

GERMAINE BAZZLE

New Orleans' First Lady of Jazz



Retired music educator and renowned jazz vocalist **Germaine Potter Bazzle** is arguably one of the most expressive and stylized voices in New Orleans' music history. The roots of jazz have always focused on the improvisational skills of the performer, and Ms. Bazzle has mastered this art with an ability to musically explore an arrangement while leaving space for spontaneity. Her wide vocal range and mastery of animated dynamics, especially in her legendary "scats," has allowed Ms. Bazzle to take ownership of jazz standards. Musicians even refer to that style as having "Bazzled" the melody.

The late Wardell Quezergue, celebrated New Orleans music arranger, producer and bandleader, once said, "Germaine is the only person I know who can turn a microphone into a musical instrument."

Ms. Bazzle has recorded with a number of well-known jazz masters, including Wynton and Ellis Marsalis, Dianne Reeves, Lady BJ, George French, Johnny Adams and Alvin "Red" Tyler. She recorded her first and only solo album in 1994, ***Standing Ovation***, produced by AFO Records.

In addition to her extraordinary talents as a musician, Ms. Bazzle is perhaps best known locally for her teaching and her support of young musicians. After graduating from Xavier University of Louisiana, Ms. Bazzle began simultaneous careers in teaching and entertainment, teaching during the day and playing bass in a traditional jazz band at night.

While playing gigs “just sort of happened,” according to Bazzle, her true desire was to teach. She taught choir at Xavier University Preparatory School for many years before retiring and has also trained countless women in private vocal lessons. She participates each year in the Louis Armstrong Jazz Camp and has taught at the Heritage School of Music, educating highly talented children on the New Orleans heritage of music, a multi-generational tradition which she embodies and professes.

A devout Catholic, Ms. Bazzle sings in the St. Louis Cathedral Choir, where she coaches fellow choir members.

Ms. Bazzle is a tireless advocate for musician’s rights. She is both a member of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 174-496 New Orleans and serves on their Board of Directors. Ms. Bazzle serves on the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation’s Advisory Board. In 2013, she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Music from Loyola University New Orleans for her contributions to music and education in New Orleans and abroad.

She has also spearheaded an advocacy initiative for women, New Orleans Women in Music (NOWIM). The organization helps bolster the musical careers of women through music industry seminars and concert fundraisers in which resources are collected for social services for female musicians.

She continues to perform in New Orleans and throughout the world, recently traveling to Estonia and Brazil. You can hear her every Sunday night in New Orleans at the Jazz Playhouse in the Royal Sonesta Hotel in the French Quarter and at this year’s 2014 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival.



* Excerpts for this biography are from Loyola University New Orleans’ Commencement program 2013