

Spring Season Brings All That Jazz

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This spring brings a bustle of activity for jazz musicians at Tulane University. In addition to multiple performances at the famous New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, campus musicians — students as well as more experienced jazzmen on the faculty — have a whole lot going on.



John Doheny, a professor of practice, plays sax while Jim Markway, a tutor in the Newcomb Department of Music, plays bass in the Professors of Pleasure jazz quintet. (Photo by Kathryn Hobgood)

This week, the Tulane Jazz Orchestra will be busy with several appearances. On Tuesday (April 29), the orchestra will have its end-of-semester concert at 8 p.m. in Dixon Theatre.

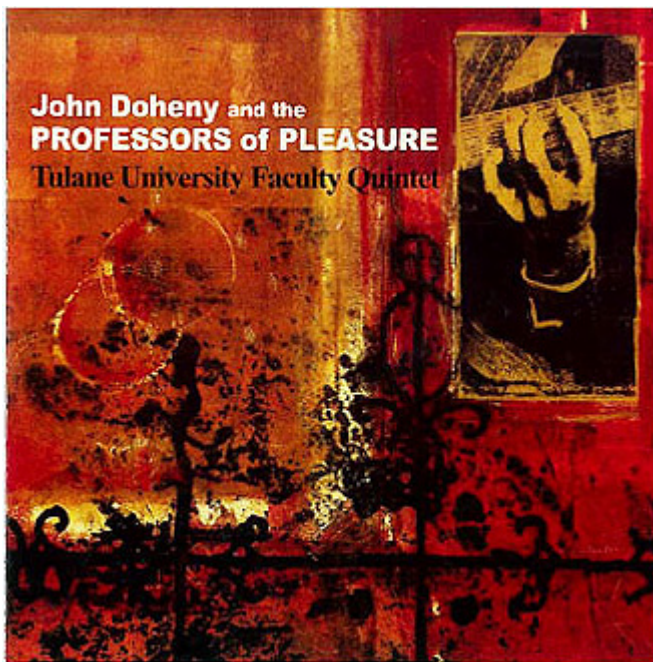
Smaller jazz combos will perform on Wednesday (April 30) beginning at 6 p.m. in Dixon Recital Hall. And on Friday (May 2), the orchestra will perform on the Gentilly Stage at the New Orleans Jazzfest at 11:35 a.m.

Tulane students are the musicians in the Tulane Jazz Orchestra. The orchestra is directed by John Doheny, a professor of practice in the Newcomb Department of Music, who is extra busy this season.

[Doheny](#) teaches jazz theory, history and applied private lessons, in addition to directing the student jazz ensembles. He also is a working musician.

A project that came to fruition for Doheny recently was the Tulane faculty jazz quintet's first CD.

Dubbing themselves the “Professors of Pleasure,” the quintet features [Doheny](#) on saxophone; [John Dobry](#), a professor of practice, on guitar; [Jim Markway](#) on bass; and [Kevin O'Day](#) on drums. [Jesse McBride](#) took over the piano chair from original member Fredrick Sanders in fall 2007. Markway, O'Day and McBride are all prominent New Orleans musicians who teach private lessons at Tulane. O'Day is an adjunct instructor who teaches music business.



With their CD, the Professors of Pleasure were able to land a spot at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival.

The debut CD is self-titled as *John Doheny and the Professors of Pleasure: Tulane University Faculty Quintet*. It features eight tracks including original compositions by Dobry ("Padrino," "Your Majesty"), Doheny ("A Greasy One"), Markway ("Halifax"), and former member Sanders ("Big G's Love"), who is the featured pianist on the disc.

The Professors of Pleasure incorporate some covers, keeping their focus on New Orleans music and composers.

"When we cover other people's tunes it's almost always New Orleans writers," says Doheny. "We're doing things like Harold Battiste's composition 'Somp'um Kinda Funky,' legendary New Orleans drummer James Black's 'Magnolia Triangle,' and we'll probably throw in some obvious stuff that everybody knows like Smokey Johnson's 'It Ain't My Fault' and the Meters' 'Cissy Strut.'"

Doheny explains, "There's a lot of great modern jazz repertoire that's come out of New Orleans that's not very well known outside of south Louisiana."

Catch Tulane jazz musicians at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival this coming weekend.

Drummer Kevin O'Day, with Kirk Joseph's Backyard Groove, May 1, 6 p.m., Jazz & Heritage Stage; and with John Mooney and Bluesiana, May 3, 3:45 p.m., Southern Comfort Blues Tent.

The Tulane Jazz Orchestra (comprised of Tulane students; directed by John Doheny), May 2, 11:35 a.m., Gentilly Stage.

Drummer John Joyce, with the Louisiana Repertory Jazz Ensemble, May 2, 12:25 p.m., Economy Hall Tent.

Irvin Mayfield and the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra, May 3, 5:35 p.m., WWOZ Jazz Tent.

Preview tracks from the [CD](#) or purchase the CD directly from the [Louisiana Music Factory](#).

The Professors are already enjoying the fruits of their labor. With their CD, they were able to land a spot at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival on June 23, with funding assistance from the Tulane School of Liberal Arts dean's office and the music department.

Doheny says the faculty quintet plans to book more gigs in the coming months.

“I'd like to tour us around a bit more locally in state, and work a bit more in town. All of us play around town quite a bit these days with other people, but not enough under the Professors' banner,” Doheny says.