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Concert: Jazz Ensemble

Jazz Ensemble

Mike Titlebaum

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Jazz Ensemble

Mike Titlebaum, director

with

Terell Stafford, trumpet

Ford Hall
Friday December 7th, 2012
8:15 pm
For the Broken Hearted
Stephen Scott
arr. Kevin Cope

Susurrus *
Christopher Schmitz

Sketch +
Jeric Rocamora

Across the Threshold *
Vladimir Nikolov

Rolo Tomassi **
Alex Lee-Clark

Just You, Just Me
Jesse Greer and Raymond Klages
arr. Mike Titlebaum

In To Norway
Ulf Bandgren
arr. Mike Titlebaum

Sweet Georgia Brown
Bernie/Pinkard/Casey

+ Winner in Ithaca College 2012 Jazz Composition Contest high school composer category
* Runner-up in Ithaca College 2012 Jazz Composition Contest college/professional composer category
** Winner in Ithaca College 2012 Jazz Composition Contest college/professional composer category
Terell Stafford, guest trumpet artist

Terell Stafford has been hailed as “one of the great players of our time, a fabulous trumpet player” by piano legend McCoy Tyner. Known for being a gifted and versatile player with a voice all his own, Stafford combines lyricism and a deep love of melody with a spirited, adventurous edge. This uniquely expressive, well-defined musical talent allows Stafford the ability to dance in and around the rich trumpet tradition of his predecessors while making his own inroads.

Stafford picked up his first trumpet at the age of thirteen, and even though he was drawn to jazz, initially studied classical music. While pursuing a music education degree at the University of Maryland, Stafford played with the school’s jazz band. It was during this time that he began to immerse himself in jazz, listening to everything that he could get his hands on. He cites as one of his most profound musical influences Clifford Brown’s rendition of Cherokee.

In 1988, Stafford had the good fortune to meet and receive advice from Wynton Marsalis who suggested that Stafford study with Dr. William Fielder at Rutgers University. During his time at Rutgers, Stafford was invited to join Bobby Watson’s group, Horizon. Over the next five years, Stafford was able to balance his offstage education with the incredible knowledge and experience he gained from performing alongside Watson, co-leader Victor Lewis, and Shirley Scott. Stafford credits this time with teaching him to be an effective arranger, a composer, and a bandleader, all things that Bobby Watson himself learned from his time with the late Art Blakey while performing with the Jazz Messengers. Stafford’s time with Horizon led to his joining McCoy Tyner’s Latin All-Star Band which featured some of the best Latin jazz players, including trombonist Steve Turre, flutist Dave Valentin and percussionist Jerry Gonzalez.

Since the mid-1990’s Stafford has performed with groups such as Benny Golson’s Sextet, McCoy Tyner’s Sextet, the Kenny Barron Sextet, the Jimmy Heath Big Band, the Jon Faddis Orchestra. Currently he is a member of the GRAMMY award winning Vanguard Jazz Orchestra (GRAMMY 2009, Best Large Ensemble, Live at the Village Vanguard), as well as a member of the GRAMMY nominated Clayton Brothers Quintet (for Best Instrumental Composition), and the Frank Wess Quintet. Between 2006 and 2007 Stafford played an integral part on several albums including Diana Krall’s GRAMMY nominated From this Moment On (2006) for which Stafford joined with the Hamilton-Clayton Jazz Orchestra. In celebration of Jimmy Heath’s 80th birthday, Stafford recorded with the Jimmy Heath Big Band for the album Turn Up the Heath (2006). A regular member of drummer Matt Wilson’s group “Arts and Crafts,” Stafford is featured on the album Scenic Route (2007). As a member of drummer Alvin Queen’s band, “Alvin Queen and the Organics,” Stafford is heard on the album I Ain’t Lookin’ at You (2006).

Stafford has also been an integral part of bands led by such venerable artists as Cedar Walton, Sadao Watanabe, Herbie Mann, and Matt Wilson. He has appeared on television (The Tonight Show with Jay Leno and You Bet Your Life with Bill Cosby) and can be heard on the soundtrack for the feature film, A Bronx Tale. He has also performed as a guest artist with the Billy Taylor Trio.
Stafford has recorded six albums as a leader with his debut album in 1995 entitled *Time to Let Go* (Candid). In 1997, he followed this album with the critically acclaimed *Centripedal Force* (Candid). His third album as a leader was the popular *Fields of Gold* (Nagel-Heyer) featuring the talents of Bill Cunliffe, Kiyoshi Kitagawa, Antonio Hart, and Rodney Green. His fourth release was the enthusiastically received *New Beginnings* (MAXJAZZ 2003) and features Mulgrew Miller, Derrick Hodge, Dana Hall, Steve Wilson, Dick Oatts, Harry Allen, and Jesse Davis. He followed this album with the critically acclaimed *Taking Chances* (MAXJAZZ 2007). Stafford's newest release, *This Side of Strayhorn* (MAXJAZZ 2011) features Tim Warfield, Bruce Barth, Peter Washington, and Dana Hall, and has been called “the first must have album of 2011” and “genius”. As a sideman Stafford has been heard on over 90 albums.

In 2010, Stafford had the privilege of playing solo trumpet with the Temple University Symphony Orchestra for the premiere performance of “fourth stream...La Banda”, a university-commissioned piece for orchestra, jazz combo and solo trumpet written by GRAMMY winning composer Bill Cunliffe, a former Boyer College faculty member. Recorded on the college's music label, BCM&D, “fourth stream...La Banda” was subsequently nominated for a GRAMMY in 2010 for Best Instrumental Composition.

An educator as well as a performer, Stafford currently holds the positions of Director of Jazz Studies and Chair of Instrumental Studies at Temple University in Philadelphia where he has been a recipient of the University's “Creative Achievement Award.” He is also a clinician for the prestigious Vail Foundation in Colorado and Jazz at Lincoln Center’s Essentially Ellington Program. Formerly, Stafford served as a member of the faculty for the Juilliard Institute for Jazz Studies in New York. Dedicated to building the jazz arts community through education, Stafford currently sits on the board of the Jazz Education Network.

Stafford was born in Miami and raised in Chicago and Silver Spring, Maryland. He received a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from the University of Maryland in 1988 and a Masters of Music from Rutgers University in 1993.

**Mike Titlebaum**

Since 2008, saxophonist/composer/arranger Mike Titlebaum has been Director of Jazz Studies at Ithaca College, where he directs large jazz ensembles, coaches small combos, teaches jazz saxophone and courses in jazz improvisation, repertoire, arranging, pedagogy and history. He is the founding member of the Ithaca Jazz Quartet and the creator of the Ithaca College Jazz Ensemble Composition Contest.

He was born and raised in Rochester, NY, where he earned his BM in Saxophone Performance from the Eastman School of Music in 1991, as well as the coveted Performer's Certificate in Saxophone. He received his MM in 1992 from Eastman in Jazz and Contemporary Media. As a student, he won nine "DeeBee" awards from DownBeat magazine in multiple categories, including...
Jazz Performance (on both saxophone and trumpet), Classical Performance, Jazz Arranging, and Jazz Composition.

He played in many of New York's world famous musical venues, including the Blue Note, Smalls, Augies, Fez/Time Café and the infamous CBGB's as well as the pit orchestra of the Broadway musical "Cats." He has performed with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the Binghamton Philharmonic Orchestra, and with dozens of internationally recognized artists and groups such as Jason Robert Brown, Red Rodney, Randy Brecker, the Nelson Riddle Orchestra, the Mingus Big Band, Cab Calloway, Jeff Tyzik, Natalie Cole, Billy Taylor, Mel Torme, Manhattan Transfer, Branford Marsalis, Clark Terry, Lee Konitz, Kenny Wheeler, Billy Hart, Paquito D'Rivera, and many others.

Titlebaum has published numerous compositions and arrangements through Lorenz (Heritage Jazz Works), Advance Music, and GIA Publications.

Alex Lee-Clark, contest winner

Alex Lee-Clark is a trumpet player, composer, and arranger currently living and teaching in Boston, MA. He graduated from Ithaca College in 2007 as a Music Education major, where he studied trumpet with Dr. Kim Dunnick, and also worked with Professor Steve Brown in improvisation and arranging. After working as a freelancer at amusement parks and aboard cruise ships, Alex began his M.A. in Jazz Composition and Arranging at UMass Amherst, studying composition and improvisation with Professor Jeff Holmes, and also classical trumpet with Professor Eric Berlin. While at UMass, composed "The Big Lebowski Suite," which won a "DeeBee" award from Downbeat Magazine for Best Orchestrated Work. After graduating from UMass, Alex moved to Boston, and quickly become a part of the professional music scene, and is currently an in-demand player for "General Business," big band, and solo jazz gigs. He has recently performed with the Four Tops, the Temptations, and recorded with the Jeff Holmes Big Band and the Beantown Swing Orchestra. He also started the Brian Thomas/Alex Lee-Clark Big Band with fellow IC and UMass alum, Brian Thomas. The group is comprised of some of Boston's best players, and features a standard big band horn section with an organ trio rhythm section. They play Alex and Brian's original compositions and arrangements, all within the funk/groove genre. They are currently scheduled to begin recording their first album with the help of Alan Evans (Soulive, Alan Evans Trio) as a producer and engineer. Alex is currently a music teacher at Galvin Middle School in Canton, MA, where he directs three concert bands and two jazz bands, and is also the director of the Franklin High School Jazz Workshop, in Franklin, MA.

Vladimir Nikolov, runner-up

Vladimir Nikolov is a composer whose works cover a wide range of musical languages and genres, using backgrounds in classical music and jazz as point of departure. He has been 'behind the scenes' of worldwide orchestral projects as arranger for some time now, while also frequently performing as conductor and guitarist with renowned soloists and ensembles.
He was born 1979 and raised in Skopje, Macedonia. He started music at the age of 14, beginning with the guitar. Soon after, he enrolled in classical guitar studies, graduating with an original composition. Meanwhile, Vladimir began cross-over composing and arranging. After departing for the Netherlands in the autumn of 2002, he started jazz composition and arranging studies at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. He finished his Master's studies in 2005 with focus on symphonic writing.

As composer and arranger, Vladimir worked with ensembles such as the Metropole Orchestra, Brussels Philharmonic, Berlin Art Orchestra, Belgrade Philharmonic, Orchestra Jazz della Sardegna, Barga Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw, the Amsterdam Saxophone Quartet. Among the collaborative artists, he worked with: John Clayton, Randy Brecker, Conrad Herwig, Ronnie Cuber, Vince Mendoza, Chaka Khan, Gino Vannelli, Andy Narell, Sertab Erener, to name but a few. He also orchestrated and arranged music for several film projects, among which 2012 Oscar winner “The Artist”. As guitarist, pianist and conductor, he performed with various ensembles including Amsterdam Conservatory Big Band, Berlin Art Orchestra, Trojka, Official Language, and Schultzing.

Vladimir's compositions and arrangements have won numerous international prizes, including two first prizes for original compositions and five first prizes for homages to the great jazz composers Thelonious Monk, Wayne Shorter, John Coltrane, David Liebman and Steve Swallow.

Christopher Schmitz, runner-up

Christopher Schmitz is an Associate Professor of Music at Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas. Dr. Schmitz has taught music theory and composition since 2003 and directs the newly established Center for Music Composition. He has received numerous commissions from both professional and academic organizations, and has published sheet music through Cimarron Press and Walrus Music Publications, as well as commercial recordings through Sea Breeze-Vista and Beauport Classical. In 2007, Schmitz won the Sammy Nestico Award in jazz composition, resulting in a commission from the Airmen of Note in Washington, D.C. His Rhapsody (for two violas and piano) received its premiere in Carnegie Hall, New York City in 2010. As a film composer, Schmitz has scored several shorts as well as the feature films Dance with the One (2010 South by Southwest Film Festival Selection) and Between Kings and Queens (REMI Winner, 43rd Annual WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival). A strong proponent of educational outreach, Schmitz has presented clinics on composition pedagogy at state education conferences and academic institutions, and currently serves as Kansas State Coordinator for the Music Teachers’ National Association Composition Contest. He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Texas at Austin, where his primary teachers were Donald Grantham, Yevgeniy Sharlat, and Bruce Pennycook. Schmitz has undertaken additional study with Chen Yi and Katherine Murdock, and has participated in master classes with William Bolcom, Jeffrey Haas, and Maria Schneider, among many others.
**Jeric Rocamora, winner of high school category**

Jeric lives in Roseville California, and goes to Rio Americano High School in Sacramento California in order to be a part of their prestigious band and music program. As a middle schooler, he was awarded the title of best middle school trumpet soloist at the Reno jazz festival in 2010. Jeric began pursuing writing as a musician in the 8th grade. "Sketch" is the fourth of his big band compositions to be performed, the second to be formally premiered. Jeric has received a number of awards from various jazz festivals as a trumpet player. He has been previously selected to be in bands such as the Mondavi Center's SF Jazz High School All-Star Combo and the Monterey Jazz Festival's NextGeneration Jazz Orchestra, which toured in Japan this past Summer. Jeric continues to be a part of this year's SF Jazz High School Combo. Among interests besides jazz music, Jeric enjoys Japanese Pop and Rock music and Rice Krispies Treats.

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**Jazz Ensemble Composition Contest**

2012 marks the third year for the Ithaca College Jazz Ensemble Composition Contest. The contest was created to encourage the composition and performance of the highest possible quality of jazz ensemble literature playable by high school, honor bands, college bands and professional bands alike.

Past winners of the contest are continuing their study of jazz composition. The winner of the 1st contest, trombonist Michael Conrad of Cedar Falls, Iowa, is currently pursuing an MM in Jazz and Contemporary Media at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY. The 2nd contest was won by trombonist Adam Bartczak of Boulder, Colorado, who is completing a DMA in jazz studies at the University of Northern Colorado.

Selecting winners for this year's jazz competition was particularly challenging. A huge number of quality entries were received from all over the world in both the college/pro category and the new high school composer category. Entries were not only compelling musically, but quite varied stylistically. Pieces were judged completely anonymously; the judges (which include both the director and jazz ensemble members) had no knowledge of the identity of the writers.

We're all looking forward to the 4th annual contest in 2013!
Personnel

**Saxophones**
Richard Rose, alto 1
Will VanDeMark, alto 2
Alec Staples, tenor 1
David DeHority, tenor 2
Andrew Horwitz, bari

**Trombones**
Ethan Zawisza, lead
T.J. Schaper
Bill Connors
Jeff Chilton (bass)

**Trumpets**
Danny Venora, co-lead
Jack Storer, jazz soloist
Matt Venora, co-lead
Colin Johnson, co-lead
James Rose

**Rhythm**
Joshua Condon, piano
Alana Dawes, bass
Damien Scalise, guitar
Will Sigel, drums

Upcoming Jazz Events

**Monday, December 10, 2012 (8:15PM, Ford Hall):** Bill's Jazz Lab Ensemble, directed by Bill Tiberio.

**Tuesday, December 11, 2012 (8:15PM, Ford Hall):** Greg's Jazz Lab Ensemble, directed by Greg Evans.