

# Mike Tomaro

**Mike Tomaro** has been the Director of the Jazz Studies Program at the Mary Pappert School of Music at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA since 1997. This saxophonist, composer, arranger and educator earned his B.S. degree in Music Education from Duquesne University and his M.A. degree in Saxophone Performance from George Mason University in Fairfax, VA. Prior to his appointment at Duquesne, he lived in the Washington, D.C. area for seventeen years as a member of the Army Blues Jazz Ensemble, a unit of the prestigious “Pershing’s Own” U.S. Army Band. While a member of this group, he served as its Enlisted Musical Director and performed for Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton as well as heads of state from around the world. He also composed and/or arranged much of the Army Blues repertoire and was featured as a soloist on several of the group’s albums and CDs. Mike is a Yamaha Performing Artist and endorses Vandoren reeds, mouthpieces and ligatures exclusively.

As a performer, Mike has worked with such diverse artists and groups as Rosemary Clooney, Ray Charles, Michael Feinstein, Linda Ronstadt, Debby Boone, Johnny Mathis, Wayne Bergeron, Terence Blanchard, Louis Bellson, Terry Gibbs, Dizzy Gillespie Tribute Big Band, Woody Herman Orchestra and the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, where he is featured on their DVD, “Live at MCG.” In his hometown, he has performed with guitarist Joe Negri, Pittsburgh Jazz Legacy Band, Pittsburgh Symphony, River City Brass Band, Pittsburgh Ballet and Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble in addition to leading his own small groups.

Mike is the co-artistic director and lead alto player of the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra, the city’s premier big band, where he composes and arranges most of the material that group performs. In 2015, the band released its first CD, “Joyful Jazz,” on the MCG Jazz label; the album contains 11 arrangements by Tomaro. It has garnered rave reviews including a four-star rating in Downbeat magazine and was selected as one of the top seven holiday albums of 2015 by the Wall Street Journal.

Mike has four nationally released recordings under his own name that showcase his talents as both performer and composer/arranger – “*Dancing Eyes*” (Seabreeze Jazz), “*Home Again*” (Positive Music), “*Forgotten Dreams*” (Seabreeze Jazz) and “*Nightowl Suite*” (Seabreeze Jazz). Additionally, Mike has also been featured on many other CDs as performer and/or arranger, most notably on Nancy Wilson’s last two Grammy Award winning releases, “Turned To Blue” and “RSVP,” the Bob Mintzer Big Band’s Grammy nominated release, “For The Moment,” Ann Hampton Callaway’s “The Hope Of Christmas,” New York Voices’, “A Day Like This,” Sheryl Bailey’s “A New Promise” and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Swing Band’s “Pittsburgh Jazz Legacy,” all on the MCG Jazz label. On the last two releases, Mike is prominently featured as the main arranger as well as a soloist.

Mike’s music has been performed by the likes of jazz greats David Liebman, Wayne Bergeron, Ivan Lins, Claudio Roditi, Mike Stern, Ernie Watts, Bobby Shew, Randy Brecker, New York Voices, Al Vizzutti and many more, as well as high schools, colleges and universities around the world. His orchestral arrangements have been performed by the Pittsburgh and National

Symphony Orchestras. Over two hundred of his compositions and arrangements have been published by Doug Beach Music, Hal Leonard Publications, and Walrus Music. In 2009, Mike scored all the music for MCG/Opera Theater of Pittsburgh's production of Duke Ellington's musical "Beggar's Holiday." Recently, he also compiled, transcribed, reorchestrated and arranged music for large jazz ensemble for the entirety of a 90 minute show for actor Keith David for his one man show, "Joe Williams: Here's To Life."

Additionally, Mike has co-authored the textbook "Instrumental Jazz Arranging: A Comprehensive and Practical Guide" (Hal Leonard Publications), with his long-time mentor, Dr. John Wilson, who was Director of Jazz Studies at Duquesne University from 1972-1996.

Mike is affiliated with the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers where he has received several ASCAP Plus awards, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS), Jazz Education Network (JEN) and the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). Mike is in great demand both nationally and internationally as a guest soloist, adjudicator, and clinician. For more information on his activities, visit his website at [www.miketomaro.com](http://www.miketomaro.com).

Since his wife's passing from pancreatic cancer in 2010, Mike has been dedicating much of his time to organizing, arranging and performing yearly concerts designed to benefit the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PANCAN).