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Jazz in the Park to feature Complex Jazz Ensemble Friday

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ST. CROIX — Talented young musicians will take center stage when *Jazz in the Park - Christiansted* presents its “Give Thanks!” concert this Friday.

The free concert will take place from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. inside the Bandstand on the lawn of Fort Christiansvaern.

The St. Croix Educational Complex Jazz Ensemble directed by Kevre Hendricks will perform a selection of cool Jazz classics for the first half of the concert. The student band includes Abigail Valery on flute, Kevin Williams Jr. on steel pan, Cristina Thomas on bass and Kevin Alphonse on drums.

“We’re excited to bring to the fore a group of gifted young musicians who have embraced modern jazz and will no doubt carry the torch for years to come,” said event organizer and bandleader Edwin “Eddie” Russell.

Eddie Russell and his Community Music Band will close out the concert with a Quelbe-jazz fusion of crowd favorites. This free event is open to the entire community and parking will be available in the National Park Service parking lot, which will remain open until 8 p.m.

Friday's "Give Thanks!" Jazz in the Park event coincides with Jump Up! St. Croix, a cultural party held in the streets and along the boardwalk of Christiansted, which goes until about 10 p.m. and is sponsored by the Christiansted Restaurant & Retail Association.

"We're inviting revelers to start their Jump Up festivities early with smooth, relaxing live jazz at a historical waterfront venue, as the sun sets over St. Croix," Russell added. "Come support our talented young musicians!"

The event is also aimed at raising awareness and community support for Crucian Kids Rock! – a free afterschool music program for at-risk youth coming to DC Canegata Recreation Center in January.

Crucian Kids Rock! and *Jazz in the Park - Christiansted* are initiatives of Community Music Inc., a nonprofit organization that promotes social harmony and educational enrichment through music.

For more information about Crucian Kids Rock! or Jazz in the Park - Christiansted, visit www.communitymusicinc.org

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