

Dave Brubeck: Jazz for Human Rights

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Process Paper

Junior Division

Individual Website

As a musician, I was always enthralled by Dave Brubeck's music and his use of 5/4 time meter and polytonality. He had also been a strong advocate for human rights, civil rights, religious rights, and artistic rights. Faced with the prospect of National History Day, my passion for Dave Brubeck's music led me to begin researching his unbelievable career lasting 92 years, from working on a ranch for a dollar a day from sunrise to sunset to advocating for civil rights by refusing to play at segregated concerts and playing for Eurasian countries during the 1958 Cold War diplomacy tour, giving freedom to the people.

First, I visited Dave Brubeck's obituaries to receive basic background information on his career, and how he relates to the theme this year, "Rights and Responsibilities in History." Then, I explored newspaper articles on Dave Brubeck's performances around the world, which gave me more detailed information on how the public reacted to his music. The Brubeck Collection provided me with primary source photographs of his experiences and interviews with him that provided me with lesser-known information on how he fought for civil rights and his experiences on the Cold War diplomacy tour. One of my most valuable resources was an email interview with Russell Gloyd, Dave Brubeck's former manager and conductor of most of his religious works. I also interviewed Chris Brubeck, one of Dave Brubeck's sons, who has also performed with him at many concerts. Interviews with Monk Rowe, Simon Rowe, Blaise Lantana, and Craig Werner, all experts on music, provided me with the highlights of Dave Brubeck's career.

I chose the website category because it allowed me to utilize a large range of multimedia to tell the story of Dave Brubeck. Since he wrote many musical works, all of

which were very unique, I believed that using audio would sufficiently prove my statements. I also utilized photographs from the Brubeck Collection to make my website more interactive. To connect Dave Brubeck's legacy to "Rights and Responsibilities in History," I had to combine text with photographs, audio, and video to support my argument.

Music in 5/4 meter time was unheard of before Dave Brubeck changed this, by constantly going against the norm. As a well-known musician, he promoted civil rights, religious rights, and artistic rights, using his popularity to benefit the world. Cancelling entire tours in South Africa and the Southern United States, Dave Brubeck championed civil rights, even when he desperately needed the money. In 1958, he was sponsored by the State Department to perform in Eurasia as goodwill ambassadors after the Cold War. His religious work, "The Gates of Justice," was written to unite blacks and Jews after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1969. Dave Brubeck assumed an enormous responsibility to not only stretch his artistic rights, but also to use his music and artistry to become an ambassador for civil, religious, and human rights.