**Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival**

**Red Carnation Backstage Reception**

ASUI Kibbie Activity Center, backstage

Friday, February 26, 2016

6:00 p.m. Event begins

6:40 p.m. Program

7:30 p.m. Event ends

**6:40 p.m.**

***Nathan trumpet fanfare from stage to get guest’s attention***

**Nathan:**

* Good evening, and welcome to the Red Carnation Backstage Reception!
* My name is Nathan Top, and I am a senior majoring in Music Performance and minoring in Jazz Studies.
* I have already had the great opportunity to perform on several stages this week but I am honored to be with you on this stage tonight.
* The Red Carnation Reception receives its name from Lionel Hampton himself.
* Lionel was known to wear a red carnation on his lapel while performing at the Festival for so many years.
* The week of the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival is my favorite time of year to be in Moscow.
* My journey with the Jazz Festival began when I was a freshman at West Albany High School in Albany, Oregon.
* My high school band director, Stuart Welsh, a University of Idaho alumnus, made attending the Jazz Festival with his bands a priority, and I attended through my senior year of high school.
* One of my earliest and fondest memories of the jazz festival includes watching Gerald Clayton play “*This Little Light of Mine”* on the Kibbie Dome stage. **It was awesome!**
* This year we are celebrating the 49th year of the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, and to tell us more about the festival’s legacy is **President Chuck Staben**.

[Applause]

[Nathan stands off to the side on stage to greet the president; Staben approaches podium; shake hands; Nathan steps off stage and stands off to the side.]

**President:**

* The Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival is a special event at the University of Idaho.
* It’s a celebration of music that brings our Vandal family together and also unites our broader community.
* Jazz Fest is also a chance to reach out to communities across the Northwest through the “Jazz in Schools” program, which every year reaches thousands of students.
* Those students also come here to participate in workshops and seminars and take the stage alongside leading lights of the music world.
* Music education, of course, is not just learning how to play the notes.
* It is learning how to execute fundamentals, how to collaborate, and how to innovate.
* Those are tools that students take with them outside the world of music, to their other academic experiences, to their future careers, and to their personal growth and maturation.
* Jazz Fest has a profound impact on the direction of students’ lives.
* For many students, it gives them a flavor for what life is like at college. They can picture themselves living here and succeeding here.
* For students like our emcee, Nathan, it helps showcase the University of Idaho and helps our university stand out as their choice for a college education.
* That is a great impact for students, for our university, and for our world.
* We are very proud of the festival’s success and its unique fusing of jazz and education to bridge cultures, inspire creativity and develop the leaders of the next generation, both inside and outside of music.
* I’d like to take a moment to acknowledge the **Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival Advisory Board**… many of who are with us this evening.
* Could you please stand or wave?
* This dedicated group of individuals share their time, talents and contributions to help make the festival the success it is.
* **We all thank you for your continued commitment.**

[Applause]

* I want to also take a moment to recognize the work of executive director **Steve Remington**, who keeps this festival running smoothly as a success this year and every year.
* Also joining us this evening is **John Clayton**, the festival’s Artistic Director... John will be speaking momentarily.
* We are very lucky to have John Clayton’s talent, vision and dedication.
* John is a composer, arranger, conductor, producer, educator and virtuosic bass player.
* He is a Grammy award winner and has been nominated for that award numerous times.
* John has worked with a who’s-who of accomplished musicians, including Paul McCartney, Gladys Knight and Yo-Yo Ma.
* A Vandal supporter recently wrote to me and pointed out something interesting about John.
* He was perusing a recent issue of ESPN The Magazine, just this February, and he read an article called “When Whitney Hit the High Note,” about Super Bowl twenty-five in Tampa.
* That performance has been lauded by many as the best performance of “The Star Spangled Banner” ever.
* It almost didn’t happen that way.
* The article notes that Houston, her vocal arranger, and “bassist-arranger John L. Clayton,” our very own, changed it from three-four time to four-four time, dramatically slowing it down.
* The NFL was concerned – this could be too slow, too non-traditional.
* We’re lucky the NFL did not get their way, and that Whitney and John got theirs.
* I’ll quote from the article: “By slowing it down, Team Houston and the Florida Orchestra … not only increased the national anthem's level of technical difficulty, they amplified its soul. They made it the blues.”
* The effect, with Whitney Houston’s unique singing ability, was astonishing.
* ESPN article notes that “People were weeping in the stands, weeping in their homes. The song itself became a top-20 pop hit. Folks called in and requested Whitney Houston's national anthem on the radio.”
* That’s the power of music.
* And it’s a testament to the talent and vision of John Clayton. Thank you, John, for your contribution to music and to the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival at the University of Idaho. We are lucky to have you.

[Hold for applause]

* We’d also like to thank the presenting sponsors of the concerts… **Avista Corporation, Gritman Medical Center, Pepsi** **and Potlatch Corporation**.
* Thank you for your generous support; you really do make a difference in students’ experiences and in our ability to come together through this festival.

[Lead applause]

* I appreciate all of you coming tonight.
* Please enjoy the reception and enjoy this wonderful night and weekend of music.

**Nathan:**

* Thank you President Staben.
* Coincidentally, the Jazz Festival’s theme this year, Jazz Pathways to Discovery, speaks in many ways to my own story.
* Because of the Jazz Festival, I have had the opportunity to watch many of my jazz heroes perform. Along with that, I have also had the privilege to share the stage with many great musicians including Jimmy Heath, Benny Golson, Terrell Stafford, and the Lionel Hampton Jazz Band.
* I have also enjoyed getting to know many of the artists during the after-hours jam sessions that take place all over downtown Moscow.
* Additionally, I have attended clinics of the Jazz Festival, many of which have changed the way I listen to, play, and experience jazz music.
* John Clayton has stated, this year’s theme “speaks to the importance of learning, absorbing and growing”.
* Please join me now in welcoming the festival’s Artistic Director…**John Clayton!**

[Applause]

[Nathan stands off to the side on stage to greet Clayton; shake hands; Clayton approaches podium; Nathan steps off stage and stands off to the side.]

[Remarks from John Clayton]

[Applause]

[Clayton returns to crowd; Nathan returns to podium]

**Nathan:**

* Thank you Mr. Clayton.
* What an **amazing** evening!
* The Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival is how I got introduced to the University of Idaho and my trumpet and jazz teacher, Vern Sielert.
* Because of this festival, I knew when applying for college, I wanted to attend the U of I and study at the Lionel Hampton School of Music.
* After three years, I was awarded one of the Lionel Hampton School of Music’s scholarships.
* With the experiences and support I have gained from the U of I and the Jazz Festival, I will be graduating this semester with competitive offers to several Graduate Studies music programs across the nation.

[Hold for applause]

* I know I am just one of the thousands of students being inspired by jazz music at the University of Idaho.
* This is a great place to learn and grow.
* It’s your generosity that makes this tradition and this institution possible.
* Thank you for sharing the festival with us and please enjoy the rest of the evening.

**[END]**