

March 3rd, 2014

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to recommend the jazz group Snaggle as strong clinicians in a music education setting. As the jazz director and music teacher at Merivale High School in Ottawa, I invited a former grad Nick MacLean and his group Snaggle to run a clinic on improvisation with our music students. Nick was very professional in his communication prior to the event and the workshop exceeded my expectations.

The workshop began with a short performance by this first rate ensemble. All graduates of Humber College in Toronto, their fusion jazz is modern and engaging for students and adults alike. The group then went on to teach the basics of improvisation to our students. Through their leadership and well structured approach, our students felt safe to try improvising. Our students range in ability levels in improvisation (from understanding complex changes to no experience!) and the group was able to effectively reach each level. They began with simple one note improvisation, then worked into basic modes, how to leave space, and experimenting with improvisational dialogue. Our rhythm students were gradually integrated into the ensemble and before they knew it they were jamming with the pros!

This workshop not only improved the performance of our jazz musicians but also encouraged those not in jazz to experiment with the genre. All members of the group maintained a professional yet lively and approachable demeanor throughout the workshop. The students left charged up and more willing to dive into improvisation. I would highly recommend Snaggle to any jazz program looking to develop improvisation in their ensemble.

Sincerely,

Tessa MacLean