

Excellence in Teaching

Gordon Lee

Music

Gordon Lee is a composer, jazz pianist, arranger, conductor and music educator who is well known throughout the Pacific northwest for his work in all these fields. Although he is best known for his jazz performances and compositions, Gordon is active in many styles of music. He has had commissions to compose chamber music and music for large ensembles from Oregon Symphony members, big band leaders, and vocalists including a collaboration with Ghanaian singer Obo Addy on an orchestral suite in 2004.

Gordon considers Jazz one of the most positive of America's cultural exports. He remains active as a performer and composer as well as teacher. Gordon has taught jazz studies at Western Oregon University since 1999. His courses include Jazz History, Improvisation, and Beginning Musicianship. He also teaches a number of private piano students. In addition to teaching, Gordon is the Executive Director of the award winning WOU/Mel Brown Summer Jazz Camp, a position he has held for the past 6 years. Gordon is eager to share the success of the camp with others, noting: "The Jazz Workshop has enjoyed phenomenal success at increasing enrollment and getting more than 155 teenagers to spend a week in early August on campus in Monmouth. We are adding a week in June this year. This has resulted in new students at WOU during the regular school year. In 2003 we won the award for innovation from the North American Association of Summer Sessions. We anticipate in excess of 150 students this year and our enrollment in early March for the August camp is already over 60 students."

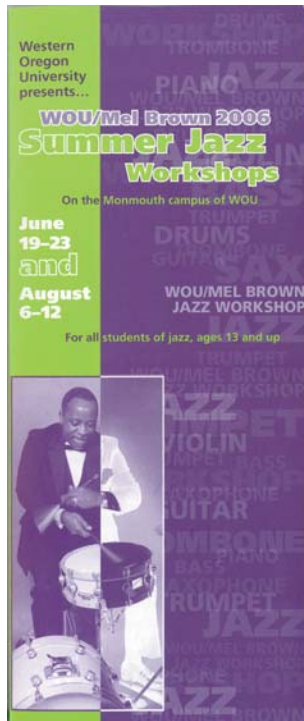
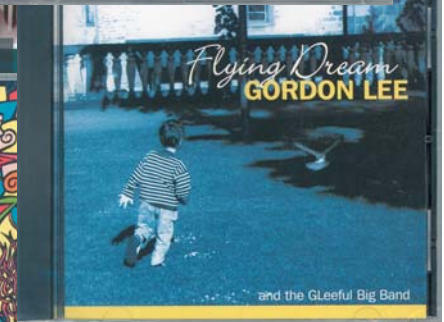
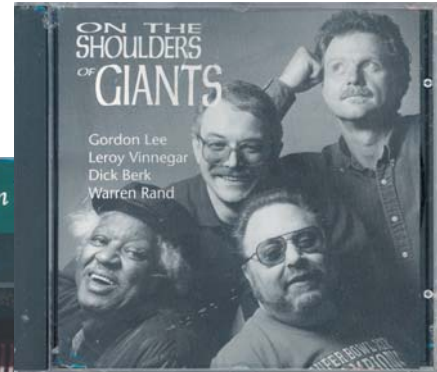
Gordon brings a great deal of professional experience to share with students at Western. It is pretty cool for students in his classes to learn that their instructor played with the jazz greats to whom they are listening in jazz history. Gordon loves music and clearly enjoys what he does, often keeping the beat to the music he shares in class with his students. He also brings in multimedia whenever possible, so that students not only hear but also get to see the performers.

After earning a degree in music at Indiana University, he moved to Portland, and began playing with one of the originators of jazz-rock fusion, Native American saxophonist and song writer Jim Pepper. This association lasted until Pepper's death in 1992. Since that time Gordon has organized and presented many Pepper memorial concerts.

In 1980 Gordon moved to New York City and worked as a jazz pianist. He performed with such jazz and pop stars as Don Cherry, Bill Frisell, Gladys Knight and the Pips, the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, and the Temptations. More recently Gordon has worked with Bobby Hutcherson, Dewey Redman, Houston Person, Frank Foster, and Javon Jackson.

In 1985 Gordon decided to escape the rat-race of New York and returned to Portland. He then became involved in music education at the college level in the Portland metropolitan area. He began playing with drummer Mel Brown in 1986, a musical relationship that continues still. In 1989 the Mel Brown Sextet, playing Lee's compositions and arrangements, won the international Hennessy Jazz Search beating out over 700 bands from around the world. The next year Lee's cd "Gordon Bleu" won Best Jazz Recording of 1990 from the Northwest Music Association. Lee has produced 3 other cd's

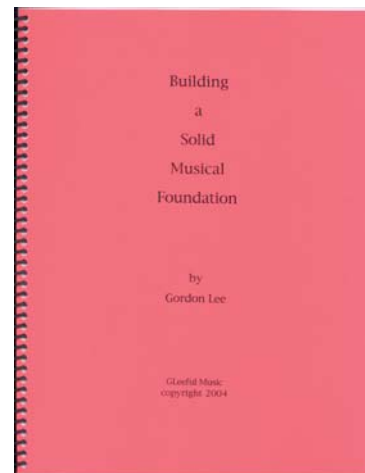
since then: "Land Whales in New York" featuring Jim Pepper, 1991; "On the Shoulders of Giants" with Leroy Vinnegar, 1993; and "Rough Jazz" with John



Gross, 1997. His cd, "Flying Dream," on the Origin Arts label, features an all star big band from the Pacific Northwest playing Lee's music and "One-Two-Three" features solo, duo and trio pieces with Renato Caranto, Andre St. James and Carlton Jackson.

Gordon received a Master's of Music degree in conducting from Portland State University in 1999. He has performed all over the world: several times at the Mt. Hood Festival of Jazz; the Playboy Jazz Festival at the Hollywood Bowl in L.A.; the JFK Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C.; Les Ducs des Lombards in Paris, France; across Austria and southern Germany; Tokyo, Japan; Lima Peru; Istanbul, Turkey. He has performed with the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of David Amram and the Oregon Symphony under Norman Leyden and Bill Conti.

With his unique experience in jazz, classical, world music and their blending, as composer, pianist and conductor, Gordon Lee blazes new paths. He continues his intention of presenting the highest quality original music while informing the public about the many potentials that music can be.



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