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# Welcome!

Dear Student,

Welcome to Manhattan School of Music! Your years here are crucial to your development as an artist and as a person. We wish you every success in your endeavors and are here to assist you in any possible way. The Jazz Arts Program handbook is designed to answer frequently asked questions about your area of study. The responsibility for knowing the information contained in this handbook, as with all school policies and procedures, rests with you. If you have a question or concern, please contact myself, another staff member, or an appropriate faculty member right away.

With best wishes,

Justin DiCioccio, Assistant Dean/Chair  
Jazz Arts Program



## **New Directions**

The potential of jazz music in America is diverse and limitless, but only if it is conceived as a world of beauty, power, expression, and imagination in which all members of society can participate. The need exists to create a new example for music instruction in our country. This should be a model of performing musician artists of the future who will understand the centrality of their roles. Not only are they performers who will be able to teach the next generation of professional musicians, but they will also be able to broaden the artistic involvement of all Americans.

As jazz music continues to work its way into the mainstream of the American educational system, new and innovative methods need to be formulated to assure the perpetuation and development of this important art form. By creating a program that will attract top musical talent and training them in an innovative educational format, a new type of graduate will be created—the complete artist musician.

The complete artist musician can create simultaneously through performing, composing, and teaching—all of which will contribute to the development of a total performance concept. Jazz students enrolled in the Manhattan School of Music Jazz Arts Program are trained with no distinct separation between three critical areas of jazz music: performance, composition, and pedagogy. All three components are integrated into one focus, with emphasis in each student's major area. The result is that the department graduates are no longer just performers. The threefold conception produces the complete artist musician—a performer, composer, and pedagogue. This new and distinctive concept in music education is the central philosophy incorporated in the Manhattan School of Music Jazz Arts Program. As it is established, it will help to improve and change the basic nature of the way jazz music, its art, and its culture will be taught to future generations.

Sincerely,

Justin DiCioccio, Assistant Dean/Chair  
Jazz Arts Program

# I. Introduction to the Jazz Arts Program

## 1. Your teacher

One of the most important parts of a musician's development, your teacher is a vital source in helping you to make career decisions, both large and small. As in any relationship, issues which need discussion and /or resolution may arise. We encourage you to discuss problems directly with your teacher as they occur. Unresolved issues and/or the sense that you cannot discuss problems with your teacher need to be addressed with the assistant dean, the dean of academics or the dean of students.

You are entitled to and required to have twenty-eight one-hour private lessons with your major teacher in the course of the school year. Most teachers give one-hour lessons each week. Some faculty members, given the nature of other performance and teaching commitments, offer two-hour lessons and/or lessons at differing intervals. Nonetheless, you should have received the equivalent of twenty-eight lessons by the end of each academic year. Make certain that you understand your teacher's lesson schedule plan. If you are concerned that you are not receiving the requisite number of lessons, or have a problem with the frequency of your lessons, notify the assistant dean.

## 2. Change of Teacher

This is an important decision to be thought over carefully and thoroughly. Student decisions to change teachers are often due to miscommunication or lack of communication with the current teacher. You are therefore encouraged to discuss the matter with your teacher, assistant dean Justin DiCioccio, the dean of academics, or the dean of students.

A Change of Teacher Request Form must be obtained from the dean of students in Room 113. The completed form must have the signatures of the proposed teacher, assistant dean Justin DiCioccio, and the deans of students and performance, in that order. You have the option of obtaining the signature of your current teacher though this signature is no longer mandatory.

## 3. Dividing of Lessons Between Two Teachers

A Petition to Divide Lesson form must be obtained from the dean of students in Room 113. The completed form must have the approval of your major teacher, the teacher you will be splitting lessons with, assistant dean Justin DiCioccio, and the deans of students and performance, in that order.

Only juniors, seniors and graduate students may divide lessons between two teachers. Special consideration may be given to others at the discretion of the assistant dean Justin DiCioccio.

Please note: The Change of Teacher Request Form and Petition to Divide Lessons form must be filed by the date listed in the academic calendar. Requests received after this period are rarely granted and will be considered on an individual basis.

## **4. Contacting the Jazz Arts Program Staff**

If you need to contact the staff of the Jazz Arts Program, you may do so in one of the following ways:

Justin DiCioccio, Assistant Dean/Chair

- Leave a message at 917-493-4523
- Sign up for an office hour appointment in Room 609B.
- Send an e-mail to [jdicioccio@msmny.edu](mailto:jdicioccio@msmny.edu)

Chris Rosenberg, Manager for Jazz Administration

- Leave a message at 917-493-4579
- Sign up for an office hour appointment in Room 609B.
- Send an email to [crosenberg@msmny.edu](mailto:crosenberg@msmny.edu)

Stephanie Crease, Coordinator

- Leave a message at 917-493-4517
- Send an email to [screase@msmny.edu](mailto:screase@msmny.edu)

## **5. Jazz Arts Program Message Board/Student Mailboxes**

The Jazz Arts Program message board is located on the 6th floor. The student mailboxes are located on the 2nd floor. Check them daily for special departmental notices, concerts, master classes, and ensemble placement results.

## **6. Faculty/Student Conferences**

Midway through each semester, freshmen and first-year graduate jazz majors will have a conference with various teachers from their program and the program chair. During these conferences, faculty will have the opportunity to discuss with students their strengths and/or weaknesses, establish goals, and voice any concerns they may have.

## **II. Ensemble and Audition Requirements**

### **1. Audition Policies**

All ensemble auditions take place at the beginning of the school year before a faculty panel. Students should be prepared to perform a jazz standard or composition on their major instrument and demonstrate their ability to improvise on the title. Sight-reading will also be a part of the audition.

- All ensemble placements will be made by the assistant dean of the department in collaboration with the faculty.
- Normally, all small groups will have at least five members and not more than eight. Large ensembles will have 15–20 members. Placement in an ensemble is contingent upon your audition, your schedule, and available rehearsal space.
- Students may be assigned to two or more ensembles based upon audition, student interest, and departmental need.
- All students are responsible for rehearsals and performances for the duration of the semester. DO NOT accept professional engagements during these times. In case of unusual circumstances, schedule conflicts will be resolved at the discretion of the program assistant dean.

### **2. Absences**

The following is the departmental policy concerning student absences. Each student is permitted two excused absences per semester. Whether or not these are considered excused is determined by the following criteria:

- Leave for professional reasons must be submitted and approved two weeks in advance of the date(s) in question by the dean of academics or the dean of students.
- If you are sick, you must call the instructor's voice mail and leave a message before the rehearsal begins. If your absence is approved, you are also responsible for getting your music to rehearsal and finding a comparable sub to play your parts. Get to know your fellow musicians!
- If you have any kind of emergency, you must call in at the first opportunity and explain the situation to the jazz office. Unauthorized absence is not permitted.
- Consequences for unexcused absences for classes and ensembles: two unexcused absences = grade lowered by one letter.
- Excessive lateness will also result in grade reduction.

## **III. Juries**

### **1. Jury for Non-graduating Students**

Every student is required to play a jury during the May jury period of each academic year until applicable jury and recital requirements have been fulfilled. A fall jury period will be scheduled each year, if necessary, for students who need to take a jury at that time. Consult the repertoire requirements provided in this handbook early in the school year, and prepare carefully for this important event. Juries are a vital part of your training as a performer. The resultant scores have a significant bearing on your academic record, scholarship, ensemble assignments, and other aspects of your standing within the school. The office of the registrar assigns jury days and times. Early planning will avoid last-minute scheduling problems. Students are encouraged to read their jury comments, which are available in the office of the registrar upon request.

### **2. Sophomore Continuation Jury**

This jury, at the end of the sophomore year of study, establishes that a student's progress has been sufficient to reasonably ensure completion of the program of study and will determine whether or not a student may continue in that program.

### **3. Advanced Standing Jury**

This jury, for undergraduate students only, is for the purpose of advancing a student's performance status by a semester or in some instances a full academic year. Students must satisfy the following conditions in order to be considered for advanced standing:

- Have receive a B+ or higher on the most recent jury.
- Be in good academic standing.
- Be in junior year of study and able to complete coursework within the current academic year.
- Have filed the completed petition with the office of the registrar prior to November 1 for a December jury and April 1 for a May jury.
- Be able to perform all four years of repertoire.

The appropriate petition is available from the office of the registrar and requires the approval and signatures of both the major teacher and the assistant dean. It is then to be filed with the office of the registrar for final approval. Juries take place in December or May. This jury is one half hour in length. Candidates may take only one advanced standing jury in their academic career.

The jury repertoire and performance should clearly demonstrate that the student is worthy of advanced standing consideration. The student is responsible for organizing their own ensemble. This ensemble should be at least a quartet. The student should prepare two features: one from Year 3 repertoire and one from Year 4 repertoire.

Playing the advanced standing jury is no guarantee of performance status advancement. The decision is based upon academic standing and faculty evaluation of the jury.

For a December advanced standing jury:

- If no semesters are granted, the candidate must perform the regular junior jury in May as well as participate in lessons, ensembles, and improvisation during their senior year. The candidate will perform a graduation recital in the spring semester of their senior year.
- If one semester is granted, the candidate must perform a graduation jury in May. In the following fall semester, the candidate must participate in lessons, ensembles, and improvisation as well as complete a graduation recital
- If two semesters are granted, the candidate must perform a graduation recital during the spring semester or before the end of the add-drop period of the following fall semester. The candidate must participate in all classes, lessons, and ensembles as assigned for the remainder of the current academic year. Recitals may not be performed during the summer months.

For a May advanced standing jury:

- If no semesters are granted, the candidate must take lessons, ensembles, and improvisation during their senior year and perform a graduation recital and graduation jury in the spring semester of their senior year.
- If one semester is granted, the candidate must take lessons, ensembles, and improvisation during the fall semester of their senior year as well as perform a graduation recital and graduation jury.
- If two semesters are granted, a graduation recital must be performed before the end of the add-drop period of the following fall semester. Recitals may not be performed during the summer months.

Please note: The graduation recital may only be scheduled upon successful completion of the advanced standing jury.

#### **4. Jury Requirements for All Performance Majors**

Every student—freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, and first- and second-year graduate performance major (instrumental and vocal)—must perform a jury at the end of each school year. Seniors and second-year graduate students perform required recitals as well.

Following is the format and focus of the juries.

- Each student will perform with his or her Manhattan School of Music school combo. Students are strongly encouraged to memorize their feature (see below).
- Each student prepares one feature with a faculty combo coach, as well as his or her private teacher, reflecting his or her level of performance ability.
- In addition, any faculty member or jury panel can select any other tune from the improvisation tune list (pages 13–15). The student will play alone or with rhythm section at the discretion of faculty panel. Repertoire may be requested in any style or meter. Students are responsible for a cumulative understanding of the repertoire list. (For example, by the fourth year, a student is responsible for all four years of repertoire.)
- Each combo presents a typed tune list to the faculty. The number of tunes prepared reflects the number of musicians in the combo. Example: a quintet prepares five tunes.
- Vocalists will perform in duos with their assigned pianist or guitarist, with an added rhythm section of their choice, or an assigned Manhattan School of Music school combo. Vocalists prepare five tunes of their choice; three of the five will be selected by the jury faculty present.
- Tunes selected should be in various keys, moods, tempos, forms, harmonies, and styles.
- All students must bring lead sheets for all tunes to the jury.
- All juries will be critiqued at the end of the performance by each of the faculty present. All jury forms will be filled out, graded, and submitted to the office of the registrar for future viewing by the student. Students will be critiqued in two ways:
  - As individuals: time, phrasing, articulation, sound, pitch, style, soulfulness, and improvisational (storytelling) ability.
  - As overall ensemble performers.
- Students should be appropriately dressed in concert black.
- Each feature should incorporate all members of the combo.

## 5. Jury Requirements for Composition Majors

### Undergraduate Students

All compositions and arrangements for juries must be worked on and approved by the student's private studio faculty prior to jury presentation.

### Graduate Students

All compositions and arrangements for juries must be worked on and approved by the student's private studio faculty prior to jury presentation.

**First-year graduate students:** Present at least four large ensemble works. (This could be for Big Band, Jazz Philharmonic Orchestra, or any combination of 17 instruments at minimum) Electronic media may be incorporated if desired. One work should include vocalist or vocal ensemble. One may be a fully realized MIDI work or a combination of MIDI and acoustic instruments. The MIDI work is optional and can be used in place of one of the large ensemble works. At least half of the jury must be recorded.

**Second-year graduate students:** Present at least six large ensemble works. One of the six must be a Jazz Philharmonic work. Three of these works must be for big band consisting of eight brass, five saxophones, and four rhythm section players. One work must include vocalist or vocal ensemble. One may be a fully realized MIDI work or a combination of MIDI and acoustic instruments. The MIDI work is optional and can be used in place of one of the big band orchestrations. At least four selections must be recorded.

## 6. Jury Postponement

The dean of academics or the dean of students will only consider a student petition requesting postponement of a jury in extreme medical conditions (documented by a physician), sudden family emergencies, or other exceptional circumstances. **Any student who fails to play a scheduled jury will receive an "F" for that jury and be placed on academic probation, or, depending on the circumstances, may be subject to immediate dismissal from the school.** A postponed jury must be successfully completed no later than the first week of the subsequent semester.

## 7. Jury Repertoire List

### YEAR 1

1. Blue Bossa
2. Stella by Starlight
3. Satin Doll
4. Take the A Train
5. There Will Never Be Another You
6. Don't Get Around Much Anymore
7. Green Dolphin Street
8. Indiana
9. I Got Rhythm
10. Honeysuckle Rose
11. Autumn Leaves
12. The Girl From Ipanema
13. Wave
14. Misty
15. My Funny Valentine
16. Someday My Prince Will Come
17. All of Me
18. Bye Bye Blackbird
19. Tenor Madness
20. So What
21. Cool Blues
22. Perdido
23. Sweet Georgia Brown
24. What Is This Thing Called Love?
25. Stompin' at the Savoy
26. Night and Day
27. Mr. PC
28. All Blues
29. Maiden Voyage
30. A Night in Tunisia

### YEAR 2

1. Once I Had a Secret Love
2. Confirmation
3. Like Someone In Love
4. I Hear a Rhapsody
5. I Love You
6. Our Love Is Here to Stay
7. Prelude To a Kiss
8. Stardust
9. Here's That Rainy Day
10. The Days of Wine and Roses
11. A Day in the Life of a Fool
12. Embraceable You
13. Body and Soul
14. Cherokee
15. What's New
16. Afternoon in Paris
17. Alone Together
18. Yesterdays
19. Au Privave
20. All the Things You Are
21. Milestones (old)
22. Bluesette
23. Quiet Nights
24. Don't Blame Me
25. Footprints
26. Four
27. Roseta
28. Lady Bird
29. Joyspring
30. Minority

### YEAR 3

1. All of You
2. Beautiful Love
3. Darn That Dream
4. Everything Happens to Me
5. Here's That Rainy Day
6. Dearly Beloved
7. How High the Moon
8. Meditation
9. I Can't Get Started
10. I Got It Bad
11. End of a Love Affair
12. I Remember April
13. In a Mellow Tone
14. In a Sentimental Mood
15. Invitation
16. Seven Steps to Heaven
17. It Don't Mean a Thing
18. My One and Only Love
19. I'll Take Romance
20. Up Jumped Spring
21. Out of Nowhere
22. 'Round Midnight
23. Solar
24. The Shadow of Your Smile
25. Sophisticated Lady
26. Tenderly
27. Take 5
28. Tune Up
29. When I Fall in Love
30. Just One of Those Things

### YEAR 4

1. Giant Steps
2. Struttin' With Some Barbecue
3. The Way You Look Tonight
4. Jitterbug Waltz
5. Love for Sale
6. Easy Living
7. Willow Weep for Me
8. You Stepped Out of a Dream
9. Woody 'n' You
10. Con Alma
11. Once I Love
12. How Insensitive
13. The Song Is You
14. Blame It on My Youth
15. My Favorite Things
16. Blue in Green
17. God Bless the Child
18. Have You Met Miss Jones?
19. In a Sentimental Mood
20. For All We Know
21. Fly Me to the Moon
22. I Remember You
23. Milestones (new)
24. One-Finger Snap
25. Just Friends
26. Somewhere Over the Rainbow
27. Mood Indigo
28. Dolphin Dance
29. A Foggy Day
30. Speak No Evil

## YEAR 5

1. It Could Happen to You
2. Summertime
3. Nica's Dream
4. Spring Is Here
5. It Might as Well Be Spring
6. Spring Can Really Hang You Up the Most
7. Pensativa
8. Upper Manhattan Medical Group
9. You Don't Know What Love Is
10. 'Round Midnight
11. St. Thomas
12. These Foolish Things
13. Watch What Happens
14. Speak Low
15. Pent Up House
16. Polka Dots and Moonbeams
17. My Shining Hour
18. I'm Old-Fashioned
19. Imagination
20. I Thought About You
21. Everything Happens to Me
22. Moment's Notice
23. Ain't Misbehavin'
24. Airegin
25. All God's Children Got Rhythm
26. Angel Eyes
27. As Time Goes By
28. But Not for Me
29. But Beautiful
30. Caravan

## YEAR 6

1. Chega de Saudade
2. A Child Is Born
3. Emily
4. Alice in Wonderland
5. Count Down
6. Easy to Love
7. Georgia
8. Gone With the Wind
9. Greensleeves
10. How Deep Is the Ocean?
11. Moonlight in Vermont
12. I Fall in Love Too Easily
13. Stablemates
14. I Should Care
15. If I Were a Bell
16. It's All Right With Me
17. If You Could See Me Now
18. I'm Getting Sentimental Over You
19. In Your Own Sweet Way
20. Whispering
21. I've Grown Accustomed to Your Face
22. Just in Time
23. Laura
24. Long Ago and Far Away
25. Love Walked In
26. Lover Man
27. Lover
28. Slow Boat to China
29. Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise
30. Tangerine

## **IV. Recitals**

### **1. Non-required Recitals**

Students are encouraged to give recitals in non-graduation years. Consult with your teacher for approval. Most non-required recitals are given in the fall semester when recital space is more readily available. The scheduling coordinator is responsible for the assignment of recital space and other related details.

### **2. Required Recitals—Undergraduate and Graduate Programs**

Students expecting to graduate from either program during the current school year are required to give a graduation recital. Follow repertoire requirements carefully in building a recital program. Make certain that your teacher approves of the chosen repertoire. Consult the scheduling coordinator in scheduling a graduation recital. The recital approval form, available from the scheduling coordinator, requires the approval and signatures of your teacher and the assistant dean. The teacher's signature indicates that the student is prepared to perform. Once the major teacher has signed the form, the teacher is not permitted to request a postponement of the recital. The assistant dean's signature signifies approval of the repertoire and programming. The assistant dean will not sign a recital approval form until the major teacher has done so. Students should be certain that the program is accurately written before submitting it for signatures. The recital approval form is to be filed with the scheduling coordinator and the assistant dean at least four weeks prior to the recital date. Students must be enrolled for major lessons until the graduation recital and graduation jury (as applicable) have been successfully completed. A graduation recital does not serve as a substitute for an entrance examination to a higher degree program. Students are responsible for providing their own accompanists.

### **3. Recital Criteria**

In order for recitals to run smoothly the following rules and procedures should be followed:

- Each recital should have a typed, printed program (a copy must be submitted to the concert office).
- Performers should be appropriately dressed.
- Recital durations as follows:
  - Bachelor of Music: 75 minutes including intermission
  - Master of Music: 90 minutes including intermission
  - Doctor of Musical Arts: 120 minutes including intermission

Because of the large volume of recitals, especially in the Spring semester, candidates may not exceed these performance lengths.

- Two faculty adjudicators are required to attend the performance (your private teacher does NOT count). The use of CD or videotape is sanctioned only if no faculty adjudicators can be present and with the approval of the assistant dean or the manager of jazz administration. You should contact faculty adjudicators well in advance of the recital. All adjudicators must be approved by the assistant dean or the manager of jazz administration.

- A recital can take place in a club where the student is featured. This must be approved in advance with assistant dean or the manager of jazz administration.
- Students are responsible for arranging all equipment needs for their recital. Neither the recording studio nor the Jazz Arts Program are responsible for onstage equipment. Make arrangements for your equipment well in advance of the date.

Please note that attendance and punctuality are critical factors in your grade.

## **V. Attire**

- For large ensembles: Men: Black Suit with Long Tie, Black Shoes and Socks. Women: Dressy Black Outfit
- For Jazz Philharmonic concerts: Men: Black tux, black bow tie, Black Shoes and Socks Women: Formal dark outfit
- For juries, recitals and Café Jazz: Concert black (long-sleeve black shirt, black pant, black belt, black socks, and black shoes)

## **VI. Grading System**

### **1. Academic Classes (required and electives)**

Exams, attendance, assignments, class participation and attitude are all factors in your grade.

### **2. Performance Classes (all ensembles)**

Attendance, attitude, overall improvement in performing ability (time, style, phrasing, articulation, interpretation, improvisation, solo development, and improvement, reading, etc.) are all factors in your grade.

# Appendix: The Student Artist Jazz Musician

## JD Jet-Propelled Wisdom or How to “Straighten Out”!!

### 1. Wisdom

You are #1—It is very important that we treat each of you as an individual and tailor your schedules to fit your needs. We want you to get the best education you deserve.

- It’s easy to be like everyone else; set a new standard for yourself! Work harder, pay attention to detail, and try to set a new standard of excellence! Work on developing something new, different, special, serious, and lasting! With depth and substance! The result will be an audience, a career, a life in music, and the development of your own voice.
- Remember you are the best from all over the world, coming together to create, to grow, and to build a lasting artist’s life and career! There still must be a top and bottom! Sometimes this is difficult to deal with, since you were the top in your region. Work harder, you’ll get there!
- You are very important and special! The world would not be the same without you! When you are in a classroom or a rehearsal and someone leaves, the feeling in the room changes! THAT’S HOW IMPORTANT YOU ARE!!!
- Develop a positive attitude! Turn around a negative situation and make it positive! It’s in the “tude”—some students can be dark, bitter, negative, and angry! Be focused! Know what you want! Be positive! Have respect for others; others’ property; and others’ feelings, thoughts, ideas. There isn’t only one way to see or do something.
- Take an artist approach to music! Art has many meanings—look for the deepest!
- Our faculty is among the most talented, energetic, internationally known, diverse, and open-minded of all jazz institutions.
- You are all drummers!
- Practice listening one hour per day! Copy from the Masters! Use a repeated listening technique! First for overall feel and oral picture! Then focus on individual instruments and their relationship to other members of the ensemble. Are they fulfilling their instrumental roles? Do you know what the role of each instrumentalist is? Seek the answers!!
- Learn the standards and jazz classics so that your improvising can go to the next level of musical statement! Learn to tell a story!

(12) Twelve tunes say it all: “Blues,” “I’ve Got Rhythm,” “Cherokee,” “Sweet Georgia Brown,” “Indiana,” “How High the Moon,” “Out of Nowhere,” “Perdido,” “Honeysuckle Rose,” “Whispering,” “All the Things You Are,” “Night and Day,” “Lover”!!

- The key to a successful performance is: Focus and concentration. Work for listen-and-match concepts – you perform music with your ears and hearts!! Listen and match pitch; dynamics; phrasing; articulation; note duration; and up-beat, down-beat relationships!!
- Student Semester RUMORS TO AVOID!!
  - I’m taking too many classes.
  - Classes are too HARD!
- ANSWERS: Maybe you just need to work harder; become more efficient; and organize your hourly, daily, weekly, and monthly schedules!!
- Support each other in concerts; take advantage of classical recitals, concerts, and curriculum!
- Check the jazz bulletin board (outside of jazz offices) and your student mailboxes, phone messages, and emails daily!
- Review your Student Handbook for:
  - Ensemble placement and audition policies
  - Rehearsal policies
  - Grades and grading system
  - Absences and lateness of classes and ensembles
  - Juries
  - Recitals
- You are expected to be at all rehearsals: prepared and with parts, tunes, and chord changes—practiced, learned, memorized, and internalized.
- REMEMBER: Lateness and cutting of classes, ensemble rehearsals and mandatory meetings, master classes, and performances will NOT be tolerated and will result in the lowering of grades, possible failures, and decrease or loss of scholarships. You need to evaluate your decision to cut, send a “sub,” or take a professional leave of absence in regard to the importance of any scholarship you are already receiving or will possibly receive in the future. Is the “GIG” good enough musically or monetarily to possibly blow your scholarship or scholarship opportunity? Chances are, the “GIG” is probably not “musically challenging” or does not pay that well!! Is it worth blowing your education? Does the amount of money the “GIG” is paying exceed your scholarship ratio???
- Remember: While in school you are a student first. You MUST plan your outside activities around school, not the other way around.
- Look into Composers Week as it relates to you! (Inquire in the jazz office.)
- We want to help you build a life in music; help you develop your career.
- Incoming students: take advantage of student/faculty conferences!
- Our approach to education is interdisciplinary! Your major private teachers; your theory, ear-training, history, improvisation, and ensemble teachers are all working together in this goal: to give you the most meaningful education your can get and deserve.
- Remember the Joy in Making Music!! Be happy and positive, but have FUN!!
- Take advantage of jam session rooms! (Inquire in the jazz office.)
- We believe in the University of the Road. PLAY!! PLAY!! PLAY!! PLAY!!

- You practice this music with other musicians! Jam, hang, play, play, and play! Create playing opportunities for yourself!
- We are very interested in upgrading and expanding the ART OF JAZZ!
- Thoughts on Big Bands:
  - A Big Band is the only place where a jazz musician learns about orchestral music, blend, balance, section playing, rhythm, time, phrasing, articulation, dynamics, and how to listen!!
  - This leads to a better understanding and concept of building a story-telling solo.
  - There is something missing in a player who hasn't had Big Band experience.
  - It is a great vehicle to continue to develop! The true American orchestra!
  - It teaches you how to play in a recording studio, TV show, Broadway shows, acts, performing with singers, etc.
- Investigate the Center for Contemporary Composition and New Technology (Rooms 506 and 516).
- The secret to success and developing your own voice is:
  - Work a little harder than everyone else.
  - Pay attention to detail.
- Can you make a living in music? Can you make a living in jazz? The answer is YES!! You are running a business. You are a small-business person. Your business is you!! Some questions you need to find answers to:
  - Why should you be hired?
  - What do you bring to the gig?
  - What do you have to offer?
    - What are your unique, different, or individual strengths?
      - Are you prepared?
      - Are you dependable?
      - Can you be trusted?
- Remember—No one can take your dream from you! You give it up!!!
- Make everything feel like a GROOVE!!! This includes your music, lifestyle, how you carry yourself, and how you relate to other people. This “tude” leads to success and happiness!
- Work hard, with a terrier-like intensity; but find time to read; attend music and dance concerts and theater, and visit museums and galleries. Challenge yourself! Stay conversant with a cultural and artistic life!
- Lastly . . . Thank you for being who you are!!!

## **2. JD's Random Thoughts**

- Young jazz musicians today have something in common with doctors and lawyers: they need to be academically certified. A masters and a doctoral degree have become an essential credential.
- The proverbial artist, struggling alone in a practice room and waiting for the phone to ring has given way to an alternative model: the conservatory jazz artist.

- This does not mean a growth in the amount of first-rate jazz being created in this country. In fact, many critics feel that jazz schools are directly responsible for a decline in the quality and the level of jazz.
- When I go to conventions, concerts, etc., all I see is “jazz-school-art.” The jazz sounds academic; basically it sounds like homework, learning how to follow the teacher’s rules!
- In truth, where are the innovative sounds in jazz?
- While jazz schools have flourished since the 60s, they have become lodges in the institutions and critical theory has been elevated above craftsmanship.
- Whereas once students learned skills by attending jazz jam sessions, copying from recordings, and the teacher/student relationship, today they sit subverting the hierarchy.
- Does anyone spend three or four years on a work of art these days?
- Schools have taught a generation of jazz artists how to create jazz without laboring in their practice rooms! It’s all about intellectual strategy. You assemble scales into riffs and motifs and create a solo; say the word story, and they are done.
- The jazz school has fostered its own conceptually driven style. Its invasion of the jazz world has been abetted by the commercial media, where an obsession with novelty and the business of jazz makes every recent graduate a potentially hot property.
- Many of the students in jazz schools have already recorded CDs, and it’s not unusual to find record producers trolling the school halls and jazz conventions in search of the next 20-something sensation.
- I don’t think that young jazz artists today are any less sincere than artists 50 years ago, but they are facing an historically unique situation. This is at a time when the jazz scene is market-driven; when clubs, presenters, promoters, and record producers are obsessed with finding the next hot name. Schools are producing far more musicians than the system can possibly absorb. The pressure to create trendy work may be greater than ever. The rise of the 80s jazz star changed everything, and changed it for the worse.
- I’m not interested in critical theory elevated above craftsmanship. The way to become a jazz artist and develop your own identity is to play and play and play. Don’t be lazy. Work harder than everyone else. Try to do something better and on a higher level.
- Set a high standard for yourself! Do something so well that everyone knows there is something special happening! Pay attention to detail, do the little things that make a difference, be a little different, work a little harder—this is the key to success.
- Our focus is on performance, not on academics and critical theory. The study of theory and the theoretical principals will help plug the holes and will make you a better artist. But critical theory is important in learning how to think.
- The way to develop an outstanding, innovative jazz school is to devise a curriculum with depth and substance and hire an internationally recognized, diverse, dedicated and knowledgeable faculty. This in turn will attract good, dedicated and serious students.

- My primary focus is on the student, advancement, career development, and a “Life in Music”!
- There is no room at Manhattan School of Music for self-interest, negativity, darkness, bitterness, and anger!
- Things do not happen if one does not make them happen!
- Take care of business and respect others! This will help to guide you in your future and help to build a successful life and career.
- Create a daily, organized, well-disciplined study and practice schedule for yourself. Listen, take notes, be aware, be respectful. Your private teachers and faculty will be glad to help you in improving these areas of personal development.

### **3. What should you get out of college?**

- Students should emerge with a capacity to think and express themselves with clarity!
- To be able to think critically about issues, to analyze them and to come up with their own conclusions; under all circumstances!
- To be successful in this complex world, you need to be able to work with a diverse group of people and handle all challenges.
- Learn to move intellectually within an array of views. This is difficult and requires moving outside your own little way of seeing the world.
- Primary skills should be analytical skills of interpretation and inquiry. How does one distinguish truth from fiction, etc.? The ability to understand the other side, even when you may not share it, is necessary.
- You should not be dependent on the sources of information provided by the media or any other venue; have an independent capacity to ask questions and evaluate answers.
- A college education has to create a lifelong habit of curiosity, as opposed to becoming more convinced that you are the authority. It should provide the capacity to have a deep enjoyment of all aspects of human expression that are not commercial and of art that is not blockbuster and/or money-making!
- Finally: develop a sense of value that is beyond material gain, beyond wealth, fame and power.
- In the end, it’s about the way you conduct your life both as a private individual and as a citizen!

### **4. Learning How to Learn!**

Mastering the art of learning is by no means an easy accomplishment. The task demands an eagerness—better yet, a passion—for learning itself; a mind open to complexity, ambiguity, and opposing points of view; the insight to formulate the right questions; the thirst for answers; and the independence, once all this is done, to arrive at one’s own conclusions.

## **5. The Contemporary Jazz Artist**

Endless pursuit of the unknown has long been a point of pride among Jazz Musicians, and a way of distinguishing themselves from what many see as the old, out-of-touch traditions!

If a Jazz Artist knows what he/she will produce, they are not a contemporary jazz artist!

If the audience wants a sure bet, go and hear "Classic Jazz". There they will hear what they expect!!

Many Jazz Musicians are eager to give their music longer lives! This idea applies a museum curatorial approach to "live" art practice rather than "In the Moment Performance"!!

A museum approach is a way of holding onto something that by its very nature cannot be held onto!

Jazz Musicians need to have a sense of a constant evolution that we need to be supporting and energizing! Not running forward, but still looking backward and worrying about what they have already missed!

## **6. Making It Beautiful**

Artists need beautiful things around them.

Beautiful objects stimulate you, they inspire you.

Submerge yourself in beautiful music, people, paintings, literature, sculpture, clouds, trees, birds, flowers, sunshine, etc.

## **7. An Interview with Justin DiCioccio**

This interview, conducted by Eric Neymeyer, appeared in the Jazz Improv Magazine in February 2008.

Q: Tell us about the kind of enthusiasm that you experience every day in the jazz department at Manhattan School of Music.

A: It's really called the Jazz Arts Program. The idea of that is that it is not isolated from the rest of the school. We believe in an interdisciplinary approach within the

jazz program, and interdisciplinary with the classical area of study also. Where our program differs from other institutions, is that our concept is built on what I call the complete artist and musician of the 21st Century – one who is a performer, a composer and a pedagogue. The reason behind that is that people are asking constantly, “Can you make a living in music?” I get calls from parents and students asking if you can really make a living in music today – especially in jazz. Immediately, I say, “Yes, you can.” But you need to know how to do that. People have said, “Justin, this is really an innovative concept,” and it really isn’t. It’s really what we do as musicians. We play. We write – we do some kind of writing – whether we’re writing songs, or compositions, or arrangements, or writing articles or reviews for magazines or publications. We’re performers. And, we all do some kind of teaching private teaching, or in an institution. Everybody I know does that. It’s not one-third, one-third, one-third, necessarily. We all have our strengths and weaknesses, our likes, our dislikes. Some of us lean more toward playing, Some of us lean more toward writing. Some of us lean more toward teaching. We are able to do all that on an extremely high level, because the level of playing is so high. There used to be a concept that if you can’t play, you teach. But that’s been gone for some time. By initiating this concept of the complete artist-musician, one thing feeds off the other. The playing helps the composing. The composing helps the playing. The teaching helps the composing helps the playing. It helps you dissect what you’re doing so you understand everything. There’s no separation. The interdisciplinary approach of these three concepts helps to build, and becomes, a life in music – not only a career, but a life. Your art becomes your life – and life reflects art and art reflects life.

Q: As musicians, some of us spend a lot of time in the practice room, almost to the exclusion of developing interpersonal skills, and business acumen and consequently to the detriment of being successful – because developing relationships is so important – especially in the current environment where everyone needs to take more responsibility for his or her own actions and career success. Could you comment?

A: I think there has to be an awareness of what you’re talking about – which is really on the money. A musician is a small business person today – and you have to take that approach. Sometimes when I talk to people about that, they think I’m shuckin’ and jivin’ – like I don’t know what I’m talking about or I’m bastardizing the music. I’m not bastardizing the music at all. I’m not shuckin’ and jivin’. I’m talking about life and the reality. We are small business people – and the business is us. If we were standing at the corner of 42nd Street and Broadway, and there were four pizza restaurants, which one should I go to? Why should I go to that restaurant on the northeast corner instead of the other ones? What do you have that is unique,

different and special? Why should I buy my pizza from you? And, as an artist, musician, educator, what do you have that is unique, different and special. Why should people want to hire you? What do you bring to the table that is you? Of course, your voice, what you do, is you. People talk about developing your own voice. Well, developing your own voice is the thing that you have inside of you. Each of us have something that's unique, different and special and that's you. And, figuring out what that thing is, and then using that as your strength – that's what you bring to the table. And, these things enable you to have a life in music and be successful.

Q: Regrettably some artists and musicians with these hopes and desires do not implement these understandings. But, the moment you play your first gig, or sell your first song, you are in business – whether or not you know it, believe it, or take responsibility for it.

A: That's unfortunate, because eventually they are going to become bitter, negative, angry and disenchanting because they're not going to be working. By the way, the only time you need a manager is when you get to the point where you want to perform concerts at Carnegie Hall, or Lincoln Center, and so forth. On that level, you need a manager because the booking agents won't talk to the performers. But anything less than that, you've got to take responsibility for yourself. You are the President and CEO of your business. Your business is you.

Q: Could you talk about the background that has brought you to this point where you exude an incredibly positive, motivation attitude and magnetic persona?

A: The most important thing is to make everything feel like a groove. I've been fortunate as a player. I know what a groove is, and I know how to hit a groove – as a player, as a conductor. That's my concept – to make everything feel like a groove. So if I'm teaching a lesson, or playing, or conducting or writing a composition – I want to do so with that kind of feeling. When you're playing the music, you have to hit a groove. If you're not hitting a groove, you're not playing the music. So, just bring that groove to everything you do. Make everything in life feel like a groove. That's the secret. That's the key. Much of what we do is "hanging." You're hanging on the bandstand, you're hanging in the concert hall. You go out for dinner. You go have a drink, or coffee. Whatever it is, you want to be able to talk to people – the interplay. The interplay is life. If you don't want to have a cup of coffee or dinner with that person, how are you going to play music with them? The key is to make everything hit a groove. Music is about emotions and feelings. That's what you have to hit. And, once you hit a groove, everybody wants to be part of that – because it feels good. A lot of times students worry about making money. If you hit a groove, that comes across in your music, you make people feel good, they hire you and you make money.

Q: Would you like to touch upon your experience as a player?

A: I've been involved in music education, in jazz education, so long that people forget that I'm also a player. That's how I learned to do this – from being a player. I wear many hats – one is as an educator, one is as a player, one is as a conductor. I do a lot of conducting – not only big bands, but contemporary symphony orchestras. I've played in symphony orchestras, the Marine Band in Washington, played with Duke Ellington – trio with Duke Ellington – when I was the White House drummer with the Marine Band – and I'm still playing. I am who I am because I'm a player. That's how I learned to hit a groove. I'm back to that again. Make everything in life feel like a groove.