

CHRISTIAN PINCOCK

TROMBONIST • COMPOSER • EDUCATOR



Workshops & Concerts

Adventurous original music performed on valve trombone and electronics

Available as a guest artist
for concerts, lectures, ensemble coaching and workshops

BIO

Christian Pincock is a trombonist, composer and educator who creates a wide range of adventurous and eclectic music. Informed by a firm background in jazz, his work focuses on narrative, gesture and detail as a way of inspiring and entertaining audiences with work that integrates many musical styles and elements.

Christian composes for and performs with Slipstitch, which explores unusual orchestration sounds, brings together composition and improvisation in unique ways, and uses the full textural range of individual solos through complex group counterpoint. Coming out of the jazz tradition of innovation, the group incorporates many other influences including the rhythms of Afro-Cuban and Brazilian music, the forms and compositional practices of European classical music, and grooves and expressive techniques from popular modern styles.

He also performs solo works on trombone and computer using homemade controllers and computer software for live control over computer-generated sounds and processing. Some of these controllers include a set of modified organ pedals, buttons and motion sensors attached to his valve trombone and keyboard controllers used in nonstandard ways. He has released five recordings under his own name and has performed on other artists' recordings.

Christian has taught and directed bands at the University of New Mexico jazz and dance departments, the New Mexico Jazz Workshop, Long Island Conservatory and public school systems in Boston, New York, Albuquerque and Seattle. He has led workshops on composition, electronic music, ensemble playing and improvisation at schools, arts organizations and festivals including University of Colorado Colorado Springs; University of California San Diego; the Santa Fe Complex; The Improvising Composer; and the International Society for Improvising Musicians.

Christian has performed with a diversity of artists such as Bob Brookmeyer, Bobby Shew, Toshiko Akiyoshi, George Garzone, George Russell, Ikue Mori, Wayne Horvitz, Gunther Schuller, Maria Schneider, David Liebman, Slide Hampton, Butch Miles, Andy Martin, Rob Wilkerson, and Justin Ray, Jack Wright, Evan Mazunik, John O' Brien, Lily Maase, Jeremiah Cymerman, Thollem McDonous, Mark Weaver, Ben Wright, Milton Villarrubia III, Tatsuya Nakatani, Mark Weaver, Julian MacDonough, Sean Buckley, Robert Muller, Rick Compton, Aaron Otheim, Chris Icasiano, Luke Bergman, Levi Gillis, Jon Hansen, Evan Woodle, David Balatero, Evan Smith, Max Wood, Gus Carns and Walter Thompson.

Christian holds a bachelor of music degree from New England Conservatory of Music where he studied with Bob Brookmeyer and John McNeil and a Master of Music degree from Manhattan School of Music in jazz studies where he studied with Steve Turre and David Taylor. His continuing education experiences include the Music OMI Residency (2007) and The Banff Center Workshop for Jazz and Creative Music (2005).

WORKSHOP OFFERINGS

Below is a selection of workshop possibilities. Any of these can be modified to fit your situation.

- Guest Ensemble Coaching
- Improvisation For All Musicians
- Developing as a Composer-Performer
- Composer Masterclass
- Creative Practice Techniques

Guest Ensemble Coaching

Big band was one of my first musical inspirations and continues to inform my compositions and performance today. I gained much of my ensemble coaching abilities by playing with and learning from artists such as Bob Brookmeyer, Maria Schneider and Gunther Schuller as well as by playing in and directing a variety of ensembles. Working with groups, I focus on helping individuals identify and work through their weaknesses so that they can work intuitively as a group, playing with energy, personality and excitement.

Whether your student's group is a big band, small combo or any other type of ensemble, I can help them develop their group and individual playing skills. Guest ensemble coaching can be structured in a number of ways. My original big band and small group compositions of various difficulty levels can be rehearsed and incorporated into a concert. I can then work with the students at rehearsals (either all in person or partially via Skype/FaceTime before I arrive) to get them ready for performance. If desired, I have a number of compositions which can either feature me on trombone as a guest soloist or feature student band members in a concert.

An ensemble coaching workshop or residency can incorporate aspects of other workshops. For example, a wind ensemble guest coaching could be focused on introducing improvisation through conducted signs or a big band residency could be focused around expanding the students' conception of improvisation through free improvisation games. I will work with you to design a program that will fit your students' abilities and needs.

Improvisation For All Musicians

When I talk about improvisation, many musicians who are unfamiliar with it tell me "I wish I could improvise but I don't know what to do." This often comes from musicians trained in a Classical tradition who have learned exclusively by reading and find the freedom of improvisation to be both interesting and overwhelming. I have developed techniques of teaching improvisation that can be learned by any musician in ways that expand their comfort zone while respecting and building from their stylistic knowledge and abilities.

In my experience of teaching improvisation, I find that developments in creativity come from practice within carefully chosen limitations relating to the musicians background and experience. In my improvisation workshops, I help the students discover and try out limitations for practice and performance which will focus their efforts towards the goals they wish to achieve making their practice more efficient and rewarding.

One of the techniques I like to use in teaching improvisation is to use conducted signs to convey structural limitations for improvisers to work within. The system of signs I use is developed out of the Soundpainting sign language created by Walter Thompson, with whom I have worked and studied while living in New York. This way of working, while engaging and exciting in a performance setting, is also extremely useful in educational settings of all kinds from the earliest musical exposure to the highest levels of professional work. It trains musicians to focus away from the mechanics of their instrument and on to developing sound within compositional and structural elements as an individual. Then, their individual musical contributions inform what the other players and the conductor do, creating an engaging group dynamic and giving them a sense of ownership and authorship in the endeavor.

Many of these signs also have written symbols which can be incorporated into standard musical notation giving the possibility of using large-scale musical concepts directly into standard notation in a variety of ways. An improvisation residency could be structured to include multiple sessions where students design compositions using these symbols to structure improvisations or compose works where their compositions contain improvisational elements or sections in unique ways as guided by these symbols.

I also use the musical concepts defined by this system in improvisation masterclasses without specifically using the notation or signing system. In this more general approach, I use them to focus students' attention on particular structural concepts so they can explore new ways of developing cohesive improvisations in any stylistic context, e.g. alternating improvising using long notes for 20 seconds in extremely high density level with improvising using short notes for 10 seconds at a very low density level. These exercises can open up new ideas and possibilities to musicians of all levels of experience.

An improvisation masterclass or residency can be structured to include a guest ensemble coaching, an interactive workshop and/or a lecture. Whether it is a big band, a small group, a wind ensemble, or anything else, I can usually prepare the group to play a concert using the signs in three 2-hour rehearsals. (In some cases, two 2-hour rehearsals will be enough. Some of the rehearsals can be led over Skype or FaceTime before I arrive.) Additional rehearsals will allow for us to work with more signs, get deeper into the concepts and to form a more unified group sound. In workshops, depending on the student's level of experience with improvising, I use the musical concepts to guide improvisers such as mapping density levels, range or silence within a composition; creating games involving changing roles of improvisers or asking the ensemble members to simply focus on a particular musical aspect while improvising. As a lecture, I introduce these concepts of improvisation, describe different ways to approach improvisation and share examples in live performance, my own recordings or recordings of others.

Developing as a Composer-Performer

I find that in most traditional educational structures, the development of students' musical skills is usually geared towards broad stylistic categorizations such as jazz and classical music. However, the variety of music that people create outside of learning institutions is staggeringly varied and many performers have developed voices that are unique and personal, drawing inspiration from their experiences of many different influences. Analogous to singer-songwriters, these artists are performer-composers, artists who compose and perform their own unique brand of music that often defies categorization.

How and when should one develop ones' own authentic voice on their instrument and in composition? How can improvisation and composition be a part of this process? What opportunities and support structures are available to composer-performers? What kinds of collaborations are possible for musicians? What kinds of technology can be incorporated into one's presentation?

These and other questions are part of the struggle of such an artist. Given today's ability to access technology and information, composer-performers have the opportunity to create our own processes for composing compositions, synthesize new structures for improvisation, interpret existing material, build our own unique instruments, interface with computers and collaborate with artists of other disciplines.

This could be structured as a one-time lecture where I share my experiences with each of these methods and how I use them in my own work. Alternatively, it could be part of a larger residency where students brainstorm ideas to test, develop and refine in their own work in-between sessions.

Composer Masterclass

In addition to composing music that I perform myself, I continue to compose music for other musicians to interpret. In my first composition lesson with Bob Brookmeyer, he told me that his job was to help me ask the right questions. Now, with years of experience since then, I am able to help my own students find the questions which are most appropriate to their needs to take their compositions in the direction they want them to go and identify areas of weaknesses.

Some questions we consider in this workshop are: Where does particular material come from and where can it go? What is its core, soul or function? How do I organize all of my material in my mind? How do I start a composition? How do I know when a composition is finished? How and when does the title of a piece come about? How do I distinguish ideas which are working from those that aren't?

The composers' masterclass can be structured as an interactive workshop where student composers present pieces for commentary, or as a lecture where I share the processes I use when composing pieces of my own. Focus can be on electronic music, big band, small jazz group, or solo compositions.

Creative Practice Techniques Workshop

All musicians know that practice is the way to get from where one is to where one wants to be, but what is the most efficient way to practice? In my years of private teaching experience, I have worked with students of many ages and abilities, each with different musical goals and needs. Through this experience, I have developed specific methods for teaching students how to practice a wide range of material creatively and efficiently that promote awareness of sound and physicality.

In this workshop, I distinguish 3 ways of practicing, 3 aesthetic levels to be aware of and 3 physical qualities to develop. I present the method I use for practicing sightreading, distinguish between relating to sound and relating to technique, and cover ways to structure one's practice of improvisation. This is all in the context of targeting one's weaknesses, overcoming them and integrating new techniques into their set of abilities through creative exploration, improvisation and composition.

This workshop can be set up as a multi-session workshop over the course of a few days, a few weeks or a single session. If split into multiple sessions, students will be encouraged to practice the material with which they are currently working using the methods presented offering a chance to develop these methods over time and to refine their applications.

MUSIC

Solo

Trombone and electronics

- ◆ [Hawaii Breath](#)
- ◆ [Void, And Unenforceable](#)
- ◆ [Unwanted Help](#)
- ◆ [Arms](#)

Slipstitch

Jazz-influenced original compositions for various groups

- ◆ [Buddy on the Lam](#)
- ◆ [Quake](#)
- ◆ [500 Billion](#)

Big Band

University of New Mexico Jazz Band I

- ◆ [In The Kitchen Again](#) – Composed for the UNM Jazz Band I.

Conducted Improvisation

Soundpainting: live composition/conducted improvisation.

- ◆ [Christmas Medley](#) – A mashup of holiday tunes using Soundpainting to guide the structure of the composition. “I’m Dreaming of a White Christmas” and “Carol of the Bells” were rehearsed, the other tunes were chosen by the individual players. Performed at the annual Table & Chairs holiday party at Cafe Racer in Seattle.

RESUME

Higher Education Teaching

University of New Mexico, Albuquerque NM
Lecturer, Jazz Studies spring 2010–fall 2012
Classes Taught:
Jazz Improvisation I
Improvisation II
Music For Dancers
Jazz Theory & Keyboard Skills

Big Band Directorships

New Mexico Jazz Workshop nonprofit arts organization, Albuquerque NM
Director, High School Honors Jazz Bands I & II fall 2009–fall 2012
Director, Community Jazz Big Band fall 2009–fall 2012

Guest Directorships

University of New Mexico Jazz Big Band I fall 2012 & spring 2009
University of California, San Diego Improvisation Ensemble spring 2012
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs Performance Art Ensemble spring 2011

Workshop Facilitation (selected)

Trombone Section Coach
Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, WA
Newport HS Jazz Band I 2014-present
Mountlake Terrace HS Jazz Bands I & II 2013-present
Ballard HS Jazz Band I 2013-2014
Garfield Jazz Band III 2014
Albuquerque Public Schools, Albuquerque NM
Presenter, "Brass Techniques" 2011
Presenter, "Improving Your Jazz Solos" 2013
New Mexico Jazz Workshop, Albuquerque NM
Instructor, Summer Jazz Intensive–High School Division 2010-2012
Presenter, "Effective Practice Techniques" 2011
The Center for Contemporary Art, Santa Fe NM
Presenter, "The Art of Live Composition" 2008
The Banff Center for the Arts, Banff, Alberta CA
Presenter, "The Art of Live Composition" 2007

Performed With (selected)

ARTISTS

Bobby Shew
Bob Brookmeyer
Toshiko Akayoshi
Maria Schneider
John Faddis

BIG BANDS

Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra
Darcy James Argue's Secret Society Big Band
Ryles Jazz Orchestra
Ayn Inerto Jazz Orchestra
Sherisse Rogers Project Uprising

Education

Manhattan School of Music, New York NY
Master of Music in Jazz Studies 2004
New England Conservatory, Boston MA
Bachelor of Music in Jazz Studies 2000

Contact

Christian Pincock
1611 8th Ave N Unit 607
Seattle, WA 98109

(206) 660-7123
cppbrass@gmail.com

www.ChristianPincock.net
www.facebook.com/cppmusic