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## Mats Holmquist (b. 1960)

Mats Holmquist is a composer/arranger, big band leader of Swedish origin currently working as artistic director of JZ All Star Big Band, Shanghai (generally regarded as China's leading big band). He studied six years at the Royal College of Music, Stockholm and two years at University of North Texas receiving Master of Music/Composition degrees, from both these institutions. As a leader he has composed and arranged music for four albums of his own: three albums with his professional big band "Mats Holmquist Stora Stygga – Big Bad Band" and one with his own quintet, vocals and string quartet. He has performed with his own groups at international jazz festivals like Montreux, The Hague, San Sebastian, Pori, Aarhus, Oslo, Stockholm, Riga, Shanghai and many more. Three new CDs are planned; 1. "A (minimalist) Tribute

to Wayne Shorter" 2. "Big Band Minimalism", the origin of Mats' own minimalist style and 3. "To Herbie", a Tribute to Herbie Hancock (also in his minimalist style).

His band is the only Swedish big band ever to receive a 4 1/2 (four and a half) star review for his CD "A Tribute to Chick Corea" on the leading music website; allmusic.com. They have performed with most established Swedish vocal artists at concert halls and festivals all over Sweden visiting more than 75 cities and six other countries, performing more than 350 concerts in fifteen years time. They have performed for Bill Clinton, the German president in Berlin, the Swedish Royal family etc. His album "12 Standards" featuring twelve of Sweden's foremost pop singers, interpreting jazz standards, was the first big band album in Sweden released on a major pop/rock label (Stockholm Records). "Stora Stygga" has



been sponsored by multinational accounting firm Deloitte & Touche.

As a clinician with 30 years of experience he travels more and more internationally; Norway, Latvia, Germany, Russia, China etc. performing big band clinics using The General Method, as well as concerts with different big bands. He is also founder/director of the Swedish National Youth Big Band, three regional Swedish youth big bands and in 2005 he founded the only specialized pre-college big band program in the country.

Mats Holmquist has composed music for symphony orchestras, string orchestras, string quartets and he orchestrates and conducts strings for Sweden's world famous pop group Roxette. He has received a number of awards, grants and scholarships from different institutions in Sweden and his big band have been

receiving government grants from the ministry of culture since 2004. In 2010, he started the attempt of establishing a new musical "sub-genre" that could be described as a fusion between modern big band music and the minimalism of Steve Reich; "Big Band Minimalism." Stora Stygga received government support for a small European tour which took place in the summer and fall of 2010. In January 2012 he organized a week long tour of Sweden with his Big Bad Band and Dave Liebman performing new arrangements of Wayne Shorter classical compositions in his own minimalist style.