‘SNL’ trombonist, Sac State alum comes home for concert

For almost 30 years, Sac State alumnus Steve Turre has been playing trombone with the Saturday Night Live band on NBC, as well as carving out a unique place in jazz music. Now he’s returning to his college home for a visit and performance with our student Jazz Ensembles at 8 p.m. Wednesday, April 17, in the Music Recital Hall.

“He’s one of the more prominent trombone jazz artists of our time,” says Professor Steve Roach, director of the Jazz Ensembles. “To have him come back to Sac State, where he began his musical career, is really thrilling.”

Turre grew up in the Bay Area, where he was exposed to mariachi, blues and jazz. He was at Sac State from 1966 to 1968, when he also joined the Escovedo Brothers salsa band. Professional tours included time with Ray Charles and Art Blakey, and performances with J.J. Johnson, Herbie Hancock and many other jazz luminaries. He joined the Saturday Night Live band in 1984, and he continues to lead several ensembles, record CDs and teach.

Turre is looking forward to coming back to Sacramento State, saying he imagines it looks lot different now. He has fond memories of many of his instructors, including Music Professor Herbert Harrison, who encouraged him to pursue his interest in jazz.

And Turre found inspiration from professors in English and literature. Their approach to teaching opened his eyes to those subjects. “They made it interesting. They made it fun,” he recalls.

For the April 17 concert, Turre and the Jazz Ensembles plan a tribute to J.J. Johnson, and renditions of Turre’s own compositions and arrangements.
Having guest artists such as Turre come to Sac State is not only a boon for jazz enthusiasts in the Sacramento area, it’s a priceless benefit for the student musicians.

“The students get to play with somebody at such a high level that, for some of them, it’s a brand-new experience,” Roach says. “They definitely understand the impact of performing with someone like Turre.”

Tickets are $10 general, $7 seniors and $5 students, and are available at the University Ticket Office, (916) 278-4323 or www.csus.edu/sfsc/ticketoffice/.

To listen to samples of Turre’s work, visit www.steveturre.com. More information about the concert is available at www.csus.edu/music or by calling the Music Department at (916) 278-5191. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

– Craig Koscho
ckoscho@csus.edu

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