



The Taylor Eigsti Trio performs a set Tuesday night at the Schwab Auditorium. Becca Stevens also performed as a special guest.

Renowned pianist jazzes auditorium

By David Strader
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Contemporary or not, Taylor Eigsti proved jazz is still kicking. The Taylor Eigsti Trio performed a jazz show with special guest Becca Stevens at Schwab Auditorium Tuesday night as a part of the annual Center for the Performing Arts 2010 Jazz Presentation.

George Trudeau, director for the Center for Performing Arts, said he was excited to finally host Eigsti's performance.

"He's fabulous," Trudeau said. "Jazz is alive in these younger artists that are paving ground and freshening up the genre — not that the genre necessarily needs freshening up."

In addition to Eigsti's three album releases, the 26-year old jazz pianist has been nominated for two Grammy Awards and has appeared on the covers of music magazines "Jazziz" and "Keyboard."

The band played mostly original music, but also played songs inspired by artists like Coldplay and Elliott Smith.

Eigsti said that he enjoyed branching away from traditional jazz in this manner.

"As jazz musicians, you grow up playing and loving jazz standards," he said. "But you look for new monumental standards from great artists like Elliott Smith."

Eigsti's trio was completed by Harish Raghavan on both stand-up bass and bass guitar, and, according to Eigsti, the "incomprehensible" Eric Harland on drums.

Harland implemented a wide arrangement of percussion tech-

"The turnout really speaks to the health of the jazz world."

George Trudeau
Center for the Performing Arts
director

niques throughout the night, ranging from the ringing bells to banging on music stands.

The trio's special guest Becca Stevens joined on vocal accompaniment and also played some of her own original songs during the show.

Unlike the Taylor Eigsti Trio, Stevens' songs stepped away from jazz, as her first song was only her and her ukelele.

When introducing Stevens' solo performance, Eigsti gave her a warm welcome.

"This is a stage full of band leaders," he said. "And Becca is a truly exciting composer."

Between 300 and 400 tickets were sold, according to Trudeau.

"The turnout really speaks to the health of the jazz world," he said. "And it's very good for a new up-and-coming artist like this."

Steven Boyer (junior-meteorology) said he was surprised by the crowd demographic for the event.

"I didn't think contemporary jazz had this kind of audience," he said. "I was expecting a much younger crowd."

Long-time jazz fan Sylvia Ruggeri said was great to see the genre represented in State College. "I love jazz like this," she said. "I got hooked on it when I was young and I've been buying records ever since."

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Focus group to tackle religion

By Kristin Stoller
FOR THE COLLEGIAN

Sex, religion and politics: They're topics that could be considered taboo in an academic setting, but they were brought into the spotlight last week as part of the Life-Talk Focus Group series.

These informal discussions, lasting an hour, comprise a three-part series sponsored by the Scholar Assistant team of Simmons and Atherton Halls.

The first two talks were held on Sept. 28 and Oct. 6 and dealt with politics, life, relationships and sex. The final discussion will be held tonight in Atherton Hall's Grandfather Clock Lounge and will discuss religion and faith.

Meryn Oswald (junior-French and English) and Ben Reimold (senior-nuclear engineering), will lead the discussions, bringing up topics such as abstinence, pornography and gay relationships. The pair will act as moderators, pushing their opinions aside and strictly asking questions.

The two got the idea to host the talks after a panel discussion on faith last year moderated by Schreyer Honors College (SHC)

If you go

What: Life-Talk Focus Group Series Discussion
When: 9 tonight
Where: Grandfather Clock Lounge in Atherton Hall

Details: Open to Schreyer students and Atherton and Simmons Halls residents.

Dean Christian Brady.

The biggest criticism was that the students wanted to be able to discuss their ideas in small groups, Reimold said.

"It was coming out of a desire to talk about things that matter," Reimold said.

The main reason for the talks was to foster a safe and healthy environment to discuss difficult topics in a respectful way, Reimold said.

This year the discussions are only open to SHC members and other residents of Simmons and Atherton Hall in the hope of promoting community values in those two areas.

Joe Tucker (sophomore-electrical engineering and mathemat-

ics), said he "stumbled into the talk" but ended up pleasantly surprised.

"I didn't have any expectations going in, but I definitely felt that it was a positive experience," Tucker said. "We touched on a variety of topics that affect students daily. It was a great way to have a conversation with students that I don't come into contact with on a regular basis and collect different points of view on important issues."

So far the moderators said attendance has been low, with only seven to nine people participating in the first two discussions.

If the number of people in attendance increases tonight, Oswald and Reimold said they each plan to lead a smaller group in order to keep the small environment originally desired.

"It's unique," Oswald said. "Every year and major comes together to engage in intellectual discussions. If you can't talk about those three issues with your friends, what can you talk about?"

The conversations will culminate in a larger panel on sex moderated by Brady, scheduled for 8 p.m. on Nov. 3 in the Grandfather Clock Lounge.

British writer wins Booker Prize

By Sylvia Hui
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

LONDON — British writer Howard Jacobson won the prestigious Booker Prize Tuesday with his philosophical comedy "The Finkler Question," beating five other writers, including two-time winner Peter Carey and the bookies' favorite, Tom McCarthy.

Jacobson, who had been on the long list twice for the 50,000 pounds (\$80,000) prize but had never been shortlisted until this year, jokingly said he had prepared acceptance speeches for over two decades before eventually winning the award.

"I'm speechless," he began as he took to the stage at London's Guild Hall.

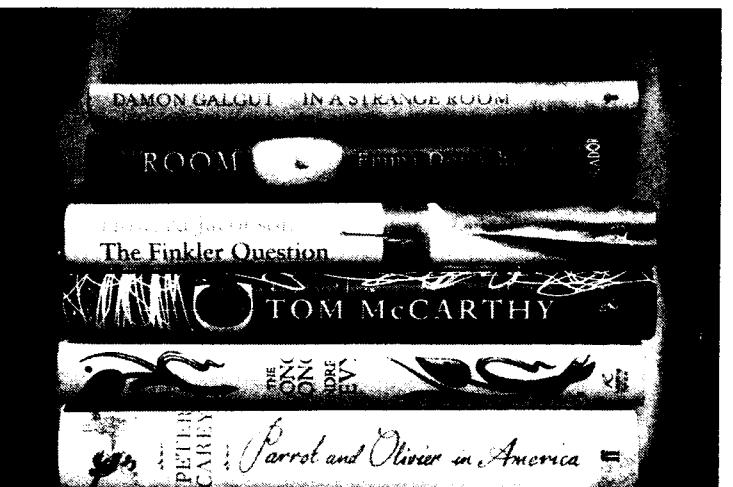
"Fortunately I prepared one earlier. It's dated 1983, that is how long the wait's been."

The 58-year-old, who has written 15 novels, is known for his comic touch and his treatment of Jewish themes. His latest, he said, is a comedy about sorrow and loss.

"I wanted to make the reader laugh and weep at the same moment," he said.

Chief judge Andrew Motion called the book a "completely worthy winner of this great prize."

"The Finkler Question" is a



Kirsty Wigglesworth/Associated Press

Six books were shortlisted for the 2010 Man Booker Prize. Howard Jacobson's "The Finkler Question" beat the other contenders.

marvelous book: very funny, of course, but also very clever, very sad and very subtle. It is all that it seems to be and much more than it seems to be," he said.

Jacobson was competing against such strong contenders as Carey, an Australian who won Bookers in 1988 for "Oscar and Lucinda" and in 2001 for "True History of the Kelly Gang." His historical novel "Parrot and Olivier in America," inspired by the American travels of French philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville,

was on this year's Booker short list. Lesser-known British writer McCarthy, was odds-on favorite for his experimental tale of time and technology. "C." McCarthy's story of a technology-obsessed 20th-century everyman has drawn comparisons to James Joyce.

The other contenders include "Room" by Irish-Canadian writer Emma Donoghue, "In a Strange Room" by South Africa's Damon Galgut, and "Small Island" author Andrea Levy's "The Long Song."

Stand-up star Jerry Seinfeld finds himself a Broadway director

By Mark Kennedy
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

NEW YORK — One word seems to best describe Jerry Seinfeld's role as a Broadway director: reluctant.

The TV and stand-up star said he began helping comedian Colin Quinn develop material for what would become Quinn's one-man stage show "Long Story Short" and then got roped into directing a work that traces global events from the caveman to the digital age in just 75 minutes.

"There is very little performance comedy that works on his intellectual level. He's one of these guys that can do it. It just needed a form," Seinfeld said during a press event Tuesday to publicize the show. "I kind of challenged him to come up with a form and he did. And then once he did, I was kind of stuck getting involved with it."

In the show, Quinn — the former host of MTV's late-1980s game show "Remote Control" and a "Saturday Night Live" cast member — takes audiences through the history of the world, highlighting why empires always seem to fail. "This show is about how human nature just steps in every time and ruins everything," he said.

The show debuted off-Broadway this summer to generally good reviews and now goes on Broadway at the Helen Hayes Theatre for an 11-week run starting Oct. 22.

Seinfeld and Quinn, who met decades ago while working comedy clubs, said collaborating on this project was easy since they both know stand-up and have complementary talents.

"I'm very smart about being funny and he's very funny about being smart," said Seinfeld. "He's

really a smart guy that figured out how to be funny, and I'm smart about taking funny and figuring out how to pace it and organize it. So it was a good blend of skills."

Quinn has been testing slivers of the show's material for years, but found comedy clubs weren't the best venues for intellectual humor. "They'll stay with you for about 30 minutes. Then they're like, 'All right, c'mon. Will somebody talk about the lower half of the body, please? We get it: You're smart,'" he said.

The one-man show is constantly being tweaked to add or remove topical elements. "We don't want it to end. At some point, it'll end. But it's fun to keep playing with it. It's like a car — you keep tuning it," Seinfeld said.

Asked how he knew what was funny on stage, Seinfeld deadpanned: "I had a sitcom in the '90s," he said.



Charles Sykes/Associated Press

Colin Quinn, left, and Jerry Seinfeld discuss "Long Story Short," the one-man theatrical show moving to Broadway and directed by Seinfeld.

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