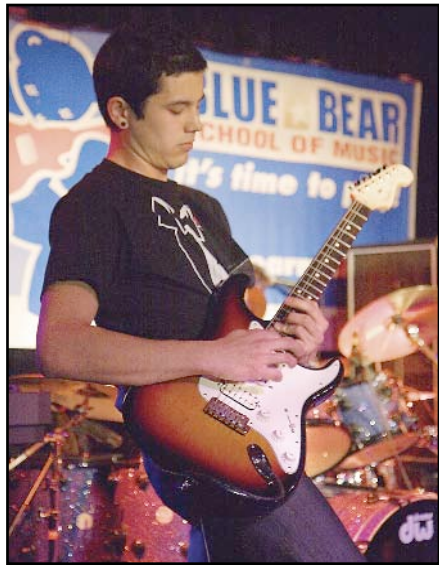
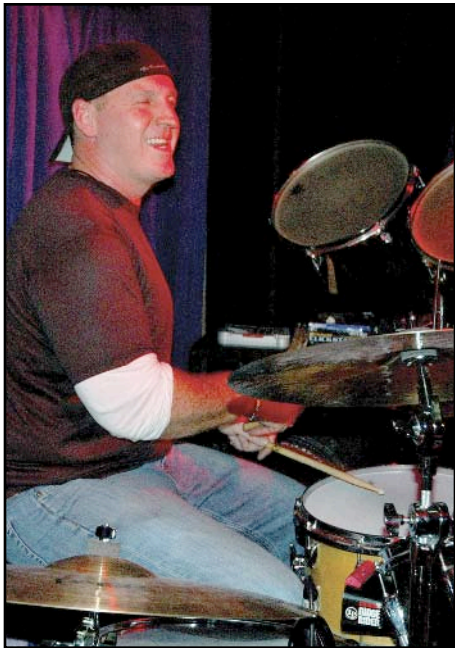


# Blue Bear — Making Beautiful Music



**Blue Bear School Of Music** Kevin Marlatt, Executive Director (left) **Student & Staff** rock at Café du Nord PHOTOS: JULIE BERNSTEIN (above)

For 30 years, Blue Bear School of Music in Fort Mason Center has been the “school of rock” for aspiring musicians of all ages and abilities. Children, teens, and adults attend Blue Bear in Building D to study acoustic or electric guitar, bass, and other stringed instruments. The sounds of percussion, vocals, saxophone, clarinet, and band practice echo through the halls as generations of musicians discover the thrills of creating sounds together.

Blue Bear is also extending its acclaimed musical programs into the greater San Francisco community by holding classes and shows in venues all over town.

“We are actively looking to partner with local organizations to have more off-site programs,” said Kevin Marlatt, Blue Bear’s Executive Director and former director of the San Francisco Unified School District’s Arts Education Master Plan (AEMP). Marlatt wrote the AEMP, which was issued in 2006.

**Composing a Strong Music Community** Blue Bear has been a force in Bay Area music for more than 35 years. Some of the original founders and longtime staff members remain involved with the school. Many former students have captured fame in the music world, teach at Blue Bear, or participate in its annual fundraising concert and other programs. Blue Bear also attracts world-class musicians as instructors, sponsors, and performers for its many programs.

For example, local rocker siblings Bonnie and Chris Hayes studied at Blue Bear as teenagers in the 1970s and went on to become legends in the Bay Area band circuit. Bonnie Hayes is a Grammy-nominated performer and recording artist who teaches songwriting at Blue Bear. Her brother played guitar for the hit band Huey Lewis and the News for more than 20 years.

Blue Bear sponsors include big names such as Counting Crows, Green Day, Bruce Hornsby, Smash Mouth, Carlos Santana, and Third Eye Blind. Huey Lewis and his band are among the 2008 scholarship sponsors, which also include the Lucasfilm Foundation and Bonnie Raitt. Blue Bear maintains an impressive list of more than 70 affiliated artists and bands — all featuring performers who are staff, board members, current students, or alumni of the school.

“If you go to any live music venue anywhere in the Bay Area, you are going to run into someone involved with Blue Bear,” said Marlatt.

**Tuning Future Musicians Through Savvy Education** Blue Bear’s stellar musical pedigree ensures that students learn from the best and gain music industry exposure early in their emerging careers. Blue Bear’s curriculum emphasizes live performance skills. The school organizes stimulating band workshops and gigs at local clubs to encourage students to get on stage in front of supportive audiences as soon as possible.

Group classes, private lessons, short seminars, and summer camps for kids and adults represent the wide range of learning opportunities available at Blue Bear. More than 600 students enroll each quarter to learn rock, folk, blues, jazz, and pop styles. Over the years, Blue Bear estimates that between 20,000 and 30,000 musicians have participated in the school’s music programs and classes.

Blue Bear continues to add new programs to reach more students. The “Rock U” Summer Camps directed by Bonnie Hayes expand each year with more intensive, weeklong sessions for children and teenagers who want to learn keyboards, drums, guitar, bass, and vocals. A new Studio 101 camp teaches students to record and mix their own tracks with Garage Band software. There are now camps in Marin County as well as San Francisco.

The new Little Bears music programs reach out to the youngest potential musicians from four months to five years in age. Children and their parents or caregivers learn together by exploring traditional, folk, and world music through storytelling, dance, games, and playing instruments. The reasonably priced programs take place at Blue Bear in other community spaces in San Francisco

Blue Bear’s inspiring Studio 101 program founded in 2006 brings the latest computer-based music technology to students throughout San Francisco. Through summer camps, after-school programs,

and adult classes, the mobile Studio 101 van delivers training to those who want to learn how to create and record music and videos, mix and produce soundtracks and sound effects, develop broadcast-quality sound files, edit music, and make musical arrangements. Blue Bear also encourages literary efforts from students, such as writing stories, scripts, and lyrics.

**Coming Soon to a Club Near You** To catch some of the new talent emerging from the Blue Bear School of Music, check out one of the band showcases held at the end of each quarter in local clubs throughout San Francisco. These shows feature student and instructor bands and professional musicians performing in many styles. The Fall 2008 showcase takes place in the Café du Nord on Upper Market Street near the Castro and Duboce neighborhoods.

“We’re looking for more performance opportunities,” said Marlatt. “We help the club owners book shows for Monday through Wednesday nights and the owners help us.” — CW



## Fort Mason Center

offers 17 different venues suitable for conferences, theater performances, receptions, classes & workshops, weddings, & special events. Spaces range from 50 to 50,000 square feet.



Booking information:  
(415) 345-7557 or  
contact@fortmason.org  
www.fortmason.org/venuereental



### INFO BOX

#### BLUE BEAR SCHOOL OF MUSIC

##### DESCRIPTION

Blue Bear School of Music is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing superior, affordable popular music education to students of all ages and levels through a supportive community. Founded in 1971, Blue Bear is one of Fort Mason Center’s original residents, arriving in 1978. Blue Bear offers classes in rock, blues, jazz, folk, and pop for a variety of instruments, including guitar, keyboards, drums, saxophone, clarinet, mandolin, fiddle, and voice. Blue Bear also seeks to extend its musical programs into other San Francisco neighborhoods through partnerships with community and education groups and the music industry.

##### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kevin Marlatt

##### LOCATION

Building D

##### CONTACT INFORMATION

(415) 673-3600

www.bluebearmusic.org