

MARTY ASHBY

Profile

Marty Ashby began performing professionally at age eight with his parents and brothers in their hometown of Baldwinsville, NY. The “Ashby Family” was one of Central New York’s most in-demand Society Bands during the 1970’s and provided a strong musical base for all of the Ashby boys. Marty was accepted to the Ithaca College music program on scholarship at age 16 and thus graduated High School in three years to pursue a career in music.

During his undergraduate years Ashby began producing Jazz Festivals in order to escape the smoky jazz club scene and, more importantly, present the music in a dignified way. This proved to be a wonderful vehicle to premiere new music and perform with a variety of his idols for the first time. Up until this time, Ashby had concentrated on learning the Jazz repertoire and gaining as much gig experience as possible. He was now beginning to write more music, create new ensembles and tour with his own bands.

Upon completion of undergraduate schooling, Ashby moved to New York City to continue the pursuit of music and capitalize on relationships developed while in Ithaca. In order to survive in the city Marty had three jobs and worked as a musician in every conceivable way from tuba gigs to banjo gigs to \$50 jazz club gigs. One of his day jobs was selling subscriptions to the New York Philharmonic. The immense business structure of the orchestra fascinated Ashby and he ended up in a management position very quickly. Intrigued by the gross disparity between the orchestra, opera, ballet, etc., and the jazz industry, the goal became how to present jazz in the manner of the other performing arts (OPAs).

After spending the next five years working for a variety of OPA groups including: The Cleveland Orchestra, Ohio Ballet, National Symphony and finally The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Ashby put techniques he learned regarding marketing, promotion, consumer relation database management, presenting, fundraising, etc. to work on small scale jazz events and festivals.

In 1987, Ashby was introduced to the newly completed, Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild and immediately knew he had to work there. Leaving the Pittsburgh Symphony and taking a 50% pay cut, Ashby set out to create a Jazz Subscription Series. Almost 25 years later, Ashby is now the Executive Producer of MCG Jazz, a program of the Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild (MCG). MCG is a multi-disciplined center for arts and learning that complements traditional humanities education with studio-based art and performance programs that serve as a catalyst to academic achievement. Since starting MCG Jazz, Marty has produced 2,000 concerts and 40 recordings on the MCG Jazz label, including five GRAMMY® Award winners and a new series of educational DVDs produced from the MCG archive collection. The mission of MCG Jazz is to preserve, present and promote jazz.

For almost three decades, Marty has served as artistic advisor and producer for jazz concerts and festivals around the country including the Animal Crackers jazz series in Racine, Wisconsin, Jazz on the Circle at Severance Hall in Cleveland, OH, and the Jazz at Seven Springs Festival in Champion, PA and has been a strong advocate for developing a broad-based initiative to expand the audience for jazz and increase new public/private partnerships for the music. Ashby has consulted with many jazz presenting and other non-profit organizations including, San Francisco Jazz Festival, the Japan Society, the Museum of African American Museum and is currently the gallery consultant for the Jazz exhibit in the North American gallery at the Musical Instrument Museum in Phoenix, AZ. Most recently, Marty was selected as the EPP Goldman-Sachs fellow at the National Museum of American History (NMAH) where he is developing a high-level strategic planning model for the NMAH reopening of its West wing in 2014 that will include

live music and engaging public programs aligned with the Smithsonian Institution's pan-intuitonal strategic goals.

As a motivational speaker, Marty builds a bridge from the bandstand to the board room: teaching teamwork and empowering communities through jazz principals of innovation, improvisation, creativity and collaboration. His speaking engagements always have a twist - or a swing - Marty's guitar always makes an appearance. He has presented at TEDx, Family Housing Fund, I Live NY, and for Starbuck's Global Summit. Marty's Starbuck's presentation is mentioned in Howard Schultz' book, *Onward*.

Ashby's speaking presentations are not limited to business development, he also is an adjunct professor at Oberlin Conservatory of Music at Oberlin College where he teaches a Business of Jazz course to jazz performance majors and the Mary Pappert School of Music at Duquesne University. At Oberlin, the semester long study includes an overview of the Global Jazz Business, providing insights into key music business components and their relationship to Jazz. Students explore a variety of careers in the jazz business, examine the current issues in the music business, compare latest technology opportunities and create an action plan for their Jazz career. For Duquesne University, Marty offers two workshops: 1) Brazilian Jazz, an in-depth investigation of Brazilian jazz its compositional structure, its contributors, performance techniques and its influence on other genres of music; and 2) Barney Kessel and the Art of Trio Guitar, designed for composers and arrangers whose primary instrument is guitar or bass, but is open to all performance majors and focuses on arranging techniques.

As a guitarist, Ashby has performed and recorded with Slide Hampton, Claudio Roditi, Nancy Wilson, Paquito D'Rivera, Herbie Mann, Phil Woods, The Dizzy Gillespie™ All-Star Big Band and others. He is currently working on an educational book/CD entitled: "Barney Kessel's Art of Guitar Trio". Ashby has a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree from Ithaca College and a Masters in Music from Duquesne University. He is also a voting member of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), the Latin Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (LARAS) and a member of the Society of American Magicians (SAM).