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Acclaimed jazz pianist Kenny Barron teaches, tours mid-Michigan through MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence Program, Feb. 8-14

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EAST LANSING, Mich. – Jazz lovers in mid-Michigan can rid themselves of the February chills when one of the top jazz pianists in the world comes to Michigan State University College of Music for a weeklong residency supported by a $1 million endowment from the MSU Federal Credit Union.

Jazz pianist Kenny Barron will be at MSU from Feb. 8-14 where he will teach and work with students through the MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence program. While in residence, Barron will instruct, perform and tour with MSU Jazz Octets over a seven-day period packed with workshops and campus concerts. The award-winning artist will also take to the road with MSU Jazz Octets I and II to visit music and jazz programs at public schools and academies in Oxford, East Lansing, Fowlerville, Williamston, Hastings and Detroit.

“Kenny Barron brings a wealth of experience to students everywhere he goes,” says Associate Professor of Jazz Piano Xavier Davis. “He has worked with many of our heroes including Joe Henderson, Stan Getz, Dizzy Gillespie and Ella Fitzgerald. The stories he can tell from those experiences alone are invaluable. Practicing is very important, but there is no replacement for experience and hearing first-hand about the good and bad from a jazz legend.”

Honored as a Jazz Master by the National Endowment for the Arts in 2010, Barron is known for his elegant playing, sensitive melodies and infectious rhythms. The Los Angeles Times named him “one of the top jazz pianists in the world,” and Jazz Weekly calls him “the most lyrical piano player of our time.” Barron consistently wins jazz critic and reader polls, including Downbeat, Jazz Times and Jazziz magazines, and is recognized worldwide as a master of performance and composition.

Barron’s many honors include a Lifetime Achievement Award from Spanish ceramist Lladro in 2012, honorary doctorates from his alma mater SUNY Empire State in 2013 and the Berklee College of Music in 2011 and the Living Legacy Award from the Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation in 2009. He was inducted into the American Jazz Hall of Fame, won a MAC Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005 and is a six–time recipient of Best Pianist by the Jazz Journalist Association.

Barron is scheduled to perform two concerts with MSU Jazz Octets led by Davis as well as Jazz Studies faculty Diego Rivera and Randy Napoleon at the Cook Recital Hall in the Music Building on Friday, Feb. 12, at 7 p.m. and at 9:30 p.m. The concerts will also showcase performances of MSU Jazz Octets I, II, III and IV.

“Bringing an artist of Kenny Barron’s caliber here shows that we take jazz extremely seriously,” says Director of Jazz Studies Rodney Whitaker. “We can’t thank the MSU Federal Credit Union enough for their vision and generosity that is building our reputation as a center for jazz studies and performance.”

General admission tickets are $10 for adults, $8 for seniors, free for students with ID or under 18, and are available from the College of Music box office—in person at the Music Building, Room 102, 333 W. Circle Drive or over the phone at (517) 353-5340—online at music.msu.edu, or at the door one hour before the show.

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Now in its third year, the innovative jazz residency program continues to attract high-level talent and serves as a model for jazz studies programs nationwide. Pianist Kenny Barron is the third of four critically acclaimed jazz artists in residence for the 2015-16 season. Residencies in 2015 included the legendary jazz drummer Jimmy Cobb in December and jazz trumpeter Brian Lynch in October. Jazz saxophonist Tim Warfield, Jr. will be the fourth and final artist in this season’s lineup, and will be in residence at MSU from Feb. 29-March 6, 2016.

**Schedule: MSUFCU Jazz Artist in Residence Kenny Barron**

- **Monday, Feb. 8, Press Day: Detroit, Mich.**
- **Monday, Feb. 8, Blue Monday, 6 p.m.,** MSU Professors of Jazz with Kenny Barron
  - **Venue:** MSU Federal Credit Union, 3777 West Road, East Lansing, Mich.
- **Tuesday, Feb. 9, Workshops: Jazz Studies students at MSU College of Music**
- **Wednesday, Feb. 10, School Visit: Oxford High School**
  - **Venue:** 7 p.m., Oxford Performing Arts Center, 10 N. Washington St., Oxford, Mich.
  - **Contact:** John Hill, 248-969-5000; John.Hill@oxfordschools.org
  - **Website:** http://www.oxfordschools.org
- **Thursday, Feb. 11, School Visits: East Lansing and Fowlerville High Schools**
  - **Venue:** 9:40 a.m., East Lansing High School, 509 Burcham Drive, East Lansing, Mich.
  - **Contact:** David Larzelere
  - **Website:** els.k12.mi.us
- **Friday, Feb. 12, School Visit: Williamston Middle School; Performance: College of Music**
  - **Venue:** 10:15 a.m., Williamston Middle School, 3845 Vanneter Road, Williamston, Mich.
  - **Contact:** Melanie Rosin, rosinm@gowcs.net
  - **Website:** williamston.mi.schoolwebpages.com
  - **Performances: Jazz Octets, MSU,**
  - **Venue:** 7 p.m. and 9:30 p.m., Jazz Octet I-IV Concert, Two performance times; MSU College of Music, Cook Recital Hall, 333 W. Circle Drive, East Lansing, Mich.
- **Saturday, Feb. 13, School Visit: Hastings, Mich.**
  - **Venue:** 7 p.m., First Presbyterian Church of Hastings, 405 M-37, Hastings, Mich.
  - **Contact:** Spencer White, 269-945-5463; swhite@hassk12.org
  - **Website:** saxonbands.weebly.com
- **Sunday, Feb. 14, School Visit: Detroit, Mich.**
  - **Venue:** 7 p.m., Carr Center, 311 E. Grand River Ave., Detroit, Mich.
  - **Contact:** Oliver Ragsdale, 313-965-8430; oliver@thecarrcenter.org
  - **Website:** www.thecarrcenter.org