THE WIND BLOWS SOUNDLY FOR RETURNING DUKE OF THE SAX

Master saxophonist Michael Duke is returning to Sydney to teach at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music after 10 years of academic and performance exploits in the USA.

Dr Duke will become Australia’s first fulltime classical saxophone lecturer in a woodwind faculty.

His appointment follows an international recruitment program that attracted 70 local and international candidates.

The Melbourne-born musician and scholar, who recently became a father for the first time, has supported an array of internationally renowned entertainers including Gloria Estefan, The Four Tops, Bill Cosby and Gary Burton, as well as played with big bands and orchestras (Danilo Perez Big Band, the Jim Widner Big Band, and the Greg Hopkins Big Band).

Duke received both Master’s and Doctorate Degrees in Music Performance from Indiana University studying under the tutelage of renowned classical saxophonists Eugene Rousseau, Thomas Walsh, Jean-Yves Fourmeau and Arno Bornkamp.

While pursuing jazz studies at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, Duke studied with Shannon LeClaire, Jim Odgren and George Garzone and performed in the ensembles of Phil Wilson, Greg Hopkins, Victor Mendoza, and Joe Lovano.

He has an impressive record as a clinician and tutor as well as a soloist and recording artist. At the tertiary level, Duke has taught on the faculty of Simpson College in Iowa (2002-2005), Eastern Nazarene College in Massachusetts (2007-2008), and as an Associate Instructor at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana (1998-2000).

In Australia he has performed with many of Australia’s premiere orchestras, including the Melbourne Symphony, Orchestra Victoria, the Australian Philharmonic and Pops Orchestra, and the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

In the US, his performances range across the Owensboro Symphony Orchestra (Kentucky), the Camerata Symphony Orchestra (Indiana), the Columbus Indiana Philharmonic, and the Cedar Rapids Symphony (Iowa).

Duke has performed at the past four bi-annual North American Saxophone Alliance National conferences, two World Saxophone Congresses, and has lectured at the Australian National Band and Orchestra Clinic.

He won the Indiana University Woodwind Concerto Competition for his performance of Jacques Ibert’s "Concertino da camera" for alto saxophone and orchestra in 2002.

The Dean and Principal of the Sydney Conservatorium, Professor Kim Walker, said: “This is just thrilling...an Australian returning after a decade away performing and gaining higher degrees. It is doubly exciting because it is also making Australian musical history – the inaugural fulltime saxophone appointment in a woodwind faculty.”

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