

Antonio J. García is a Professor Emeritus and former Director of Jazz Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University, where he directed the Jazz Orchestra I, instructed jazz and music-business courses, and founded a B.A. Music Business Emphasis. An alumnus of the Eastman School of Music and of Loyola University of the South, he has received commissions for jazz, symphonic, chamber, film, dance, and solo works from Meet The Composer, The Commission Project, The Thelonious Monk Institute, and regional arts councils; composition honors include IAJE (jazz band), ASCAP (orchestral), and Billboard Magazine (pop songwriting); and his music has aired over NPR and CBS-TV. His indie-film scores have screened across the U.S., Italy, Macedonia, Uganda, Australia, Colombia, India, Germany, Brazil, Hong Kong, Mexico, Israel, Taiwan, South Korea, Spain, and the U.K. His recent commission was performed at Carnegie Hall by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra.

A Conn-Selmer clinician, he has freelanced as trombonist, bass trombonist, or pianist with over 70 nationally renowned artists including Ella Fitzgerald, George Shearing, Mel Tormé, Billy Eckstine, Doc Severinsen, Louie Bellson, Dave Brubeck, and Phil Collins—and has performed at the Montreux, Nice, North Sea, Pori, New Orleans, and Chicago Jazz Festivals. He has performed internationally as a scat-singer, is the only person to have directed all three genres of Illinois All-State jazz ensembles—combo, vocal jazz choir, and big band—and is the recipient of the ILMEA's 2001 Distinguished Service Award. He has produced recordings or broadcasts of Wynton Marsalis, Gene Bertoncini, Jim Pugh, Dave Taylor, Susannah McCorkle, Sir Roland Hanna, and the JazzTech Big Band.

García was Coordinator of Combos at Northwestern University, teaching jazz and integrated arts, was Jazz Coordinator for its National High School Music Institute, and directed the Vocal Jazz Ensemble there. Formerly the first Coordinator of Jazz Studies at Northern Illinois University, he was selected by students and faculty there for NIU's Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching award and nominated as its candidate for CASE U.S. Professor of the Year (one of 434 nominees nationwide). He is recipient of the VCU School of the Arts' 2015 Faculty Award of Excellence for his teaching, research, and service, in 2021 was inducted into the Conn-Selmer Institute Hall of Fame, and is a 2023 recipient of The Midwest Clinic's Medal of Honor.

Mr. García is Secretary of The Midwest Clinic Board and a Past Advisory Board Member of the Brubeck Institute, *International Trombone Association Journal* Associate Jazz Editor, *IAJE Jazz Education Journal* Editor, IAJE-IL President, IAJE International Co-Chair for Curriculum and for Vocal/Instrumental Integration, and Illinois Coalition for Music Education coordinator. He served as a Network Expert (for Improvisation Materials) for the Jazz Education Network and as adjudicator for the ITA's Frank Rosolino, Carl Fontana, and Rath Jazz Trombone Scholarship competitions and the Kai Winding Jazz Trombone Ensemble competition. He served as an NEA Music review panelist and was asked to serve on Arts Midwest's "Midwest Jazz Masters" panel and the Virginia Commission for the Arts "Artist Fellowship in Music Composition" panel.

Most of all, Tony is dedicated to assisting musicians towards finding their joy. His 35-year full-time teaching career and countless residencies in schools have touched tens of thousands of students in Canada, Europe, South Africa, Australia, The Middle East, and across the U.S. His collaborations highlighting jazz and social justice have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars, providing education to students and financial support to African American, Latinx, LGBTQ+, and Veterans communities, children's medical aid, and women in jazz. He serves as a Research Faculty Member at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. His partnerships with South Africa focusing on racism and healing resulted in his performing at the Nelson Mandela National Memorial Service in D.C. in 2013. He also fundraised \$5.5 million in external gift pledges for VCU Jazz.

His book, *Jazz Improvisation: Practical Approaches to Grading* (Meredith Music), explores course objectives. His *Cutting the Changes: Jazz Improvisation via Key Centers* (Kjos Music) offers musicians of all ages the opportunity to improvise over standard tunes using just their major scales. Widely published in more than a dozen education and jazz periodicals, he is Co-Editor and Contributing Author of NAFME's *Teaching Jazz: A Course of Study* and authored a chapter within *Rehearsing The Jazz Band* and *The Jazzer's Cookbook*. The partnership he created between VCU Jazz and the Centre for Jazz and Popular Music at the University of KwaZulu-Natal merited the 2013 VCU Community Engagement Award for Research. He is interviewed in *Bonanza: Insights and Wisdom from Professional Jazz Trombonists* (Advance Music).

Regarding *Jazz Improvisation: Practical Approaches to Grading*, Darius Brubeck says, "García has produced a lucidly written, probing, analytical, and ultimately practical resource for professional jazz educators, replete with valuable ideas, advice, and copious references." Jamey Aebersold offers, "This book should be mandatory reading for all graduating music ed students." About *Cutting the Changes*, saxophonist David Liebman states, "This book is perfect for the beginning to intermediate improviser who may be daunted by the multitude of chord changes found in most standard material." Of his jazz curricular work, *Standard of Excellence* states: "Antonio García has developed a series of Scope and Sequence of Instruction charts to provide a structure that will ensure academic integrity in jazz education." Wynton Marsalis emphasizes: "Eight key categories meet the challenge of teaching what is historically an oral and aural tradition. All are important ingredients in the recipe." The *Chicago Tribune* highlighted García's "splendid solos...virtuosity and musicianship...ingenious scoring...shrewd arrangements...exotic orchestral colors, witty riffs, and gloriously uninhibited splashes of dissonance...translucent textures and elegant voicing" and cited him as "a nationally noted jazz artist/educator...one of the most prominent young music educators in the country." *Down Beat* recognized his "knowing solo work on trombone" and "first-class writing of special interest." *The Jazz Report* noted the "talented trombonist," and *Cadence* cited his "hauntingly lovely" composing. Phil Collins said simply, "He can be in my band whenever he wants." He resides in his native New Orleans. E-mail <ajgarcia@vcu.edu>; visit <www.garciamusic.com>.