

Youth programs the focus for jazz fundraiser concert



The Midnights join the Victoria Soul Gospel Choir in performing at the Victoria Jazz Society's Music for Youth concert this Friday (Sept. 30).

Photo contributed

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The Victoria Jazz Society is taking a new approach to its fundraising efforts this year.

For the first time, the group is hosting a single concert event with the sole purpose of raising money for its student outreach programs.

Music For Youth, set for Friday (Sept. 30) at Alix Goolden Performance Hall, will feature performances by the Victoria Soul Gospel Choir and a 'hybrid' of local show band The Midnights and the Vic High R & B Band.

Net proceeds from the concert will support the outreach programs, which take two different forms.

The first sees local jazz combos visit area high schools for performances and workshop clinics. Aspiring musicians have a chance to meet the performers and find out what options are available if they're interested in pursuing a career in jazz.

The society also puts on workshops featuring touring jazz musicians performing in Greater Victoria.

Both programs are free for students. The \$6,000 to \$7,000 cost for this year will be covered by the proceeds from Friday's concert.

"It's (the students') first exposure to jazz, and hopefully we'll get some students interested in pursuing jazz music," said Darryl Mar, jazz society executive and artistic director.

"It develops and ensures that the jazz genre is continued in our community."

The evening will also feature a musical presentation soliciting support for World Vision Canada, whose mandate to help children and their families fits well under the Music For Youth theme.

The Victoria Soul Gospel Choir has been involved with the Victoria Jazz Society for the past four years. The group is led by Vancouver-based Checo Tohomaso, whose career highlights include playing with [Marvin Gaye](#), [The Commodores](#) and others. In true gospel fashion, the choir has a tendency to bring audiences out of their seats.

The Vic High R & B Band has been part of the school's music program for nearly 20 years. Music director Eric Emde eventually formed The Midnights out of a collection of former and current Vic High students, as well as assorted local musicians.

Currently operating as a 12-piece outfit, The Midnights have become an audience favourite with their high-energy sets of soul, Motown and dance-floor classics.

The Music For Youth fundraiser concert gets underway at 7:30 p.m. at the Goolden hall, 905 Pandora Ave. Doors open at 7. Tickets, \$25, are available at the jazz society office, 1031 Vancouver St. (250-388-4423), Lyle's Place and Ditch Records and the Royal & McPherson box office (250-386-6121, online at rmts.bc.ca).

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