THE HIXSON-LIED ENDOWMENT:
Providing global opportunities for students, faculty
Dear Friends,

I am pleased to share with you, through this publication, what we have achieved, thus far, with the Hixson-Lied Endowment and to celebrate its extraordinary impact on our college.

In 2000, the college was officially renamed the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts to recognize a gift of $18 million to the University of Nebraska Foundation by Christina M. Hixson and the Lied Foundation Trust for the college. The endowment, named the Christina M. Hixson-Lied Foundation Trust Endowment for the College of Fine and Performing Arts, benefits all areas of the college.

Since 2002 when grants were first awarded, the Hixson-Lied Endowment has had an impact of $16,727,153, which is a remarkable figure and a tremendous gift for a public arts college. But more than dollars, the investment by Miss Hixson and the Lied Foundation Trust has been an investment in people—students and faculty, whose lives are forever changed by the opportunities given to them through the Hixson-Lied Endowment.

Our students are given the opportunity to pursue their dreams to study the arts and make the world and their communities a better place through the practice of those arts when they graduate. Our faculty engage in world-class research and creative activities.

The grants have benefited every single faculty member and student in the college, either through the program grants or individual student and faculty grants.

We are pleased to bring you this publication to highlight the successes that this remarkable endowment has helped achieve. We take great pride in bearing the name of Miss Christina M. Hixson and Mr. Ernst Lied and look forward to visioning what the endowment will help us achieve next.

Chuck O’Connor
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean

twitter.com/charlesoconnor
facebook.com/HLCFPA

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The University of Nebraska is committed to providing a non-discriminatory learning environment and work environment for students, faculty, and staff. Please see our equal opportunity policy in the Faculty and Staff handbook.
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Ernst F. Lied attended the University of Kansas from 1923 to 1925 and later graduated from the University of Nebraska in 1927. After graduating from high school in Clarinda, Iowa, Christina M. Hixson borrowed money from an uncle and moved to Omaha, Nebraska, to attend business school. Hired by Lied in the 1940s, Hixson served as secretary for his rapidly growing Buick dealership. After hearing about the land boom, he came to Las Vegas in 1958 to take advantage of the low real estate prices. Lied relocated to Southern Nevada in 1960. Lied’s investments eventually grew to extraordinary proportions, and Hixson was crucial in the development of his commercial properties, which included shopping centers, a hotel and the construction of homes.

Lied established the Lied Foundation Trust in 1972 in honor of his parents, Ernst M. and Ida K. Lied. Before he passed away in 1980 at age 74, he named Hixson the sole trustee of the foundation, instructing her to sell his land holdings to fund it. At the time of his death, his operation included more than 1,000 acres of prime Las Vegas real estate plus a number of other lucrative businesses. Lied trusted Hixson to oversee the foundation, but he did not leave specific instructions about what to fund with his philanthropic contributions. Hixson decided that one major focus would be providing educational assistance so prospective students could someday give back to their own communities, as she has had the privilege of doing so generously.

Hixson was recently inducted into the UNLV Nevada Business Hall of Fame in 2015 and received the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts’ Award of Merit in 2002. In the spirit of her dedication to education and the arts, Hixson continues to provide exceptional support for the Hixson-Lied College, Lied Center for Performing Arts, the University of Nebraska, University of Nebraska Medical Center and many projects throughout the state of Nebraska. She also has made gifts possible to projects and programs in Kansas, Iowa, Nevada, Utah, California and Washington.

History

Christina Hixson and Dean Giacomo Oliva cut the ribbon on the Hixson-Lied monument in April 2002 with (left to right) University of Nebraska Foundation President Terry Fairfield and Regents Charles Wilson and Randolph Ferlic. Photo by University Communications.

About the Hixson-Lied Endowment

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**Antiochia ad Cragum Archaeological Research Project (ACARP) in Turkey**

Hixson-Lied Professor of Art History Michael Hoff's research project. Several students in art history have participated in these annual digs. Since its inception in 2005, the ACARP has been excavating a 3rd century A.D. temple, colonnaded square and a gymnasium complex. In 2012, they began work on the great Bath-Gymnasium Complex, where they discovered a large, late Roman courtyard with a swimming pool and mosaic pavement decorated in mosaic panels. In 2015, they found a Medusa's head (pictured).

**American Pavilion Cannes Student Film Program**

at the Cannes Film Festival in Cannes, France. Three students from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film have participated as interns at the Cannes Film Festival, including Yari Lemosky (2007), Taylor Morrissey (2014) and Aways Koushourdi (2018 pictured at far left).

**Chiara String Quartet**

performed at the Seoul Arts Center and other locations in South Korea (2014). In addition to a high-profile concert at the Seoul Arts Center, the Chiara also performed at the Jejuang University City College.

**Digital Architecture Project at Mt. Lykaion Excavation in Greece and Italy**

Research project of Assistant Professor of Art History Philip Sapirstein. Sapirstein uses digital photography and computer software to generate detailed, 3-D models of Greek temples, beginning with the Temple of Athena, a 6th century B.C. structure of Olympia, Greece. He is the principal investigator of the Digital Archaic Heraion Project at Mon Repos in Corfu, Greece.

**Hannah Potter**

Study with Tiny Hands International Summer Vision Team in Katmandu, Nepal (2012). Potter traveled through Tiny Hands International, a Christian non-profit focused on fighting sex trafficking and working with orphans. She helped design and create a mural for one of the children's homes she visited, engaging the children in the creation process.

**Japanese Visual Culture in Context**

Funding through the School of Art, Art History & Design International Education Program. After an eight-week online prep seminar, students spent three weeks in Kyoto and Tokyo getting first-hand experience in Japan's rich visual culture.

**Camille Hawbaker and Karen Kunc**

Printmaking Workshop in Bangladesh (2013). Cotter Professor of Art Karen Kunc received a Fulbright Specialist Project Grant to teach a contemporary woodcut printmaking workshop at Dhaka University in Bangladesh. She was accompanied by graduate student Camille Hawbaker, who received Hixson-Lied funding for her trip, and visited with both students and faculty at the University of Dhaka.

**PUTTING THE HIXSON-LIED COLLEGE ON THE MAP**

This map shows a sampling of where in the world our faculty and students have performed, presented, studied and exhibited around the globe since 2002, giving the Hixson-Lied Endowment true global reach.

**Chiaro String Quartet performed at the Seoul Arts Center and other locations in South Korea (2014). In addition to a high-profile concert at the Seoul Arts Center, the Chiara also performed at the Jejuang University City College.**
Finding inspiration in Japanese visual culture

By Carlos Velasco

This past summer I had the opportunity to participate in a School of Art, Art History & Design study abroad trip led by Professor Dana Fritz to Japan. The trip spanned three weeks and mainly took place in both Tokyo and Kyoto, with the focus being the visual culture of Japan. The entire experience was one that I truly won’t forget.

For the months leading up to the trip, Dana would host several meetings in preparation and schedule in things like brief Japanese lessons with faculty from UNL. These were great ways to prepare both our understanding of Japanese visual culture and history and also know a few useful phrases before departing. Looking back, these pre-trip lessons also helped us to have a great understanding of what we were looking at and experiencing while on the trip, as no one can really prepare you for just how different the culture and visual landscape of Japan really is if you’re just used to Western visual culture.

Once arriving in Tokyo, the next three weeks began to fly by. Every day would be packed in with important and interesting sights such as museums, landmarks, temples and even small trips to other towns and cities. A unique component in the trip was that we were all designated a place to “lead” the group to. This allowed us to dive into research of different places beforehand and effectively get more accustomed to transportation and getting around in Japan as we led our friends to interesting sights ranging from an Issey Miyake retrospective, to the island of Miyajima.

We started for a few days in Tokyo getting to see a lot of what made modern visual culture in Japan so unique and Afterwards took a week and a half to travel to the more historic city of Kyoto. Kyoto was a welcome relief from the hustle of Tokyo and allowed our group to learn more about the traditional craft, art and beliefs that shape Japan. We were very hosted by the fantastic Taka Kawakami, a priest at the Shunkoin Temple who made every day a learning experience and showed us his unique perspectives of Kyoto.

Our trip also gave us plenty of free-time to explore sights we wanted to see. It was actually on my second day that I decided I really wanted to explore the Shinjuku area of Tokyo, and I went out on my free time to explore the city. The next day I rose early and visited the Meiji Shrine. These sorts of experiences are ones I’ll probably never forget—there’s nothing quite like getting lost in the sensations of Tokyo. Toward the end of the trip, I dedicated a lot of time to looking at places I knew would be specifically interesting for my area of interest, and at every point it felt like there was always a perfect mix of free time and group time. Another memorable day was when a group of us decided to travel to visit a temple in Nara, Japan, famous also for its free-roaming deer; followed soon afterwards by a trip to Osaka to get as much of the local cuisine as we could.

The lessons we learned on the trip collectively are worth a lifetime of learning. I’ll truly never forget a trip we took to Hiroshima and just how much seeing the Peace Museum has impacted me and my understanding of world issues. Alongside this, as visual artists, being immersed in and day out in a completely different culture and experience brought back points of inspiration that I still try to incorporate into my own work. As a designer, the trip also had a plethora of extremely useful opportunities to understand how branding, design and visual communication was executed in Japan, and how to better understand communicating with various audiences I wasn’t used to.

This trip and all its experiences wouldn’t be quite as possible without the generous Hixson-Lied Endowment, which provided a great scholarship that, alongside other support, allowed me to travel to Japan for free. I truly hope to return soon to Japan. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience getting to see, eat and do quite as much as we did in the span of three weeks. My appreciation and understanding of Japanese visual culture, my desire to be curious about the world and my newfound sources of inspiration are all things that will be felt within my own work as an artist.

Carlos Velasco

Carlos Velasco is a senior studio art major (graphic design) from Shelby, Nebraska. Photos courtesy of Velasco.
The Hixson-Lied Endowment has supported numerous guest artist and scholar programs that help our students learn from the very best professional artists, musicians, filmmakers, performers, and technicians. The School of Art, Art History, & Design and Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film each have special guest artist programs funded by the Hixson-Lied Endowment. In addition, the Lied Center for Performing Arts provides masterclasses and other experiences with their season artists, courtesy of grants from the Hixson-Lied Endowment.

Below are just some of the notable guest artists who have worked with our students since the Endowment’s inception.

**LEARNING FROM THE BEST ARTISTS**

Members of Alvin Ailey’s American Dance Theater gave a masterclass to students in the dance program of the Glenn Korff School of Music prior to their April 7, 2015, performance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

World-renowned Cellist Yo-Yo Ma (center) gave a masterclass to two School of Music chamber ensembles on March 22, 2010, following his performance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts with students (left to right) Lily Spader, piano; Kristi Jenkins, violin; Jessica Dussault, cello; and Lexi Woodard, viola. Photo by Mike Edholm.

Emmy Award-winning actress Marg Helgenberger (“Intelligence,” “CSI” and “China Beach”) visited the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film on Sept. 19, 2014, to work with students in the intermediate and advanced acting classes.

Early in the morning on March 24, the University Singers gathered at Westbrook Music Building and loaded a bus to drive to New York City, a trip supported by the Hixson-Lied Endowment. On the morning of the 26th, New York City’s skyline was finally in view, accompanied by many cheers. After getting settled into our hotel (of which many rooms had a lovely view of Central Park), we attended our first rehearsal with Z. Randall Stroope, one of the most well-known composers/ conductors of our time.

Outside of rehearsals, we were free to do as we pleased. We all received free tickets to “Something Rotten,” a new musical that season, though some of us chose to attend “Elliot d’Amore,” Doinetti’s timeless comedy, at the Metropolitan Opera. Many of us visited the somber, yet hopeful, site of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, now the location of the beautiful One World Trade Center (also known as Freedom Tower). Times Square and Central Park were a pleasant walking distance from our hotel, and the subway system connected us to anywhere else in the city we wished to go. For example, I attended church in Harlem on Easter Sunday, and the previous night I enjoyed a fine French cuisine at Chez Lucienne with my parents, who chose to travel to New York to celebrate this unique opportunity with me.

Though our adventures in the city were fantastic, nothing compares to the memory of performing on the historical stage at Carnegie Hall, the finest venue for our solo-performance prior to the combined concert. Our opening piece, Samuel Barber’s “Agnus Dei,” blossomed into its full potential as the auditorium’s magical acoustics morphed each phrase into truly inspiring art.

The audience was clearly stunned, and the rest of the concert flowed very nicely from this reverent and gorgeous opener. I was fortunate enough to give solos during our spiritual piece and our final selection, Phil Collins’ “Take Me Home.” Our performance was met with a standing ovation, which is a clue that the event achieved what music is meant to achieve: connecting humans to each other through meaningful, artistic expression.

The combined choir performance, under Stroope’s baton, was a bold and beautiful celebration of music, faith and patriotism. Stroope’s “American Rhapsody,” a celebration of American folk tunes, and Vaughan Williams’ famous “Five Mystical Songs” (with baritone soloist John Viscardi) were exquisite and fitting for the religious holiday the church had celebrated the previous day.

We returned to Lincoln Wednesday morning, weary yet content, after our non-stop drive from New York, having spread the skills of Nebraska to Manhattan and a few high schools and churches along the way. We cherish our memories of music making and friendship that were fostered by this experience, and we are so fortunate to attend a college that supports opportunities like this for its students.

Sebastian Sorensen is a senior music major from Fremont, Nebraska.

The Hixson-Lied Endowment. In addition, the Lied Center for Performing Arts provides masterclasses and other experiences with their season artists, courtesy of grants from the Hixson-Lied Endowment.
EMMA ORWEN
Major: Studio Art
Year: Freshman
Hometown: Seward, Nebraska

What's it like being in the School of Art, Art History & Design?
It's a lot different than other majors, I would think. It seems like we have our own community here that's really nice for a lot of like-minded people just making things.

When did you start having an interest in art?
I only really started considering art in high school, but I feel like I've been doing it ever since I could hold a pencil.

What does it mean to you to have a Hixson-Lied Scholarship?
I've been really lucky. I was the assistant director for “Don Giovanni,” which was amazing. Then, I got cast in the spring opera “Tales of Hoffman.” Last summer, I was part of the opera “Marriage of Figaro” that toured Nebraska thanks to a gift from the Seacrests. We got to meet so many cool people from these smaller towns. This year, I got lead roles in “Little Women” and “Par from Heaven.”

What are you going to do to conquer the world?
My best memory is probably the first time I got to walk out on the Kimball stage and sing with the Orchestra. That was something I’d never forget. It’s probably one of the biggest stages I’ve performed on, by far, and with a wonderful-assuming orchestra. I just remember feeling the sense of this is definitely what I want to do with my life.

NICK SHELDON
1st Year MFA Printmaking
Hometown: Portland, Oregon

What's your most memorable experience in the School of Art, Art History & Design?
I think one that stands out is we had a dinner with all the print grads, and they found out that I could kind of cook. So I went over to one of their houses, and we sat there and cooked a bunch of food and swapped stories and hung out. It was just a great time, and it was kind of like something you see on a TV show.

What does it mean to you to have a Hixson-Lied Scholarship?
It mean actually quite a bit. I think, to me, it makes it feel like there are a lot of people who understand the value of education, in general. I didn’t finish my high school, and there were a lot of people who did not believe in me and did not support me, and I went down a really dark path for a while. Knowing that there’s somebody out there who doesn’t know you but believes in your potential—it’s life-changing.

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3rd Year MFA Directing for Stage and Screen
Hometown: American Fork, Utah

What are some of the productions you have been involved in?
I was the assistant director for “The Skin of Our Teeth,” which was directed by Virginia Smith. I was the assistant director for “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,” and I was also able to be in it, which was really interesting. I did my second year film, which was called “Daddies,” and I’m currently filming my third film, which is looking into an urban legend called “The Hatchet House” here in Nebraska. I also directed a show for TheatreUs called “Facing East.”

What does it mean to you have a Hixson-Lied Fellowship?
I don’t think I could have given up a profession or a full-time job to come back to school without it. It means that Miss Hixson and the rest of the board are looking out for the future of education, and they’re looking out for the future of artists, which I think is really important. I don’t think I’m a political person, per se, but we don’t know where arts funding may go. I think it says a lot about the School as a whole.

What do you hope to do when you graduate?
I hope to direct professionally. I want to continue to create new and exciting theatre that asks audiences questions and has them think when they leave the theatre. It would like to someday, as a goal, to change the face of the American musical theatre—to create a new uniform, to continue to push the boundaries of what we can create onstage and to tell great stories.
RESEARCH

DIANE BARGER: History University Press of America, 2013); Historical Dictionary of German Literature in 1945 (Scarecrow Press, 2010); The A to Z of German Theater (Scarecrow Press, 2010); The A to Z of Postwar German Literature (Scarecrow Press, 2008); Historical Dictionary of Postwar German Literature (Scarecrow Press, 2008); Cultural Chronicle of the Woman Repub- lic (Scarecrow Press, 2008); Historical Dictionary of German Theater (Scarecrow Press, 2008); Hitler Laughing: Comedy in the Third Reich (American University Press, 2009)


STACY ASHER: Transla-

JAMIE REIMER: Transla- tion, revision and publication of Robert Owens’ opera “Culture! Culture!” (Scarecrow Press, 2010), as well as the North-American premiere performance.

BOOKS

STUDENT COGS

ADDITIONAL MUSIC

DIANE BARGER: 12 edi-
tions of 19th century operatic repertoire for piano (with or without pedal), published by Potenza Music.

SKYROS QUARTET: Intro-
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Faculty and Student projects supported by the Endowment

ETHAN SEAGREN
Ethan Seagren, who graduated from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film as a film and new media major in 2014, received two Hixson-Lied student grants. In 2013, he received an undergraduate scholarly and creative activity grant to film his short film, “Clocked,” on location in Mountain View, Missouri, in 2012-2013 and complete post-production visual effects. In 2013, he also received a production visual effects. In 2013, he also received a scholarship and creative activity grant to complete his visual effects portfolio, where he explored advanced compositing techniques and methodologies.

Today, Seagren is a technology coordinator with Industrial Light & Magic (ILM) in San Francisco, California. He works with the head of computer graphics and the research and development group to coordinate the technological advancement that is needed for upcoming shows and the development for the company as a whole.

"MY EXPERIENCE WORKING AT ILM HAS BEEN ABSOLUTELY INCREDIBLE," SEAGREN SAID. "There is so much talent and knowledge within the walls of ILM and getting to be a part of it—to learn from and work alongside some of the pioneers in the industry—has been a dream come true. We put the technology in place that lets artists bring their work to life. That’s why I enjoy it so much. It’s a beautiful fusion of art and technology.”

WENDY KATZ
Among the faculty grants that Associate Professor of Art History Wendy Katz has received are three research and creative activity grants to help support her research for her book project titled “The Politics of Art Criticism in the Penny Press, 1833-1861.” It was during her research in Washington, D.C., as a Smithsonian American Art Museum Fellowship recipient, where she discovered a new poem by Walt Whitman in the June 23, 1842, issue of the “New Era” by “W.W.”

The poem, “To Bryant, the Poet of Nature,” addressed William Cullen Bryant, an American romantic poet and editor of the New York Evening Post. Her published article in the Summer/Fall 2014 issue of the “Wall Whitman Quarterly Review,” outlined her reasons for believing the poem was by Whitman.

“Through her research, she knew of Whitman’s connections to not only Bryant, but Parke Godwin, Bryant’s son-in-law and the editor of the “New Era” at the time Whitman’s poem was published. Whitman himself edited and wrote for other Democratic-leaning penny papers.

“It seems clear to me that they all knew each other and were writing for each other’s papers,” Katz said. Her book is still in process, and she hopes to have it ready to submit to a publisher later this year.

The Hixson-Lied Endowment has supported nearly 1,000 faculty and student grants since its inception. Faculty grants support research/creative activities, presentation of scholarly and creative activities and faculty development travel grants. Student grants help support domestic or international student study, presentation of scholarly/creative activities, and graduate and undergraduate scholarly and creative activities. In addition, program grants help support larger projects in each of our three academic areas, as well as collaborative programs with our affiliates, including the Lied Center for Performing Arts, Sheldon Museum of Art, the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center and the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

Listed below are just a few highlighted projects that have resulted from Hixson-Lied Endowment support.

PAUL BARNES
One of the earliest grants the Hixson-Lied Endowment awarded was a program grant that supported a commission by the Lied Center for Performing Arts for a composition by Philip Glass for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Celebration. Barnes also received a faculty grant for the commissioning, performing and recording of this piano concerto. Concerto No. 2 for Piano: “After Lewis and Clark” had its premiere at the Lied Center for Performing Arts on Sept. 18, 2004. Barnes was joined by Native American flutist R. Carlos Nakai and the Omaha Symphony.

Glass gave melody to three integral components of the famed expedition—“The Vision,” “Sacagawea” and “The Land” and framed them within a concerto’s three-movement tradition.

BARNES CELEBRATED THE 80TH BIRTHDAY OF THE COMPOSER WITH HIS FACULTY RECITAL ON JAN. 31, AND THE TWO WILL COLLABORATE AGAIN NEXT YEAR ON HIS PIANO QUINTET NO. 1 “ANNUNCIATION,” ALSO WITH ASSISTANCE FROM A HIXSON-LIED GRANT.

Based on the communion hymn for the Feast of Annunciation, Barnes will world premiere the new quintet on April 17, 2018, with the Chiara String Quartet at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.
JOHNNY CARSON CENTER FOR EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

The Hixson-Lied Endowment has made future commitments to support the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. The Hixson-Lied Endowment will help support purchasing start-up equipment and guest artist funding. It will also help support the Triennial Carson Emerging Media Conferences in 2020 and 2023, and help support a student internship program.

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts is a $57 million investment by the University that will be focused on interdisciplinary learning, creativity and research in emerging media located within the Johnny Carson School for Theatre and Film at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. It is made possible by a recent $20 million investment by the Johnny Carson Foundation.

The Johnny Carson Center will be an internationally distinct program in film and emerging media that explores the boundaries of where cinematic narrative and storytelling intersects with science, the humanities, computer science, engineering, music, fine arts and other disciplines.

Megan Elliott, former manager of leadership and community connections at the University of Technology Sydney in Australia and former director and CEO of digital media think-tank X Media Lab, has been named the founding director of the Johnny Carson Center. She began in January.

Courses and curriculum are currently being developed. The center will be located at 1300 Q St., and the facility is scheduled to be completed by the fall 2019.

Elliott is excited to get to work on building the center. “What I am most excited about is co-creating a truly interdisciplinary program that celebrates the dynamic relationship between storytelling and emerging media arts and building an internationally unique, forward-looking center that honors the name and innovative spirit of Johnny Carson,” she said.

The Hixson-Lied Endowment helps support the Johnny Carson Film Series in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

The Carson Film is a project combining professional filmmakers and actors with students from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, and shot with a significant budget, to create a short film. The Carson Film Series gives students the opportunity to work directly with faculty and outside professionals to create a professional production that is larger and broader in scope than can reasonably be expected of students working independently.

College of Fine and Performing Arts, along with more than 25 faculty and staff members. The plot centered on an FBI agent, who arrives in a small Nebraska town to assist in a missing person search for a young girl. She starts to suspect that the sheriff may know more than he is saying. The film starred professional actors Harley Jane Kozak and Winters. It was written and produced by Zamacona and directed by Alex Zakrzewski (Oz, Homicide: Life on the Street).

The second film, “Digs,” was released in 2013. Directed by Petrie, “Digs” is a romantic comedy involving a volunteer campus cop who attempts to solve a crime and somehow ends up with the girl. It was filmed in Lincoln and surrounding areas.

Professor/Screenwriter Jorge Zamacona (center) gives instructions to the cast and crew of “Vipers in the Grass” prior to the day’s filming in Ashland, Nebraska, in May 2009.

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film is currently holding a competition for film scripts for the next Carson Film, which will shoot in the spring of 2018. For more information, visit http://go.unl.edu/carsonscript.

The Johnny Carson Film Series is an industry professionals work closely with faculty and students in a mentoring environment that provides the students a hands-on learning experience from teacher/mentors over the course of two years to create a professional product.

Past professional participants have included Director Donald Petrie (Miss Congeniality, How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days), Actor Graham Shiels (Olympus, True Blood), Actress Tara Karien (Brooklyn Nine-Nine), Actor Devon Winter (Brooklyn Nine-Nine, Olj) and Producer/Writer Jorge Zamacona (Quanto, The Last Ship).

The first Carson Film, “Vipers in the Grass” was released in 2010. It was filmed in Ashland, Lincoln, Roca and Wahoo, Nebraska. The film incorporated more than 120 students across the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, along with more than 25 faculty and staff members. The plot centered on an FBI agent, who arrives in a small Nebraska town to assist in a missing person search for a young girl. She starts to suspect that the sheriff may know more than he is saying. The film starred professional actors Harley Jane Kozak and Winters. It was written and produced by Zamacona and directed by Alex Zakrzewski (Oz, Homicide: Life on the Street).

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Producer/Screenwriter Jorge Zamacona (center) gives instructions to the cast and crew of “Vipers in the Grass” prior to the day’s filming in Ashland, Nebraska, in May 2009.

Johnny Carson Film Series

Director Donald Petrie (center) visits with Tara Karien and and Spencer Slade during the filming of “Digs” in May 2012. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communications.
In 2005, the Hixson-Lied Endowment supported a grant to bring the Chiara String Quartet to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Glenn Korff School of Music, where they continue to be the Hixson-Lied Artists in Residence. The Chiara String Quartet (Rebecca Fischer and Julie Yoon, violins; Jenah Sinosits, viola; and Gregory Beaver, cello) formerly occupied the Lisa Arnhold Residency in the Juilliard School of Music in New York City. In 2015–2016, they were the quartet-in-residence at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. In addition to the Chiara Quartet’s regular performances in major concert halls across the country, the ensemble was one of the first to perform in non-classical spaces including (le) Poisson Rouge and Galapagos Art Space in New York, The Tractor Tavern in Seattle and National Sawdust in Brooklyn, demonstrating the potential of chamber music venues for chamber music performance. The Chiara Quartet has performed innovative concerts in non-traditional native venues for chamber music including the world premiere of Andrew Last’s quartet for orchestra by Heart” on Azica Records. It features Bartók’s six string quartets, played entirely from memory. It followed their “Brahms by Heart” CD in 2014. In 2015, they released a CD titled “Jefferson Friedman: Quartets.” Their performance of Friedman’s Third Quartet on this album was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. The Chiara Quartet is active in the community and in the schools. Last year, they visited every Lincoln high school. “We’ve taken the service and community-engagement piece of our work very seriously ever since we’ve been here,” Sinosits said. Lincoln has been a wonderful place for the Chiara to call home for the past 12 years. “We’ve all been able to raise families here,” she said. “It’s been fun to watch Lincoln grow. Over the time we’ve been here, Lincoln has really taken very seriously the charge to try to be a more engaging place for people to be and for people to connect. It’s an exciting time, and it’s exciting to think about how it might look 25 or 50 years down the road.” For the latest news on the Chiara String Quartet, visit their website at http://www.chiaraquartet.net/.

**ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT:**

**Andrew Last**

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"Financially, I wouldn’t have been able to afford graduate school without the Hixson-Lied Fellowship, and the ability to continue teaching while earning my degree was very important." "I love this community. I love that students come from all around the world. I love that this institution places a high value on participation in music," Last said. "I anticipate being at Luther for a while. I’m not sure anyone will ever match Weston’s 57 years."