

Music with a twist of technology

Music students will share sounds manipulated by computers in an annual concert Saturday

By Rory Carroll
Oregon Daily Emerald

Those who think the School of Music only houses classical compositions by dead German guys need look no further than Saturday's Future Music Oregon (FMO) concert to stand corrected.

The FMO concert, scheduled for 8 p.m. Saturday will showcase performances of a variety of computer based compositions by students, many who are part of the music technology major.

FMO Director Jeffrey Stolet, who has been performing musical experiments since his youth, said the tools have changed but the basic desire to innovate has remained the same.

Although computer programs such as Pro Tools are instrumental in creating much of the music, Stolet said he thinks it is the human component they are aiming to capture with their compositions.

"Part of it is developing a sensibility of how to shape sound... to find sound that is meaningful and sound that will reflect the human imprint, not just machine sound."

Elyzabeth Mead, a graduate student who will perform her composition "Airam Eza" at the FMO, said her voice in her pieces reflects both her love for poetry and desire to bring a human slant to a computer-based medium.

"It infuses a certain soul, a certain body to an otherwise disembodied computer music," she said.

She said the human voice, along with percussion, is one of the fundamental instruments.

Stolet said his students are dedicated to the exploration of sound and its creation along with the innovative use of new technologies to create interesting, creative pieces.

In the past, he said, FMO has always been well attended, but each year is a totally new experience.

This year will feature live performers, and some students will incorporate real-time, computer-graphic animation. Performed animation is controlled by the performer

as it unfolds versus prerecorded computer animation.

"Maybe the brightness is being controlled, maybe the colors are being controlled — right there. The animation is being performed as opposed to being prepared," Stolet said.

As a teacher, Stolet has to come to terms with teaching something that has yet to be invented. He said he tries to develop a community that fosters the kind of environment where students can learn from each other while being appropriately critical of the work they hear.

The music Stolet's students are creating is an important part of building our culture, he said.

"Try to shape an exciting, dynamic culture that gives birth to some expressive pieces," He said. "In some ways, I'm not necessarily the teacher. I'm the person who shapes the culture which does the teaching."

Junior Dominic Vieira will be performing his composition "Aquarium" on Saturday. He said he enjoys the interaction between the various students and their work. The class meets once a week allowing students to present their work to one another for feedback.

Vieira said he chose to switch from a general music major to the music technology major because it combined his love of music with his fascination with computers.

Stolet said he is always surprised with the types of pieces the students create. I'm always enormously impressed with their creativity and what they find to take from our world and shape into a musical context, into some sort of sound medium.

"I suspect that there is no

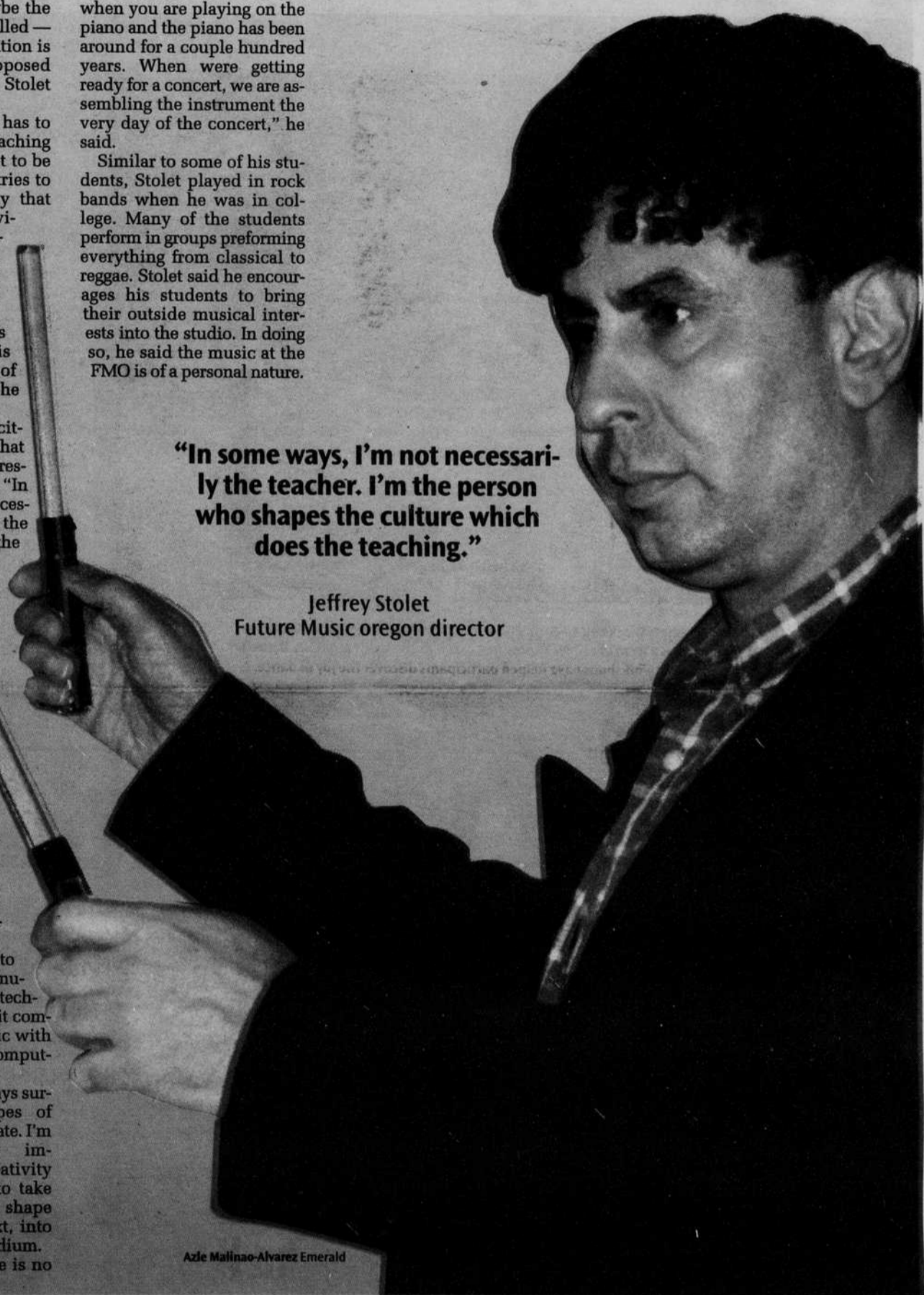
end to that creativity," Stolet said.

"It's quite a different recital when you are playing on the piano and the piano has been around for a couple hundred years. When were getting ready for a concert, we are assembling the instrument the very day of the concert," he said.

Similar to some of his students, Stolet played in rock bands when he was in college. Many of the students perform in groups performing everything from classical to reggae. Stolet said he encourages his students to bring their outside musical interests into the studio. In doing so, he said the music at the FMO is of a personal nature.

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Jeffrey Stolet
Future Music Oregon director



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