

“Maintaining a Noble Course in the Musical Arts”
Dedication Ceremony for the IU Jacobs School of Music East Studio Building

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
Musical Arts Center
Thursday, October 31, 2013
3:30 p.m.

1. INTRODUCTION

In his history of the Indiana University School of Music, George Logan wrote that “like all other institutions, the school must, if it is to maintain its stature, continue to evolve in response to its changing environment.”¹

Today, we gather to celebrate the latest evolution in the school’s rich and distinguished history as we dedicate the East Studio Building, a magnificent new facility that gives our world-renowned faculty and exceptional students the teaching and learning space they need to reach even greater heights.

2. AN ACCLAIMED MUSIC SCHOOL

What is now the Jacobs School of Music began as IU’s Department of Music in 1910, and was established as a full-fledged School of Music in 1921.

Since the 1960s, the school has been widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive and acclaimed institutions for the study of music in the country.

¹ George Logan, *The Indiana University School of Music, A History*, (Indiana University Press, 2000), 318.

During that era, it has also been one of the four or five largest music schools in the world.

The school's outstanding faculty members—too numerous to mention by name, but many of whom are here today—are drawn from the ranks of the world's scholarly and performing elite. Its students, likewise, are among the world's most gifted musicians.

3. THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF PHILANTHROPY

Of course, the very name of the school—the IU Jacobs School of Music—is testimony to the transformative power of philanthropy.

An extraordinarily generous of \$40 million in 2005 led to the naming of the school in honor of the late Barbara and David H. Jacobs, Sr. It was, at the time, the largest single gift ever made to a school of music at a public university, and the largest single gift ever given by individuals to Indiana University.

And, as I mentioned earlier, in 2007, the construction of the magnificent building we dedicate today was made possible by a remarkably generous gift of \$44 million from our friends at the Lilly Endowment.

The Endowment's generosity, over many years, has transformed the face of this university. In total, the Lilly Endowment's overall support for Indiana University has totaled approximately three-quarters of a billion dollars.

I am particularly delighted that Vice President Sara Cobb and Program Director Patty Villars could be with us this afternoon. On behalf of Indiana University, I would like to once again express to them our deep gratitude to Lilly Endowment for the extremely generous gift that made the Music Studio Building possible. We are deeply grateful to

you for your unwavering support of IU that has, over the decades, been so crucial to our ability to further Indiana University's mission.

4. THE EAST STUDIO BUILDING

With the dedication of the East Studio Building, the Jacobs School of Music now has technologically and acoustically superior teaching and practice facilities that rival any music school or conservatory anywhere in the world.

The building provides faculty and students with excellent acoustics and more and larger faculty studios and practice rooms. State-of-the-art wiring and technology throughout the building will allow faculty to teach interactively and to reach around the globe.

The building also incorporates advanced temperature and humidity controls, which are essential to preserving the school's many valuable musical instruments.

5. SPECIAL THANKS

Every project—especially one as ambitious as this one—requires a great team that collaborates on the many details that ultimately come together.

I want to commend Dean Gwyn Richards, who continues the tradition of strong leadership of the school begun by B. Winfred Merrill, Wilfred Bain, and Charles Webb, and whose vision for the IU Jacobs School stretches towards the horizons.

I also want to extend my thanks to Executive Associate Dean Eugene O'Brien and the many members of the school's faculty and staff who helped to make this ambitious vision a reality.

I also want to commend Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities Tom Morrison as well as the many design and construction professionals, both internal and external, who contributed to this project.

6. CONCLUSION

George Logan, who, as I mentioned earlier, envisioned a future in which the School of Music would continue to evolve in response to its changing environment, also wrote that “those of us who love [the school] as it is will hope there is not reason for it to change too much, and will find comfort... in the fact that its enormous mass and momentum make it difficult to deflect from the noble course set so many years ago.”²

The magnificent building we dedicate today is evidence that the school has not deflected at all from that noble course. It is evidence that the Jacobs School of Music continues to respect the traditions of excellence established so many years ago, even as it evolves, with the aim of extending those traditions well into the 21st century.

² Ibid.