
Mother of Pearl



study guide



Mother of Pearl

Join Mother of Pearl for a lively and interactive performance of jazz and blues that is both entertaining and educational. This 50-minute show will give students from grades K through 12 a taste of jazz history, the structure of the music and treat them to the rich sounds of this musical genre played by four dynamic performers.

Mother of Pearl is:



Wendy Solloway
bass

Karen Graves
sax, flute, vocals

Lauri Lyster
drums

Brenda Baird
keyboards

Mother of Pearl highlights the work of **women in jazz** and seeks to provide a **positive role model** for both genders by encouraging girls and boys to **believe in their dreams** and work hard to achieve them!

For more information on Mother of Pearl in the schools contact:

Lauri Lyster

604.253.6994

lauristix@hotmail.com

or visit the Mother of Pearl website at:

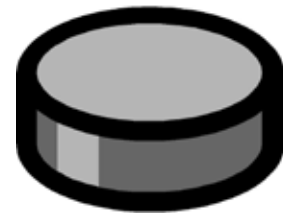
www.motherofpearljazz.com

Mother of Pearl **THE SHOW**



HOCKEY NIGHT IN CANADA THEME

The performance begins with this well-known Canadian anthem. Less well known is the fact that this piece was written by a Vancouver-born woman by the name of Dolores Claman. Mother of Pearl's award-winning arrangement (and we have the fridge magnets and certificate signed by Don Cherry to prove it) reinvents the tune in some interesting time signatures while never losing the integrity of the song.



CRAZY BLUES

By PERRY BRADFORD



MAMIE SMITH AND HER JAZZ HOUNDS

Get this number for your phonograph on Okeh Record No. 4169

CRAZY BLUES

This comical and historically significant blues tune from the 1920's was recorded by Mamie Smith, the first black woman to record the blues. It sold 400,000 copies in one month, ushering in the decade of the "blues queens" in which African American women in their feather boas reigned supreme.

Opportunities for further study

- Race relations
- A historical look at the 1920's



SPIDERMAN

Mother of Pearl illustrates four different styles of music all under the hubris known as jazz. By using a well-known song, students come to understand how the same melody can be arranged in many different ways and how jazz is not one homogeneous style but actually made up of many styles. The styles demonstrated are: a fast swing, a slow blues, a Latin montuno from Cuba and Klezmer—a curious blend of Dixieland and Jewish Eastern European influences.

Opportunities for further study

- Look at different styles of music—students can even try their hand at taking a melody and reinventing it in their favourite style.
- Look at the music of different cultures.

Mother of Pearl **THE SHOW** continued



BUILDING A BLUES TUNE

This segment of the show focuses on the roles of the instruments starting with the drums, adding the keyboard, the bass, the saxophone and finally the vocals. For younger audiences, we use the analogy of a tree: the drums, the dirt which the tree grows out of; the bass, the roots; the keyboard, the branches; the sax, the leaves, and the vocals, the bird singing in the tree. The concept of improvisation is introduced. Exploration is encouraged and mistakes are deemed “OK”. Volunteers from the audience (including a teacher) are asked to help out on a vocal improvisation over the same blues progression. Finally, everyone is asked to join in.

Opportunities for further study

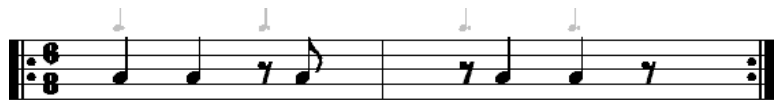
- Improvisation—younger children can use rhythm instruments.
- Look at different instruments in jazz groups, symphonies, rock bands, etc.
- Note that in high schools that have a music program it is also possible to arrange for students to improvise on stage.

FOOLS RUSH IN

Drummer Lauri Lyster teaches the audience a simple but important *clave* rhythm. In the middle of this well-known jazz standard, the players stop (except for Lauri), and the audience takes over with their newly-learned rhythmic accompaniment.

Opportunities for further study

- Listen and discuss Latin American music
- Rhythmic exercises



JUMP CHILDREN



Our last song was recorded by the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, an all-women’s big band from the Forties who started out as a rag-tag band in a school for poor orphan girls and later went on to become a big sensation. The myth of “girl” instruments and “boy” instruments is dispelled. Students are encouraged to follow their hearts, no matter what other people say; work hard at it and make your dreams come true!

Opportunities for further study

A look at the 40’s (eg: How did World War II affect the role of women?)

Time permitting, a question and answer period follows the show.

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Who is Mother of Pearl?

Brenda Baird piano, flute and keyboard



Multi instrumentalist Brenda Baird is a much in demand performer and teacher with a rich and varied musical background. After graduating from UBC with a Bachelor of Music degree, Brenda ventured into the commercial music scene and studied at Capilano College. Her wide-ranging studies in both classical and jazz have given her powerfully creative abilities in composition and arranging as well as performance. She has toured with a variety of ensembles in Africa, France, Japan and throughout North America, and her talents have also landed her work in musical theatre, chamber music ensembles, film and television. At home, Brenda is a very busy piano and flute teacher, and mother.

Karen Graves saxophones, flute and vocals



This multifaceted musician grew up on Vancouver Island where she was subject to amazing and inspiring band teachers throughout her schooling. Karen Graves earned a two year Jazz Diploma from the acclaimed Malaspina College, before enrolling in the school of hard knocks. Karen has studied with renowned Russian voice instructor, Nikolai Kolesnikov and with saxophonists Pete Cristlieb and Pat Labarbera.

While playing with the Banff Jazz Orchestra under the direction of Hugh Fraser, Karen had the honour of performing in concert with Slide Hampton, Maynard Ferguson, Muhal Richard Abrahms and Kenny Wheeler. Karen is a composer and along with leading her own band she keeps busy as a sideman as well as being a regular with such bands as V.I.C.O. (The Vancouver Inter Cultural Orchestra); Soulstream, a ten piece soul/funk band; Out of the Woods and Mimosa.

Lauri Lyster drums and percussion



Lauri Lyster is a truly versatile musician, equally at home playing classical percussion with the Vancouver Symphony or Opera Orchestras, playing drum kit in jazz and dance bands, working with multi-media productions in conjunction with dance, electronics and mixed media or playing hand percussion with various world music ensembles. She received her Bachelor of Music degree at the University of British Columbia, earning the School of Music Medal as well as the offer of a scholarship to the prestigious Berklee School of Music. As well as drumming in Mother of Pearl, Lauri is a key member of Winter Harp, an ensemble dedicated to medieval and rare instruments which has recorded a handful of CDs and has toured Canada and the Pacific Northwest. Lauri also enjoys teaching and lecturing at local recording and music schools in Vancouver.

Wendy Solloway Bass



With her electric and acoustic bass, Wendy Solloway supplies the bottom end to Mother of Pearl's sound. Her experience as a bassist goes back many years, performing in dozens of bands encompassing a wide variety of styles as well as theatre, performance art and video. Wendy has been featured on CBC Radio's Art Beat and was nominated for a Jessie Richardson Award for her original score in the Tamahous Theatre production Paradise and Wasteland. As an instructor of Women and Music at Simon Fraser University, she compiled research on the history of women in jazz, which informs Mother of Pearl's repertoire. She holds a music degree from the University of Windsor and, in addition to performing, currently works as a music therapist.