



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **New England Conservatory Presents “*Living Time*” George Russell: His Musical Life and Legacy**

**Sunday, March 21 at Jazz at Lincoln Center**

**Part of NYC Week-long Celebration of NEC’s Ground-Breaking Jazz Studies Program,  
March 20 – 27, 2010**

*“Four decades after its founding, NEC’s jazz studies department is among the most acclaimed and successful in the world; so says the roster of visionary artists that have comprised both its faculty and alumni.” — Mike West, JazzTimes*

New England Conservatory presents “*Living Time*” **George Russell: His Musical Life and Legacy**, an in-depth examination of George Russell’s pivotal position and important contributions to African American improvisational art music on Sunday, March 21 from 2 – 6 p.m. at Jazz at Lincoln Center, Irene Diamond Education Center, Broadway at 60<sup>th</sup> St., 5<sup>th</sup> floor, NYC. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, please call (212) 258-9800 or log on to [www.jalc.org](http://www.jalc.org).

While Russell’s music and ideas have been celebrated around the world, they remain somewhat “below the radar,” particularly in the United States. This academic colloquium will be a major critical appraisal of his multi-faceted career. Panelists include: **Gunther Schuller, Ken Schaphorst** NEC '84 M.M., **Ingrid Monson** NEC '82, **Cameron Brown, Stanton Davis** NEC '72, **Ben Schwendener** NEC '86, and **David Baker** with an introduction by **Jerome Harris** NEC '77. There will be two panels: “George Russell as composer, bandleader, and influential figure”; and “George Russell as music theorist and educator.”

The event is part of New England Conservatory’s 40th Anniversary of its first-in-the-nation Jazz Studies program. “**Hot and Cool: 40 Years of Jazz at NEC**,” began in Boston in October and continues in NYC with **8 days of concerts and events March 20 - 27, 2010** featuring some of NEC’s most renowned alumni, faculty and students. Proceeds from these events will support jazz scholarships at NEC.

NYC Events include:

<b>Saturday, March 20</b>	<b>Anthony Coleman; Jeremy Udden</b>	<b>Cornelia Street Café</b>
<b>Sunday, March 21</b>	<b>“Living Time”: George Russell’s Musical Life and Legacy</b>	<b>JALC</b>
<b>Sunday, March 21</b>	<b>Andre Matos CD Release Concert for <i>Quare</i></b>	<b>Cornelia Street Café</b>
<b>Monday, March 22</b>	<b>The Public Option &amp; The Noah Preminger Quartet</b>	<b>55 Bar</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 23</b>	<b>Darcy James Argue’s Secret Society</b>	<b>Jazz Standard</b>
<b>Weds, March 24</b>	<b>NEC Faculty Jazz All Stars; Marty Ehrlich’s Quartet</b>	<b>Jazz Standard</b>
<b>Thursday, March 25</b>	<b>Curtis Hasselbring; Frank Carlberg</b>	<b>Douglass Street Music Collective</b>
<b>Friday, March 26</b>	<b>Vocal Showcase</b> with Dominique Eade, Sara Serpa, David Devoe, Amy Cervini, Carmen Staaf, Jorge Roeder, Jo Lawry, Richie Barshay, Sofia Koutsovitis	<b>Joe’s Pub</b>
<b>Friday, March 26</b>	<b>John McNeil-Bill McHenry Quartet</b>	<b>Cornelia Street Café</b>
<b>Saturday, March 27</b>	<b>NEC Jazz Summit</b> with John Medeski, Ron Blake, Anton Fig, Bernie Worrell, Sarah Jarosz, Dominique Eade, Lake Street Drive + more	<b>B.B. King’s</b>

The 40<sup>th</sup> celebration kicked off in Boston with a week of events in October 2009, culminating in a performance by the Wayne Shorter Quartet with NEC’s Philharmonia, which Kevin Lowenthal of the Boston Globe called a “stirring merger of jazz and classical music and to the fruitful 40 years of the two forms cohabiting at NEC.”

With a faculty that has included 5 MacArthur "genius" grant winners (Steve Lacy, George Russell, Ran Blake, Gunther Schuller, and Miguel Zenón) and 4 NEA Jazz Masters (Schuller, Brookmeyer, Russell, and Ron Carter), and alumni that reads like a who’s who of jazz, NEC’s Jazz Studies Program has spawned numerous Grammy winning composers and performers. As Mike West writes in *JazzTimes*: *“Four decades after its founding, NEC’s jazz studies department is among the most acclaimed and successful in the world; so says the roster of visionary artists that have comprised both its faculty and alumni.”*

**History of NEC Jazz Studies**

The first fully accredited jazz studies program at a music conservatory, NEC’s program was the brainchild of Gunther Schuller, the jazz historian, horn player, composer, author, and conductor. Principal Horn in the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra at age 19, Schuller had discovered Duke Ellington as a teenager and pronounced jazz as important as classical music. Named President of the Conservatory in 1967, he moved quickly to incorporate jazz into the curriculum. By September 1969, he had gotten his unprecedented program approved by the National Association of Schools of Music and began offering classes. Closely allied to the Jazz Studies program was his Third Stream department, which came along a few years later and which linked classical and jazz into a new genre.

Schuller chose his jazz faculty with a connoisseur's discernment. The first department chair was saxophonist Carl Atkins. Composer George Russell, who conceived the Lydian Chromatic Concept (which has importantly influenced jazz greats from Miles Davis to Maria Schneider), began a Conservatory association that continued until his recent passing. When Russell retired from teaching, the NEA Jazz Master became a Distinguished Artist-in-Residence Emeritus. Pianist Jaki Byard, called a "walking encyclopedia of jazz," brought his eclecticism and generosity of spirit to his NEC teaching. And Ran Blake, who Schuller had discovered pushing a broom at Atlantic Records, came to NEC in 1968 and became the first chair of the Third Stream Department in 1974.

During the early years of Jazz at NEC, Atkins formed a trio composed of Donald Pate on bass, Harvey Mason on drums, and Ron Fransen on piano. With Atkins as saxophonist and coach, the group toured jazz festivals recruiting students and attracting national attention to the new NEC program.

Among the earliest students to enroll were Stanton Davis and Ricky Ford. Brought in by Ran Blake, Ford fronted the house band at Wally's Café while playing in Jaki Byard's big band and Schuller's repertory band at the Conservatory. "My participation in the NEC jazz ensemble under Jaki's direction prepared me for entrée into the Ellington Orchestra," Ford has recalled.

By the time Schuller retired as President of NEC in 1977, the list of jazz graduates was already impressive. They included Anthony Coleman (who has returned to teach at NEC), Marty Ehrlich, Fred Hersch, Jerome Harris, Michael Moore, and Bo Winiker.

Throughout the history of NEC's Jazz Studies program, the faculty has continued to be distinguished by its wide range of important artists including trumpeter John McNeil; saxophonists Jimmy Giuffre, Steve Lacy, and Joe Allard; drummer Bob Moses; bassist Dave Holland; trombonist-composer-arranger Bob Brookmeyer; pianists Michael Cain and Stanley Cowell; and guitarists Gene Bertoncini, Chuck Wayne and Jack Wilkins. Vocalist Dominique Eade, who graduated in 1984, then became the first jazz performer to receive an NEC Artist Diploma in 1989, joined the faculty and has been a magnet for gifted young singers. Several, like Kris Adams, Luciana Souza, Lisa Thorson and Patrice Williamson, have gone on to prestigious careers.

So illustrious is NEC's jazz faculty that five of the most eminent have received MacArthur "Genius" grants (Lacy, Russell, Blake, Schuller, and Miguel Zenón). In addition, Schuller, Brookmeyer, Russell, and Ron Carter have all been named NEA Jazz Masters.

Similarly, prominent alumni of NEC reads like a Who's Who of Jazz and includes: Bruce Barth, Regina Carter, Freddy Cole, Marilyn Crispell, Marty Ehrlich, Ricky Ford, Satoko Fujii, Jerome Harris, Fred Hersch, Roger Kellaway, Mat Maneri, Harvey Mason, Andy McGhee, Bill McHenry, John Medeski, Vaughn Monroe, Michael Moore, Hankus Netsky, Jamie Saft, Frank London, Don Byron, George Schuller, Luciana Souza, Chris Speed, Cecil Taylor, Cuong Vu, Phil Wilson, Bo Winiker, Bernie Worrell, Rachel Z, Rachael Price, Richie Barshay, and Bridget Kearney.

For further information on Jazz 40th at NEC, go to: <http://necmusic.edu/jazz40>  
For more information on Jazz at Lincoln Center, please visit [www.jalc.org](http://www.jalc.org).