The Music of Matt Michaels: A Guided Tour Through the Recording Process and Presentation

Matt Michaels was involved with the Wayne State Jazz Studies Program from its inception in 1979 eventually becoming Director of Jazz Studies, a position he held until 2005. He retired from Wayne State in 2007 and died in 2011. He was an educator who is recognized nationally for his exemplary expertise and unparalleled dedication to his students. A wonderful jazz pianist, Matt performed frequently in jazz clubs, played concerts, recorded with his jazz trio, and performed as a sideman with many other jazz groups. Although not a prolific composer and arranger, Matt possessed a deft touch when it came to composition and arranging. His musical ideas were sophisticated, creative and at the same time accessible; this is the side of his artistry that will be presented. Five of his arrangements for orchestra, soloist, and jazz trio, as well as five original compositions and arrangements for jazz big band have been archived. This involved saving his original manuscripts in a digital format with annotations, and then recording the works. This presentation will be in the form of a guided tour through recording process and all the steps required to produce a high-quality document preserves the legacy of Matt Michaels.

Russell Miller saxophonist, flutist, composer, arranger, and educator - has been musically active in and around Detroit for more than forty years. He is currently Associate Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Music at Wayne State University where his duties include teaching jazz arranging & orchestration and directing jazz ensembles.