

DAWN NORFLEET

Vocal Jazz Workshops

MEET THE ARTIST:

Dawn Norfleet's academic and musical journey began when she was a student in Los Angeles public schools, where her singing, flute-playing and song-writing talents were nurtured by flourishing arts programs. A Wellesley College grad, "Dr. Dawn" later studied Classical musical composition and earned a Ph.D. in ethnomusicology from Columbia University. She began her professional career as a jazz vocalist, flutist and composer on the excitingly competitive music scene of New York City, where she worked among the top young musicians in the world. As winner of a national competition for new Classical choral works, her composition was performed by a Minnesota-based vocal ensemble. Dawn eventually returned to the West Coast and immersed herself in the Los Angeles music scene. She has performed or collaborated with diverse artists such as Jeff Lorber and The Lula Washington Dance Theater, and has fronted her own bands in various popular venues around the city. She appeared as a flutist on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno and has accompanied R&B star, Monica. A passionate advocate of quality arts education for youth, Dr. Norfleet has led numerous youth ensembles in New York and Los Angeles, specializing in voice, woodwinds and percussion. Currently, Dawn is working on a new musical recording, collaborating with musicians in New York and Los Angeles.



MUSIC · CENTER

ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS:

Dr. Norfleet's workshop is entitled *'Do-Be' or Not 'Do-Bop': A Vocal Jazz Journey*. She takes students on a historical trek through the development of vocal jazz. The workshop starts with the exciting rhythms of New Orleans (noted as the "birthplace" of jazz), then winds through African American folk music such as "work songs" and the blues, and culminates with a kid-friendly "jam session," - a musical meeting of minds where individual creative expression is celebrated. Along the way, students learn about vocal jazz icons, common jazz rhythms, vocal techniques such as "pitch bending" "blue notes" and improvisation. They have the opportunity to write and perform their own original blues

song! Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this workshop, "'Do Be' or Not 'Do Bop'" lessons can easily tie into English Language Arts and Social Studies topics. Designed to encourage the bold, the shy, and those somewhere in between, students ultimately learn the value of attaining a group ethos while developing confidence in their unique contribution to the team music-making process.

This delicate balance between solo and ensemble is one of the most vital and enduring lessons taught by jazz - perhaps America's most democratic musical form.

BEFORE THE WORKSHOP:

- Please have the students wear nametags for the workshop. It saves time if they are made beforehand!
- Review the importance of listening and observing. Ask the students what it means to be a good listener. What does it mean to be a good observer? Why is it important in daily life? Why is it important when the artist is here?
- Review students' knowledge and ideas about music and jazz in particular, underscoring the idea that it is both personal and universal. Discuss that everyone's ideas will be both different and related. Discuss the importance of being able to express oneself through music and to enjoy a wide variety of styles.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP:

- Review the major points presented in the workshops. What were the most important ideas? What parts of the workshop did the students like best? What did they learn? What did they learn about themselves?
- Practice the activities and skills they learned with the artist so students can attain more ability and enjoyment with vocal jazz.
- Review songs they learned and practice them often.
- Perhaps build a music center within the classroom that features the music encountered during the workshop. It is a good idea to have a tape/CD player and headphones so students can listen to the music. Have a few questions that direct their attention to listen for different things (e.g. types of instruments, mood of the music, melody, rhythm, texture of sounds, etc.)