

The Harlem Connection To Chapel Hill

UNC Prof + WXYC student DJs to make their debut over NYC airwaves Friday on WBAI

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THE <u>HARLEM CONNECTION</u> TO CHAPEL HILL UNC Prof + WXYC student DJs to make their debut over NYC airwaves Friday on <u>WBAI</u>

Ever since its renaissance back in the 1920s, Harlem, NY has been one of America's most famous and historic communities. The village has been the subject matter of books, movies, poetry, TV shows, and songs.

These days, it's being celebrated in a new manner.

The Harlem Connection is radio program that launched in November 2020. Billed as "a weekly love letter to Harlem," it showcases the people and the sounds that helped to establish and maintain Harlem as a cultural Mecca.

The show is produced and hosted by a trio of "conductors" (DJ Black Icon 1, MamaSoul and The L.A.W.) that clearly loves playing music from multiple genres and different eras and then revealing how they all–somehow-- connect to Harlem. Episodes highlight Harlem's connections to household names (Ella Fitzgerald, Michael Jackson) and to locals (Marko Nobles, Claudia Hayden) that the producers feel should be lauded. Most of their shows are centered around specific themes like "The Harlem Love Dis-Connection" (where they offered songs to avoid playing on Valentine's Day) or "The Harlem Connection to Black Friday" where every song had the word "black" in its title.

The conductors decided to do an episode entitled "The Harlem Connection to Nommo." ("Nommo" is an Afrocentric term employed by philosopher Molefi Asante that refers to the power that words have to create & change reality) That idea led them to contacting University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Linguistics Professor & African-American English Semantics Specialist, J. Michael Terry, for some linguistical context and color. After interviewing Terry, The L.A.W. thought, "Wow. Terry's a longtime professor and his enthusiasm about UNC is infectious. I can only imagine how the students there must feel." And he wondered if there was a way to capture some of that UNC energy and share it with NYC listeners.

That led to The Harlem Connection contacting WXYC, the station run by students of the

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Harlem Connection conductors worked with a trio of student DJs to shape the episode. Consisting of an interview with UNC Professor Terry, and music blocks provided by the WXYC team including station Production Manager DJ Moomaw and Programming Manager DJ BANGS, the episode is a virtual "Tarheels Takeover" of The Harlem Connection. "I never thought that being a DJ here on campus would connect me to other radio stations around the country," WXYC Station Manager dj AD said. "This is an exciting and refreshing experience."

The Harlem Connection conductors couldn't be happier about it.

"New York is the biggest media market in the country, if not the world," MamaSoul said, "so when my friends and I were student DJs, we dreamt about being on air in New York City. Now that we are, it's our chance to 'pay it forward." DJ Black Icon 1 agreed. "Professor Terry gave us some really great information. And by working with the WXYC DJs, we'll be presenting music by artists ranging from Aaron Neville and Quincy Jones to Kanye West and H.E.R. We think folks of all ages are really going to dig the collaboration. This episode's got North and South; black and white; young and old; students, graduates, professors, and drop outs! It's like America in a two hour show. There's a lot to dig."

"The Harlem Connection to Nommo/ Tarheels Takeover" episode will air in the NYC area at 10PM Friday, April 16th & then repeats at 3AM on Sunday, April 18th. It'll be accessible to all via <u>www.wbai.org/listen-live/</u> during those hours. After its live airing, the episode may be accessed via <u>www.wbai.org/archive/</u> under "The Harlem Connection." WXYC management is reviewing their station's schedule for an appropriate rebroadcast time in the Chapel Hill/Durham area.

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Press Contact: TheHarlemConnection@WBAI.org 646-319-7037

About WBAI:

The Harlem Connection generally airs Fridays at 10PM on 99.5FM (in the New York City area) and via WBAI.org/listen-live (worldwide).

L.A.W. Simmons The Harlem Connection +1 646-319-7037 TheHarlemConnection@WBAI.org Visit us on social media: Facebook Twitter

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