



The United States Army Field Band

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The Musical Ambassadors of the Army
Washington, DC

THE JAZZ AMBASSADORS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY FIELD BAND

Feature Story

One of the finest big bands in the world today, the Jazz Ambassadors of Washington, DC, tours thousands of miles each year to promote patriotism and good will for the U.S. Army through free public concerts.

The Army's official touring big band has appeared in a variety of high profile contexts, including performances with the Columbus (OH) Symphony Orchestra, the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Syracuse Symphony. During a joint performance with the National Symphony Orchestra, conductor Marvin Hamlisch declared, "I can't think of better ambassadors for our country." This unique collaboration with Maestro Hamlisch has included the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the San Diego Symphony Orchestra, the Seattle Symphony Pops, the Colorado Pops Orchestra, and the New York Pops at Carnegie Hall.

Other recent, notable performances include appearances at the Toronto Jazz Festival, the Richmond Jazz Festival at Maymont, the Jazz Education Network Conference in Louisville, KY, the Kennedy Center Honors, and The Colbert Report.

A highly competitive audition process draws candidates from leading conservatories, universities, and the professional ranks. Many members of the Jazz Ambassadors have extensive civilian performance experience. Alumni have gone on to careers in university teaching, studio recording, and performance.

In 1969, Army Field Band Commander Major Hal Gibson formed the Studio Band in response to an increased demand for jazz performances. The Studio Band became the Army's premier touring jazz ensemble, and was renamed the Jazz Ambassadors in 1979.

The band has appeared in all fifty states, Canada, Mexico, Japan, India, and throughout Europe. Whether at a world-renowned venue or playing in the grassroots of America, the Jazz Ambassadors impress audiences with their virtuosity. The ability to connect with their audience has attracted the attention of Gordon Goodwin, Bobby Shew, Ernie Watts, and the Dave Brubeck All-Star Quintet, just a few of the outstanding jazz artists who have shared the stage with America's Big Band.

Concerts by the Jazz Ambassadors are programmed to entertain all types of audiences. Many of the ensemble's members arrange and compose music highlighting the group's creative talent and gifted soloists. Their diverse repertoire includes big band swing, Latin music, contemporary jazz, bebop, standards, popular tunes, Dixieland, and patriotic selections. Wherever they travel, the Jazz Ambassadors proudly carry the message of patriotism and goodwill to audiences worldwide.