

Kansas City Young Audiences Teacher Program Guide

ABCDE-Flat

Artist: Carol Comer

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Contact KCYA for
more information on
this and other
programs.

816-531-4022
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Workshop Description

Carol Comer teaches beginning jazz improvisation in this workshop for students, grades K-2. Beginning with simple repetitions—a clock, a washing machine, a galloping horse, a jump rope—the concept of rhythm is introduced, pointing out that rhythm is all around us. The children are invited to create rhythms of their own using a variety of percussion instruments.

Melody and harmony are added by way of the xylophone, piano, and bells. The first style of music played has several names—Latin, Caribbean, Jamaican, Island, Afro-Cuban—and the children are taught how these musical terms came about: because this is where they're from.

They learn to play the snare

drum, after which they learn how to improvise the melodies and rhythms of Kansas City Jazz. During this style they also learn how to play the electric bass, a harmony instrument, and the bass is added to the combo.

They will also learn how to play Ragtime and a very funny game of stand/sit is used for the non-performing audience. Time permitting, a “silent movie” is played and the children identify four plot themes by the style they hear from the piano.



Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Discover that music is a language
- Learn that jazz has several different sounds from several different places
- Learn that our community is famous for one of these styles
- Gain confidence and self-esteem through expressing

Language Arts:

- Listens and responds to a variety of media (e.g., books, music, videos)

Music:

- Knows that music consists of several elements

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Tuned acoustic piano with bench (not stool); portable chalkboard, chalk, eraser; one 4' table; custodian to unload/reload equipment; empty workshop area at least 45 minutes prior to workshop for set up and sound checks; electrical outlets nearby; all workshops in same space.

Additional fee: \$14 for cartage per school.

Artist Bio: Carol Comer

Carol Comer is a composer, teacher, writer, pianist, and jazz vocalist. She has performed for jazz festivals and clubs throughout the area.

Carol has served as music director for a live-broadcast radio show and as a jazz journalist. Her contributions to jazz have been acknowledged in several books.

The Kansas City Jazz Commission honored Carol with the Jazz Heritage Award,

“in appreciation and admiration for contributions that have helped establish and perpetuate the style of music known as Kansas City Jazz.”

Carol especially enjoys working with young people. She has served as an Artist in Education on the state rosters of Nevada and Utah and was honored with the Lighton prize for teaching excellence in 2003 by KCYA.



Carol Comer

Vocabulary

Bongos: One of a pair of connected tuned drums that are played by beating with the hands.

Improvisation: The process of spontaneously creating fresh melodies over the repeating cycle of chord changes of a tune.

Percussion instrument: A musical instrument through which sound is produced by hitting it or hitting something else.

Solo: A player's improvisation over one or more choruses of the tune.

Syncopate: Change the rhythmic accents.

Tempo: The rate and speed of a musical work.

Post-Workshop Activities

1. Create a rhythm from something you see or do every day
2. Listen for the rhythm in a poem or book
3. Make a percussion instrument of your own
4. Create a melody with your voice, humming or singing sounds



List of Resources

BOOKS

Charlie Parker Played Be Bop
by Chris Raschka
Orchard Books (NY);
(August 1, 1992) ISBN: 0531059995

Chicka Chicka Boom Boom by Bill Martin, Jr. & John Archambault
Little Simon; Bk & Cassette edition
(October 1, 1991) ISBN: 0671748947

Follow the Drinking Gourd by Jeanette Winter
Dragonfly Books ; (January 1, 1992)
ISBN: 0679819975

The Sound That Jazz Makes by Carole Boston Weatherford
Walker & Company; (May 30, 2000)
ISBN: 0802787207