

FOCUS | Winter 2011

**It is said that everyone has a right to their own opinion. Since we are an institution of higher education, that belief is especially pertinent. Respondents to the last issue share their appreciation and insight.**

## An excellent teacher

I was saddened yet blessed by the notice of the passing of Hans K. LaRondelle in the winter issue of *Focus* magazine. I was a seminary student from the fall of 1970 through the winter of 1972, graduating in 1973. Four professors were especially engaging to me during that time: Raoul Dederen, Gerhard Hasel, Mervyn Maxwell and Hans K. LaRondelle (my favorite).

Every lecture in every class from Dr. LaRondelle was like a sermon—mostly on righteousness by faith. Sometimes he would become so passionate on the subject that his face would redden and he would almost lose his voice. I remember his humble, shy smile and his friendly chuckle that would come at times of interaction with his students.

Dr. LaRondelle, through his lectures and books, provided significant information to his students concerning the rise and fallacies of Dispensationalism and Zionism, which have become increasingly popular. I still think of him when refuting belief in the Secret Rapture, etc.

LaRondelle's excellency in teaching and preaching helped to make my three long and cold winters in Michigan more tolerable! May God bless his family and his memory.

Ertis L. Johnson (MDiv '73)

## Priority on research

In these few words, I wish to express my appreciation to President Niels-Erik Andreasen for his well-balanced and creative article profiling the significance of a university in the global community it serves. Any university that fails to put a priority on research not only lacks vision, but minimizes its role and importance thereby making it insular and irrelevant. In my opinion, this article by President Andreasen should be circulated to all of our university presidents and board members, just in case they missed reading

it in *Focus*. Again, congratulation to President Andreasen for such an insightful article.

Dennis Marshall (att.)

## Evolution of jazz music

Lyle Hamel [in the winter 2011 issue of *Focus*] indicated that he was taught at EMC that jazz was not an acceptable type of music to be listened to or to be a part of Seventh-day Adventist education curriculum. As a music educator, jazz in our institutions should at least be an integral part of the listening curriculum and where the expertise exists, should also be an ensemble experience option since jazz is very much a player's art. It is interesting that the 1972 revised edition of *A History of Western Music* by D.J. Grout has only a few passing minor references about jazz, whereas the 2010 edition of the *Concise History of Western Music* by B.R. Hanning [which is based on *A History of Western Music*] includes a much more detailed discussion of the music of African Americans and vernacular styles.

This includes the historical development of jazz, its precursors, and the significant influence of jazz on the Western canon of music. Jazz should be a part of the listening/performance curriculum for several reasons.

Firstly, though it is a relatively recent 20th-Century American phenomenon, jazz artists and styles are recognized worldwide, and jazz includes widely divergent styles ranging from entertainment music to art music. It is a dynamic, ever-changing genre that is worthy of study and performance, as evidenced by the voluminous space given its study in music appreciation, major music history texts and anthologies.

Secondly, the study of jazz and its performance allows one to experience a vernacular style that is quintessentially African-American and whose roots can be traced back to Africa—with characteristics such as improvisation based on



## Thanks for writing

**Letters to *Focus* are always welcome.** To ensure a range of viewpoints, we encourage letters of fewer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for content, style and space.

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formulas that allows wide-ranging variation, syncopation and multiple rhythmic layers, bending or sliding pitches, anticipation of beats, uneven rendering of successions of equal note values, and enriched harmonies.

Thirdly, the significance of jazz is seen its influence in the works of major composers of the Western musical canon. For example, Maurice Ravel's *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*, Kurt Weill's *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (opera), Igor Stravinsky's *Ebony Concerto*, Gunther Schuller's *Concertino for Jazz Quartet and Orchestra*, and George Gershwin's piano concerto, *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Finally, most jazz today is not considered pop music, commercial music or music

created for the sole purpose of entertaining; rather, for many musicians, jazz is a genuine form of art music. In striking parallel to the rise of the classical concert repertoire over a century earlier, by 1970 the jazz world had developed its own roster of classics that were treasured on recordings and kept alive in performance, and jazz critics and historians began to describe jazz as a kind of classical music. With jazz ensembles now a regular part of most schools of music and jazz studies and jazz history a part of the curriculum, jazz is now respected as art music—to be listened to for its own sake, and where possible, experienced in ensemble playing.

**Mervyn Joseph** (BME '76, MA '77)

## European Tours

Alumni and friends of Andrews University are invited to join one of the following 2011 tours offered by Merlene Ogden, dean emerita of Andrews University:

### Portugal, Spain and the Douro River Valley Cruise

September 14–25, 2011

#### Pre-cruise extension to Spain September 6–15, 2011

The cruise features two days in Lisbon followed by a coach tour through Coimbra to Porto to board our cruise ship, The Duoro Spirit. The next eight days visit charming Portuguese cities and enjoy beautiful scenery in this picturesque river valley. In Spain visit Madrid, Avila, Segovia, Toledo, Granada, Cordoba and Seville, ending in Lisbon. Full information available upon request.

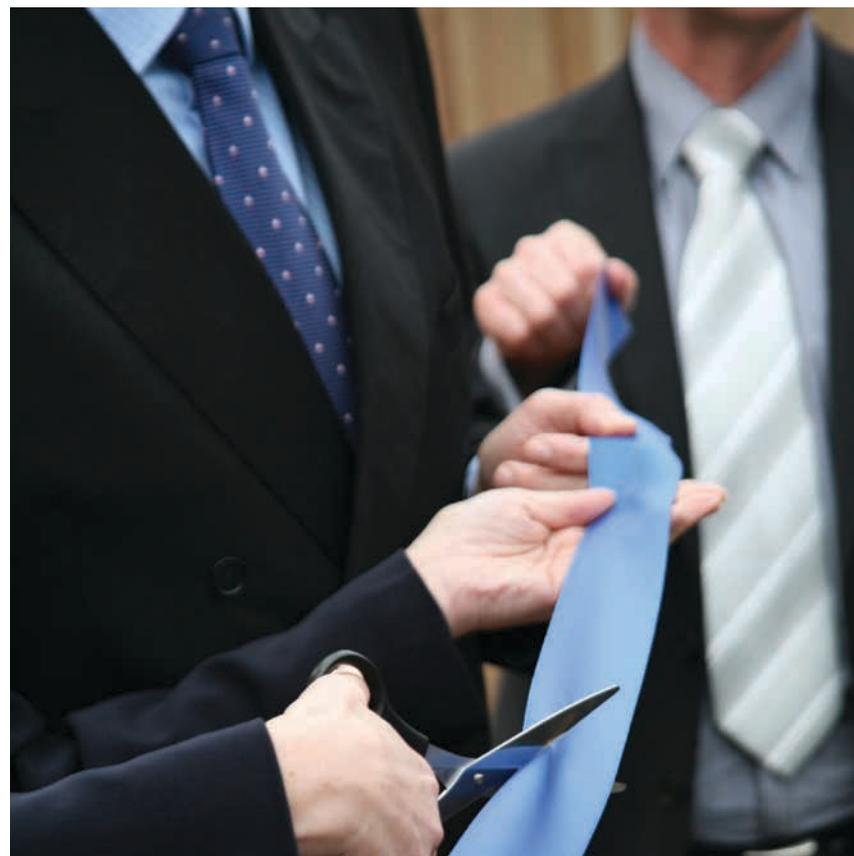
### Danube Holiday Markets—Passau, Germany, to Budapest, Hungary

December 4–12, 2011

This cruise during the Christmas season features visits in four countries—Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary. Enjoy holiday decor and the sights and sounds of Christmas, as well as the Old World atmosphere during this festive time of year. A pre-cruise, three-day extension to Salzburg, Austria, and a post-cruise, two-day extension to Budapest, Hungary, are also offered. Full information is available upon request.

#### For information, please contact:

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## Buller Hall Ribbon Cutting

Friday, July 29, 2011, 11 a.m.  
Main entrance, Buller Hall—**Be There!**

