Jazz and Improvised Music

Cuong Vu, Jazz Studies chair (Photo: Steve Korn)

Guitarist Bill Frisell and drummer Ted Poor are new additions to the Jazz Studies faculty at UW (Steve Korn photo).

Drummer Ted Poor has joined the UW Jazz Studies faculty (Steve Korn photo).

Students, faculty, and guest artists perform at the Chapel Performance Space in Wallingford for the 2013 Improvised Music Project festival (Steve Korn photo).

One way to look at it.

Jazz Studies students perform at a UW Huskyfest event.

At the heart of the thriving new music scene in Seattle, the Jazz Studies and Improvised Music program at the University of Washington is well-established as a birthing ground for innovation, collaboration, and disciplined concentration on technical mastery and excellence in performance and creation.

Long a catalyst for innovative directions in new music and for preparing students to perform at the highest levels of musicianship in the professional realm, the program provides a foundation in the significant historical figures, works, styles, and movements of jazz, coupled with an encouragement toward pushing boundaries and extending the art form. Among the most vibrant and energetic musical communities at UW, the program benefits tremendously from its proximity to the excellent jazz programs of Seattle’s middle and high schools and the atmosphere of experimentation in the clubs and coffeehouses of the Seattle’s music scene.

Renowned Faculty

Faculty in the program—all seasoned professionals with serious touring and recording credits—guide students in mastering their chosen instruments and in applying musical concepts and training to performance in small and large ensemble settings. Our faculty represent a range of strengths and areas of interest from traditional jazz to the avant-garde.

Performance Opportunities

On-campus performance opportunities run the gamut from traditional big band settings to small ensembles creating original works and new arrangements of the great works from the jazz repertoire. Students interested in exploring musical opportunities beyond campus will find abundant avenues for expression in both casual and more formal settings.

Esteemed Guest Artists

The program regularly hosts workshops, clinics, and performances by visiting musicians, many of them giants of jazz and improvised music. Some of our recent guests have included: Pat Metheny, Lee Konitz, Bill Frisell, John McLaughlin, Jack DeJohnette, Alex Acuña, Ralph Alessi, Tim Berne, Brian Blade, Don Byron, Matthew Garrison, The Bad Plus, Regina Carter, Ron Carter, Larry Coryell, Dave Douglas, George Garzone, Marcus Miller, John Patitucci, Eric Revis, Antonio Sanchez, Mike Stern, Craig Taborn, Ernie Watts, and Matt Wilson, among others.

Non-Major Instrumental Lessons

Students who are not majoring in music but who are interested in taking private instrumental lessons with faculty are
welcome to audition! Non-major lessons auditions occur in September, January, and February each year for admission into a faculty studio beginning Fall term. More audition information can be found on the Audition Dates page. Lessons are offered on a space-available basis in faculty studios and occur weekly over the course of the academic year. If admitted to private lessons, students will be given a faculty code to register for the appropriate MUSICP course number. In addition to tuition, non-major lessons require a $400 course lesson fee.

Student Support

In addition to student support distributed by the University of Washington's financial aid office, the School of Music distributes more than a half million dollars annually in merit- and need-based student support. Graduate teaching assistantships are highly competitive and are granted in all areas of study.

HOW TO APPLY

For more information, contact SoMadmit@uw.edu

Faculty in this Area

Cuong Vu
Chair, Jazz Studies; Donald E. Petersen Endowed Professor

Luke Bergman
Artist in Residence, Bass

Tom Collier
Professor Emeritus, Jazz Studies

Bill Frisell
Affiliate Professor, Jazz Studies

Ted Poor
Artist in Residence, Drums
Marc Seales  
Professor, Jazz Piano

Huck Hodge  
Chair, Composition; Associate Professor

Richard Karpen  
Director, School of Music; Aura Morrison Endowed Professor

Greg Sinibaldi  
Artist in Residence, Saxophone

Paul Harshman  
Artist in Residence, Jazz Studies (Big Band)

Fred Radke  
Lecturer; Jazz (Big Band era); Honorary Director, UW Big Band

Gina Funes  
Lecturer; Vocal Performance for Non-Majors

Featured Video
Upcoming Events

- **Jazz Innovations, Part I** - Nov 15 - 7:30pm
- **Jazz Innovations, Part II** - Nov 16 - 7:30pm
- **Studio Jazz Ensemble & UW Modern Band** - Dec 6 - 7:30pm
- **Fall 2018 Entrance & Scholarship Auditions** - Jan 27
- **Fall 2018 Entrance & Scholarship Auditions** - Feb 10

More events

News & Announcements

- **Musical Gifts: More than 50 free events in 2017-18** (Sep 8, 2017)
- **Student and Alumni Notes: Summer 2017** (Jun 19, 2017)
- **Congrats, 2017 UW Music graduates!** (Jun 19, 2017)
- **Brendan McGovern named 2017 Dean's Medalist in the Arts** (Jun 6, 2017)
- **Faculty Notes: Spring 2017** (May 12, 2017)

More news

Related Research

- **Marc Seales: American Songs, Volume 3, Place and Time**; Origin Records, 2015
- **Marc Seales: American Songs, Volume 2: Blues...and Jazz**; Origin; 2014
- **Mt Varnum: Wounded Caroline**, Ted Poor and Greg McMurray, 2013
- **Cuong Vu, with Ted Poor, Stomu Takeshi, and Luke Bergman**: Leaps of Faith; CD; 2011

More research