November 2, 2015

Dear Music Educator,

On behalf of The Sam Houston State University School of Music, I invite you to participate in the 6th Annual SHSU Bill Watrous Jazz Festival. The dates for this year’s festival have been set for April 1 & 2, 2016. I am pleased to announce that joining Bill Watrous as our featured guest artist for this year’s Jazz Festival is Internationally Acclaimed jazz trumpeter/educator/clinician, Bobby Shew. It goes without saying that Mr. Shew is one of the most sought-after and respected trumpet artists and pedagogues in the world. We are very fortunate and honored to have him with us as our featured guest with Bill Watrous.

We’re now into our 6th year presenting a two-day festival format with adjudicated performances of participating groups, master classes by our guest artists, and our evening performances/awards ceremony featuring the SHSU Jazz Ensemble, Bill Watrous, Bobby Shew, and other guests. The invited adjudicators/clinicians for this year will be Dennis Dotson – former trumpeter with Woody Herman’s Thundering Herd and Jazz Trumpet Specialist at University of Texas at Austin, Joel Fulgham – Leader of The New Houston Jazz Orchestra and Affiliate Percussion Artist at University of Houston, Stefan Karlsson – Former Professor of Jazz Piano at University of North Texas and internationally acclaimed jazz artist, Lynn Seaton – Professor of Jazz Bass at University of North Texas and internationally acclaimed jazz artist, and Mark Taylor – internationally acclaimed composer/arranger for Hal Leonard Corporation and leader of Washington D.C. based-group, The BigBand.

I sincerely believe we are truly fortunate to have such accomplished musicians appearing at this year’s Jazz Festival. As in the past, the SHSU Jazz Festival is competitive. Bands perform for ratings / awards, for constructive comments from nationally known jazz educators, and for the educational benefits that result from hearing other groups perform. Since listening is such a vital part of music education, it is requested that students listen to the performances of at least two other bands. This will provide an audience for each band and an opportunity for members to hear live performances.

Enclosed is a registration form, which must be accompanied by a check to reserve your band a spot at this year’s Festival. Participation in the Jazz Festival is limited and availability will be offered on a first-come basis. I hope to hear from you soon. Thank you for your past support of this festival and I look forward to seeing you and your students at this year’s 6th Annual SHSU Bill Watrous Jazz Festival.

Sincerely,

Dr. Aric Schneller,  
Director of Jazz Studies  
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