

LAURENCE HOBGOOD WORKSHOP OFFERINGS



Perpetual inventiveness.
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Piano virtuoso.
THE NEW YORK TIMES



Thanks again for a great residency and concert. The students are still talking about the events of last week. You gave them superb feedback, perspective and direction. And your trio was fabulous.— Michael Sakash, Music Director Conservatory at Fryeburg Academy

... teachers need to be inspired, and you certainly did that for me. The students are still talking about YOU, your lecture, and your playing. Seldom in my life have I met anyone who could speak about music and play it at the level that you do... I am a better person and musician for having met you. — Bob Athayde, Music Director, Lafayette, CA

Laurence Hobgood Workshop Offerings (descriptions below and on the [website](#)):

- ❑ **Slowing Down:** Key Steps Toward Expanding Musical Consciousness
- ❑ **Piano Technique:** An Organic Approach for Removing Tension
- ❑ **Arranging as “Re-Arranging”:** Methods for Imagining New Treatments of Familiar Repertoire
- ❑ **Vocal Jazz Workshop:** Beyond Technique
- ❑ **Basic Theory:** Understanding the Harmonic/Melodic System from the Ground Up
- ❑ **Producing a Jazz Record:** From Tracking to Mastering
- ❑ **Guided Listening Session:** Hearing Beneath the Surface
- ❑ **Listening to Jazz: The Informed Ear:** Jazz Appreciation for the non-playing aficionado
- ❑ **Weekend Workshop For Singers: An Immersion In Process** 12-hour workshop

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Slowing Down: Key Steps Toward Expanding Musical Consciousness (2 Hours)

The desire for something to sound good quickly is usually not in our best interest. The fact is that the way our “ego” wants to learn is very different from the way our brain wants to learn. The term “ego” is used literally here, so not in reference to “egotism”; simply the self in the sense of how we usually relate to the world around us -- hence the understandable desire for a given musical idea to sound good (or effective or pleasing, etc.) right away.

But for improvement to occur (this is true of any complex mental activity) the brain needs to be “programmed” (like a computer); by systematically introducing -- or “encoding” -- new information and allowing the brain to process/digest that information, we create a method for building our abilities organically. This requires that we slow down our process; the result seems less immediately gratifying but leads to actual improvement -- which becomes our new source of gratification!

This workshop introduces this concept more thoroughly, then solidifies it through practical examples and exercises. (It should be noted that this concept affects all other areas of musical inquiry.)

Piano Technique: An Organic Approach for Removing Tension (1 Hour)

Starting with the basics of correct position and posture, this workshop focuses on the “programmability” of the muscles in the hand, wrist and arm. With the right kind of slow practice the hands can utilize muscle memory to embed a series of actions (in this case playing a specific sequence of notes) so that they’re maximally efficient and free of tension, resulting in more conscious phrasing and enhanced expression.

Arranging as “Re-Arranging”: Methods for Imagining New Treatments of Familiar Repertoire (2 Hours)

Perhaps Laurence’s best known specialty: innovative writing and arranging for jazz ensemble, with or without vocals, focusing on the ever-expanding American Songbook. Ranging from basic concepts governing reharmonization, phrasing, rhythm and notation to specific devices for reexamining lyrics, understanding grooves, creating vamps, utilizing modulation, writing for horns and strings, this workshop will reveal much about Laurence’s process and include one or two new arrangements -- conceived and executed during the class!

Vocal Jazz Workshop: Beyond Technique (2 6 hrs)

Although not a vocal coach in the classic sense, Laurence brings a wealth of experience/success from years of working with some of jazz’s finest singers to this clinic: from how to interact with the band to making great connections with the audience this workshop also focuses on the deeper issues of gestural in phrasing, rhythmic interpretation, projection, dramatization and emotional delivery, choosing alternate melodic approaches and more.

Basic Theory: Understanding the Harmonic/Melodic System from the Ground Up (2 Hours)

Most students of music base their understanding of harmonic and melodic structures on incomplete and incorrectly conceived information. In this workshop we’ll start from the beginning -- the church-endorsed modes (scales) that informed Gregorian Chant -- and discuss the meaning and evolution of counterpoint, how chords are formed from scales, vertical vs. horizontal thinking, understanding root movement and much more. The goal is to define a dependable chain of information that can act as a reference when practicing, writing an arrangement or even just listening to music.

Producing a Jazz Record: From Tracking to Mastering (2 Hours)

Follow the steps in making a record -- yes, we still call it a record. (We’re recording, after all!) From initial rehearsals through tracking, editing, mixing and mastering this workshop defines, step by step, the basic outline of what needs to happen for your project to be not only successful but efficient. Following that basic walkthrough we’ll zoom in on specific areas and go into as much detail as time allows, leaving time for Q&A at the end.

Guided Listening Session: Hearing Beneath the Surface (1.5 - 2.5 Hours)

Listening to jazz is an art unto itself; there’s so much going on at any given time, it’s easy to miss many enlightening facets of a solo or ensemble performance. A deliberately constructed listening session reveals both “big picture” and “fine point” aspects of many concepts: rhythmic approach, harmonic shape and content, storytelling in improvised solos, negotiating complex forms and even recording techniques, just to name a few things. This workshop also serves as a great reinforcement of craft principles covered in other areas of instruction, whether private lessons or various other workshops listed here. In fact any of these master classes can have a customized listening session “built” to dovetail with its content.

Listening to Jazz: The Informed Ear (Jazz Appreciation for the non-playing aficionado) (2 - 3 Hours)

This is a highly adaptable workshop; the goal is to enhance the experience of listening to jazz with actual, specific, comprehensible information. This is achieved through discussion, definition and demonstration of musical form, using familiar repertoire -- both recordings and live playing -- as examples. Because we'll be utilizing tunes we easily recognize it's a bit like walking through a park you've walked through 1,000 times -- only this time with a botanist.

We'll examine the basics of rhythm, tempo and time signature(s) to set a framework for understanding the phrasing/form of a given song, including a brief primer on the core issues governing melodic "construction" itself. Then we'll dissect the three critical strata: the song's melody, chord progression and bass line, showing how they fit together to "form" a cycle-able sequence of measures and resulting phrases over which improvisation can occur.

We'll discuss the core process for conceiving jazz lines -- alternate melodies if you will -- and hear examples ranging from minimal (less busy than the song's melody) to complex/dense (much busier than the song's melody and therefore more like what most people associate with jazz.) And this will all unfold in a way that centers around the idea of truly understanding (and being able to follow) the underlying "schematic" of the song in question.

Laurence can conduct this workshop by himself with just an audio set-up and a piano, or -- really fun -- a bassist and drummer can be added; using a live jazz trio to demonstrate these principles makes it even easier to comprehend this workshop's material. And if you like the trio option this workshop can be combined with a trio performance. (Laurence can bring his own bassist/drummer or work with local musicians.)

Weekend Workshop for Singers: An Immersion In Process (12 hours)

This workshop will present opportunities to delve into diverse but umbilically connected issues faced by all jazz/improvisational singers:

- * Choosing repertoire and innovative arranging
- * Methods for making alternate melodic choices and enhanced gesturality in phrasing
- * Philosophy of practice that can free us from "spinning wheel" syndrome
- * A discussion of the importance of rhythmic awareness and explanation of rhythmic notation
- * Breaking down elements of music theory to make them both more comprehensible and practical
- * Good rehearsal techniques and relating to instrumentalists "on the stand"
- * Making a record: breaking down key elements of the production process

As the workshop progresses we'll be able to focus on the issues that seem most interesting to participants. Everyone will have an opportunity to sing, both in groups and one on one. (12 hours; limit 20 singers)
This workshop can also be structured for shorter sessions or larger groups.

www.laurencehobgood.com/teaching

For bookings and information, contact: **Margie T. Farmer** 252-202-0865 | margiecaot@gmail.com
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