

ROBERT KEHRBERG, DEAN

Western Carolina University

COLLEGE OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS



Education:

Dr. Kehrberg received his Bachelor of Music in Music Education in 1968 from the University of Iowa. After serving in the United States Air Force for four years he returned to the University of Iowa and completed his Master of Music degree in performance in 1973. Dr. Kehrberg attended the University of Northern Colorado from 1975-77 and completed his Doctor of Arts degree in 1983 with a specialty in low brass teaching and performance as well as a cognate area in music theory. He studied low brass with Dr. John Hill, Mr. Buddy Baker and Mr. Jack Robinson. While at Northern Colorado he studied jazz pedagogy with Mr. Gene Aiken and Buddy Baker. His jazz education is traced back to his high school days through his band director Mr. Joe Brice. He was an inspiration that only musician teachers can bring to their students.

Composition

Dr. Kehrberg composes music for solo instruments, band and small ensembles. His works for brass quintet have been played in China, England, Carnegie Hall and Germany. His composition for amplified digital delay solo trombone, "Tautophonic," was featured on the cover of the International Trombone Journal and at the 10th Annual New Music and Art festival at Bowling Green State University. In the summer of 2011 he completed a work for solo trumpet and piano, "Russian Fantasy," for P. Bradley Ulrich as a featured number for a fall 2011 premier in Russia.

The College of Fine and Performing Arts was established on July 1, 2007. The College has over 600 arts majors within the Schools of Music, Stage & Screen, and Art & Design. The College includes the John W. Bardo Fine Arts Center completed in 2005 and houses a 1000 seat performance hall and the University Fine Art Museum. The college is housed in nine facilities across the campus with dedicated arts venues and teaching spaces.

Arts Administration:

Dr. Kehrberg began his arts administration work in 1985 while working at Eastern New Mexico University as an Associate Professor of Music. After serving two years as Director of the School of Music at Eastern New Mexico he took a position at Western Carolina as Head of the Department of Music in 1987 and served in that capacity through 2004. Dr. Kehrberg served as interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Western Carolina from 2004-2007. Reorganization in 2007 created a new College of Fine and Performing Arts. Dr. Kehrberg was named founding Dean of this new college in July 2007.

Scholarship & Creative Work

Dr. Kehrberg's performance area is in low brass. He performed with the University of Iowa Symphonic Band on a three month good will tour of Europe and Soviet Union in 1967. He was a member of the United States Air Force band at SAC Headquarters in Omaha from 1968 – 1970 and served in the US Air Force Band in Europe from 1970-72. His orchestral performance work was with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra from 1973-75, Roswell Symphony from 1985-87 and principle trombone with the Asheville Symphony from 1987-1991. He performed with the Smoky Mt. Brass Quintet on tuba and trombone from 1995-1999.



Dr. Kehrberg's favorite hobby is woodworking and carving.

Teaching Experience:

Dr. Kehrberg has experience at multiple levels of teaching. After completing his master of music degree he taught middle school and high school band in Milford Nebraska. After two years he decided to return to the University, study trombone performance, and complete a doctorate degree. His next teaching post was at Cloud County Community College in Concordia Kansas. He was responsible for the instrumental program and a community band. He began university level teaching at Eastern New Mexico University in Portales. While at Eastern New Mexico he taught low brass, brass choir, jazz ensemble and improvisation, music theory and music in general studies. Prior to beginning dean work he had 26 years of university level teaching experience and 30 years total teaching experience.

Besides teaching applied low brass one of Dr. Kehrberg's favorite teaching assignments is teaching a self paced online course in Music Appreciation. This is a unique course where students may start at any time and have nine months to complete the course.

Teaching is a life long pursuit for Dr. Kehrberg. His two brothers and sister all taught music at the secondary and post secondary level. It started back on the farm where his mother was a dedicated elementary teacher.

Arts and You:

Every day of our lives we have arts experiences. From the mix and match of clothing colors, choice of favorite music to wake up with, choice of film or digital enlightenment or entertainment experiences for the evening, making changes in the layout of your home, and how one arranges the small detail objects we make artist choices. People may be unaware of these artist choices, but we all make them. All too often the arts are put into Boxes – the boxes of a concert hall, a museum, a gallery, a digital screen, a theatre stage. However, there is a tie to all of this. That is the individual and the choices they make.

At Western Carolina we train professionals for various arts areas. We have very defined career paths and the not so defined. The common thread is the need for creative thinking that involves the visual and performing arts. Another common thread is the need for the professional to know they are making artistic decisions and can communicate about it. The faculty members in the arts are key to this. They all make art in various disciplines and bring this fascination and skill to the classroom and presentation venues. They are truly professionals and I do so appreciate their fascination with the process and wonderment of it all.

The big question then seems to be, when are you aware that you are making an artistic decision and just how important is this awareness? Major choices involve the traditional centers such as the gallery, theatre stage and etc. When you bring these experiences into your daily life through introspection you make creative choices; this is especially true in choices of color, size and shape and to the subjective sense of self. It is a lifelong adventure to discover new choices and new awareness. They are around every corner if you are open to them.

The arts are critical for all of us to find that space that gives us meaning, a smile and a sense of wonderment. It really comes home for me when I need to put into perception abstractions such as: love, honesty, hope, remorse, and beauty. The art I know helps. It helps all of us to experience ourselves through different looking glasses and that is exciting and fun. Experiencing the artist choice and knowing when you are, brings a self experience not possible any other way.

We are all artists. While some artists make it, talk about it and help others make it; we all make the artist choice. It is fun. So enjoy the experience as the wonderment is exciting and the choices we make enrich our world.