

FolkwangJAZZ

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Visiting Artists - Learning from Jazz Masters

Chris Potter, Rudresh Mantrappa, Joe Lovano and John Clayton. And probably also Brad Mehldau and Vijay Iyer. They are all coming to the Folkwang University of the Arts Jazz Department.

"We have a strong desire to give more to the students," says Peter Herborn, head of the Jazz Department at Essen's Folkwang University of the Arts. Prof. Herborn is referring to that special situation when an established jazz star passes on their skills and experiences directly to young musicians - which will become reality this summer within the framework of a new **Visiting Artist Program**, initially still conducted as a pilot project.

Each year, four world-renowned artists will work with the students **for a period of four days**. The debut will be with saxophonist **Chris Potter** in August 2018, followed by master classes with **Rudresh Mahanthappa** in late October 2018, **Joe Lovano** (late March), **Brad Mehldau** (second half of 2019), **Vijay Iyer**, and **John Clayton** (November 2019). Each of the invited artists will bring their own concept and artistic signature to Essen. Peter Herborn is currently talking to Chris Potter about details for the first workshop. Being able to work with Chris Potter, Rudresh Mahanthappa, Joe Lovano or John Clayton for four days at a time is a rare luxury. Usually, workshops with such renowned musicians last a few hours, or a day at the most.

Having the opportunity to work closely with these artists for a four day period, will allow the students to delve deeper into the concepts and material presented. "We simply want these workshops to be an extraordinary learning experience," says Peter Herborn, expressing the will for pedagogical sustainability. With this in mind, the Visiting Artists Program has every chance of becoming the new highlight of the Jazz course at the Folkwang University of the Arts as a supplement to the regular curriculum. Every jazz student is invited to participate in the workshops - regardless of the instrument! After all, jazz is about aspects such as individual character and artistic attitude. This, of course, will not exclude the musical and technical aspect. On the days of the Master classes, the regular class schedule will be suspended, giving students the time to participate.

The Chamber Music Hall and the Pina Bausch Theatre will provide an intimate setting for all of the events of the renowned guests. The Jazz department at the Folkwang University of the Arts was founded 30 years ago. Since then, it has become an indispensable part of the creative culture of the University and the Ruhr Region. The course of study runs without any stylistic definition and is practice-oriented. In addition to instrumental skills, media skills are also imparted. "Keeping an open mind and having a solid handcraft." This is Herborn's advice for young creative musicians who must be versatile in order to have a financially viable career.

In 2002, the University built a top of the line recording studio. Ever since, the studio has become an integral part of jazz Departments curriculum. Every jazz student works regularly from the 5th to 8th semester in the recording studio. The bachelor's and master's thesis consists of a recording production with which the graduate can demonstrate his or her craftsmanship and artistic skills. A special feature of the Folkwang University is its proximity to "neighboring disciplines" such as musical, dance, physical theatre or acting. This interdisciplinary aspect expands the artistic possibilities for jazz students. Essen is centrally located, in the heart of North Rhine-Westphalia, with close proximity to around 200 live music venues, and one of the largest jazz scenes in Europe. With ample performance and networking opportunities it is an excellent location for any aspiring jazz musician looking to broaden their horizon. For foreign students it is important to note that the study is free of charge. There is small fee of 304.62 Euros, which mainly covers the free use of public transportation and other student benefits.



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