

Although it is impossible to cite every instance of the outstanding jobs so many of you are doing as jazz instructors at the high school level, the purpose of this article is to identify and describe some of the superior programs that exist throughout the country. It's always interesting for us to make comparisons, be inspired, or just provide a model of excellence and that's what this article is all about. Concurrently, I want to stress that we haven't described ALL the impressive schools in existence among the high school jazz programs in this single edition, and since I hope to provide a sequel to this article each year, if you have information you would like to share with our readers, please send it along for consideration of publication in the future. Exemplary programs have been particularly in vogue at recent NAJEE conventions where some of the high school ensembles featured were truly impressive and incredible. To suggest that their performance surpassed anyone's notion of what was considered possible for high schools just a few years ago is right on the money but the maturity and presence these high school students exhibited could still only be the product of an exceptional program. Nevertheless, this certainly must be what the founding fathers of NAJEE had in mind when they established this organization!

For this article, four schools have been profiled as exemplary models (Hall High School, Interlochen Arts Academy, The Arts Magnet High School, and Hemet High School) from all regions of the country. In each instance, the following areas are examined and analyzed: a) a brief history or background of the program, b) course offerings and curriculum, and c) special activities, honors, and highlights. No inferences should be made about the relative merit of the schools. Take my word for it: Each of these programs is a monster in its own right and often demonstrates a curriculum and product that is the envy of many colleges.

**Hall High School
West Hartford, Connecticut
William N. Stanley, Director**

Hall High School boasts of one of the earliest jazz programs among high schools in the United States. The jazz band has been offered since 1960, the jazz choir since 1962, and in 1963, the first of an incredible 18 record albums produced at Capitol, Columbia, RCA, and A&R was completed! Currently, the program is committed to a European tour every other year that has become another of their impressive traditions.

The jazz course offerings at Hall receive full academic credit and have met daily since 1972. Courses include: Concert Jazz Band and Jazz Band II, Audio and Recording Techniques, and Jazz Choir (which devotes 1/2 time to jazz and the remainder to madrigal). In addition, there are a number of non-credit courses offered after school. These include Jazz Dancers, which meets all year, various Jazz Ensembles, which are periodic according to need, and Improvisation Workshops, which are also periodic but also offered every second or third summer. Although there is an extensive selection of courses offered throughout the remainder of the Music program (including 4 choirs, theory, harmony, etc.), one notable feature of the Department is that marching band is not allowed according to a written policy of the school board since 1964.

The requirements for participation in the jazz program are rigorous but the benefits are obviously worthwhile. In

addition to a library of over 1,400 charts, approximately 150 of which are performed each year, the program is duly proud of the high tech presentation of its annual "show" on its home stage. In addition to the 40-60 concerts per year, Hall High School presents a jazz gala each year for six sold-out nights, where, during the three hours of music, the audience is treated to a jazz extravaganza that includes costuming, lighting, staging, all the various jazz groups and a total package that has become the single source of revenue to financially support the European tours, recordings, new technological instruments, etc. Last year, for instance, over \$23,000 was generated from this single event. One other significant recent feature that provides a new curricular dimension to the program is a band room that is also an expandable 16-track recording studio which is fully loaded with the latest and best equipment possible. For instance, they are currently expanding so that they have 16 track automated mixdown and fully digital mixing by June of this year to coincide with their newly released CD album which was totally recorded at the school. It is little wonder, then, that the school has garnered such enthusiastic media attention and the word "professional" is so frequently applied to the program. When high school students have the full-time benefits of a recording studio on hand to constantly monitor their performance, the results seem obvious.

Stellar High School Jazz Programs

Among the many fine jazz programs across the country, four are selected here as sources of inspiration and curriculum enhancing ideas

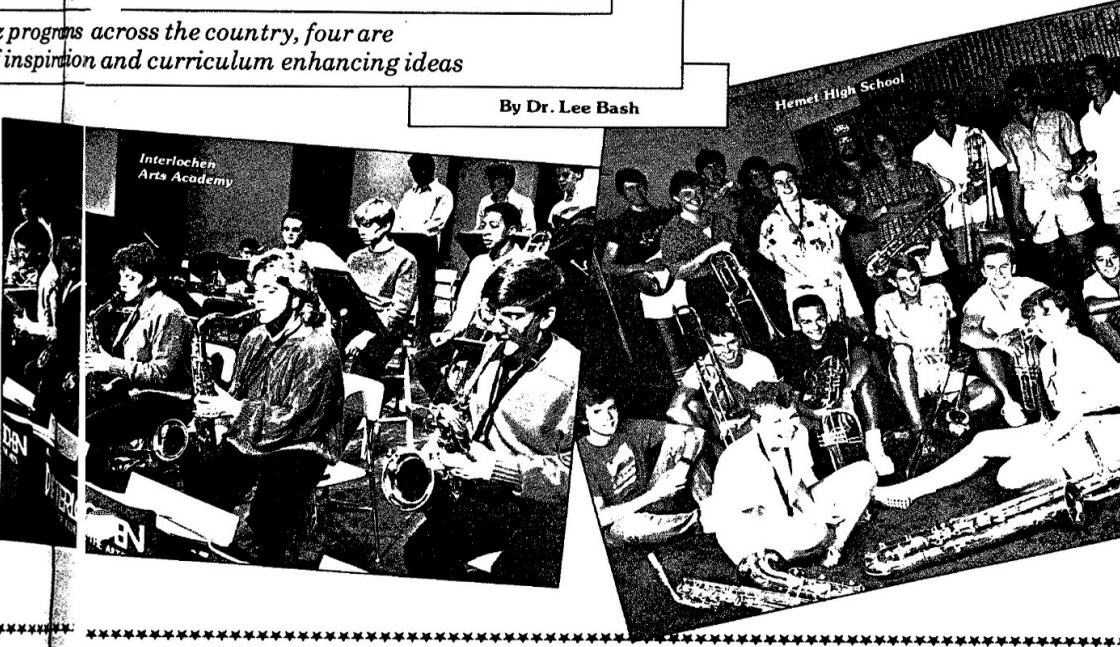
By Dr. Lee Bash

Besides the extensive touring and record production, Hall High School has compiled an impressive record at festivals and contests with consistent First Places over the years. Other notable honors include 12 first- and 3 second-place awards from the prestigious *down beat* Awards. One final honor that Hall High School has recently enjoyed is having saxophonist Pat Zimmerli receive a "Young Talent Award" from NAJEE and *down beat* magazine in the same year.

**Interlochen Arts Academy
Interlochen, Michigan
William Series, Coordinator of Jazz Studies**

The Interlochen Arts Academy was founded by Dr. Joseph E. Maddy in 1962 as the first private high school in the country to place emphasis on intensive art's study while maintaining a superior academic program. Maddy, a prominent arts educator with a national reputation, implemented an innovative program that emphasized concentration and wholesome competitiveness, freedom of curricular choices and progress based on individual abilities. Today, that philosophy includes a substantial jazz program, which suggests just how compatible jazz is with those lofty ideals embraced by Maddy.

The stated objectives of the jazz studies program probably best summarize the curriculum. To provide the learning experience of performing in the jazz idiom through ensemble playing and individualized instruction with ad-



ditional stress on improvisation, jazz history, and styles. Courses include Studio Orchestra; Jazz Workshop Ensemble; Jazz Styles and Analysis; and rhythm section classes which emphasize jazz theory, voicings, proper accompanying styles, and improvisation and are offered as Jazz Guitar Class; Jazz Bass Class; and Jazz Piano Class.

Visiting jazz artists have always played a prominent role at Interlochen and in recent years have included David Baker, Maynard Ferguson, Stan Getz, Sir Roland Hanna, Ramsey Lewis, Marian McPartland, Ed Soph, and Billy Taylor among others. Among other honors and appearances, the Studio Orchestra, under the direction of Peter Brockman, was just featured at the MENC convention in Indianapolis, after already appearing at this year's NAJE conference in Detroit. While there, Ben Waltzer, a pianist for the group was awarded one of the prestigious "Young Talent Awards".

**Arts Magnet School
Dallas, Texas
Bart Marantz, Director**

The Arts Magnet High School has been in existence in the new downtown Dallas Arts District for only eleven years. During that short time, balanced emphasis on the arts and academics has consistently produced one of the leading prototypes of its kind in the nation. Since 1983 when Bart Marantz, Director of Jazz Studies, joined the school, there have been a series of highlights as the jazz program has matured and blossomed.

There are four artistic "clusters" at the Arts Magnet High School, of which music is one. There are five departments within the music cluster: choral, guitar, piano, wind and percussion, and orchestral strings. Each department has several ensemble classes in order to fulfill the ensemble requirement—all music students must take ensemble each semester. In addition, all students are required to pass two years of Comprehensive Musicianship. These courses are offered during the first two years with a competency exam that must be fulfilled before the student can go ahead in the track. In addition, there is a great deal of emphasis placed on maintaining high academic standards as well (particularly, due to the Texas law which stringently restricts students from participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities unless they fulfill rigorous guidelines). Courses which have direct jazz applications or jazz incorporated into their structure include Show Choir, Jazz Arranging I & II, Jazz Improvisation, Stage Band I-IV, Jazz Combo I-IV, Guitar I-IV, and Composition I & II. To assist the students, the school has a computer-supported music laboratory system that is being updated as often as possible to keep up with technology.

The Arts Magnet High School is particularly proud of winning the distinguished "Rockefeller Brothers Fund" award for displaying an exemplary program in the arts. But it is the jazz program in recent years that has garnered an incredible amount of honors in its own right. Both the combo and big band have recently been featured at NAJE conventions. Joe Jackson, a marvelous trombonist, received the Young Talent Award from both *down beat* magazine and NAJE. The program has won 27 *down beat* Dee Bee Jazz Awards in recent years and perhaps the most

impressive of those awards include the composition and arranging categories where the students have really excelled. In fact, the jazz program now features student arrangements and compositions extensively and the results have been phenomenal!

**Hemet High School
Hemet, California
Jeff Tower, Director**

As I reviewed the material for this article, the single piece of information that really impressed me was that Hemet has a city population of only 35,000. Nevertheless, their program is impressive and the envy of many schools three times their size! Much of the credit goes to a marvelous feeder school system that offers two jazz groups at the elementary and junior high level and 120 high school students involved in the band program overall.

The thrust of the jazz program at Hemet is purely performance oriented. Of course, there's fierce competition among the students for placement in the top jazz ensemble. Even the second jazz ensemble, Jazz II, has placed consistently in the intermediate and advanced divisions of jazz festivals. The Hemet Jazz Band reads 300 charts a year, participates in an average of eight festivals, does extensive performances in school and around the community, and has produced six albums that have not only received the highest praise among critics (including NAJE's Herb Wong), but enjoy regular air-play on some jazz radio stations across the nation. Since recordings are such a crucial dimension of the program, the band spends an incredible amount of time in the studio: The last album took over 300 hours of studio and editing time. There is also a focus on individual growth and musicianship which is evidenced by 15 different soloists being featured on their last album.

When it comes to festivals and contests, the program has generated an impressive 92 top division ratings from among the 99 Festivals the band has entered. But competitions aren't the sole area of concentration for Hemet. Touring has also always been an important feature of the program with performances in over 10 states, and 7 countries. Special guest appearances have included presentations at 8 national conventions and conferences and the band has also been featured at some impressive events such as the Smithsonian Institute, Disneyland "And All That Jazz" (4 times), and the Playboy Jazz Festival. Currently, Hemet can be heard on over 200 radio stations world wide.

In summary, I would like to point out that three of these schools have recently been featured at NAJE conventions, three of these schools (not the same three) have garnered extensive awards from *down beat*, three of these schools (again, not the same three) have had student recently honored by NAJE with their Young Talent Awards, and all of them consistently attract the most prestigious college recruiters. Of course, any college or university jazz program is always seeking students who have been well prepared in the basics of jazz performance with an abundance of background and experience.

I am indebted to David Baker and Dr. John Bradley for their invaluable cooperation and assistance in this project. Each provided material and ideas that contributed significantly to the overall body of this work.