FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(To get the text version of this file, visit pam.byu.edu/synthesis)

Synthesis is Jazzing Things Up

Synthesis continues to dazzle audiences around the globe, leaving their mark on the world of jazz music. With a repertoire that has the band as well as audience members dancing, each performance is one to be remembered. From Brigham Young University, the award-winning instrumental jazz ensemble frequently travels throughout the world presenting a wide variety of popular musical styles, while also exhibiting their first-class musicianship and professionalism.

The group’s repertoire consists of a variety of jazz styles including: swing, jazz, blues, rock, fusion, gospel, and Latin. Synthesis takes you on a journey through the timeless numbers from jazz legends like Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Glenn Miller, and Louis Armstrong as well as modern numbers from current legends like Gordon Goodwin, Alan Baylock, and Mike Tomaro. They also perform professional-level original pieces composed by members of the group. Synthesis musicians create an engaging night of jazz music you’ve been waiting to hear, join us at (PLACE) on (DATE) at (TIME).
Synthesis plays throughout the world as peers to professional artists and groups at jazz festivals, concerts, and events. In 2018, Synthesis performed in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic during their three-week tour. In 2016, the group went on an extended tour to the Baltic States, covering Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as well as Sweden and Finland. On tour, the group made history at the Saulkrasti Jazz Festival, where they played multiple encores and the audience stayed even after the venue shut off the lights. While on tour, Synthesis also performed at the Festinord Young Adult Conference, and during various performances was accompanied by guest performers, including Louise Ringheim Ross and Lembit Saarsalu.

In 2013, Synthesis toured Brazil, bringing their smooth jazz sounds to one of the most prestigious showcases of its kind – the Rio das Ostras Jazz and Blues Festival, where they performed for thousands of people. In 2013, the group was the winner of DownBeat Magazine’s Top College Big Band award. In July 2010, Synthesis toured in Denmark and Norway. They played at the Copenhagen, Kongsberg, and Aarhus Jazz Festivals, sharing stages with some of the best jazz talent in the world. They toured England and Scotland in 2008, where they opened at the Edinburgh Jazz Festival and the Wigan Jazz Festival, and also played with world-renowned tenors Stephen Duffy, Freddie King, and Todd Gordon. The group visited Spain and Portugal where they were the highlight of national television; they were showcased on the Big Band Night at the International Jazz Festival in Montreux, Switzerland along with Gerry Mulligan’s New York Big Band and have performed at the prestigious international jazz festival two other times since then; and the list goes on.

No matter where in the world they entertain, their passion and music never need a translator. Transcending language barriers through their music, Synthesis touches the hearts of audience members around the globe, as expressed by John Galbraith of Novosibirsk, Russia: “Everyone who attended the concert felt the magic of (their) mood as (they) lit up the room with enthusiasm and energy. For two hours we were treated to something much more than a well done concert. (We) were swept away in the power of oneness…. Each one sensed a unity…. Each was proud to be a part of it.”

Synthesis is produced by the School of Music at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah. BYU is one of the nation’s largest private universities with approximately 30,000 students from across the United States and 100 foreign countries.
Artistic Director

Dr. Ben Nichols, director of Synthesis, has traveled across the globe–performing at large venues, intimate city concerts, and countless jazz festivals throughout North America, South America, and Europe. He is known internationally for his expressive sound and energetic artistic style and has recorded with acclaimed contemporaries including: Ben Wendel, Wycliffe Gordon, Jon Faddis, and legendary Journey drummer, Steve Smith.

Nichols is the founder and director of Crossover Saxophone Quartet. He was a featured soloist with this group during the world premier of his original arrangement of, "Just Friends" at the N.A.S.A. Conference in 2020.

Additionally, in 2019, Nichols was a lecturer at the 2019 N.A.S.A. Conference, presenting research on contemporary intervallc compositional and arranging methods. In 2022, after a presentation at the Jazz Education Network Conference, Nichols's research was selected to be published through Indiana University Press in the Jazz in Education and Research Scholarly Journal, Vol. 3.

Nichols is currently the Assistant Professor of Saxophone at Brigham Young University where he directs Synthesis and runs the saxophone studio. Prior to this appointment, Nichols worked at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, where he directed the saxophone studio, headed saxophone quartets, ran jazz combos, and taught courses on improvisation, music theory, and woodwind methods. He's also been employed as a faculty member at the University of Illinois, Springfield, where he was the jazz ensemble director, and at Lincoln College, where he taught saxophone, clarinet, music theory, and music appreciation courses.
Artist Manager
Taylor Morris
801-422-3573
taylor.morris@byu.edu

Performing Arts Management
306 Hinckley Center
Provo, UT
801-422-3576
perform@byu.edu
pam.byu.edu

Synthesis originates in the School of Music of the College of Fine Arts and Communications at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah.