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View Jazz Ensembles performing here
View Jazz Singers performing here

Sac State jazz groups will compete at Monterey Festival

For the sixth year in a row, Sacramento State’s Jazz Ensembles have been named among the top six college jazz bands in the nation and will head to Monterey March 30-April 1 to compete against the other five groups in the Next Generation Jazz Festival.

The event is organized by the Monterey Jazz Festival to recognize the best in jazz music from college and high school groups.

Sac State’s Jazz Singers also will perform at the festival, but as an exhibition group because director Kerry Marsh is serving as a judge in the competition.

The Jazz Ensembles will perform three numbers on Sunday, April 1, to an audience of jazz fans, musicians and educators – “Transit,” by Darcy James Argue, “Here’s That Rainy Day” arranged by Chris Walden, and Pat Metheny’s “Phase Dance.”

“This is truly the highlight of our semester,” says Professor Steve Roach, Ensembles’ conductor and director of the University’s Jazz program. “I’m really proud of the efforts and talents of our students.”

Trumpet player Tim Weiss has been to the Festival a couple of times already with the Ensembles, but says it’s still just as exciting as the first time. “There are new people and musicians to hear and experience,” he says.

Weiss also wrote the arrangement of “Phase Dance” that the groups will play. He listened to a couple of Metheny’s versions of the song, then added a few new things of
his own. “I’m excited we get to play it, especially at the Festival,” Weiss says. “It’s a great opportunity for me to get my music out there.”

The Jazz Singers have competed twice at the Festival and this will be their second time performing as an exhibition group. “The students look forward to seeing other top vocal jazz groups and to share their own passion for vocal jazz onstage,” says Marsh.

For junior Amber White-Sanborn, this will be the first time singing at the Festival. “There are going to be so many great groups there,” she says. “It will be fun to meet them and learn from them. And hopefully we can be role models for the high school groups that will be there.”

For more information on Sacramento State’s Jazz programs, visit www.csus.edu/music. For media assistance, call the University’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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