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## *Black musical happening*

Under the direction of teacher artist-in-residence Bill Dixon, Bennington College's "Four Early and Late Evenings of Sequences and Events in Black Music" took place from May 17-20.

It featured student, faculty, and guest musicians and dancers, as well as rare film sequences of past jazz greats: from Bessie Smith to Billie Holiday, Louis Armstrong to John Coltrane, Jimmie Lunceford, Lester Young, and Charlie Parker.

The festival was a success on several levels. As a music event, it stretched the talents of the participants while evoking outbursts of applause from the attentive audience.

Highlights of the four evenings included Mr. Dixon's composition,

"Letters to Myself, From Others and to Others," performed by the composer on trumpet and piano with his student ensemble of 20 instrumentalists. Guest performers from the faculty of the University of Wisconsin, dancer Quincy Edwards, and percussionist Henry Letcher were also outstanding, as were three visiting members from the Boston Art Ensemble, and the audience favorite, New York percussionist Milfred Graves.

Bennington College should be commended for providing an arena in which its musicians can perform up to such high professional standards while also giving interested students insight into the black experience.

T. A. W.