

## Tuba players 'joyous people'

Published Monday May 12th, 2008

**A4** By ADAM BOWIE  
bowie.adam@dailygleaner.com

Musicians spent Friday and Saturday kicking brass at the University of New Brunswick as part of the Fredericton International TubaFest.



GLEANER/STEPHEN MACGILLIVRAY PHO

**CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?:** Demondrae Thurman, from the University of Alabama, right, listens closely to the playing of Bob Travis, of Casco, Maine, during a workshop Thurman was instructing as part of TubaFest at UNB's Memorial Hall.

Some of the best tuba and euphonium players (euphonium is sometimes called a tenor tuba) from across the Maritimes, Quebec and New England shined up their brass instruments, took a deep breath and participated in a number of instructional workshops.

TubaFest organizer Richard Riding said participants took time to work on their skills with professional instructors and composers.

"We're generally working on techniques for playing the instrument," he said.

"We're trying to improve musical production and this is done in large ensembles. I was just up in the master class and it was, 'How do you make a vibrato? How do you phrase things? What do you do to make the music into beautiful music?'"

Riding said brass instruments often attract musicians from a number of different lifestyles and backgrounds.

"We have all different ages of students here," he said. "From 14-years-old through to 70 ... (and the skill level) is already quite good."

Members of The Sotto Voce Quartet, one of the world's premier chamber groups, acted as clinicians for this year's event. The highly acclaimed group is considered to be one of the most prolific and talented tuba and euphonium ensembles in the world.

Demondrae Thurman, euphonium virtuoso and member of the Sotto Voce Quartet, said he's enjoying his trip to New Brunswick. The University of Alabama professor said it's chillier here than back home, but the students have been warm and enthusiastic.

"It's fun and they're very adventurous guys and they're excited about playing the tuba or the euphonium and whenever that's the case, it's always fun to work with them," he said.

Thurman said a musician has to put their own personality into their playing.

"Most tuba and euphonium players are happy people, joyous people," he said.

"The music that we make together is the same way. It's joyous, happy and full of life."