Robin Eubanks
Associate Professor of Jazz Trombone

Robin Eubanks is Associate Professor of Jazz Trombone at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music. Whether he is performing with his own groups, EB3 or Mental Images, or with the critically acclaimed Dave Holland Quintet and Big Band, of which he is an original member, Eubanks is an artist whose impact on audiences has been powerful and lasting. He was named number one trombonist in DownBeat’s International Critics Poll for the years 1989 through 1992, as well as for 1995, and, in 2010, he was named the number trombonist in DownBeat’s Readers’ Poll.

Eubanks was born into a gifted musical family; his brother, Kevin, is Jay Leno’s “Tonight Show” bandleader, and another brother, Duane, plays trumpet in New York. The brothers’ mother Vera has been a pianist and music educator for more than 30 years; their uncle, Ray Bryant, is a prominent jazz pianist.

Eubanks began studying music at the age of eight and continued through college, graduating cum laude from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. He studied not only trombone but also the finer points of theory, harmony, composition, and arranging. Following his graduation, the young trombonist moved to New York City, where he began a career collaborating with such notable artists as Art Blakey, Elvin Jones, Patti LaBelle, Tony Bennett, the Rolling Stones, Barbra Streisand, Eddie Palmieri, and McCoy Tyner. He has won Grammys for his performances on Michael Brecker’s Wide Angles and Dave Holland’s What Goes Around.

In 2002, Eubanks received a grant from Chamber Music America for the creation and presentation of new works for a jazz ensemble. A year later, he was selected for a jazz commission from ASCAP in cooperation with the International Association of Jazz Educators (IAJE). His Full Circle, composed in honor of jazz pianist Marian McPartland, was premiered by the Jamie Begian Big Band during the IAJE’s annual conference in Toronto.

Eubanks’ compositions also can be heard on several Dave Holland Quintet, Big Band, and Mingus Big Band recordings. Colleges and universities throughout the U.S. perform Eubanks’ original works and have arranged his music for their ensembles.

Other notable commissions include Cause and Effect, which had its world premiere with the Bakersfield Symphony Orchestra in 2003; string and horn arrangements for Freddie Cole’s recording, This Is Always; Cross Currents for the late, great J.J. Johnson’s Grammy-nominated recording, The Brass Orchestra; and an arrangement of Genesis for McCoy Tyner’s Big Band.

A popular lecturer and clinician at leading educational institutions and corporations throughout the U.S. and internationally (he is the national clinician for Yamaha Musical Instruments), Eubanks has recorded several albums featuring his original music, including Get2 It, Wake Up Call, Mental Images, Karma, Dedication, and Different Perspectives.

In 2007, Eubanks and fellow jazz studies faculty members recorded Beauty Surrounds Us, a release on the Oberlin Conservatory’s new music label, Oberlin Music. One of Eubanks’ compositions, Back in the Day, can be heard on the recording.