

# Eric Hewitt - Conductor, Saxophonist, Composer, Educator

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## Critical Acclaim:

### – Lloyd Schwartz, Boston Phoenix, **Top 10 Classical Music Stories 2010**

“But if I had to choose only one event [in 2010], it would be the final concert in the Boston Conservatory's tribute to Pierre Boulez on his 85th birthday. **Eric Hewitt leading 11 of the area's most brilliant players in the first American performance of Boulez's astonishing 48-minute *Dérive 2* (last updated in 2006) would be an outstanding achievement in any year.**”

- **Lloyd Schwartz**, The Boston Phoenix. **Birthday Boys: Pierre Boulez at Boston Conservatory**. December 1, 2010:

“I think the concert I'll remember most vividly from the past few weeks was the closing night of Boston Conservatory's weekend-long tribute to modern-music icon Pierre Boulez on his 85th birthday. For all that Boulez's music is both technically and intellectually challenging, it can also be ravishing — yet few of his pieces get played here. This program began with Boston Conservatory students, under the skillful direction of Eric Hewitt, chair of the Woodwind Department, playing *Dérive* (1984), six insinuating minutes for six instruments (the quintet called for in Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* plus percussion), "derived" from the complex chords Boulez had invented for an ambitious piece for orchestra and electronics, *Répons* (which he himself led at a reconfigured Symphony Hall back in 1986).”

“At Boston Conservatory, in the piece's actual (though "unofficial") US premiere, Hewitt gave us a brief but helpful rundown of its structure: four continuous sections of about 10 minutes each (which Hewitt called "shadow bop," "shadow scherzo," "andante night music," and a "convulsive" mixture of fast and slow) and then, in conclusion, a manic section half that length that Hewitt called "Boulez's answer" to Stravinsky's violent "Danse sacrée" from *Le Sacre du Printemps* — the five sections "separated" by what Hewitt referred to as "windows" of calmer, (at first) largely unison playing.

"This piece is not for students — or cowards. Hewitt led a stellar professional ensemble that included violinist Gabriela Diaz and clarinetist Michael Norsworthy, both of whom have performed with Boulez, the BSO's amazing English-horn player Robert Sheena and percussionist Daniel Bauch, and Triple Helix cellist Rhonda Rider. *Dérive 2* is a whirlwind of repeated notes in multiple simultaneous syncopated tempos, flashing arpeggios, and pointillist shimmering, perpetual motion with moments of sublime repose and sudden stops — **48 mesmerizing and electrifying minutes. Seully Hall was packed, mainly with students. At the end, a stunned silence was followed by an extended standing ovation.**”

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### **Richard Dyer**, Boston Globe, NEC Festival Entertains with Terrific Sax Pieces. March 10, 2000

“The saxophonists, all of them well-trained pupils of Radnofsky, were on the same high level - Brian Mackintosh in the McDonald; **Eric Hewitt, summoning the qualities of a bel canto singer like Sinatra from his instrument in the Schuller**; Chien-Kwan Lin displaying spirit, stamina, and chops in the Harbison. Each played so well one was convinced that he would have brought something equally individual to the other pieces.” –

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"Mr. Hewitt, conducting, held all together perfectly." - Vance R Koven, Boston Musical Intelligencer. **Goldmine of Saxes, Bonus of Horns Adorn Alea III Program at Tsai**. April 30, 2010

"The first half returned to a lighter vein with *la grenouille* by Eric Hewitt for saxes, horns and percussion (including one uncommon item called a "lion's roar" used here for the much less threatening purpose of evoking the titular frog's "ribbits"), originally conceived as a dance work, and quietly evoking a frog pond at dusk. It makes some lovely sounds, opening with an undulating background of horns and quiet percussion (tympani and ribbits), enriching the mix with some portentous motifs for horns and bass saxophone. The music seems

largely textural and densely polyphonic, evoking classic Ligeti without the angst." - Vance R Koven, Boston Musical Intelligencer. **Goldmine of Saxes, Bonus of Horns Adorn Alea III Program at Tsai.** April 30, 210

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"Shostakovich's Folk Dances features exciting themes played at a breakneck tempo, over a the rhythmic framework of a military march. Hewitt was extremely liberal with the tempo, letting the music wind up to a near halt, then fly at the appropriate moments. The result was very exciting, possessing a dramatic impact that few performances I've heard (or performed in) of the piece are able to achieve. **The versatility of Hewitt and his wind ensemble at Boston Conservatory is quite impressive. And the diversity of programming, covering so many spheres of music from the last century, is a great service to his student musicians and audiences alike.**"

- Peter Van Zandt Lane, Boston Musical Intelligencer.

**BoCo Wind Ensemble's 20th Century Cornucopia.** October 11, 2012

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"Celebrating Gunther Schuller at 86 was the worthy and ambitious task of Eric Hewitt, saxophonist and conductor of the Boston Conservatory's Wind Ensemble. **Hewitt, Schuller's former student at New England Conservatory and later his protégé and apprentice, brought the requisite verve, keen ear, and attention to detail to do justice to the esteemed composer's varied and thought-provoking works for band.**" - Fred Bouchard, Boston Musical Intelligencer.

**Schuller with Verve from BoCo Winds.** December 12, 2011

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## **Discography:**

**Naxos 8.559683** – American Music for Percussion. Gunther Schuller – Grand Concerto for Percussion and Keyboards – producer

**Itunes** – Requiem Octet... in memoriam Gunther Schuller – Thomas Oboe Lee. Boston Conservatory Wind Ensemble, conductor

**BMOPsound 1046** – Kati Agócs : The Debrecen Passion. (By the streams of Babylon – baritone saxophone).

**Itunes** – La Serenissima – Thomas Oboe Lee. Boston Conservatory Wind Ensemble, conductor

**TROY 1442** – The Unheard Music: New Music for Brass and Wind Ensemble (Boston Conservatory Wind Ensemble, conductor/producer)

**Tzadik 9004** – Leaf Metal – The Music of Adam Roberts (Boston Conservatory Wind Ensemble, conductor)

**New World Records 80715** – Lei Liang : Milou (Radnofsky Quartet, baritone saxophone)

**GM recordings 2077** – Yesaroun'Duo : Heavy Up/Heavy Down (soprano, alto, baritone saxophones)

**GM recordings 2079** – Boston Conservatory Wind Ensemble : Deviation (conductor)

**BMOPsound 1008** – Boston Modern Orchestra Project : Derek Bermel, *Voices* (alto saxophone)

**BMOPsound 1001** – Boston Modern Orchestra Project : John Harbison , *Ulysses* (soprano saxophone)

**BMOPsound 1014** – Ken Ueno : Talus (*Kaze no Oka*, bass saxophone)

**BMOPsound 1016** – William Thomas McKinley : *R.A.P* (baritone saxophone)

**BMOPsound 1034** – Milton Babbitt – *All Set* (tenor saxophone)

**Innova 681** – Elliott Schwartz : Hall of Mirrors (baritone saxophone, Radnofsky Quartet)

**TROY 935** – Armand Qualliotine: Chamber Music (baritone saxophone, Radnofsky Quartet)

**TROY 1176** – Boston Diary: Pozzi Escott, *Clarinet Concerto* (conductor)

**TROY 444** – New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble : Songs, Hymns, Portraits (baritone saxophone)

**TROY 340** – New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble : Bernard Rands, *Ceremonial* (alto saxophone)

**Mode 125** – New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble : Gunther Schuller, *In Praise of Winds* (contrabass clarinet)

**Itunes** : Yesaroun'Duo : Yesaroun' Duo (alto, tenor, baritone saxophones)

**Vee 1905** – Ryles Jazz Orchestra : Live at Ryles (baritone saxophone)

**Centaur 2722** - Aflame in Flight: Pozzi Escott *Aria I* (alto saxophone)

**WTA 008** – The Waiteata Collection of New Zealand Music  
Volume III -Chamber Music II, (baritone saxophone, Yesaroun'Duo)