

BIOGRAPHY: PRESERVATION HALL JAZZ BAND

The Preservation Hall Jazz Band derives its name from Preservation Hall, the venerable music venue located in the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter, founded in 1961 by Allan and Sandra Jaffe. The band has traveled worldwide spreading their mission to nurture and perpetuate the art form of New Orleans Jazz. Whether performing at Carnegie Hall or Lincoln Center, for British Royalty or the King of Thailand, this music embodies a joyful, timeless spirit. Under the auspices of current director, Ben Jaffe, the son of founders Allan and Sandra, Preservation Hall continues with a deep reverence and consciousness of its greatest attributes in the modern day as a venue, band, and record label.

The building that houses Preservation Hall has housed many businesses over the years including a tavern during the war of 1812, a photo studio and an art gallery. It was during the years of the art gallery that then owner, Larry Bornstein, began holding informal jam sessions for his close friends. Out of these sessions grew the concept of Preservation Hall. The intimate venue, whose weathered exterior has been untouched over its history, is a living embodiment of its original vision. To this day, Preservation Hall has no drinks, air conditioning, or other typical accoutrements strictly welcoming people of all ages interested in having one of the last pure music experiences left on the earth.

The PHJB began touring in 1963 and for many years there were several bands successfully touring under the name Preservation Hall. Many of the band's charter members performed with the pioneers who invented jazz in the early twentieth century including Buddy Bolden, Jelly Roll Morton, Louis Armstrong, and Bunk Johnson. Band leaders over the band's history include the brothers Willie and Percy Humphrey, husband and wife Billie and De De Pierce, famed pianist Sweet Emma Barrett, and in the modern day Wendall and John Brunious. These founding artists and dozens of others passed on the lessons of their music to a younger generation who now follow in their footsteps like the current lineup.

"The tradition of New Orleans Jazz championed by the Preservation Hall Jazz Band has to be the purest musical expression of the 'melting pot' ideal...Preservation Hall defined that other characteristically American attribute: Where talent reigns, anything goes."

- Los Angeles Times -

"The Preservation Hall Jazz Band had them clapping and patting their feet and, finally, marching up one aisle and down another in their high-energy, crowd-satisfying performance."

- Santa Barbara News Press -

"...band members enticed the assembled to clap, sing, and cheer on their favorite soloists. If there was anyone in the near capacity crowd who didn't have a good time, let them come forward now."

- Bill Kohlhaase, Los Angeles Times -