

Jazz On Campus ▶



Bob Brookmeyer (left) with Universität Für Musik jazz orchestra

School Notes ▶



Moran Joins NEC: Pianist Jason Moran has joined the faculty at Boston's New England Conservatory of Music. He will begin teaching in the fall.

Details: necmusic.edu

Taylor Lessons: Guitarist Martin Taylor has teamed up with ArtistWorks to launch the online Martin Taylor Guitar Academy. The site will provide Taylor's courses via high-definition interactive video. Details: martintaylorguitar.com

Down Under Win: The New Zealand School of Music's big band has won its country's Jazz Tui award for the disc Run For Cover. Rodger Fox directs the ensemble. Details: nzsm.ac.nz

Ellington Premiere: The University of Texas Jazz Orchestra and Huston-Tillotson University Concert Choir in Austin has released *Queenie Pie*, a recording of their premiere performance of the Duke Ellington opera. Carmen Bradford is the featured guest and Robert DeSimone directed the ensemble.

Details: music.utexas.edu

New Ruffles: Students at Berklee College of Music in Boston have released *Birds Of A Feather* on the school's label, Jazz Revelation Records. The disc includes original compositions from Berklee's 11 student bandleaders and is the label's seventh release. Details: berklee.edu

Percussion Summer: The Los Angeles Music Academy in Pasadena, Calif., will host a drummers' workshop for students ages 14 and up on June 28–July 2. Instructors include Peter Erskine and Alex Acuña. Details: iamusicacademy.edu

Litchfield Lineup: Drummer Matt Wilson has been named artist-in-residence for this summer's Litchfield, Ct., Jazz Camp. Guitarist Pat Martino and trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis will also hold workshops at the camp, which runs July 11–Aug. 6. Details: litchfieldjazzcamp.com

University at Austria's Edge Moves to Mainstream of Jazz Education

Trombonist Ed Partyka sees the new face of jazz education not in New York or Chicago, but in a medium-sized city near the borders of Slovenia and Hungary. Partyka is chair of the jazz department at Universität für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Graz in Austria, where 100 students from 20 countries are pursuing four-year jazz performance degrees. These musicians are taking advantage of classes taught by professional recording artists and, with Vienna and other major cities a short drive away, abundant performance opportunities. And the tuition is cheap.

Around 60 percent of the school's population comes from outside the country, but the trombonist, a Chicago native who moved to Europe after college in 1990, would like to see more involvement from the United States. He's betting that quality instruction and the low enrollment cost will trump any Yankee fears about classes taught in German.

"Most of the European countries believe that a student or any citizen has the right to education," he said. "The astronomical tuitions that you see in America do not exist here because they're all state universities."

To supplement the work of the 10 professors and numerous staff, school officials welcome musicians like Fred Hersch, Toshiko Akiyoshi and John Hollenbeck for a few weeks each year to coach ensembles, teach lessons and give concerts. Bob Brookmeyer, who knows Partyka through the New Art Orchestra, spent a month last year working with young musicians in Graz. He also helped record the recent *Klangdebuts 36* CD that highlights two of the school's ensembles. While in Austria, Brookmeyer noted the students' work ethic and their ability to take advantage of rich musical surroundings.

"It goes without saying that there's a long artistic history and acceptance of jazz [in Europe]. The radio station is one of the main employers of composers and musicians," Brookmeyer said.

"The smallest German town will have one or two symphonies and an opera company."

European jazz might be a bit unknown to stateside high school graduates hoping to pursue music studies in college. A bias rooted in the notion that only U.S.-based artists can properly play this art form is turning some high-schoolers away from educational opportunities abroad, Partyka said.

"A lot of the European musicians have a hard time getting established in the States," he said. "I'm sure there is also a certain amount of prejudice from Americans thinking, 'Well, what can a European school teach me about jazz?'"

Dena DeRose, one of five American professors in the program, is teaching 17 private vocalists this semester. Course material instills a firm knowledge of historical jazz with a healthy dose of the modern jazz lexicon. When she's not teaching, DeRose spends some of her time giving master classes at other European performing arts institutions, schools that, she said, are not as comprehensive in the history of the music.

Studying in Graz carries with it a little culture shock. In addition to the foreign language, U.S. college students find that their European counterparts are a little older, starting school in their early twenties instead of at 18. There also is a stereotype that European students are less motivated than their American counterparts, but professors are working to dispel that notion.

"That's how it used to be here," DeRose said. "We've overhauled the curriculum and really fine-tuned it. In the last five years, it's had this steady rising momentum into being a really hardcore jazz school."

Brookmeyer thinks the next big jazz hub will be in Europe and that budding artists from overseas have as many opportunities as stateside players. While European schools still rely on American professors for some musical knowledge, he said, this school is a step toward bringing a new level of recognition to European jazz.—Jon Ross