



## School of Music

University of Iowa  
93 E. Burlington Street  
Iowa City, Iowa 52242-0000  
319-335-1603  
[uiowa.edu](http://uiowa.edu)

September 23, 2022

Re: The First Annual UI Jazz Combo Competition

Dear Iowa Jazz Band Directors,

We hope that this message finds you well and that your 2022-23 school year is off to a fantastic start! We're writing to share news of 2 fantastic jazz-related happenings at the University of Iowa in the near future that we hope will be of interest to both you and your jazz students.

The University of Iowa jazz studies area is beyond pleased to announce the launch of our **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Jazz Combo Competition!** The overwhelming jazz focus in the state has been big band up to this point, and while we acknowledge and respect the value of large group musicianship, we're long overdue for an annual event that both encourages and celebrates the art of small group jazz performance. With two different categories of competition offered, we hope that all schools and Iowa jazz students have the opportunity to participate should they choose. We're sharing news of our new competition with you early out of respect for your busy fall semester schedules - *and* the time it takes for you and/or your students to prepare.

Apart from shedding some long overdue light on the small group side of jazz performance, we are incredibly excited about the prize pool that we're offering for competition winners. We're pleased to offer a slew of coveted and beneficial prizes designed to be of ***practical value*** to young student jazz groups well beyond the date of the competition! A complete disclosure of competition rules, prizes and entry instructions is included in this mailing. We hope that you will find the competition to have benefits well in excess of the modest entry fee that we are charging to participate.

While we have your ear, we'd also like to extend a personal invitation to you and your students for a special concert we're presenting this November. **The UI School of Music is proud to host the US Army Jazz Ambassadors Big Band on Thursday, November 10<sup>th</sup> (Voxman Music Building Concert Hall, 7:30pm)**. The concert is absolutely free, will be open seating (on a first come, first served basis) and is appropriate for all ages. Please consider making the trip over to join us. This will be a special night of music and we'd love to see you there.

Full competition information and posters for both events mentioned above are included in this mailing. We hope you can join us! Until then, all the best for a successful 2022-23 year.

Sincerely,

Dr. Damani Phillips (on behalf of the UI Jazz Studies faculty)  
Jazz Area Head and Associate Professor of African American Studies  
Email: [Damani-phillips@uiowa.edu](mailto:Damani-phillips@uiowa.edu) / UI Jazz program info: [www.music.uiowa.edu/jazz](http://www.music.uiowa.edu/jazz)

# The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual University of Iowa Jazz Combo Competition January 28, 2023 / Voxman School of Music

## Meet Your Competition Adjudicators/Clinicians

### Dr. Damani Phillips



#### **UI Assoc. Professor of Jazz (saxophone) and Jazz Area Head**

Dr. Damani Phillips is a native of Pontiac, MI, and currently serves as head of the Jazz Studies program and Associate Professor of African American Studies at the University of Iowa. Phillips has earned Bachelor and Master of Music degrees from DePaul University and The University of Kentucky in classical saxophone, a second Master of Music degree in Jazz Studies from Wayne State University and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Jazz Studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder; becoming the first African American in the country to do so. An active performer, pedagogue and lecturer, Phillips has performed, taught and lectured throughout the world. He previously served on the faculty of Grinnell College and Oakland University, and is actively sought as a guest artist, clinician, presenter and adjudicator throughout the nation. He has performed with artists/groups such as Lewis Nash, Christian McBride, Wycliffe Gordon, Bobby McFerrin, Marcus Belgrave, Terrell Stafford, Hank Jones, Red Holloway and Pat Bianchi among many others. Phillips has released 6 albums as a bandleader and published his first book "What Is This Thing Called Soul: Conversations on Black Culture and Jazz Education" in 2017.

### Dr. William Menefield



#### **UI Asst. Professor of Jazz (piano) and Composition**

A native of Cincinnati, Ohio, William earned his Bachelor of Music from university of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (2005) and Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Texas at Austin (2011), both in music composition. He has recorded two albums as a solo artist and has also been featured as a soloist with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra (2005) and the Cincinnati Opera (CO) (2006, 2013). In 2019, William was commissioned by the CO to compose "Fierce", a one act opera which debuted in July of 2022. He has also performed with a variety of notable musicians including Roy Ayers, Clark Terry, David "Fathead" Newman, Gary Bartz, Steve Wilson, and Javon Jackson. William currently serves as the Assistant Professor of Jazz Studies at the University of Iowa.

### Prof. Curtis Taylor



#### **UI Lecturer of Jazz Studies (trumpet and brass)**

Curtis Taylor has performed and recorded with Patrice Rushen, Billy Childs, Gary Novak, Bob Sheppard, Ed Motta, Marvin "Smitty" Smith, Rodney Whitaker, Antonio Hart, as well as great gospel luminaries Karen Clark-Sheard, Kierra Sheard, and The Singletons. Taylor's stint with jazz pianist Cyrus Chestnut included a notable concert performance at Kennedy Center which was recorded for NPR's *Jazzset*. In 2014, Taylor relocated to Southern California where he worked with producer Kamau Kenyatta on Gregory Porter's GRAMMY-winning album *Liquid Spirit*.

### Prof. Angelo Stokes



#### **UI Lecturer of Jazz Studies (drum set and percussion)**

Angelo L. Stokes can effortlessly be described as a "Universal Percussionist" and has accomplished what many men only dare to dream and are unable to fathom. Angelo has been a protégé of Marcus Belgrave since the tender age of 16 while he attended The Detroit School for the Performing Arts and has had the distinction of performing with Aretha Franklin, Toni Tennille, Lou Rawls, Bo Diddley, Stevie Wonder and an innumerable amount of other internationally respected musicians. Angelo has increased his classical ability and discipline on various percussive instruments as a former member of the United States Air Force Band of The West and as a private music instructor. He continues to innovate and re-establish the world of the percussive arts with a sundry of global techniques learned through continued studies and the modest acknowledgement that his gift will only be made stronger through the acceptance of acumen from the artists that he has the privilege of sharing the stage with.

## **Featured Special Guest Clinician, Adjudicator and Performer**

### **Dr. Aaron Miller**

#### **Professor of Double Bass, Brigham Young University – Idaho**



Aaron Miller is an accomplished musician whose broad experience in many styles defines his double bass playing: jazz and classical, contemporary and popular, chamber and solo. He performs with an energy and enthusiasm that is palpable. Aaron is in high demand as a soloist, performer, educator, and clinician throughout the United States of America and abroad. He has been a guest for multiple national jazz festivals for the past two decades and spends each summer working with students at the Red Lodge Music Festival in Montana. An advocate for new music, Miller recently commissioned and premiered four new works for the double bass that feature improvisation as an essential element. In 2016, Aaron Miller performed the South America premier of Zivojin Glisic's concertó for double bass with the Guayaquil Symphony Orchestra. Starting in 2007, he joined the faculty of Brigham Young University-Idaho where he directs the double bass studio and the jazz combos program. Miller's students have received regional and national recognition including the Downbeat student music award in 2008. Aaron received his doctoral degree from Northwestern University in 2016 where he studied with Andrew Raciti. Miller has shared the stage with David Liebman, Bob Mintzer, Mark Levine, Joe Lovano, Benny Green, Jamey Aebersold, and Marvin Stamm. In 2004, Aaron toured with the Glenn Miller Orchestra.

## **The 1<sup>st</sup> Annual University of Iowa Jazz Combo Competition** **Competition Guidelines and Entry Information**

**Competition Date:** Saturday, January 28, 2023

**Location:** Voxman School of Music, 93 E. Burlington Street, Iowa City, IA 52240

**Divisions:** There will be two competition “division” options:

1. Intra-School Division
2. Mixed School Division

*See detailed division descriptions below*

**Time:** Intra-school division groups: 8am to noon  
Jazz Combo Clinic by Dr. Aaron Miller: 12:30pm to 1:30pm  
Mixed School division groups: 2pm to 5pm  
Evening Winner’s Concert: 7pm  
*Note: Individual group time slots assigned after registration*

**Entry Fee:** \$100 per individual group

**Entry Deadline:** December 15, 2022 (entry fee non-refundable after this date)

**Info and Registration:** <https://bit.ly/Uljazzcomp>

### **Competition Rules**

1. Two separate divisions for the competition: **Intra-School Combos** and **Mixed School Combos**.
  - Intra-school combos must be comprised entirely of students who attend the same school and are representatives of a single school’s music program.
  - Mixed school combos may be comprised of students from across multiple school districts and multiple music programs. There are no restriction on how many different programs may be represented in a single mixed group.
2. Multiple entries from the same school are permitted, but no single student shall be allowed to play in more than three (3) different groups across both competition divisions.
3. Competition is open to groups/students registered and actively attending middle school or high school at the time of the competition.
4. There will be no partitioning of competing groups based on school size or state classification (1A, 2A, etc.). All competitors will compete on an even tiered system within each division – regardless of student age, school district size or group size.
5. Each competing group will be allotted 20 minutes of performance time in which three different selections of contrasting styles/tempo should be presented. Each group is not required to fill all 20 minutes, but shall not exceed that amount of performance time.
6. While related, outside styles of music are welcome to be included in group repertoire, the competition is indeed a *jazz competition* – and will be evaluated as such. Related styles of African-American music are allowed, but jazz music (in the traditionally-accepted sense) must be decisively at the core of the music presented by each group.

7. Improvisation is a necessary component of each group's performance to meet the criteria stipulated in item #6 above. Performances should indeed be improvisation-centered, just as one would reasonably expect in a typical small group jazz performance.
8. Use of sheet music is allowed, but "improvised solos" should not be written out and read and/or memorized by performing students.
9. In the spirit of fairness and equity to all participants, hand-picked "all star" (or mixed-school) groups shall not compete against groups limited to students within their respective school's current student body (intra-school groups).
10. The maximum size of any single group will be capped at 7 musicians maximum (jazz septet). The instrumentation within that cap of 7 is open to any/all instruments – typical to jazz music or otherwise.
11. Each individual group entered into the competition will be required to pay a separate entrance fee of \$100/group by check (via mail) or credit card (through the competition's secure web portal) at: <https://music.uiowa.edu/public-programs/jazz-combo-competition>.
12. Competition winners will be invited to perform on the evening winner's concert (1/28/23 – 7pm). We ask that winning groups for each division make the necessary arrangements to remain in Iowa City to participate in this celebratory performance.

### **Adjudication**

1. Each student group will be evaluated by our panel of 5 adjudicators – consisting of the 4 permanent University of Iowa jazz faculty and one featured guest adjudicator/clinician.
2. To flatten any individual judge's scoring variances, raw scores received will be converted to a scale of X/100. Converted point totals for all 5 judges will be added together to create a composite score for each competing combo. The group with the highest point total in each division will be named the 1<sup>st</sup> place finisher.
3. All groups will receive copies of their written score sheets (with raw scores and comments) and/or an audio recording of adjudicator comments recorded during the group's performance.

### **Prize Pool and Benefits to Competitors**

All competing groups will receive the following:

- Written and/or verbal constructive comments from all 5 adjudicators
- A one hour mid-day jazz combo clinic, lead by the competition's featured guest artist.
- Hi-quality audio and DVD-quality video of the group's performance to be used as the ensemble director/students see fit (copyright clearance/use permissions for cover songs/standards is the responsibility of each performing group – not the competition hosts).

1<sup>st</sup> place winners in each division receive the following (in addition to items above):

- School or Band name engraved on UI Jazz Combo Competition travelling trophy – to be kept for the year by division winners until the date of the following year's competition.
- A performance slot on the evening winner's concert (Voxman Recital Hall, 7pm), which will be broadcast live on KCCJ Jazz 88.3 FM. Evening concert shared between both division winners and UI Jazz Faculty Quintet (feat. the festival's invited guest artist).
- \$500 cash prize (per winning group)

- Two guaranteed professional bookings at major performance venues/outlets within the state of Iowa during the summer following the competition (courtesy of KCCK Jazz 88.3 FM).
- High quality audio and video of evening concert performance ***including coverage of copyright clearance/use permissions by UI Jazz Studies and School of Music.***

### **Instructions for Group Registration**

- The easiest method of registering your group for the competition is online at our secure competition info/registration website site: <https://bit.ly/UIjazzcomp>. Registration and electronic payment of entry fees may both be handled here.
- Registration by mail is also permitted. Please mail the enclosed registration form and check for competition fee to: **Dr. Damani Phillips, University of Iowa, Voxman School of Music, 93 E. Burlington Street, Iowa City, IA 52242.**
- All entries must be postmarked by the entry deadline: December 15, 2022. Late entries not accepted.

For complete competition info, rules and online registration, visit:

