

## Woody Witt, DMA

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### Summary

Innovative and effective Saxophonist, Composer, Jazz Educator, and Arts Manager with 30+ years of experience leaving a distinctive mark on the jazz world as a performer, composer, and teacher. An influential freelance musician, performing across the U.S., Asia, South America and Europe, recording acclaimed albums, and performing with the top artists in the industry. A passionate music educator with the demonstrated ability to lead and develop strong musical programs, motivate students of diverse skill levels, and successfully impart a solid understanding of music fundamentals, literature, and performance. Known for producing a distinctive sound, fresh ideas, and exceptional live performances.

### Education

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2000 **Doctor of Musical Arts in Saxophone** | The University of Houston | Houston, TX | Related field: Conducting

1995 **Master of Music in Jazz Studies** | The University of North Texas | Denton, TX | Related field: Saxophone Performance

1992 **Bachelor of Music** | The University of Houston | Major: Performance, Minor: Theory | Summa cum Laude

### Academic Assignment

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**Houston Community College**, Houston, TX  
**Professor of Music, Town and Country Campus**  
**2003 – Present**

Delivered effective planning, development, and teaching of courses in general music, including the fundamentals, literature, Jazz Studies, improvisation, and saxophone performance to a body of students with diverse skill-sets and backgrounds. Created and implemented an engaging curriculum based on classroom instruction, ensemble, and private lesson environments.

#### Key Accomplishments:

- Booked internationally acclaimed artists, including Randy Brecker, Tim Hagans, Billy Hart, Bill Cunliffe, Rich DeRosa, Neil Slater, Bob Sheppard, Rich Iacona, Will Kennedy, and many others to campus to conduct clinics and perform with student ensembles while providing enriching experiences for students.
- Recruited new students to the Jazz Studies program, including the instrumentation for a second big band (Fall 2013), resulting in a significant increase in awareness, credibility, and reputation of the jazz program.
- Voted in as Music Program Coordinator for the HCC System (2013) to complete assessment reports on the music program and project program goals, book orders, and other administrative duties.
- Coordinated all aspects of regional tours performing across high school and college campuses, featuring Randy Brecker, Billy Hart, Franck Amsallem, Andrea Marcelli, Sorin Zlat, and others.

**The University of Houston**, Houston, TX  
**Affiliate Artist in Jazz Studies/Saxophone Instructor**  
**1996 – Present**

Created specialized instruction and core curriculum in jazz improvisation, jazz history, clarinet methods, and saxophone. Coached jazz combos, led jazz ensembles, and delivered one-on-one private instruction.

### Key Accomplishments:

- Originated, developed, and organized the highly-successful first annual Moores School of Music Jazz Festival in 1999 which has since become an influential and anticipated yearly tradition.
- Served as the saxophone instructor since 2021, teaching the entire studio, private instruction students, and studio classes, hosting guest clinicians including Ben Solomon and Clay Steiner, serving on multiple recital committees, and supporting recruiting efforts around the Houston area and across Texas state.

**Cezanne**, Houston, TX

### **Artistic Director**

**1999 – 2002; 2004 – 2010; 2015 – Present**

Served as a vital operating member of the management team for the Southwest's premiere jazz club by hosting some of the industry's top artists.

### Key Accomplishments:

- Oversaw the acquisition of internationally renowned artists, including Randy Brecker, Jimmy Cobb, Eddie Gomez, Joshua Redman, Tim Hagans, Fred Hersch, Kenny Werner, The Moutin Reunion Quartet, Mark Levine, and Jason Marsalis.
- Secured all groups and performances, prepared calendars for mailing, and managed data in the contact database.
- Performed accounting and reporting by administering AP/AR while managing door receipts and filing annual 1099 forms for performing artists.

**High School for The Performing and Visual Arts**, Houston, TX

### **Director of Jazz Studies**

**1999 – 2000**

Creatively developed and implemented a strong curriculum for highly talented high school students on methods of jazz improvisation and musical arrangement. Coached a jazz combo and directed 2 jazz ensembles to develop musical abilities and passions.

### Key Accomplishments:

- Created and coordinated clinics for concerts featuring top artists, including Art Lande, Tim Hagans, Jamie Baum, Jeff Hirshfield, Ronnie Cuber, the U.S. Army Ambassadors, University of North Texas (UNT) One O'clock Lab Band, Marvin Stamm, Bill Mays, and Ed Petersen.

## **Additional Teaching Experience**

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**Saxophone/Clarinet Instructor**, Montgomery College Department of Music

**Woodwind Instructor**, San Jacinto Community College

**Saxophone Specialist**, Spring, Tomball, Conroe & New Caney Independent School Districts

**Teaching Fellow in Jazz Studies/Applied Saxophone**, The University of North Texas

**Saxophone Instructor**, Dallas School of Music

**Saxophone Instructor**, Spring Branch, Katy, Friendswood, and Aldine Independent School District

## **Honors and Awards**

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2014 Winner, Taichung International Jazz Saxophone Competition (Taiwan)

2010 French American Cultural Exchange Grant

1996 Winner, The University of Houston Moore School of Music Concerto Competition

1995 The University of North Texas Outstanding Graduate Student in Jazz Studies

1994 Regional Winner, Texas Music Teachers Association Instrumental Solo Composition

1993 Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honor Society

1990 International Association of Jazz Educators Award

1988 Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

1988 Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society

1988 Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society

1985 Eagle Scout

## Selected Publications & Arrangements

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1. **Witt, Woody.** *Sonny Stitt Improvised Tenor Saxophone Solos.* Collection of 15 transcriptions of tenor saxophone solos performed by Sonny Stitt, 1997.
2. **Witt, Woody.** *Sonny Stitt – His Life & Music.* Doctoral Dissertation, 2000. Available through the University Microfilms International.
3. **Witt, Woody.** *International Association of Jazz Educators Texas Newsletter.* Solo transcription of Another Jones as performed by Michael Brecker, tenor saxophone, with the Hal Galper Quintet on Live at Rosie's CD, 1992.

## Recent Clinics, Workshops, & Adjudications

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2002 – Present	American Festival of the Arts, Summer Jazz Program Clinics
1997 – Present	Texas Music Festival, Jazz Improvisation and Master Classes
2012	Alief-Elsik HS, Sharpstown International HS, McDonald JHS & Music Family Institute, Series of Masterclasses
2011, 2012	McNeese Jazz Festival, Adjudicate & Performance with guest artist, Scott Whitfield (2011), Tom Scott (2012)
2011	Jacksonville State University, Guest Artist & Clinician
2010	The University of Texas at Austin, Masterclass
2009	The University of Alaska Fairbanks, Guest Artist & Adjudicator
2009	Lake Zurich HS, Mundelein HS, Clinics

## Performances & Professional Recordings

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### JAZZ ENSEMBLE CREDITS, LIVE AND RECORDED PERFORMANCES WITH:

- Albert (Tootie) Heath
- Bill Watrous
- Billy Taylor
- Branford Marsalis
- Conrad Herwig
- David Liebman
- George Coleman
- Hubert Laws
- James Moody
- Joe LoCascio
- Larry Ham
- Louis Hayes
- Quantum Mechanics
- Randy Brecker
- Red Holloway
- Rufus Reid
- Scott Whitfield
- Terence Blanchard
- Tim Hagans
- Tom Harrell
- Tom Scott

### SYMPHONY AND LARGE ENSEMBLE CREDITS:

2011 – Present, HCC Monday Night Big Band	1995 – 1997, Ronnie Renfrow Big Band
2011, Baytown Symphony Orchestra	1995, Pete Petersen and The Collection
1996 – Present, Houston Symphony Orchestra	1993 – 1995, Dallas Jazz Orchestra
1998, Woodlands Symphony Orchestra	1993 – 1994, Irving Symphony Orchestra
1994 – 1995, UNT One O'clock Lab Band, Grammy-nominated big band under director of Neil Slater	1993, Dallas Wind Symphony 1993, Garland Symphony Orchestra
1995 – 1997, HCC Studio Jazz Orchestra	1992, The University of North Texas Wind Ensemble

### RECORDING CREDITS (LEADER):

2019, Live at Cezanne (trio recording)	2008, First Impressions
2018, Made in Taiwan	2008, Willows
2017, Presence	2007, A Conversation
2014, Absinthe	2006, Live at Cezanne
2011, Pots & Kettles	2005, Square Peg Round Hole
2009, Seasons Ago	2002, Debut Solo Recording

### **SELECT RECORDING CREDITS (SIDEMAN):**

2017, The Mystery, David Craig Quartet  
2014, Glenious Alien Landscape, Glen Ackerman  
2013, Comfortable Blues, Tim Solook  
2012, Aunt Nasty, Chris Cortez  
2011, The Big Purr, Pasheen  
2010, Opening, Carol Morgan  
2010, Nameless Places, Joe LoCascio & Patty Sanders  
2010, The Glenious Inner Planet, Glen Ackerman  
2007, Awakenings, Chris Cortez  
2009, Cocalamus Bridge, Harvie S.  
2009, Bamboo Philharmonic, Mark Plsczek  
2007, Line, Kelly Rossum Quintet  
2006, The Trumpet & the Bull, Mark J. Inouye  
2006, Shadows & Music, Robert Nelson  
2003, Wherever I Go, Deadra Hart

2002, The Last Concert, David Craig  
2002, The Party's Over/Begun, Kelly Rossum Quintet  
2002, Daybreak, Kevin Patton Quintet  
2000, A Tribute to Duke Ellington, Richard Brown's Swing Orchestra  
2000, Let's Dance, Richard Brown's Swing Orchestra  
2000, Solo Para Ti, David Lopez  
1997, Into the Mood, Richard Brown's Swing Orchestra  
1996, Prism, The University of Houston Jazz Orchestra and Wind Ensemble  
1995, Dallas Jazz Orchestra Plays Dee Barton, Dallas Jazz Orchestra  
1994, Lab '95 UNT One O'clock Lab Band, North Texas Jazz  
1993, Transparent Two, UNT Two O'clock Lab Band

## **Community Service & Associations**

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Founder, South Texas Jazz Foundation – A 501c3 organization designed to assist the HCC Monday Night Big Band raise funds to support guest artists, recording, travel and festival appearances.

Performer, Benefit Concert for Hurricane Katrina victims, 2005

Professional Associations; American Federation of Musicians, International Association of Jazz Educators, Who's Who in America, 2005.

## **Selected Professional Activities**

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### **2022**

- Axelrad – 6 performances including quintet, big band, & Cowboy bebop.
- Cezanne Presents at Glade – 15 performances.
- Doo Wop Projects – 6 performances.
- Candlelight Concerts – 23 performances including Divas, Jazz/Soul, RJ, AW, Xmas, & Romantic Jazz.
- Houston Symphony Orchestra (HSO) – 11 performances.
- River Oaks Chamber Orchestra Concert.
- University of Houston (UH) Wind Band Gotkovsky Performance.
- Uvalde Jazz Camp.
- Houston Underground Judging.
- Completed the Etude Book.
- Moores School of Music (MSM) Collage Concert & All-State Clinic.
- Moores Chamber Concert at the Christ Church Cathedral.
- University of Northern Texas Alumni Day Performance.
- Jazz Education Network Conference guest artist with Eastman.
- Kingwood big band guest artist.
- Mark Smith Studio Clinic.
- Lonestar Cowboy Church (LSCC) Christmas Concert.
- Cowboy Bebop Musicians Performance Trust Fund streaming Concert.
- Alex Winkler movie session.

### **2021**

- Spearheaded 167 events, including 3 HSO, big band, & wind ensemble performances.
- Candlelight Concerts contracted, produced, & played 34 performances.
- Reopening/closing Cezanne at Birraporetti's, including Rique Pantoja & live stream concert with Andrew Griffith.
- Solo recital at MSM with Dr. Andreea Mut in the Moores Opera House with music by Caplet, Gotkovsky, Woods, & a premiere of a work by Dr. Aaron Lington
- Tributes to Miles Davis, George Gershwin, Duke Ellington, NOLA, Louis Armstrong, Music of Brazil, & Jazz Meets Soul.

### **2018 – 2019**

- Cezanne – 30 performances, featuring Gerry Gibbs, Paul Kogut, Jeff Franzel, Wheeler, Memo, Dennis Dotson, Adriano Santos, Dennis Dotson, Bruce Saunders, Brian Pardo, Larry Ham, Shelley Carroll, GenuWine, Dufour Trio, Rich DeRosa, Henschen, David Caceres, Rich Harney, Tom Brechtlein, Red Young, Silvio, & David Craig.
- HSO – 5 shows including, the Harry Potter soundtrack, Ella Fitzgerald shows, & performances around July 4th.
- "Brain on Art" showcase event at UH, cross-disciplinary music & engineering study.
- San Houston State University (SHSU) jazz festival judge, guest artist, trio recording (Ackerman, Dufour) at Cezanne.
- Region 19 Jazz Ensemble selected clinician.
- Recorded duo tracks with Dan Gelok.

- Waltrip Jazz Festival guest artist.
- Northern American Saxophone Alliance (NASA) clinic/performance with Dan Gelok.
- Performed Bach Violin Concerto at Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church.
- Performances in Denmark & Sweden with Carl Winther, Anders Mogensen, & Johnny Aman
- Recorded with Odense Conservatory students.
- Texas Music Festival Jazz Camp.
- Bernhardt Winery & Dosey Doe with Burlison.
- Toured CT & NY with Larry Ham.
- Duo shows with Memo at 1810 Ojeman.
- Sugarland performance with Jeremy Good.
- Quintet with Russell Haight.
- Began Texas Jazz Workshop combo 1.
- Jazz Houston Orchestra (JHO) performance at Miller.
- 1894 Opera House with Doo Wop project.
- Great Day Houston with Mark Dannenbaum.
- Trio CD release at Cezanne.
- Glade Foundation Trio Concert.
- Henry Darragh big band recording.
- JHO Concert at Wortham with Gregory Porter.
- Jambo Cat in Omaha with Mitch.
- Rhapsody in Blue & 80s.
- Monks Trio Show (Austin).
- Made in Taiwan CD release shows.
- Eddie Lewis Young Audiences Performance.
- Golf Coast Intercollegiate Consortium Jazz Festival with John Mills.
- Guest artist with University of Texas San Antonio big band.
- Cezanne Jazz Festival, Brazil Tour, Record.

## 2017

- Cezanne – 7 performances featuring Coltrane tribute, Adriano Santos, Dennis Dotson, Bruce Saunders, Brian Pardo, Ackerman, & Dufour, & a recording with Harney, Browne, & Dufour
- Toured Denmark & Sweden with Winther, Aman, & Mogensen.
- Toured NY & CT with Larry Ham.
- Toured TX, recording with Winther, Aman, & Mogensen.
- Adjudicated SHSU Jazz Festival.
- Smithsonian African American Heritage Museum demonstration.
- University of Nebraska at Omaha clinics, Love's performance.
- JazzHouston Big Band inaugural concert, educational outreach concert.
- Brain research performance for Mark Dannenbaum.
- Alejandro Basulto Martinez Concerto recording.
- Cowboy Church & Woodsedge Christmas concerts.
- Recorded duos with Dan Gelok.
- Appeared at National Association of Music Merchandisers (NAMM).
- Appeared at Waltrip Jazz Festival as a judge & guest artist.
- Clinic/performance at NASA with Dan Gelok.
- GCIC Jazz Festival (Market St., Woodlands) with HCC/Dennis Dotson.

- Bach Violin Concerto performance at Christ Evangelical Presbyterian Church (CEPC).

## 2016

- HSO – 4 performances featuring Yo-Yo Ma, Seth MacFarlane, Linda Eder, & Bond & Beyond.
- Regional tour with Sorin Zlat (clinics/concerts at Katy Taylor, High School of Performing and Visual Arts (HSPVA), Austin, & Trinity Lutheran).
- Adjudicated the MSM Jazz Festival.
- NYC performances at Birdland & Small's.
- Texas Jazz Festival (Corpus Christi).
- Guest artist with the Lamar University Jazz Ensemble at the Jazz Educator Network Conference in New Orleans.
- Attended the NAMM conference in Los Angeles.
- Release of new CD, "Presence," on the BluJazz record label.
- Performances in Omaha, NE, & Des Moines.
- Performances in Austin & Houston with pianist/composer, Michael McNeill.
- Jazz Festival in The Woodlands.
- Premiered a commissioned arrangement from Rich DeRosa with big band (University of North Texas faculty).
- Adjudicated Houston Underground saxophone competition at UH.

## 2015

- Performed West Side Story with the Houston Ballet.
- Performed the movie soundtrack to Singing in the Rain with HSO.
- Big band at SHSU for the Caruso Trumpet Competition, backing judges Ingrid Jensen, Clay Jenkins, Bobby Shew, & competition winners.
- Clinic saxophones & jazz ensemble at Creighton Prep HS (Omaha, NE).
- Recorded 10th solo CD featuring compositions of Joe LoCascio, Book of Days.
- NYC at Smalls Jazz Club, leading a trio with HCC student, Memo Reza, on drums.
- Kitano with the Russ Nolan Quartet as a special guest.
- HSO on grand opening season concert with Andres Orozco Estrada, directing.
- Clinics & concerts with Brazilian musicians Silvio Gianetti & Wellington Pimpa in Twin Creeks.
- MS, HSPVA, Dueitt MS, Spring HS, Klein Oak HS, Klein HS.
- Duo recital with Joe LoCascio at HCC Spring branch.
- Michael Feinstein at Galveston Opera House.
- Texas Jazz Festival, lead alto with Tony Campise Memorial Big Band.
- Duo recital at UH with Dan Gelok, all improvised programs.
- Taiwan on Taichung Jazz Festival as a guest soloist with the Taipei Jazz Orchestra.
- Guest with Shawna Yang Quartet & leading a quartet featuring Taiwanese jazz musicians.
- Recorded a CD of Taiwanese folk songs arranged for a jazz quartet.
- Guest soloist with the Bayou Big Band & Lee College Jazz Ensemble at Lee College (Baytown).
- Hosted Don Braden in a clinic of the Monday Night Big Band funded by STX Jazz Foundation

- Performed with trumpeter Wayne Bergeron at the Clarion in Lake Jackson, Brazosport College.
- Solo saxophonist for Mayor's Holiday Party.
- Performed with jazz trumpeter Randy Brecker at Cezanne.
- Organized & hosted the inaugural meeting of the Houston Jazz Society.
- NYC-based band Quantum Mechanics at Cezanne & CEPC, plus a clinic at HSPVA.
- Performed with big band backing Dianne Schuur at Trinity Jazz Festival.
- Clinic & concert at Lamar University, hosted by saxophone professor, Rick Condit.
- Performed with The Jazz Project at the UH MSM Jazz Festival.
- Hosted inaugural Houston Jazz Society Jam Session at Cezanne.
- Performed concert at UH Student Union with Dan Gelok & HCC student, Memo Reza, as a collaboration with UH College of Engineering, Your Brain on Art.
- Performed with Brazilian pianist Jovino Santos Neto at Cezanne.
- Toured with Stan Kenton Legacy Orchestra in MN, IA, & MO.
- Performed in Santa Fe, NM on jazz series with John Trentacosta.
- Monday Night Big Band featuring special guest, Yellowjackets drummer, Will Kenned.
- Performed as a guest artist at the Christopher Newport University Jazz Festival (Newport News, VA).
- Performed & conducted clinics in Sao Paulo, Brazil, for 1 week.