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Column: **Berklee Buzz**

## Phil Wilson's "Bones, Big Bands, and Rev. Bob Thompson"

September 2000

By *Charles Chapman*

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### Berklee Buzz Archive

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Internationally-acclaimed jazz trombonist and Berklee Professor Phil Wilson conducted the Berklee Rainbow Band in a concert entitled "Bones, Big Bands, and Rev. Bob Thompson" on August 10 at the Berklee Performance Center. A renowned gospel singer, the Rev. Thompson of Phillips-Exeter Academy performed two selections with the band -- Jerome Kern's "Ol' Man River" and the premiere of a new work by Phil Wilson entitled "The Forest," based on a poem by Wendell Berry. The concert featured compositions and arrangements by Wilson and also included an arrangement of Tommy Wolf's "Spring Can Really Hang You Up The Most" by student Jason Camelio of Attleboro, MA.

The Berklee Rainbow Band, which includes some of the college's top instrumentalists from around the world, is one of Berklee's premier ensembles and has been featured at numerous festivals, including the Juan-les-Pins Jazz Festival in the south of France. Phil Wilson is currently working on a gospel CD project for the band that features Rev. Bob Thompson, with traditional gospel songs arranged by Assistant Professor Dennis Montgomery III, director of the Berklee Reverence Gospel Ensemble.

During the week of August 8, "Berklee Summer Guitar Sessions" once again drew students from all over the globe with over 300 guitarists in attendance. This year special guests were the versatile jazz/blues guitarist Duke Robillard and rock guitarist Vinnie Moore of Alice Cooper fame. Robillard and Moore presented clinics and concerts, with Berklee's renowned faculty conducting daily classes and ensembles, and presenting clinics and concerts throughout the week.

Tony and Grammy award-winning singer/actress Jennifer Holliday and rock guitar legend Steve Vai will receive

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honorary doctor of music degrees during Berklee College's Entering Student Convocation on September 8. The two honorees will help welcome Berklee's entering Class of 2004, which includes approximately 800 students from 75 countries. Some of Berklee's most outstanding current students also will welcome the entering class with a concert featuring the music of the two honorary doctorate recipients. The Convocation ceremony will be held at 7 PM in the Berklee Performance Center. The concert tribute will follow at 8 PM.

Professor in the guitar department, Charles Chapman just released a text on jazz improvisation for beginning to intermediate musicians titled "Making The Changes" (Mel Bay Publications). Chapman also recently signed a contract with Mel Bay to publish a book of jazz guitar interviews he has conducted over the last ten years, including Berklee alumni John Abercrombie, John Scofield, Mike Stern, Kevin Eubanks, and Jack Peterson, as well as George Benson, Johnny Smith, George Van Eps, Gene Bertoncini, and Bucky and John Pizzarelli.

We at Berklee are taking a deep breath awaiting the arrival of the 3,000+ students as the Fall 2000 semester approaches. These future performers, recording engineers, composers, business people, therapists, and songwriters have a youthful energy and verve that makes it all worthwhile.



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