



SPECIAL TO THE DAILY

The Hennessy Six Jazz Sextet, led by Sean Schafer Hennessy, will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Colorado Mountain College in Breckenridge.

## ‘The Road Less Traveled’ rolls in Friday

*SMA presents Hennessy Six Jazz Sextet at Colorado College in Breckenridge*

By Eli Pace  
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Traditional jazz standards go out the window Friday as Summit Music and Arts brings six accomplished performers to Colorado Mountain College to deliver, as a group, an all-original jazz concert featuring a little bit of everything done differently.

The Air Force influence with the Hennessy Six Jazz Sextet can't be missed, and the band's coming to Breckenridge on Friday for "The Road Less Traveled," a show featuring the group's own unique brand of jazz with original compositions written by three of its members.

Playing entirely its own music — save a possible encore — the ensemble covers the gamut, seamlessly going from soulful ballads and driving swing to Latin and hard bop.

Each musician comes with a wealth of experience, their own unique background, and they take pride in their versatility.

Bandleader Sean Schafer Hennessy said they can cover many different styles without spending too much time on any one by itself.

"We don't stick anywhere too long," he explained, later adding their bassist often plays electric and acoustic instruments in their shows. Which one he strums Friday, according to Hennessy, could depend on "what (he's) feeling" at the moment.

"We try to get as many tools as we can for each instrument and musician," Hennessy said, relating different percussion, woodwind and string instruments to a painter's palette. In that same vein, having three writers also has a way of keeping the music fresh, too.

Hennessy himself will use a number of different trumpet mutes. Taken altogether, the different musicians, instruments, mutes and styles "allows (the Hennessy Six) to bring in different colors like an artist in a different sort of way."

Friday's show will be the second installment of SMA's 2017-18 concert series, and more than anything, Hennessy hopes it can help people find a sense of comfort, if only for a couple hours, in the midst of crazy times.

"If we're trying to do anything, it's give people that sense of peace right now," he said, adding that music has a way of dissolving the 24-hour news cycle, radio and social media posts that can weigh heavy on one's spirit.

"One of the things music is great about is that people can come out and not necessarily have to worry about all those things," he said. "They can come out, be themselves and listen to something they haven't heard before, something a little fresh, something that gives them a chance to take a break from society and everything going on in the world."

The Hennessy Six Jazz Sextet takes the stage at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Colorado Mountain College's Finkel Auditorium.

Playing with Hennessy will be Colorado-native Chris Gaona on drums; bassist and composer Jason Crowe; pianist, composer and educator Reggie Berg; guitarist Colin McAllister and James "Cully" Joyce.

Berg has been performing professionally since the age of 9, and Crowe has recorded or performed with big-venue headliners like Vince Gill, Amy Grant, Faith Hill and Celine Dion, just to name a few.

McAllister is a soloist, chamber musician and conductor. He also serves as director of the music program at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs.

Joyce too has worked with big-name stars, arranging music for a long list of performers, including Wynonna Judd and Faith Hill, in addition to numerous Air Force ensembles. In 2009, Joyce retired from the U.S. Air Force after 20 years of performing, arranging and directing numerous music ensembles. Since then, he continues to organize ensembles throughout the country and perform as a freelance woodwind artist in Colorado.

Also, Gaona retired from the Air Force Academy Band where he played with several groups, including the Falconaires Jazz Ensemble.

Hennessy himself has been described as one of America's most gifted composers and instrumentalists, and stands as a protégé of Grammy Award-winner

Wynton Marsalis, who has nothing but high praise for the young composer.

"Hennessy has the maturity and sophistication necessary to become a great artist," Marsalis said in a news release. "He interprets each piece of music with clarity, elegance and uncommon grace. Furthermore he possesses the intellect, discipline and drive necessary to excel."

Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Friday. The concert begins an hour later. Showtime is scheduled to run two hours. Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Tickets for children are free. For more, go to [SummitMusicAndArts.org](http://SummitMusicAndArts.org) or call 970-485-3356.

Also, Richard Seeley, a local, award-winning wildlife and landscape photographer, will be exhibiting his captivating photographic imagery before, during and after the concert, including photographs from his most recent adventure in Svalbard, Norway, featuring polar bears and arctic foxes.

### IF YOU GO

**What:** Hennessy Six Jazz Sextet performing "The Road Less Traveled"

**When:** 7:30 Friday night

**Where:** Colorado Mountain College, 107 Denison Placer Road, Breckenridge

**Info:** Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 in advance or \$30 at the door. Children get in free. For more, go to [SummitMusicAndArts.org](http://SummitMusicAndArts.org) or call 970-485-3356.