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Jazz Festival weekend in Lewiston



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An exceptional level of talent featuring jazz all-stars and rising stars will grace the stage on Friday, Aug. 25, and Saturday, Aug. 26, at the Northwest Jazz Festival. Headlining performances include the United States Air Force Rhythm in Blue Band, the Benny Benack III Quartet, and, on Saturday, experience the highly anticipated festival appearance of the supergroup SOMETHING ELSE!

The festival runs from 5-10:30 p.m. Friday, and from noon to 10:30 p.m. Saturday. Center Street in historic Lewiston will come alive with live music on five stages throughout the festival grounds, with an assortment of food/beverage vendors adding to the ambiance.

The festival is free to attend (no coolers or carry-ins), with a limited number of tickets available for preferred seating at the main stage. Tickets are \$25 each and available online at www.LewistonJazz.com. A limited number of tickets will be available at the festival.

Click the QR Code for a Jazz Festival preview and schedule.

Jazz Ambassador Awardee

The Northwest Jazz Festival highlights local, national and international musicians each year at the two-day festival. The board of directors also takes time to recognize the accomplishments of those who give their time and talent to further jazz in the community through the Jazz Festival Ambassador Award.

This year, the award is given to Lázara Martínez, violinist and owner of PAUSA art house in the historic district of Allentown in Buffalo. As Lázara will be out of town during the event, festival music director Tony Zambito will accept the award on her behalf.

PAUSA art house is the winner



Lázara Martínez photo courtesy of the Northwest Jazz Festival



Carol Calato and Benjamin Mekinulov outside of the Upward Niagara Chamber of Commerce office on Center Street in Lewiston. (Submitted photo)



of JazzBuffalo 2022 "Best Small Jazz Venue," presenting a variety of music shows and artistic exhibitions from local, national and international artists. The relaxed atmosphere of the venue attracts patrons who wish to attend an intimate concert or an art exhibit while enjoying a glass of wine, beers or spirits, or dining on tapas and paninis. Lázara cofounded PAUSA art house in 2013 and is currently the sole owner and manager of all business operations.

Chairwoman Carol Calato nomi-

nated Lázara for the award, with full board approval.

"Ask any jazz musician, or jazz lover, their opinion of PAUSA: They rave about it," she said. "Thanks to the foresight, determination and talent of Cuban-born musician Lázara Martínez, Western New York has an intimate, award-winning venue to listen to fine performances from local, national and international artists in an intimate and relaxed setting. Lázara Martínez is well-deserving of the 2023 Jazz Ambassador Award."



Headliner Benny Benack III will take to the main stage on Friday at the 2023 Northwest Jazz Festival. (Submitted photos)

Scholarship Winner

The Jazz Festival board of directors announced Benjamin Mekinulov as the recipient of the 2023 Carol Calato Jazz Scholarship.

He is a senior cello performance major at the Cleveland Institute of Music. Mekinulov started lessons with professor Feng Hew of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra when he was 6 years old, and cello has been his passion ever since. He also has studied with David Yink (Eastman School of Music) and Dr. Melissa Kraut (Cleveland

Institute of Music).

Mekinulov has served as the principal cellist for the Greater Buffalo Youth Orchestra. He was a first-prize recipient of the "Tuesday Morning Competition," and gold medal winner of the Cleveland Cello Society Scholarship.

The \$1,000 Carol Calato Jazz Scholarship is awarded each year to a student majoring in a music field, via an application and judging. The process for the 2024 award will start in March, with information at LewistonJazz.com.

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