

Saudi Arabia and the United States Strengthen Musical Ties with Herbie Hancock's Milestone Visit

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- The Saudi Music Commission, one of 11 sector specific commissions under the Ministry of Culture, and the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh announce the very first visit to Saudi Arabia of jazz legend, Herbie Hancock, the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance Ensemble at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), and acclaimed jazz vocalist Janis Siegel. Their tour celebrates U.S.-Saudi cultural ties, arts education, and the universal power of music. It is sponsored by the Arts Envoy Program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA).

The group's agenda includes a performance at the King Fahad Cultural Center, with the participation of Saudi jazz vocalist Nourah Alammary; a masterclass for Saudi music students at the Saudi Music Hub, Riyadh; a roundtable on women in the arts with female Saudi artists and musicians; and an event with Saudi traditional musicians at the studio of Saudi visual artist Ahmed Mater. U.S.

Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Michael Ratney welcomed the visit, saying "Saudi Arabia's cultural scene is evolving at an incredible pace, and hosting a legend like Herbie Hancock is a huge milestone. His music has inspired generations and having him here is a testament to the Kingdom's remarkable cultural scene."

Paul Pacifico, CEO of the Music Commission, stated: "Herbie Hancock is one of the world's great music icons. His career has influenced the global cultural conversation in music over decades. The opportunity to host Herbie Hancock, Janis Siegel and musicians from the Herbie Hancock Institute here in Riyadh underscores the progress being made in further developing the Saudi music sector, and it highlights the Music Commission's commitment to fostering cultural exchange, welcoming diverse artists and to celebrating the universal language of music."



Herbie Hancock

This landmark musical visit demonstrates the burgeoning cultural ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia, which extend from music to filmmaking, the visual arts, cultural heritage, and theater. As U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said when announcing Herbie Hancock as a U.S. Global Music Ambassador, “Music is such a powerful diplomatic force because I think it taps into something fundamental – universal, even. It’s capable of expressing common emotions and speaking to shared experiences in a way that words alone simply can’t.”

Herbie Hancock is an internationally renowned pianist and composer who is one of the most innovative and influential musicians of our time. A true icon of modern music, he has shaped the direction of jazz, fusion, funk, and hip-hop for more than six decades. From his recordings with the legendary Miles Davis Quintet to his solo jazz albums and pioneering music incorporating multiple genres, Hancock has always been on the cutting edge. He has earned 14 GRAMMY Awards including Album of the Year for *River: The Joni Letters*, and an Academy Award for his score for the film *Round Midnight*. A Kennedy Center honoree, Hancock serves as Creative Director for the Los Angeles Philharmonic and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador for Intercultural Dialogue. He is the Chairman of the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz and a Distinguished Professor at the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA, where he inspires the creativity of the next generation of jazz artists.

For more than 60 years, Janis Siegel has been an undeniable force in the world of jazz and popular music. A founding member of The Manhattan Transfer, Siegel’s powerful and versatile voice became one of the group’s most recognized trademarks. Performing for audiences around the world, The Manhattan Transfer and Siegel amassed a large international fan base and garnered consistently high critical praise, including 10 GRAMMY awards. Siegel has also enjoyed an eclectic solo career, spawning more than a dozen finely crafted solo albums and participating in numerous collaborative projects with some of the world’s most renowned musicians, producers, composers, and arrangers.

Hancock and Siegel will share the stage with the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz Performance at UCLA Ensemble – six of the most gifted young jazz musicians from around the world who were selected to study in a full scholarship master’s program with the greatest jazz musicians of our time. The Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz is a nonprofit education organization with a mission to offer the world’s most promising young musicians college level training by internationally acclaimed jazz masters and to present public school music education programs for young people around the world.



Janis Siegel

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