



Spirit Of New Orleans Productions

Traditional New Orleans Jazz with a 21st Century Flavor

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Leroy Jones reassembles the Fairview Brass Band for a special concert at the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival 2009

This historic event, taking place at this year's New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, will reunite one of the most important brass bands in New Orleans' brass band history. The Fairview Baptist Church Christian Marching Band was founded in 1970, and was the brainchild of reverend Andrew Darby, pastor of the Fairview Baptist Church. Reverend Darby wanted to involve the neighborhood youth with brass band music and also provide live music for the church functions. He asked banjoist Danny Barker, who lived in the neighborhood and was a member of the church with his wife Blue Lu, to assist him in recruiting young aspiring musicians. Soon there was a large enough group of youngsters and Danny Barker appointed Leroy Jones, 12 years at the time, as the leader of the band. The rehearsals took place in Jones' parents garage on St. Dennis Street, in the 7th ward of New Orleans, just a few blocks from the Fairview Church.

The Fairview Brass Band brought new energy to the brass band scene and its importance to the continuation of tradition cannot be underestimated. At the time, traditional brass band music was in jeopardy mostly because of young musicians' lack of interest in it. The Fairview Band introduced tens of young musicians, many of whom are still active musicians today, to the traditional brass band sounds and tunes. In its heyday, the Fairview band had as many as 30 musicians and the group would sometimes be split up to 3 different bands, performing at different functions simultaneously.

The band performed actively 1970-1974, playing for the 2nd New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival in Congo Square (1971, at the time called Louisiana Heritage Fair), at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC, numerous Social Club parades, and church and private events.

The Fairview Brass Band later evolved into Leroy Jones' Hurricane Brass Band, and after Mr. Jones started predominantly pursuing his solo career, some of the Hurricane Brass Band's musicians went on to start the Dirty Dozen Brass Band.

Now, 39 years later, the JazzFest 2009 Fairview Alumni concert, inspired by the centennial of Mr. Barker's birth, will bring together 12 musicians; among them for example Alton "Big Al" Carson, who nowadays is better known as one of Crescent City's finest singers, on tuba, Dirty Dozen's longtime trumpeter Gregory Davis, trombonist Lucien Barbarin, who played snare drum in the Fairview Band, and of course Leroy Jones, whose trumpet will once again lead the Fairview Baptist Church Marching Brass Band.

Leroy Jones and the Fairview Baptist Church Brass Band Alumni – Tribute to Danny Barker

April 24, 2009 - 4:20 to 5:25 pm

Economy Hall Tent - New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival

Leroy Jones – trumpet
Gregg Stafford – trumpet
Gregory Davis – trumpet
Kevin Harris – tenor saxophone
Darryl Adams – alto saxophone
Joe Torregano – clarinet
Lucien Barbarin – trombone
Michael Johnson – trombone
Harry Sterling – banjo
Alton Carson – tuba
Anthony Bennett – bass drum
Jerry Anderson – snare drum