

Youth have chance to play some jazz

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Music Critic

It may seem as though the new music season is far away at the moment but the fall semester will come soon enough and with it will also come the opportunity for young musicians to play in a new jazz orchestra.

Specifically, a Jazz Youth Orchestra is being formed in Manhattan, and anyone under the age of twenty-five is welcome to join.

The orchestra is the brainchild of Manhattan resident James Rourk, who has an extensive background as a musician and is currently a leading member of the local Gingerbread Band.

Mr. Rourk is a native of South Dakota and has been playing woodwind instruments since the age of twelve. He has performed with a number of groups, including Marlys Roe and the Talisman, a rock-jazz

group that has recorded for AOKE and ABC Back records.

In more recent years Mr. Rourk was principal oboist with the North Queensland Symphony Orchestra in Australia.

The aim of Manhattan's Jazz Youth Orchestra, according to its organizer, will be "to give the youth in this area a chance to play in a large jazz setting."

Eventually, it is planned that the orchestra might incorporate as a non-profit organization so as to encourage private donations to the group.

"It's an opportunity for young people to get to know jazz and enjoy it...After all, it's an important American art form."

There is, observes Mr. Rourk, "a wealth of American music that gets ignored, yet which should be heard...Glenn Miller, Harry James, Dixieland jazz..."

"A lot of young people graduate from high school, and who do not go to a university and have nowhere to play music...this jazz orchestra will be for them."

It is also hoped that there might be opportunities for the group to perform as a pit orchestra in local productions.

The Manhattan Jazz Youth Orchestra will start its activities with the new school year in the fall...meanwhile further details may be obtained from James Rourk at 776-3202.