

UW jazz festival

MONDAY.FEBRUARY 24.2025

**FEATURING THE GRAMMY-NOMINATED
CLAYTON HAMILTON
JAZZ ORCHESTRA**



UW A&S AUDITORIUM 7:30PM

ADJUDICATORS



DARREN KRAMER is a professional trombonist, composer, music producer, educator, and motivational speaker who has performed throughout the world as trombonist with diverse artists Matchbox Twenty, Garth Brooks, Marc Anthony, Tom Jones, Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, and Duke Ellington's Sophisticated Ladies with Mercer Ellington. Kramer is a prolific composer having recorded six original CDs and has arranged over 400 songs which feature Grammy Award-winning artists such as Michael Brecker and Jerry Hey. Kramer grew up in a musical family in Colorado, graduated from University of Miami, and is an XO Brass Artist and Ableton Certified Trainer who now creatively combines live acoustic instruments with music technology as seen

on his 2023 TEDx Talk. Kramer shares his vast knowledge from 40 years of extensive performing and teaching experience via his innovative group ElektroHornz, as well as his music and wellness podcast Sonic Tonic Experience, and as a member of the jazz faculty at Colorado State University.

“This appearance of XO Brass Artist Darren Kramer has been made possible, in part, through an educational grant from the KHS America Academic Alliance and XO Professional Brass. Darren performs exclusively on XO trombones.”

DR. ROBERT BROOKS is a jazz saxophonist, woodwind doubler, composer, and educator dedicated to cultivating the tradition of jazz education. He holds a DMA and MM from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and a BM from Central Michigan University. He currently serves as jazz saxophone and improvisation faculty at The Ohio State University. Robert's most recent releases, “Accidental Nomad” and “New Standard Duo” on Ropeadope Records, have received critical acclaim. He has toured with Reginald Chapman's “Pressure Fit,” Sun Stereo, and the World Famous Glenn Miller. He has also performed with jazz legends including Bob Mintzer, Bobby Shew, Jim Rupp, Tom “Bones” Malone, the Temptations and many more.



With his wife, Dr. Lara Brooks, they are The Sax & Serenade Duo, a boundary-pushing collaboration that aims to blend classical / ccm voice with the versatility of jazz tenor saxophone. The group crafts innovative works that defy traditional expectations. With their captivating performances and unique interpretive possibilities, The Sax & Serenade Duo takes contemporary music to new heights, inviting audiences on an enchanting journey of genre-blending melodies and emotive storytelling. Their most recent collaboration is with composer Griffin Candey, seeking to infuse unique voicing and unconventional themes into the realm of Western Art Music. Dr. Brooks proudly endorses P. Mauriat Saxophones, Clarinets, and Flutes; Silverstein Works ligatures and reeds; SYOS mouthpieces; and KeyLeaves products.



Music has been an essential part of life for **SETH LEWIS** since he was a child, singing with his mother and playing numerous instruments until age 12 when he found the bass. His most recent recording, Dream Theme, produced by Octave Records is available on all platforms and he can be heard on many other recordings as a leader and a sideman. Thanks to his life in music Seth has travelled the world performing and teaching and has collaborated with celebrated jazz artists as well as performing with Broadway and Las Vegas shows. During his time in New York, Seth regularly appeared at well-known jazz clubs including Smalls, Smoke, Dizzy's Club Coca-Cola, Cleopatra's Needle and The Iridium. Some of the outstanding artists Seth has worked with include: Mulgrew Miller, Louis Hayes, Eric Alexander, Adam Nussbaum, David Hazeltine, Chico Freeman, Bobby Watson, Harold Mabern, Gabriel Mervine,

Jerry Dodgion, Randy Brecker, Sheila Jordan, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Greg Gisbert, Dave Liebman, Eric McPherson, Abraham Burton, Josh Evans, Stacey Dillard, Dawn Clement, Alexis Cole, Benny Golson, Jeff Hamilton, Evan Sherman, Jonathan Barber, Emmet Cohen and many others. Seth studied privately and was mentored by two legendary bassists; the late Bob Cranshaw and Ron Carter. Seth has also studied with Christian McBride, Nat Reeves, John Lockwood, Martin Wind, Bill Charlap and Steve Davis.

Seth has been awarded research grants from the Institute of Jazz Studies at Rutgers University and the University of Northern Colorado. His research has been published in *Allegro Magazine* (Feb. 2020) and he has presented research at the Jazz Education Network Conference and the International Society of Bassists Conference. Seth holds a Bachelor of Music degree from the Hartt School of Music and a Master of Music degree from William Paterson University and a Doctorate from the University of Northern Colorado. Seth currently teaches at Colorado State University, The University of Wyoming and the Stanford Jazz Workshop. Seth has previously taught at the Hartt School of Music, The Artists Collective, Newark Academy and the Litchfield Jazz Camp. Music is a gift that is meant to be shared and Seth is grateful for the continued opportunities he has to bring music to new audiences.



GABRIEL SANTIAGO, a native of Brazil, is an accomplished composer, arranger, and skilled guitarist proficient in both acoustic and electric styles. His notable career spans 14 albums, comprising CDs and DVDs, lauded for their captivating compositions as described by *JazzTimes Magazine*. Santiago's musical prowess has earned him recognition as a gifted artist, having been mentored by esteemed figures in the jazz realm such as Pat Metheny, Adam Rogers, and Maria Schneider.

His musical journey has been adorned with accolades, including the prestigious ASCAP Young Jazz Composer Award, solidifying his remarkable talent and impact on the music landscape. Santiago's academic achievements are equally impressive, holding a Doctoral Degree in Music Composition from the esteemed University of Texas at Austin. Collaborating with a diverse range of artists, from established names like Chris Potter and Stefon Harris to talented musicians like John Clayton and Janek Gwizdala, Santiago's versatility shines through.

Moreover, Santiago had the privilege of being the first artist to record with the inaugural line of microphones by the renowned recording engineer Rupert Neve. Apart from his instrumental finesse, he showcases his skills as a versatile composer, creating music across various genres and ensembles – from Symphony Orchestras to Jazz Combos. Influenced by Brazilian Music, Jazz, and Classical Music, Santiago's compositions resonate with audiences from different backgrounds and preferences, highlighting his exceptional musical ingenuity.

EMMA TAYLOR is a bassist, vocalist, and educator based in Central Illinois. She currently teaches at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois. After graduating from Millikin University studying Music Business and Commercial Music, Emma received her Masters Degree and Doctorate of Musical Arts from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. At UIUC she served as the Jazz Bass Teaching Assistant and directed Jazz Band III, studying under the direction of Larry Gray. She also served as the Classical Bass Teaching Assistant.

Emma has performed with renowned musicians such as Carl Allen, Jim Snidero, Derrick Gardner, Gary Smulyan, Tito Carrillo, Troy Roberts, Frank Catalano, Joel Spencer, and Chip McNeill. Aside from playing in the US, Emma has also toured in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, and Mexico—most recently completing a two week-long residency performing and teaching classes in Brazil at the Federal University of Uberlândia.



Emma is also a member of Simply This Quintet, a collaborative ensemble that performs original compositions by members of the band. This group regularly tours and presents masterclasses at universities and music conferences, recently performing at Furman University and Anderson University in South Carolina, The Ohio State University, and Millikin University. Emma has performed at national conferences including Jazz Education Network, Midwest Band and Orchestra Association, North American Saxophone Alliance, and International Society of Bassists Convention. She is a member of the Women in Jazz Organization.



SHAWN WILLIAMS is a versatile jazz trumpeter, composer, arranger, and educator known for his dynamic performances and innovative teaching. He earned his Doctor of Arts degree from the University of Northern Colorado (UNC) in 2020, where he later served as Assistant Professor of Jazz Trumpet from 2020 to 2024. Currently, Shawn is the Associate Artistic Director of the Mile High Freedom Bands in Denver, CO.

Before his time in Colorado, Shawn made his mark in the San Francisco Bay Area as a sought-after performer and educator. He served as the adjunct jazz trumpet

instructor at Chabot College in Hayward, CA, and maintained a thriving private trumpet studio. He performed with notable groups such as the Electric Squeezebox Orchestra, Foreverland, RAFA, the Bad Five, Dick Bright Orchestra, and led his own Shawn Williams Quintet. His festival appearances include the San Jose Summer & Winter Jazz Festivals, the Stanford Jazz Festival, and the Monterey Jazz Festival.

Shawn's recent performances include appearances with the Colorado Jazz Repertory Orchestra and the Colorado Jazz Orchestra. He is featured on acclaimed recordings, including *At the Edge of Spring* (2025) with compositions by David Caffey, *The Life and Death Situation* (2024) featuring Spencer Zweifel, and *Time Child* (2019) alongside trumpeter Ingrid Jensen and music by Erik Applegate.

Shawn gained national recognition as a finalist in the National Trumpet Competition in 2011, 2015, and 2016. He also toured extensively with the Glenn Miller Orchestra from 2012 to 2013, performing across 47 states, Japan, and Portugal, and contributing to the album *In the Mood* (2013). Additionally, he has traveled worldwide as a trumpeter with Royal Caribbean Cruises, performing across Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific Islands.

His educational background is as impressive as his performance career, holding a Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies from California State University, Northridge, a Master of Music in Jazz & Contemporary Media from the Eastman School of Music, and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Santa Clara University. His doctoral dissertation, *Three in One: The Style, Structure, and Sound of Thad Jones as a Jazz Trumpeter*, offers a deep dive into Thad Jones' improvisational and compositional style.

ALEX ANNAN is currently Visiting Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Wyoming. In August 2024, he completed his doctoral degree in Jazz Studies with a secondary emphasis in Classical Bass from the University of Northern Colorado. Prior to his time at UNC, he completed Jazz degrees at the University of Kansas and University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Alex has released four albums under his name with the most recent, *Northern Dreams*, being released in September of 2024. Alex has won four DownBeat Student Music awards and was a finalist for the Herb Alpert Young Composer Awards in 2023. He has performed with many jazz greats such as Diane Schuur, The Brubeck Brothers, Anat Cohen, Ken and Harry Watters, Adam Larson, and Marcus Lewis.



THE CLAYTON-HAMILTON JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Headlining the featured evening concert of the 2025 UWYO Jazz Festival is the Grammy-nominated Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra.

John Clayton, Jeff Hamilton, and Jeff Clayton founded the Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra. While in their twenties, John and Jeff Hamilton toured and recorded with Monty Alexander, then moved on to separate big band environs. Jeff joined Woody Herman and John signed up for Count Basie.

All along, Jeff Clayton had been performing and recording in Los Angeles. In 1986, the three men came together in L.A. and formed the Jazz Orchestra. In 2020, Jeff Clayton passed away after a lengthy illness. The CHJO reminds audiences that his spirit remains in every note that is played. The excitement of this powerful 19-piece band is the result of the band's stellar performances and John's writing.

Their music is composed and arranged by John, and it is not unusual to hear his take on a composition by Jeff Hamilton or something from the Hamilton trio book.

Along with multiple Grammy© nominations, the orchestra is featured on recordings with Milt Jackson, Diana Krall, John Pizzarelli, Charles Aznavour, Ernie Andrews, Barbara Morrison, Natalie Cole and many more.

From 1999-2001, they were the in-resident jazz orchestra for the Hollywood Bowl. Their busy schedule still finds them touring the U.S., Europe and Japan, often premiering extended works at jazz festivals and in concert halls.

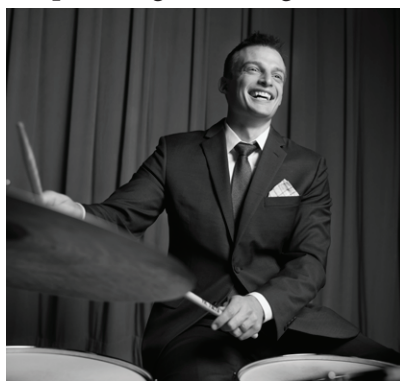
People often describe their sound as being influenced by Ellington, Basie and Thad Jones. This would never be denied by the orchestra, but one listen lets you know that their voice is unique, distinct and impactful.



UWYO JAZZ STUDIES PROGRAM

The Jazz Studies Program at UWYO gives students the opportunity to study a truly American art form. Through weekly lessons with top call jazz musicians, participation in one of our six jazz ensembles, world class guest artists, weekly jazz studio class, ample performance opportunities on and off campus, and through study in courses like jazz improvisation and jazz history, students in the UWYO Jazz Studies program receive an invaluable and adaptive education covering everything from basic improvisation in traditional swing styles to advance performance practice with the most modern styles of jazz.

The Jazz Studies program is available for all undergraduate and graduate students and complements the outstanding traditional music curriculum. Students are able to supplement their music education with a broad jazz curriculum that helps prepare them for a variety of situations in music whether as an educator or performer. All students are welcome to be a part of the Jazz area, whether you are a music major or if you are pursuing other degrees at UWYO. We hope you will continue your musical journey with us.



Please contact the **Director of Jazz Studies, Dr. Andy Wheelock** at awheeloc@uwyo.edu with any questions you may have. We look forward to working with you!

Sincerely, UWYO Jazz Faculty

Andy Wheelock - Director of Jazz Studies, Drum Set
Ben Markley - Chair of Music Department, Jazz Piano
Seth Lewis - Bass
Gabriel Santiago - Guitar

JAZZ ENSEMBLES

The UWYO Jazz Studies program maintains two 18+ member big bands and four jazz combos of varying size and instrumentation.

The Wyoming Jazz Ensemble is the premier big band in the state of Wyoming and in addition to performing regularly around the region, the WJE was recently on tour in Europe and was invited to compete at the Jack Rudin Jazz Championships at the Lincoln Center in NYC. The WJE regularly shares the stage with WORLD CLASS GUEST ARTISTS like Steve Nelson, Jeff Hamilton, John Clayton, Gilad Hekselman, Rodney Whitaker, Ernie Watts, Terrel Stafford, Joel Frahm, Greg Osby, Bill Charlap, Bobby Shew, Greg Gisbert and Ari Hoenig to name a few.

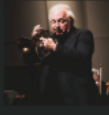
While high level performance is at the heart of what the Jazz Ensembles at UWYO do, education is our primary purpose. We program music, styles, and guests according to the needs of the students in each of our ensembles. Our ensembles study all styles of music within the Jazz idiom and also regularly program student arrangements and compositions with the goal of helping our students reach their potential and find their voice as artists and educators

THE SCENE

Students in the UWYO Jazz Studies program are a part of a very happening music scene which includes:

- Weekly Jam sessions feature a paid house band of UWYO students;
- Monthly shows at local establishments ft. professional touring musicians;
- Live in Laramie concert series;
- Regional jam sessions hosted by UWYO faculty;
- Ample private gigs in the community; and
- Venues that support regular student projects and performances

TICKETS: WWW.TIX.COM/TICKET-SALES/UWYO/6984



MONDAY, FEB 3, BRAD DAWSON QUARTET

7:30pm Concert, BCPA Recital Hall



MONDAY, FEB 17, LIVE EDGE TRIO

W/PETER SOMMER & STEVE KOVALCHECK

7:30pm Concert, BCPA Recital Hall



MONDAY, FEB 24, WYOMING JAZZ ENSEMBLE

**W/JEFF HAMILTON, JOHN CLAYTON, BIJON WATSON
CLAYTON HAMILTON JAZZ ORCHESTRA**

7:30pm Concert, A&S Auditorium



WEDNESDAY, MAR 26, ADAM BIRNBAUM TRIO

7:30pm Concert, BCPA Recital Hall



WEDNESDAY, APR 16, JAZZ COMBO SHOWCASE

Directed by Andy Wheelock, Seth Lewis, Gabriel Santiago, & Alex Annan
6:00-9:00pm Concert, Bond's Brewing



THURSDAY, APR 17, WYOMING JAZZ ENSEMBLE

W/GUEST ERIC RICHARDS

Directed by Andy Wheelock and David Wharton
3:00pm Concert, BCPA Concert Hall



MONDAY, APRIL 21, BILL O'CONNELL TRIO

7:30pm Concert, BCPA Recital Hall

JAZZ **SPRING** **2025**

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING JAZZ STUDIES

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