Berklee Holds Historic Auditions at MacEwan

Edmonton – For the first time in the history of MacEwan’s Music program, representatives from Berklee College of Music in Boston will travel to Edmonton in search of new and diverse talent.

Although the renowned Massachusetts music school has had a transfer agreement with MacEwan for over a decade, February 13 and 14 will mark the first time auditions will be held in Western Canada. Previously applicants had to travel to Seattle or Boston to compete for a spot at the school. Berklee’s only other Canadian stop will be in Toronto.

Berklee assistant director of international admissions, Michael Shaver, says interest was high during information sessions they held during the school’s first recruitment trip to MacEwan earlier this year. “We consider every aspect of an applicant’s strengths when looking for new talent to admit to the school,” says Shaver. “The board of admissions seeks students who show high potential, who are creative, collaborative, and open to new ideas, who are problem-solvers and entrepreneurs, and who have something extra that sets them apart,” he adds.

The articulation agreement with MacEwan is a formal agreement with Berklee that allows MacEwan’s Music program graduates to transfer with two years advanced standing towards a four-year academic degree. Currently there are 16 schools in the world that have such an agreement, only three in Canada. MacEwan music program chair, Bob Gilligan, says this trip solidifies MacEwan’s relationship with Berklee. “Our two schools share a similar philosophy and curriculum in that our students have the opportunity to embrace popular music education in all its forms such as rock, pop, jazz, soul, and blues,” he says.

Students auditioning for a spot in the world’s premier college of contemporary music, will also be competing for scholarships that will be offered to students as additional incentives to attend. Last year, Berklee conducted over 6,000 auditions around the world, with an acceptance rate of about thirty percent. Currently, 4,000 students attend Berklee. Of the 53 auditions being conducted at Grant MacEwan College on February 13/14, 25 are Music program students.

Auditions are closed events, but media interviews with Berklee representatives, MacEwan music faculty, and MacEwan music students have been set-aside on Friday, February 13, 2009 from 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. in room 182 (first floor, 10045 – 156 Street).

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BACKGROUNDER

Berklee College of Music

Berklee College of Music was founded in 1945 on the principle that the best way to prepare students for careers in music is through the study and practice of contemporary music. For more than half a century, the college has evolved to reflect the state of the art of music and the music business. With more than a dozen performance and nonperformance majors, a diverse and talented student body representing more than 70 countries, and a music industry “who’s who” of alumni, Berklee is the world’s premier learning lab for the music of today – and tomorrow.

Berklee attracts a diverse range of students who reflect the multiplicity of influences in today’s music, be it jazz, rock, hip-hop, country, gospel, electronica, Latin, or funk. The college is a magnet for aspiring musicians from every corner of the earth, which gives the school a uniquely international flavor. Of all U.S. colleges and universities, Berklee has one of the largest percentages of undergraduates from outside the United States—25 percent. Reflecting the interplay between music and culture, Berklee creates an environment where aspiring music professionals learn how to integrate new ideas and showcase their distinctive skills in an evolving community.

MacEwan Music Program

For nearly 30 years, MacEwan's music program has launched the careers of some of Canada’s top musicians. The popularity of our program and success of our students is due in large part to our curriculum.

MacEwan is one of the only post-secondary schools in Western Canada to offer a diverse learning experience that focuses on jazz, rock, and pop. Students complete a two-year diploma specializing in writing, performance, recording arts, or take a comprehensive major.

Transfer agreements have been established with Berklee College of Music (Boston), LIPA (Liverpool), McGill University (Montreal), Laval University (Quebec), University of Toronto (Ontario), St. Francis Xavier University (Nova Scotia), University of Lethbridge (Alberta), and the University of Alberta.

Six Upcoming Music Concerts:

Advance tickets are available through Tix on the Square to enjoy MacEwan's Music students perform in the John L. Haar Theatre (10045 – 155 Street entrance) beginning March 22, 2009. Advance ticket prices start at $5 per person (student/senior rate) and service fees apply. Call Tix on the Square at (780) 420-1757.