

Ben Schwendener

Teaching

- Professor / Facilitator CCT UMass Boston
- Jazz Faculty, New England Conservatory,
- Faculty, Longy School of Music of Bard College

Education

Bachelor of Music (Jazz Composition) '86 New England Conservatory

Areas of Expertise

Composition, creativity, Dialogue-based education, Project-based learning, Collaboration and cultural exchange.

Biography

Ben Schwendener is a composer and pianist who sustains a unique voice in contemporary creative music and is a leading authority on George Russell's Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization, which he assisted Russell in teaching at the New England Conservatory from 1986 to 2004. After Russell's retirement, he has continued to teach the LCC at NEC to this day. He was (from 1986 on) an editorial assistant to the late George Russell, and is a certified teacher (and while Russell was alive, of teachers) of the Lydian Chromatic Concept, and has given lectures, workshops and seminars at Universities around the USA and at institutions around the world. Schwendener has helped to establish a new direction in natural pedagogy and dialogue-based arts education, establishing Organic Music Theory and Universal Musical Elements as primary creative sources.

A father to three children and living in Boston with his wife Shari Repasz, Schwendener is on the faculty at the New England Conservatory and the Longy School of Music of Bard College. He has also designed classes for non-musicians, based on the inter-discipline correspondences of Organic Music Theory, which he has taught since 2000 for the Creative and Critical Thinking Department in the Graduate College of Education at UMass Boston.

He has created music for small and large ensembles, dance companies, film, video and art installations, written volumes of piano music for children of all ages, released many recordings and performs frequently with ensembles and on solo piano throughout the U.S., Europe and Japan.

Swendener founded and directs Gravity Arts, Inc., a nonprofit organization providing customized educational services and products for individuals, groups and corporations. Most recent projects are collaborations with Swiss choreographer Angelo Dello Iacono since 2012. The Mobile Trio and Iacono's dance company ADN Dialect have created the international cultural exchange project No Plan B, an experimental jazz scenic event and most recently Zeitzone.