

Bill Watrous and The Temple Jazz Orchestra

Thomas Fairlie

The Temple Jazz Orchestra with trombonist Bill Watrous will perform at this year's Texas Bandmasters Association Convention/Clinic. Founded and directed by Thomas Fairlie, the Temple Jazz Orchestra is in residence at Temple College in Temple, Texas. TJO emerged from the natural growth of the jazz program at Temple College over the last 15 years. Founded in 1990, what began as a collaboration of students and adult musicians from the area has become the premier jazz ensemble in Central Texas. TJO now boasts the best professional jazz musicians and educators from an area surrounding Temple, including musicians from Waco, Killeen, Belton, Rockdale, Austin, San Antonio, Round Rock, Brownwood, and other communities.

"The Temple Jazz Orchestra in many ways reflects the overall philosophy of the Temple College music program," Fairlie said. "The entire music program is fully integrated into the community, and has become a center for locally-based music performance in Central Texas."

Area music teachers and professional musicians continue

their music education by performing on a regular basis. This has led to not only the creation of the Temple Jazz Orchestra, but also is the foundation upon which the entire program has been built. "Traditional music majors and other college musicians share ensembles with band and orchestra directors from the area, which significantly improves their performing experience," Fairlie said. Temple College now boasts two big bands, two combos, a large symphonic band, a full-sized community orchestra, and a full array of vocal ensembles including vocal jazz. The success of the college's ensembles also led to the creation of a professional orchestra, the Temple Symphony Orchestra, in 1994. Now in its eleventh season, The Temple Symphony Orchestra is also in residence at Temple College.

The Temple Jazz Orchestra has been the featured band at the final concert of the Temple College Jazz Festival for the past 15 years. In addition to Watrous, TJO has

performed with Marvin Stamm, Bob Mintzer, Russel Ferrante, Eric Marienthal, Allen Vizzuti, John Fedchock, Kevin Mahogany, Gary Foster, Ernie Watts, Lew Soloff,

Frank Mantooth, Wayne Bergeron, and others. TJO has also shared the stage on several occasions with the Temple Symphony Orchestra.

The Temple College Jazz Festival has grown into one of the most successful in Texas. This year

more than 40 ensembles were registered to perform over the three days of the festival. Each year two major recording artists appear with the Temple College big bands on consecutive nights, in addition to one night of professional vocal jazz. Next year drummer Ed Shaughnessy will close the festival with TJO.

Grammy nominee Jazz Trombonist Bill Watrous has carved out an impressive career for himself, performing with jazz greats including Woody Herman, Roy Eldridge, and Count Basie. He has been voted the "Number One

**The Temple Jazz
Orchestra featuring
trombonist Bill Watrous
will perform on
Saturday, July 23
at 4:15 pm.**

**Bill Watrous will
present "Melody
Playing 101" Saturday
morning at 9:30 am.**

Bill Watrous and The TJO

Jazz Trombonist” in Downbeat Magazine’s readers’ poll seven years in a row and has won the magazine’s Critics Award twice.

Bill Watrous is considered to be one of the greatest trombone virtuosos of all time. His talent is truly staggering. In addition to an active schedule of performances at colleges and high schools across the country, Bill Watrous is one of the most “in demand” Los Angeles studio musicians and has recorded nineteen solo albums. His album, “The Tiger of San Pedro” (released on Columbia Records) was nominated for a Grammy in the category of Best Performance by a Large Jazz Ensemble.

He has also been a guest soloist on countless albums by other prominent jazz musicians throughout his career such as Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Ray Charles, Freddie Hubbard, Arturo Sandoval, Michel Legrand, and others too numerous to mention. In addition, one of Bill’s projects included his big band playing with the very successful jazz-rock group Chicago on their album “Night and Day.”

Bill Watrous made his first appearance with TJO in 1994 at the Temple College Jazz Festival. He was invited for a return performance in 2003. “During the dress rehearsal Bill turned to me and asked, ‘are you going to record this?’ I stammered that if it was OK with him we would” Tom Fairlie, TJO director, said. “We were gigging with him again the next day in

Georgetown, and on the way down to the gig Bill and I were listening to the recording. He said to me ‘you need to release this as a CD’. I was floored by the idea, and having an artist of his stature suggest this was a major break through for us.”

This collaboration led to the release of a CD, “Bill Watrous LIVE with the Temple Jazz Orchestra” in the fall of 2004. Discussions related to the Temple Jazz Orchestra appearing with Bill at TBA or TMEA sometime in the future were begun. Subsequently, Bill suggested contacting Jeff Jarvis regarding our mutual interest in a performance at TBA. “I met Jeff at IAJE in Long Beach last January, and he helped us put all of this together at this year’s TBA,” Fairlie said.

The Temple Jazz Orchestra released its first compact disc recording “Soft Lights and Sweet Music, Live” to critical acclaim in the spring of 2001, featuring the works of various artists. The Temple Jazz Orchestra’s second CD “Bill Watrous LIVE with the Temple Jazz Orchestra” was released on October 3, 2004.

For more information on the Temple Jazz Orchestra or to purchase CD’s, go to the TJO web page at: <http://home.att.net/~dawild/tjo.htm>.

For more information on the Temple College music program, go to TC’s web page at www.templejc.edu.



Bill Watrous and Tom Fairlie

Thomas Fairlie has been the Division Director of Fine Arts at Temple College since 1999 and a fulltime faculty member since 1990. He founded and has directed the Temple Jazz Orchestra since 1990. Additionally, he founded the Temple Jazz Festival in 1991, and continues as co-director of the festival. He is the founding and current musical director/conductor of the Temple Symphony Orchestra. Mr. Fairlie was also the co-founder and former musical director/conductor of the Larimer Youth Festival Orchestra (now the Youth Orchestra of the Rockies) from 1995-1999 in Fort Collins, Colorado. He also guest conducted the Fort Collins symphony in a chamber concert and a side-by-side concert with the Larimer Youth Festival Orchestra during the summer of 1999. He was invited to return as a guest conductor for a pair of concerts with the Rocky Mountain Youth Orchestra in the summer of 2002.