

The Columbian

Weekend

and beyond

Friday, January 30, 2009

Strike up the bands

Hitting the high notes
at the Clark College Jazz Festival

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Liam Neeson in action film
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sweet selection, from traditional to
memorable Page F23



COVER STORY

Sounding a new note at Clark

College's annual jazz festival downplays competition, stresses education



Jake Krecklow, who plays string bass, will perform with the Clark College Jazz Ensemble during the college's annual jazz festival.

STEVEN LANE/The Columbian

If you go

- **What:** The 47th annual Clark College Jazz Festival, featuring jazz bands from high schools throughout Washington and Oregon.
- **When:** Continues 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Jan. 30 to 31, followed by finals competitions and special guest performances starting at 7 each night.
- **Where:** Clark College's Gaiser Hall, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver.
- **Cost:** \$5, free to those 12 and younger.
- **Information:** 360-992-2188, 360-992-2662 or www.clark.edu.

By BRETT OPPEGAARD
for The Columbian

For the past few years, the Clark College Jazz Festival has had trouble attracting enough bands to fill all of its potential performance slots. There has been turnover in the director position, which has contributed to the drift of the 47-year tradition. But organizer Richard Inouye, now in his second year, felt he really just needed to emphasize education more, rather than competition, and be aggressive with his

marketing.

Despite the struggling economy, his renewed focus was rewarded this year with a return to a full festival slate. After the 16 vocal ensembles scheduled to perform Jan. 29, the event will continue festivities with 45 jazz ensembles performing Jan. 30 and 31 at the school's Gaiser Hall. That will mean about 1,200 high school students from throughout Washington and Oregon will be coming to the campus. Inouye said, plus another 3,000 supporters,

including family, friends and fellow students, as well as the rest of the audience attracted from the region.

A jazz ensemble is a Count Basie-style collection of horns, usually 15, and a rhythm section that includes a piano, bass and drums. Inouye said he's been hearing from the band directors that many are preparing to play Count Basie music this year as well as other jazz standards, from such luminaries as Duke

Jazz:

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Ellington.

Inouye suggested these as the five moments of the festival not to miss:

■ **Crowning the Sweepstakes Band of 2009, 9:30 p.m. on Jan. 31.**

To soak in the pure student emotion of the competition, that's when the best band of the festival, regardless of school size classification, is picked. That group gets invited back next year to perform. It also receives the legacy trophy, a big cup with a trumpet on top, that's passed down from school to school over the years. In addition, this is when the festival chooses the annual super band, the top 18 individual players of the weekend.

■ **The Roosevelt High School Jazz Band II, the 2008 sweepstakes winner, comes back for its encore, 9 p.m. Jan. 31.**

This Seattle-based ensemble shocked the judges and crowd last year by outperforming the top-rated group at its school as well as the entire rest of the field. It's always a surprise to hear what the Sweepstakes Band chooses to play, and it's usually light-hearted and fun, meant as a way to showcase the group's top talents.

■ **The competition among the best of the Class A and Class AA schools, 7 p.m. Jan. 30.**

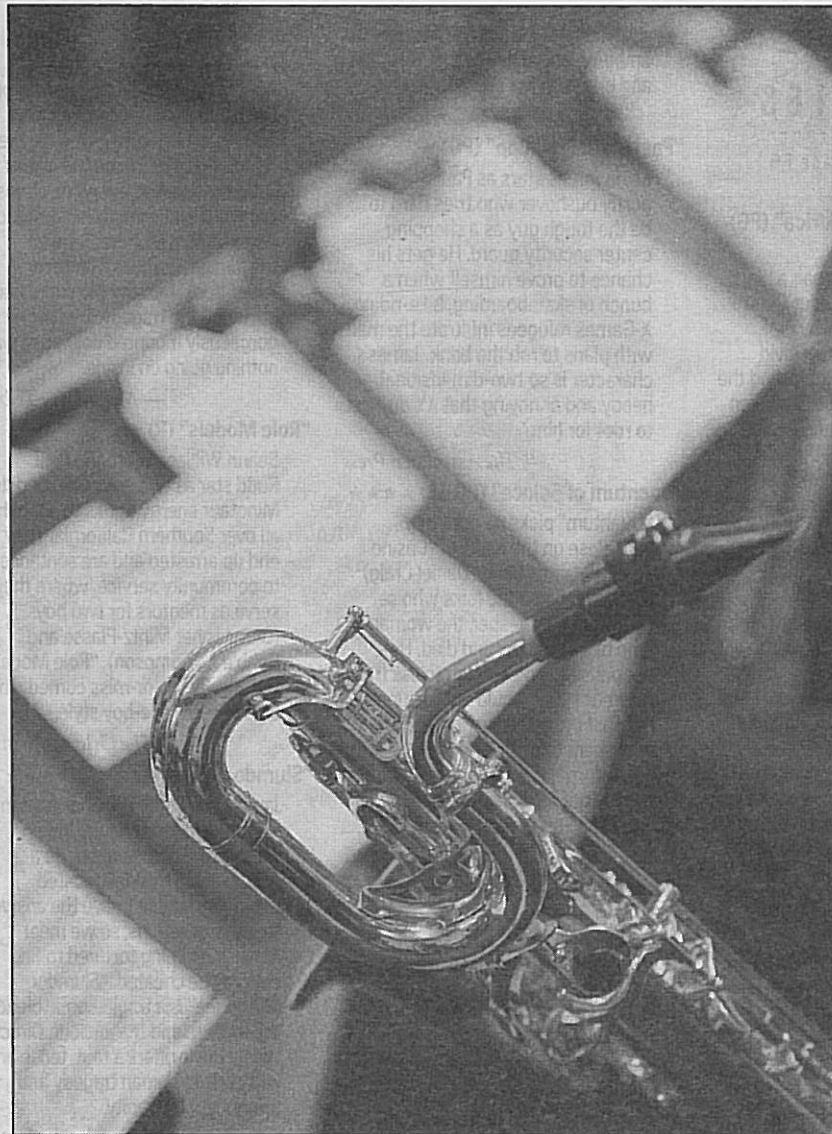
There are 10 Class A and 11 Class AA ensembles striving this year to be considered the best for their school sizes, and the enthusiasm from them and their supporters traditionally rivals anything the audience will see from the bigger schools.

■ **The competition among the best of the Class AAA and Class AAAA schools, 7 p.m. Jan. 31.**

Usually the Sweepstakes Band for the year comes out of this competition, pitting the biggest schools — 11 AAA and 13 AAAA — directly against each other.

■ **Don't forget about the Clark College Jazz Ensemble, performing under Inouye's direction, at noon and 9 p.m. Jan. 30 and noon Saturday, Jan. 31.**

A secondary motive for the festival is to get prospective music students to campus and show them what Clark offers. It's one of the highlights of the year for the Clark ensemble, to be able to perform in front of such a large audience, and it's a primary recruiting tool for Inouye. He plans a program of "Green Piece" by Maria Schneider, a salsa arrangement of the jazz standard "Peanut Vendor" that Inouye had commissioned when he was leader of the Falconaires Jazz Ensemble, which is part of the Air Force Academy Band, and "Jackknife," which was written by one of the festival adjudicators, Greg Yasinsky, coordinator of jazz studies at Washington State University's Pullman campus.



Among the highlights of the Clark College Jazz Festival will be a salsa arrangement of the jazz standard "Peanut Vendor" that Richard Inouye had commissioned when he was leader of the Falconaires Jazz Ensemble, which is part of the Air Force Academy Band. Inouye, of the Clark College music department, has organized the Clark College Jazz Festival for the past two years.

CLARK COLLEGE JAZZ FESTIVAL SCHEDULE

FRIDAY

Class A

8:20 a.m. Ridgefield High School
 8:40 a.m. Vancouver School of Arts and Academics
 9 a.m. Hockinson High School
 9:20 a.m. Ridgefield High School
 9:40 a.m. Woodland High School
 10:20 a.m. Overlake School
 10:40 a.m. Adna Middle/High School
 11 a.m. Creswell High School
 11:20 a.m. Astoria High School
 11:40 a.m. Trout Lake High School
 Noon Class A finalists announced

FRIDAY

Class AA

1 p.m. Columbia River High School
 1:20 p.m. Prairie High School
 1:40 p.m. Milwaukie High School
 2 p.m. Scappoose High School
 2:20 p.m. David Douglas High School
 2:40 p.m. Union High School
 3:20 p.m. Washougal High School
 3:40 p.m. Cascade High School
 4 p.m. Fife High School
 4:20 p.m. Mead High School
 4:40 p.m. Hockinson High School
 5 p.m. Class AA finalists announced
 7 p.m. Finals competition
 9 p.m. Clark College Jazz Ensemble performance, followed by the Class A and Class AA awards presentation and Outstanding Musician awards

SATURDAY

Class AAA

7:40 a.m. Mountain View High School
 8 a.m. Battle Ground High School
 8:20 a.m. Century High School
 8:40 a.m. David Douglas High School
 9 a.m. Newport High School
 9:20 a.m. Mercer Island High School
 10 a.m. Mountlake Terrace High School
 10:20 a.m. Union High School
 10:40 a.m. Cleveland High School
 11 a.m. Meadowdale High School
 11:20 a.m. Mead High School
 11:45 a.m. Clark College Jazz Ensemble performance, followed by the announcement of the Class AAA finalists

SATURDAY

Class AAAA

12:40 p.m. Century High School
 1 p.m. Clackamas High School
 1:20 p.m. Kelso High School
 1:40 p.m. Newport High School
 2 p.m. Heritage High School
 2:20 p.m. Lake Stevens High School
 3 p.m. David Douglas High School
 3:20 p.m. Mountain View High School
 3:40 p.m. Battle Ground High School
 4 p.m. Mountlake Terrace High School
 4:20 p.m. Garfield High School
 4:40 p.m. Roosevelt High School
 5 p.m. Pacific Crest Community School exhibition
 5:20 p.m. Class AAAA finalists announced
 7 p.m. Finals competition
 9 p.m. Roosevelt High School Jazz Band II, the 2008 Sweepstakes Award winner, performance
 9:30 p.m. Class AAA and Class AAAA awards presentation and Outstanding Musician awards as well as the 2009 Sweepstakes Award