



JAMMING: Trombonist Nathan Ford jammed with University of Louisville professor Michael Tracy on Hamilton Island yesterday.

Picture: Contributed.

Jam sessions jazz up piece of paradise

By **NICOLA SIMPSON**

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JAMMING with one of the greats in a tropical island paradise — it sounds like every musician's dream.

For Central Queensland Conservatorium of Music (CQCM) students it has become a reality.

Thirty-six jazz studies students are performing at Hamilton Island with University of Louisville Professor Michael Tracy, of Kentucky, USA.

Prof Tracy has come to Mackay to consult with CQCM staff on research and teaching and to run master classes for the students.

Trombonist and final year student Nathan Ford said working with Prof Tracy was highly motivating.

"It's been good to see a performer who is at a really high level," he said.

"It's made me want to go and practise, it's got me excited again," he said.

Prof Tracy's visit has been made possible by a visiting scholar grant awarded to CQCM.

The seasoned jazz musician has offered instruction to both students and lecturers during his visit.

"Mike has been really impressed with not only the program and the students but also with the partnership in Hamilton," CQCM jazz coordinator Glen Hodges said.

"Part of Mike's visit (to Mackay) next week is actually spending time with both (lecturer in jazz) Derrin Kerr and myself to give us some help with our doctoral studies," he said.

Prof Tracy, a talented saxophonist, can be seen performing at the Clarion Hotel at the Mackay Marina this Sunday from 1pm to 5pm as part of the CQCM's regular Sunday jazz sessions.