

Umbria Jazz in New York: An Exceptional Fusion of Sounds

Benedetta Grasso (April 26, 2010)



Umbria Jazz in New York offers many concerts between May 4-8 with Enrico Rava and his band and a unique historical concert in Harlem with the "inspirational Ensemble" gospel choir.

Do the names B.B. King, Miles Davis, Bill Evans, Goerge Coleman mean anything to you? What do they have in common besides being some of the most inspired and talented musicians of our era, who changed jazz forever? Well, they all played, at different times of their life at the [Umbria Jazz](#) [2] festival along with other stars such as Eric Clapton, Elton John and Carlos Santana.

Since 1973, in fact, Umbria, a small and very secluded Italian region has hosted one of the most important International musical events which takes place during the summer in Perugia and during the Winter in Orvieto. More important is that this festival is a perfect venue for Italian artists, famous or not, and a place where one's talent and knowledge of this genre can be expanded.

Enzo Capua, the organizer of the festival, explained to i-Italy how Umbria Jazz branched out to



various countries and to the United States. Organizing Jazz-themed events in New York is of course the crucial part of the exportation of this Italian event. New York is where Jazz dominated the musical scene in the 1920s: it is a city that along with New Orleans and Chicago, is almost a synonym with this melancholic and yet passionate genre, something that is very intellectual and mental and also very spontaneous in its improvisational style.

"The idea of bringing the festival to New York came up years ago." said Enzo Capua. "In 2001 we had our first night at Town Hall and since 2004 the festival became an annual event."

"Our goal is to promote Italian Jazz which especially in the last decade has been graced with a rising number of talented artist and a much broader diffusion. We would like for these artists to be recognized outside of Italy as well as for our festival to reach people of all nations. We brought Umbria Jazz to Argentina and Australia as well as the United States."

Although the city hosts plenty of musical guests, Umbria Jazz is at the top of the list, gaining more and more visibility every year and reaching a very diverse audience in the hot-spots for jazz aficionados.

As Enzo Capua explained: "Here in New York we have had various concerts held at [Birdland](#) [3], which is the biggest and one of the most fascinating Jazz clubs in the city as well as Blue Note and many others. The Enrico Rava Quintet has incredible talent and speaks to a global audience."

The 2010 edition of Umbria Jazz will be one to remember.

"The most important and exciting event this year is both revolutionary and historical. We will have a big concert at a well-known Baptist Church with Rava's Quintet and the "Inspirational Ensemble" in Harlem marking the first time that an Italian Jazz band will perform with an African American gospel choir, combining two powerful traditions and ethnicities, very different and yet linked by certain themes and musical patterns. The fact that the concert will be set in Harlem is highly significant both on a cultural and political level. We hope to reach out to members of the Harlem community and to create an experience that speaks to those who live there."

The concert will feature two different performances, both half an hour long of each group and then a final exhibition (40 minutes) of the bands together."

This performance in Harlem will take place on May 4th 2010 at 7:30pm (doors open at 6:30pm) at the [Convent Avenue Baptist Church](#) [4] (420 West 145th Street) and the admission is free. Also, from May 4th until May 8th the Enrico Rava Quintet will play at Birdland every night.

Bill Evans once said that Jazz is a mental attitude rather than a style: a combination of tones and colors, often in dissonance, in an unresolved melancholia. A gospel choir reminds us of everything that is linked with harmony, faith, optimism and strength coming from supporting each other. Put these things together and you'll have an exceptional event, something magical and yet deep that you don't want to miss.

UMBRIA JAZZ FESTIVAL PRESENTS
A SPECIAL CONCERT IN HARLEM

FEATURING
BEST OF ITALIAN JAZZ & THE BEST VOICES FROM HARLEM
Enrico Rava Quintet " The Convent Avenue Baptist Church "Inspirational Ensemble"

Tuesday, May 4th, 2010
7:30PM (Doors at 6:30PM)



at the Convent Avenue Baptist Church
420 West 145th Street at Convent Avenue (A, C, or D trains to 145th Street Station)

Top Italian Jazz and the best voices of Harlem come together in an historic international cultural and musical collaboration featuring the dynamic Enrico Rava Quintet and the spectacular voices of Harlem's Convent Avenue Baptist Church "Inspirational Ensemble," under the conduction of Dr. Gregory Hopkins.

This concert is open to the public and admission is free.
Join us for an exciting and uplifting musical experience!

Umbria Jazz will continue in New York from May 5th-8th with concerts of
Enrico Rava Quintet
@ Birdland

Please visit www.birdlandjazz.com [3] for more information about performances
Umbria Jazz 2010 will be held in Perugia, Italy from July 9th-18th.

www.umbriajazz.com [2] to learn more

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