Electives in Performance – Spring 2015

Most of the performance classes hold auditions in the first week’s class time.
Students must be registered for the course to be eligible to attend the audition.

Afro-Cuban Jazz Orchestra - Bobby Sanabria. In 1940 the Afro-Cuban tradition began here in NYC. Machito and his Afro-Cubans, under the direction of maestro Mario Bauza, fused the harmonic sophistication of Jazz with the rhythmic complexity of Afro-Cuban music. The ensemble explores that rich legacy with a repertoire that encompasses the past, present, and future of the genre. The ensemble performs once a month at the Nuyorican Poets Café and a school concert every semester featuring a renowned guest soloist. High level reading and solo skills are recommended. Final enrollment for this class is at the discretion of the instructor. **1-2 credits**

Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers - Charles Tolliver. An in-depth study of the repertory and performance traditions of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. The original recordings will be studied and the students will work toward developing a good playing style in an ensemble devoted to this group’s work. Final enrollment for this class is at the discretion of the instructor. **2 credits**

Brazilian Jazz Ensemble - Richard Boukas. A contemporary instrumental Brazilian jazz ensemble covering samba, choro, bossa nova, baiao, frevo, marcha rancho, maracatu and other essential Brazilian genres in their organic fusion with jazz, popular and classical traditions. Featured composers include Hermeto Pascoal and his current/former band members Jovino Santos Neto, Itiberê Zwarg, Vinicius Dorin, André Marques; Guinga, Toninho Horta, and classic popular vocal (MPB) repertoire by Chico Buarque, Sérgio Santos, Djavan, Johnny Alf and others. Learn rhythm section roles/interaction adapted from percussion sources, idiomatic melodic phrasing and improv concepts for Brazilian grooves.

The Brazilian Jazz Ensemble requires technically accomplished players who are strong readers and have a serious work ethic. Concert preparation often involves extra rehearsals & sectionals outside normal class time. Required instrumentation is as follows:
- **two saxophonists**: soprano/tenor (clarinet optional); alto with strong flute double (clarinet optional)
- **guitarist** who can function both as a melodic and accompanimental instrument (fingerstyle technique a plus)
- **vocalist** with instrumental-level scatsinging to double horn lines and improvise solos. Prior familiarity and/or director coaching in Portuguese for singing repertoire with original lyrics (lyrics).
- **pianist** with strong soloing and accompanimental skills
- **bassist** (5-string electric)
- **drummer** with previous experience in Brazilian rhythms on drumset and some hand percussion. **2 credits**

Charlie Parker Ensemble - David Glasser. The repertoire of Charlie Parker will be learned and studied. Specific tunes and original arrangements will be learned, practiced and recorded including the music of Charlie Parker, as well as some of his contemporaries and fellow musicians, Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk, Bud Powell, and Tadd Dameron. The language of the bebop musicians will be studied through listening, emulation, and implementation. Repertoire includes such works as Groovin' High, Blue and
Boogie, Salt Peanuts, Dizzy Atmosphere, Shaw Nuff, 'Round Midnight, Donna Lee, Confirmation, Hot House, Eb-Pob, The Squirrel, One Base Hit, Two Base Hit and many others. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. **Recommended Prerequisite: Completion of the Bebop Harmony class.** 2 credits

**Chick Corea Ensemble** - Armen Donelian. The repertoire of this class will include Chick Corea's seminal compositions of the 1960's and 70's, including *Steps, What Was, Tones for Joan's Bones, Windows, Litha, Captain Marvel, Like This, Morning Sprite* and similar material. The focus will be on strengthening the student's essential skills for performing Corea's brilliant and challenging music: Melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and technical clarity; improvisational originality; observance of dynamics and expression; propulsive and relaxed sense of time; and, ensemble cohesion. A final concert will be presented. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits

**Choral Musicianship** - Richard Boukas. A mixed acapella choir (women and men) comprised of vocal and instrumental Jazz students. Offers musicians the invaluable experience of performing polyphonic (contrapuntal) music from 1300 to the present. Repertoire will be masterpieces from the sacred and secular traditions of Europe, with some works from other cultures including the Americas and Eastern Europe. The primary goal is to let the music serve as our natural teacher - a "musicianship doctor" that addresses imbalances in our skills, and enhance work in all other core curriculum areas (i.e. Ear Training etc.) Prerequisite: Intermediate sight-singing abilities in treble and (men) bass clef are required. Vocalists: at least one semester of vocal sight-singing or permission of instructor. Enrollment by audition. 1-2 credits

**Electric Miles Ensemble** - Adam Holzman. Miles Davis is arguably the father of modern jazz, and his switch from acoustic to electric is still controversial. From the late 60's until the end of his career Miles Davis led the way in electric jazz, spearheading movements such as jazz-rock and jazz-funk. This ensemble will play music from all phases of Miles's electric period. Repertoire will include material from "In A Silent Way," "Bitches Brew" and "Jack Johnson" all the way to the late career highlights such as "Decoy" and "Tutu." Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits

**Eyes of the Masters** - Philip Ballman (coordinator). Guest Master artists from various backgrounds will be invited to give a master class. Primarily conducted through the playing experience, this course is a master class concept with each artist presenting his/her points of view on music, the Jazz life, or other specific topics. The sessions may also include performance demonstration or a jam with students. **If taken for credit, attendance of at least eight of the ten sessions is mandatory to pass. All students are invited to attend all sessions.** 1 credit

**Herbie Hancock Ensemble** - George Cables. This class will focus on the music of Herbie Hancock, including songs from the acoustic albums of the 1960’s, the funky electric albums of the 70’s and 80’s, and the eclectic recordings of more recent years. Final enrollment for this class is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits
Indian Ensemble - Samir Chatterjee. Students in this ensemble will learn and perform repertoire from a variety of Indian music styles and genres, including popular music and the classical traditions of North India (Hindustani music) and South India (Karnatak music). Special attention is paid to the principles of raga and tala as well as improvisational techniques and approaches that have been of great interest to jazz musicians for decades. Final enrollment for this class is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits

Jazz Orchestra - Charles Tolliver. The big band of the swing and bop eras has provided the foundation for today's larger Jazz ensembles and studio recording groups. Experience playing in a big band is useful for all Jazz musicians. It develops sight-reading skills and teaches the student to play in a section. The New School Jazz Orchestra is a top-level ensemble that often performs at Jazz clubs in New York City. The ensemble also performs student arrangements and compositions. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 1-2 credits

John Coltrane Ensemble - Reggie Workman. The Coltrane Repertory Ensemble is a repertory ensemble consisting of more advanced students at the school. Participants are selected by audition. In this ensemble, significant Coltrane compositions are chosen as vehicles towards understanding why and how the music of John Coltrane, an icon of Jazz whose breath of creation spans modern music from traditional to futuristic and beyond, pioneered concepts of harmonization. His innovative system was predicated on novel uses of the minor third fourth progression, which attributed to the expanded use of whole tone scales and the twelve-tone system, giving more flexibility to the improviser. Coltrane's logical resolutions of extended chromatic passages, articulating densely notated compositions and tasteful note placement in slower compositions have become defining factors in Jazz and improvised. All of the above represent challenges unique to Coltrane compositions and an understanding of this great artist. 2 credits

M-BASE Ensemble - Andy Milne. In this course, students learn all the music by ear. The repertoire consists of the music of Andy Milne, Steve Coleman, and other composers associated with M-BASE. The course offers the unique opportunity to learn and perform music using very specific rhythmic challenges not normally found in standard jazz repertoire. The music is challenging, melodic and funky. Students improve their melodic and rhythmic ear training, and develop skills for distinguishing, internalizing and soloing with new and unfamiliar rhythms and melodic passages. The course is not a superficial survey on "how to solo over odd time signatures" but rather a study in rhythm and form, helping to develop a rhythmic concept which will open doors for playing in any meter. Students are taught to hear musical phrases, rather than time signatures. The process of eliminating the conceptual bar line will help foster a greater sense of freedom, based on understanding the music from the ground up. The goal of the course is to give students a first-hand look at the anatomy of the music associated with "M-BASE" and help them to develop the musical muscles necessary to understand and improvise with this music. The approach used strives to encourage students to hear musical phrases rather than time signatures. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits
Ornette Coleman Ensemble – Cameron Brown. This class focuses on performing the early compositions of Ornette Coleman. An intuitive approach to learning his compositions as well as improvising will be emphasized. The course will explore music from his early albums including Something Else, This Is Our Music, Tomorrow is the Question, and The Shape of Jazz to Come. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. **2 credits**

Rhythm & Blues Revue Ensemble - Michael Wolff. This is a performance ensemble with vocalists, horns, and a full rhythm section that may include more than one keyboard and/or guitar along with electric bass. The ensemble will play arrangements drawn from the repertoires of such great R & B revues as Ray Charles, James Brown, and Aretha Franklin, along with compositions supplied by the instructor; the group may also play original compositions and arrangements submitted by students and approved by the instructor. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. **2 credits**

Rhythm Section Workshop (“The Art of the Rhythm Section”) - Hal Galper. A “hands-on” class focusing on the various aspects of rhythm section playing: the logistics of listening, clarifying instrument roles, the decision-making process, developing performance awareness, concentration and instrumental control. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. **2 credits**

Standards - Reggie Workman. In the Standards Ensemble, students are required to learn assigned songs representative of the American Song Book, which demonstrate standard structure and chord progressions. Ensemble members are later given songs that have been written with the identical harmonic structure of the Song Book but with new melodies composed and arranged by exponents of the Jazz world. Students are assigned a number of songs from the standard American Songbook as well as songs originating in the Jazz genre, which have become recognized as standards. Vocalists, like the instrumentalists, are expected to articulate all the written melodies, allowing vocalist to expand their vocabulary for improvisation. Finally, a listening module will be provided encouraging participants to make analytical comparisons between vocalists and instrumentalists. **2 credits**

The Sun Ra Arkestra - Ahmed Abdullah. For years the music of Sun Ra was only available to those brave enough to spend time in his Arkestra. A master composer, arranger, bandleader and pianist, Sun Ra's works are overdue for critical attention by music students. Sun Ra compositions give students a range of challenges with music of odd intervals covering territory from ballads to swing and beyond. Compositions are presented in a unique style, which offers an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings that gave rise to the music. His lyrics, speaking of space travel and a planet without cemeteries, will challenge students to expand their horizons and understanding of art music. The multidisciplinary vision that combines poetry, music, and dance with lyrics, characteristic of the Sun Ra legacy, will be afforded opportunity to develop within this ensemble class. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. **1-2 credits**

Super Trios – Allison Miller. This ensemble will cover the musical contributions of piano trios from Nat King Cole, Bill Evans, Paul Bley, Hampton Hawes, McCoy Tyner, Keith Jarrett, as well as others. Enrollment is limited to pianists, acoustic bassists, and drummers. Particular emphasis will be placed on
the communication and support among the various members of the ensemble and the individual roles of each player. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits

**Thelonious Monk Ensemble** - Steve Cardenas. An ensemble focusing on Monk’s important compositions and stylistic innovations. Students will be required to bring in their own arrangements of Monk’s music. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits

**Vocal Jazz Ensemble** - Amy London. In Vocal Jazz Ensemble, students have the opportunity to finesse such professionally demanding skills as: diaphragmatic breathing, proper vocal placement, blending with other singers, vowel and diction clarification, and sight singing, as well as having fun singing beautiful and challenging music as a group. VJE will sing works by such renowned arrangers as Darmon Meader, Dave Lambert, Gene Puerling, Phil Mattson and Michelle Weir, as well as up and coming arrangers such as Dylan Pramuk (NS Jazz BFA 2009), Robert Lepley and Pamela Watson. Student compositions and arrangements are welcome as are A Capella pieces. Choral singing is an important skill for any professional singer. There is paying work for singers who have good choral chops, from church and synagogue gigs to jingles to film scores to vocal jazz and a Capella performing groups, and Broadway shows as well. VJE will culminate in a concert in the New School Performance Space at the end of the semester. Come and join the fun! 1-2 credits

**Wayne Shorter Ensemble** - Doug Weiss. Wayne Shorter is one of the giants of improvised music as well as a notable leader and composer. This ensemble will be an in-depth study of Shorter’s work, both compositionally and as an improviser. Classroom activities will include learning early compositions directly from the recordings as well as reading transcriptions made by the instructor. Final enrollment is at the discretion of the instructor. 2 credits