

Sam Reider and the Human Hands present:
Roots of Freedom
60 Minute Outreach Performance

THEMES:

Community and Diversity
Self-expression and the blues
Group improvisation and freedom
Music as protest

INTRO PERFORMANCE: MEDLEY OF HUMAN HANDS

NEW ORLEANS

Intro to New Orleans, a city on the Mississippi River, with melting-pot of cultures:

- New Orleans is a melting pot of cultures.
- Spanish and French music: Musette
- Celtic and Old-time music: Bariban Reel, Old time song
- Fife and drum music: Sousa March
- Cajun: Waltz and Zydeco
- African drums and Caribbean rhythms: Little Liza Jane
- All these types of music mixed together and created new forms of American music which you can hear in the classic New Orleans 2nd Line parade.
- Play Bourbon Street Parade

THE BLUES

How do musicians express their stories and emotions through music?

- The Blues is a story mixed with a feeling. When you put those two elements together over the rhythm of swing, no matter how sad or mad you were, you start to feel really good.
- Ask each member of the band an emotion, what sound they make when they feel that way, and what that sound is like on their instruments.
- Ask student volunteers for a story and the emotion and sound that correlates.
- Demonstrate improvising with those sounds over a blues.

IMPROVISATION

What is improvisation?

Is it possible for more than one musician to improvise at the same time?

What techniques does a band use to allow multiple people to improvise?

What does it mean to be a leader?

- Demonstrate call and response through improvisation.
- Demonstrate “free” improvisation in group.
- Invite student volunteers to read Langston Hughes’ “Po Boy Blues” as band improvises responses.

*If drama/dance/acting students are present, ask them to collaborate on an improvised scene where the musicians provide a musical backdrop to students performance. This must be pre-arranged with school.

MUSIC AND PROTEST

What is a Spiritual? What is a protest song?

Raising your voice

How can musicians use their art for social change?

- Volunteer reads Martin Luther King Jr.’s address at Berlin Jazz Festival: “God has wrought many things out of oppression. He has endowed his creatures with the capacity to create—and from this capacity has flowed the sweet songs of sorrow and joy that have allowed man to cope with his environment and many different situations. Jazz speaks for life. The Blues tell the story of life’s difficulties, and if you think for a moment, you will realize that they take the hardest realities of life and put them into music, only to come out with some new hope or sense of triumph. This is triumphant Music.”
- Examples of Protest Music:
 - Staples Singers, *Wade in the Water*
 - Nina Simone, *Mississippi Goddamn*
 - Charles Mingus, *Fables of Faubus*
 - John Coltrane, *Alabama*
 - Pete Seeger, *We Shall Overcome*
- Ask audience for examples of things they want to protest today in their communities and in the world at large.
- Perform free-improvised version of “Alabama” while volunteers call out what they want to protest and the rest of the audience echoes.