

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY JAZZ FACULTY

Dr. Gordon Vernick, Coordinator of Jazz Studies, formed the GSU Faculty Jazztet. All of the members teach at Georgia State. The primary function of this group is to further the awareness of jazz as the American musical art form. This is accomplished through concert performances and presentations for students of all ages within the school system and around the world, including performances in Moscow, Beijing, Brazil, and Costa Rica. Many world-renown jazz artists have performed with the Jazztet and include: Conrad Herwig, Randy Brecker, Kenny Werner, John Hart, Marc Copland, Paul McCandless, Andy LaVerne, Phil Markowitz, and many others. The members of the group have a long list of professional jazz performing credentials and include:

GORDON VERNICK, TRUMPET

Gordon Vernick is an Associate Professor and the Coordinator of Jazz Studies at GSU. He received a B.M. from Ithaca College, M.M. from the University of Miami and a Doctor of Arts from the University of Northern Colorado. Prior to teaching he played professionally as a freelance musician in Miami, Kansas City, Denver, and New York. He has received grants from the NEA, Atlanta Bureau of Cultural Affairs, and the Missouri Arts Council. A well-respected member of Atlanta's jazz community he performs regularly and is in demand as a clinician. Together with Geoff Haydon he co-wrote the jazz history text, **Jazz History Outline** published by Kendall-Hunt.

KEVIN BALES, PIANO

Kevin Bales received his B.M. from the University of North Florida and M.M. from Florida State. He taught at UNF for 10 years and many of his groups won Downbeat Awards and were invited to perform at IAJE and other prestigious festivals. As a jazz pianist he has performed and recorded with Marcus Printup, singer Rene Marie, Bunky Green, Bob Reynolds, Ira Sullivan, Barry Green, and many others. He has performed at venues from South Florida to New York City and is one of the most in-demand pianists in the Southeastern U.S. He teaches jazz piano, combos and improvisation.

KINAH BOTO, DRUMS

Originally from Montgomery, Alabama he has made Atlanta his home since 1994. Kinah Boto has an extensive list of performing credits that has taken him to Europe and the Far East many times. Some of the artists he has toured or recorded with include: Nneena Freelon, Russell Gunn, Marcus Printup, and many others. His ensemble, ***GROUP THINK***, performs regularly in the Atlanta Metro area.

ROBERT DICKSON, BASS

Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, Robert received his B.M. from The University of Alabama and a Master of Music from the University of New Orleans where he was a graduate teaching assistant. He performed extensively in the New Orleans area and recently relocated to Atlanta after hurricane Katrina in the fall of 2005. In addition to his background in jazz Robert has attended the Brevard Music Camp as an orchestral bassist. He has performed with many jazz greats including Terri Lynne Carrington, Jerry Coker, Dizzy Gillespie, Lou Marini, Jason Marsalis, Steve Masakowski, Irvin Mayfield, Davy Mooney, Ed Petersen, Shannon Powell, Lew Soloff, and Johnny Vidacovich.

DAVE FRACKENPOHL, GUITAR

Dave Frackenpohl is an active jazz guitar performer, composer, and arranger in the Atlanta area. Collaborating with such jazz artists as Michael Brecker, Hank Crawford, Bobby Watson, Carl Allen, and Chris Vadala, Dave has performed at such venues as Spivey Hall, Fox Theatre and the Rialto Center for the Performing Arts. In addition to his *Après Diem* jazz quartet, *Frack & Friends*, Dave performs with touring Broadway shows and artists such as *Chicago, 42nd Street*, Tommy Tune, and Bernadette Peters, as well as with Big Bands such as *Moments Notice* and *Les Elgars*. Dave teaches in the Jazz Studies program at Georgia State University.

GEOFFREY HAYDON, KEYBOARDS

Geoff Haydon is an Assistant Professor of Music at GSU where he is the Coordinator of the Piano Faculty, teaches applied piano, jazz history, and jazz theory. He has a B.M. and M.M. in Piano Performance from the University of Richmond and a D.M.A. from the University of Texas. Dr. Haydon is engaged in a varied professional career as a jazz/classical pianist. He has also been working as a freelance pianist in Atlanta since 1988 and is an expert in MIDI/synthesizer applications. He has also played with many renowned jazz artists including: Joe Henderson, Randy Brecker, Paul McCandless, and John Hart.

MACE HIBBARD, SAXOPHONE

Mace received his Bachelor and Masters degrees in Saxophone Performance from the University of Texas at Austin where he studied with Harvey Pittel. He also taught at U.T. Austin and presently teaches part-time at Jacksonville State in Alabama. An outstanding performer and teacher, Mace has performed with Bobby Shew, the Glen Miller Orchestra, Odd Man Out, The Austin Symphony, and many other world-renowned artists. An excellent woodwind doubler, Mace is also a composer and has recorded numerous compositions.

AUDREY SHAKIR, VOCAL JAZZ

Ms. Shakir is THE jazz vocalist in the City of Atlanta. An accomplished performer, she has worked extensively in New York and has studied vocal improvisation with famed jazz pianist, Barry Harris. Also an accomplished pianist, she has performed with many major jazz artists including Kenny Baron, Duke Pearson and Lionel Hampton. She was recently featured with the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra.

NEAL STARKEY, BASS

Neal Starkey has had extensive jazz performance experience all over the country. Originally from New York, he has made Atlanta his home for the past 25 years. His performance credits are extensive and include such artists as Kenny Barron, Eddie Harris, Sonny Stitt, Duke Pearson, Al Cohn, Charlie Rouse, Barney Kessell and many others. He has recorded with Herbie Hancock, Tony Williams and Freddie Hubbard with the CBS JAZZ ALL-STARS. Mr. Starkey has also had extensive studio recording experience and is one of the most in-demand bassists in the Southeastern region.

JUSTIN VARNES, DRUM SET

A graduate of the University of North Florida, Justin has lived in Atlanta since 2003. He also studied at the New School in New York City. He was a graduate assistant at Georgia State University and received his M.M. in 2006. As a professional he has toured with Phoebe Snow, Earl Klugh, Christian Tamburr, saxophonist/trumpeter Ira Sullivan, and Bob Reynolds. He is one of the most in-demand drummers in the Southeast and also directs the jazz combo program at GSU.