

Metroplexity Big Band Coming to 45th SWOSU Jazz Festival

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Metroplexity Bag Band

Southwestern Oklahoma State University's annual Jazz Festival will celebrate its 45th anniversary in 2015, and a special event featuring the Metroplexity Big Band will be held on February 12-13 on the Weatherford campus.

In addition to the Dallas-based band, other entertainers at this year's SWOSU Jazz Festival will include a band of jazz students and alumni of SWOSU's storied music program.

The festival kicks off on Thursday evening (Feb. 12) with a free 7 p.m. concert by the Metroplexity Big Band, led by bassist/composer Kris Berg, in the Fine Arts Center.

On Friday (Feb. 13), there will be concerts at 1 and 8 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center featuring five members of the Metroplexity Big Band and SWOSU Jazz Ensemble "A". Tickets are on sale and can be purchased by calling 580.774.3780. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$5 for seniors, and \$3 for individuals with a valid SWOSU I.D.

Also going on throughout the day on Friday will be performances by high school and college jazz ensembles. Admission to those performances is free.

Dr. Richard Tirk, director of the SWOSU Jazz Festival, said it is exciting that the 45th anniversary will feature the artistry and excitement of Berg and the MBB.

Berg is one of the top-selling jazz composer / arrangers in the world and has been enhancing the programs and recordings of jazz ensembles from professionals to middle schools for years. While very popular in the United States, Berg enjoys a following throughout the world. His popular series of "chicken" funk tunes have sold tens of thousands of charts.

In addition to Berg and the Metroplexity Big Band, every five years the SWOSU Music Department invites any former jazz students along with long-time SWOSU music professor Dr. Terry Segress, who is now retired, to light up the evening with burning jazz music. This year's alumni band will feature special guest alum/pianist Dave Hanson ('76), who currently is on the jazz faculty at the University of Denver and co-leads the Colorado based H2 Big Band. Segress will have students representing SWOSU's Jazz 'A' from the 70's to the most recent graduates and has selected a program of standard charts like Foster's *Blues in Hoss Flat* in addition to newer ones like Dave Hanson's *Blues Brews*.

For more information on any of the SWOSU Jazz Festival activities, contact Tirk at 580.774.3772/richard.tirk@swosu.edu or the SWOSU Music Office at 580.774.3780.