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It's a list that could go on for pages: Stanley Turrentine, Curtis Fuller, Billy Taylor, Phil Woods, Art Farmer, Gregory Hines ... You get the picture. For a full list, check out the Jazz Week Web site, www.louisville.edu/music/jazz/jazzweek/03/2003.shtml.

For listeners, evening performances by these folks are the focus of Jazz Week, but they're just the most visible tip of a musical iceberg that includes daylong clinics and workshops that bring established artists together with college students and high school and middle school students from throughout the region.

David Baker, chair of the prominent Jazz Studies Department at Indiana University, said in a phone interview: "I've followed U of L's

Java Men



Jazz Week since it started. From modest beginnings, it's grown to have a national impact that really draws attention to this entire cultural region, Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio. Jamey Aebersold is probably the most visible jazz educator in the world, and he and Mike Tracy have been able to attract some of the biggest names in jazz.

"But what distinguishes the U of L festival from other festivals is that it has such a strong educational component. The performers are not only great players, they're also great teachers, and the festival is inextricably linked to educational aims."

That thought is echoed by David Nearpass, director of bands at Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Terre Haute, Ind., and director of the Jazz Ensemble at Indiana State University. Nearpass is one of many middle school and high school band directors who bring their students to Jazz Week each year.

"From Terre Haute to Louisville is a long way to bring a group of middle school students," Nearpass said. "But we've come down six times. It's great for our kids. Not only do they get feedback and criticism during the clinics, but they also

get the chance to play with people like Clark Terry and Curtis Fuller. It's a classy operation run by very special people."

Over the last decade, the combination of great performances and workshops has paid dividends for the Aebersold Jazz Studies Program. "It gets people talking about the program," Tracy said. "Students see that they'll have an opportunity to study with some of the best players in jazz and it gets them excited about coming to Louisville." In recent years, those students have come from Turkey, Germany, Brazil, Austria and the Czech Republic, as well as from across North America. And enrollment in the jazz program has quadrupled.

As for Jazz Week, it continues to attract top performers. In addition to headliner Dave Brubeck, this year's lineup includes a fine mix of local and national artists. There's Bobby Watson, composer and saxophonist. High points of his 25-year career include a stretch as musical director for Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, playing on the first recordings by Wynton Marsalis and working with the free jazz innovator Sam Rivers. He also has a long string of recordings as leader.

Trumpeter Marcus Printup is a veteran of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra and has recorded as a leader for Blue Note and other jazz labels. In addition, there are performances by vocalist Gail Wynters, Louisville favorites The Java Men and rare jazz films from the collection of Hal Miller.

Each year, Tracy said, members of the U of L jazz faculty get together and try to identify prospective performers. "Then it's a matter of trying to find who's available, who might be in the area and who we can afford," he said. "We've tried to pay tribute to the tradition by bringing in well-established artists, but we've also covered a lot of stylistic ground with groups like (jazz vocal ensemble) New York

Gail Wynters



Voices and DIVA (an all-woman band).

"We've been fortunate to bring in some people who are no longer around, like Stanley Turrentine, Art Farmer and Ray Brown. There are fewer and fewer opportunities to hear people from that generation."

Asked about other artists he'd like to bring in, Tracy reels off names such as free jazz pioneer Ornette Coleman, the Count Basie Band, jazz guitarist John Scofield and the groovy Medeski, Martin & Wood.

Here's hoping!

Jazz Week runs Sunday to Sunday (Feb. 23-March 1). For tickets and schedule information, call 852-6907 or visit www.louisville.edu/music/jazz.

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Marcus Printup

