

Subject: September 2023 Update from Tony García
From: Antonio Garcia <ajgarcia@vcu.edu>
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To: Recipient List Suppressed;;

September 2023 Update from Tony García

Highlights:

- * House Reno
- * Recent Gigs
- * The Grand Grands
- * Ending My 20-Year Run As Jazz Editor for the *International Trombone Association*

Journal

- * Reprise of "Maggie Said, WALK!" in Richmond and via Livestream September 30
- * Two New Commissions: One At Carnegie Hall October 14!
- * Awarded The Midwest Clinic Medal of Honor
- * Archives



<Screen Shot 2023-03-27 at 8.39.53 AM 1.72.jpg>

photo credit: courtesy Northrop High School

Trading solos with Northrop High School (IN) trombone students.

Greetings!

Having been back in New Orleans now for over a year, it's time I sent out my first update to my new e-list of folks who have at one time or another expressed interest in knowing what's going on in my circle of life. Some of this news may be old to some of you but new to others. And given our move, this first edition might include more of the personal side of life than usual. If you want off the list, simply e-mail me so. And if you know someone else who might want on, have them e-mail me at <ajgarcia@vcu.edu>!

CATCHING UP

In July I marked a year as "showrunner" for the renovations to our home here, which (other than the grandkids) had been my primary focus since even before our move last July. I don't do any but the most minor of the work; I line up and supervise the contractors. But that's a job in itself.

Since last June (yes, even before we moved here) we've redone the HVAC ducts (and added two); updated the dim 1970s interior lighting by adding 33 internal recessed-can lights; added three porch lights; and installed a French Quarter-style lantern on the front porch. We've replaced the small front garden of annuals with some easier-care perennials and added some attractive lighting and a sprinkler system. We've installed a security system; a mechanized hoist to transport items to and from attic storage; added or replaced a washer, dryer, and dishwasher; installed lovely interior window treatments; and removed a large and deteriorated shed. We've installed storm shutters, a whole-house generator, solar panels, attic insulation, yard drainage that vents out to the street; and upgraded the last old windows in the house to energy and wind-resistant editions. And of course there was a lot of painting!

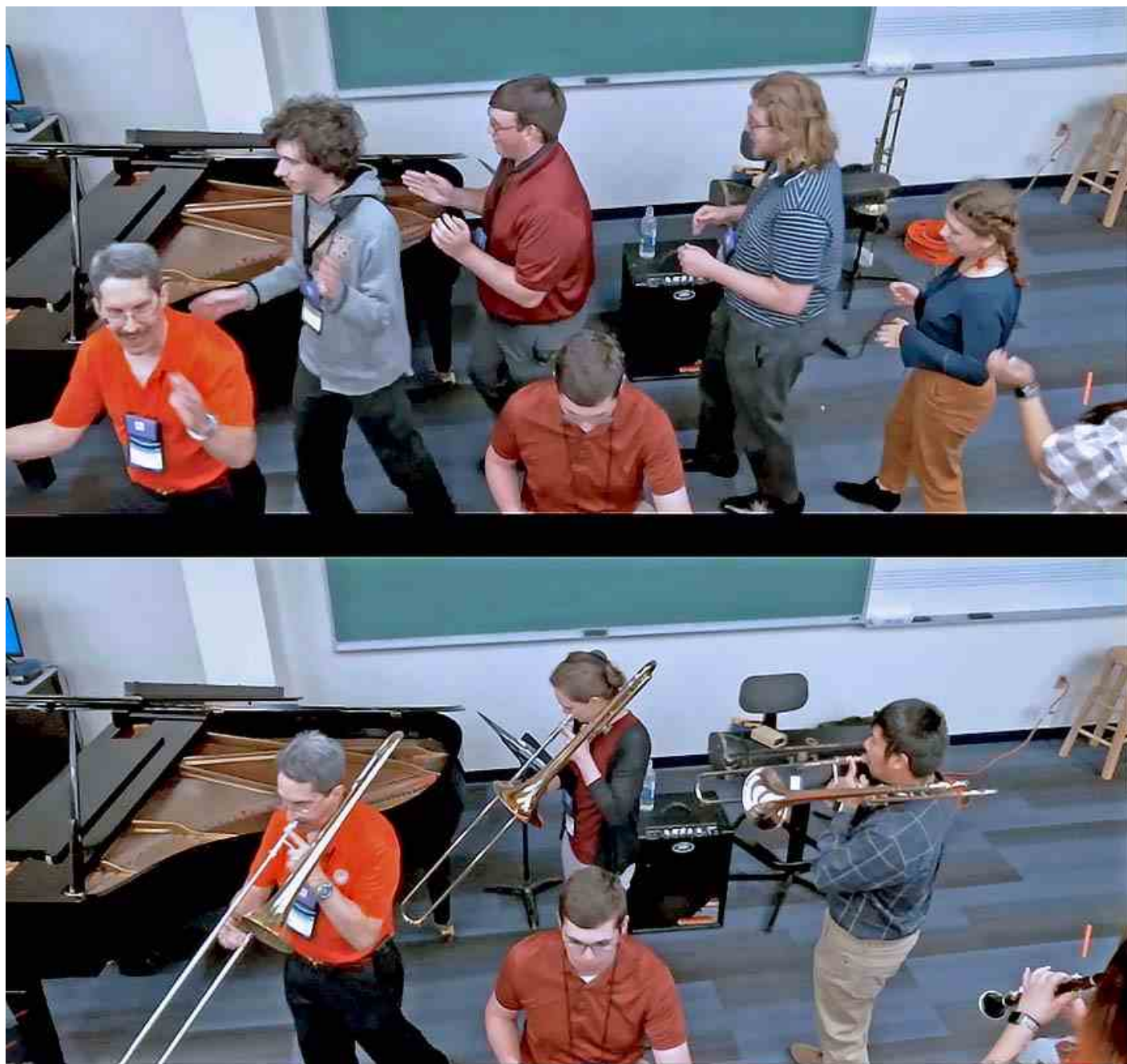
Home insurance in NOLA is beyond expensive. We knew that coming in; but it has increased even beyond our nightmares (a 62% hike this year!). So in order to lower that, one of the steps we took was to install a more-pitched roof over our enclosed sunroom, as the previous less-pitched roof over that portion of the house was one of the reasons why our 2022 insurance company booted us off of coverage after a quarter of the year! The good news is that it seems as though the payoff will be our returning to that company this month, saving us substantial money. We should pay off that roof with insurance savings within three years. Meantime, keep praying for a mild hurricane season here! We intentionally moved into a "no flood zone" neighborhood, and it's a great one; but we could use all the divine assistance available.

When this past Summer arrived, we packed in a couple of trips, including a trip to Colorado to see that wing of the family (bringing along our kids and grandkids), a brief duo-vacation in nearby Biloxi, MS that we greatly enjoyed, and a working trip to Chicago. You may have heard that it's been a HOT recent couple of months here. Yes, indeed! We've had a drought in NOLA since before I've been here (unheard of in my lifetime); and for nearly two months the temps neared 100 (with real-feel much higher); so we're ready for Fall. We are fortunate that our central air conditioning, though older, is benefitting from the updates mentioned above (and ceiling fans in almost every room). As a result, we have been able to be quite comfortable inside with temperatures closer to 80 degrees yet low humidity.



<Garcia.CSI.Reading.72.jpg> photo courtesy Conn-Selmer

Tony leads the CSI Jazz Reading Band in new music that they as teachers can consider for their school ensembles.



<Garcia.CSI.ImproveGroove.72.jpg> photo courtesy Conn-Selmer

Tony leads educators and future educators through cross-rhythming exercises around a swinging drum set to internalize groove.

Summer also included a June return-trip to the Conn Selmer Institute (<<https://www.connselmer.com/education/events/conn-selmer-institute>>). It's my favorite place to teach, and I also of course get to learn from my colleagues and mentees there.

One of the things I focused on last year during my flex-time was getting a few of my older charts published. So three more of my jazz ensemble charts are now published by ejazzlines.com: "Bouncing Back" for young bands, plus the ballad "Home Is Where the Heart Is" and the New Orleans-based "Doctor DeJa Vu's Promenade" for more experienced groups.

On a path to divest some responsibilities, at the end of June I let go my twenty-year run as

Associate Jazz Editor of the *International Trombone Association Journal* (following a ten-year run as Managing Editor of the *International Association for Jazz Education Journal*). I have one more major article coming out in the *ITAJ* that will likely run in January. Meantime, I prepared some past articles of mine for potential reprint in *The Louisiana Musician*, the state music-educator periodical, as additional means to re-introduce myself to my colleagues in the region (most of whom were not teaching here when I moved to Illinois from Louisiana in 1987!) One reprint was just published in the September edition (<<https://www.lmeamusic.org/louisiana-musician/>>); another may be out early next year.

At the International Trombone Festival in July, my "Feeling Iowish" composition was performed by the Blue Ridge Trombone Quartet of Nathan Dishman (the commissioner from a while back). About that same time I began teaching an adult jazz trombone student, perhaps once a month, which I really enjoy.



<IMG_20230725_081223190.72.sm.jpg>

photo credit: Antonio Garcia

Caiden and C.J. in Colorado

Of course, Mary and I focus a lot on the grandkids, as was the plan for our move. We watch at least one grandchild four or more days a week, sometimes also the second grandchild. The grands are cute as can be! C.J. turned one in August and is so excited to be standing up (holding on to tables and chairs for dear life)! Caiden will be six in October, just started kindergarten at

the school across the street from his home, and last month lost his first tooth! There are many milestones each week, and we love those boys. Sometimes it is more exhausting than running a jazz program, but we are excited to be here and very excited to be just six minutes from our kids and grandkids. Kate is teaching special-needs kids at that same school across the street, and her husband James is managing a record-setting Firestone Auto Care shop.



<M'sBday_193537.72edGar>

photo credit: Antonio Garcia

My lovely wife, Mary, at her recent N'Awlins birthday celebration.

Mary currently is teaching three sections of a one-credit course online from home for Loyola (thus cutting back 75% from her full-time post there last academic year, plus eliminating the commute entirely) and planning her next steps of career evolution among many options surfacing. She has found time and energy to practice vocally only a handful of times since our move; so we have no current plans to take our musical act out in the near future! But in good news, she recently received a letter from VCU President Michael Rao appointing Mary as a Professor Emerita at VCU! Bravo! (But she stays in NOLA!)



<DSC01364 edGar.72.jpg>

photo credit: courtesy Brother Marin High School

Performing for the students of Brother Martin High School (LA).

I've greatly enjoyed my flex-time work from home, with occasional run-outs to schools. From January into June I was delighted to complete a commission for the Eastman New Jazz Ensemble (of my grad alma mater). I call it "Lane Check" and really enjoyed writing it. See "November" below for a likely performance date.

From mid-June into August I worked on a commission for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra <<https://orpheusnyc.org>> in NYC. That ensemble has worked with tons of major classical artists and a good number of jazz artists (Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock, and Branford Marsalis, to name a few); and its claims to fame include having no conductor and rotating the principal chairs among all players. My piece premieres in October in a three-concert series, culminating in a Carnegie Hall concert that Mary and I will attend--25 years after I'd performed there as bass trombonist of the Phil Collins Big Band. See "October" below for the concert dates.

Branford's guesting on the series, though not on my piece; so Mary and I look forward to seeing him again. Did you know that he soloed on my first big band composition, back when I was in

high school? True Dat. He was lead alto, sitting in front of me, in the Loyola Summer High School Jazz Band; and the guy behind me was Wynton. The next Summer the guy in front of me was Donald Harrison, and the guy behind me was Terence Blanchard. Not a bad summer experience!



<CMSCVscreen5.14.22.jpg> Photo credit Richmond Main Public Library
The CMSCVA performs "Maggie Said, 'WALK!'" in May 2022.

SEPTEMBER

In May 2022 the Chamber Music Society of Central Virginia premiered my commission "Maggie Said, 'WALK!'" from the suite "Our Pictures." It's a work for string quartet and bass plus woodwind quintet: two violins, viola, cello, bass; flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, and horn. Gradually over the course of 2022 and 2023 the various movement--each composed by someone with Richmond connections--were unveiled. And now on Saturday, September 30 at 2p Eastern Time, the CMSCVA will present the entire "Our Pictures" suite for the first time. The concert is at Dooley Hall in the Richmond Main Public Library (101 East Franklin Street); but from anywhere in the world you also can see and hear the concert livestreamed at <<https://rvalibrary.org/events/gellman-concerts/>>.

"Our Pictures" is prompted in part by the concept of Mussorsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition," with each movement inspired by a piece of visual art, historic object, dance, or piece of literature found in Richmond, Virginia (where I lived for 21 years). For those of you interested in more detail regarding the elements of Maggie L. Walker's life that inspired me to create my movement, you can see my notes in the link to the May 2022 program at <<https://simplebooklet.com/ourpictures#page=19>>.

The September 30 personnel will vary slightly from May 2022's; so come or tune in for a brand new performance! For details, visit <<https://cmscva.org/index.php/events/free-live-and-streamed-event-our-pictures-a-musical-portrait-of-richmond/>>. If you can't attend or tune in, feel free to

check out at least the May 2022 debut of my "Maggie" movement, complete with composer-intro, at <<https://garciamusic.com/video.files/MaggieSaidWalk.CMSCVA.5.14.22.mp4>>. (You can skip directly to the performance at 8'55", if you like!)

These days I practice the trombone just about every day (which is more than I could average while a full-time professor!). Aside from staying in shape for the occasional outreach/teaching/guest spot, it's mostly for my own enjoyment and mental health. Reunions with musical friends are always great, but I am not actively looking for gigs to play nights. After all, I'm up at 6:10a four or five times a week to watch the grandkids! Plus, I had terrific experiences gigging here in NOLA 40+ years ago.

The composing has been very fulfilling, though I do miss teaching a lot. I visited a couple of high schools and a college last Spring to teach and am on tap to visit one college this Fall so far plus several high schools and a college in Spring. I'm not sure what my next big project will be; so I'm using my current time to get a bunch of my tech refined, update my calendar, do hurricane-prep, and the like. The e-mail app that I've used since 1993 to accomplish many unique tasks in my e-communication is finally being denied by VCU for use at the end of September; so I'm working on aligning and getting familiar with my new e-client!

It's possible the next big project might be final updates to the sequel to my book "Cutting the Changes: Improvising via Key Centers." Completed in 2010 but tabled by its publisher in 2012, it's been dormant for over a decade; and I've occasionally inquired about it. Last year a fan of the first book again nudged me about book two; so I contacted the publisher again (which I'd done periodically over the decade). This occasion he agreed to give the rights to the entire project back to me, and we signed that deal in June.

I figured I might need to partner up with some digital/internet genius to self-publish the book online; but not long afterward, through a mutual friend, a major publisher reached out to me with interest in considering it. So they're now reviewing the work, and I'm guessing I'll hear their decision by the end of the year. If yes, then I'll need to focus on some updating since 2010; but I consider the work 95% done.



<NorthropGarciaTShirt.72.sm.jpg>

photo credit: Antonio Garcia

The official t-shirt of the 2023 Barry A. Ashton Jazz Festival this past March. If you'd like to view the hour-long finale concert, visit <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwNmkmJAJHc>>.

OCTOBER

October is a big month. October 1-9 Mary's mom visits us in NOLA, overlapping with a shorter visit here also by Mary's California brother and his wife. During that visit we'll celebrate Carolyn's 85th birthday and Caiden's 6th. The following week Mary flies to present at her ACES National Conference in Denver, during which I fly to NYC; then she flies from Denver to NYC while my sister Margarita flies from Houston to NYC, where my nephew Zack lives. And the four of us will attend the Carnegie Hall performance of my commission. Then Mary and I will spend a couple of days together in NY to relax and catch some shows, flying back together to NOLA. At the end of the month our friends Bob and Gwen visit NOLA for a few days; so we look forward to seeing them then!

Here's the three-concert run of Orpheus concerts debuting my commission "Homecoming: A New Orleans Journey," should you be in the PA/NY region:

--TH Oct 12, Williams Center, Lafayette College; Easton, PA; 8pm

--F Oct 13, The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College | Purchase, NY; 8pm

--SAT Oct 14, Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall | New York, NY; 8pm

Tickets for all three concerts are available at <https://orpheusnyc.org/tickets-and-concerts>. The concerts are not livestreamed.

If you're planning to come to the Carnegie performance, let me know so that we can look for you there!

NOVEMBER

In November I'll wrap up an October-November project that I won't be allowed to divulge until next Spring. Ah, the suspense!

Mary and I plan to attend a performance of the musical "MJ" (Michael Jackson) at the Saenger Theater here in New Orleans. We haven't been to the Saenger in decades! Looking forward to it.

The Eastman New Jazz Ensemble will likely perform my commissioned work "Lane Check" at one of the following concerts:

--M 11/6, 7:30p Eastern Time (shared concert with the Eastman Jazz Ensemble)

--M 12/11, 7:30p Eastern Time (full concert)

Both concerts should be livestreamed at <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/live/kilbourn/> (but not archived).

I'm told that in late November I'll be guest-performing at one of our Louisiana universities: looking forward to it!



<MidwestMontg.72.jpg>

photo credit: courtesy The Midwest Clinic

Views of The Midwest Clinic (Chicago, IL)

DECEMBER

December always brings some 15,000 or more of my closest friends together in Chicago at McCormick Place West for The Midwest Clinic (<<https://www.midwestclinic.org>>), the largest international instrumental music conference in the world. It's been my privilege to serve on its Board of Directors since 1994. The three days will offer wonderful performances and clinic sessions; and in the jazz area that includes workshops on Improv, Ensemble Rehearsal, Latin Music, Drum Set, Lead-Playing, and more.

To my extreme surprise, I learned in June that this December the Board is awarding me The Midwest Clinic Medal of Honor (<<https://www.midwestclinic.org/midwest-clinic-awards.html>>). The Medal of Honor was introduced in 1962 "as a way to honor conductors, educators, composers, and others whose unique service to music education and continuing influence on the development and improvement of bands and orchestras deserve special recognition." Just over 100 individuals have merited the award since its inception, including Leonard Slatkin, Morton Gould, Howard Hanson, Elizabeth Green, Karel Husa, William D. Revelli, Jacquelyn Dillon, and one of my own teachers, Arnold Jacobs. In the jazz-influenced world that includes Clark Terry, Doc Severinsen, Ellis Marsalis, Wynton Marsalis, Candido Camero, Sammy Nestico, Jamey Aebersold, Richard Dunscomb, Mary Jo Papich, Janis Stockhouse, and (saxophonist) Ron Carter. As I said to the Midwest Board of Directors in June: "You have bestowed upon me the highest honor of my career and-other than my family-the highest honor of my life."

The award is currently scheduled to be presented on Thursday, December 21 at 7:30p in

McCormick Place West's Ballroom 196, just prior to our co-hosting the concert of the United States Navy Band Commodores that evening (a staging tht prompts a smile from me, given that my father had served as a Lieutenant Commander in the U.S. Navy Medical Corps). Should you be attending Midwest, please join us at the event!

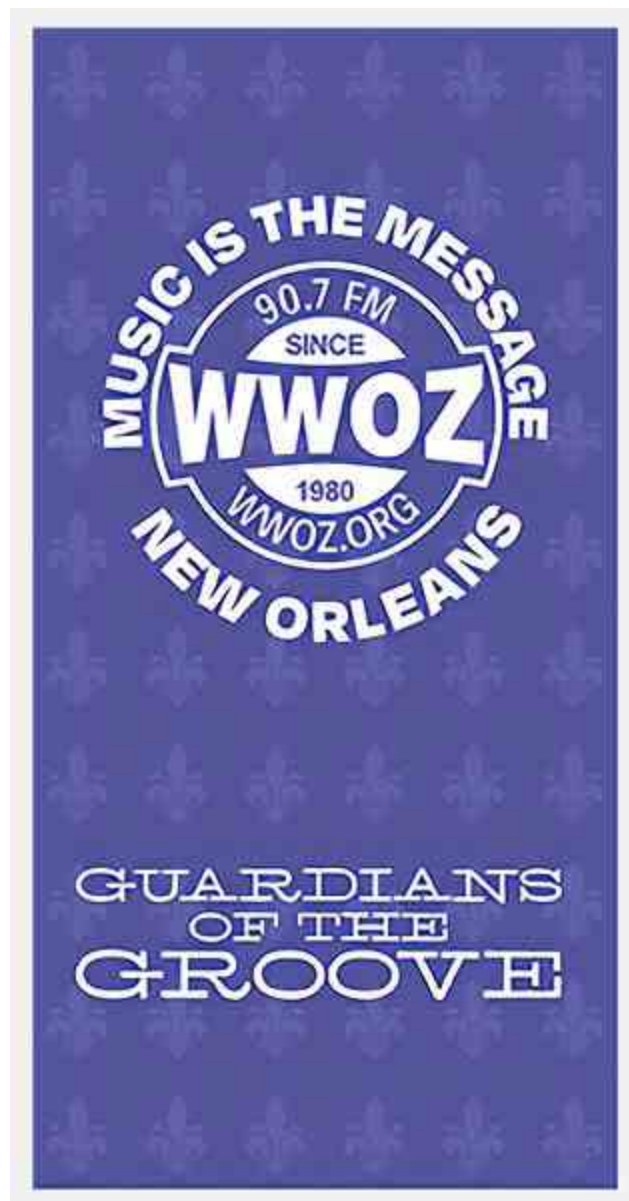
For an anecdotal look back at my career thus far, feel free to read "Evolution of a Career" (<<https://garciamusic.com/evolution.career.html>>), which includes links to thanking a number of my mentors. And/or browse the "Favorite Gigs" stories archived at <<https://garciamusic.com/hot.topics/favorite.gigs.rightfr.html>>. More to come someday!



<JEN2024-Cadmium-Banner-2.jpg>

JANUARY

January is shaping up to be quite the month. January 3-6 brings the Jazz Education Network Conference (<<https://www.jazzednet.org>>) to New Orleans--always a great event wherever it is, but even better in NOLA! I'm a founding member and hope you'll all attend. It look like the month will also include residencies as artist/clinician at an out-of-state college residency and an out-of-state high school program; so I'm excited!



<WWOZ.flag.jpg>

FEBRUARY

Mardi Gras! Lots of good times, music, and food to add to the usual good times, music, and food. This seems like a good moment to remind/inform you to tune in any time to WWOZ New Orleans 90.7 FM: it's the musical voice of the city and will put you in the mood! Listen online at <<http://www.wwoz.org>>. Look at the top of the page for the red "Listen Now" button.

There you will find a readily available ID-playlist, plus three available streams: live radio, New Orleans music, and an archive of all shows of the prior two weeks! To sample the recent live playlist, visit <<https://www.wwoz.org/programs/playlists>>. Some shows are devoted to the blues, or brass bands, or soul, or funk, or cajun or zydeco, or spirituals and gospels, or traditional New Orleans jazz, or modern jazz, or..... And some shows are a mix. Enjoy! And check out another WWOZ creation: the Groovapedia <<https://www.wwoz.org/groovapedia/>>. It's their curated web archive of NOLA music in photos, videos, and text.

WWOZ self-describes as "the greatest radio station on the planet"; and I agree! (By the way, tune in October 5-8--or later via the two-week archive--for their annual celebration of live music from New Orleans and the world beyond. Partnering with the Archive of the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Foundation, they'll play recent and historical recordings from the Neville Brothers, Dr

John, Irma Thomas, Allen Toussaint, Professor Longhair, Walter Wolfman Washington, Tuba Skinny, Germaine Bazzle, Amanda Shaw, Aaron Neville, Lost Bayou Ramblers, John Boutte, Cowboy Mouth and lots more.)

MARCH

March will bring a return to Chicago for Midwest business. The Spring season of school jazz festivals picks up in March, and some have expressed interest in having me their way. We shall see!

APRIL

An in-state and an out-of-state jazz festival have expressed interest in my collaboration; so I look forward to what develops!

ARCHIVES

I have many more articles in mind to write! But in the meantime, if you have interest in my past writing, do please visit the articles-link <<http://www.garciamusic.com/educator/articles/articles.html>> (all free!), as well as the books-links for *Cutting the Changes: Jazz Improvisation via Key Centers* <<https://garciamusic.com/educator/books/ctc.html>> and *Jazz Improvisation: Practical Approaches to Grading* <<https://www.garciamusic.com/educator/books/books.html>>.

You can hear samples of my playing at <<https://garciamusic.com/artist/composer.arranger/solodemos.html>>, of my writing at <<https://garciamusic.com/artist/composer.arranger/artcomp.publ.works.html>>, and of my random thoughts at <<https://garciamusic.com/random.thoughts/random.thoughts.html>>. You can find downloads and interviews at <<https://garciamusic.com/downloads/downloads.html>>. Or just browse my entire site at <<https://www.garciamusic.com>>! (You can find a site map at <<https://garciamusic.com/site.map/site.map.html>>, if you wish.) Are you a Phil Collins fan? Well, then you should check out <<https://garciamusic.com/hot.topics/pcbb/pcbb.html>>, including its links to online recordings and photo-pages.

Most of all, I'm dedicated to assisting musicians towards finding their joy. After a 35-year full-time teaching career and countless residencies in schools that have touched tens of thousands of students in Canada, Europe, South Africa, Australia, The Middle East, and across the U.S., I look forward to continuing my outreach--whether assisting ensembles such as combos, vocal jazz choirs, big bands, and string ensembles; or in classroom topics such as improv, theory composition/arranging, history, music business, and more; or via commissioned compositions. So if you're considering an opportunity we should chat about, contact me at <ajgarcia@vcu.edu>!

And if you plan to visit NOLA in the future, let me know; and I'll e-mail you Mary's and my recommendation list.

Best to all,



<AGarcia_2DA0016cr.72.Aleman.jpg>
photo credit: David Aleman

Tony

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former Director of Jazz Studies (<<https://www.jazz.vcu.edu>>)

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Pronouns: he, him, his

--Secretary, The Midwest Clinic (<<https://www.midwestclinic.org>>)

--Bach Trombone Clinician, Conn-Selmer, Inc.

(For an application form towards Conn-Selmer support for
a Garcia clinic, please e-mail me at <ajgarcia@vcu.edu>.)

--Past Associate Jazz Editor, Int'l Trombone Association Journal (<<https://www.trombone.net>>)

--Past Network Expert (Improvisation Materials),
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--Past Advisory Board Member, The Brubeck Institute

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--Learn about VCU Jazz & Social Justice at

<<https://garciamusic.com/educator/vcu.jazz/vcu jazz.socialjustice/vcu jazz.socialjustice.html>>.

--Check out my articles at <<https://www.garciamusic.com/educator/articles/articles.html>>

and books at <<https://www.garciamusic.com/educator/books/books.html>>.

"Now I wish I still played trombone because I think some of the hippest parts are happening down there."

--*Dave Douglas*, Down Beat, June 2013