Introduction

As a Crane student, you will have the opportunity to develop a diverse and versatile musical background. The Jazz Studies area at Crane offers you the opportunity to grow as a musician through both performance and classroom experiences.

Jazz Studies Minor

The Jazz Studies Minor provides students with guided experiences in improvisation, performance, history, arranging and pedagogy. This program is a valuable addition to any existing degree program in The Crane School of Music. Students completing the Jazz Studies Minor have proved themselves as highly effective instrumental jazz teachers in the public schools, as successful students in leading graduate level Jazz Studies degree programs and have gone on to explore careers as performers.

The Jazz Studies Minor is open to any student who is accepted for any degree program at The Crane School of Music. In special circumstances, students outside The Crane School of Music may be accepted for study in the Jazz Studies Minor.

The Crane Jazz Ensemble

The Crane Jazz Ensemble led by Bret Zvacek is the premier performance group in the Jazz Studies program at The Crane School of Music. Maintaining a tradition of performance excellence, the ensemble has been named for multiple awards at festivals including the prestigious Notre Dame Collegiate Jazz Festival. The Crane Jazz Ensemble performs a wide variety of music composed by artists ranging from Duke Ellington to Maria Schneider while presenting student compositions and arrangements as well.

Ensembles and Courses

- Jazz Ensemble
- Jazz Band
- Latin Ensemble
- Small Jazz Groups
- Jazz Improvisation 1 & 2
- Jazz Theory & Arranging
- Jazz Techniques
- Jazz Styles & Analysis
- Historical Development of Jazz
Some Recent Guest Performers and Clinicians

- Gregory Porter
- Teri Lyne Carrington
- SF Jazz Collective
- Donny McCaslin
- Stefon Harris
- Matt Wilson
- Larry Ham
- Ralph Alessi Baida Quartet

Bret Zvacek,
Director of Jazz Studies

Professor Bret Zvacek has performed with Kenny Wheeler, Gene Bertoncini, The Woody Herman Orchestra and numerous other jazz artists. Since September 2005, Prof. Zvacek has served as the Musical Director of the Central New York Jazz Orchestra (Syracuse). Prof. Zvacek’s 2001 quintet CD “Day in May” has been described as being “infused with creative energy” (Cadence Magazine, December 2002). He has written big band music for numerous professional and student ensembles. Prior to coming to The Crane School of Music, he has held teaching positions at University of North Texas and McGill University.

Applying to Crane

You will find complete information about Crane and SUNY Potsdam on our website, including detailed information about the audition process.

The Crane School of Music offers these degrees:

- BM and MM in Music Education
- BM and MM in Music Performance
- BM in Musical Studies - Composition
- BM in Musical Studies - Music Theory
- BM in Musical Studies - Music History
- BM, emphasis in Music Business
- BA in Music

For more:

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