

4-9-2009

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "04/09/2009 - EIU Jazz Ensemble Spring Concert to Include Big-Band Selections" (2009). 2009. 52.

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EIU Jazz Ensemble Spring Concert to Include Big-Band Selections

Apr-09-2009

The EIU Jazz Ensemble Spring Concert will bring classic and contemporary big-band music to Eastern Illinois University's Doudna Fine Arts Center on Thursday, April 23.

The concert, which includes several student compositions and arrangements, is to begin at 7:30 p.m. in The Theatre. Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for students; seating is open.

The EIU Jazz Ensemble will be joined by three guest musicians: Allan Horney, trombone; Jeff Helgesen, trumpet; and Trish Marcus, vocals.

Horney, a professor of jazz studies who will retire after this semester, will be featured on a swinging arrangement of "Makin' Whoopie." A former director of the EIU Jazz Ensemble, Horney has been an arranger for the Marching Illini of the University of Illinois since 1977.

Helgesen, a Champaign resident, has been an active fixture in east-central Illinois music circles for more than 25 years. His credits include live performances and/or recordings with Aretha Franklin, Natalie Cole, Ray Charles, The Manhattan Transfer and the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra.

Marcus, of Winchester, Ky., is the mother of the EIU Jazz Ensemble's lead alto saxophonist, Joshua Marcus. This is his final performance with the band, and she will be featured as vocalist on his arrangement of "My Foolish Heart" by Young and Washington.

The EIU Jazz Ensemble, which is directed by Sam Fagaly, has received numerous awards, including Outstanding Ensemble and Solo Performance citations at the Notre Dame and Elmhurst College jazz festivals, as well as Downbeat magazine's prestigious "DB" award for best big band recording in the U.S.

The band released its first CD, "Eastern Time Zone," in 1994, and its latest recording is "In the Pocket." The group has been featured at conferences and festivals, including the International Association for Jazz Educators convention.

The concert is sponsored by the EIU music department.

For tickets and information, or to arrange accommodations for people with special needs, contact Doudna Fine Arts Patron Services (217-581-3110 or doudnatix@eiu.edu) or visit the Doudna Fine Arts Center Box Office.

The Doudna Fine Arts Center is a division of the EIU College of Arts and Humanities. For more information, please see <http://www.eiu.edu/doudna>.