



We remember
SATCHMO!

日本ルイ・アームストロング協会
Wonderful World Jazz Foundation (WWJF)

WWJF 楽器寄贈 に関する新聞・雑誌記事



A thank you in memory of Satchmo **Everything New Orleans**

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Sheila Stroup

Yoshio Toyama came all the way from Tokyo to celebrate Louis Armstrong's birthday, and he found the perfect way to do it Monday morning.

He presented the Carver High School marching band with 39 instruments -- everything from tubas to trumpets -- donated by the Wonderful World Jazz Foundation.

"The Japanese people want to thank the United States, New Orleans and Satchmo for giving the world such wonderful music called jazz," Yoshio said, as he handed over the instruments to band director Wilbert Rawlins.

The presentation in the school library was followed by a short but inspired performance by Yoshio's jazz band, Yoshio Toyama & The Dixie Saints.

Yoshio played trumpet in a rousing rendition of "When the Saints Go Marching In" and then sang "Wonderful World" in the gravelly voice of his hero.

"Happy Birthday, Satchmo!" he shouted, as the audience broke into applause.

A love affair with jazz

Yoshio and his wife, Keiko, fell in love with New Orleans music 40 years ago. It happened when they heard the Preservation Hall band play in Japan.

"The band manager, Allan Jaffe, suggested that if we liked jazz so much we should come to New Orleans," Yoshio said.

That same year, Armstrong played in Japan, and Yoshio went backstage to see him.

"I picked up his trumpet, and he let me play it," he said. "That is something I'll never forget."

Yoshio and Keiko were college students in 1963, but after they graduated and married, they came to the Crescent City.

"Allan Jaffe took very, very good care of us when we got here," Yoshio said.

They lived in a seedy apartment above a restaurant on Bourbon Street and had a glorious time.

"The window was broken, and at night you could hear the music coming from Preservation Hall," Yoshio said.

Giving back with music

The restaurant owner heard them practicing through their window and told them that if they'd practice in the courtyard, he'd pay them in meals.

"So every day, we ate Creole food," Yoshio said.

The couple worked as musicians and learned jazz from masters like Percy Humphrey and "Sweet Emma" Barrett.

"Every once in a while Allan was nice enough to let us play in the band," Yoshio said.

They went back home in 1973, and they've been playing traditional jazz there ever since.

"Jazz is very well-loved in Japan," Yoshio said. "I have a regular gig playing at New Orleans Square at Tokyo Disneyland."

In 1994, Yoshio and Keiko started the Wonderful World Jazz Foundation to celebrate the music of New Orleans.

"I wanted to do something symbolic, and I thought of giving instruments to the children in this birthplace of jazz that we love so much," he said.

It is his group's annual thank-you to the city. And because it's New Orleans, there's lagniappe for the gift-givers.

"We get to come back every year," Yoshio said, "and every year we have a fabulous time."

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