“Pave the path for your Illinois journey” A Look Inside the Completed Smith Hall Renovations
Dear Friends of the School of Music,

The 2019/20 academic year is my first as director of the school and as a member of the faculty, and in my short tenure, I've been repeatedly astonished by the depth and breadth of the world-class music programs that have been built here. From our Lyric Theatre program to our symphony orchestra, from the Black Chorus to the Experimental Music Studios, from the award-winning research being conducted in musicology and music education to the spirited performances of the Marching Illini, the students and faculty at Illinois are second to none. It's a true honor and privilege to join them!

Illinois graduates play leading roles in hundreds of orchestras, choruses, bands, K–12 schools, and colleges and universities. The School of Music is first and foremost a resource for the state of Illinois, but our students and faculty come from around the world, and the impact of our alumni and faculty is global as well. Our graduates have performed on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera, at the Newport Jazz Festival, in Carnegie Hall, and in other renowned venues and with leading companies far too numerous to mention. Complementing our wonderful people, facilities like the Krannert Center and Smith Memorial Hall (a registered national landmark) are true gems that enable our students to perform in breathtaking venues and bring some of the finest musical programming in the world to the region.

I have especially enjoyed meeting alumni in my short time here and view them as true partners in spreading the word about what makes music at Illinois special, as well as providers of the philanthropic resources that will ensure that today’s students have the same rigorous education they did. Every time an Illini performs on a stage, presents cutting-edge research at a conference, teaches music to a high school student, or excels in the arts-administration or entertainment fields, that person serves as an ambassador for the great education they received at the School of Music.

My faculty colleagues and I have many ideas that we want to implement this year, but I have one message that I hope you’ll help me deliver to parents and students wondering if a music career is right for them: U of I is a place where bright, motivated music students can have it all. They can get the benefits of being at a world-class research institution that provides its students with a top-tier liberal arts education, and they can simultaneously receive immersive, conservatory-style professional training. What this mix means is that students who come to Illinois will be prepared for a variety of career options after graduation. In my first year as director, I want to expand these pathways and make them clearer, so that all of our students feel confident that great things await those who hold a degree from the School of Music!

If you have questions about what you can do as an alum to help bolster the school, please don’t hesitate to reach out. I’m at music-director@illinois.edu. Thank you again for being part of the School of Music community. I look forward to partnering with you as we continue our exciting journey!

Sincerely,
Jeffrey Sposato, PhD
Professor and Director
New High Reached in Undergraduate Admissions

This fall, the School of Music welcomed its largest freshman class of students since 2013. Interest in SoM programs has been steadily increasing in the past four years due to targeted recruitment efforts by the SoM faculty and music admissions and public engagement offices as well as the development of new degree programs.

Undergraduate applications were at a record high for the second year in row, due in part to the addition of the new bachelor of musical arts degree in Lyric Theatre and the bachelor of science degree in Computer Science + Music. Applicants came from 30 states and eight countries, and the school saw a record high number of Latinx applications. Going forward, the school is working to develop initiatives to attract a strong and diverse student population, with the desire to continue to support and increase the undergraduate student body.

—Angela Tammen, admissions and public engagement director

Khroma Quartet Wins Silver at Fischoff

The Khroma Saxophone Quartet was awarded the silver medal in the Senior Winds/Brass Division at the 46th Fischoff National Chamber Music Competition on May 12, 2019. Hosted on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, the Fischoff bills itself as “the largest chamber music competition in the nation and its longest consecutively running competition.” Founded at Illinois in Fall 2018 and coached by Professor Debra Richtmeyer, the group consisted of DMA candidate Wilson Poffenberger (tenor), and MM students Scott Augustine (alto), Michael Chapa (baritone), and Anne Kunkle (soprano).

School Launches BS in Computer Science + Music

This year, the SoM welcomed the inaugural freshmen class pursuing the BS in computer science and music (CS+Music). One of the few of its kind in the country, CS+Music is a new cross-disciplinary program that prepares students to join and lead a vibrant workforce centered around the creation and distribution of entertainment media through constantly evolving technological platforms. Devised by Professor Heinrich Taube (Composition-Theory) and Paris Smaragdis (Computer Science/Electrical & Computer Engineering), the curriculum has already attracted much interest, including among out-of-state and international students. Given the inherent links between music and mathematics, the School of Music’s rich history of fostering experimentation with technology, and the increasingly dynamic role of data and computing in music, Taube called the creation of the degree program “a no-brainer” and envisions the university being “the premiere place on Earth” to pursue such studies.
Music Professors Win Funding for Ambitious Projects

Music professors were included among the 14 projects selected to receive funding from the Presidential Initiative to Celebrate the Impact of the Arts and the Humanities, a nearly $2 million effort to bolster arts and humanities projects across the University of Illinois system.

Adam Kruse, Malaika McKee, William Patterson, and Tiffani Saunders were awarded $150,000 that will aid them in the creation of the Hip-Hop Xpress, an internet-enabled school bus to be equipped as a multi-user music production and recording studio. Using music, dance, visual arts, and technology, the bus will travel to communities across the state, teaching youth about African-American history, hip-hop, DJing, sound engineering, and music production.

Michael Silvers was awarded $50,000 for his project “Hearing the Ocean, Seeing the Rain: Water, the Arts, and the Future of Human life on Earth.” In this multi-year initiative, visual and performing artists, as well as scholars, will examine the role of the arts in understanding water in human life across the globe. The project will reach students and the general public through the development of two interdisciplinary courses on water, concert performances, and interactive artistic activities. Funding will also support an edited volume, radio documentary series, and multi-disciplinary student research on water.

Wind Symphony Celebrates 150 Years of Illinois Bands

Under the direction of Stephen Peterson, the Illinois Wind Symphony commemorated Illinois Bands’ sesquicentennial with several high-profile concerts and commissions. Following a blind audition process, the Wind Symphony was selected to perform at the 40th national conference of the College Band Directors National Association in Tempe, AZ. With an anticipated crowd of over 1,000, the February 21 primetime concert was moved at the last minute to a larger venue, Arizona State University’s iconic Gammage Auditorium. In addition to a performance of Joel Love’s Solace with featured soloist Debra Richtmeyer, the concert included world-premiere performances of Steven Bryant’s Pendulum and Stephen Taylor’s Always Coming Home, all of which were commissioned in part or in whole by Illinois Bands. In April, the Wind Symphony joined the world-renowned Canadian Brass in the premiere performance of Quintessence, a new work composed for the two ensembles by Dana Wilson. With additional support from the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, the Canadian Brass also presented master classes during their Urbana residency.

Low Voices to Resound in Carnegie Hall

On March 24, 2020, low-voiced members of the Chamber Singers, Oratorio Society, and Varsity Men’s Glee Club will take part in a historic performance in Carnegie Hall’s renowned Stern Auditorium. Making his final Carnegie Hall appearance as music director of the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, which travels south of the border as part of Carnegie Hall’s International Festival of Orchestras series, conductor Kent Nagano will lead the chorus in a performance of Shostakovich’s Symphony no. 13 (Babi Yar).
Moorhouse Rises to President of American Bandmasters Association

Linda R. Moorhouse, associate director of the School of Music, has become president of the American Bandmasters Association. Formed in 1929 with the goal of honoring and promoting concert band music, the ABA is an elite group that only the most distinguished band leaders are invited to join. While Moorhouse follows in the footsteps of A. A. Harding, Mark Hindsley, Harry Begian, and other Illinois Bands greats to become president of the ABA, she becomes only the second woman in the organization’s 90-year history to hold the position. Associate Director of Bands and ABA member Elizabeth Peterson called the news “extremely exciting” and noted that “Moorhouse earned this position due to her experience, leadership, organizational skills, musicianship, and national and international reputation as a talented conductor and teacher.”

Moorhouse is welcomed as president at the ABA’s 2019 convention in Loveland, CO

Ollie Watts Davis Named Provost Fellow

Professor Ollie Watts Davis was named a Provost Fellow for academic year 2019-20. In this role, she will work with Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Kevin Pitts to develop a campus-wide student success initiative improving retention, graduation rates, and reducing time-to-degree. Seeking “to utilize and expand ties within the Urbana-Champaign community,” Davis will also engage the Council of Undergraduate Deans, Student Affairs, the Campus Center for Advising and Academic services, as well as faculty and advisors from across campus.

Lyric Theatre Graduates First Degree Recipient

In May 2019, Colleen Bruton became the first recipient of a BMA in Lyric Theatre. A new program, Lyric Theatre @ Illinois (LTI) embraces a broad continuum of opera and musical theatre to reflect the artistic demands of the 21st-century musical stage, on which performers must exhibit the highest standards of singing, acting, and movement. When asked what drew her to LTI, Bruton noted, “They had everything I was interested in: classical training, musical theatre training, dance classes, acting classes, main stage productions, and a town full of performance opportunities. It honestly seemed too good to be true.” With plans to pursue a theatre career in Chicago and eventually in New York, Bruton notes, “I am leaving this university able to not only perform a song well, but to understand the musical aspects of it and read/learn the music quickly—an extremely valuable and marketable skill in the musical theatre world today.” According to Sarah Wigley, clinical assistant professor of voice and resident director of Lyric Theatre, Bruton is the first but will not be the last to graduate with a degree in LTI: “I firmly believe that in the near future, music educators, conductors, voice teachers, accompanist/coaches, drama instructors, and students everywhere will be aware of what our program has to offer and quickly be vying for a position in one of our select freshman classes.”

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Silvers Wins Prestigious Carnegie Fellowship

Associate Professor of Musicology Michael Silvers was one of only 32 scholars to be awarded a prestigious 2019 Andrew Carnegie Fellowship. One of the most generous initiatives of its kind, the Andrew Carnegie Fellows Program aims to support high-caliber scholarship and research that applies new perspectives from the humanities and social sciences to today’s most pressing issues. Silvers will use his fellowship to work on a new book, *Timber and Timbre: From Brazil’s Atlantic Forest to the Concert Hall*. Arguing that environmental decline has affected systems of musical aesthetics, the book will examine the making of violin bows for Western art music and fiddles for traditional music in Brazil. During his fellowship, Silvers will spend time in the US and Brazil to research traditional Brazilian fiddles and brazilwood logging and conservation, and to interview musicians, luthiers, loggers, and environmentalists.

Barrett Invested as Zimmerman Chair

On February 3, 2019, university administrators and members of the SoM community assembled in the Music Building Auditorium to witness the formal investiture of Professor Janet Revell Barrett as the Marilyn Pflederer Zimmerman Endowed Chair in Music. The ceremony featured guest speakers Mark Robin Campbell (MS ’86, EdD ’91), of SUNY Potsdam’s Crane School of Music, and Associate Professor Emerita Eve Harwood, both of whom discussed Zimmerman’s life and legacy as a pioneering researcher and supporter of music education at the university. Before her death in 1995, Zimmerman earned two degrees (MS ’55, EdD ’63) from the School of Music, where she also taught 1959–64, 1968–71, and 1987–93. Barrett, whose research interests including the reconceptualization of the music curriculum, interdisciplinary approaches involving music, and music teacher education, then took to the podium to express gratitude and acknowledge Zimmerman’s “remarkable life of inquiry and mentorship.”

International Conference Honors Kellman

The 2019 Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference in Basel, Switzerland, paid tribute to both the five-volume *Census-Catalogue of Manuscript Sources of Polyphonic Music 1400–1550* (1979–1988) and to Professor Emeritus of Musicology Herbert Kellman, co-editor with Charles Hamm of the first volume and editor of the subsequent four volumes. The catalogue, describing some 1,650 manuscripts and supported by a major NEH grant and the university’s Research Board, was the first of its kind, and the first project of the school’s Musicological Archives for Renaissance Manuscript Studies, founded in 1968 by Hamm and Kellman with several colleagues. In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the publication of volume 1, 14 scholars from seven countries gave talks recognizing Kellman’s “visionary” work and on the past and future of manuscript studies.

String Research Project to Celebrate 50th Anniversary

In 1937, Paul Rolland stated, “the teacher must find an approach of teaching in which the difficulties of their instrument are overcome to ensure the students’ technical abilities and musical gifts are realized.” Thirty years later, the U of I String Research Project (1966–70) tested and proved Rolland’s hypothesis and curriculum of movement training to free the student’s playing from excessive tension within an organized plan of string and music instruction. The international acclaim in 1970 for the films and teaching materials from the research project and their continued use attest to Rolland’s enduring pedagogical influence. In 2020, the Paul Rolland String Pedagogy Workshop (July 12–18) and UI School of Music will observe this important anniversary with celebratory events.

—Michael Fanelli (BM ’68, EdD 2001)
What Goes Around Comes Around—Memories of Music at Illinois

On a recent walk to the Harding Band Building from the Music Building, I came upon a group of ISYM campers standing for their group photo on the stairs of Smith Memorial Hall. When close enough, I could see that the group was our Illinois Summer Youth Music Double Reed program. I thought, “I wish Bunny could be here to see this.” Bernice From (’72, ’77), known by her closest friends as Bunny, passed away in January. Last year, she donated both of her bassoons to the School of Music and was delighted to see pictures from Professor Timothy McGovern of ISYM participants playing the contrabassoon. During the 150-year celebration of Illinois Bands, Bunny traveled from Arlington, VA, last summer to play both instruments one last time in the Harding Band Building and in the Great Hall of the Krannert Center.

As I watched the photographer do his job, I began to think about my Illinois classmates. My thoughts were influenced by the group of oboe and bassoon players in front of me. I remembered Aaron Hilbun (’95), who passed away just a few months ago. Aaron has been on my mind a lot recently as I am working with his mother to establish a new scholarship in his memory. He and I used to walk this path before and after band rehearsals. We walked much faster on our way to Harding to make sure we were on time. Few things seemed scarier than the notion of showing up late for band rehearsal. Next, I thought of Aaron and Bernice and their own experiences on the steps of Smith Hall. Indeed, they spent influential years here, enjoying the same SoM that these young campers were discovering through ISYM. Quickly bringing my mind back to the present, Professor John Dee shouted to the group, “OK everyone, say, ‘Hello, Mr. Allen!’” The group energetically shouted out their warm greeting—what a wonderful group of students and teachers.

When the photographer was finished, Professor Dee introduced me to one of the camp instructors. I remembered Lisa Larsen (’91) from her time as a student at Illinois. We caught up a bit as Professors Dee and McGovern proudly shared how the ISYM week was going. We are lucky to have former students like Lisa on campus on a plentiful basis. It is an incredible opportunity for all involved to have the chance to work with our outstanding faculty members.

While contemplating my own gratitude and memories of my time at Illinois, I thought of Thomas Smith. Over a hundred years ago, his gift to fund Smith Memorial Hall, in honor of his wife Tina, gave us a place to host wonderful musical experiences. Many recall recitals, master classes, and graduations in this magnificent old building. Among others, I wish Thomas, Bunny, and Aaron could have been with me on that walk. I think they would be very proud.
Music at Illinois Initiative

New this year, we are making spaces in the Music Building available for naming as a way of thanking our donors for their gifts. If you or someone you know would like to name a classroom, practice room, or other space, please let us know. Donations of $1,000 or more to the Music at Illinois Initiative or the School of Music Annual Fund will qualify to name a space. You can learn more about this and other initiatives in support of Music at Illinois at music.illinois.edu/giving.

Jazz Greats Remembered and Celebrated Through New Endowments

The School of Music is proud to celebrate the jazz legacy of the late Donnie Heitler (1936–2018) as well as Gregg (1939–2018) and Jeff Helgesen. Thank you to Tamara Mitchell for establishing the Gregg and Jeff Helgesen Fellowship in Jazz. And thank you to Glen (BME ’76) and Krista Strauss for starting the Donnie Heitler Jazz Scholarship. SoM jazz students will undoubtedly benefit from these generous gifts.

Donnie Heitler entertaining at Minnecci’s Ristorante, Champaign, 2015

Giving increased by over $500,000 this year. Thank you to our donors and friends for supporting Music at Illinois!
Engaging the World
By Stephen Burian, public engagement assistant director

True to our charter as a land-grant institution, the U of I School of Music continues to engage the world outside of Urbana-Champaign in diverse and significant ways.

Four of our summer professional programs alone attracted participants from more than 10 countries and more than 20 states.

In its third year on campus, The Paul Rolland String Pedagogy Workshop drew double the attendance of previous years. Highlights included the piloting of a new certification program for string teachers in Paul Rolland String Pedagogy, intersections with the Paul Rolland Day Camp and ISYM, and guest artist Endre Granat, Hollywood Symphony concertmaster who appears in the films produced by Paul Rolland during his landmark research in the 1970s.

The Illinois Choral Conducting Symposium was blessed to have Joseph Flummerfelt as a guest faculty member for several years, and all are saddened by his passing. This summer, Pearl Shangkuan (Calvin College, MI) and Maurice Boyer (Concordia University Chicago), two of Flummerfelt’s former students, served as guest faculty with Professor Andrew Megill for a symposium that was both bittersweet and life affirming.

Megill also hosted the third Illinois Bach Academy (IBA). This year, IBA took a deep look at the cantatas of J. S. Bach associated with the Reformation. Of course, the performance included Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, BWV 80, complete with baroque orchestra. For 2020, the IBA will mount the monumental St. Matthew Passion.

The Illinois Summer Piano Institute attracted a near-record number of attendees—more than twice the usual number. Faculty included Professor Timothy Ehlen and Professor Emeritus Ian Hobson, as well as guest faculty David Deveau (MIT) and Boaz Sharon (Boston University). Sinfonia da Camera once again partnered to provide the backdrop for three SPI Concerto Competition winners and two faculty concerto performances.
Illinois Summer Youth Music continues to reinvent and revitalize with new programs and changes to old ones.

With the help of major grants from the College of Fine and Applied Arts (FAA), the Meredith Foundation, and increased support flowing into the ISYM Scholarship Fund from private donors, ISYM was able to provide scholarship funding to attract several dozen new students who would otherwise not have been able to attend. From FAA, and with the support of the SOM Inclusivity, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee, $15,000 was granted in ISYM scholarships for students from underrepresented populations.

Newer ISYM programs that focus on the creation of music continue to grow: composition with Stephen Taylor, music technology with Eli Fieldsteel, and hip-hop with Adam Kruse. Look for additional offerings in music technology and music production in 2020.

For the School of Music, public engagement is not limited to summers. The Piano Laboratory Program (PLP) and Illinois String Academy (ISA) continue to experience growth. Over 200 students now take lessons in piano and string instruments throughout the academic year. Many also take part in composition and theory classes. PLP and ISA employ over 25 instructors and other staff to provide instruction, all the while gaining valuable experience as they become the next generation of master teachers.

At the Downtown Champaign Chamber Music Festival (DoCha) in April, the ISA Chamber Orchestra was featured with the Jupiter String Quartet in a performance of Elgar’s Introduction and Allegro for solo string quartet and string orchestra.

An ISYM student saxophone quartet rehearses with Professor Debra Richtmeyer

Steven Gooden (Merit School of Music, Chicago) conducts the ISYM junior symphonic band
Revisiting the Heartland

As an ethnomusicologist, having done fieldwork among Native Americans, in Iran and in India, I decided, about 1990, to see what I might find if I tried looking at my own culture, that of midwestern university schools of music (mainly Illinois, but others too), from the same perspective. As a result, in 1995, I published a book, *Heartland Excursions*, interpretive and not data-heavy, in which I tried to explain my impressions (going back to when I came in 1964), pretending to be an outside observer—the “ethnomusicologist from Mars.” I came up with four essays, each presenting the school as a kind of society: 1) a society of great composers, each with a distinctive personality, who are a kind of pantheon that rules us; 2) competing societies of students and teachers, artists and scholars, instrumentalists and vocalists, educationists and performers and lots more; 3) a group of musics—classical, “new,” “early,” non-Western, jazz, and more, who, in concentric circles, also compete, striving for recognition, within the rules of the central classical traditions; 4) our repertory which, also, we tend to think of as if it were a society.

While he was still director of the School of Music, Jeff Magee kindly asked me, 25 years later, whether I thought this picture had changed. For one thing, ethnomusicology has changed, and I’m not sure I’d try to write a book in this way today. But to follow Dr. Magee’s question very briefly: 1) The society of great composers has very much expanded, and we hear, and sincerely respect, a much larger community of composers who have taken their places alongside the “biggies.” 2) We have more groups that compete, adding jazz, non-Western, vernacular ensembles, and more, but I also feel that there is among them more interaction, fusion, and cooperation. More musics are regarded as “normal.” 3) Musics on the outside circles have moved towards the center, and jazz, world music, Broadway musicals, some popular genres, and more, are accepted as “normal” music. 4) That chapter about the repertory as a society? I’m going to have to work on that concept some more. But all together (remember I’m a long-time emeritus and thus an outside observer) I feel that the various components of the school—there are more of them now—continue to compete, often vigorously, but on a more level playing field, and they are also more likely to find ways of interacting.

—Bruno Nettl, professor emeritus of musicology

In 1995, Professor Bruno Nettl’s book *Heartland Excursions: Ethnomusicological Reflections on Schools of Music* was published by the University of Illinois Press in its series Music in American Life. To commemorate the 25th anniversary of its publication, *Sonorities* asked Nettl and Laurie Matheson, director of the University of Illinois Press, to each reflect on the book’s significance then and now.

—Laurie Matheson, director, University of Illinois Press
Award-winning music educators Brandon (BME ’08, MME ’19) and Sarah Catt (BME ’09, MME ’19) reflect on their time at the School of Music and, with the help of their students, deliver an inspiring message to fellow members of the class of 2019.

Whereas keynote speakers customarily impart wisdom and advice based on their many years of distinguished experience, the School of Music took a different approach for its May convocation ceremony. Brandon and Sarah Catt spoke from the distinctive perspectives of early-career alumni, whose student experiences are still very fresh in their minds.

After nine years as choir director at Elk Grove High School, Sarah Catt recently became assistant professor and director of choral activities at Elmhurst College. Brandon Catt serves as fine arts department chair, student engagement coordinator, and director of vocal music at Glenbard East High School in Lombard, IL, where his teaching responsibilities include choral music and hip-hop production. As you will see in their adapted convocation address below, they both have embraced the imperative of making the twenty-first-century music classroom and rehearsal room an inclusive space, one in which musicianship, citizenship, and social responsibility are integrated with holistic excellence.

SARAH: If we were to rewind to ten years ago, we were sitting here in this same beautiful hall, at the same dignified ceremony, as undergraduates excited and nervous about what would happen next. I can say with complete certainty that neither of us thought that we would be here with you today, but we are so excited that we are. We have great memories from our time on campus. I remember loading up on caffeine and scones at Espresso Royale, attending friends’ recitals in the Memorial Room, and conducting Frank Ticheli’s There Will Be Rest on this stage during our senior conducting recital.

BRANDON: I remember learning about life and music from Ollie Watts Davis in Black Chorus rehearsals, going to the Final Four with the Orange Krush, and playing with the Marching Illini at the Rose Bowl and in Ireland.

S: Not to mention, we met each other on this campus. I was walking down the first-floor hallway of the Music Building when I ran into one of my friends right outside the elevator. She was standing there talking with another undergrad whom I hadn’t met before.

B: I was that undergrad, and it was love at first sight. Well, at least for me.

S: I think I learned his name two months later. In reality, we stayed friends throughout college, until the summer after my senior year when our voice professor, Dawn Harris, and the entire staff of the ISYM Musical Theatre camp made it their top priority to set us up that week. They obviously succeeded, since as you can see, we’re still together. In fact, two of our most cherished mentors on our musical journey participated in our wedding with Professor Harris singing a beautiful solo and Joe Grant conducting a choir of our friends and colleagues.

B: In addition to these great memories, the University of Illinois School of Music filled us in ways that we didn’t know needed to be filled. Every step of the way in our career, we have found that Illinois prepared us to consider options, make thoughtful decisions, and regroup in moments of
adversity. We can confidently tell you that you have also been given everything that you need from this incredible place. We hope that sharing a bit of our Illinois journey will allow you to reflect on your own path moving forward.

S: Brandon and I went back and forth for weeks about what our message would be today. We went in a million different directions before the obvious hit us. After teaching for 10 years, we’ve realized that the source of our inspiration has always been our students. So why not look to them?

B: We decided to ask our students what advice they wanted to share with the next generation of professional musicians, educators, scholars, and leaders. We reached out to students electronically, and within a couple hours we had over 30 responses. Here are just some of those pearls of wisdom. We invite you to listen and consider each one.

Don’t get discouraged easily if one person doesn’t appreciate your music because that same music could be life-changing for someone else.

—Mikaela, age 17

Your love for the craft WILL show in how you perform and educate.

—Yinka, age 16

If you’re not having fun with the career you choose, then what’s the point?

—Shay, age 15

We have a lot to learn from these young people. Reflecting upon their advice made us realize that our goal today is not to enlighten you with earth-shattering new ideas; rather, our hope is that you recognize the tools and strengths you have within yourselves to succeed, in part thanks to your time at Illinois.

S: Trust in your experiences here at Illinois. Know that what you walk out with today is much more than just a degree. While your musical knowledge and abilities have certainly grown during your time in the School of Music, we believe that the non-musical insight and experiences given by this school may serve you even more. They certainly have for us. When reflecting on our Illinois journey through two degrees, we realized how we both had become equipped with many important tools.

B: At Illinois, we learned the importance of human connection. The importance of social conscience. Of compassion. Of friendship. Of service. We learned what it is to be leaders in our field who work to serve the needs of all people. These are the lessons that made our Illinois journey.

S: Most of us are sitting at graduation thinking about ourselves. I certainly am. What will my future hold? How will I impact the world? But instead of just focusing on ourselves, we encourage you to think about the relationship between your music and the people around you. Some disciplines
are solitary by nature, but this field we have entered? It is not one of them. Music needs people to come to life.

B: Consider a composer without a musician to awaken the notes of their pen. Or a performer without an audience to inspire. A teacher without students to challenge and to be challenged by. We need other human beings to grapple with our art. Today when thinking about your future, choose to consider more than just the impact of music on your individual life; rather, imagine the power your art can yield in all of the lives around you.

S: Have you considered how your music will help people deal with the struggles and successes of their lives? Over the course of our teaching, we have witnessed our students’ music profoundly impact their peers, families, audience members, and complete strangers. We have shared our music with colleagues at their weddings. Our music has also helped our students work through some of the toughest topics to discuss and understand, including self-harm, poverty, racism, and sexism.

B: After recently performing with our choirs at a childcare center, a teacher approached me and shared that she saw her four-year-old student, who had been in the class for a month, smile for the very first time because of our singing that day.

S: Our music has helped students, families, and staff mourn the loss of their siblings, parents, teachers, and friends. These were not the considerations we had when we were sitting in this room 10 years ago. We were not thinking about the profound impact that our music would have on the lives of those around us.

B: Now consider this. Your music will do the same and so much more. Imagine the people who you will impact with your music. You don’t know them yet, but they are absolutely waiting for you. What an incredible privilege and responsibility we all have.

S: So what is your Illinois journey? What lessons will you take with you through your life and your career? Who inspired you to be your best self?

B: Remember this place, but more importantly remember the people. Pave the path for your Illinois journey.

S: We thank you for letting us share. May your journey be full of purposeful work, inspiring relationships, and moving music.

B: Congratulations, Class of 2019!
On August 16, 2019, Jeffrey Sposato became the new director of the School of Music. An accomplished administrator, educator, scholar, and performer, Sposato brings a wealth of experience to the position. Before coming to Illinois, he was associate director of the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston (UH), where he was also director of graduate studies and had served as a member of the musicology faculty since 2007. He was previously head of the music program at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg, where he founded and directed the school’s Collegiate Chorale. He received a PhD in musicology from Brandeis University, an MM and BM in vocal performance from New England Conservatory, and a BA in German studies from Tufts University. His publications include Leipzig After Bach: Church and Concert Life in a German City (Oxford, 2018), The Price of Assimilation: Felix Mendelssohn and the Nineteenth-Century Anti-Semitic Tradition (Oxford, 2006), William Thomas McKinley: A Bio-Bibliography (Greenwood, 1995), and numerous reviews, journal articles, and contributions to edited collections. Sonorities recently interviewed Sposato to learn more about his life, career, and vision for the School of Music.

How did you first get involved in music? What inspired you to pursue a career in music?

My family has been very musical for several generations. For instance, my grandmother did some voice teaching and her brother, Moses Silverman, was a well-known cantor in Chicago. So, I knew that a career in music was an option growing up. But the person who really set me on the path to pursuing a career in music was my high school choir director, Robert Gottshalk. He encouraged me to join the choir and then nurtured my interest in both singing and conducting, to the point that he let me conduct the choir and orchestra on several occasions, including at my high school graduation.

What are some of your most memorable experiences and proudest accomplishments of your career?

Two of my proudest accomplishments are my two books on German music: one on Felix Mendelssohn, and one on music in Leipzig from 1750 to 1850. As with many things worth doing, these took much longer to write than I anticipated. My Leipzig book took 13 years from start to finish and required multiple research trips to Germany. In both cases, the research was difficult, with lots of the sources that were hard to find and hard to decipher, and so I look on them with a lot of pride.

Two other memorable accomplishments are on the performance side. Establishing the first collegiate chorale at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg was immensely satisfying. It’s still in operation today. This was a school that had very few musical opportunities, and I got to build that, and most of their music program, from the ground up. The second is related to my Leipzig book. As I discovered composers who had largely been forgotten, I worked with Houston-area professional orchestras and choruses to do recreation concerts. But the most exciting of these recreations was actually a Lutheran mass that took place in Leipzig. On October 31, 2017, the city celebrated the 500th anniversary of the start of the German Reformation, the date when Martin Luther presented his 95 theses in Wittenberg. With the help of UH composition student Eric Heumann, I reconstructed the music that was used to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Reformation in Leipzig in 1817. Students from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater “Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy” performed this music on the anniversary in 2017 in the same church as it had been performed in 1817—Leipzig’s St. Nicholas Church. Putting that together and being there to introduce the music before the mass was really thrilling to me both as a musicologist and a performer.

You come to Illinois after more than a decade at the University of Houston. What attracted you to the University of Illinois and the School of Music?

I’ve known about the stellar reputation of the School of Music at Illinois for a long time. In some ways, Illinois reminded me of the University of Houston, in that it is a large state university that has an excellent music program operating inside of a prominent research university. In other ways, Illinois is unique: it has the amazing asset of the Krannert Center, it has many more years of alumni,
and it offers the PhD in musicology, which was attractive to me since I would get to work with those students. While I was at UH, I developed some ideas about how we could update music education for the twenty-first century. This job seemed like an amazing opportunity to work with an incredible group of talented faculty and staff and with dedicated alumni—to integrate their ideas with mine to further strengthen what is already a world-class program.

**How has your musical training helped prepare you to be an administrator?**

It is tough to make a living as a solo musician or a performer. For some, there won’t be enough opportunities to make ends meet; for others, life circumstances and other priorities will make it difficult to pursue performance full time. And even in the best cases, it takes time to build a career. So we need to provide students with the training necessary to excel at multiple music-related careers after graduation. When I entered New England Conservatory, I intended to be a vocalist. In making the shift to musicology, I saw that there were other things I could do as someone interested in music—I could be an educator and a researcher. And even as I completed my PhD in musicology at Brandeis, I worked in a number of music-related fields—I was chief musicologist and publicist for a record company, I worked as executive director of a symphony orchestra, and so on. A college education is expensive, and students—and their parents—want to know that they will leave with the skills they need in order to have a successful career. One of my primary goals is to work with our faculty to figure out how we might train our students in such a way that those who joined us initially to become performers will also be able to teach or to work in some other area of the music industry or arts administration, and will feel that their degrees were a good investment.

I believe that by doing this, we will increase the number of first-generation college students enrolled in our programs, many of whom are from underrepresented groups. My reasoning is that if you’re a first-generation student, you might gravitate to business or law or medicine, thinking that’s the only safe way to go. I want to make sure that if you are passionate about music, you can choose music and be confident that you can put your degree to work after graduation.

**What are your other goals for the School of Music?**

I’d also like to see us develop stronger ties with the U of I research enterprise. In particular, I want to help all of our faculty—applied and academic alike—realize that they can be researchers, that we are all scholar-performers. My spouse used to work at Carnegie Mellon, and the director of undergraduate research there used to say that research is asking a question that no one knows the answer to. If that’s the case, then a musicological book is research, but so is performing a piece—even a very familiar one—in a way that allows us to learn something new about it. We already do this on a regular basis, but I want to work with our faculty on ways we can better showcase our research and make us an even more vibrant part of the university’s research mission.

Another top priority for me is increasing diversity. There is a lot of unconscious bias in the music profession. For instance, if we assume that the best undergraduates come from certain wealthy high schools and the best graduates come from elite universities, we’re not going to have a very diverse school, nor are we going to get the very best musicians. We will keep recruiting from these elite schools, but we need to branch out. There are talented musicians everywhere. This is something that our alumni could help us with, because they are spread out around the country and the world, and they know where to look. They can bring people to our attention. We need to make sure that the School of Music represents the diversity of the state of Illinois and the entire country.

I’m also very committed to fundraising. We have great ambitions for the School of Music, and we need the help of all of our alumni and friends to realize them. Scholarships are our top priority, but I would also like to create a Director’s Innovation Fund, so when faculty come forward with an innovative new idea, we can provide them with some seed money to get that off the ground. I would also like to see us get a naming gift for the School of Music. This signifies to the world that someone successful has registered a vote of confidence in what we are doing, and it calls attention to the school. As its name suggests, we had a naming gift at the Moores School at UH, and the School of Music at Illinois is equally deserving.

**Other than music, what are some of your interests? What do you like to do in your spare time?**

I like to collect minerals. It’s a fun hobby, and it’s great to see people of all ages, including lots of fascinated kids, at the mineral shows. I also collect CDs and vinyl records. I have pretty diverse tastes—everything from the pop-punk group All Time Low to baroque composer Jan Dismas Zelenka.
A Glimpse Inside Newly Renovated Smith Memorial Hall

Last year, *Sonorities* reported on the major renovations being undertaken at Smith Hall. With the bulk of the work now complete, we invite you to step inside and discover a more efficient, secure, comfortable, environmentally friendly, and welcoming Smith Hall.

All photos by Michael Siletti except where noted

A new plaque on the first floor acknowledges support for the renovations from student fees.

New fireproof glass doors with magnetic hold-opens have been constructed throughout the building. As an added benefit, they help segregate noise in the building.

Crown molding and plaster relief panels have been placed on new walls to integrate new construction with the look and feel of the original building.

Studios and faculty offices have been repainted and contain new soffits that hide critical but unsightly pipes for the HVAC and fire suppression systems.

New covers have been placed over radiators.
The original seats in the Recital Hall have been refurbished. The original faux-leather backs have been replaced with cloth, which absorb more sound than hard backs. The bottoms and backs have new foam cushions, which make the seats more comfortable.

Vestibules have been added to the main entrances of the Recital Hall to help prevent noise bleed. The doors now lock, helping to secure the hall, and have been partially covered with Tolex, a vinyl material often used on guitar amplifiers, for added durability and a subtle touch of musicality.

Restrooms have been completely renovated with new plumbing, fixtures, and finishes.

New electrical outlets on the floor of the Recital Hall make it easier for engineers to record performances and other events.

The Recital Hall’s floor has been regraded to create a more consistent rake. This facilitated placement of the new vestibules in the rear of the hall, brought the hall up to accessibility code, and, due to the use of improved materials in the floor, enhanced the room’s acoustics.
A new accessibility ramp leads to the Memorial Room.

While maintaining the original look of the building’s staircases, new iron and tubular steel handrails have been installed that meet building code height requirements.

The Memorial Room’s palace-size Persian Sarouk rug from ca. 1920 has been cleaned and repaired.

“Some of the most important renovations are the ones that most people do not get to see,” said Nathan Mandel, operations and properties manager for the School of Music. For example, the air handler under the Recital Hall has been treated acoustically (above left) to help alleviate mechanical noise from the motor, bearings, pulleys, and electronic drive. Additionally, the pump for the forced air heating system, which, according to Chad Wahls, facilities manager for the School of Music, “had been a great source of problems since the 1950s, when it was installed,” has been relocated to another room under the east hallway. Plumbing has been upgraded throughout the building with new pipes (above middle) that carry water for the sprinkler and radiant heat systems. Meanwhile, new sump pumps (above right) help protect the building from water damage. “The end result for a visitor,” according to Mandel, “is that it’s going to be comfortable and quiet.”
new full-time faculty

Carlos Roberto Ramírez (Musicology) is a musicologist and harpsichordist whose primary research area is the study of Early Modern music and culture, focusing on the convergence of musical practice, organology, the history of the book, and subjectivity from 1350 to 1750. Ramírez’s secondary research area examines representations of gender, class, and race in Latinx musics, exploring the interaction of structures of power and subjectification in the genre of reggaeton. An ardent advocate for the combination of musical practice and scholarship, Ramírez performs regularly and has had the opportunity to study historically informed practice with some of the leading exponents in the field, such as Christopher Hogwood, Jordi Savall, Neal Zaslaw, Annette Richards, and Joyce Lindorff. He has presented his research at a number of conferences, including the American Musicological Society, the Symposium of the International Festival of Spanish Keyboard Music, the Royal Musical Association, Columbia University, and Princeton University. He completed his PhD at Cornell University and was a Pre-Doctoral Diversity Fellow in Music at Ithaca College.

Michael Siletti (Musicology) received an MM and PhD in musicology from Illinois, where he also worked as a graduate teaching assistant and served as president of the Illinois Student Association of Music Scholars. His dissertation, “Sounding the Last Mile: Music and Capital Punishment in the United States Since 1976,” is a finalist for the Society of American Music’s Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award. He has presented his research at numerous conferences, including meetings of the Society for American Music, the Conference on Illinois History, and the Midwest chapter of the American Musicological Society.

new part-time faculty in 2019–20

Ashley M. Davis (Black Chorus) joined the School of Music as a lecturer in music. Skilled and experienced in teaching and conducting the choral music of African Americans, effective student engagement and recruitment, and administrative work, Davis will serve as the assistant conductor of the University of Illinois Black Chorus. With two earned degrees from Illinois, you will find Davis promoting the music of Black Americans and inspiring all who come her way.

Yichen Li (Voice) is a diverse musician who has performed extensively in opera, oratorio, and chamber music and has won numerous awards as a vocalist and piano accompanist. Li earned a BA in music education (piano concentration) from Nanjing Normal University, where he served as a teaching assistant in several music classes. He received an MM in vocal performance from Illinois State University and a DMA in vocal performance and literature at the University of Illinois under the tutelage of Ollie Watts Davis. Before joining the faculty at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Li taught at the University of Illinois at Springfield and Illinois College.

faculty updates

Christina Bashford (Musicology) was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, the foremost academic society in the UK for the study of history. She also gave keynote addresses at two international conferences, one in Athens, Greece (The Birth of Contemporary Europe: World War I, Music and the Arts; November 2018), the other at the University of Oxford (Perspectives on Historically Informed Practices in Music; September 2018). Her article “Interpreting the Role of the Violin in the Ballykinlar Internment Camp during the Anglo-Irish War of 1920–1921” was one of six prizewinning essays published in the 100th anniversary issue of the journal Music & Letters in Summer 2019. In January, she stepped away from her role as the SoM’s director of graduate studies to begin a sabbatical of research and writing.
Zack Browning (Composition-Theory, Emeritus) had his portrait album Soul Doctrine released on Innova, which was described as “World wise contemporary classical music with a rock attitude” (Midwest Record). Browning’s composition Decade of the Dragon was released on NakedEye Ensemble’s album Storylines Crossing (Starkland) and it received two Gold Medals from Global Music Awards (Best Ensemble Recording and Best Debut Album). Premiere performances included Songs of the Double Moon, which was commissioned by School of Music alumni Hye Young Kim and Suhyoung Park with Ensemble HYE (IPAC Hall, Seoul, South Korea), and Network Slammer with video at Conservatorio Alicante, Spain. Performances of his music included Rock Furious (Ossessioni Festival, Scuola di Musica Sarti, Faenza, Italy), Howler Back (tour of China by Encore Saxophone Quartet), and Right at the Dead End (London, UK and Taipei, Taiwan). Browning continues to direct the Salvatore Martriano Memorial Composition Award, now in its 23rd year.

Donna Buchanan (Musicology) gave invited presentations at the University of Texas at Austin (October) and the University of Illinois Center for Advanced Study (January); read a paper, “The Belled Voice: Timbral Ethnoaesthetics and Cosmological Resonance in Bulgarian Women’s Singing,” at the annual Society for Ethnomusicology conference (November); and gave three lectures for the pedagogy workshop “Teaching the South Caucasus,” organized by the campus Russian, East European, and Eurasian Center (REEEC) and American Research Institute of the South Caucasus (June). She published a book review in the Anthropology of East Europe Review and a dual-language essay in the booklet accompanying the 2019 Smithsonian Folkways release, Sound Portraits from Bulgaria (produced by Martin Koenig), for which she also served as consultant. In May, she visited Sofia as one of seven US institutional representatives participating in a cultural exchange seminar convened by the Bulgarian-American Fulbright Commission. Throughout 2018-19, she also served as acting director of REEEC.

Michael Cameron (Double Bass) was a featured guest artist at the International Society of Bassists convention at Indiana University Bloomington. He performed the world premiere of Blue Neon Tumbleweed III by Marc Satterwhite with pianist Evan Mitchell. He also performed composition professor Erik Lund’s Obstructed Bass, a work for unaccompanied bass that received its world premiere in March in Urbana. He was also a judge for ISB’s senior solo competition.

Barrington Coleman (Vocal Jazz, Varsity Men’s Glee Club) completed a post-sabbatical journal, “An Exploration of Vocal Pedagogy and Career Development of Male Choral Ensembles.” Completed in Spring 2018, this document provides male choral program structure, gender-based vocal techniques, repertoire studies, performance practice, teaching methodology, and career development perspectives. During 2018-19, these teachings were utilized through Varsity Men’s Glee Club collaborations with UI World Music Society and guest artist and 2001 alumnus Steven Hackman (conductor, composer) in commissioned works. In addition, Coleman has applied pedagogic principles to jazz composition, arranging, and performance forums, including collaborative recitals with jazz bassist Larry Gray, and recording co-production and performance work with his son, jazz artist and 2016 alum Crofton Coleman. As a new contributor to the jazz area in Vocal Jazz as well as Jazz Vocal Ensemble, Coleman will be featured during the 2019 season as a Krannert jazz trio artist, and as a participant with Men’s Glee in a March 2020 Carnegie Hall performance of Shostakovich’s Symphony no. 13.

Ollie Watts Davis (Voice, Black Chorus) was appointed to the Suzanne and William Allen Distinguished Professorship in Music, named a Provost Fellow, nominated for Virginia Tech’s Woman of Color in the Academy Award, and served as soloist for the 55th Annual Convocation & Investiture of Laureates to The Lincoln Academy of Illinois at the State Capitol. In addition, she served as soloist for the Albert Lee Memorial Unveiling & Dedication Ceremony, opened the Illinois Program for Research in the Humanities series with a performance talk on “Race Work,” and presented at the National Association of Teachers of...
Singling Transatlantic Pedagogy Tour in Germany. She was the guest clinician for the Join Voices Chicago festival at Northeastern Illinois University, led the Black Chorus ISYM camps, and directed the 14th Black Sacred Music Symposium. Additionally, she led the Black Chorus in signature performances on and off campus, including the Legacy of Project 500 at Illinois celebration.

**John Dee (Oboe)** performs at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, as principal oboe of Sinfonia da Camera, and the Campaign-Urbana Symphony, and is regularly invited to give guest clinics and performances throughout the world. With his colleague Timothy McGovern, Dee has established a popular series of instructive-performance events, which are held annually throughout Chicagoland area. Hosted by regional music directors and instructors, the events are designed for oboe and bassoon students, their parents, and area educators. His oboe reed-making companion guide, *Oboe Reed-Making from Blank to Crow*, was enthusiastically received at the International Double Reed Society Annual Conference. He was also invited to give two International Double Reed Society conference performances, including world premieres, and is honored to be a member of the international committee to judge the final round of the Gillet International Oboe Competition.

**Megan K. Eagen-Jones (Musicology)** presented her research on Renaissance centonate motets (polyphonic works that set textual excerpts from two or more sources, combined in a single opus) at the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference in Basel, Switzerland. MedRen is the largest annual scholarly symposium to focus on musical works of this period. Eagen-Jones’s paper turned the focus from composers to textual compilers who—perhaps responding to the riddle culture of the era—used “pivot” words and phrases to combine passages from the Davidian psalms and other sapiential texts into new poetry. Editors like Susato seemingly picked up on this technique, indicating sources of selected excerpts in marginalia. Eagen-Jones’s paper considered this textual construction as a form of exegesis that evinces humanistic readership of the Bible. Her paper explored four sample motets by Orlando di Lasso, Leonhard Paminger, Jacob Clemens non Papa, and Thomas Crecquillon.

**Timothy Ehlen (Piano)** released a recording, *Late Character Pieces of Brahms* (Azica), which has received critical acclaim. He gave numerous recitals and performances in China, including at International Piano Week at Beijing Normal University; China Conservatory; Wuhan Conservatory; Xinghai Conservatory of Music; and the Steinway Gallery in Guangzhou. In addition to eight lecture-recitals, Ehlen gave 20 master classes to a total of at least 77 students at universities and conservatories across China, which offered him the rare opportunity to introduce his artistic perspective to an important and rising sea of musical talent. Ehlen also performed and taught at several events in the United States, including at the Montecito International Music Festival (CA), and the Freeport Arts Center (IL). In Summer 2019, he gave a concerto performance with Sinfonia da Camera during the Summer Piano Institute; his student Yu-Jung Feng performed as a winner of the concerto competition.

**Donna Gallo (Music Education)** recently published “Formative Assessment Practices and Children’s Singing Accuracy: A Mixed Methods Inquiry” in the *International Journal of Music Education*. Research presentations in 2018-2019 included a study of music educators engaged in collaborative professional development at the Research in Music Education conference at Bath Spa University (UK). Gallo received a Campus Research Board grant (October 2018) for this project. Other presentations include “Connecting to the Current K-12 Community: Music Teacher Educators as Local Professional Development Advocates” at the Mountain Lake Colloquium (VA), and two invited presentations from Kodály chapters in MN and WI. In partnership with Adam Kruse, Gallo was awarded a research grant from the American Orff Schulwerk Association and matching funds from FAA to engage music educators in collaborative professional development (2019-20), where local artists will facilitate teacher learning and mentor K-8 students. Gallo was also the invited clinician for the Illinois Music Education Association District #2 Elementary Creative Movement ensemble.

**Larry Gray (Jazz, Double Bass)** had a very busy year. In addition to his featured duets recital at Foellinger Great Hall with SoM’s Barrington Coleman, Jon Dee, Yvonne Gonzalez-Redman and Jonathan Keeble, and his appearance at the Krannert Art Museum with his Chicago-based improvising trio Gray/Wilkerson/Ra (Ed Wilkerson and Awreeay Ra), he maintained connections to Chicago performances with legendary trombonist Steve Turre’s Quintet, in duos and trio concerts with guitarist John Moulder and in a new 360-degree video release by the award-winning improvising trio Wertico Cain and Gray. He also appeared at last year’s Chicago Jazz Festival with legendary pianist Barry Harris and alto saxophonist Charles McPherson. He continues to hone his video skills and is very busy documenting student work at the Jazz at Illinois YouTube channel and Facebook page, while per-
forming regularly with current students in his Larry Gray Projects series.

**Julie Gunn (Lyric Theatre, Keyboard)** made her Wigmore Hall debut in London. She helped develop the Los Angeles and New York premieres of Ellen Reid’s 2019 Pulitzer Prize-winning opera *prism*. Additionally, she and Nathan Gunn developed “An Evening on Broadway,” in which they performed classic and contemporary musical theater with distinguished colleagues, alumni, and students. “An Evening on Broadway” also constitutes the first work of the Gunns’ new production company, Shot in the Dark Productions Inc. Teaching highlights included conducting Britten’s *The Rape of Lucretia* with Lyric Theatre and the Illinois Modern Ensemble, and hosting Richard Maltby and David Shire’s workshop of a commercial Broadway project, *Take Flight*. She is immersed in the Kranert Center’s 50th anniversary celebration, serving as co-chair of the national capital campaign, Endow the Dream.

**Rudolf Haken (Viola)** appeared as soloist in Summer 2019 with two of his own electric viola concertos (Viper Concerto and Concerto in F) at the Bayreuth Young Artists Festival Orchestra in Germany, the Shakujii International Orchestra in Tokyo, and the Rolland Workshop Orchestra at UI. In Bayreuth, Haken performed with folk musicians from Turkmenistan, Syria, Greece, and Tunisia. Haken was featured on a broadcast of Bavarian Television, as well as the Rockstar Violinist podcast. Haken performed Black Sabbath with Rachel Barton Pine at the American String Teachers Association conference in Albuquerque. Haken and Julius Adams’s electric viola duo performed for #WithIllinois in New York and in Scottsdale, AZ.

**Faculty Publications**


Helping to fill the dearth of detailed scholarship on classical music’s response to World War I, this edited volume examines how composition, performance, publication, recording, censorship, and policy shaped the Atlantic allies’ musical response to the war. While the book’s first section offers studies of individuals, the second concentrates on communities, whether local, transnational, or on the spectrum in between. Essay topics range from the sinking of the *Lusitania* through transformations of the entertainment industry to the influenza pandemic.

**Thinking Outside the Voice Box: Adolescent Voice Change in Music Education** by Bridget Sweet; Oxford University Press, 2019.

In this practical teaching guide, Sweet encourages a holistic approach to female and male adolescent voice change. Sweet’s approach takes full consideration of the body, brain, and auditory system; vocal anatomy and physiology in general, as well as during male and female voice change; and the impact of hormones on the adolescent voice, especially for female singers. Beyond the physical, it also addresses the emotional and psychological components: ideas of resolve and perseverance that are essential to adolescent navigation of voice change; and exploration of portrayals and stereotypes in pop culture that influence how people anticipate voice change experiences.


Uncovering links between music and the environment, Silvers employs an ecomusical perspective toward understanding events in Ceará, a drought-plagued state in northeastern Brazil. Centering on the production and experience of forró music in the region, Silvers argues that drought affects music making and that music making in turn affects drought. Across the concepts of vulnerability, materiality, listening, nostalgia, and policy, Silvers presents six interlocking but contextually distinct case studies that interrogate links between music and ecology in topics ranging from the harvesting of materials for wax cylinder recordings to the cancelation of state-sponsored Carnival celebrations.
Ronald Hedlund (Voice, Emeritus) continues an active performing schedule, including annual in-school programs featuring the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra, in recital, for fundraising galas, area churches, and a solo appearance with the Topanga Symphony (CA).

Barry L. House (Athletic Bands, Conducting) was recently appointed to serve as the national chair of the College Band Directors National Association Athletic Band Committee. He currently serves as a Yamaha Master Educator and as an educational consultant for Ultimate Drill Book, the latest innovation in teaching and sharing drill digitally.

Jonathan Keeble (Flute) was invited to perform Richard Prior's Concerto for Flute and Orchestra at the 2019 National Flute Association Convention in Salt Lake City's Abravanel Hall. Featured with principal flutists from the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, the Stuttgart Philharmonic, and the Atlanta Symphony before 1,200 flutists from all over the world, Keeble’s performance was described by distinguished colleagues as “revealing” and “game changing.” Prior’s concerto, commissioned by and dedicated to Keeble, is being published this fall by Theodore Presser. Keeble performed throughout the world at events in New Zealand, Hong Kong, and across the United States. His students continue to garner awards and positions ranging from professorships, to Fulbright Awards, to major competitions.

Adam Kruse (Music Education, Technology) had written publications appear in Music Education Research, the International Journal of Music Education, and the Journal of Popular Music Education. He also published an audio spoken-word piece in the journal New Directions: A Journal of Scholarship, Creativity, and Leadership. Kruse was on a team of colleagues from the School of Music and African American Studies that received a $150,000 grant to support The Hip-Hop Xpress, a mobile studio for teaching DJing, beat production, recording, and engineering skills in various school and community settings. In addition to leading workshops and guest lecturing at universities around the country, Kruse presented work at the HipHopEd Conference in New York; the National Conference of The College Music Society in Vancouver, BC; and the Research in Music Education conference in Bath, UK. Kruse was also delighted to co-organize the third ISYM Hip-Hop Camp with Professor Lamont Holden.

Erik Lund’s (Composition-Theory, Emeritus) CD MEMOS was released on Centaur Records. The recording includes performances by the Jupiter String Quartet, Fidelio Piano Trio (UK), Illinois Modern Ensemble, Illinois Saxophone Ensemble, as well as several fine solo and duo renderings. Lund’s music was featured in concerts in Taiwan in May 2019 at Tunghai University in Taichung, and in Taipei. These concerts featured performances by UI alum Han-Jui Chen (double bass), and Yu-Chen Wang (gu-zheng), who now live and work in Suzhou, China. Lund also presented lectures on his music and master classes at Tunghai University and National Chiao Tung University in Hsinchu.

Gayle Magee (Musicology) was a featured speaker at Oberlin College and the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where she presented her research on Canadian music in World War I. With colleagues William Brooks and Christina Bashford, Magee completed an edited collection entitled Over Here, Over There: Transatlantic Conversations on the Music of World War I (University of Illinois Press, 2019). This year, she completed a three-year term as editor of the award-winning journal American Music. In August she began a three-year term as chair of the musicology area. She continues to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Charles Ives Society, and to publish on Ives and contemporary composer William Bolcom.

Jeffrey Magee (Musicology) completed seven years as director of the School of Music and assumed the position of part-time associate dean in the College of Media while remaining professor in the SoM. His article “Whose Turn Is It? Where Gypsy’s Finale Came From and Where It Went” appeared in an all-Sondheim issue of Studies in Musical Theatre, and he contributed book chapters to Over Here, Over There: Transatlantic Conversations on the Music of World War I and Rethinking American Music (both UI Press, 2019).
He continued to serve as reviewer for the American Council of Learned Societies and Radcliffe Fellowship programs.

**Timothy McGovern (Bassoon)** hosted Keith Sweger, professor of bassoon at Ball State University, for a recital and master class. In April 2019, McGovern was invited as a guest artist and teacher, along with John Dee and Cara Chowning, at the University of Iowa, Ball State University, and Butler University. They performed recitals and presented master classes. McGovern had numerous outreach activities this year, including recitals and master classes at Midwest Young Artists at Ravinia, The Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra, and three Double Reed Workshops in Geneva, Naperville, and Lincolnshire, IL. He continues to perform many concerts with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, Illinois Chamber Orchestra, C-U Symphony Orchestra, and Sinfonia da Camera. McGovern continues his summer activities with the ISYM Double Reed Camp and the Madeline Island Chamber Music Seminar. His CD recording, *Novelette - French Recital Music for Bassoon and Piano*, will be released this fall on Albany Records.

**Charles “Chip” McNeill (Jazz, Saxophone)** had several noteworthy performances as a soloist, including the Indianapolis Jazz Festival’s tribute to Freddie Hubbard with trumpeter Sean Jones; the University of Illinois jazz faculty’s tribute to “Jazz In Blue,” a Star-Spangled Salute Gala to the USO; the Jazz Education Network conference in Reno, NV with Grammy-nominated jazz drummer Michael Waldrop, along with a clinic presentation for the conference; a podcast interview for socaljazz.com; a performance and clinic at LaPorte High School’s (IN) 2019 JazzFest, which also featured Butch Miles and Frank Greene; with the Steve Allee Big Band to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Jazz Kitchen; with the Triton College Jazz Band for the Triton College (IL) Jazz Festival; an all-star jazz performance with Tom Scott, Jon Faddis, Gregg Fields, and Gordon Goodwin at the University of Missouri–St. Louis; and his 15th year with the Jim Widner summer jazz camps in June 2019.

**Charlotte Mattax Moersch (Harpichord)** was a featured harpsichord soloist in J.S. Bach's harpsichord concertos for the 112th Festival of the Bethlehem Bach Choir & Festival Orchestra, with whom she also recorded Bach’s cantata BWV 21 and Handel’s *Ode for St. Cecelia’s Day* for Analekta. She celebrated the release of two solo harpsichord recordings for Centaur Records—Bach’s *Goldberg Variations* and *The Bach Legacy*, which includes the Italian Concerto and sonatas and polonaises of JCF, CPE, and WF Bach, funded with support from the Research Board and an FAA Project Completion Grant. She directed the Illinois period instrument ensemble Concerto Urbano in several performances, including “Les goûts reunits,” a program of French and Italian sonatas, and continued her series of concerts at the Krannert Art Museum entitled “Saturdays with Sebastian,” featuring Bach’s keyboard works.

**William Moersch (Percussion)** has commissioned much of the prominent modern repertoire for marimba from composers including seven recipients of the Pulitzer Prize in Music. His latest commissions have resulted in premieres of new works for marimba and tenor steel pan (Thom Hasenpflug); marimba and electronics (Emma O’Halloran); percussion quartet and electronics, as well as marimba, guitar, and double bass (both by Alejandro Viñao). Moersch’s recording of Akemi Naito’s *Five Waka by Saigyo*, for marimba and mixed chorus, is scheduled for release by Marquis Classics in 2019. Currently, he is developing and producing an online course on marimba history and literature.

**Mark Moore (Tuba, Euphonium)** served as chair of the Arnold Jacobs Mock Orchestral Tuba Audition Competition at the International Tuba Euphonium Conference held at the University of Iowa in May 2019.

**Alchemy** by the Jupiter String Quartet and Bernadette Harvey; Marquis Classics, 2019

For their latest offering, the Jupiter String Quartet reunited with Australian pianist Bernadette Harvey to record works commissioned by the Arizona Friends of Chamber Music. Recorded and co-produced by Grammy Award-winning engineer Matthew Snyder in Krannert’s Foellinger Great Hall, the album features the world-premire recordings of Pierre Jalbert’s Piano Quintet, Steven Stucky’s Piano Quartet, and Carl Vine’s *Fantasia* for piano quintet, as well as a new recording of Jalbert’s *Secret Alchemy* for violin, viola, cello, and piano. In a glowing review, *The High Arts* commends the musicians’ “poised, precise and elegant” playing and notes that “these are demanding pieces that don’t just rely on a handful of technically skilled players but also, as the title of the release suggests, on imaginative musical insights.”
Linda Moorhouse (Administration, Bands) served as an adjudicator for bands in Oahu (HI) and in Cobb County (GA); and as a conductor at the University of North Georgia, Colorado State University, in Kansas with the John Philip Sousa Honor Band, and in Kentucky with the Louisville Winds, an adult community band that has been invited to perform at the 2019 Midwest Clinic. She also conducted the Champaign-Urbana Civic Wind Band for their annual “Ice-Cream and Independence” summer concert, which this year featured Nathan Gunn. She continues to serve the National Band Association, the nation’s largest professional organization for bands, as executive secretary and journal editor, and also serves this year as president of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association.


Susan Parisi (Research Scholar) carried out research in the Archivio di Stato in Mantua, Italy, in September 2018, focusing on music received by the Gonzaga court in the 1590s. In July 2019, Parisi attended the 47th Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference, held in Basel, Switzerland. Her commissioned profile of musicologist Carol MacClintock (1910-1989) was published in Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart Online in June 2019.

Edward Rath (Piano, Emeritus) adjudicated the Kranert Debut Artist Award and piano division concerto prelim competitions. He attended the annual conference of the American Liszt Society in Phoenix, for which he serves as webmaster and editor of its newsletter.

Yvonne Gonzales Redman (Voice) completed work on a research study exploring the effects of the music work environment upon voice instructors hearing and voice use during studio teaching. With assistance from a Strategic Research Initiative grant from FAA she created an interdisciplinary study that measured room acoustics, noise levels, hearing, and voice use throughout individual teaching periods. Results were presented at the American Speech Hearing Association Convention, The Voice Foundation Annual Symposium, and the International Congress on Acoustics. She was invited to present on performance anxiety at the Florida Music Education Conference and will present on music hearing health at the Central Regional National Association of Teachers Conference. A recently released Toccata Classics CD (Vol. 6) features her performing vocal works by Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, with Vol. 7 currently in production. Her performance of Dominick DiOrio’s Gathering was released on a CD of music celebrating the Illinois Sesquicentennial.

Debra Richtmeyer (Saxophone) was one of only eight people—and the only American—to be elected to the International Saxophone Committee/World Saxophone Congress at WSC XVII in Croatia. Her duties include overseeing the organization of the next two World Saxophone Congresses, to be held in July 2021 in Kurashiki, Japan, and in July 2024, location to be determined. She was an invited soloist and juror at the SAX-GO International Saxophone Competition and Festival, Nova Gorica, Slovenia. She was the featured soloist for the Illinois Wind Symphony’s performance of Joel Love’s Solace: A Lyric Concerto for Saxophone at the College Band Directors National Association Conference in Tempe, AZ. Her book Between the Words: A Saxophonist’s Guide to Practice, Performance and Pedagogy, is being published by Theodore Presser Co.

Casey Robards (Vocal Coaching, Accompanying) was appointed full-time clinical assistant professor in vocal accompanying and coaching at Illinois. Casey conducted Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte at the Bay View Music Festival in 2019, where she is head of collaborative piano. As a pianist, Casey has released three CDs in the last year, including Botanica: Music for Oboe and English Horn, with University of Illinois alum Sara Fraker (MSR Classics); Chinese Fantasies, featuring the music of Bright Sheng and others, with violinist Fanyge Sun (Blue Griffin Records); and Anchored in the Lord, spirituals sung by the American Negro Spiritual Intensive at the Bay View Music Festival, directed by Everett McCorvey. In 2018-19, she performed recitals with Philip Alejo, Sara Fraker, Jonathan Keeble, Richard Sherman, Angelique Clay, LaToya Lain, Richard Todd Payne, and Henry Pleas. Casey contributed a chapter to So You Want to Sing Spirituals (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).
Guido Sanchez-Portuguez (Guitar) was invited as the main guest to the Mid-America Guitar Ensemble Festival in Minneapolis. On the closing night, and under his direction, the festival’s guitar orchestra premiered his most recent composition, Passages, a three-movement guitar ensemble piece commissioned specifically for the festival. Shortly afterwards, the piece was published by Guitar Chamber Music Press.

Bernhard Scully (Horn) maintained a busy schedule of teaching and concertizing around the globe. He was named a tenured member of the acclaimed North Country Chamber Players (serving the larger upper New England area), which includes the principal players in the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. He was invited to give master classes and perform as a soloist at Yonsei University in Seoul, South Korea, and at the Isla Verde Bronces Festival in Córdoba, Argentina. He performed principal horn in Schumann’s Konzerstück with both the University of Illinois Symphony Orchestra and Colorado State University Orchestras. Bernhard was on faculty once again as artistic director of the Kendall Betts Horn Camp, successfully overseeing the 25th season of the international festival. He was invited to serve on the jury of the 2019 Chilean Brass Festival.

Michael Silvers (Musicology) received a 2019 Andrew Carnegie Fellowship, the so-called “Brainy Award,” which recognizes “high-caliber scholarship in the social sciences and humanities.” He was also awarded research grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and Fulbright. He is the lead coordinator for a multi-year project on water and the arts, funded by the U of I Presidential Initiative to Celebrate the Impact of the Arts and the Humanities. His book, Voices of Drought: The Politics of Music and Environment in Northeastern Brazil, was released by the University of Illinois Press in October 2018. He presented on his research at meetings of the Society for Ethnomusicology in November 2018 and at the Society for American Music in March 2019; this past year, he also gave presentations at Indiana University Bloomington and, via Skype, at Harvard University, as well as on campus at Illinois.

Joel Spencer’s (Jazz, Drums) performances in Chicago included appearances at the Green Mill Jazz Club with celebrated Chicago saxophonist Pat Mallinger and a feature weekend with internationally known jazz saxophonist David Liebman. Spring 2019 included performances with the Joan Hickey Trio at Uncorked at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts; with pianist John Campbell at the Lake Geneva Grand Resort in WI; and with the Chicago Jazz Orchestra Quintet at Winters Jazz Club, Chicago. Throughout the past year, the Joel Spencer Quartet recording Jazz Hit has received increasing notoriety on the international playlist for the show Real Jazz, featured on Sirius Satellite Radio. During Summer 2019, Spencer was featured as a guest artist in the 40th anniversary concert celebration of the Chicago Jazz Orchestra at Chicago’s Studebaker Theatre. In addition, Spencer has been chosen as the feature cover story in the December 2019 issue of Chicago Jazz Magazine.

Sylvia Stone (Voice) was the recipient of a national award during the 55th Edizione della Mostra Nazionale del Tartufo Bianco Pregiato, in Sant’Angelo in Vado, Italy. In June–July, Stone taught and directed the young opera singers’ training program she established in Italy in 2004. Students were from universities in Colombia, Malaysia, Singapore, and the US. They received intensive language classes, solo and ensemble rehearsals, opera role coaching, voice lessons, and stage rehearsals. The program culminated in performances of great Italian opera scenes at the core of the musical preparation and stage work offered during the course. Afterwards, Stone was in Munich and Salzburg, where she gave a master class at the Austrian-American Mozart Academy.

Bridget Sweet (Music Education) co-published “Female vocal identity: A phenomenology” in the Journal of Research in Music Education with Elizabeth Cassidy Parker of Temple University. They also co-presented the study, “A multiple case study of two inclusive choirs” at the American Choral Director Association’s Symposium on Research in Choral Singing in Chicago. Sweet conducted three all-state choirs this year: Kentucky Junior High SATB, Virginia Middle School SATB, and Maine High School SSAA. She presented research in IL, KY, AL, and FL, and was a featured presenter at the 2019 Minnesota ACDA Summer Dialogue at St. Olaf College. She gave several virtual presentations and choral clinics and conducted the 2019 ISYM Junior Chorus. With her Illinois music education colleagues, she presented sessions on critical service learning and social justice at the College Music Society National Conference in Vancouver, BC, and the Illinois Music Education Association annual conference.

Stephen Taylor’s (Composition-Theory) music has been performed widely around the US in the past year, including in Los Angeles, New York, Boston,
Reynold Tharp’s (Composition-Theory) piano piece Littoral was one of ten pieces selected for “The Keyboard in the 21st Century: An International Conference for Composers” at Hong Kong Baptist University in April 2019. In May, his piece San Francisco Night for large chamber ensemble was performed by the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Chamber Players, conducted by Steven Mackey on a concert at Princeton University that also featured a world premiere by Juri Seo (DMA 2013). In January 2019 he was appointed director of graduate studies for the SoM.

Sever Tipei (Composition-Theory) has continued to develop DISSCO, original software for composition and sound design, with the help of undergraduate NCSA SPIN, UIUC Research Initiative and CS students that he mentored. Results were presented collectively at conferences and symposia in Florence, Italy, and Istanbul, Turkey. At the same time, DISSCO was enhanced through a collaboration with the San Diego Supercomputer Center through XSEDE (Extreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment), sponsored by National Science Foundation. Tipei’s new compositions, 8 and 1/2, for fixed media, and Ghioc, for baritone saxophone and fixed media, were performed, respectively, at “Meridiane” festival, Bucharest, Romania, and also at the North American Saxophone Alliance, Cincinnati; the International Computer Music Conference/New York Electronic Music Festival; and KCPA. More DISSCO compositions were presented at the Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Jacksonville, FL; the Workshop on Computer Music and Audio Technology, Taiwan; Diffrazioni, Florence, Italy; Ball State University (IN); the Society for Electro-acoustic Music in the United States, Boston; and Sound and Music Computing, Malaga, Spain.

Christos Tsitsaros (Piano Pedagogy) was judge for the Chopin Foundation of the United States Northwest Council National Piano Competition, which took place in Seattle in February 2019. He also gave a master class devoted to his piano music for the Bloomington-Normal Music Teachers Association. In March, he was awarded a Beckman-designated UI Research Board creative research award.

Paul Vermel (Orchestra, Emeritus) who retired from the School of Music in 1994, is enjoying life in southern Maine. At age 95, he teaches only occasionally, and is mentoring a gifted conductor in RI.

Ann Yeung (Harp) gave a presentation “Recalling Agency and Innovation” on iconoclastic feminist harpist-virtuoso-composer Henriette Renié at the 2019 American Harp Society’s Summer Institute, held at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, supported in part by an Arnold O. Beckman Research Award. She was also featured as a panelist on “Competition Preparation” at the institute. In AZ, she was a featured clinician for the Mesa Public Schools Harp Program, the largest in the US, and gave a presentation on Parish Alvars at the University of Arizona Fred Fox School of Music in November 2018. She was the featured artist for the 2018 Chicago Harp Day hosted by Lyon & Healy Harps. Her article on Jacques Ibert’s Entr’acte was published in the Spring 2019 World Harp Congress Review. She directed the premiere of Julia Kay Jamieson’s bug portraits at the 17th Illinois Summer Harp Class this past June.

Nicholas Temperley (Musicology, Emeritus) received the Midwest Victorian Studies Association’s Lifetime Achievement Award in April at its annual meeting in Fort Worth, TX. This marked the 2018 issue of Retrospect Opera’s recording of Edward Loder’s Raymond and Agnes (1855) under the baton of Richard Bonynge, an opera first revived by Temperley at the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, in 1966. In February appeared The Whole Book of Psalms: Collected into Metre by Thomas Sternhold, John Hopkins, and Others, edited by Beth Quitslund and Nicholas Temperley (Renaissance English Text Society), the first-ever critical edition of the chief collection of metrical psalms and tunes from the English Reformation. He also reviewed Andrew Gant’s book O Sing unto the Lord, John Goulden’s Michael Costa: England’s First Conductor, and a CD of Michael Balle’s opera Satanella; he also wrote liner notes for Charlotte Mattax Moersch’s CDs of the Goldberg Variations and harpsichord music of J. S. Bach’s sons.
1950–1959


Barbara Garvey Jackson’s (BM ‘50) publishing company, ClarNan Editions, was sold January 1, 2019, and is now a division of Classical Vocal Reprints. All 111 titles are kept in print. ClarNan Editions specializes in music composed by women of the past—more than 40 composers from the late 16th century to the early 20th century. Jackson will continue to occasionally edit new works.

1960–1969

Kareen Vallandigham Britt (BS ‘64, MS ‘65) retired from the Dallas Opera Orchestra this spring after 30 years playing 2nd flute and piccolo. She was the orchestra representative to the Regional Orchestra Players’ Association for more than ten years, served on the Opera Board and Marketing Committees, served on two Negotiations Committees, and was Chairperson of the Players’ Committee. She will miss the Dallas Opera and the Orchestra family but it is time. Her recommendation to those who aspire to become orchestra musicians is to get and stay involved!

Tom Jewett (BS ’65) has revised and moved his commemorative Symphony Orchestra Latin America Tour website to ui64solat.org. From January 31 to June 4 each year, their activities for that day are highlighted on the schedule page; newly added are broadcast recordings from the final concert in Lima, Peru. Still active in web accessibility consulting, Tom is an emeritus faculty member of the California State University, Long Beach computer science department and LiCoL, USAF(ret).

1970–1979

Howard J. Buss (DMA ’77) continues to compose new works and serves as editor of Brixton Publications (ASCAP) and Howard Buss Publications (BMI), which publish music by American composers. Recent premieres of his works include Ricordi d’amore for two harps in Venice, Italy, and Vibrant Horizons for flute and wind ensemble in Tucson, AZ. His Totally Tubular for oboe/English horn and trumpet/flugelhorn and Bassoonisms for bassoon quartet were premiered at the 2019 International Double Reed Society Conference in Tampa. In November, his Skylines for woodwind sextet will be premiered in London, England. His Reflections on the Last Post for tuba and piano won the 2019 Tuba-Euphonium Workshop’s Composition Competition sponsored by the U.S. Army Band “Pershing’s Own.” This work will be the official competition piece for the workshop’s 2020 event. The winning contestant will solo the tuba/band version of the work on the Gala Concert with the Army Band.

Joan L. Frey (BS ’70) served in progressive leadership roles for 38 years as a professional nurse, leader, educator and member of the National League for Nursing, and in elected and appointed positions on the NLN Board of Governors. Frey has demonstrated distinction in transforming and advancing excellence in nursing education by providing leadership and visionary thinking over 20 continuous years of dedicated, articulated Board of Governor service under seven NLN presidential terms. She joined Galen College of Nursing in 2008 as Dean in Louisville, KY, after 28 continuous service years with Aultman Health Foundation. Since 2016, she has served as academic president with oversight over four distinct campuses in as many different states, with an enrollment of 6000 students. Most recently, Frey provided visionary leadership to establish a branch nursing education campus in poverty-stricken Appalachia to correct severe nursing shortages for the improvement of unmet community workforce and healthcare needs.

Gary Fugman (BME ’75), former director of bands at the University of Wisconsin–Waukesha and Buena Vista University (IA) begins his 10th season as trumpet player for the Burt County Brass Quintet, concertizing in eastern NE.

Vivian J. Deppert Gerriets (BA ’70), fully retired from teaching and choir directing, and her sister have recently joined the Heart of Illinois Sweet Adelines in East Peoria (in residence at Illinois Central College). Lifelong learners, Gerriets and her sister are having a blast and have discovered there is always more to learn.

Ronald William Hill (BME ’76) announced the release of the album On Pasture’s Edge, a collection of original vocal and piano pieces. The album features his song cycle, Songs of Sac Prairie, based on the writings of WI’s most prolific author, August Derleth. Featured performers are mezzo-soprano Audrey Grieme Johnson and renowned bass-baritone William Powers, with Hill as pianist. The recording has been sponsored by the Sanfilippo Foundation and the Illinois Arts Council. Two outreach concerts featuring the album’s music took place in Illinois to bring the music to underserved audiences.
and published over 40 educational chamber works for piano and strings and developing string ensembles. The latest work is an Adagio for String Ensemble (transcribed and adapted for strings, which is suitable for concert programs and memorial services as a welcome departure from the tried-and-true memorial pieces currently in the literature). A conductor from the Music Institute of Chicago graciously conducted its premiere at a private gathering of community orchestra musicians.

Marvin Lamb (DMA '77) was awarded the Henry Zarrow Professorship in Music at the University of Oklahoma for “meeting the highest standards in scholarship & teaching.” Lamb has been at the university since 1998, serving initially as the dean of the College of Fine Arts. Since his return to the music faculty, he has been the head of the music composition program, teaching music composition, orchestration & conducting the New Music Ensemble. Recent compositions include WOODCUTS for tenor saxophone & pre-recorded saxophones, which was premiered at the World Saxophone Congress in Croatia, and a string quartet CD release, QUADRANTS 4 by the Pedroia Quartet on Navona Records. His principal mentor/teacher at Illinois was Paul Martin Zonn.

E. L. Lancaster (MS ’71) was presented a Lifetime Achievement Award at the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy on July 26, 2019. Lancaster is Executive Keyboard Editor of Alfred Music and a piano faculty member at California State University, Northridge.

Lucinda Lawrence (BM ’77, MM ’79) is a composer, playwright, and lyricist, focusing on creative and performing efforts in musical theatre and new old-style radio theatre. Elected to the Board of Directors of the American Association of Community Theatre (2015-2017; 2018-2021), she serves among many reader-adjudicators for the AACT New-PlayFest contest and on other committees. Other current volunteer service includes Strategic Planning for AACT and chairing the Historic Preservation Committee for National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Champaign Alliance Chapter. She won 3rd place in the 2019 American Heritage Contest of the DAR with her first non-musical theatre pursuit, a one-act stage play, Back When—A Storied Tale, adapted from her original story for Within This Old House, musical theatre work in progress. The 2019 theme was “Honoring Our Patriots While Preserving Our Family Stories.” She received the Literature and Drama category’s award at the DAR 128th Congress in Washington, DC (June 2019).

Bruce Moss (BM ’75, MM ’76) celebrated his 40th year conducting the acclaimed Wheaton Municipal Band, Wheaton, IL, which recently opened its 90th season.

Bill Overton (BS ’77, MS ’78) continues to perform and record in the Chicago area with the Chicago Jazz Orchestra, the Chicago Philharmonic, Ann Hampton-Callaway, Michael Feinstein, Slide Hampton, The Temptations, “Too Hot to Handel: The Jazz-Gospel Messiah,” and many others at Ravinia, the Auditorium Theater, the Chicago Theater, Symphony Center, the Green Mill, Winter’s Jazz Club, and many others. His shows, “The Universalist and the Last Balladeer: The Music of John Coltrane and Johnny Hartman” and “For Sure, For Certain, Forever and Always: The Genius of Jimmy Webb”, are being presented around Chicago (including Studio 5 in Evanston, IL) and elsewhere. His new album, Only Love Can Do That, was released in 2018. His new band, The Kettle Brothers, featuring Illinois alumni Dan Anderson and Art Davis, as well as Don Stiernberg, performs for Alzheimer’s and memory care patients.

Michael Pettersen (BA ’74) and his wife, Jan Marie Aramini, performed with the Bournemouth Symphony and Chorus in Poole, England. There, Pietà by English composer Richard Blackford, received its world premiere under the direction of Gavin Carr. Nimbus Records recorded Pietà over the two days following the premiere. The CD will be available later this year.

Alma Colk Santosuosso (PhD ’79) retired after a 33-year career as professor of music history at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, ON. This year, the Institute of Mediaeval Music, Canada published her book, Music Theory Manuscripts from Mediaeval Normandy, the third volume in her series concerning the study of music theory in Normandy (1000-1300). Her work was supported by grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

1980–1989

Daniel Adams (DMA ’85) delivered a lecture on his composition Eulerian Circles for unaccompanied alto saxophone in conjunction its performance by saxophonist Trevor Davis at the New Music on the Bayou Festival in West Monroe, LA, on June 6. Three of Adams’s
compositions were released on CDs during the first half of 2019. Recorded at Springs Theatre Studios by members of the McCormick Percussion Group, Solstice Introspect for vibraphone trio was released on Sustain (Navona Records). Serpentine Glow for bass flute appears on HE (Phasma-Music), recorded by flautist Iwona Glinka at Subway Recording Studios in Athens, Greece. Recorded by oboist Andrew Nogal at Windy Apple Studios in River Forrest, IL, Congruent Verses for English horn solo was released on Millennial Masters Vol. 9 (Ablaze Records).

Michael Denham (MM ’84) has served for 23 years as director of music ministries at the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. He was recently named Distinguished Alumnus of the Year at Beeson Divinity School of Samford University.

Darcy Drexler (MM ’85) is beginning her 23rd year as director of the String Academy of Wisconsin and also leads the master of music in string pedagogy degree program at UW–Milwaukee. Her former students are teaching and performing in orchestras throughout the US. This past year, she gave violin master classes and pedagogy workshops in Chicago and NYC. Drexler has given violin master classes and teacher-training workshops in Brazil and China, and each summer directs the popular SAW/UWM “Teaching the Violin to Children” workshop, which attracts both domestic and international participants.

Barbara Haggh-Huglo (BM ’78, MM ’80, PhD ’88) is professor of musicology at the University of Maryland. In July, she delivered the keynote address at the College Music Society International Conference in Ghent, Belgium. She is completing Michel Huglo’s dictionary of medieval musical terms in four languages, Le latin musicologique, and his list of manuscript sources of the musical diagrams of Plato’s Timaeus and later commentators. She serves on the editorial boards of the series Historiae and of the periodicals Journal of the Alamire Foundation, Musica disciplina, Plainsong & Medieval Music, and Revue belge de musicologie.

Charles Norman Mason (DMA ’82) has had several premieres this past year, including Quiver and Quake by Splinter Reeds, A Better Place for flute choir, and That Yearning for trombone choir. His work Swagger for amplified bassoon, brass quintet, and 2 percussion was performed at Tanglewood by Gabriel Beavers, Triton Brass, Mike Williams, and Matt Sharrock. Mason is chair of composition at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami.

Jon Mitchell (MS ’72, EdD ’80) was the 2019 recipient of the College Orchestra Directors Association Lifetime Achievement Award.

Carolyn Paulin (DMA ’89) is happily retired in southern Maine, where she is president of the board of directors of the Portland String Quartet Society, a not-for-profit organization supporting the work of the Maine-based ensemble in concert and educational outreach. She also teaches classes on musical topics at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Southern Maine.

Chuck Pelletier (BME ’86) wrote the musical The Green Room, which is being produced Off-Broadway in Fall 2019 at the American Theatre for Actors in New York. Chuck has spent the last 10 years as the vocal director for Princess Cruises.

William Susman’s (BA ’82) music appears on three albums in 2019. Amores Monutiiios for flute and marimba is a first recording by UI classmates Patricia and Greg Zuber (Met Opera Orchestra) for their album Blackbird Redux. Quiet Rhythms No. 9 was recorded by Paris-based pianist Vanessa Wagner (Victoires de la Musique) on Inland, an album of contemporary piano. And, Collision Point, a portrait album of his chamber music, features the Rome-based ensemble Piccola Accademia degli Specchi, celebrating a 10-year collaboration. Scenes from his opera Fordlandia were performed at Fort Worth Opera’s Frontiers. Haskalah for marimba and organ was performed at Bartok National Concert Hall in Budapest and the National Concert Hall in Taipei by Organized Rhythm featuring Joseph Gramley, marimba (Silk Road Ensemble) and Clive Driskill-Smith, organ. Vanessa Wagner performed selections from his solo piano series Quiet Rhythms throughout France, Germany, and Switzerland.

Peter Tiboris (EdD ’80) continues to be a vital presence on the international music scene. In 2019, he released recordings of Beethoven’s 7th and Tchaikovsky’s 4th symphonies with the Pan-European Philharmonia of Warsaw, and led concerts in New York’s Carnegie Hall; Florence; Paris; Vienna; Lisbon; and Syros, Greece. His company, MidAmerica Productions, is entering its 37th season; highlights will include the first US appearance of the Beijing Central Conservatory of Music Symphony Orchestra (December 13, 2019, Carnegie Hall). In 2020, he will celebrate Beethoven’s 250th birth year by conducting performances of the 9th symphony in Carnegie Hall, and in Vienna, Austria on the actual birthdate
(December 16) at the internationally renowned Musikverein. He has commissioned Eleni: A Dramatic Oratorio, based on Nicholas Gage’s book Eleni (composer Nestor Taylor, librettist Fergus Currie), to premiere at Carnegie Hall on the 200th anniversary of Greek independence (March 25, 2021).

Eva Wasserman-Margolis (MM ‘80) was honored for her retirement from the Givatayim Conservatory (Israel) on June 7, 2019, at a program organized by her students. After completing her studies at the UI School of Music, Eva served as principal clarinet in the Haifa Symphony. She started teaching at the Givatayim Conservatory in 1985, and raised a generation of students who play in major orchestras and hold teaching positions in universities around the world. Her students are active performers in all genres ranging from classical to jazz, klezmer and rock. A specialist in tone production, Eva has taught courses and master classes in the US, Israel, Japan, China, and many European countries. Her publications include Learning the Clarinet the Artistic Way, Time for Tone, Thinking Tone, The Generation of Hope, and Ode to Odessa, published by OR-TAV Music Publications, owned by Yosef (Jeffrey) Zucker (BM ’78). Eva’s website is www.evawassermanmargolis.com.

Scott Wood (BM ’87, MM ’89) conducted a Tel Aviv concert of the Israel Symphony Orchestra Rishon LeZion (the country’s premier opera orchestra) in a program that included Bernstein’s Symphonic Dances from West Side Story. Other summer projects included a concert with the Arlington (VA) Philharmonic and an Independence Day concert in Washington National Cathedral.

1990–1999

Dan Aldag (MM ’91) co-presented with drummer Matt Wilson a clinic entitled “Getting Off The Page: Moving Your Big Band Beyond Written Arrangements” at the 2019 Jazz Educators Network national conference in Reno, NV.

Timothy J. Bowlby (DMA ’97) received the world premiere of his composition Laurels for unaccompanied flautist in Danvers, MA, in July. He is currently completing research on implied cyclic construction in Samuel Barber’s Hermit Songs, Op. 29. Tim is senior lecturer in music and film studies at Lewis University (IL).

Michael Edward Edgeron (DMA ’94) has received international prizes for his compositions and his music is performed around the world. In June 2019, Michael was appointed professor of artistic research at the Malmö Academy of Music, Lund University (Sweden).

Adam Gohr (BME ’98), Dustin Helvie, and Matt Karnstedt (MME ’18) directed the Libertyville High School Bands, which was one of only four schools nationally to be awarded the Blue Ribbon Programs of Excellence award by the National Band Association. Their Wind Ensemble will be performing at the NBA/CBDNA Conference in Chicago this upcoming February, and in a joint concert with the University of Illinois Wind Symphony in KCPA on April 5. The Jazz Ensemble will be performing at the Illinois Music Education Conference this January.

Zach Hench’s (MM ’99) most recent album, The End Is OK, was released in May. “One Foot Then The Other,” a solo piano work from the album, was selected by Spotify to be featured on their “Classical New Releases: Spotify Picks” editorial playlist, which has over 430,000 followers.

Kelley Kesterson (MME ’92) joined Missouri State University’s music education department as supervisor of clinical experiences. Kesterson continues to be a band clinician as well as low brass instructor in the St. Louis area, where he lives with his wife of 36 years.

Jim Kollias (MS ’96) is the director of orchestras and chair of the Visual & Performing Arts department at Arnold O. Beckman High School in Irvine, CA. In April, he will be making his eighth appearance in Carnegie Hall with the Beckman HS Sting Orchestra. In 2018, he was named the Orange County Instrumental Music Educator of the Year and the American String Teachers Association Southern Section Classroom Teacher of the Year by the Los Angeles Chapter of CalASTA.


Ben Luginbuhl (BME ’98) is music department chair and choir director at Normal Community High School in Normal, IL. A National Board Certified Teacher, he was honored to be named as a top-ten finalist in the Illinois Teacher of
the Year program for the 2018–19 school year. He credits his experiences at UI as foundational to his success as a music educator, and is grateful to still be connected to the university through working as a staff member for ISYM Chorus camps for over 15 years.

Donald Nally (DMA ’96) won a second consecutive Grammy award for Best Choral Performance with his choir, The Crossing. In the past year, they have appeared with the New York Philharmonic, the LA Philharmonic, the Park Avenue Armory, and the Haarlem Choral Biennale in the Netherlands; they premiered many new works, including those of Julia Wolfe, David Lang, Michael Gordon, Gavin Bryars, and Ted Hearne. In May, he received an honorary doctorate from Westminster Choir College of Rider University (NJ). He conducts and teaches graduate students at Northwestern University.

Raymond Pettit (PhD ’96) has been appointed the executive director of the master of science in business analytics program at the Rady School of Management at the University of California, San Diego. His responsibilities include curriculum coordination, capstone program advisement, corporate relations and partnerships, and running an Advanced Business Analytics Center of Excellence. He works closely at the convergence of data science and business, including extensive collaboration with UCSD’s Supercomputing Center and Data Science Institute. He joined Rady in July 2018 after 25 years in New York City as an advertising, media and marketing science consultant and executive.

Anthony Prisk (BM ’96) has been a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra as second trumpet for six years and was previously a member of the Houston Symphony for 11 seasons. He was recently added to the faculty of the Peabody Institute as adjunct professor of trumpet for 2019–20 and has been with Temple University in the same position for five years.

Robert Reinhart (BM ’98) attended the premiere of his composition Mortise for prepared piano in November 2018 at Constellation in Chicago, and pianist Amy Williams has subsequently performed it in Fullerton, CA, and in Philadelphia. In March 2019, he attended the premiere of his Quodlibet for soprano and soprano saxophone at the University of Michigan, performed by Nina Dante and Jeff Siegfried. He continues as coordinator of sophomore theory and aural skills at Northwestern University and frequently performs as a bassoonist, vocalist, and recordist with the a.pe.r.i.od.ic ensemble and Triple Reed Trio.

Trudy Fraase Wolf (MM ’92, MS ’96) has been hired to serve as the superintendent of the Zeeland Public School District beginning in July 2019. She continues to serve as the school PK-12 music instructor as well. Wolf performs with the Bismarck-Mandan Symphony and the Missouri River Community Band.

2000–2009

Kristina Boeger (BME ’89, MM ’92, DMA ’00) guest-edited and contributed two articles to October’s Choral Journal, a special-focus issue on choral communities and social justice. Her article “Embedded and Embodied: Learning Black South African Choral Music from the Source” was published in February’s issue of 21CM.org. In January she served as music director of A Path of Miracles, performed at the Page Theater (Winona, MN) with 17 chamber singers and San Francisco’s ODC Dance. On Pomerium’s new CD release, Musical Games of the Renaissance: A Century of Musical Ingenuity, 1410-1510, she is twice-featured as a soprano soloist.

Chris Combest (DMA ’09) was recently recognized as a faculty fellow by Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, where he is currently assistant professor of tuba in the School of Music.

Lisa DeAngelis (BME ’06) has devoted her training, skills and resources to philanthropic efforts in the arts. She is in her third season as president of the Lyric Opera of Chicago’s Young Professionals Board, committed to cultivating the next generation of opera supporters. She holds an ex-officio seat on Lyric’s Board of Directors and is an invited member of multiple board committees. She is also a supporter of the School of Music, Chicago Opera Theatre, the Collaborative Arts Institute of Chicago, a member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Overture Council, and the Art Institute of Chicago’s Evening Associates, and sits on the Board of Directors for the American Society for the Alexander Technique. Recently she was a featured speaker for the University of Illinois FAA alumni event “Art of the Matter” held in Chicago and will speak to incoming FAA students this fall on campus as part of an alumni panel.

Brendan Finucane’s (BM/BME ’05) Chicago-based music education company Chromawheel Music, a partnership with fellow Illinois Alum Farsheed Hamidi-Toosi (ECE ’06) launched its first product in August, the Music Explorer Kit. The company also debuted a prototype for a novel instrument designed for musicians learning music concepts at the Illinois Music Education Association conference.
Sara Fraker (DMA ’09) and pianist Casey Robards (BM ’98, MM ’00, DMA ’12) have released a CD entitled Botanica (MSR Classics, 2019). Exploring intersections between the human and botanical worlds, Botanica is a musical entry point into current conversations around environmental and social justice. The six pieces on the album (including five world-premiere recordings) are interrelated by common themes and origins: spiritual ecology, poetic text, and resistance to injustice. Featuring music by Godron, Haas, Rouen, Soukup and Srinivasan, the program is rich with allusions to woodland trees and bamboo forests. Sara is assistant professor of oboe at the University of Arizona, a member of the Tucson Symphony, and principal oboist of the Grammy-nominated ensemble True Concord Voices & Orchestra.

Kerry Heimann (BM ’93, MM ’95, DMA ’09) joined Princeton University Concerts as Operations and Patron Services Manager. He does so following his 13-year tenure at the American Boychoir School, accompanying the choir’s almost 100 annual concerts, coordinating an extensive international touring and recording schedule, and ultimately serving as its president. Princeton University Concerts just celebrated its 125th anniversary, hosting notable artists such as Bobby McFerrin, Joyce DiDonato, and Gustavo Dudamel. Continuing his deep interest in choral music and in music of the Baroque era, Kerry regularly collaborates with ensembles from Princeton University and Westminster Choir College (NJ). Last spring, he performed multiple harpsichord concertos by J. S. Bach at the Bethlehem Bach Festival and the St. John Passion at the Spoleto Festival USA with UI professor Charlotte Mattax Moersch and fellow alumn Sherezade Panthaki, respectively.

Joseph Herl (PhD ’00), professor of music at Concordia University (NE), has received the university’s 2018 award for excellence in teaching. He is in his 19th year at Concordia, where he teaches music history, music theory, liturgy, hymnody, and church music. He has chapters forthcoming in two books: “Worship,” in A Companion to Lutheran Orthodoxy, and “Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Hymnody,” in Perspectives on the History of Hymns. He has also edited, with Peter C. Reske, the two-volume Lutheran Service Book: Companion to the Hymns, which will be published in 2019 by Concordia Publishing House.

Julia Kay Jamieson (MM ’02) was a panelist for a Masters Series Forum, “Diverse Arts Engagements: Building Artistic Voices for the Future” and chaired the Young Composer Project for the 2019 American Harp Society National Summer Institute. Her work kittens (commissioned and premiered by the 2016 Illinois Summer Harp Class Harp Jam) was performed in the opening concert of the 2019 Taiwan International Harp Festival in Taipei.

Stacey Jocoy (PhD ’05) was pleased to give the keynote presentation at the 2019 South-Central Renaissance Conference on the topic of “Isabella d’Este versus Lucrezia Borgia and the competitive origins of the Renaissance Madrigal.”

Eric A. Johnson (DMA ’02) is founding artistic director of Cor Cantiamo and the director of choral activities at Northern Illinois University. Under Johnson’s leadership, Cor Cantiamo, a professional chamber choir, will be celebrating their 10th anniversary season this year and has recently received significant artistic recognition, including a NEA Art Works grant for a commissioning project with Libby Larsen. The commissioned material will focus on immigrant families separated at the US borders. The ensemble has also been invited to perform at the 2020 ACDA Central/North Central Division Convention, and selected to premiere the ACDA Brock Composition Commission winner. Cor Cantiamo will also be releasing their third commercial CD, The Seven Heavens: Choral Music of James Whitbourn. Johnson will also be participating in a panel presentation at the Iowa Music Educators Conference entitled “What is our music? Rethinking Music Instruction and Performance Paradigms.”

Ben Jones (BA ’06) will return to the stage of the San Francisco Symphony at Davies Symphony Hall to perform in the semi-staged production of Ravel’s L’enfant et les sortilèges. Find more at www.benjonessinger.com and at @benjonessinger on all social platforms.

Kiel Lauer (BM ’08) won the bass trombone position in the Ft. Collins (CO) Symphony in July 2019. He also performs regularly with orchestras throughout CO, NM, and WY. Kiel was a student of Professor Elliot Chasanov at Illinois. He also holds an MM from Michigan State and is currently completing his DMA at Colorado, where he studies with UI alumnus William Stanley.

Charles W. Lynch III (MM ’02, DMA ’09) joined the faculty of the Midwest Harp Festival in July 2019. He also joined the American Harp Society Board of Directors as director-at-large. Notable performances include a solo performance for Lyon & Healy’s Phoenix Harptacular in October 2018 and appearances with several Phoenix Valley orchestras. He continues to direct the Mesa Public Schools Harp Program in AZ, which is the largest public-school harp program in the country with over 240 students across 16 secondary schools. He is also faculty associate in harp at Arizona State University.
Kenneth Martin (BME ’02) composed a new work for unaccompanied SATB chorus entitled *The beauty of a star*, in celebration of the 10th anniversary season of the San Diego chamber chorus Sacra/Profana. The work featured words by San Diego poet and musician, Libby Weber. The world premiere of *The beauty of a star* took place at the Sacra/Profana Season X opening concert in November 2018 under the direction of Juan Carlos Acosta.

Steven Riley (BME ’08) was named director of athletic bands at Arkansas State University.

Adam Rusek (BME ’07) has accepted the position of fine arts coordinator for Joliet School District 86 after serving the last 11 years in Peotone CUSD 207-U as the band director at Peotone High School and Peotone Intermediate School. This will be his thirteenth year in education and first in administration.

Charles Joseph Smith (MM ’95, DMA ’02) made his debut performance at the Chicago Cultural Center, and debut as a guest on CRIS Radio, both in April 2017. He played in two recent recitals at the U of I in 2017 and 2018 with the help of UIUC Autism Speaks. He also recorded 10 original music numbers of his new album, *War of the Martian Ghosts*, with help from recording engineer Glenn Curran, in 2017-18, leading to the major record release at The Hideout Chicago in Feb. 2018 to great success, and was featured in *Downbeat Magazine*, *Chicago Reader*, *The News-Gazette*, and the video series BTS Classical, also in 2018. In 2019, Charles performed a full piano recital at the Mount Prospect Music Library, and was interviewed by both NBC5 and ABC7 TV stations.

Kenneth Steinsultz (DMA ’04) was appointed department chair for the music department at the University of Evansville (IN). Steinsultz continues to serve as director of bands and professor of euphonium, trombone, and tuba.

Daniel Teadt (BM ’98, MM ’00) released a new album, *In This Blue Room: Songs of Kile Smith* (Naxos). In September, he presented a Ted Talk in which he explored the authenticity of sound. Daniel will also serve as the official TedX Youngstown voice coach for the 2019-20 season. His work as a master voice and performance coach include the Classical Singer Convention 2019, Skidmore College (NY), and Carnegie Mellon University’s Swartz Center for Entrepreneurship and Tepper School of Business executive education program. His musical accomplishments include a world premiere of Zvony Nagy’s *Dialogues With Silences*, based on the poetry of Thomas Merton.

Colleen Potter Thorburn (BM ’06) performed as harp soloist for Heitor Villa-Lobos’s Harp Concerto with the Virginia Commonwealth University Symphony in Richmond. Her performance, described as “masterful” by *Classical Guitar Magazine*, was part of the opening concert of “Experiencing Villa-Lobos,” a three-day international festival hosted by VCU that featured globally-recognized scholars and performers of Villa-Lobos’s music. Colleen teaches harp, music theory, and aural skills courses at VCU, where she has served on the music faculty since 2015.

Audra Ziegel (MM ’08) presented a lecture at the Philadelphia Flute Fair in March 2019 entitled “Stage Presence and Effective Strategies for Incorporating Body Movement.” Audra also served at the co-principal flutist of the 2019 International Festival of Conductors, Composers, and Collaborators (IFC3). Other recent credits include performing as a featured soloist on the Flute Society of Washington member’s recital and as a substitute musician with the Delaware Symphony. The highlight of 2019 was performing at the National Flute Association convention in Salt Lake City on the “Wonder Women: Celebrating Our Strength Through Music” program, where she performed the Sonata for Flute and Piano by Lita Grier. Upcoming engagements include appearing as a guest soloist on the Towson University (MD) chamber music series and master classes at Franklin and Marshall University (PA) and the University of Delaware. Audra is adjunct faculty at St. Vincent Pallotti High School Arts Academy and The Music Space in Towson, MD.

Joshua Zink (MM ’08) has been appointed assistant professor of music–voice, at Carson-Newman University (TN). His teaching duties include applied voice, director of opera theatre, music director of musical theatre, vocal pedagogy, lyric diction, and he conducts the Women Singers. Directed by Carroll Freeman he recently performed the role of Gideon in Adamo’s *Little Women* at Harrower Opera, where he also co-directed the Young Artist Program scenes performances. He has recently performed Schubert’s *Winterreise*, and Tom Cipullo’s *America 1968*. His performances include operatic roles with Opera New Jersey, Dayton Opera, Nashville Opera, Opera Omaha, Pine Mountain Music Festival, and Opera America’s series “Exploring
American Voices.” The Hixon-Lied and Tomek Fellowship funded his doctoral work at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. An advocate for new works, his published scholarly activity investigates and advances new music in America with Cipullo’s America 1968.

2010–2019

Molly Abrams (MM ’19) recently moved back to ME and is now teaching high school chorus in Presque Isle.

Theresa A. Allison (PhD ’10), professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, Division of Geriatrics, has been awarded a five-year grant from the National Institute on Aging at the National Institutes of Health. “The Potential for Music to Improve Quality of Life in Dementia Caregiving Relationships” will be one of the first longitudinal studies of the role of music in Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias. The study combines ethnographic approaches to the study of music and relationships with health sciences standardized testing to examine the impact of music in daily life for people living at home with dementia. The findings will be used to develop an in-home, music-based intervention to help keep people with dementia out of nursing homes.

Chanah Ambuter (MM ’15), based in southeast MI, has continued to perform professionally and to enlarge her harp studio. In addition to weddings and private performances, she has played for special events, including community Christmas cabaret, school openings, grand openings, banquets honoring Dearborn Heights mayors, the Women in Defense: Michigan Chapter, and Young Artists Gala. She has also returned to play with the ensembles and accompany the choirs of Faith Community Presbyterian Church, Boars Head Dramatic Christmas Cycle, West Bloomfield Carol Sing, Grosse Pointe Woods Presbyterian Church, and Troy High School Orchestra. She has also formed a duo with local violinist Jo Mckean and has collaborated in several small chamber events, including performances of a piano/voice duet she transcribed for harp, and a harp/organ duet. Chanah’s private harp studio also offered a Christmas holiday recital to the residents of Sunrise Senior Living Community and an in-house spring recital.

Chadley Ballantyne (MM ’03, DMA ’15) presented his work on acoustic voice pedagogy at workshops, conferences, guest lectures and master classes. At the 2019 American Choral Directors Association conference in Kansas City, MO, he was a co-presenter with Karen Brunssen for their session, “The Evolving Singing Voice: Adolescence.” He presented “Fun with Vocal Tract Resonances” at the VASTA/PAVA 2018 Joint Conference in Seattle. Chadley is a co-instructor with Kenneth Bozman (Lawrence University, WI) and Ian Howell (New England Conservatory of Music) at NEC’s Acoustic Vocal Pedagogy Workshop. The 2019 AVP workshop included participants from across the US, Canada, UK, Sweden, Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Chadley also gave master classes at Illinois Wesleyan University, Augustana College (IL), and a guest lecture on acoustic vocal pedagogy at Northwestern University. Ballantyne is in his second year at Stetson University (FL), where he is assistant professor of music, voice.

Hannah Brauer (BME ’13) recently returned to the Urbana campus for her new position as assistant director of advancement for stewardship and donor relations at the University Library.

Erin Brooker-Miller (BM ’14) was awarded tenure with the Des Moines Symphony as principal harpist. She was a featured soloist with the ensemble performing the Mozart Flute and Harp Concerto in October 2018 and in the chamber series, Spotlight at the Temple, in May 2019. In 2019, she successfully organized the 11th USA International Harp Competition as executive director. Under her direction, the 10th (2016) and 11th (2019) competitions have received the highest praise in the organization’s history.

Andrew Buchanan (DMA ’15) recently won the position of principal timpani with the Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra.

Sydney Campen (BM ’18) is a passionate performer and advocate for the arts. Sydney is currently pursuing her master’s in harp performance at the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. Sydney recently earned a position in the New World Symphony’s 2019–20 substitute pool.

Liliana Carrizo (PhD ’18) has been named a post-doctoral fellow with the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University for the 2019-20 academic year.

Sharon Cho (BME ’14) sang background vocals on Keb’ Mo’ and Taj Mahal’s album TajMo, which won the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Blues Album of the Year as well as Best Blues Album in the 2018 DownBeat International Critics Poll. Cho received a Grammy Certificate for her role.
Joo Yon Chung (Artist Diploma '19) won 3rd place in the orchestral audition and master class competition at the National Flute Association's convention in Summer 2019.

Cristin Colvin (MM '14) stage-directed and performed the title role of Anne Guzzo’s chamber opera Locust in its September 2018 premiere in Jackson, WY, traveled with the production team to mount the show in Agadir, Morocco in March 2019, returned for a Laramie performance in October, and is planning 2020 performances. The opera has been the subject of a WY-PBS special as well as a forthcoming documentary. In July 2019, Cristin also appeared in Denver Immersive Opera’s all-female, modern retelling of Mozart’s Don Giovanni as titular character Giovanna. Set in 1997, Giovanna is the owner of a successful women’s bar franchise who uses her business as a hunting ground for lovers. A local brewery served as the venue to allow audience members to be immersed in the set and to allow for interaction with the performers.

Derick Cordoba (DMA '17) continued in his role as the Unit One music coordinator, and was named a Southern Methodist University (TX) Bridwell Visiting Scholar Fellow in 2019. In April 2019, he was invited to give lectures at SMU and the University of North Texas on the history of the first liturgical jazz service. Cordoba also led a special commemorative service at SMU’s Perkins School of Theology, performing the Liturgical Jazz Service on its 60th Anniversary with a jazz nonet. He presented a paper, “Liturgical Jazz: Jazz in Sacred Spaces,” at the sixth Rhythm Changes conference in Graz, Austria, in 2019. Cordoba presented a poster titled “The Intersection of Avant-Garde Music and Liturgical Jazz in the 1960s” at the tenth-annual Jazz Education Network Conference in 2019. Cordoba also received a Jazz Education Network JAZZ2U grant in 2019. His new EP titled J&J will be released this fall.

Ellen Denham (DMA '16) accepted a position as professional professor of music at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, where she serves as director of opera and teaches voice. Productions directed include the world premiere of her original libretto, Pinstripe Harry’s Tearoom Cabaret, using jazz-age musical theatre selections. She also presented her research on opera and improvisation as part of the Artist Series at the Texoma regional conference of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, and is scheduled to present on challenges and solutions for the developing collegiate opera program at the National Opera Association national conference.

Erica Charous Faulhaber (BME '10, MME '14) has been named curriculum specialist and department chair for instrumental music in Park Ridge-Niles, IL School District 64. She is entering her 10th year of teaching elementary and middle school orchestra.

Sadie Glass (MM '13), formally Cisler, has recently been appointed assistant professor of practice in horn at the University of the Pacific Conservatory of Music in Stockton, CA. In addition to her teaching duties, she will be joining the faculty woodwind quintet, the Pacific Arts Woodwind Quintet, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Glass was also on faculty at Kendall Betts Horn Camp as the historic horn specialist this past summer. Specializing in early music, you can hear her performing throughout the country with leading orchestras, including American Bach Soloists and Portland Baroque Orchestra.

Eduardo Herrera (PhD '13), assistant professor at Rutgers University, recently published Experimentalisms in Practice: Music Perspectives from Latin America, co-edited with Ana Alonso Minutti and Alejandro Madrid (Oxford University Press, 2018). His most recent article on soccer chants, masculinity, and violence appears in Ethnomusicology (62.3, 2018). His work on Latin American avant-garde music has been recently featured in the Journal of the Society for American Music (12.2, 2018) and American Music (35.1, 2017).

Katie Beisel Hollenbach (PhD '18) accepted the position of assistant director for admissions, recruitment, and community outreach at the University of Washington School of Music in Seattle. Her article, “Teenage Agency and Popular Music Reception in World War II-Era Frank Sinatra Fan Clubs” will be published in an upcoming issue of the Journal of Popular Music Studies. Katie presented her research at the recent annual meeting of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies in Seattle, and will be presenting at the next annual meeting of the Society for American Music in Minneapolis.

Christopher Holman (BM '14) will begin doctoral study at the University of Oxford (U.K.) in October 2019. His dissertation will focus on Bach organ performance practice in France during the nineteenth century, and he will be developing new methods of analyzing player organ rolls by students of Charles-Marie Widor and Camille Saint-Saëns. He has also been appointed Parry-Wood Organist at the University of North Carolina in Greensboro. In April 2019, he was invited to give a lecture and performance at the University of Iceland, Reykjavik, and later that year joined the faculty at the Pacific Conservatory of Music in Stockton, CA. He also performed with the American Bach Soloists and Portland Baroque Orchestra.
Scholar at Exeter College (University of Oxford), where he will direct three choral services per week, manage the weekly organ recital series, and organize the choir's annual international tour. His time at Oxford follows a two-year fellowship at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis at the University of Applied Arts and Sciences in Basel, Switzerland, supported by a grant from the Frank Huntington Beebe Fund in Boston. During that time, he has performed over 50 concerts in seven countries on some of the world’s most important historic and modern organs.

Matthew Honda (BA ’14) received his MD from Tulane University School of Medicine and is beginning his residency in internal medicine at Loyola University Medical Center.


Meghan Jain (BME ’16) served as a clinician at the Illinois Music Education Conference in January 2019. Her presentation, “Acing edTPA: A Recent Grad’s Perspective,” was well received. In August 2018, Jain took on the challenge of rebuilding the choir program at Smith Middle School in Troy, MI. She teaches a curricular theater arts class, and in Spring 2019 she will direct the school’s first musical in over five years. Jain hopes to expand music access to a wider demographic of students at Smith through a popular music and songwriting class.

Aaron Kaplan (BM/BME ’11, MM ’13) and two of his colleagues started a new ensemble in Chicago, the JAM Orchestra, which gave a sold-out performance in December 2018, followed by another concert in August 2019, which featured SoM alum Evan Tammen, oboe. In addition to Aaron’s freelance work as a music director in the theatre community, he also continues in his seventh year as assistant orchestra director at Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South High Schools.

Shan Kazmi (MME ’15) and Rachel Maxwell (MME ’97) presented their clinic “Ten Takeaways from Texas” at the 2019 Illinois Music Education Conference (IMEC) in Peoria. They traveled with a group of band directors from across the country to the Lewisville Independent School District (TX) in Spring 2018 to observe nationally acclaimed band programs and teachers in the district and shared their findings in their clinic presentation.

Nick Loafman (BME ’10, MME ’15) was appointed editor of CMEA News, the quarterly publication of the Connecticut Music Educators Association.

Molly Madden (BM/BME ’11, MM ’14) presented a workshop on “Orchestral Writing for the Harp” for the Music Alive Composers Institute, presented by the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra and New Music USA, in Champaign.

Alex Munger (MM ’18) will join the Houston Grand Opera Studio as a pianist for the 2019-20 season.

Jenelle Orcherton (MM ’16) celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Champaign-Urbana Jazz Festival, which she started as a way to better support, develop, and showcase local and regional jazz talent. The festival has grown into a four-day event complete with Jazz Brunch, jam session, daily feature performers and collaborations with Allen Hall, Illini Swing Society, local libraries, high schools, CU Poets, and the SoM. This year kicks off with a parade and another outstanding lineup.

Molly O’Roark (MM ’15, DMA ’19) was a guest teacher and composer with the Connecticut Valley Harp Intensive. Her new harp ensemble piece Quin-nehtukqut was commissioned in honor of the 10th anniversary of the summer camp and was premiered on the final concert. O’Roark was a guest artist and composer for Michigan Harp Day 2018 at Michigan State University. She performed a solo recital on the Salvi Delta electric lever harp and her new harp ensemble work Rumpelstiltskin was premiered by the harp jam ensemble. She was also a featured pop-up artist during the Southern Harp Festival in March 2019 with a program based on her doctoral research on Harpo Marx.

Maureen Reagan (BM ’91, MM ’02, DMA ’19) completed her dissertation, “A History of the University of Illinois British Brass Band, 1981 to the Present.” She is currently the associate director for marketing at KCPA.

Lindy Smith (MM ’11) has joined the faculty of the University of Missouri-Kansas City as head of LaBudde Special Collections in University Libraries. Major collecting areas of LaBudde include music and performing arts, women’s and gender studies, the LGBT community, popular culture, and Western Americana.

Delaney Sterling (BME ’18) joined the development department at Goodman Theatre in Chicago as their annual fund coordinator. She will work with donors who contribute up to $2,500 towards the Goodman’s initiatives in education and new work, as well as the theater’s general operating budget.

Natalie Teodori (MM ’17) performed at the 2019 American Harp Society National
Summer Institute in a recital, “Collaboration, the Heart of Innovation.”

Elizabeth Thompson (DMA ’15) completed her first year as a tenure-track voice faculty at Illinois State University, where she teaches voice and oversees the vocal pedagogy curriculum. In May, she represented ISU at the Classical Singer Music convention and exhibition in Chicago, where she also presented a master class. Over the summer, Thompson participated in the Voice Science and Pedagogy Workshop hosted at Montclair State University (NJ), continuing her research into the vocal acoustics field. The year also highlighted Thompson’s continued work as a solo singer, presenting the recital program “Songs My Neighbors Taught Me” in both Bloomington-Normal and Kansas City; further, she served as soloist for Beethoven’s 9th Symphony with the Illinois Symphony Orchestra, various chamber music performances, and as a faculty performer in the RED NOTE New Music Festival.

Justin Vickers (BM ’96, DMA ’11), associate professor of music and artist teacher of voice at Illinois State University, just completed a productive full-year sabbatical researching and writing The Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts: A History of the Britten and Pears Era, 1948–1986 (The Boydell Press, forthcoming for the 75th anniversary of the Aldeburgh Festival in 2022). During his sabbatical, Vickers performed at Britten’s home, The Red House, for its Aldeburgh Festival programming, while conducting research in the Britten-Pears Foundation (BPF) Archive. In fall 2019, Vickers has a Scottish-themed solo recording that will be released by US/UK Albany Records, featuring the world-premiere recordings of Hamish MacCunn alongside Judith Weir and Benjamin Britten, recorded in Foellinger Great Hall, KCPA. Vickers returns to The Red House in March 2020 to complete his first opera libretto as part of a BPF-sponsored Creative Retreat, housed on the property.

J. Michael Weiss-Holmes (MM ’06, DMA ’12) continues as head of woodwinds and artist-teacher of saxophone at the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. Weiss-Holmes was recently involved with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s performance of Mass by Leonard Bernstein, conducted by Marin Alsop, which was taped for a national television special to be broadcast in 2020. Weiss-Holmes has been performing as the principal saxophonist of the Chicago Symphony since 2013 and will be joining them for their upcoming tours to FL, Europe, and Carnegie Hall during the 2019–20 season.

Nicholas “Niko” Yamamoto (BM ’17) completed a master’s in music composition at Rice University (TX) this spring. His thesis, “sound. field,” will be performed by the Shepherd Symphony Orchestra in March 2020. He was Emerging Composer Fellow for Musiqa’s 2018-19 season and commissioned to compose a saxophone quartet for the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston’s exhibition, “Stonewall 50.” Fixed Objects (2017), completed in the Experimental Music Studios, was selected for the 2019 FSU Festival for New Music. He will begin the doctorate in music composition and theory at Brandeis University (MA) in the fall. Upcoming projects include a commission from Opera Guerilla, from “New Downbeat” (project of Caroline Sackleh, BMus, 2015), and a work for Ensemble Linea. www.NikoYamamoto.com

Ka-Wai Yu (DMA ’11) recently completed his fourth year as assistant professor of music at Dixie State University (UT). He is the recipient of DSU’s Distinguished Faculty Service Award 2019 for his remarkable service to the university, profession, and community. Under Yu’s direction, the newly formed DSU Early Music Ensemble was one of the eight mini-grant recipients nationwide from Early Music America. Besides directing the fourth DSU Cello Festival in September 2019, Yu will be a featured artist in the Fresno Cello Festival in CA and University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Cello Festival this upcoming school year. He continues to enjoy his service as president-elect of the Utah American String Teachers Association and president of the Cello Society of Southern Utah. He also maintains a busy performance schedule as member of the Zion Trio, period-instrument ensemble Cosmopolitan Baroque, and as principal cellist of the Southwest Symphony Orchestra.

Aaron Ziegel (PhD ’11) was granted tenure and promoted to associate professor of music history and culture at Towson University (MD). His latest article, “Representing a Christian Nation: Sacred and Providential Discourses in Opera in the United States, 1911–1917,” was published in the Winter 2019 issue of the journal Music and Politics. He also appeared at the October 2019 national meeting of the College Music Society, where he shared research about preparing a multimedia, collaborative recital that presented a historical recreation of the music (piano duets and both popular and art songs) heard at home in American music parlors during World War I.
Karen Blackall, a DMA candidate in jazz performance, conducted the musical score to Darcy James Argue’s *Brooklyn Babylon* in the Music Building Auditorium on February 23, 2019. This event featured a cross-area ensemble of musicians from the jazz, instrumental performance, music education, and musicology areas of the SoM and marked the first performance of this music outside of Argue’s own Secret Society Big Band. Argue edited a complete set of parts for the ensemble specifically for this performance. Blackall received the Nicholas Temperley Prize for the Study of Musicology Award in 2018 for her dissertation, “Nostalgia, Landscape, and the Negotiation of Identity in Contemporary Big Band Compositions of Maria Schneider and Darcy James Argue.” Blackall also conducted selections from Maria Schneider’s *The Thompson Fields* with the Jazz Repertory Orchestra ensemble on April 25, 2019, at Krannert’s Studio Theatre.

Peng Du, a DMA student in piano performance and literature, was awarded a first-degree prize at the Golden Key International Music Festival. On May 24, she performed at Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall. She was the first-prize winner at the 2019 International Music Competition of Paris “Grand Prize Virtuoso.”

Mary Duplantier performed in “Nathan and Julie Gunn and Friends: An Evening on Broadway,” a Marquee Event at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. In December 2018, Mary also played with the University of Illinois Varsity Men’s Glee Club in their annual Concert of Carols. In Spring 2019, Mary competed in the 2019 Lyon and Healy Awards Competition in Chicago and also played with the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra.

Claire Happel Ashe, a DMA candidate in flute performance, commissioned a new work for baroque triple harp by James Moore, which she performed at the Princeton Sound Kitchen in November 2018. She participated in the North American premiere of Kapsberger’s 17th-century oratorio *I Pastori di Betellemme* as part of the Early Music Series at the Byron Colby Barn and WFMT Chicago. With her duo partner Philip Alejo, she recorded a new work for bass and harp by Stephen Andrew Taylor titled *Oxygen* which will be included on an album due out in 2020.

Jonathan Hollis, a PhD student in musicology, has completed three months of dissertation research in Armenia, funded by fellowships from the American Research Institute in the South Caucasus (summer 2018) and the National Association for Armenian Studies (spring 2019). In October, he will begin eight months of research in Armenia, through American Councils for International Education’s Research Scholar program, funded by the US Department of State through Title VIII. His dissertation, tentatively titled “Mugham in Armenian Music: Echoes of Conflict in Exile,” concerns Armenian musicians who specialize in mugham, an improvised musical tradition of the Caucasus region, and the genre’s history and reception in Armenia within the context of Armenian-Azeri ethnic conflict.

Thereza Lituma, a senior studying vocal performance and choral music education, received the 2019 Project Inclusion Voice Fellowship through the Grant Park Music Festival. As part of her fellowship, she sang with the Grant Park Chorus and was a member of the Project Inclusion Vocal Trio. Thereza performed in recitals throughout Chicago for the Grant Park Music Festival’s “Night out in the Parks” recitals as well as for a Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert. She also had the opportunity to sing alongside the Grant Park Chorus and Orchestra in their performance of Carl Vine’s Choral Symphony, the world premiere of Kareem Rous- tomato’s *Turn to the World: A Whitman Cantata*, and Beethoven’s *Missa solemnis*.

Dai-An Liu was a winner of the 2018-19 Taiwan National Symphony Orchestra International Top Talents Music Project Program. She was a featured participant in the 2019 Grant Park Music Festival’s inaugural Visiting Masters master class programs.

Dani Nutting, a DMA student in flute performance, was awarded a Fulbright grant to conduct nine months of dissertation research on the classical flute tradition in Bulgaria. She will study flute at the National Music Academy in Sofia and conduct research with flutists and musicians throughout the country, bridging classical performance and ethnomusicology. In addition to close engagement with the art music community in Sofia, Nutting will study the Bulgarian language and traditional music and dance, including the Bulgarian keyless wooden shepherd’s flute, the kaval.

Matthew Reeder was a finalist in the 2019 ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Awards and was selected to attend the inaugural residency for new music with Ensemble dal Niente at DePaul University. In addition, he published a Lacanian analysis of Kaija Saariaho’s first opera in *Re:Search*, the undergraduate journal for literary criticism at University of Illinois, and was awarded a grant by the Honors Program to research the work of Laurie Anderson.
Melinda Rodriguez, an MM student in jazz performance, won the third annual Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Vocal Competition on April 27. Rodriguez was one of five finalists, selected from a field of 50 registrants representing 16 states and seven countries. Hosted by George Washington University, the finalists performed with the legendary Count Basie Orchestra.

Geoffrey Schmelzer, an undergraduate voice performance major studying with Jerold Siena, performed three opera roles at music festivals this summer. At Manhattan Opera Studio’s summer festival in New York City, Geoffrey sang the roles of Papageno in Mozart’s Die Zauberflöte and Count Almaviva in Le nozze di Figaro. He also participated in a gala with his operatic colleagues at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall. Geoffrey returned to Central Illinois in late July to sing the role of Schaunard in the Midwest Institute of Opera’s production of Puccini’s La Bohème. In addition, Geoffrey’s guitar playing can be heard on Urban Desi artist Humza’s single, “Aja,” which was released in June.

Noël Wan won a 2019 international Lyon & Healy Award and was a 2019 Yellow Barn Music Festival Artist in harp. She gave a lecture-recital, “Contemporary Chamber Music & the Interdisciplinary Imagination,” at the 2019 American Harp Society National Summer Institute with fellow Illinois students Daniel McCarthy, Matthew Reeder, and Zack Osinski.

Aaron Wilbert, a DMA candidate studying oboe with John Dee, will join the faculty of Bradley University in Fall 2019. Wilbert was also an associate member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago during their 2018–19 season.

Lishan Xue, a DMA candidate in piano performance and literature studying with William Heiles, has won numerous prizes from national and international competitions and has performed in prestigious venues on four continents. Recent performances include recitals at Palazzo Albrizzi in Venice, and Capella del Mercanti in Turin, Italy, both as winner of the 2019 On Stage International Classical Music Competition, Piano Solo. Her first book, Learn to Improvise Jazz, co-authored with Tom Walsh, chair of jazz studies at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, was published by Shanghai Music Publishing House in June 2019. Covering a range of topics pertaining to performing and listening to jazz, the Chinese-language book also includes many exercises and four appendices, including a list of select jazz classics, mini jazz theory, piano voicing, and sheets for Bb and Eb instruments. It also comes with audio recordings, including exercise demonstrations, play-along tracks, and tunes from Walsh and Xue.

DMA candidate Gabriel Piqué was awarded the second-place prize at the 2018 Research Live! competition for his presentation “The University of Illinois Saxophone Ensemble: Exploring Old Works in a New Format.” Research Live! invites graduate students from all disciplines to share their research with a general audience in a compelling three-minute presentation.
Michael Colgrass

Michael Colgrass, a leading American-born composer, performer, and educator, died on July 2, 2019, in Toronto, ON.

Born in Brookfield, IL, in 1932, Colgrass was first inspired to pursue music after seeing drummer Ray Bauduc perform “Big Noise from Winnetka” in the 1943 film Reveille With Beverly. Colgrass used the money he earned from working as a golf caddy and setting pins in a bowling alley to gradually accumulate his first drums, which he learned to play by joining the school band and playing along with jazz recordings. Determined to be the next great drummer, he soon immersed himself in Chicago’s jazz scene, eventually performing with Joe Daley.

Seeking to expand his knowledge of music, Colgrass enrolled at the University of Illinois in 1950. Initially unmotivated by his studies and prone to missing his morning classes after performing six nights a week at Katsina Restaurant, Colgrass would later call his early college days “a disaster.” In an attempt to right the fledgling student, professor Paul Price urged Colgrass to attend a percussion ensemble concert at Smith Memorial Hall. While Colgrass commended the musicians’ talent, he complained, in conversation with Price after the concert, that “the music was terrible.” In response, Price challenged Colgrass to compose music that he would enjoy hearing. Recalling this pivotal moment in his life and career, Colgrass wrote in his 2010 memoir, “As the idea [to become a composer] dawned on me, sunlight in the music school hallway seemed to grow brighter, and to this day I can see the radiance of sunbeams streaming through Smith Music Hall’s windows.” Inspired, Colgrass soon wrote his first composition, Three Brothers, which was premiered at the university in 1951, received an endorsement from John Cage, and is still performed today. Over the next several years, he studied composition with Eugene Weigel at Illinois, Darius Milhaud at the Aspen Festival, and Lukas Foss at Tanglewood.

After graduating from Illinois with a degree in music performance and composition in 1954, and a two-year stint in Germany as timpanist with the Seventh Army Symphony Orchestra, Colgrass moved to New York. Choosing to freelance over a scholarship offer from Juilliard, he received steady employment as a pit musician for the premiere Broadway run of West Side Story. He also performed with the American Ballet Theater, the New York Philharmonic, several jazz ensembles, and participated in Columbia’s Stravinsky Conducts Stravinsky recording sessions.

The passion for composition that Colgrass first experienced at Illinois never left him, however. In 1967, he decided to retire his drumsticks and become a fulltime composer. Eschewing allegiance to any one of the postwar new-music styles, Colgrass forged his own artistic pathway, crafting a unique, highly personal style that freely blended diverse influences, from jazz to serialism. He won the 1978 Pulitzer Prize for Déjà vu, a single-movement concerto for four percussionists and wind ensemble, commissioned and premiered by the New York Philharmonic. In 1982, he received an Emmy Award for the PBS documentary Soundings: The Music of Michael Colgrass. He was also awarded two Guggenheim Fellowships, a Rockefeller Grant, and the 1988 Jules Léger Prize for New Chamber Music.

When not composing, Colgrass lectured on personal development and gave workshops throughout the world on the psychology and technique of performance, often with his renowned sense of humor on display. While Professor of Percussion William Moersch was preparing for his 1984 New York debut recital, he hosted one of Colgrass’s “Excellence in Performance” workshops and recalls the welcome influence it had on his playing: “Through his fascinating presentations and exercises, I realized I was too comfortable onstage from my years as a New York freelance musician; I needed to recreate a sense of stage fright and an invisible barrier at the entrance to the stage. Only when I was in a ‘performance state of mind’ could I pass through that barrier and function at the highest level of awareness and creativity. The recital was a tremendous success and I have used those techniques ever since.” Not content to work only with professional musicians, Colgrass also created a method of teaching children how to write music using graphic notation.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Ulla; their son, Neal; and a sister, Gloria. In a note, Ulla and Neal wrote, “Michael did not want any ceremonies after his death, nor did he want you to be sad. Instead, visit him by playing his music and feel his spirit soar.” —Michael Siletti, editor
Ben Johnston

Ben Johnston passed away on July 21, 2019, in Deerfield, WI, at the age of 93. Johnston is best known for his research about scalar theory and microtonal compositions. He spent a large part of his professional career at the University of Illinois.

After enlisting in the Navy in 1944, Ben received his BFA from the College of William & Mary in 1949 and then in 1950 married Betty Ruth Hall and attended the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music for a short time. A musicology professor gave Johnston a copy of the newly published *Genesis of a Music* by Harry Partch. This clarified what Ben had been hearing and for a short time he worked with Partch. His assignment was to tune Partch's instruments and he and Betty performed some of Partch's music. While in California, Ben enrolled at the University of California, Berkeley, but then went to Mills College, where he studied with Milhaud and earned an MFA.

The early 1950s were an exciting time. He received an appointment as accompanist and composer for the dance department at Illinois and then a faculty position in the School of Music's composition-theory division. He was chairman of the renowned Festival of Contemporary Arts, bringing in such guests as John Cage, Ralph Shapey, George Perle, Milton Babbitt, and Elliott Carter. Johnston sponsored Harry Partch's residency in the Center for Advanced Studies. Johnston's research was published in *Perspectives of New Music* and he gave frequent lectures about microtonal theory. Then when his String Quartet no. 2 was paired with Cage's *HPSCHD* on Nonesuch H-71224, listeners were able to experience the clarity and complexity of just intonation. His String Quartet no. 4, probably his best known, was recorded by the Kronos Quartet; the Kepler Quartet recorded all nine quartets under Johnston's supervision.

In addition to his research, Johnston had many composition students, and Larry Polansky credits Ben for helping shape his professional life. Polansky wrote the following:

“After Ben passed, his colleague and friend Heidi Von Gunden asked me to supply a short paragraph about Ben as a teacher. It occurred to me I could do that in one word: inspiration.

“Ben was a careful, responsible, and dedicated teacher. For most of his students, I think, he was an introduction and portal to a completely new way of thinking about pitch and rhythm. But for all of his students, he was a welcome beacon and shining example in the often-shadowy mist of academic art-making and teaching, of how to live a life of integrity, passion, and deep humanity as a composer in a world (academic, and beyond) where that is both difficult to do and infrequently encountered.

“In my nearly 40 years of teaching (I just retired), the unusually deep way that Ben inspired me as a young student composer (along with, I know, many others) is something to which I’ve never ceased to aspire. But Ben’s dedication to his art and his teaching, as well as his devotion to an ideal of a beautiful and complex musical idiom, sets a high bar that few of us can attain. But it’s still worth a try. If I’ve communicated, through my own work, even a small measure of Ben’s artistic, intellectual, and spiritual flame to my students, I’d be overjoyed (and surprised).

“This is to say that even though I was only technically Ben’s student for two years at the U of I, in all other ways he has remained my teacher ever since.”

Neely Bruce, also Ben’s student and friend, wrote this tribute:

“Ben Johnston was my teacher, my colleague, and my friend for 53 years. He supported my work and opened doors for me professionally. His music made an indelible impression on me from the first. It took the world a long time to realize what some of us had known for decades—Ben Johnston was one of the greatest composers of the second half of the twentieth century. The Kepler Quartet finished recording Ben’s complete quartets in 2016, when he was 90 years old. Ben was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Letters two years later, and died the following year. But Ben’s music was always beautiful, always original, always thought-provoking, always important. Special thanks to the great wide world of music for finally catching on! Better late than never.”

—Heidi Von Gunden, associate professor emerita of composition-theory
Joseph Flummerfelt

Joseph Ross Flummerfelt, a distinguished alumnus of the University of Illinois School of Music, passed away on March 1, 2019, in Indianapolis, at the age of 82.

Flummerfelt was recognized as one of the world’s most accomplished choral conductors (both Leonard Bernstein and Riccardo Muti called him the “world’s greatest choral conductor”). For 33 years, he served as professor of conducting and artistic director at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. With the Westminster Symphonic Choir and the New York Choral Artists, of which he was founder and musical director, he collaborated in hundreds of performances with the New York Philharmonic. Flummerfelt also prepared choirs for many other orchestras, including significant collaborations with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw, Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and the Leipzig Gewandhaus, for conductors including Abbado, Barenboim, Bernstein, Boulez, Chailly, Colin Davis, Guíñi, Maazel, Masur, Mehta, Muti, Ozawa, Sawallisch, Shaw, and Steinberg.

An accomplished orchestral conductor, he made his NY Philharmonic debut in 1988, conducting Haydn’s Creation, returning in 2001 to conduct the world premiere of Stephen Paulus’s Voices of Light. He also appeared as guest conductor with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Orchestra of St. Luke’s, Juilliard Symphony Orchestra, and San Antonio and Phoenix Symphonies, and conducted more than 60 choral/orchestral performances with the Spoleto Festival Orchestra. Flummerfelt was named Musical America’s Conductor of the Year in 2004.

Flummerfelt’s choirs have been featured in 45 recordings, including several Grammy winners (John Adams’s On the Transmigration of Souls, Mahler 3 with Bernstein, and Samuel Barber’s opera Antony and Cleopatra, and Singing for Pleasure, chosen by the New York Times as one of the finest-ever recordings of Brahms’s music.

Flummerfelt also served as director of choral activities for the Spoleto Festival USA for 37 years and for the Festival Dei Due Mondi in Spoleto Italy for 23 years. Through the Spoleto festivals he became a frequent collaborator and friend of composers Gian-Carlo Menotti and Samuel Barber, who asked Flummerfelt to conduct for his funeral.

In addition to his work as a performer, Flummerfelt was also a master teacher. Hundreds of his former students now occupy important choral positions throughout the United States, including Andrew Megill, now director of choral activities at Illinois,
Joe’s legacy is extraordinary. He breathed profound grace into our world through his performances and teaching (his friend Leonard Bernstein once remarked that his work provided “a great measure of beauty to a world that needs it badly”). Becoming his student was one of the greatest gifts; like hundreds of others who studied with him, my life was irrevocably changed in ways I didn’t expect. I hoped to become a better musician because of his teaching and example, but I didn’t understand how much he would change me by his belief that music is a tool for the honest exploration of what it means to be deeply human and fully alive.

My colleagues and I are deeply touched by Joe’s gift to the Illinois choral department. His bequest opens up a world of possibilities that will enrich our graduate students’ lives and education. Increased scholarship funding, bringing outstanding guest artists and performers to Urbana-Champaign, national and international touring, commissioning new works, collaborations with leading musicians, enhancing the performance and scholarly opportunities for our students—all these become possible through Joe’s generosity.

During the last weekend I spent with Joe, he wanted each visitor to hear a passage from a letter by Rainer Maria Rilke: “Death is our friend precisely because it brings us into absolute and passionate presence with all that is here, that is natural, that is love. . . . Life always says Yes and No simultaneously. Death (I implore you to believe) is the true Yea-sayer. It stands before eternity and says only: Yes.” Joe’s extraordinary gift will allow the choral division to say “Yes” more powerfully than ever before, as we explore the many ways we can enhance our students’ education. For this opportunity to continue Joe’s legacy, and the legacy of the Illinois choral program, we are truly grateful.

and Donald Nally, conductor of The Crossing and professor at Northwestern University. Yannick Nezet-Seguin, artistic director of the Metropolitan Opera and conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, cites Flummerfelt as one of the two major influences on his conducting and told the NY Times that his sessions with Flummerfelt were the only significant conducting lessons he ever had.

In recent years, Joseph Flummerfelt was a frequent presence in Champaign-Urbana. He was an artist-in-residence for the choral area, leading rehearsals and teaching master classes for our conducting students. For the past three summers, he co-taught the Illinois Choral Conducting Symposium, a week-long advanced conducting course offered by the SoM.

Shortly before his death, he generously established the “Joseph R Flummerfelt Graduate Choral Music Fund” at the University of Illinois. Memorial contributions may be sent c/o University of Illinois School of Music Advancement, 1114 West Nevada Street, Urbana, IL 61801.

—Andrew Megill, professor of conducting and director of choral activities
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Ginny (BME ’59, pictured in 2014 with Bert Zhang, BA ’16) loved making a difference in students’ lives and will be greatly missed. For many years, she was a cherished member of the Illinois Music Advancement Council’s Executive Committee with a passion for helping to make the school a better place.

planned giving

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We would like to recognize the following alumni and friends who have chosen to include Music at Illinois through a bequest or other planned gift. Donors who remember the School of Music in their estate plans provide critical funding to establish student, faculty, and program support.

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SPECIAL EVENTS

All-Illinois Junior Band
January 25, 2020

High School Orchestra Clinic
February 15, 2020

Superstate Concert Band Festival
May 8-9, 2020

ALUMNI EVENTS

Illinois Music Education Conference
Alumni Reception
Pere Marquette Hotel, Peoria
January 31, 2019

Midwest Clinic Alumni Reception
McCormick Place, Chicago
December 17, 2020

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Illinois Band Conducting Symposium
February 14-15, 2020

MARCH 24, 2020

MONTREAL SYMPHONY
Tenors and Basses
Of the UI Choirs
Kent Nagano, conductor
Carnegie Hall, New York City

SUMMER 2020

Choral Conducting Symposium
Illinois Bach Academy
Paul Rolland String Pedagogy Workshop