



**Michael Abene Commissioned by Boyer College of Music and Dance
to Create *Luck Be A Lady - A Tribute to Frank*, by Terell Stafford,
Dick Oatts, and the Temple University Studio Orchestra**

**Available April 21 on Three-Time
Grammy® Award-Nominated Label BCM&D Records**

The **Temple University Studio Orchestra**, under the direction of **Andreas Delfs**, is set to release its recording of ***Luck Be A Lady -- A Tribute to Frank***, commissioned by the **Boyer College of Music and Dance** at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA from **Michael Abene**. The recording, available April 21, 2017 via BCM&D Records, features trumpeter **Terell Stafford** and alto-saxophonist **Dick Oatts** -- both of whom are also on the jazz faculty at Boyer.

"One of our ambitious goals at Boyer is to regularly commission new works by living composers for our students to perform," said **Robert T. Stroker**, Dean and Vice Provost for the Arts at Temple. "This provides the unique opportunity for our students to rehearse and record with composers, giving them insight into the creative and artistic process of composing and arranging."

Abene is one of several composers/arrangers Stroker has commissioned from for the college. Others include Michael Daugherty, Bill Cunliffe and Dave and Chris Brubeck -- the latter two of which yielded three Grammy® Award-nominations combined for the Temple Orchestra on the Boyer record label, **BCM&D Records** in the "Best Instrumental Composition" category.

Luck Be A Lady -- A Tribute to Frank received its premiere in Philadelphia by the Temple University Jazz Band, under the direction of Terell Stafford as part of a concert celebrating what would have been the singer's 100th birthday. It was the brainchild of Dean Stroker to put together an evening to celebrate Sinatra's contribution to the American songbook. Since Boyer continuously commissions new musical works, Stroker and Terell Stafford approached Michael Abene to arrange a selection of songs recorded by Sinatra. Because the premiere performance was such a success, Stroker decided to release it on the Boyer label, BCM&D, as a separate recording.

"As you know Frank Sinatra recorded many of the greatest standards ever written so selecting the pieces was extremely difficult," states Abene. "There were certain tunes I immediately thought of: 'It Was a Very Good Year,' the video of Sinatra at the recording session was just marvelous, 'I'll Never Smile Again,' which he sang with the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra, 'I'm a Fool To Want You,' one of the greatest ballad interpretations ever. The others included were some of my personal favorites: 'You Make Me Feel So Young,' 'Luck Be a Lady,' 'Come Fly With Me,' 'Fly Me To the Moon' and a beautiful ballad not as well known, 'I Guess I'll Hang My Tears Out To Dry.' This just touches on a portion of Mr. Sinatra's output."

"What influenced me most about Sinatra was how he put himself into the melody and lyrics as much as he did putting himself in a role as an actor," reflects Oatts. "Playing with Terell Stafford is exactly like that for me. It is a different magic every time. Michael Abene and Andreas Delfs brought out the best from our students, who were simply amazing."

"I enjoyed working one-on-one with Dick Oatts when it came to phrasing, articulation and overall concept. I also loved working with the students to bring the music to life," says Stafford, who has long served as Director of Jazz Studies and Chair of Instrumental Studies at Temple University. "Putting our personal touch on Michael Abene's terrific arrangement was the icing on the cake."

About the Creators:

Michael Abene is a composer, arranger, keyboard player and record producer and was musical director-principal arranger/composer of the WDR Radio Big Band of Cologne and associate music director of the BMI Jazz Composers Workshop and an Associate Professor of Jazz Composition at Manhattan School of Music. Abene produced the

Grammy® winning projects *Digital Duke* featuring the Duke Ellington Orchestra and *The GRP All-Star Big Band-All Blues*. He also produced the Grammy® Award-nominated "The GRP All-Star Big Band" and "The GRP All-Star Big Band Live" and received nominations in the arranging category for all three big band recordings. In addition, Abene was nominated for his arrangement of "America" from *Dave Grusin Presents West Side Story*. Some artists Abene has arranged, composed and/or produced for are Maynard Ferguson, Maceo Parker, Take 6, Billy Cobham, Eddie Daniels, Bireli Lagrene, Chick Corea, Buddy Rich, Dick Oatts, Dizzy Gillespie, The Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra, Dave Taylor, Patti Austin, The Metropole Jazz Orchestra, The Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, New York Voices, Ronnie Cuber, UMO Jazz Orchestra (Helsinki), Jazz Big Band Graz and the BBC Big Band. Abene arranged, produced and conducted the music for Patti Austin's 2008 Grammy® Award-winning album, *Avant Gershwin*.

Andreas Delfs was appointed music director of the 100-piece Temple University Symphony Orchestra in 2015, and has worked with Emanuel Ax, Joshua Bell, Yo-Yo Ma and Renée Fleming. He has led many of the world's noted ensembles, including the London Symphony Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, New York City Opera, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, San Francisco Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony and the Taipei Symphony Orchestra. Delfs was Music Director of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra for twelve seasons, during which time he was instrumental in the orchestra's rise to national prominence.

Delfs was also Music Director and Artistic Consultant to the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra and served as General Music Director of Hannover, Germany, conducting the symphony orchestra and opera company. Prior to his time in Hannover, he was Music Director of the Bern Opera, resident conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony during the tenure of Lorin Maazel. Delfs has a full guest-conducting schedule and has recorded on the Naxos, Telarc and Decca labels. Among Delfs' most notable operatic achievements has been his highly praised debut with the New York City Opera conducting performances of *Carmen* and a production of the uncut version of Hans Werner Henze's monumental *König Hirsch* for the Württemberg State Theatre in Stuttgart. He led four productions at the Aspen Music Festival and gave the Swiss premiere of György Ligeti's *Le Grand Macabre*, which received special praise from the composer.

Dick Oatts was a member of the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra dating back to the 1970s. He has recorded and toured with small groups such as Red Rodney, Eddie Gomez, Vic Juric, Bob Brookmeyer, Mel Lewis, Dom Salvador, Jerry Bergonzi, Flim & the BB's, Fred Hersch, Dave Berkman, Terell Stafford, Jon Faddis, Lalo Schiffrin and Ray Mantilla. He has performed with the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra, Mel Lewis, Carnegie Hall Jazz Band, Lester Bowie, Joe Lovano, Sam Jones-Tom Harrell, Paquito D'Rivera, Jim McNeely, Tito Puente, Kenny Wheeler, and Gunther Schuller. Oatts has also been featured with the Stockholm Jazz Orchestra, Danish Radio Big Band, Norboton Jazz Orchestra and the UMO Big Band in Helsinki. He has accompanied such vocalists as Joe Williams, Sarah Vaughn, Ella Fitzgerald, Nnenna Freelon, Mel Torme, and Milton Nascimento. Oatts has also recorded solos for such as Luther Vandross, James Taylor, and Everything But The Girl. He is a Steeplechase recording artist and has released six albums as a leader on that label and on DMP. For thirty years, Oatts has appeared at college jazz festivals as a soloist and clinician throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, Canada, South America, and the Middle East. He is Professor of Music at Temple University.

Terell Stafford has been hailed as "One of the great players of our time, a fabulous trumpet player" by piano legend McCoy Tyner. He has played with some of the biggest names in jazz, including Bobby Watson, Shirley Scott, McCoy Tyner, Benny Golson, Kenny Barron, Diana Krall, Jimmy Heath and John Faddis. He is a member of the Grammy® Award-winning Vanguard Jazz Orchestra and the Grammy® Award-nominated Clayton Brothers Quintet. In celebration of Jimmy Heath's eightieth birthday, Stafford recorded with the Jimmy Heath Big Band for the album, *Turn Up the Heath* (2006). A regular member of drummer Matt Wilson's group, Arts and Crafts, Stafford is featured on the album, *Scenic Route* (2007). As a member of drummer Alvin Queen's band, Alvin Queen and the Organics, Stafford is heard on the album, *I Ain't Looking at You* (2006).

The trumpeter has recorded six albums as a leader. His latest release, *BrotherLee Love*, a tribute to the iconic Lee Morgan, appeared at the top of the jazz charts for more than a year. As a sideman Stafford has been heard on over 90 albums. Stafford played solo trumpet with the Temple University Symphony Orchestra on "fourth stream...La Banda," commissioned by the Boyer College and nominated for a 2010 Grammy® Award in "Best Instrumental Composition" category. Stafford is Chair of Instrumental Studies, Director of Jazz Studies and Laura C. Carnell Professor of Music at Temple University. In 2013 Stafford was named Artistic Director of the newly formed Jazz Orchestra of Philadelphia.

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