



50 Years and Moving Forward

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New Orleans musician GrayHawk Perkins and France’s Mezcal Jazz Unit Kicked Off Limited NY Engagement of “Thirteen Moons” in Westchester Square on Feb 25th

(February 26, 2014—Bronx) The Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA) was privileged to host the kick-off New York performance of “Thirteen Moons” at BCA’s future headquarters (2700 East Tremont Avenue) in Westchester Square on February 25th as part of BCA’s Community Arts Tuesdays. “Thirteen Moons” is an original musical collaboration featuring New Orleans musician GrayHawk Perkins, of the Choctaw and Houma tribes, and Mezcal Jazz Unit, a French Jazz quartet.

A sizeable audience of foot stompers, head bobbers, and knee slappers enjoyed the evening as Perkins and the band performed a unique blend of blues, folk and jazz, intertwined with tribal rhythms, language and storytelling with the France-based Mezcal Jazz Unit band. This was the first of a five-performance New York tour – the only one slated for the Bronx – and we had them in Westchester Square!



On Feb 25th, BCA hosted New Orleans musician GrayHawk Perkins (2nd from right) and France’s Mezcal Jazz Unit who kicked off the limited New York Engagement of “Thirteen Moons” in Westchester Square.

Photo: Phil Cardone

In one of the most fascinating collaborations to come out of New Orleans, Mezcal Jazz Unit, a quartet from southern France, and Native American musician and educator Grayhawk Perkins perform Perkins’ original composition which represents the diverse cultures and musical orientations of these five musicians and celebrates the thirteen Moons of the Native American Calendar. Perkins has written a series of musical chants honoring each of the moons and did so in the Mobilian trade language dialect.

Perkins and the French jazz musicians have found innovative ways to integrate these early Native American chants in the musical language of improvisational jazz. **GrayHawk Perkins** is regarded as one of the major Native American educators and historians in the country, adept at lecturing, writing, music, storytelling, educating, film acting, advising, and annually coordinating the Native American section at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. The **Mezcal Jazz Unit**, proficient in a variety of European and American jazz styles, is composed of Emmanuel de Gouvello, on bass, who did special arrangements on Grayhawk’s compositions, Christophe Azema, saxophone; Vivian Pères, drums; and Jean Marie Frédéric, guitar.

The Bronx Council on the Arts is a private, non-profit membership organization that is the official cultural agency of Bronx County. Recognized nationally as a leading arts service organization in providing cultural services and arts programs, BCA serves a multicultural constituency of almost 1.4 million residents. BCA provides an array of services to over 5,000 artists and more than 250 arts and community-based organizations. Visit BCA’s website at www.bronxarts.org for information on the Bronx Council on the Arts and the many programs and activities we provide to the community.

Community Arts Tuesdays are made possible with the support and contributions from the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, the NYS Council on the Arts, Lambert Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation, Scherman Foundation, and NYC Council Member James Vacca. Special thanks to the Just Nuts Band for providing equipment and technical assistance for this performance.

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