

# *fanfare*



Northwestern

# *first chair*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



Over the past several months, faculty have shared with me many examples of the excellent achievements of Bienen School students during the COVID-19 pandemic. I applaud our students for their extraordinary efforts through these uncertain times.

The pandemic has brought challenges to all of us. Students are experiencing the loss of regular participation in ensembles and concerts. Performance faculty and alumni—including members of professional orchestras and ensembles—are left with fewer outlets to share their talents with audience members. Music scholars have limited opportunities to conduct research due to travel restrictions and safety precautions that limit in-person collaborations. Yet despite many difficulties, our community has demonstrated remarkable flexibility and resilience. I am proud of our faculty for adapting to new modes of teaching and continuing the school's important mission of educating the next generation of artist-scholars.

Without a doubt, all aspects of the Bienen School's operations have been disrupted by the pandemic. Beginning last spring and throughout the summer, our staff and administrators worked tirelessly within the school and with many offices across the University to prepare for a return to campus. Music performance instruction has presented many unique situations that required developing specialized safety restrictions. We are incredibly fortunate to have the high-quality facilities and state-of-the-art technical capabilities of the Ryan Center for the Musical Arts. It is difficult to imagine how we could have responded to the pandemic in the outdated Music Administration Building.

As we continue to respond to the pandemic, topics regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have emerged as central areas of focus across our school, the University, and the nation. Last summer, the school publicly expressed its solidarity with our Black students, faculty, staff, and alumni and the entire Black community. In June, school administrators received a petition from Bienen Students Expecting Change. Along with the school's department chairs and associate and assistant deans, I met with the group in the fall to discuss the petition and share existing and planned DEI activities.

As the first African American and first female dean of the Bienen School and as a performer of music of African American composers, I understand and agree with the students

regarding the importance of representation and visibility in classical music. We must work as a community to incorporate more voices and contributions of diverse groups into our music curricula and public events—a goal I have pursued throughout my tenure as dean.

We have already made progress at the Bienen School in the musicology area, which launched a new undergraduate core curriculum in fall 2019. One goal of the revised curriculum is to provide students with a more inclusive and more diverse representation of classical music. The musicology faculty will regularly update these courses, which have been well received by students.

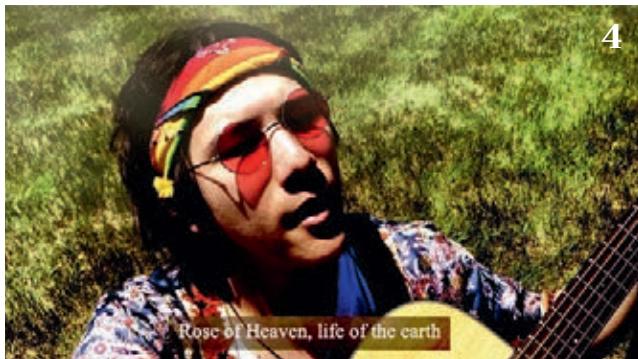
A school-wide project during the current academic year involves creating videos featuring art songs and chamber music by Black composers. Voice students will perform the songs, and musicologists and guest presenters will provide scholarly background information on the works and composers. These videos will be posted on the school's website. In April, I will moderate a virtual discussion on Black art songs with professors Louise Toppin and Willis Patterson of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance.

In addition, Bienen faculty have been working both independently and collaboratively to develop DEI initiatives for their studios and classrooms. Many of our instrumental studios are studying repertoire of diverse composers and requiring inclusion of these composers in degree recitals. Conducting faculty have recently hosted guest speakers for virtual DEI-related discussions. I am committed to promoting and supporting these ongoing initiatives throughout the school, and I look forward to sharing more information about our progress in the coming months.

Our society's return to "normal" life—and the specifics regarding when and how live music performances will resume—remains uncertain. However, the absence of in-person concerts and events over the past year has proven how crucial they are to our humanity and how essential they will be to restoring normalcy in a postpandemic world. I am confident that the Bienen School of Music will be an important part of the healing process, reconnecting our communities through music performances and scholarship.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Toni-Marie Montgomery".

Toni-Marie Montgomery  
Dean



# fanfare

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Bienen School of Music

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Scenes from *Orfeo Remote*

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Hanna Bingham prepares for a performance in Mary B. Galvin Recital Hall

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# noteworthy



Clockwise from above: *The Crossing*, Dover Quartet, Third Coast Percussion, Tony Alonso, Stephen Powell, Josephine Lee, Kellen Pomeranz

## Bienen Alumni, Faculty among 2021 Grammy Winners and Nominees

Bienen School alumna Kellen Pomeranz '11, who goes by Pom Pom, won a 2021 Grammy Award for best R&B album as a cowriter and coproducer on the lead single from John Legend's album *Bigger Love*. "Conversations in the Dark" reached no. 1 on iTunes after Legend performed it on the TV series *This Is Us*; it has since been certified gold by the Recording Industry Association of America. Now based in New York, Pomeranz studied music technology at the Bienen School.

Many other Bienen School alumni and faculty were well represented among this year's Grammy nominees. For the fifth consecutive year, Bienen School director of choral organizations Donald Nally and his new-music choir The Crossing received a Grammy nomination for best choral performance, this year for *Carthage*, with music by James Primosch. The album features alumni

Micah Dingler '09 MMus, Robby Eisentrout '15, Dimitri German '16 MMus, Michael Jones '14 MMus, Chelsea Lyons '17 MMus, and Elisa Sutherland '12, '14 MMus, with Kevin Vondrak '17 MMus as assistant conductor and assistant producer.

This was Nally and the choir's sixth Grammy nomination to date; they have won twice previously for best choral performance—in 2018 for Gavin Bryars's *The Fifth Century* and in 2019 for Lansing McLoskey's *Zealot Canticles*.

The Dover Quartet, the Bienen School's Quartet-in-Residence since 2015, received its first Grammy nomination, for best chamber music/small ensemble performance for *The Schumann Quartets*.

Third Coast Percussion—with alumni Sean Connors '06 MMus; Robert Dillon '02; Peter Martin '04 MMus, '11 DMus; and David Skidmore '05—also was nominated for best chamber music/small



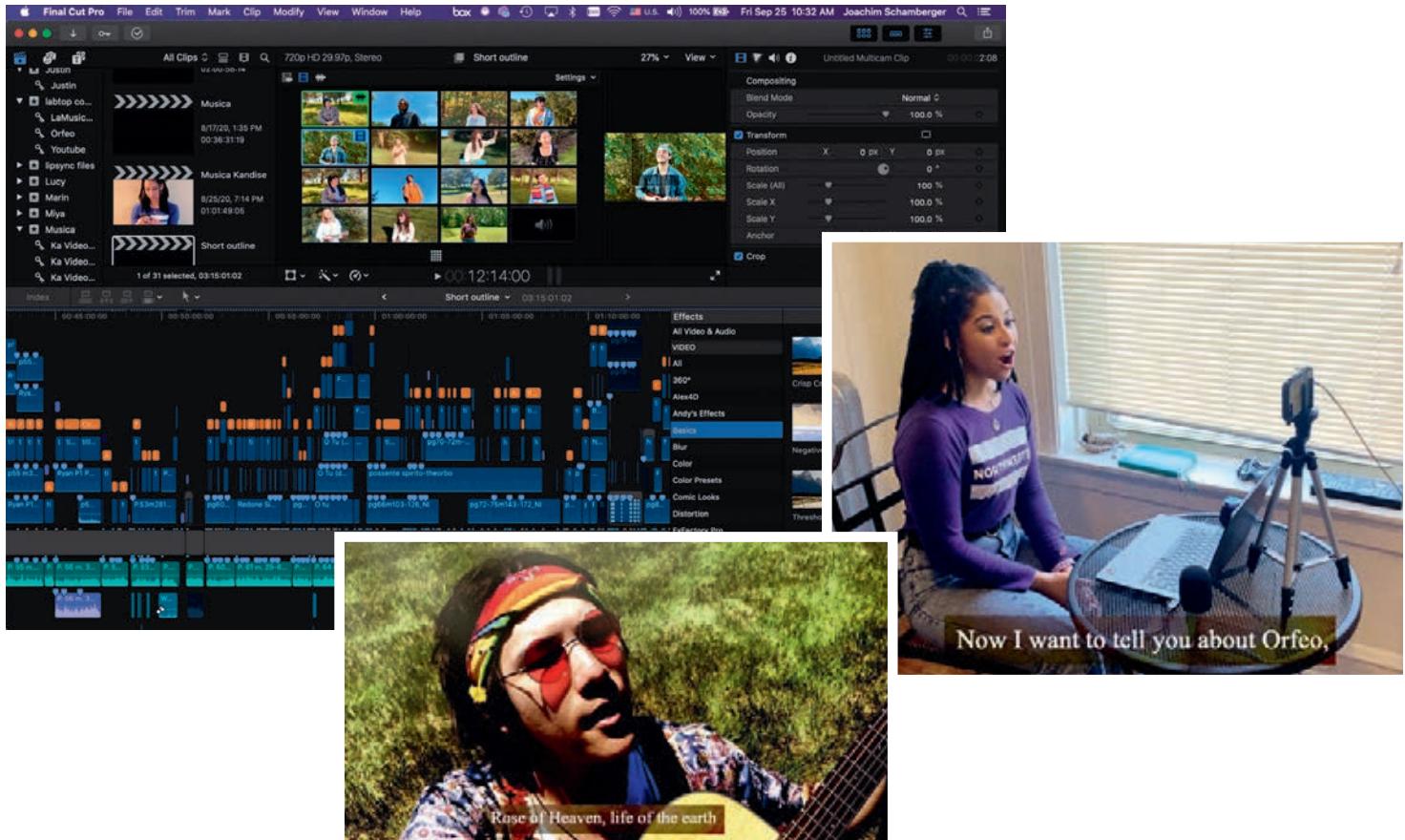
ensemble performance, for *Fields* (also nominated for best engineered classical album). Third Coast Percussion won a 2017 Grammy for *Steve Reich* and was nominated in 2020 for *Perpetulum*.

Josephine Lee '07 MMus, vocalist for Ted Hearne's *Place*, was nominated for best chamber music/small ensemble performance with Steven Bradshaw, Sophia Byrd, Isaiah Robinson, Sol Ruiz, and Ayanna Woods. This was Lee's first nomination.

Baritone Stephen Powell '86 received his first two Grammy nominations. His recording *American Composers at Play: William Bolcom, Ricky Ian Gordon, Lori Laitman, John Musto* was nominated for best classical solo vocal album. His second nomination was for best opera recording as a principal soloist for *Dello Joio: The Trial at Rouen* with conductor Gil Rose, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Odyssey Opera Chorus, and soprano Heather Buck.

From the Latin Recording Academy, Tony Alonso '02 was nominated for a Latin Grammy in the best Spanish-language Christian album category for *Caminemos con Jesús*. The collection of sacred music celebrates Alonso's Cuban heritage and features performances by some of the finest Cuban American musicians in the United States. ■

# *noteworthy*



## *Orfeo Remote* Premieres

One of the most exciting projects to emerge at the Bienen School amid the pandemic is *Orfeo Remote*, an experimental opera film spearheaded by director Joachim Schamberger and conductor Stephen Alltop. The five-part opera miniseries, based on *L'Orfeo* by Monteverdi, launched in January and is available to view on YouTube and at the link below.

The ambitious project required 1,400 audio and 1,300 video tracks and was produced entirely remotely. Schamberger set the 400-year-old original work against the current pandemic. The film opens as La Musica, an unemployed musician, gathers her fellow artists to tell the story of Orfeo's trip to hell. In this opera-within-a-film, the artists' tale is set in the 1960s on a hippie commune, where young lovers Orfeo and Eurydice experience both the ecstasy and the perils of the counterculture movement.

"When I heard we were moving the opera online, I realized I would be able to accomplish two things on my bucket list at once—to be in an opera and to be in a movie," said undergraduate student Nicholas Lin, who played Orfeo.

For student practice tracks, Alltop recorded every note of the opera on harpsichord and chamber organ at home. Then, when students submitted their individual vocal recordings, he created the final soundtrack with a remote ensemble of Bienen student

musicians and members of San Francisco's Dark Horse Consort. The project includes recordings from a total of 60 vocalists and instrumentalists.

Schamberger coached students on character and interpretation in addition to shot types, framing, and screen direction. With two separate casts of students in locations across the country, detailed coordination was required to create the 10 videos of the five-part series. "Acquiring basic fluency in video and audio production is becoming increasingly essential for musicians," said Schamberger.

As *Third Coast Review* noted, the hard work of faculty and students paid off: "The technical achievement of *Orfeo* is worth saluting and watching."

*Orfeo Remote* and related activities were supported by the biennial Evelyn Dunbar Memorial Early Music Festival, which combines informed performance with scholarly inquiry through master classes, preconcert presentations, and lectures. ■

To view *Orfeo Remote*, visit  
[music.northwestern.edu/orfeo-remote](http://music.northwestern.edu/orfeo-remote).

## Bienen Effort Leads to Zoom Upgrades

A joint effort by the Bienen School and technology colleagues at peer institutions resulted in upgrades to Zoom's videoconferencing platform that have greatly benefited online music instruction.

Zoom, Northwestern's preferred method for video interactions, released in the fall the new high-fidelity music mode that enables users to deactivate certain features that hinder music making while taking advantage of a sampling rate much higher than had been previously available—resulting in higher-quality and more accurate sound.

Ray Mathew, the Bienen School's principal technology officer, participated in discussions that led to these improvements. "After an initial group conversation involving the Seven Springs schools of music along with a number of others from around the country, it was a privilege to be specifically invited to work with the Yale School of Music, Peabody Institute, Juilliard School, and Eastman School of Music in approaching Zoom directly and helping develop a way to support music instruction with significantly higher fidelity than was previously possible," he said.

"The changes to the underlying technology, plus the new settings we now have access to, will go a very long way toward helping us ease the last-mile problems of connecting students and



instructors," he added. "I'm glad that this work will benefit everyone who is using Zoom to teach during these difficult times."

Annie Hyung, an undergraduate cello performance major, said familiarizing herself with a helpful trio of Zoom settings—enabling original sound, disabling echo cancellation, and using high-fidelity music mode—has led to a superior experience: "The combination of these three settings is a godsend in making Zoom sound much more accurate, with minimal enhancement." ■

## Alma Mater Performance Featured in Nationally Televised Spot

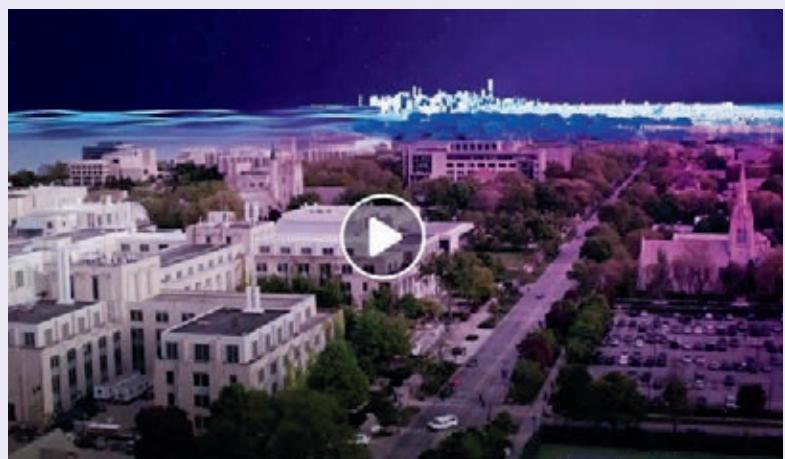
The Bienen Contemporary/Early Vocal Ensemble's performance of Northwestern's Alma Mater was featured in a public service announcement that debuted during Northwestern's October 24 football game.

According to the University's global marketing and communications office, PSAs during Northwestern athletic events have the largest media audience of any University communications. In previous years, a single spot has averaged over 11 million national viewers annually.



The video combines original animation with inspirational text based on University president Morton Schapiro's essay on educating students for an uncertain future.

The arrangement used in the video—commissioned by the school and Donald Nally for the 60th reunion of the Class of 1959—was written by Kevin Vondrak '17 MMus (left).



Vondrak used several sources as inspiration for his arrangement, which includes both Latin and English lyrics and ancient and modern musical sounds. Instead of "Amen," his arrangement ends with "Go 'Cats!"

To hear the Alma Mater, visit the Davee Media Library at [music.northwestern.edu/davee](http://music.northwestern.edu/davee).

# FALLING INTO HYBRID LEARNING



*In late September, many Bienen School students returned to campus for an academic term unlike any they had experienced before. After a fully remote spring quarter—and months of careful planning by Bienen administrators, staff, and faculty—students resumed limited on-campus activities under strict safety precautions.*

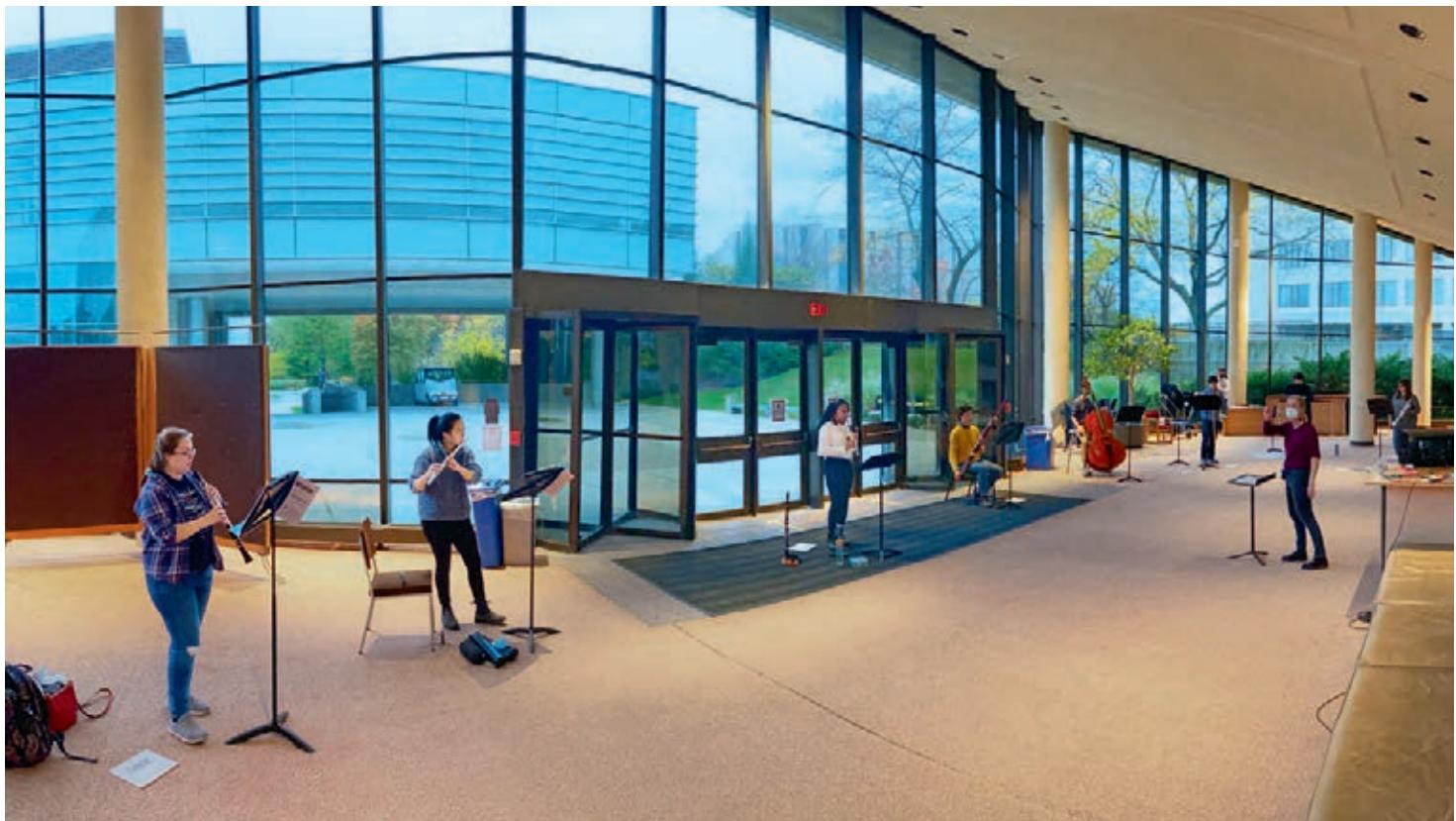


Northwestern required most first- and second-year students to study remotely during the fall in an effort to reduce campus density and ensure sufficient quarantine and isolation spaces. However, the Bienen School successfully petitioned for an exception for second-year instrumental students, as their access to practice rooms and in-person performance opportunities was deemed critical to advancing their training.

The extensive planning for the fall return to campus involved Bienen staff and administrators' meeting regularly with campus partners, including the provost's and registrar's offices, facilities management, procurement, and risk management, as well as consulting with peer schools and reviewing research focused on the safety of music-making activities.

The majority of the school's fall academic music classes were held virtually, while selected music education and performance classes were offered via a hybrid model of remote and face-to-face instruction. Most studio music lessons and chamber music activities were provided in the hybrid mode; those taught in person took place in larger spaces to allow for appropriate distancing. Campus venues, including Lutkin Hall and Kresge Centennial Hall, were utilized in addition to Bienen facilities to provide more locations for in-person learning. The school assigned practice rooms to specific groups of students to aid in contact tracing as needed.

Large ensembles presented a particular challenge that required unique considerations. Wind, orchestra, and jazz conductors worked with students in small configurations of instruments or in



Mallory Thompson conducts musicians from the Symphonic Wind Ensemble in the lobby of Pick-Staiger Concert Hall.

rotations of small groups. Strict stage-seating charts were developed for all venues and customized for individual ensembles, with configurations dependent on the repertoire or number of performers. The school also offered remote ensemble options for instrumentalists to satisfy their major ensemble requirement without participating in a face-to-face ensemble. All choirs and voice lessons were conducted solely online due to the risk of virus transmission through singing.

Throughout the fall, Bienen administrators continued to work closely with University leaders, medical professionals, and local and state health officials to examine and refine safety procedures. Among the primary considerations was the risk posed in a variety of settings by aerosolizing wind and brass instruments. The latest health and safety information and recommendations continue to be shared with students.

Although the school presented no concerts for in-person audiences in the fall, masked and properly distanced string players from the Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra presented a livestreamed concert from Pick-Staiger Concert Hall. Another live-streamed performance featured the Jazz Small Ensembles, and the jazz studies program offered two recorded concerts via Zoom.

Despite the unprecedented challenges, Bienen students experienced many rich learning opportunities during the hybrid fall quarter. Jennifer Higdon, winner of the school's 2018 Michael Ludwig Nemmers Prize in Music Composition, presented a virtual master class for composition students. Clarinet studio members safely gathered in Lutkin Hall for an orchestral excerpts class presented

virtually by Anton Rist, principal clarinet of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. The percussion studio performed a work by Joe W. Moore III via Zoom for the composer himself, who afterward provided feedback to the ensemble. The saxophone ensemble conducted distanced workshops of contemporary repertoire weekly in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, and the fall composition showcase moved online, with works presented and archived on Northwestern websites.

To enable further connections among her students, viola professor Helen Callus appointed her graduate students as mentors to her undergraduate students; they met with one another every other week in mini studio classes. Callus said the successful program has provided students with the personal contact they were missing: "It gave undergraduates the opportunity to bond with one another in a more intimate format than was possible in most of their other classes, to perform before my studio class, and to pick the brains of graduate students. In return, the graduate students were put on the spot, learning how to mentor younger students and facing questions on topics ranging from practicing to repertoire."

Johannah Carmona, an undergraduate student of Callus, said her experience as a hybrid student has been productive and enjoyable. In the fall, she was able to perform in a live string quartet and with the Baroque Music Ensemble—masked and distanced. Carmona also participated in online master classes with guest artists. "As a Bienen student who has both online and in-person classes, I truly believe that I am living the best of both worlds—continuing to learn while staying safe," she said. ■

# *on the concert stage*



BY JERRY TIETZ

Director of Concert Management

Looking back on the Bienen School's fall quarter, I am struck by how many new reasons I have to be immensely proud of and impressed by our students and faculty. The creativity, ingenuity, resilience, and character of our community were on full display and,

as a result, so too were its passion and talent.

Our collective need to adapt as a society to a masked and socially distanced world has presented challenges for us all, even as we go about life's day-to-day activities—and making music is no exception. From a violinist's maintaining her focus playing a tricky

To view videos of past performances, visit the Davee Media Library at [music.northwestern.edu/davee](http://music.northwestern.edu/davee).

passage while her mask creeps steadily down her nose to a horn player's attempting

to blend his sound with that of a fellow octet member positioned 40 feet away, students persevered in the face of the expected, the unexpected, and the downright surreal.

Our students' first opportunity to share their talent came in October, when 19 members of a miniaturized Northwestern University Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Robert G. Hasty and graduate assistant conductor Kyle Dickson, performed a livestreamed concert featuring works by Roger Zare, Samuel

Coleridge-Taylor, and Tchaikovsky. Those of us who enjoyed the concert from the comfort of our homes might have observed that the group, in concert black and masked throughout, resembled a collective of dapper musical ninjas. Yet their commitment to the performance never wavered, despite playing to an empty concert hall.

Another livestream on November 12 featured the Kevin Fort and Victor Goines Jazz Small Ensembles performing a thoroughly enjoyable program of original compositions by Goines, Fort, and Joe Nedder as well as arrangements of music by Bernice Petkere, Joe Young, Thelonius Monk, Wayne Shorter, John Lennon, and Paul McCartney. Within a week, the jazz studies program would offer two recorded concerts via Zoom. The Darius Hampton and Joe Clark Jazz Small Ensembles performed a program of original compositions and arrangements by Bienen students and faculty, followed a day later by a program of the Northwestern University Jazz Orchestra featuring original compositions and arrangements by Bienen students.

Loyal attendees of the annual Festival of Lessons and Carols concert at Alice Millar Chapel were not disappointed either. The Baroque Music Ensemble, conducted by Stephen Alltop, offered a special virtual program in December, blending spoken word with the music of Gabrieli, Pachelbel, C. P. E. Bach, and John Rutter.

If the last year has taught us anything, it is that sometimes, unfortunately, the show must *not* go on in order to protect the safety and well-being of our communities. But where there is a will—and perhaps a bit of tech savvy—Bienen students have also shown there is a way. ■



# *faculty*



Recent world premieres of **Stephen Alltop** (conducting) include *Solitude of the Stars* for voice and piano by Stacy Garrop, performed with soprano Josefien

Stoppelenburg for the Rembrandt Chamber Players, and two works by Gary Fry with the Champaign-Urbana Symphony Orchestra. For the Elmhurst Symphony, Champaign-Urbana Symphony, and Apollo Chorus of Chicago, Alltop has conducted six video concerts with distanced performers, focusing on the music of Florence Price, Jessie Montgomery, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, and Louis Moreau Gottschalk. As a harpsichordist, Alltop has filmed performances for Music of the Baroque, the Arizona Bach Festival, and Bach Week in Evanston. He has given webinar presentations and performances for the Northwestern University Alumni Association, National Association of Teachers of Singing, Fortnightly Club of Chicago, Kellogg School of Management, Feinberg School of Medicine, and the Dominican Republic's Banco Popular.



**Richard Ashley** (music theory and cognition) presented his research project "On Prototypes and the Prototypical: An Investigation of Music-Theoretic Concepts" at Music Theory Midwest's June conference and at the Society for Music Theory's national conference in November. He also published "Musical Form: A Challenge for Models of Musical Cognition" in *Physics of Life Review*. Ashley joined the editorial board of the Society for Music Theory's *Music Theory Online*.



**Sarah Bartolome** (music education) presented "Building Community in the Virtual Classroom" as part of the Northwestern Alumni Association webinar series

Music Teaching and Learning in Virtual Communities.



**Karen Brunssen** (voice and opera) presented the online lecture "The Evolving Singing Voice" in November for the Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra. She also taught a virtual master class for Opera Edwardsville, served on a panel at the Philippine Choral Directors Association Conference, and gave presentations and a master class for Singers in Accord and the Dainava Lithuanian Chorale.

recently featured in a virtual concert of the Indiana University Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Greg Ward.



**Drew Davies** (musicology) appeared on BBC Radio's *Early Music Show* in a program that explored the history of Latin America through its sacred and secular music from the 16th through 18th centuries.



**Amanda Draper** (music education) presented "Effective and Creative Ideas for Breakout Rooms" as part of the Northwestern Alumni Association webinar series

Music Teaching and Learning in Virtual Communities.



**George Cederquist** (voice and opera) is the artistic director of Chicago Fringe Opera, where in October he directed the camera opera *Corsair*, one of ten episodes in the Decameron Opera Collective's national film project.



**Joe Clark** (jazz studies) received an Individual Artists Program grant from Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events to record two suites for jazz ensemble, including one originally composed for the Northwestern University Jazz Ensemble. Clark's compositions and arrangements were



**Kevin Fort** (jazz studies) performed with Bienen students Joe Nedder and Robin Steuteville in a live-streamed concert in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall in November.



**Victor Goines** (jazz studies) presented "A World of Improvisation: The Context of Music and Our Everyday Lives" in November for the Northwestern Alumni Association's Faculty Live series. He also performed with Bienen students in a livestreamed concert in Pick-Staiger Concert Hall, which featured several of his own arrangements.



**Nancy Gustafson**  
(voice and opera) is founder of the Songs by Heart organization, which provides interactive musical programs for people with memory loss. Opera

Saratoga is launching a first-of-its-kind engagement-centered music therapy program in partnership with Songs by Heart, which will serve memory centers in seven counties in upstate New York.



**Robert G. Hasty**  
(conducting) presented “DIY Document Camera for Virtual Teaching Environments” as part of the Northwestern Alumni Association webinar series Music

Teaching and Learning in Virtual Communities. Hasty joined the American String Teachers Association’s Collegiate Committee in October.



**Michael Henoch**  
(oboe) recently participated in remote and in-person performances with Chicago Symphony Orchestra colleagues. A recording of the Reicha Wood-

wind Quintet in E-flat Major, with each musician performing on separate video and audio tracks, was featured in the CSO From Home series. He also performed Milhaud’s *La cheminée du roi René* in person, under strict safety protocols, at Orchestra Hall. This performance was filmed and later presented as part of the CSOtv series.



## Thomalla’s Third Opera Premieres during Pandemic

*Dark Spring*, a new opera by Professor Hans Thomalla based on Frank Wedekind’s *Spring Awakening*, premiered at Mannheim National Theatre in Germany on September 11. Bienen School lecturer Alan Pierson conducted.

The original work dramatizes the effect of the oppressive culture of the 19th century on a group of young adults. Thomalla’s opera shifts the focus to the contemporary stigma around mental health issues and provides an ambi-techno soundtrack for the piece.



Alan Pierson (left) and Hans Thomalla

of all the difficulties the pandemic brought on,” Thomalla said. “The stage director did an amazing job of finding ways to make this happen, with lots of live video, prepared video, and careful choreography.” He added that because the opera is scored for only 10 instruments, the musicians were able to perform safely apart.

A review from *Die Rheinpfalz* noted that “Thomalla’s eloquent and meticulously refined musical language is aimed like a magnifying glass on the toil of growing up . . . Pierson at the podium is an excellent administrator of the score.”

*Dark Spring* was commissioned by the Mannheim National Theatre and financed by the Ernst von Siemens Music Foundation. Thomalla’s first opera, *Fremd*, premiered in 2011 at the Stuttgart Opera; his second, *Kaspar Hauser*, premiered at the Theater Freiburg in 2016.

While in Germany for the premiere, Thomalla also attended a performance of his concert-length *Harmoniemusik* by Munich-based Ensemble Rissonanzi Errante.

# faculty



**D. J. Hoek** (musicology) contributed “Northwestern University’s John Cage Collection: History and Ongoing Development” to a recent issue of *Notes: The Quarterly Journal of the Music Library Association*. The article traces how Cage’s archive came to Northwestern in the 1970s and highlights subsequent acquisitions that have expanded the collection’s scope and context.



**David McGill** (bassoon), former principal bassoonist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was featured in the late Andrew Patner’s book *A Portrait in Four Movements: The Chicago Symphony under Barenboim, Boulez, Haitink, and Muti*. McGill was also highlighted in a four-part television series released last fall about a 2016 performance at the Ravenna Festival in Italy, which featured McGill in Mozart’s bassoon concerto conducted by Riccardo Muti. McGill’s book, *Sound in Motion: A Performer’s Guide to Greater Musical Expression*, was translated into Japanese in 2019.



**Patrice Michaels** (voice and opera) performed in a November Carnegie Hall tribute to her late mother-in-law, US Supreme Court justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Hosted by mezzo-soprano Isabel Leonard, the event also featured interviews with Ginsburg’s children and remarks and performances by Joyce DiDonato, Renée Fleming, and Denyce Graves. Michaels previously composed a song cycle in the late justice’s

honor, *The Long View: A Portrait of Ruth Bader Ginsburg in Nine Songs*, which appears on the 2018 Cedille Records release *Notorious RBG in Song*.



**Toni-Marie Montgomery** (dean) participated in the 2020 African American Music Conference, hosted virtually by the University of Michigan School of Music,

Theatre & Dance. She served as a panelist for “Delivering a More Dynamic, Diverse Curriculum for the 21st-Century Music Student,” and her recording of David Baker’s sonata for cello and piano, with cellist Anthony Elliott, was featured among the preconference performances. Montgomery was also on the panel “A Just Future for Black Artists” as part of the Black Reflections series organized by Michael Martin ’19 MMus and hosted by Oberlin Conservatory and the New World Symphony. She was elected secretary of the Gateways Music Festival board and participated in a Gateways virtual festival webinar with Dwandalyn Reece, curator of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

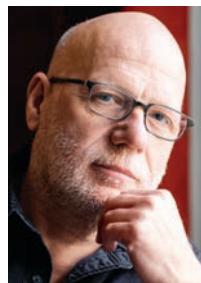


**Steven Morrison** (music education) completed a six-year term as editorial chair of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*. In September, he presented “What Can We

Take from the Podium? Rehearsal Thinking in the Online Classroom” for the Northwestern Alumni Association webinar series Music Teaching and Learning in Virtual Communities. With doctoral student Diego Pinto, he presented research at McMaster University’s virtual Neuromusic Conference about how expressive movement may be used as a factor in vocal group evaluations.



**Michael Mulcahy** (trombone) performed a virtual concert in Northwestern’s Alice Millar Chapel as part of the Grand Teton Music Festival’s GTMF on Location series.



**Donald Nally** (conducting) and his choir The Crossing were nominated for a Grammy Award for best choral performance for *Carthage* (see page 2), marking Nally’s sixth Grammy nomination. In October, the choir presented *The Forest*, an outdoor work with sound designed especially for socially distanced performance, composed by Nally and Kevin Vondrak ’17 MMus. The specially designed amplification kits used for that performance inspired the creation of three new works for socially distanced singing. The Crossing, in the lead-up to the US presidential election, presented four new works addressing issues in the national discourse. In December, the group released an album of live performances, *Rising w/ The Crossing*, based on the acclaimed series of daily, pandemic-inspired recordings of the same name and featuring the world premiere of David Lang’s *protect yourself from infection*. The Crossing’s recording of *Earth Teach Me Quiet* by Ēriks Ešenvalds was named one of the 25 best classical music tracks of 2020 by the *New York Times*.



**Susan Piagentini** (music theory and cognition) contributed the chapter “Adapting the Aural Skills Curriculum: A Move Away from the Right Answer” in *The Routledge Companion for Music Theory Pedagogy*. This academic year, she is an AP Higher Education

Visiting Fellow in course and exam development for the College Board, providing feedback on the alignment between the AP music theory course and exam and expectations of the discipline as well as suggestions for teachers' professional development.



**Alan Pierson** (conducting) launched, with Alarm Will Sound, a new series of works created for the video chat medium. *Video Chat Variations* was featured in the *New York Times*. Pierson conducted the world premiere of **Hans Thomalla's** opera *Dark Spring* in September (see page 11).



**Gene Pokorny** (tuba) performed a virtual concert in Northwestern's Alice Millar Chapel as part of the Grand Teton Music Festival's GTMF on Location series.



**Jesse Rosenberg** (musicology) presented the program "Opera in a Virtual Age" in December as part of the Northwestern Alumni Association's Faculty Live series. His talk explored opera in the time of lockdown and provided historical perspectives on how pandemics have affected the field of live opera.



**Taimur Sullivan** (saxophone) presented virtual guest master classes at Michigan State and Penn State Universities in December. His PRISM Quartet recently released *The Anchoress* on its XAS label and announced the launch of the PRISM Quartet Institute, an innovative online program through which the ensemble will partner with cultural and educational organizations worldwide to share knowledge accumulated in their 36 years together. Created with lead support from the Presser Foundation in part as a response to the pandemic, the initiative is deeply connected to the mission of PRISM's educational programming: to foster a new generation of artists and the public's appreciation of contemporary music.



**Andrew Talle** (musicology) presented the webinar "Beyond Bach: Music and Everyday Life in the 18th Century" as part of the Northwestern Alumni Association's Faculty

Live series.



**John Thorne** (flute) taught a virtual master class on baroque ornamentation for Cynthia Meyers's flute students at the New England Conservatory. He taught remote lessons

and classes for the Aria International Festival in July and has led flute warm-up classes for flutists at Roosevelt University and across the globe via Zoom.



**Gail Williams** (horn) performed a virtual concert in Northwestern's Alice Millar Chapel as part of the Grand Teton Music Festival's GTMF on Location series. She presented an audition seminar for New World Symphony wind and brass fellows in December.



**Marguerite Lynn Williams** (harp) was appointed principal harp of Minnesota Orchestra. She is also principal harp of the Lyric Opera of Chicago Orchestra.



*Timeslips*, one of the latest collaborative video installations by **Jay Alan Yim** (composition) was presented as part of the *Chlorophelia* exhibition at London's APT Galleries in December. It received its European premiere in the fall as part of *The Current* at Berlin's Haus der Kulturen der Welt, which cocommissioned the 40-minute installation with the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science. Yim also received grants from the Illinois Arts Council and Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

# students



**Seth Adams**, a doctoral student in music education, presented “Adventures in Temporal Displacement: Getting Creative with Virtual Ensembles” as part of the

Northwestern Alumni Association’s Music Teaching and Learning in Virtual Communities webinar series.



**Anjni Amin**, a doctoral candidate in music theory and cognition, accepted a position as visiting assistant professor of music theory at Oberlin College for the current academic year.



**Justin Chang**, a Bienen-McCormick dual-degree piano student of Sylvia Wang, received an honorable mention in the 2020 MTNA Illinois State Performance Competition’s

senior piano division. In November, he performed on WFMT’s *Introductions*.



**Daniel Cook** ’17 MMus, a doctoral candidate in wind conducting studying with Mallory Thompson, won third prize in the professional orchestra conducting division of the 2019–20 American Prize. Cook teaches at the University of North Texas College of Music.



**Sarah Gates**, a doctoral candidate in music theory and cognition, presented “The Making of a Theorist: On the Cognition of Music-Theoretic Expertise” at the Society

for Music Theory’s national conference in November.



**Natalie Gregg**, a master’s flute student of John Thorne, won a flute/piccolo position with the US Air Force Band of Mid-America.

**Dylan Hong**, a master’s saxophone student of Taimur Sullivan, won the young artist woodwind division of the 2020 MTNA Illinois State Performance Competition.



**Patrick Horton**, a doctoral candidate in music education, presented “Facilitating Creative Revision in Remote Learning Environments” as part of the

Northwestern Alumni Association webinar series Music Teaching and Learning in Virtual Communities.



**Fred Hosken**, a doctoral candidate in music theory and cognition, received Music Theory Midwest’s 2020 Arthur J. Komar Award for his paper “Metric Feel and

Form in ‘Superstition’: Analyzing Stevie Wonder’s Beat ‘Pockets.’” According to the

review committee, the paper presented “a compelling new analysis of an important work from the popular music canon and connected this analysis to listener accounts of perceived intensity.” Hosken presented the paper at the organization’s annual conference in June and at the Society for Music Theory’s national conference in November.



**Saetbyeol Kim**, a doctoral piano student of James Giles, won a 2020 Luminarts Fellowship in Classical Music. She received the third prize and audience

prize in the Cleveland Virtu(al)oso Competition, and she was one of three winners of the Music Academy of the West’s digital challenge for a performance and video of William Bolcom’s *The Serpent’s Kiss*.

**Kyoko Kohno**, a Bienen-Weinberg dual-degree piano student of James Giles, was named an alternate in the 2020 MTNA Illinois State Performance Competition’s young artist piano division.

**Flemming Li**, a piano student of Sylvia Wang, was a first-prize winner in the Great Composers Competition for best Shostakovich performance.

**Chad Lilley**, a master’s saxophone student of Taimur Sullivan, performed on a recording as solo soprano saxophone for the John Harbison work *Remembering Gatsby* with the National Orchestral Institute Philharmonic and conductor David Alan Miller, released by Naxos in November.



**Diego Pinto**, a doctoral student in music education, presented research at McMaster University's virtual Neuromusic Conference about the way expressive movement may be used as a factor to evaluate vocal groups.



**An Tran**, a doctoral guitar student of Anne Waller, joined the faculty of Northern Illinois University's School of Music.

**Samuel Valancy**, a master's saxophone student of Taimur Sullivan, was named an alternate in the 2020 MTNA Illinois State Performance Competition's young artist woodwind division.



**Luiz Fernando Venturelli**, a cello student of Hans Jensen, won the \$10,000 third prize in the 2021 Sphinx Competition.

**Audrianna Wu**, a Bienen-Weinberg dual-degree piano student of Sylvia Wang, was a first-prize winner in the Great Composers Competition for best Shostakovich performance.



**Muzi Zhao**, a Bienen-Medill dual-degree piano student of James Giles, won the young artist piano division of the 2020 MTNA Illinois State Performance Competition.

## Competition Winners

### DETROIT JAZZ FEST

Bienen jazz ensemble (AK) Squared won first prize in the Detroit Jazz Festival's 2020 Collegiate Combo Competition and performed as part of the live festival in August. Ensemble members include **Austin Klewan** and **Albert Kuo**, jazz saxophone students of Victor Goines; **Jesse Lear**, a jazz double bass student of Carlos Henriquez; and percussionist **Tyler Santee** '20.



### NATS CENTRAL REGION AUDITIONS

Several voice students advanced in the National Association of Teachers of Singing central region auditions, held virtually in October. Winners included **Stephanie Chee**, **Paige Dirkes-Jacks**, **Megan Fleischmann**, **Benedict Hensley**, **Miya Higashiyama**, **Lauren Randolph**, **William Tanski**, and **Alex Wiebe**, students of Theresa Brancaccio; **Nicholas Lin**, **Claire O'Shaughnessy**, **Ellen Robertson**, and **Norah Wolfe**, students of Karen Brunssen; **Annie Burgett** and **Mary Buckingham**, students of Nancy Gustafson; and **Allison Brook** and **Helaine Liebman**, students of Pamela Hinchman.

# alumni

## 1940s



**Betty Van Gorkom** '42 celebrated her 100th birthday in October. She is a member of the Bienen School's Music Advisory Board and a University Life Trustee.



**Sheldon Harnick** '49, '18 H, lyricist of *Fiddler on the Roof*, was featured in November on a PBS Great Performances documentary about the blockbuster musical.

## 1950s



**David Krehbiel** '59 was nominated for the memoir category of the Eric Hoffer Award for

*Through the Door: A Horn-Player's Journey*. The award honors freethinking writers and independent books of exceptional merit. The memoir recounts Krehbiel's time as a horn player for the Chicago, Detroit, and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras.

## 1960s

**Richard Alderson** '69 MMus and **Ann Alderson** '78 DMus have written a comprehensive book on how to sing and teach voice, *A New Handbook for Singers and Teachers*, published by Oxford University Press. Both are former Bienen School faculty members, Richard from 1970 to 2000 and Ann from 1978 to 1990.

## 1970s



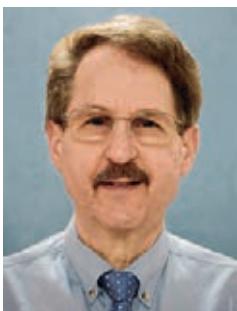
**Nancy McGraw** '70 received the 2020 Bistro Award's Interpretive Artistry Award for her Johnny Mercer cabaret. She has appeared in Broadway, off-Broadway, and touring musicals.



**Joseph Celli** '72 MMus, an oboist and composer, is heard on radio stations WPKN and WWUH in Connecticut and New York. His programs include *Soundprint: Asia*, featuring traditional music of the continent's 42 countries, and *My Other Music*, an eclectic program featuring styles from zydeco to new jazz and experimental music. *Musicians Speak*, his podcast series of interviews with new-music innovators, is carried on multiple streaming services and available on his website.

**Dennis Dorwick** '73 MMus continues to see a rise in views and downloads of his thesis, "Telemann, the Faithful Music-Master: Telemann Performance and Reception in Australian Music Culture since 1981," published by the University of Sydney in 2017. It explores the complex and changing reception of Georg Philipp Telemann's music in Australia.

**Chris Granias** '76 MMus hosted the fourth annual Kalo Taxidi Good Journey Concert in October to support multiple sclerosis research. The virtual event included performances by Granias; the Chicago Bassoon Quartet, with **Susan Nigro** '73, '74 MMus, **Elizabeth Heller** '79 MMus, Dianne Ryan, and Lynette



**Howard Reich** '77 retired from the *Chicago Tribune* after 43 years, including 37 years as a full-time arts critic. He is an Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and the author of six books. His latest project is the international release of *For the Left Hand*, a documentary inspired by his *Tribune* series on Chicago pianist Norman Malone. Reich received an Alumni Merit Award from Northwestern in 2007, and in 2019 he gave the Bienen School's convocation address.

## 1980s



**Susan B. Nourse** '82 (above left, with Hemke) and **Jonathan Helton** '84 MMus, '97 DMus (below) collaborated on the book *Frederick L. Hemke: In His Own Words*, published in 2020 by the North American Saxophone Alliance, which includes autobiographical essays depicting episodes in the life of the celebrated saxophonist and pedagogue who served on Northwestern's faculty from 1962 to 2012.



**David Landis** '78 is president of the marketing agency Landis Communications Inc. To mark its 30th anniversary, the agency donated \$300 daily in October to nonprofits in the Bay Area. Landis has volunteered for nearly 40 years with ODC, San Francisco's premier modern dance company, theater, and school.

**Eleanor Weingartner** '84, principal clarinet of Mexico's National Symphony Orchestra since 1990, recently released two albums on the Urtext Digital Classics label. *Concertos for Oboe, Clarinet and Orchestra* features Weingartner and her husband, oboist Miguel Salazar,



**Curtis J. Moore** '95 was nominated for an Emmy Award for outstanding original music and lyrics for "One Less Angel," featured in *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. He is one half of the songwriting duo Mizer and Moore, with Northwestern School of Communication alumnus Thomas Mizer '93.



with Camerata de las Américas and conductor Ludwig Carrasco, a Bienen doctoral student

of Victor Yampolsky. *Voyage* includes a collection of relatively unknown works for clarinet and piano performed by Weingartner and pianist Alfredo Isaac Aguilar.



**Brian Schmidt** '85, '88 MS is founder and executive director of the videogame industry's

largest professional conference on game music and sound design, GameSoundCon. Its virtual 2020 conference featured more than 100 speakers and panelists, drawing an audience of over 1,100 composers, sound designers, and educators from around the world. Portions of the event were held in virtual reality. The conference raised \$20,000 for Education Through Music-Los Angeles, an organization that works with low-income and disadvantaged school districts to facilitate music programs.

Baritone **Stephen Powell** '86 received two 2021 Grammy nominations (see page 2).



**Susan Petrocci Stukus** '86 retired last April after 30 years of teaching elementary music

in central New York. For the past 7 years, she taught students in fourth through eighth grades and directed fifth-, sixth-, and seventh-grade choirs.

**J. Christopher Thomas** '87 MMus is in his 10th year as adjunct professor of percussion at Longwood University in Virginia and his 29th year as director of percussion studies at Midlothian High School, also in Virginia. Last spring he performed the world premiere of Gordon Ring's Concertino Trio for clarinet, saxophone, and marimba with the Longwood Wind Symphony. He works closely at Longwood with assistant professor of music **Kevin Callihan** '13 MMus.



## 1990s



**Joel Harrison**

'91 DMus retired as artistic director, president, and CEO of the American Pianists Association after a nearly 21-year tenure.

He solidified APA's reputation as the premier American organization to cultivate the careers of young American classical and jazz pianists.

**Patrick Rath** '93 became president and CEO of the United Performing Arts Fund in October. He was previously executive development officer and system vice president at Advocate Aurora Health Foundations.



**Torrey Lawrence**

'96, '96 MMus was named provost and executive vice president at the University of Idaho.

He was previously vice provost for faculty.



**Alexander Laing**

'96, principal clarinet of the Phoenix Symphony, was elected vice chair of the Gateways Music Festival board of directors. He teaches for the National Alliance for Audition Support and

which airs Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. on Chicago classical station WFMT.

He is also a cohost and creative

consultant for the *Opera Box Score*

radio show.

has recently taught the Advancing an Anti-Racist Orchestra Model class for the Juilliard School's evening division. He has served as a faculty member for the National Youth Orchestra and the Los Angeles Philharmonic's YOLA National Institute, and he recently moderated the "Outside the Box: An (Unconventional) Orchestra Musician's Perspective" panel for the League of American Orchestras Conference.

# alumni

## 1990s *continued*



**Betty Anne Younker** '97  
PhD, dean of Western University's Don Wright Faculty of Music, was

named to the New Year's Honour List by the mayor of London, Ontario. She was recognized for advocating for the equitable treatment of artists and helping create new opportunities in the professional arts.



**Jennifer Walshe** '98 MMus, '02 DMus was elected to Aosdána in Ireland. Founded in

1981, Aosdána honors those who have made outstanding contributions to the country's creative arts. Membership is limited to 250 living artists working in architecture, choreography, music, literature, and visual art.

## 2000s

**Robert Boldin** '01 MMus was promoted to director of artistic operations at Pittsburgh Opera, where he has served as artistic administrator since 2015.

Soprano **Kearstin Piper Brown** '03 MMus was elected chair of the Gateways Music Festival board of directors, on which she has served since 2016. She performed in the opening concert of the 2020 virtual festival and recently performed as Euridice in Opera Williamsburg's virtual production of *Orfeo ed Euridice*.



The Riot Ensemble, which includes artistic director **Aaron Holloway-Nahum** '05 (left) and pianist **Adam Swayne** '06 DMus, received an Ernst von Siemens Ensemble Prize for 2020–21. The award supports the structural and artistic development of a young ensemble focused entirely on contemporary repertoire.



**Timothy Fawkes** '01 is president of the Illinois chapter of the American String Teachers Association,

where he spearheaded new initiatives including a diversity scholarship program, a race and equity professional development cohort, and a roundtable series on teaching during a pandemic. Fawkes continues to teach at Glenbard East High School in Lombard, Illinois; during his tenure he has presented two featured concerts at the Illinois Music Education Conference and collaborated with artists including Fifth House Ensemble, the Orion Ensemble, Michael Miles, and the Old Town School of Folk Music.

**Tony Alonso** '02 was nominated for a Latin Grammy for best Spanish-language Christian album for *Caminemos con Jesús* (see page 2). He is an assistant professor of theology and culture and director of Catholic studies at Candler School of Theology at Emory University.

Third Coast Percussion—with alumni **Robert Dillon** '02; **Peter Martin** '04 MMus, '11 DMus; **David Skidmore** '05; and **Sean Connors** '06 MMus—received a Grammy nomination in the best chamber music/small ensemble performance category for *Fields* (see page 2).



**Scott Harrison** '02 was named interim executive director and senior strategic facilitator of the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra.

He was previously interim executive director of the Hawai'i Symphony Orchestra.



**Sam Kaestner** '02 MMus recently completed a master's degree in strategic design and management

at Parsons School of Design, where he worked with a team to design a way to compel climate action for the United Nations. After extensive user-centered design research, their solution was to engage children to drive change now and into the future. The UN adopted the idea as the children's component of the Act Now campaign, which launched in November. Climate Action Superheroes will mobilize children and parents around the world to take action on climate change and sustainability.



**Pin Chen** '03 conducted the all-Southern California middle school honor orchestra for the Southern California School Band and Orchestra Association, the largest organization of music teachers in the region's 11 counties. Chen is a past vice president of orchestra education for the association and is a regular clinician and festival adjudicator.



**Cory Hills** '03 was named an inaugural Gretsch Fellow in Children's Music at the Fred Rogers Center.

The yearlong fellowship supports research and best practices in music experiences for children. Using research from the center's archive to explore ways that Rogers tackled difficult social concepts and topics with children, Hills plans to create an antibullying music performance/assembly program for elementary schools.

**Juliet Petrus** '03 MMus was named a 2020 People-to-People honoree by the Confucius Institute US Center, in recognition of her essay "The International Language: Using Song to Connect China and the West," and was honored at its virtual gala in October. The essay focuses on Petrus's successful career as an



opera singer in China, where she has performed in more than 20 cities. She also lectures and gives master classes

across China, having worked with students at conservatories in Harbin, Shenyang, Beijing, Nanjing, Jinan, and Chengdu, among others. *Singing in Mandarin: A Guide to Chinese Lyric Diction and Vocal Repertoire*, a book she coauthored with Katherine Chu, was published by Rowman and Littlefield last year.



**Elizabeth Bennett** '04 was named a semifinalist for the 2021 Music Educator Grammy Award, which recognizes teachers who have made a significant and lasting contribution to music education in schools. She was one of 10 finalists for the 2020 award. She is director of orchestras at Buffalo Grove (Illinois) High School.



**Melissa Ngan** '04 MMus was appointed president and CEO of American Composers Orchestra.

Formerly CEO of Chicago-based Fifth House Ensemble, she has also served as a consultant for the Cleveland Orchestra and San Francisco Opera.

**Michelle Edgar** '05, vice president of brand marketing for Epic Records, was recently featured on the podcast *Elevate Your Brand*, hosted by Laurel Mintz. Edgar is founder of the XX Project, a platform for women in

business, as well as Music Unites, which funds sustainable music-education programs in underserved public schools.



**Alejandra Valarino Boyer** '07 MMus was selected to participate in Sphinx LEAD, a two-year

program providing mentorship and growth opportunities to arts leaders from minority communities. Boyer is Seattle Opera's director of programs and partnerships and is the founder of BIPOC Arts, an online database that celebrates opera professionals of color.

**Josephine Lee** '07 MMus, vocalist for Ted Hearne's Place, received her first Grammy nomination, for best chamber music/small ensemble performance (see page 2).



**Matt Martin** '07 was recognized in the *Crain's Chicago Business* 40 under 40 list for 2020. Alderman of Chicago's 47th Ward, he previously worked as a civil rights lawyer in the Illinois attorney general's office.

**Robin Giebelhausen** '08 MMus was appointed assistant professor



of music education in the School of Music at the University of Maryland, College Park, where she joins

**Ken Elpus** '06 MMus, '11 PhD and **Stephanie Prichard** '09 MMus. Giebelhausen previously taught for seven years at the University of New Mexico.

## We want to hear from you!

Please email your news to [fanfare@northwestern.edu](mailto:fanfare@northwestern.edu) or submit your news online at [music.northwestern.edu/alumninews](http://music.northwestern.edu/alumninews).

**Sarah Dinin** '09 directs Dinin Arts Management & Consulting, based in Milwaukee. The agency's clients include violinists Arnaud Sussmann and Danbi Um, violist Paul Neubauer, pianists David Fung and Einav Yarden, the Amernet String Quartet, the Lysander Piano Trio, and the SPA Trio.

### 2010s



**Roderick Cox** '11 MMus had debuts with the Fort Worth and Dallas Symphony Orchestras in October, conducting Beethoven's Symphonies No. 4 and 6 and Piano Concerto No. 3 with pianist Behzod Abduraimov. Cox has recently been featured on the program *Arts Engine* with Aaron Dworkin, in *Herbert* magazine, and on the podcast *a mic on the podium*.

musical scenes by living composers on the topic of modern dating and love, including "At the Statue of Venus" by Jake Heggie and "Cabaret Songs" selections by William Bolcom. Arahata and Best are both based in Rochester and on the faculty at Nazareth College.

**Lara Korneychuk** '13, '13 CERT joined the San Diego Women's Chorus artistic team in December as assistant to the artistic director.

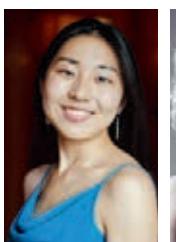


**Richard Narroway** '13 was named winner of the Music Trust's 2020 Freedman Classical Fellowship. The award will enable him to perform across Australia.



**Erin Cameron** '15 was named instructor of clarinet at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro.

**Kellen Pomeranz** '11 won a Grammy Award for best R&B album as a cowriter and coproducer on John Legend's album *Bigger Love* (see page 2).



Pianist **Yoshiko Arahata** '13 MMus (left) and mezzo-soprano **Jessica Ann Best** '08 MMus performed in the 2020 Rochester Fringe Festival, held virtually in September. Their *Contemporary Musicians' Guide to Modern Love* featured art songs and



**Véronique Filloux** '15 performed in a fully masked production of *Cosi fan tutte* in October with the Pittsburgh Opera, where she is a resident artist. "Filloux sang the soprano role of Despina delightfully, even in the passages requiring her to disguise her voice with a Papagena-like squeal," according to a review from *Pittsburgh in the Round*.

# alumni

## 2010s *continued*



**Daniel Healy** '16 PhD and  
**Kimberly Lansinger Ankney**

'15 PhD coauthored *Music Discovery: Improvisation for the Large Ensemble and Music Classroom*, recently published by Oxford University Press. Healy was also named chair-elect of the creativity special research interest group of the National Association for Music Education.



**Geirþrúður Anna Guðmundsdóttir**  
'17 was one of five finalists selected from a pool of 130 entrants in the second annual Lillian and Maurice Barbash J. S. Bach Competition.

**Susan Kang** '17 was a quarterfinalist in the National Flute Association's Young Artist Competition, held virtually in August. She was also invited to perform on the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series when it resumes in Chicago.



Cellist **Drake Driscoll** '18 is cofounder and executive director of the Vision Collective, which received the 2020 Robert Sherman Award for Music Education and Community Outreach. The collective builds meaningful relationships with and among refugees and new citizens by sharing and exchanging music among diverse communities.



Cellist **Brannon Cho** '17 was awarded the \$35,000 János Starker Foundation Award for 2020. The biennial prize is given to a cellist age 30 or younger who has begun a significant career in music. Cho's recent and upcoming solo performance highlights include debut recitals at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Kumho Art Hall, Konzerthaus Berlin, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and New England Conservatory's Jordan Hall.



**Kate Lee** '17, director of choirs at Maine East High School in Park Ridge, was named the Illinois State

Board of Education's 2021 outstanding early-career educator of the year.



**Hunter Hanson** '18 was appointed adjunct instructor and administrator of screen scoring at

New York University.

**Drew Powell** '18 MMus won second place in the National Flute Association's 2020 orchestral audition and master class competition.



**Alicia Russell** '18 MMus was a winner of the 2020–21 Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions for the

Georgia district.



**Chi-Yang John Wang** '18 MMus was appointed principal horn of the Taipei Symphony Orchestra.



**Noelle Ike** '19 began a position as social media and digital marketing manager for Carnegie Hall.

**Michael Martin** '19 MMus spearheaded "Black Reflections," a three-part panel discussion on Black artistry in concert music hosted by Oberlin Conservatory and the New World Symphony. Conversations covered the historical and



social context of Black musicians' participation in concert music, Black musicians' personal experiences, and reimagining a just and equitable future for Black artists in concert music.

## 2020s

**David Cao** '20 is founder of Evanston Young Artists, which strives to make music accessible to children from low-income, underserved communities and communities of color. The organization received a 2020 Cultural Fund Grant from the Evanston Arts Council.



**Jonathan Kraft** '20 MMus won a trombone position with the US Army Ceremonial Band.



**Andrew Morstein** '20 MMus made his European debut with Theater an der Wien in Vienna as Andronico in Vivaldi's *Bajazet*.



**Julian Velasco** '20 MMus won a 2020 Luminarts Fellowship in classical music.



**Rodney Dorsey** '92 MMus, '06 DMA is professor of music and chair of the department of bands at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He chose Northwestern to study with former director of bands John Paynter '50, '51 MMus, and, later, current director of bands Mallory Thompson '79, '80 MMus. "Being around such a high level of music making was a big influence. It reminded me of what was possible and helped to elevate my ears and my expectation to a higher level," he says.

**Rena Kraut** '99 is founder and executive director of the Cuban American Youth Orchestra. "The clarinet studio was, at that time, Russ Dagon '61, '62 MMus, Charlene Zimmerman '72, Lawrie Bloom, and Leslie Grimm '85 MMus. We never saw anything but collegiality and partnership between these four very different musicians and teachers," she says. "It wasn't until I spent time at other institutions that I realized how rare this was. It was clear that they all put our education first."



**Kangmin Justin Kim** '11 was the first countertenor to play the role of Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro* at London's Royal Opera House. "My voice teacher Theresa Brancaccio '82, '83 MMus, whom I call the 'mother of my voice,' is one of the most caring and nurturing educators I've ever met," he says. "She helped me transition from a tenor to a countertenor and taught me so many valuable lessons about vocal health that I apply to my everyday professional life."

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

The Bienen School's new series showcases former students and some of their fondest memories of Northwestern. Here are selections from this ongoing series. To see more, visit [music.northwestern.edu/alumni](http://music.northwestern.edu/alumni).

**Ralph Votapek** '60 won the prestigious Naumburg Award and the first Van Cliburn International Piano Competition. He recalls going every Friday afternoon to hear the Chicago Symphony Orchestra with Fritz Reiner—concerts that cost 65 cents with a Northwestern ID. "Gui Mombaerts was probably the best piano teacher I ever had, and certainly the one who was just right for me at my stage of development," he says of the late Northwestern professor.



**Michelle Edgar** '05 leads creative marketing campaigns for her roster of artists as vice president of brand marketing for Epic Records and also founded the nonprofit organizations XX Project and Music Unites. "I always appreciated the entrepreneurial path that Northwestern helped ignite in me, and my incredible professors saw my passion and supported me through my years as a student and in my professional journey," she says.



**Paula Grissom-Broughton** '99 MMus is chair of the department of music at Spelman College. At Spelman, "my mentor and undergraduate music instructor Joyce Finch Johnson '57 MMus, '72 DMus was a graduate of Northwestern," she says. "She highly recommended me to continue my studies at Bienen because she said it would be the best academic environment to cultivate my 'whole' self—intellectually and musically. She was right!"

# in memoriam

All dates are 2020.

## 1940s

**Jeanette Ross** '45 in Madison, Wisconsin, on December 21

**Wayne R. Bohrnstedt** '46, '47 MMus in Riverside, California, on August 6

**Harriet Mueller Howard** '46, '49 MMus in Santa Rosa, California, on June 12

**Mary Balloon Shull** '46 in Springfield, Illinois, on November 9

**Barbara Anderson** '48 in Anna, Illinois, on December 15

**Louise Nelson** '49 MMus in Crane, Texas, on August 17

**Hollis Oseas** '49 in Cincinnati on December 9

**Wilson E. Stone** '49 in East Hampton, New York, on November 2

## 1950s

**Ruth E. Knudson** '50 in Michigan City, Indiana, on September 3

**H. John Lennon** '51, '56 MMus in Scarborough, Maine, on September 18

**Kathleen Rouillard** '51 in La Mesa, California, on October 10

**Allen J. Sever** '51 in Minneapolis on September 29

**Ruth Tengwall Wall** '51, '53 MMus in Hanover Park, Illinois, on July 27

**Jean I. Burnham** '52 MMus in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 6

**Nancy Jeans Maxson** '52 in Pittsburgh on November 25

**Mary Beth Hansen Birch** '53 in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on October 28

**Donald S. Condon** '53 in West Palm Beach, Florida, on June 13

**Robert E. Pennington** '53, '55 MMus, '67 DMus in Vienna, Virginia, on September 29

**Theodore C. Stewart** '53 in Washington, Iowa, on August 3

**Norma Jean Lamb** '55 MMus in Buffalo, New York, on August 22

**Sherley M. Craig** '56 in Pittsburgh on September 7

**Leo C. Ellison** '56 MMus in Duluth, Minnesota, on October 26

**Virginia M. Hilton** '56 in Evanston on August 5

**Carolyn Burroughs Tower** '56 in North Andover, Massachusetts, on May 3

**Barbara A. Asmus** '57 MMus in La Jolla, California, on June 28

**Leslie W. Guinn** '57 in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on December 12

**Mary Lou Kleist** '58 in Sterling Heights, Michigan, on August 4

**Moonyeen C. Albrecht** '59 MMus, '70 MMus in Mount Pleasant, Michigan, on October 9

## 1960s

**Harold A. Rutz** '60 MMus in Austin, Texas, on November 1

**Stephen E. Funk** '62 in Salem, Oregon, on October 17

**Richard Garner Cox** '63 DMus in Greensboro, North Carolina, on December 25

**Joanne Arlene Lindstrom** '63, '64 MMus in Tallahassee, Florida, on November 2

**Benn Gibson** '64 MMus, '73 DMus in Winfield, Kansas, on July 29

**Rita Black** '66 MMus in Brevard, North Carolina, on December 15

**Ann Elizabeth Swope** '69 MMus in Louisville on October 25

## 1970s

**Kathryn Smith Bowers** '70 in Boulder, Colorado, on June 30

**Robert Fred Kern** MMus '72 in Dallas on August 14

**Gretchen Koch** '72 MMus in St. Joseph, Michigan, on December 31

**Barry Michael Williams** '78 MMus in Rock Hill, South Carolina, on September 3

## 1980s

**Bruce A. Egre** '82 in Cleveland on September 23

**Maurice A. Wright** '89 in Topeka, Kansas, on September 2

## WILLIAM PORTER (1932–2020)

William V. Porter, professor emeritus of musicology, died in Chicago on August 18 at age 87. Born in Raleigh, North Carolina, Porter received a bachelor's degree in music in 1954 from Davidson Col-

lege, a master's in music history in 1956 from Oberlin College, and a PhD in music history from Yale University in 1962.

Elected to Pi Kappa Lambda at Oberlin, he also received fellowships from Yale and a grant for study at the Vatican in 1986.

Porter came to Northwestern in 1961 as an instructor of music history and literature. He retired in 1999, having served as acting chair of music history and literature. He remained active with projects relating to his specialization in late 16th- and 17th-century Italian music.

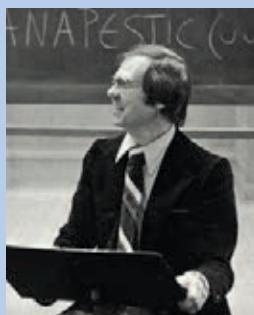
A member of the American Musicological Society, American Music Library Association, and International Musicological Society, Porter wrote numerous articles and papers, contributing to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *Sohlmans Musiklexikon*, *Studi Musicali*, *Con che soavita*, *Essays in Honor of John F. Ohl*, and *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, on whose editorial board he served.

## THOMAS KASDORF (1934–2020)

Thomas Kasdorf '56, a loyal supporter of the Bienen School of Music, died in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on October 30 at age 85. Born in Chicago, Kasdorf earned a bachelor's degree in music education from Northwestern, where he was president of the a cappella choir and a piano soloist with the symphony orchestra.

Two years after graduation, he moved to Kalamazoo, Michigan, where he was director of choral activities at Kalamazoo Central and Loy Norrix High Schools. Among his many roles in the community were director of music at the First Presbyterian Church, music director and conductor for the Kalamazoo Singers, and adjunct associate professor at Western Michigan University. In 1986, to recognize Kasdorf's significant contributions to and leadership in the arts, the Arts Council of Greater Kalamazoo awarded him the Community Medal of Arts.

In recent years, Kasdorf returned to Northwestern and became deeply involved with the choral program as a friend and benefactor, establishing the Thomas R. Kasdorf Scholarship in Choral Music, an endowment providing financial support to graduate choral conductors at the Bienen School. He was a frequent guest at concerts and conducting seminars, reconnecting with the University community and bringing his wisdom and humor to students. The Kasdorf Scholars are representatives of his legacy, generosity, and vision in furthering the choral arts.



# *in development*



BY SARAH GENERES

Director of Development

It has been inspiring to see and hear the ways our students and faculty have continued to make and share music during the past year. Music has been essential to our collective ability to find joy and celebrate, as well as to grieve, through the COVID-19 pandemic. As we inch ever closer to the day our concert halls can safely reopen for performances with live audiences, I am grateful that the Bienen School continues to educate the talented musicians who will be part of those performances.

Alumni often tell me they wish they could make a “large gift” to the Bienen School but they simply don’t have the financial resources to do so. I always stress that annual gifts of any size benefit the school, and if you look at a person’s giving to the school over their lifetime, the impact of consistent annual giving is amazing.

Planned gifts offer another way to make a substantial impact on the school. Charitable bequests, gift annuities, insurance policies, and other planned gifts provide an opportunity for you to make a future gift while realizing your current financial goals. Depending on how they are structured, planned gifts can provide income to you and your family and can offer flexibility if circumstances change during your lifetime. They also help the Bienen School transform the lives of future generations of musicians.

From operations and research to scholarships and student assistance, planned gifts support all areas of the school. Depending on the gift level, there may be naming or other opportunities for recognition. Alumni and friends who notify us that they have included the Bienen School in their estate plans become members of the Henry and Emma Rogers Society, which entitles donors to benefits including invitations to an annual luncheon.

The Bienen School is sincerely grateful to the 59 members of the University’s Henry and Emma Rogers Society who have notified us of their intention to include the Bienen School in their estate plans (see the list at right). To learn more about joining this distinguished group, please contact me at [sarah.generes@northwestern.edu](mailto:sarah.generes@northwestern.edu) or 847-467-3849.

As we approach the end of the “We Will” campaign, the Bienen School is striving to reach our ambitious campaign goal of \$70 million. We know that the lives of many of our music alumni have been affected by the pandemic. For those whose livelihoods have felt less of an impact, we are grateful for their gifts in support of the school. We applaud our alumni for their many successes across countless disciplines, and we are proud to prepare the next generation of Bienen students to follow in their footsteps. ■



## Rogers Society

The Henry and Emma Rogers Society honors and recognizes alumni and friends who have included Northwestern in their estate plans. We are grateful to members who have designated their gifts to benefit the Bienen School.

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We are grateful to all who have made contributions to the Henry and Leigh Bienen School of Music. The following donors have given \$1,000 or more from July 1, 2019, through December 31, 2020. We are grateful for all gifts in support of the Bienen School of Music, and we thank our many valued donors and friends who have made gifts of less than \$1,000 during this period.

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(\$50,000 or more)

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