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The Newark Museum of Art Presents *Jazz Greats: Classic Photographs from the Bank of America Collection*

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Captures the pioneers of a vibrant and historically influential musical genre through intimate and reflective moments

NEWARK, NJ – May 9, 2022 – The Newark Museum of Art is pleased to welcome the upcoming exhibition *Jazz Greats: Classic Photographs from the Bank of America Collection*, which celebrates the legacy of singers, musicians, audiences, and artists who contributed to the cultural footprint of this genre.

Jazz Greats: Classic Photographs from the Bank of America Collection chronicles a vivacious coming-of-age story for jazz as an engine for expression — one touted for freedom and modernity but also constrained by the perennial systems of race, class, and society.

When it opens, the exhibition will bring together 33 photographs by 15 photographers that date from the 1920s to the 1980s. Through their dynamic lens, the collection captures the early leaders and moments that defined this indelible genre of music during an era of social, economic, industrial, and political reckoning.

“We’re thrilled to be able to share such a unique, timely collection with our visitors this summer and celebrate the legacy of these artists, both photographers and their subjects,” said Linda C. Harrison, Director and CEO of The Newark Museum of Art. “Our audiences will find this exhibition translates a vigorous musical genre, its origins, and its geography, with fluency and transparency, bearing a new stage for the greats.”

Many of the subjects include legends from jazz and modern dance art forms—Miles Davis, John & Alice Coltrane, Billie Holiday, Eric Dolphy, Louis Armstrong, Eartha Kitt, Ella Fitzgerald, and

Dizzy Gillespie. Among the collection, there are also photographs that record amateur musicians performing in their local communities, as well as their captivated audiences. It is these kinds of vital representations of the underground jazz scene that tell the complete story of this enduring genre.

The exhibition not only portrays the legendary singers and musicians most synonymous to jazz, but also the relationship between an emerging art form and the community that gave it the space to thrive. Audiences will find that the collection alludes to the power within American art forms, and particularly jazz, and its role in bridging communities and influencing an era of cultural awakenings.

The artworks on display were captured by photographers as renowned as their subjects — William Gottlieb, a photographer and newspaper columnist who captured the golden age of jazz in the 1930s and 1940s; Michael Abramson, known for his documentation of the nightlife of Chicago’s south side through intimate portraits and stills; Milt Hinton, the self-proclaimed “amateur photographer” and jazz bassist who captured jazz greats like Louis Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie, Cab Calloway, Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, and others.

The full list of photographers featured in this exhibition includes: Aaron Siskind, Anthony Armstrong-Jones, Arthur H. Fellig, Barbara Morgan, Chuck Stewart, Eduard Van Der Elsen, Edward Steichen, Gjon Mili, Gordon Parks, Jonas Dovydenas, Lisette Model, Marc Pokempner, Michael L. Abramson, Milton J. Hinton, Paul D’Amato, and William Gottlieb.

This exhibition has been loaned through the Bank of America’s Art in our Communities ® program. Through this program, entire exhibitions are loaned to local museums and nonprofit galleries at no cost as a way to engage the public with important works of art while helping institutions generate vital revenue.

“At Bank of America, we believe in the power of the arts to help economies thrive, educate and enrich societies and create greater cultural understanding,” said Alberto Garofalo, President, Bank of America New Jersey. “The Newark Museum of Art has been a mainstay of New Jersey’s cultural landscape for decades, and we are thrilled to share this unique exhibit from our collection with them and their patrons.”

The first presentation of this collection was available to west coast audiences in 2018 at the De Saisset Museum, Santa Clara University, followed by the Museum of African American History in Boston in 2019, and later in 2022 at UCR ARTS’ California Museum of Photography.

The Newark Museum of Art will also present a concurrent installation, *Billie Holiday at Sugar Hill: Photographs by Jerry Dantzig*, which features photographs by photojournalist Dantzig, who received special access to Billie Holiday’s public and private life during a week-long residency at the Sugar Hill nightclub in Newark, NJ, and commentary from celebrated author Zadie Smith.

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About The Newark Museum of Art

Founded in 1909, The Newark Museum of Art is the largest art and education institution in New Jersey and one of the most influential museums in the United States. Its renowned global art collections, supported by significant holdings of science, technology and natural history, rank 12th among North America's art museums. The Museum is dedicated to artistic excellence, education and community engagement with an overarching commitment to broadening and diversifying arts participation. As it has for over a century, the Museum responds to the evolving needs and interests of the diverse audiences it serves by providing exhibitions, programming, and resources designed to improve and enrich people's lives.

The Museum also encompasses the Victoria Hall of Science, the Alice and Leonard Dreyfuss Planetarium, the 1885 Ballantine House, the MakerSPACE, the Billy Johnson Auditorium, the Alice Ransom Dreyfuss Memorial Garden, an authentic 1784 Schoolhouse, and the Newark Fire Museum.

The Newark Museum of Art, a not-for-profit museum of art and science, receives operating support from the City of Newark, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State (a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts), the New Jersey Cultural Trust, the Prudential Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Victoria Foundation, the Estate of Phyllis and Sanford Bolton, the Wallace Foundation, and other corporations, foundations, and individuals. Funds for acquisitions and activities other than operations are provided by members and other contributors.

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