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## Faculty Jazz Combo

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND  
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

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FACULTY JAZZ COMBO

Mike Davison, director, trumpet

Damon Brown, bass  
Howard Curtis, drums  
James Saxsmo Gates, saxophone  
Kevin Harding, guitar  
Baron Tymas, guitar

guest  
Weldon Hill, piano



OCTOBER 30, 2000, 7:30 P.M.  
CAMP CONCERT HALL  
BOOKER HALL OF MUSIC

• • • PROGRAM • • •

My Leg

Mike Davison

Duke, Party of 3

Damon Brown

My Foolish Heart

Victor Young

Lila

Baron Tymas

3:45 PM

James Gates

Triple Threat

Rogers Grant

• • • PERSONNEL • • •

*Michael Davison* holds a B. M. from the Eastman School of Music, M. M. from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, and D. M. A. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has been head of the jazz and brass programs at the University of Richmond since 1986, a former chair of the music education division of the Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the College Music Society, and is presently the president of the Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Jazz Educators. As a classical musician, Davison has performed with the Whitewater Brass Quintet, Wisconsin Brass Quintet, Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Richmond Symphony Orchestra, and the Brass Band of Battle Creek. As a jazz musician, he has worked with such artists as Michael Brecker, Curtis Fuller, Chris Vadala, Gene Bertoncini, The Temptations, Aretha Franklin, the Canadian Brass, and the Empire Brass Quintet. Davison is a prolific recording artist with numerous jazz and classical albums to his credit, and is the author of many articles for *Down Beat* magazine, the *International Trumpet Guild Journal*, the *Jazz Educators Journal*, and the *G. I. A. Quarterly*. He has published several jazz combo

compositions with Walrus Music, has written a volume of transcriptions of trumpeter Randy Brecker with Hal Leonard Publishing Co. and is contracted to do a second volume with Warner Bros in the near future. Currently Davison is writing and presenting seminars on conditioning and motivation; his article "The Life and Times of John Czlabotnik: A Music Journey," has appeared in *Fanfare*, a tabloid sent to every college and high school band in the country. A world traveler in the name of jazz and music education, Davison has led a group of jazz educators to South Africa, music educators to China, and taught in Lyon, France at A.I.M.R.A., the French international jazz school. Since 1987 he has been on the trumpet faculty at the International Arts Camp in Interlochen, Michigan. Davison is a clinician for the Edwards Instrument Company, a performer and clinician on the Akai Electric Valve Instrument (EVI), and in great demand throughout the country as a classical and jazz teacher and performer. Dr. Davison is active in the International Trumpet Guild, has performed at the last 11 ITG conferences, and hosted the 1999 ITG Conference at the University of Richmond.

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*Damon Brown* was born and raised in rural South Boston, Virginia. After studying saxophone for several years, he began performing on the bass guitar at age 12, thereby finding his real passion. For the next five years, he performed extensively throughout Virginia and North Carolina in numerous groups with his two older brothers. Upon graduating from high school, Brown attended Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, where he gained valuable experience performing in ensembles, and in various studio settings. His bass playing is featured on a selection from the 1989 Studio Production Projects CD released by the college. Brown finished his undergraduate degree at North Carolina Central University where he studied with Dr. Ira T. Wiggins. He performed professionally with Dr. Wiggins in

his jazz quintet for several years before heading to graduate school at East Carolina University, where he mentored and studied with Carroll V. Dashiell, Jr., and received his graduate degree in bass performance. Brown has performed over the years at the Montreux Jazz Festival, the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual International Association of Jazz Educators Conference, the JVC Jazz Festival, and at Carnegie Hall. He has performed with such artists as Alvin Batiste, Vanessa Rubin, and Bob Mintzer. In addition, he has studied with Jimmy Haslip, the bassist from the jazz group the Yellowjackets. He currently tours the Southeastern United States with the group Grady's Hat as they promote their recording *Never Find Another*. Along with his wife Shelley, he has called Richmond home for the past four years.

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*Howard Curtis*, born and currently residing in Williamsburg, Virginia, has enjoyed a multifaceted career as a jazz drummer, multiple percussionist, and educator for 25 years. Curtis has performed at the Hampton Jazz Festival, The Hilton Head Jazz Festival (South Carolina), and the DC Free Jazz Festival. He performed and/or recorded with John Abercrombie, David "Fathead" Newman, Andrew White, Billy Harper, Rosemary Clooney, Lionel Hampton, Gary Thomas (his recording on JMT released in fall 1997), Johnny Coles, David Liebman (*Joy on Candid* received 4 1/2 stars in *Down Beat* magazine), Amiri Baraka, Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, John Dearth (*One Bright Glance* on Enja), Jon Faddis, Mark

Murphy, Joe Kennedy, Jimmy Heath, Clark Terry, Barry Harris, George Coleman, Buck Hill, Marc Johnson, Ernie Andrews, Oliver Lake, Odeau Pope, Julius Hemphill, James Carter, Kenny Rankin, and Ellis Marsalis. "Pop gigs" include stints with The Temptations, The Platters, The Main Ingredient, Bob Hope, Tom Browne, Red Skelton, Melba Moore, and Barbara Mandrell. Special interest concerts have taken Curtis to Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.), Georgia State University (Atlanta, Ga), University of Virginia (Charlottesville, Va), The Knitting Factory and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts (both in New York).

"I don't waste time. I play like there's no tomorrow," is the motto of saxophonist, composer/arranger, clinician and teacher, *James B. Gates, Jr.* (appropriately nicknamed "Saxsmo"). The list of artists Gates has performed with reads like a "Who's Who" of the jazz world: Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers, Clark Terry, Walter Davis, Jr., Nat Adderly, Walter Bishop, Jr., Alan Dawson, Ellis Marsalis, Terri Lynn Carrington, Roberta Flack, Lou Rawls, Cecil McBee, Billy Hart, and many, more. Gates' wealth of talent is firmly rooted in the bop and post-bop era; music influenced by the legendary Charlie Parker, Julian "Cannonball" Adderly, and Sonny Rollins. He has performed on the nation's leading club and concert stages and has been broadcast over

National Public Radio in the appropriately titled "I Don't Waste Time," as part of the prestigious Berklee Concert Series. His first compact disc release of original contemporary jazz compositions, *Yes I Can* was recorded in July of 1991. Strongly committed to jazz education, Gates regularly conducts clinics and master classes tailored to all audiences and levels of proficiency. The message carried in every session is universally positive: Through jazz music all people can reach self fulfillment as equals, working together toward a common goal of peace. "It's important for me to help others understand the real idiom of jazz — the Old School. Too many have turned away from it... or should I say 'too many have taken another road.' You dig?"

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*Kevin Harding* is a graduate of VCU's Jazz Studies Program. Before moving to Richmond in 1992 to study jazz, Harding worked as a blues musician in the Boston area, where he performed with his own band. He has performed with the VCU Jazz Orchestra and with the Great American Music Ensemble at the Kennedy Center. His performance with jazz violinist, Joe

Kennedy, Jr. on The Guitar and Other Strings Series was selected as one of the highlights of the 1997 concert year by the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Harding has performed in Peru under the auspices of VCU and the Instituto Cultural Peruano Norteamericano. He is currently on the faculty of the University of Richmond.

A relatively late starter, *Baron Tymas* picked up the guitar at age 14, at first playing blues, rock and R&B by ear. By his senior year in high school he had advanced enough to win his school's award for excellence in music. Uncertain of a career in music, however, he majored in English at Vassar College and Howard University. He later taught English at Georgetown Day High School and Parkmont School, both in Washington, D.C. During his teaching years, he performed, composed, and taught music in the Mid-Atlantic region, especially with the reggae band Black Sheep and the jazz fusion group Cross Currents. He even tried his hand at acting, appearing

in the Washington production of George C. Wolfe's *Spunk*, for which he also composed and performed music. He eventually returned to school, earning a masters in music from Howard University in 1992. At present, Tymas performs regularly with the Richmond-based group F.R.E.N.S., which recently released its debut CD, *The First Time*, on Lifegroove Records. Tymas teaches at the University of Richmond, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Virginia Union University, and Virginia Commonwealth University's Community School of the Performing Arts. In addition, he maintains a full roster of private students in the Richmond area.

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A native Richmonder and graduate of Virginia Union University (class of 1981), *W. Weldon Hill* earned both the Master of Music and Doctor of Philosophy degrees from the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. Hill began teaching in the VUU Department of Music in 1984 as Coordinator of Instrumental and Commercial Music at the rank of Assistant Professor. In this post, he assembled nationally recognized jazz ensembles, developed the Commercial Music/Jazz Studies curriculum, and continued to

perform. He subsequently served as Chairperson of the Department of Music and Chairperson of the Division of Humanities. Hill remains active as a musician with the Great American Music Ensemble—which has performed extensively at the Kennedy Center and for National Public Radio (NPR) with such artists as Jon Faddis, Jimmy Heath, Benny Carter, and Ethel Ennis—his own piano trio, and the Good Shepherd Baptist Church Men's Choir of Richmond, among others.