

For Immediate Release
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MIT Music and Theater Arts

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**CHICK COREA PREMIERE to MARK
50th ANNIVERSARY of JAZZ at MIT (1963-2013)**

<http://youtu.be/7y-tNt2W4Vg>

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of Jazz at MIT, Chick Corea, NEA Jazz Master, recipient of 18 Grammy awards, composer and keyboard virtuoso, is composing a work for the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble (Frederick Harris, Jr., director). The piece will be premiered on April 27th at Kresge Auditorium, (84 Mass. Ave., Cambridge) in a Gala Concert that will also feature Steve Kuhn, one of the most lyrical and affecting pianists in jazz. Admission is free in advance and \$5 at the door. Tickets are available at mitmta.eventbrite.com.

Chick Corea, a native of Chelsea, Mass., has strong ties to MIT, where as a junior in high school he rehearsed and played trumpet and piano in a jazz sextet he formed with Joel Karp MIT '62 and Rich Orr MIT '62, trombones; MIT graduate students Ed Kane and Roger Eiss, on trumpet and bass; and Boston resident Lennie Nelson on drums. This was one of Corea's first bands. It gave him the opportunity to write some of his first arrangements. "It was a lot of fun," he said in a recent interview.

Just as Chick has influenced many young musicians during his illustrious career, he was himself inspired by the founder of the MIT Jazz program—Herb Pomeroy. “Herb Pomeroy and his band and the musicians he collected around him provided the first really deep, professional, great live jazz playing for me,” Corea said. It was Pomeroy who offered him his first professional club date as the opening act for the Herb Pomeroy Big Band at the Stables club on Huntington Ave., Boston. “I think it was on a Sunday,” Corea recounted, “and that was my first big gig in a jazz club. It was great. So, Herb and his band provided a lot of inspiration to me... Herb was one of the first elders that I really looked up to, and who was an accomplished and great player, arranger and band-leader. He set a very good example for me. He was a kind, straight-ahead, down-to-earth, communicative, helpful guy. And made me feel comfortable right away. So I thank him for that.”

Indeed, Herb Pomeroy, big band leader, outstanding trumpet player and gifted composer and arranger was among the most influential jazz performers and educators of the last 50 years.

Well aware of Pomeroy’s talents, the first director of music at MIT, Klaus Liepmann, made the brilliant and pivotal decision to hire Pomeroy in 1963 to lead the MIT student-led jazz band—then called *The Tectonians*. Under the leadership of Herb Pomeroy, the jazz program at MIT flourished. The Festival Jazz Ensemble (as it was renamed) rose to national prominence with its participation at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland and in the Notre Dame and Villanova Jazz Festivals. Herb Pomeroy also further developed the jazz program by bringing Everett Longstreth to lead a second jazz band at MIT, which he did for 32 years.

Pomeroy was also a member of the faculty at the Berklee College of Music. He was hired by president, Lee Eliot Berk, son of Berklee's founder Lawrence Berk '32, an MIT alumnus.

Herb Pomeroy's legacy continues to enhance the jazz program at MIT to this day. Thanks to the generosity of his family, the Pomeroy music library, recordings, and personal papers are now a vibrant part of the MIT Institute Archives.

Since Pomeroy's tenure and under subsequent leadership by Jamshied Sharifi, James O'Dell and Frederick Harris, the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble has performed with such distinguished guest musicians as Charlie Mariano, Ray Santisi, Phil Woods, Joe Lovano, Kenny Werner, Don Byron, Steve Turre, Terence Blanchard, Dominique Eade, and Guillermo Klein, among others. Some of the composers who have written for the MITFJE include Magali Souriau, Guillermo Klein, Jamshied Sharifi, Kenny Werner, George Schuller, and Mark Harvey. To this list now we may add Chick Corea.

Today, in addition to the Festival Jazz Ensemble, which has been directed by Frederick Harris, Jr. since 1999, the MIT Jazz program offerings include three jazz combos; (coached by Boston bassist Keala Kaumeheiwa), the MIT Vocal Jazz Ensemble (led by Pulitzer Prize winning composer and MIT Institute Professor John Harbison), and courses in jazz history, harmony, arranging, composition, and improvisation (taught by Dr. Mark Harvey).

View a short video about the 50th Anniversary of Jazz at MIT.

<http://youtu.be/7y-tNt2W4Vg>

Biographical Notes

Herb Pomeroy was described by Duke Ellington as “One of America’s Jazz Treasures.” He was among the most influential jazz performers and educators of the last 50 years. Herb was a celebrated big band leader from the 1950s through the early 1990s. Highly respected by his peers, he was also an outstanding jazz trumpet player and a gifted composer and arranger. Louis Armstrong initially inspired Herb to become a trumpeter and later he became a gifted bebop player. From his early twenties up to his last months, playing the trumpet was one of his most satisfying musical outlets. Herb is perhaps most remembered and beloved as a “musician’s musician” and a world-renowned music educator. He taught at the Berklee College of Music for 40 years and was the founding director of the MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble for 22 years (1963-1985). Through his teaching, playing and band leading, he touched and greatly influenced the lives of several generations of musicians.

Chick Corea is an 18-time Grammy winner, brilliant American composer and keyboard virtuoso. He has attained living legend status after five decades of unparalleled creativity and an artistic output of a variety that is simply staggering. From straight ahead to avant-garde, bebop to fusion, children’s songs to chamber music, along with some far-reaching forays into symphonic writing, Chick continues to forge ahead, continually reinventing himself in the process. His extensive discography boasts numerous essential albums, beginning with his 1968 classic, *Now He Sings, Now He Sobs*. In 2012, Corea took home two Grammys, including Best Jazz Instrumental Solo, for *Forever*, the 2-CD set recorded on his acoustic trio tour with Return to Forever bandmates Stanley Clarke and Lenny White. The two honors were, remarkably, Corea’s 17th and 18th Grammy Awards.

Steve Kuhn is renowned as one of the most lyrical pianists in jazz, with an unfailingly beautiful touch and a sophisticated sense of swing. He began studying piano at the age of five with Margaret Chaloff, mother of jazz baritone saxophonist Serge Chaloff, who taught him the "Russian style" of piano playing. As a teenager he appeared in jazz clubs in the Boston area, gigging with the likes of Coleman Hawkins, Vic Dickerson, Chet Baker, and Serge Chaloff. He graduated from Harvard and attended the Lenox School of Music where he was associated with Ornette Coleman, Don Cherry, and Gary McFarland, with faculty that included George Russell, Gunther Schuller, the Modern Jazz Quartet members, and Bill Evans. He later joined trumpeter Kenny Dorham's group for an extended time and has also appeared with John Coltrane, Stan Getz, Art Farmer, Oliver Nelson, Ron

Schedule of 50th Anniversary Events

THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2013

3-5 pm, MIT Lewis Music Library

Opening of the Herb Pomeroy/MIT Jazz@50 Exhibit, Lewis Music Library, Hayden Library Bldg, 160 Memorial Drive.

FRIDAY, APRIL 26

4-5 pm, Kirsch Auditorium, MIT Stata Center

Jazz at MIT: Excellence, Spirit, and Community

A Historical Perspective of Jazz at MIT. Former band members from all decades share memories. Moderated by Richard Orr, '62 (Kirsch Auditorium, Stata Center, Vassar and Main St.)

5-6:30 pm, Kirsch Auditorium, MIT Stata Center

Herb Pomeroy's Boston: Big Bands, Berklee, and the Bridge to MIT

Presentation by Richard Vacca, author of *The Boston Jazz Chronicles*, with guest panel: Ray Santisi, Fred Bouchard, David Bondelevitch, '85, and John Harbison. Moderated by Mark Harvey (Kirsch Auditorium, Stata Bldg., Vassar and Main Sts.)

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

6:30-7:15 pm, Kresge Auditorium, MIT

50 Years of Jazz through the lenses of Directors and Faculty.

Panelists: Everett Longstreth, Jamshied Sharifi, Jim O'Dell, Fred Harris, John Harbison, and Keala Kaumeheiwa. Moderated by Mark Harvey. Kresge Auditorium, 84 Mass. Ave. Cambridge.

7:30 pm, Kresge Auditorium

50th Anniversary Gala Concert/6th Annual Herb Pomeroy Memorial Concert. MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble, MIT Alumni Jazz Band, MIT CMS Jazz Combo, MIT Vocal Jazz Ensemble, guest pianist Steve Kuhn, and the world premiere of a composition by Chick Corea composed for the FJE for this 50th anniversary concert. Kresge Auditorium, 84 Mass. Ave., Cambridge.