



JAZZ

CONTINUED FROM 1B

energy with the audience, as the two share close quarters in the venue's intimate atmosphere.

"The difference between a nightclub and a concert hall is that [the latter] can be more sterile," said James Dreier, a lecturer in the UI Jazz Department. "The lovely part about the Mill is that people are right on top of the band, feeling the energy."

The Jazz Department has been doing a variety of Thursday night shows at the Mill in recent years, Dreier said.

"We get the ensembles out in a nightclub atmosphere, because that is where this music was born, and it still exists there," he said. "It's good for the students to have that experience, somewhere that is much more intimate."

The concerts feature both large ensembles and small combos with students and professors in the Jazz Department, each with a different focus on a style or subgenre. These include West African, swing, and classic American among others. Other UI jazz ensembles include World Beat, Latin Jazz, and Johnson County Landmark.

The Jazz Repertory Ensemble covers early



Trombone player Zach Spindler (above) and alto sax player Brooke Hendricks (right) will perform tonight at UI's Jazz Series. (The Daily Iowan/Christy Aumer)

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UI Jazz Series

When: 7 p.m. today

Where: Mill, 120 E. Burlington

Admission: \$5 nonstudents, \$3 students

swing to progressive jazz. The group learns to perform music from each era and also to use improvisation techniques.

Brent Sandy, a UI jazz faculty member and director of the Jazz Rep Ensemble, said that his mission for the group is to teach the members the basics of jazz by providing an opportunity to play in live settings.

"My mission is to teach the

basics," Sandy said. "How to swing and the ins and outs of playing a lot of the great composers and arrangers of the history of jazz."

These famous jazz masters include Count Basie, Charles Mingus, Duke Ellington, and Thelonious Monk, whose works provide a solid foundation for music.

"[This music] is based on the blues, which is very African-American-centered music," Sandy said. "Basic blues was created in the slave fields as a means of storytelling."

Through improvisation and individual flair, the 16



members complement each other's styles to become one dynamic music machine.

"They can imitate and assimilate [what they have learned] into their own styles and then innovate when that time comes," Sandy said.

Spindler said he enjoys playing jazz in a bar because he said it feels more authentic in the sense that it has a laid-back vibe, and that's how the music came to be.

He was also involved in the Latin Jazz ensemble, Jazz Combo, and Johnson County Landmark.

"I grew into jazz because the culture is more about you developing your own sounds; you can interpret

melodies however you want," he said. "The same goes for improv — nobody's telling you who you should sound like."

Sandy said jazz is based on improvisation, which is essentially creating one's own melodies over given harmonies.

"[We play] different tempos, styles, and keys," Sandy said. "All of this comes into play for the way you program a piece, like the way a visual artist

would program a show at a gallery. We are covering the musical canvas."

The Jazz Rep Ensemble tries to encompass the wide range of styles from composers of the past and then play the music so it excites the audience.

"Students should come out and support their fellow students to see what's happening in other parts of campus and hear one of America's only indigenous art forms," Sandy said.

