

# *The Annual Bell Jazz Lecture 2014*

*“You Can’t Teach Jazz! Music Education,  
Music Institutions and Beyond”*



Detail from a painting of Graeme Bell by Bob Baird



***Craig Scott***  
*The 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bell Jazz Lecture*  
*Delivered 27 September 2014*  
*Waverley Library*



# *The Annual Bell Jazz Lecture* **2014**

*“You Can’t Teach Jazz! Music Education,  
Music Institutions and Beyond”*



*Delivered by*

***Craig Scott***

*Chair of Jazz Studies  
Sydney Conservatorium  
of Music*

*27th September 2014*

Drawing by Bob Baird

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# Introduction

## The Annual Bell Jazz Lecture



The Annual Bell Lecture series was initiated in 1993, in association with the Doubly Gifted Exhibition of art works by Australian jazz musicians and has been presented on an annual basis since then. Its purpose has been to honour the contribution to Australian and the world's jazz by the best loved and appreciated Australian jazzman, the late Graeme Bell.

Graeme was, of course, an outstanding pianist, excellent band leader, composer of note and an ambassador for Australian jazz overseas. He will always be missed, but we hope that his memory will be perpetuated, in part, through the twenty two lectures of this series.

Our lecturer for 2014 is Craig Scott, Chair of Jazz Studies at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and his lecture examines the education and development of jazz musicians in the context of music education and practice at the Conservatorium. The Committee takes great pleasure in being able to add him to the long list of Bell Jazz lecturers.



Photo by Mark McPhee

## Craig Scott

Craig Scott has been one of Australia's leading bassists for over 30 years. He began his career in jazz in 1979 with the Keith Stirling Quartet. Since that time he has been a member of many other jazz groups led by such well-known jazz identities as Don Burrows, James Morrison, Julian Lee, Kerrie Biddell, Paul MacNamara, Steve Brien, Judy Bailey, Roger Frampton, Gordon Brisker, Cathy Harley, Trevor Griffin, Serge Ermoll, Jim Pennell

and many others.

He leads his own quintet, "CSQ" (featuring Warwick Alder, Paul Cutlan, Tim Fisher and Tim Firth), which has performed at many of Australia's major jazz festivals, including Manly, Bellingen, Walsh Bay, Darling Harbour and Wangaratta. Craig is also the regular bassist with the Judy Bailey Trio. As well as performing with these and many other groups, he has been invited to perform as bassist for the Wangaratta Festival Jazz Piano competition on three occasions since its inception in 1989. In 2008 he was invited to be on the adjudication panel for the National Jazz Awards - Bass.

Craig has also accompanied a plethora of visiting international jazz artists including Joe Henderson, Red Rodney, Urbie Green, Eddie Daniels, Bobby Shew, Joachim Kuhn, Clifford Jordan, Nat Adderley, Branford Marsalis, Lee Konitz, Mickey Tucker, James Williams, Ronnie Scott, Frank Morgan, George Cables, Jim McNeely, Claire Martin, Mark Levine and Benny Chong.

Craig is deeply involved in jazz education and is Chair of the Jazz Studies Unit at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. He frequently gives master classes at other tertiary institutions around Australia and New Zealand and has also taught for the Jazz Action Society jazz workshop programme and for 'Jazzworx!' jazz clinics in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and Townsville. In July 2002 he was invited to be a guest lecturer at Berklee Music School in Boston, U.S.A for the IASJ (International Association of Schools of Jazz.)

## **“You Can’t Teach Jazz! Music Education, Music Institutions and Beyond.”**

*(The lecture will look at how previous generations of musicians became jazz players and examine whether these processes are the same as the processes that take place at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music now)*

Good afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a great pleasure to be here this afternoon with you, and a real honour to have been asked to present the Bell Lecture for 2014. I wish I could say that I am here because I am a member of the “doubly gifted” club, but regretfully I cannot. I can’t paint, draw, or sculpt to save my life, and anyone who has seen me swing a golf club knows how far my giftedness goes in that area.

I have been involved in music for a good part of my life - 42 years in fact. I began playing professionally while I was still at school, doing shows at the Bondi Pavilion Theatre, and The Marian Street Theatre in Killara with my brother Phil Scott, who is a well - known comedian, satirist, author, and pianist. (Hmmm...maybe he should be doing this lecture.) In 1979 I started playing with the Keith Stirling Quintet and from that time on I have been involved in the music scene, and mostly in the jazz part of it.

The jazz scene has been very good to me over the years. I have been fortunate enough to play with pretty well all of the “greats” in Australia since 1979, and I have had the rare opportunity to play with some exceptional musicians from overseas. All of these experiences have been wonderful, sometimes terrifying, but always an incredible learning opportunity, and a privilege.

As you go through your career it is amazing how often the same kind of questions keep coming up. I wouldn’t mind having a dollar for every time a member of the audience asks “how do you guys know when to start and stop playing?” or “do you guys just make it all up?” or “how do you people know what to play?” These kinds of questions are important questions to the inquirer and deserve to be answered properly. The answer to them all lies within the fact that the musician

who wants to play jazz has to learn what to do, how to do it, make mistakes and generally be immersed in an experiential learning environment.

That environment includes a lot of different aspects. Somebody, and I don't exactly remember who it was now, once said to me that 'the best teacher you have is the appendages you have hanging on both sides of your head.' That is true, but part of the process is learning how to use them. I said earlier that I was involved in music theatre at the beginning, which was fundamentally reading music and performing it the same way every night. That is true of quite a number of the musical genres that exist in what we hear around us. Fundamentally, though, it is not the case in jazz, which relies heavily on an improvised component for the bulk of what is performed by the players and perceived by the listener.

So, how do jazz musicians learn? You listen to jazz on recordings; you go to gigs and watch and listen; you practice your instrument; you investigate harmony; you practice using your aural skills to identify and contextualize what you are hearing. You have lessons; go to jam sessions; approach musicians who are better and more experienced than you are and pick their brains about everything; you delve into the recorded history of jazz to find out how it has arrived at the performance practice of today. You may even do a course of study at an education institution of some type. You experience all of these things as often as you can; and, you do gigs where you make mistakes, or not, and you take from every experience some kind of lesson. It is experiential learning, and it never stops. Every time you take out your instrument you should take away from it something that you have just learnt.

I said earlier that I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to work with many great Australian musicians. So as to not disrespect our imported colleagues, I should say Australian based musicians – we all know how many great musicians live here who were not born here, but have chosen to stay.

I want to refer to the learning experiences that I have just outlined by placing myself in that environment for a few minutes and talk about the people who I regard as the gurus who taught me along the way. As I

said earlier, I started my jazz journey in the Keith Stirling Band. Keith was the first guru for me, and in fact I first studied with him prior to being in his band. In 1978 I enrolled in what was then the NSW Conservatorium of Music, in the extension studies program. This was a part time evening based course which was available to people who wished to upgrade their skills and mine could certainly use upgrading back then. It was the first formal environment that I had experienced that took like minded, but inexperienced musicians, and placed them together for 2 hours on a Monday night and exposed them to a master musician who could do everything that he was asking of the class. Keith was a master musician, believe me. He left after one semester to go on an Australia Council grant to study in America, and was replaced by Roger Frampton, who was also a master musician and teacher. During that time I met and became friends with Steve Brien, who was not actually in my class but we used to hang out a lot. He is therefore my most long-standing musical colleague and, as you know, he is a fantastic guitarist. Those classes were the beginning of my real education in jazz.

In 1979 I was offered a 6 month contract on the Fairstar with pianist Jay Stewart, the son of the late and greatly missed Barry Stewart, and drummer Cary Bennett. Just as a matter of interest Jay is now the composer of most of the music you hear on a large percentage of the Reality TV shows you see in Australia, and Cary is now Dr. Cary Bennett PhD and is teaching in the Philosophy department at the University of New England in Armidale. Between the 3 of us we knew about half a dozen songs, including The Girl from Ipanema, a 12 bar blues and Don't Get Around Much Any More. The 5 hour gig saw a lot of those tunes for the first few days. Luckily we had plenty of time on our hands and we started learning tunes from day one. In fact one of the performers on the boat was great – her name was Lola Nixon and she kept coming to sit in with us and made us learn her favourite standards so we could play for her.

I got off the Fairstar in August '79 and almost immediately I got a call from Keith and he asked me to join a band he was putting together. Well, I was stoked! Shortly after that, the guitarist who had been in the group left, and I suggested Steve Brien as the replacement and we were off. We often rehearsed all day 3-4 days a week. Keith was assiduous with us. We studied harmony; we listened to tons of jazz; we played;

he challenged our ears constantly; and he set the bar very high, and expected us to reach it. For those of you who knew Keith, you would be aware that he often spoke in metaphors. He had a nickname which I know that he detested, but (and with the greatest of respect to him) it was apt. “Cosmic” was it, and I understand that it was coined by Doug Foskitt. One example of Keith’s ‘cosmicity’ is this rave:

“A solo is like a piece of toast...you get the bread and you put it in the toaster...and it cooks...when it pops up, you don’t put it back”

Now you may be wondering what on earth he is talking about here; I know I was. He was saying that you should only play until you have said what you have to say – then shut up. A great lesson actually. There were many others raves like this and they all had an important message concealed within them. They just took a bit of figuring out.

When we finally got to do a gig Keith asked Alan Turnbull to play the drums in the band, and Alan did the first 2 gigs with the group. It was the beginning of a very long association I have had with Alan. We played hundreds of gigs together and fundamentally Alan yelled at me for the first 5 years, sometimes sotto voce, sometimes not, about listening to him and playing with him. He was the next guru for me and, although there were times I would have quite cheerfully strangled him, it was the best thing that could have happened to me. Al has incredible ears, he doesn’t miss anything, and he has reactions like a striking cobra. I remember once I decided to see how closely he listened so I played the circus music theme, but as a walking line. He whirled his head around and said “don’t play that crap”. Duly chastened but incredibly impressed I immediately ceased.

We started working together a lot at the old Regent Supper Club and the pianist in that group was Paul McNamara. Paul is the next guru in my education, and thus I got to work with 2 gurus at the same time. Paul is quite simply the best teacher I have ever come across. Every gig was a learning feast and between Alan yelling and Paul suggesting ways through the songs it was simply amazing. Just as importantly, after the gig we would sit in the car, the three of us and Paul and Al would discuss all manner of things: music; grand prix racing; music; eastern philosophies, such as the writings of Krishnamurti; music; etc. It was like attending the university of life.

I just want to mention one more guru if I may. One night around the same time as the supper club period, I got a call from a pianist who I think is one of the great harmonic masters and, possibly, a bit under appreciated as a jazz artist in some quarters. I am referring to Julian Lee. Julian asked me whether I could do a gig at a restaurant in Neutral Bay which was called Mischa's Roast and Carvery. I turned up with my bass and a book of tunes called the "Real Book" – which was a book full of melodies and chord symbols. I was quite nervous about playing with Mr. Lee – I knew who he was, and what he had done, up to a point. He very obligingly asked me what I would like to play so I opened the book and named a tune. We did that for the whole first set, about an hour's worth of music. Even with my limited experience at the time I could hear that he was changing almost everything he was playing on the fly, to accommodate the bass notes I was thumping out, and, at the end of the first set, he said to me, nicely I must say, "Do you have the Real Book with you?" I answered, "Yes, isn't it great?" He replied, "No, it's rotten and most of it is wrong!" "Ahh, hmm" I retorted. Then he went on to say that in the next set we would play exactly the same tunes again, only this time I would keep the book shut and use my ears. Now I could have sneaked the book open, but he would have known immediately, so I kept it closed and tried to follow him. I wouldn't pretend to try and insult your intelligence by saying that I nailed it all, nowhere near it I would think...but what was obvious even to me was that the tunes which had previously seemed a bit non-descript and dull suddenly sparkled like jewels, with beautiful chord changes and immaculate voice leading in the harmony – each tune had its own unique identity. I will never forget it. That was the start of a long association I had with Julian, which lasted until he stopped playing, although of course we are still friends. Julian would never gloss over a musical point. If I asked what he had just played he would always tell me; explain how it worked; why he did it; how he thought. He also was the first person to point out to me that, when someone is reading a chart, that is what they will play, irrespective of what else might be happening in the band. The other great thing about playing and learning from him was the fact that he wanted you to come up with your own way through the songs and play them at him on the gig. It was a mutual musical conversation always and he has the most unbelievable aural skill. I don't think he ever

missed what I was up to...I can't say the same about myself, but he was patient!

The point about these gurus, and of course there have been others, is that it turns out that this has been the process for musicians for years and years. A long time ago, I thought it was "high time" that I did a PhD and so I started interviewing musicians and researching who were the gurus for previous generations of musicians. It is amazing how little there is in jazz literature about this topic, at least as far as what took place in Australia. The American experience of jazz learning is well captured in a great book entitled: 'Thinking in Jazz: The Infinite Art of Jazz Improvisation', by Paul Berliner.

While being engaged in the PhD, I had the great privilege of interviewing Graeme Bell about his life and career in music, and he told me about his experiences and studying with his mentors. It turned out that it was somewhat similar to my experiences. From many conversations on gigs, or socially with Alan Turnbull, Graeme Lyall, and Darcy Wright, I heard about the incredible influence of Frank Smith. Smith was similar in approach to Keith Stirling – much of what he taught or spoke about was in the setting of his groups. Don Burrows spoke about his experiences to me, often about people from whom he learned and, interestingly, one of the people who he mentioned about influencing his harmonic approach was the wonderful bassist Ed Gaston. Ted Nettlebeck was another member of the Frank Smith School. All musicians I have ever spoken to about this didn't learn their craft in isolation, but rather by getting together with other like minded players and working things out. There are many stories about people wearing the grooves out on their records from playing them over and over, discussing the music on there and trying things out together. Learning jazz has always been about being taught by others, as well as immersing oneself into the genre and learning by experience, listening, reading, transcribing, and studying. Everyone has had someone, or a group of someones with whom they studied and played and learnt their craft. Jazz learning has always been fueled by a master/apprentice mentoring process.

I was speaking earlier about questions that are often asked of me. The one I left out was not so much a question, but more a statement that I have heard many times. It goes something like this, and is usually a

response to the fact that people are suddenly aware of the fact that I work at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music in the jazz department:

“Well, you cant teach jazz can you...you’ve either got it or you haven’t, right?”

Quite early in my career I started to play with Don Burrows - around about 1981 or 2 I believe. At that time he was running the Jazz department at the NSW Conservatorium of Music. I nearly didn’t play with him in fact. He rang my house and said, “ah g’day, it’s Don Burrows here.” And I said “yeah, right” and convinced it was Steve Brien ringing from the downstairs phone extension I hung up. A moment later the phone rang again and a somewhat annoyed sounding voice said, “it’s Don Burrows, I want to speak to Craig Scott.” “I’ll get him”, I replied. (sound of footsteps receding and reappearing). “Hello, this is Craig Scott” I said. We arranged to rehearse at the con, and I started playing with him. In fact it was on both Double and Electric bass that he wanted me to play the music we were performing, until he actually heard me play the Electric bass whereupon he said, “put the electric away, cob, play it all on the double”, which I was only too pleased to do. After a few years in the band, in 1984 Don asked me to start teaching Double Bass at the Conservatorium.

I had been thinking before that, though, that I would have liked to be doing some teaching. I was excited at the processes that I had gone through and was still going through (and still am for that matter) and I was really wishing I could share it with somebody more formally. Jay, Steve and I talked a lot about music and played a lot at the house but the thought of getting to teach younger more inexperienced musicians was appealing. I think that I was already beginning to understand the importance of putting something back into the scene. I was getting a lot out of it, and I wanted to share those experiences. I began to do some teaching for the Jazz Action Society along with David Levy, as well as a bit of ensemble teaching in the NSW school system. So, getting the opportunity to teach at the Conservatorium was possibly the most defining event in my musical life. I must say that it remains so.

The Jazz Studies Department at the Conservatorium was the first jazz program available in Australia. The degree was called the Associate Diploma in Jazz Studies and the first graduates from it emerged in

1979 and, although jazz subjects were available as electives prior to that, it was as I said the first full jazz degree in Australia.

If you look at the musicians who populate the scene now and who were born in the late 1950s or so and beyond, it is quite difficult to find people who did not spend some time studying music and specifically jazz in a tertiary jazz program. Sydney was the first one, but it was quickly followed by the VCA in Melbourne, The Canberra School of Music; Brisbane Con; Elder Con in Adelaide, WAAPA in Perth and so on. There followed some other private providers as well, so jazz is well served in the “institutionalized” environment.

How does this kind of environment stack up against the environment of learning that prior generations enjoyed? I am fortunate in being in a position where I was able to discuss this question with a variety of fellow musicians who range in age from being somewhat older than myself, to somewhat younger, all of whom work in the jazz staff of the Conservatorium. I chose to pick their brains because they are well acquainted with what happens at the Con and they formed a cross-section of people who studied both outside the University environment and also within it. Naturally, I also have an opinion about all of this, but in the context of these conversations I didn't necessarily air my own views, but rather listened to the views of my peers.

The first fact that became apparent to me was that, although the way they all learned was different according to their generation, their belief in what happens at the Con was uniform.

Earlier, when I was discussing my own experiences and what was involved in my own educational journey, I mentioned the skills that I thought were necessary for a jazz musician to develop. They were:

1. To develop the mechanical ability to play an instrument to the level that enables the musician to express their ideas fluently.
2. To study harmony in order for the musician to be able to play a solo over the composer's chord changes.
3. This involves the understanding of, not only what the chord changes are, but also an understanding of how they function and move around and why they move around in the way they do.

4. To develop aural skills to the highest possible level. The reason for this is because there are many possibilities in how the musician may deal with the chord changes in a particular song, and the practice of good jazz players is to not play the same set of chords over and over again, but to alter them, using logical, musical decisions. In jazz the aural aspect is the most critical thing. This is a somewhat broad generalization now, but in the Classical music tradition there is a much greater emphasis on being able to read music, and less on the ability to aurally identify what is going on. Good classical musicians will look at a piece of musical notation and are so well trained that they see the 'dots' and it elicits a physical response. In other words they do not have to go through the process of identifying what the note is, what the rhythm is and how to play it – they are well beyond that stage. Their reaction is immediate and intuitive. The equivalent in jazz is an aural response. Good jazz players do not hear a chord and have to figure it out, what it is replacing and what they might play over it – their reaction is likewise immediate and intuitive. In saying this I am not suggesting that jazz musicians shouldn't bother with learning to read, of course. There are many jazz and commercial gigs where that is just as necessary as being able to aurally identify what is going on.
5. To study the history of jazz in order to know what has come before. Why bother to do that? The answer lies in the fact that each generation of jazz musicians has been somewhat influenced by the history of what has come before and, usually, the process involves beginning by learning what is happening around them when they start out ; bringing their own new ideas to jazz practice and suggesting stylistic and musical changes to performance. Some of the great innovators are good examples of this. Charlie Parker started out playing in society band sax sections and then went away and began to shape the whole be-bop movement. This had a great effect on jazz performance because it involved a different way of performing music, not just because of considerations such as tempo, but also in looking for more ways to solo through chord changes. Jazz has always been a music that will take on board new influences that emerge - just look at the influence of AC Jobim and the whole Brazilian tradition - the synthesis of rock into jazz that musicians such as Herbie Hancock

investigated in the 70's, and, more recently, the interest in world music that has seen many 'folk' musics being synthesized into the jazz language and performance practice. There are many improvised 'musics' around the world. The whole Indian music tradition is fundamentally improvised, but doesn't sound too much like jazz to me. It is the rhythmic qualities such as syncopation and swing and the use of western harmony and western scales and melody that define jazz - and that has not changed since the beginning of the jazz movement, early last century. When something new is added to existing practice it is exciting and I, for one, do not feel it diminishes jazz in any way. One of the most compelling sets of music that I have ever seen was a recital given by Simon Barker, the Sydney based drummer, who I am happy to say, is on the Jazz Staff at the Con. Simon studied the music of a particular village in Korea and, in fact, is one of the very few "westerners" to have been given that opportunity. He has amended the way he sets up his drums and altered them in such a way as to be able to access the sounds and rhythms of the Korean music while playing the kit. His recital consisted of a 20 minute drum solo in which he played all of the Korean influences he had embraced, on the re-worked drum kit, and then followed 40 minutes of trio playing by Simon, Matt McMahon and Jono Brown, in which they played standards, but in which Simon used much of the rhythmic language he had exhibited in the previous 20 minutes. When I say it was fantastic, I am not doing it justice. That it was truly exiting is un-doubtable. That it was jazz in every sense of the word, and contained something that was totally new, but which added to and did not intrude into jazz performance practice is unequivocal.

6. To analyse the work of others and to transcribe and learn from the master musicians to whom we aspire.
7. To play, as much as possible in order to become 'match fit' as a player and to learn from the experience of performing, and this should be as wide ranging as possible.

I would now like to present to you a video that captures some of these things and how we present them at the Conservatorium in the jazz course.

*(At this point, Craig Scott presented a video of some 8-10 minutes in length)*

As you can see from the video we have just watched there is a lot going on at the Conservatorium. Our aims and objectives are simple: To provide the most comprehensive musical education to students that gives them the opportunity to experience performance opportunities at the highest possible level; to assist them on their journey to find and shape their own unique creative artistic voice; and to provide them with the opportunity to develop all of the skills they need to be complete musicians, fluent in all of the aspects of musical literacy that they will need in order to survive in the live music climate that exists in Australia and elsewhere today. Great ears, great technique, great reading, respect for the tradition of jazz and the desire to be lifelong learners who are not content to stand still and rest on their laurels.

Each student who enrolls in the jazz course at the Con is involved in both a small and a large ensemble, both of which meet 2 hours a week, every week of every semester. Currently we have 3 big bands, which we call the Conservatorium Jazz Orchestras, and 10 small ensembles. In the large ensembles the emphasis is on reading, playing together, achieving a blend, swinging and tackling increasingly advanced repertoire. David Theak, my colleague at the Con, runs the first and third bands and he is great at it. You may also be aware that David is the artistic director of the Jazz- Groove Mothership Orchestra, which is a professional band based in Sydney and which has performed with all kind of guest artists, including Maria Schneider and Darcy James Argue. The second band is run by Simon Sweeney, who is also an expert in running big bands, with a long history of doing so in the NSW school system and the community. He also teaches the trumpet for the jazz unit. The 10 small ensembles are run by a variety of the jazz staff - Judy Bailey, Mike Nock, Warwick Alder, Steve Brien, Andrew Dickeson, Dale Barlow, Mike Rivett, Ron Philpott, and David Theak. The emphases in these small ensembles are somewhat similar to those of the large ensemble, but with an added emphasis on the students composing their own music to perform, along with the standard repertoire that you would expect to be covered. Additionally, this year we have created an improvising ensemble, which is run by Simon Barker and Phil Slater, and which explores some of the less 'traditional', freer aspects of group improvised jazz performance. All

of these classes also run 2 hours per week, every week of every semester.

The third ensemble-based class the students are involved in is an Improvisation class which, likewise, runs 2 hours a week, every week of every semester. The emphasis in here is on playing repertoire and looking at the possibilities of how to play through the chord changes, exploring alternatives much in the same way that I referred to earlier when I was talking about the gurus who I had the privilege to work with.

One of the comments I used to hear from musicians, out on the scene, regarding graduated con students was that “they can play but they don’t know any tunes”.

Over the last ten years or so we have upped the ante on the repertoire requirements for the students and they are now required to retain by memory eighty songs, which range from standards to advanced jazz repertoire from contemporary composers. In addition to this, I am excited to say, we have introduced into this core repertoire eight original Australian compositions and we are going to increase it to twenty over the next few years. So one quarter of the required, examinable repertoire will consist of Australian content.

Matt McMahon teaches Jazz Training to the students and has done so for around eight years. In fact before Matt taught it I used to teach it and I miss it, actually. In many respects it was my favourite class – by the time four hours of a Friday morning were through I used to feel that my ears were literally ‘on fire’ - nearly as good as Julian Lees. These classes are also two hours per week.

All the jazz students are required to do Jazz History for two years and the historical content begins in the early 20th century and runs to now. Andrew Dickeson runs those classes and does a great job. The students need to pass a listening exam in which they identify music, do a class presentation on a particular jazz artist and play different styles in the class as part of it. That way, students who have never heard someone like Bix Beiderbecke have to learn that style and reproduce it, and that is the case all the way through the jazz history course.

The Harmony and Arranging course is taught by Evan Lohning, and, if you have ever heard any of his arrangements, it is pretty obvious that he knows a great deal about it. What strikes me about Evan's arranging 'chops' is that musicians like playing his music. That says a lot, to me.

There are other components involved in the jazz course. Students can study Jazz Analysis with Phil Slater; Jazz Vocal Workshop with Judy Bailey, a class with an emphasis on aural skill and chordal voice leading; Jazz Pedagogy, which deals with how to teach jazz to other people; Rhythm Analysis/Awareness with Simon Barker, which is a new elective that looks at the most contemporary use of rhythm and performance practice – every single jazz student does it because it is so good; and Music Business Skills, which is run by David Theak.

When I started out in the music industry you didn't have to do a lot of entrepreneurial work on behalf of yourself, really. If you could play well, and you were a decent human being the phone just rang and you got gigs. That is a far cry from the realities of the music scene now. The students who are coming out of the con have to be able to self promote, know to use social media, know how to get grants, know how to fill in a tax return, know how to get gigs, know how to get their music played in the media...the list goes on. The Music Business Skills course covers all that and more and arms the students with the kind of knowledge that they need. And, they are good at it, because they have to be! People such as myself are mostly hopeless at it, but we are learning!

Lastly, every student has an instrumental lesson every week with an expert teacher and jazz player, who mentors the students, and helps them to fulfill their potential. I will name all of the jazz staff at this point, because I think it is a pretty impressive list:

Piano - Kevin Hunt, Judy Bailey, Mike Nock, Matt McMahon

Trumpet- Phil Slater, Warwick Alder, Simon Sweeney

Saxophone - David Theak, Col Loughnan, Mike Rivett, Dale Barlow

Drums - Simon Barker, Andrew Dickeson

Trombone - James Greening, Dave Panichi

Guitar - Steve Brien

Vocals - Kerrie Biddell

Bass - Ron Philpott, Craig Scott

Jazz Piano Fundamentals Class - Julie Spithill

Jazz Pedagogy - Saul Richardson

Vibes - Daryl Pratt (who is also chair of the Percussion unit)

Most of us also take ensembles, impro classes and sectional tutorials.

The students get a lot from all of this, but so do the teachers. When you teach, you learn just as much. This is a value that we impart to the students – we are all lifelong learners and we hope that they will be curious, challenge every notion and keep growing as artists throughout their careers, too.

As I told you earlier, I spoke to several colleagues at the Con about their learning experiences and asked them to draw comparisons between what we do in the tertiary education system and the learning journeys that they experienced. Their opinions were interesting, I think, and quite diverse in some respects. All of them agreed that the structure of the jazz course was representative of all of the skills that a professional musician requires these days, with the emphasis on musical literacy that we demand from the students in order to pass all their subjects and get their degree. Several colleagues also made the point that because the various skills involved in learning about jazz performance are all under the one roof, so to speak, that the learning process is accelerated. Mike Nock was firmly of the view that the opportunities to engage with learning all of these skills was made easier by our setup and that information that it had taken years for him to learn and access was readily available to the students. My own experiences are similar to the opinion that Mike put forward and I know that there are still things that I know intuitively from the years of performance that I have under my belt, that I need to work on from the perspective of really understanding them to the point that I can articulate what they mean to the students. Judy Bailey made the point that although she agreed with Mike regarding the availability of information and the acceleration of learning that is available to the students, she felt that the experiences of actually learning at the ‘coal face’ in performance was irreplaceable. And, she is right. The one aspect of jazz that you can’t teach is experience. You can provide

opportunities to experience, and that is fundamentally what the jazz course is all about, but each musician's experiences over the course of their career is different, and it is impossible to put one's students into the situation that you, yourself, have experienced. The students are really fortunate to have such a diverse group of musicians to study with, because the collective experience of around 600 years gives the staff a lot to talk about. I can only tell my students what it was like to play with Joe Henderson, George Cables, Red Rodney, Urbie Green, Clifford Jordan, Don Burrows, Julian Lee and so on and so on, but what I learned from them and many others is the basis of what and how I teach.

Jazz practitioners are extremely fortunate in one, noteworthy regard, and we tend to take it for granted at times. Jazz is the only genre (apart from genres that came after it such as Rock and Roll, and more contemporary music) that has recorded virtually its entire history, except for the very earliest bands where the technology to enable music to be recorded was still being invented.

On Friday June 17th 2011, John Fordham wrote for the Guardian that "Jazz had been evolving for almost a decade before it was recorded – and a white New Orleans band called the Original Dixieland Jazz Band beat all the superior Southland black bands to it. The ODJB was a raucous but lively five-piece, influenced by the sound of Louis Armstrong mentor, King Oliver's New Orleans groups. In 1917, following a successful New York run, the band cut tracks in the Victor studios that sold massively and launched a global jazz craze." (<http://www.theguardian.com/music/2011/jun/17/first-jazz-recording>)

So this is a pretty good track record for jazz, and considerably better than the legacy of live recordings that the Classical tradition enjoys. One cannot hear a live recording of Beethoven conducting the iconic 9th Symphony, or Bach sitting at the Clavier playing the Preludes and Fugues which form the foundation of Western Harmony. However one can hear the last time the first great Bill Evans Trio performed at the Village Vanguard in New York (LaFaro, the bassist, was dead a few days later in an auto accident); one can hear Charlie Parker creating a new art form and playing the saxophone in a way that no one had played it before – the birth of Be-Bop is well represented by the wire spool recordings of Dean Benedetti. Jazz was recorded by record

companies, by enthusiasts, and by fellow musicians. More recently the advent of online information has proliferated hugely, and sites such as YouTube present hundred upon hundred of hours of live footage of jazz players performing at jazz festivals, on television shows, in concert halls and even in movies. This is a particularly important development in my view. When I went to New York to study in 1984 I had listened to a lot of jazz and had a pretty good idea of what was involved in performing it. It was not until I actually saw the music being performed by dozens of extraordinary musicians that I realized just how high a level they played at, and a good part of this realization came by watching them take care of the business of playing what they loved. The commitment, energy, expertise, and virtuosity was palpable and the visual impact of it was every bit as relevant as the audible part of it. I saw some real garbage too, which was important as well – it enabled me to contextualize where I was really up to as a player, and, being a somewhat high profile bassist by this time, coming from a different hemisphere, it was somewhat confronting. It was just what I needed. The experience informed my practice from then on.

The great difference between the experiences of older generations of musicians, such as myself, and onward, compared to students who study today in the tertiary environment is the immediacy of availability of information. It was around before, but it was much harder to find, took longer and was not always confined to a single place. On the other hand there were more opportunities to perform and learn on the bandstand. My view of the Con is that it partially replaces what has been lost in the scene; provides an environment that is special in itself; and makes use of the experiences and knowledge that is encapsulated by the incredible group of men and women who teach there.

Which begs the question:” Can you teach jazz?” In my view the answer is yes. Jazz has always been taught – it has always been an aural tradition. Now it has a home and the song remains the same.

Thank You.