

Rhythm & Blues Foundation

Note BOARD

Remembering Ruth:

Hundreds gather to pay tribute to Ms. Rhythm & Blues

On January 22, 2007 hundreds of friends, family and fans gathered at Harlem's historic Abyssinian Baptist Church to celebrate the life and musical achievements of Ms. Rhythm & Blues, **Ruth Brown**. The event was organized by the Rhythm & Blues Foundation as a tribute to our beloved co-founder.

Ruth's life story was full of ups and downs, surprising twists and unexpected turns. Yet, as so many would testify through-

out the evening, she managed to touch everyone she encountered with her generous spirit and indomitable will. **Howell Begle** and **Bonnie Raitt** recalled her unyielding friendship and courage as a crusader for artists' rights. **Mabel John**, **Harvey Fuqua** and **Chuck Jackson** each shared anecdotes about Ruth's generous spirit and life on the road.

Maxine Brown and **Sandra Reeves Phillips** offered rousing gospel tributes, while **Little Jimmy Scott's** heartfelt performance moved the audience to

tears. Ruth's son **Ron McPhatter**, backed by Ruth's long-time musical director **Robbie Todd**, also said good-bye to his mother through song. The evening's final note was played by **Paul Shaffer** whose organ recessional shook the rafters of the historic church.

The evening's repast turned into a reunion as long-time supporters **Judy Belushi** and **Sharon Felder** reminisced with board members **Judy Tint**, **Terry Stewart**, **Louise**



Little Jimmy Scott pays his respects to the legendary Ruth Brown.

West and **Isisara Bey**. Other colleagues and fellow performers attending included **Ben E. King**, **Bill Pinkney** and **Hal Jackson**.

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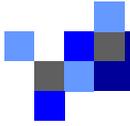
Phyllies Intruders and producing team Dre & Vidal were among the artists lending their talent to "Let Your Voice Be Heard."

R&B Foundation's 1st Annual Summer Music Education Program

The Rhythm & Blues Foundation's first annual Summer Music Education Program brought together three generations as Philadelphia-based vocalists, musicians, producers, engineers and songwriters engaged students at the Universal Institute's Charter School in "Let Your Voice Be Heard," a music enrichment program designed to teach

youngsters about the historical and social significance of R&B music. Fifty students, ranging in age from five to fourteen, learned a variety of concepts during the six-week program, including the African origins of R & B music, basic songwriting, the elements of production, and cho-

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Ruth's son, Ron McPhatter, speaks about his fond memories of his mother.

Remembering Ruth (Continued from page 1)

While many tears were shed during the memorial service, the evening ended as Ruth would have wanted most -- with fond smiles, warm hugs and lots of laughter. The Foundation will continue to honor Ruth's life and legacy through its mission.



Founding Board Members Howell Begle and Judy Belushi at the Ruth Brown Memorial Tribute in New York City.

Summer Music Program (Continued from page 1)

reography. The program's ultimate goal was to encourage the students to express themselves through music.

Each week the children were thrilled to meet their instructors that included West African dancers and drummers, songwriter **Bunny Sigler**, renowned music producers **Dre & Vidal**, and recording artist

Carol Riddick. A live performance by **Phyllies Intruders** had everyone - students and teachers alike - dancing. The program culminated with the students recording their own songs in the studios of **Philadelphia International Records**. A CD release party for the kids and their parents is planned for this fall.

Thanks to the direction of **Development Director Deborah Johnson** and coordination of **Summer Intern Kia Holifield**, the Foundation now has a program template that can be shared with children in other cities. We invite you to contact us to identify opportunities to share the program at other sites.



Students record their original songs at Philadelphia International Records in August

"The help you offered allows me to get treatment from the only doctors who have been helpful with my condition. With this treatment, I can live a normal productive life; without it I cannot. I am extremely grateful for what you have done!"

~ S.C.

Songwriter/Composer/
Musician

MAKING A DIFFERENCE Grant Funds Disbursement (January 1–August 10, 2007)

NUMBER OF GRANTEES - 16

NUMBER OF BURIALS - 7

◆ Amount Disbursed for Medical Expenses	\$7,964.40
◆ Amount Disbursed for Non Medical Expenses (excluding Burials)	\$16,266.64
◆ Amount Disbursed for Burials	\$18,268.36
TOTAL AMOUNT DISBURSED (ALL GRANT FUNDS)	\$52,803.63

Submitted by Financial Administrator Tina Ryan Wise

RBF: Seen On Scene

The Rhythm & Blues Foundation participated in several events over the course of the summer. Collectively, these events served to raise the Foundation's public profile and to solidify our relationship with several key partners.

◆ The Sound of Philadelphia took center stage at the **9th Street Italian Market Festival**, presented by Sorrento Cheese. The Foundation presented a city citation to **Board Member Kenny Gamble** and his musical partner **Leon Huff** in recognition of their 45 years of songwriting and for making Philadelphia the Home for Rhythm & Blues. There was dancing in the street as Philadelphia mainstays **Harold Melvin's Blues Notes, Phyllies Intruders, Bunny Sigler** and other acts brought back Rhythm & Blues memories to the 150,000 attendees during the two-day event.

◆ The Foundation responded to the invitation from **Soul Patrol.com** to participate in its annual convention. Held in cooperation with the **5th Annual Philadelphia Black Heritage Festival**, the convention included a concert at

the historic American Bandstand Studios, and an outdoor festival featuring the **Chi-Lites, the Orleans** and other R & B favorites. Foundation staff did a brisk business selling t-shirts and distributing information, while the Executive Director participated in a lively panel discussion on the future of Rhythm & Blues with **Jimmy Castor, Dr. Ricardo Wilson of Mandrill** and others.

◆ The spirit of **Advisory Board Member Gerald Levert**, was alive and well in Philadelphia when the R&B Foundation sponsored a successful appearance by **Eddie Levert** during his national book tour. Dozens of fans lined up to receive autographed copies of "I Got Your Back" at the souvenir shop of **Philadelphia International Records**. Later that evening, both Eddie and **Executive Director Patricia Wilson Aden** were interviewed on live radio during a second book signing event. The day's events were capped off with the thrilling news that the book had hit the *New York Times* bestsellers list.

◆ At **Teddy 25: A Cele-**

bration of Life, Hope & Possibilities, the night was star-studded and the audience was star-struck. Held at the sold-out Kimmel Center, **Teddy 25** gave Philadelphia an evening of brilliance and honors as **Patti LaBelle, Stephanie Mills, Melba Moore, Musiq** and other celebrities saluted **Board Member Teddy Pendergrass**. The Foundation staff assisted production by providing support backstage, in the press room and during the VIP reception.

◆ **Development Director Deborah Johnson** attended a tribute concert to **Lonnie Lester** in Indianapolis. The R&B Foundation is a recipient of the event's proceeds.

◆ **Board Member David Nathan** and **Operations Administrator Ramon Jones** represented the R&B Foundation at **Stax 50th Anniversary** in Memphis.

◆ **Interim Executive Director Patricia Wilson Aden** was the representative for the R&B Foundation during the **Black Music Month Celebration** at the White House.



Foundation Staff greet Bunny Sigler at the 9th Street Italian Market Festival in Philadelphia.

"On behalf of every artist that you have helped and will help, we are touched by your humanity. You are truly angels on earth. Recovery is not a walk through the park but each day is better than the last. Please thank your staff individually for me and re-affirm what noble work they do."

~ C.V.

Horn Player



Board Member David Nathan, Recording Artist Isaac Hayes and Operations Administrator Ramon Jones at the VIP After party during the Stax 50th Anniversary Celebration Weekend in Memphis

DONATION DOLLAR\$

Thanks to the efforts of Board Member Judy Tint and the generosity of Mark Dibner, the R&B Foundation received a \$100,000 donation from The Argus Fund! The funds will be used to support the Foundation's operations, replenish the Doc Pomus Fund and renew Performance Grant opportunities.

Our annual appeal continues to reap returns! To date, the annual appeal has generated over \$22,000 in generous contributions received from donors such as Emeril Lagasse, The Monterey International Pop Festival Foundation, Festival Productions and Q-Prime -- just to name a few.

Board Member Jim Fifield led the way by appealing to his friends and colleagues for support. The letter Jim sent to 11 contacts generated donations from 8 individuals totaling \$10,000. Thanks, Jim!

We have also received over \$15,000 from donations in mem-

ory of our dedicated **Advisory Board Member Gerald Levert**. Additionally, we were recently informed the Foundation has been named as the beneficiary in the will of a devoted Gerald Levert fan.

We are extremely grateful to all of our donors for their continued support!

We're on the web!
rhythmb blues.org

From The Desk of The Executive Director

Months of hard work and dedication have earned both the board and staff of the Rhythm & Blues Foundation a well-deserved pat on the back. Since joining the Foundation's staff in September 2006, I have enjoyed being a part of the new energy and direction to the Foundation's programs, while rebuilding confidence and morale amongst the board and staff. Along the way, we've hit a few snags but, thankfully, we've reached many more milestones. Counted among those milestones would be:

- ◆ Distributing over \$50,000 in grants to our neediest constituents during the first 6 months of this year;
 - ◆ Generating over \$36,000 in unrestricted donations, and
 - ◆ Launching our new education program;
- In addition to these more visible accomplishments, we have also committed our-

selves to several less-than-glamorous but oh-so-necessary financial management tasks, such as bringing our audits up to date and unraveling several frustrating tax-related issues.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of everyone in the Foundation's family. Board members have not shied away from their duty to provide oversight and policy guidance. Hard decisions have been made and, as a result, we now stand on firmer ground. The staff has responded to the board's direction with enthusiasm and a commitment to excellence. Now, our operations and programs are more robust than they've been in many years.

We must remember, however, that we still have many more goals to be reached and our mettle is sure to be tested along

the way. So let's congratulate ourselves on our work well done, as we set our sights on the next milestones to be reached. Surely, if we continue to work with focus, energy and determination, our accomplishments will continue to multiply!



Interim Executive Director Patricia Wilson Aden joins Branford Marsalis and Clifton Davis as they view the R&B Foundation exhibit at Philadelphia International Records