



## **TASC Attends Historic Ertegun Jazz Night at Turkish Ambassador's Residence**

On April 30, 2019, Turkish Ambassador Serdar Kılıç hosted the Ahmet Ertegun Jazz Night at the historic Turkish Residence at Sheridan Circle. Hundreds of Washingtonian jazz lovers filed in to see the amazing Sean Jones and the All-Stars, featuring vocalists Sharon Clark and Lena Seikaly, and Charlie Young (Alto Saxophonist), Paul Carr (Tenor Saxophonist), Cyrus Chestnut (Pianist), Lenny Robinson (Percussionist), and Kriss Funn (Bassist). The Ertegun Jazz Night, named after the Turkish American founder of Atlantic Records and son of Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Münir Ertegun (1934-44), featured the music of Ray Charles, Cyrus Chestnut, John Coltrane, Paul Desmond, Duke Ellington, Cole Porter, and Billy Strayhorn. The Turkish American Business Council (TAIK) sponsored the event and DC's famous Ben's Chili Bowl catered delicious chili dogs and cold Turkish Efes beer!



Dr. Maurice Jackson, Georgetown University Professor of African American Studies and Performing Arts, provided opening remarks regarding the historic role of the Turkish Ambassador's Residence in the struggle against segregation in Washington DC. When the predominately white neighborhood of Kalorama shunned the Turkish Embassy for inviting Black Americans into the Turkish Residence, Turkish Ambassador Ertegun invited Kalorama inhabitants to diversity dialogue through the power of jazz. When members of Congress and the U.S. Department of State reprimanded Turkey, and demanded that Black Americans be permitted only through the back door of the Turkish Residence, Ambassador Ertegun replied, "In a Turkish home, all guests are equal and enter through the front door in dignity; those who support segregation should try the back door to see if they like it." Dr.

Jackson also underscored how gentrification in the Washington DC was pushing Black Americans out, in a modern form of segregation.

TASC Co-Chair Gunay Evinch attended the event to represent solidarity in diversity. The TASC Embassy Row Lecture Series (ERLS) will feature speakers on the history of the Turkish Embassy and Black Americans in times of segregation.