

# HIXSON-LIED

COLLEGE OF FINE  
AND PERFORMING ARTS



## TRANSFORMATIVE

Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media  
*Arts inspires creativity, innovation*

Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media



FALL 2020

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# Answer the Highest Calling in Your Heart

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The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts is going through unprecedented and complicated times due to the challenges of a global pandemic and the need for fairness and social justice that call upon our consciences. Daily, our faculty, staff and University leadership are working together to rethink how we can effectively teach our students, maintain a healthy working and learning environment, and meet this moment in our country's history. I feel privileged to work with such an amazingly creative and dedicated group of people.

Like many of you, I was horrified by the images we saw on television of George Floyd's death and those of other citizens this year. We understand that people of color have to face different challenges as Americans than others, certainly different than me. They often have a different experience at school, too. Our College has had to look in the mirror more deeply and question our assumptions about the things we do and create. We are re-examining how we can be a healing, unifying and inclusive force for peace and understanding in our community and on our campus. We know that if the fire this time becomes the fire next time, and we did nothing, we would have missed the opportunity to make a real difference in our world.

Statements of support and solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement are good, and we are among those who have spoken them, but actions are better. And, as a College, we are taking them.

One of the ways that we are doing this is through We Are Nebraska, an improvisational theatre company presented in collaboration with the Offices of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Diversity and Inclusion, as well as the Colleges of Business, Law, and Engineering and the Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources. We Are Nebraska gives us something as simple as it is profound: our Nebraska students telling and performing their stories of what it is like to be themselves. Led by instructor Julie Uribe, students participating in We Are Nebraska come from many corners of our state and world, they have very different majors and backgrounds. They are liberals and conservatives; rural and urban; religious and secular; gay, straight, and transgender; people of color; and returning veterans of foreign wars.

We Are Nebraska performs to standing-room-only crowds monthly in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and around campus. In attendance regularly are members of the Lincoln Police Department and local civic leaders. No politics, no agendas, just a commitment to see and understand each other. That is the power of the arts. Please join us at a performance. You can learn more about We Are Nebraska on page 22.

The College is doing other things to meet the call for peace. The Nebraska Repertory Theatre, for instance, in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, has chosen to postpone three productions planned for this fall and focus instead on devoting Nebraska Rep's resources and time to an intensive exploration of how we approach race and social justice in our theatres and in higher education. This fall, in partnership with the St. Louis Black Repertory Company, Nebraska Rep will convene a diverse group of artists, writers, collaborators, and civil rights leaders in virtual events, workshops, panels, listening circles and performances.

Our College is consistently among the most committed and diverse colleges on campus. Our music ensembles, for instance, perform across our community and state, frequently in areas and among people underserved by quality music performance.

Our School of Art, Art History & Design is organizing its guest lecture series called "(Re-) Public," which will explore how to re-imagine public space in the wake of a global pandemic and mass social demonstrations. Several art and design faculty are a part of the new Environmental Futures group at our University investigating race, identity, and the environment through courses such as, "Visualizing Crisis: Food, Water, and Biopolitics" and "Design Laboratory with the Drought Mitigation Center."

Finally, the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts is embedding ethics across its curriculum, investigating the racism embedded in emerging media technologies.

The arts are only as important as the questions we ask of our community, and the Hixson-Lied College has been a leader in giving voice to our students and generating discussions that unite and help us understand one another. Through music, dance, theatre, film, art, design and emerging media arts, we bring the best of what it means to be human.

As I write this, former civil rights leader and U.S. Congressman John Lewis is being laid to rest. I pass his words onto our College and all of you:

*...answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe. When historians pick up their pens to write the story of the 21st century, let them say that it was your generation who laid down the heavy burdens of hate at last, and that peace finally triumphed over violence, aggression and war. So I say to you, walk with the wind, brothers and sisters, and let the spirit of peace and the power of everlasting love be your guide.*

I hope to see you in our concert halls, galleries, classrooms and theatres soon. Until then, stay well and safe.



**Chuck O'Connor**  
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean

**"...walk with the wind, brothers and sisters, and let the spirit of peace and the power of everlasting love be your guide."**

**—Rep. John Lewis**

**COVER SECTION: CARSON CENTER**

- 6** Transformative Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts inspires creativity, innovation
- 10** Elliott reflects on the Carson Center's first year
- 12** Meet the faculty
- 17** Emerging Media Arts curriculum focuses on flexibility
- 20** Students intern with branching narrative film project
- 21** Emerging Media Arts faculty receive research grants

**ADAPTING TO COVID-19**

- 34** May Capstone exhibition moved online due to COVID-19
- 36** Acting courses required 'creative solutions' for remote learning
- 38** Husker theatre alum helps sew masks for New York City hospitals
- 39** Carson Center's Open Studios event a virtual success
- 41** Cornhusker Marching Band provides virtual spirit for Husker fans

**FEATURES**

- 22** We Are Nebraska interns grow as diverse, inclusive leaders
- 24** Nebraska Rep, Black Rep to collaborate for #RealChange
- 26** New Carson School student organization promotes diversity, equity, inclusion
- 27** The American Prize caps productive year for White
- 29** Three Husker ceramic artists selected as Ceramics Monthly 2020 Emerging Artists

**HIXSON-LIED**

FALL 2020

COLLEGE OF FINE  
AND PERFORMING ARTS

For Alumni and Friends of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean**

Charles O'Connor

**Editor and Writer** | Kathe C. Andersen**Art Director** | Ella Durham**Photography** | All photos by Justin Mohling unless otherwise noted.**Cover photo:** Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. Photo courtesy of HDR © 2019 Dan Schwalm.**Special Thanks**

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**DEAN'S LETTER**

I hope our alumni and friends are staying healthy and safe during these trying times of the global pandemic. It was only a year ago in November 2019 that we opened the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and celebrated with a dedication weekend. Yet, there are more big things ahead, and you will continue to hear a lot about the Center and other achievements in the College in the years to come. We celebrate the Center's opening in this issue of the magazine.

We also celebrate the year that Dr. Tyler White had—premiering his newest opera in Cozad, Nebraska, as well as earning the American Prize in Composition (orchestra division) for his orchestra work "A Brand-New Summer." And we spotlight a new program, the We Are Nebraska internships. These internships, under the guidance of Julie Uribe, train and grow the next generation of diverse and inclusive leaders. Using improvisational methods, students explore their personal stories of social impact and then present them in a theatrical experience that has been inspiring, educating and entertaining the campus and community for the past year. The stories they share are powerful, and we look forward to hearing more stories this year.

And then in March, it felt like the world was upended almost overnight by the coronavirus. The university pivoted to remote learning. Remote learning presents obvious challenges for the fine and performing arts, but in this issue of the magazine, we share with you some of the successes of our faculty and students in the remote environment. I cannot thank our directors, faculty and staff enough for the hard work they have put in to teach our students over the past six months. We remain focused on protecting the health and safety of our community and assuring that our students are able to continue their education, whether remotely or in-person.

I hope you enjoy this issue of our magazine and thank you for your continued support of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

**Chuck O'Connor**  
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean  
[twitter.com/charlesoconnor](http://twitter.com/charlesoconnor)



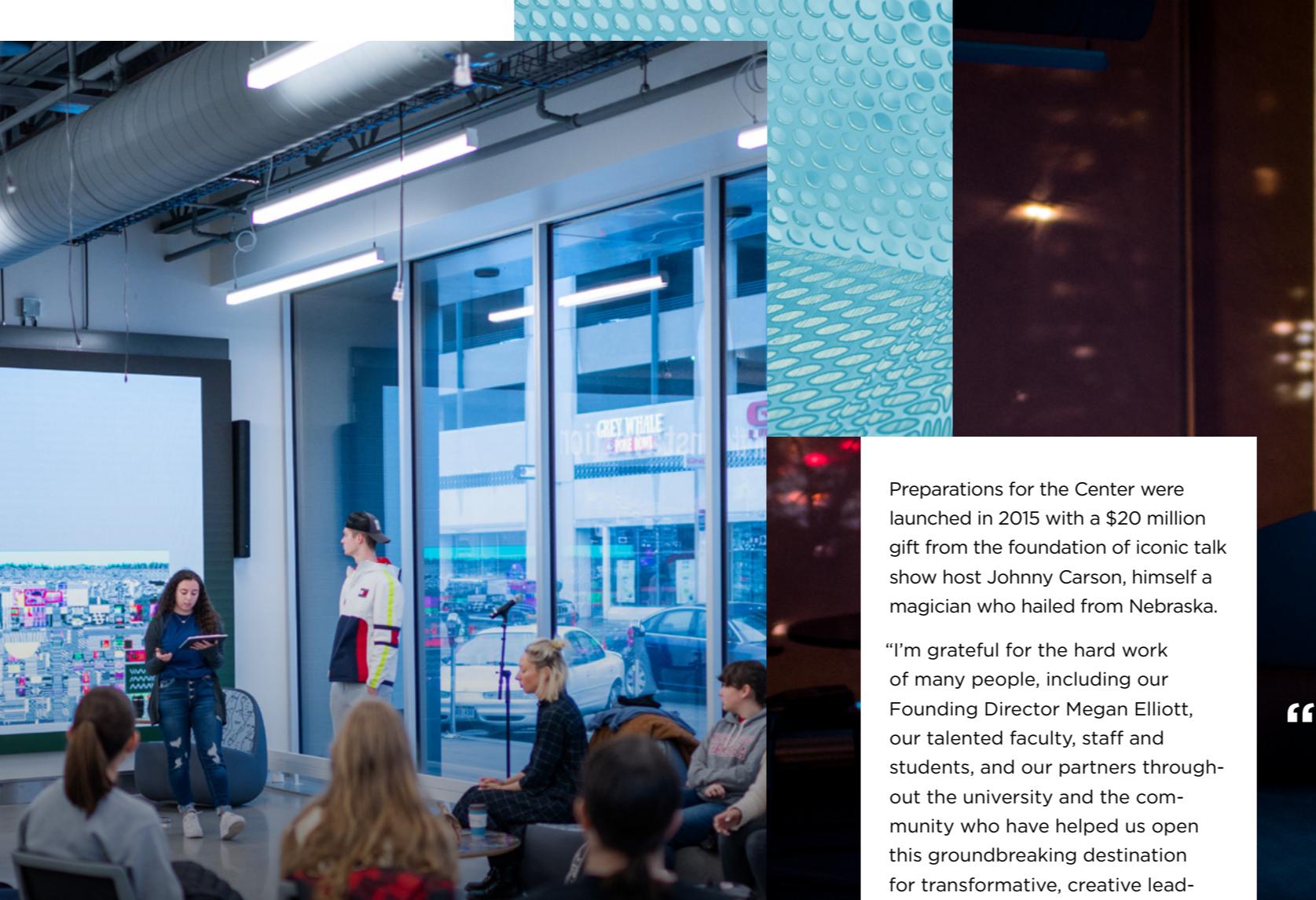
Photo by Madeline Cass.

# Hixson-Lied Center for Transformative Media Arts

## Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts inspires creativity, innovation

*Students present projects in Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts Ash E. Smith's Story Lab II course last spring.*

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts opened last fall to welcome the "wizards and pirates and magicians of the world" with great fanfare and a campus-wide dedication celebration in November.



Preparations for the Center were launched in 2015 with a \$20 million gift from the foundation of iconic talk show host Johnny Carson, himself a magician who hailed from Nebraska.

"I'm grateful for the hard work of many people, including our Founding Director Megan Elliott, our talented faculty, staff and students, and our partners throughout the university and the community who have helped us open this groundbreaking destination for transformative, creative leaders," said Chuck O'Connor, dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. "We are so grateful to the Johnny Carson Foundation and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for their support in helping us achieve this dream."

*Right: A video project on display during the Carson Center's December 2019 Open Studios event.*

Elliott said she envisions the new Carson Center will become the premiere destination for "the best and brightest students, faculty, visiting artists, entrepreneurs and scientists from around the world."



Above: A featured staircase and an Absen Acclaim series LED video wall are visible at the entrance of the Carson Center.

Bottom: Emerging media arts students work and collaborate in a second-floor classroom. Photo by Dan Schwalm, HDR, Inc.

**"We are so grateful to the Johnny Carson Foundation and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for their support in helping us achieve this dream."**



The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts at dusk. Photo by Dan Schwalm, HDR, Inc.

Even before its official opening, the Center earned a Hewlett Packard/Educause Campus of the Future designation, the first program in the Big Ten to do so. It's a partnership that gives Nebraska access to the latest high-tech equipment and puts Nebraska in the company of MIT, Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, Yale University and Dartmouth College in investigating ways augmented reality, virtual reality and 3D scanning and printing technologies can benefit teaching, learning and research.

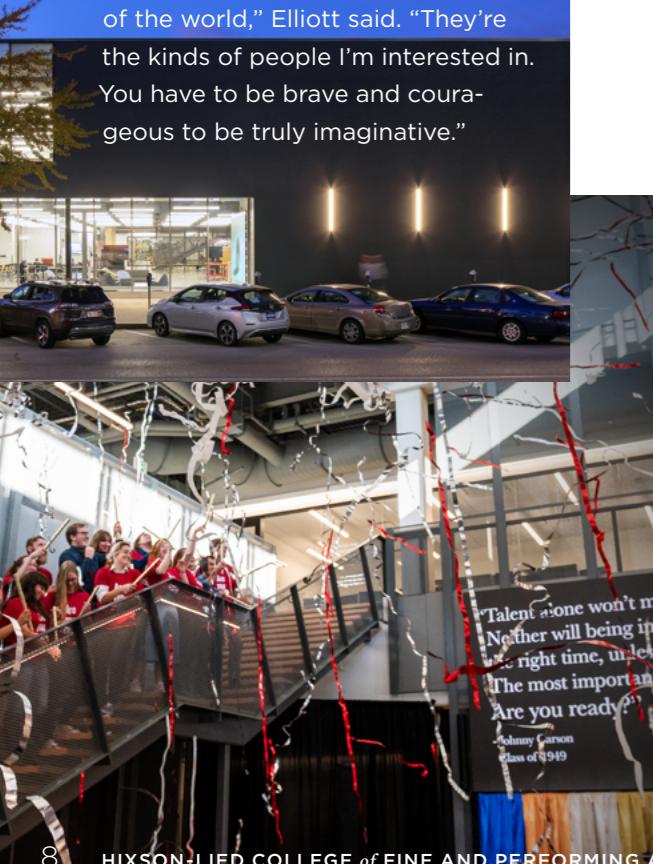
"I talk about recruiting the wizards and the pirates and the magicians of the world," Elliott said. "They're the kinds of people I'm interested in. You have to be brave and courageous to be truly imaginative."

The Center celebrated its Dedication Weekend November 15-17, 2019. "I can't believe we're here," Elliott said at the formal dedication on Nov. 17 after accepting the position just three years earlier. "Three years later, I'm standing here in the Carson Center, celebrating with you and the people that made it possible to program and build a building, create a brand-new Bachelor of Fine Arts in Emerging Media Arts, craft a strategic plan, hire new faculty members, put together an awesome team of staff, a rock-star international Advisory Council, and recruit our first cohort of students."

# We know Johnny would be very pleased."

Allan Alexander, the President and CEO of the Johnny Carson Foundation, said at the dedication that the Center exceeded their expectations.

"This facility and the program exceeds all of our expectations," Alexander said. "It was the largest funding we have done through the foundation, and we thought about it very carefully because of that. We have a saying that goes, 'What would Johnny do? What would Johnny say?' And it has to meet that criteria...It is beyond our expectations how beautiful this is and how exciting it is. We know Johnny would be very pleased."



Dean Chuck O'Connor (left) and Carson Center Founding Director Megan Elliott (third from left) with Johnny Carson Foundation board members (left to right) Lawrence Heller, Allan Alexander, Larry Witzer and Jeff Sotzing at the dedication.

HDR Architect Tyson Fiscus, who helped design the building, likes the energy of the new facility.

"I'm so excited and moved by the creative energy the building exudes," Fiscus said. "The students and faculty have charged the building with positive vibes. I'm proud that the building is functioning as the design team hoped, and that the students and faculty have made it feel like their second home."

When you enter the Carson Center, two features greet you: a featured staircase and an Absen Acclaim series LED video wall. The wall itself is 16' x 9' or roughly 220 inches diagonally.

"I'm proud about how the main feature stair communicates between the two building levels," Fiscus said. "The feature stair has become the metaphoric heart of the building. I'm also proud of the new window in the south façade. The structural limitations of the existing building made adding any exterior windows a challenging architectural detail."

Designing a building while the university was designing the program was also a challenge, but the Carson Center facility emphasizes flexible spaces for an ever-changing variety of uses.

"The Emerging Media Arts program has some very specific requirements, as far as technology and digital infrastructure," Fiscus said. "Making that required technology flexible was indeed challenging. Ultimately, we created a grid of overhead power and data that could be pulled down as needed or be tucked away in the ceiling to leave the floor space completely open and flexible."

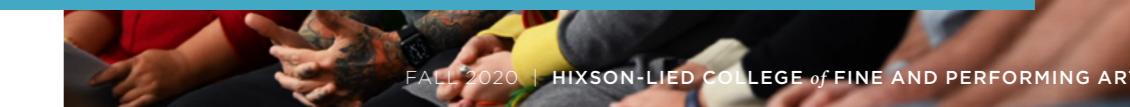
During the dedication, Elliott paid tribute to Norm Hollyn, a University of Southern California professor and film editor who advised the development of the Carson Center. He died unexpectedly in March 2019. His vision for the Center and its importance to being linked to Carson were featured in a video shown at the dedication.

**"THE CONCEPT, FOR ME, OF WHAT THIS EMERGING MEDIA ARTS CENTER COULD REALLY BE GREAT AT, IS TO PREPARE STUDENTS TO WORK IN A FUTURE IN WHICH THE TRADITIONAL FILM WILL DISAPPEAR," HOLLYN SAID IN THE VIDEO. "IT'S NOT ABOUT THE TECH. IT'S ABOUT THE INNER SOUL OF YOU AS A CREATOR, REACHING OUT TO OTHER KINDS OF INPUT AND BEING WISER ABOUT IT."**

The Center's inaugural 33 students are joined this year by a second cohort of 36 students.



From left to right: Carson Center Advisory Council members Preeta Bansal, Jeff Nicholas, Erica Larsen-Dockray, Ross Warren, Clint! Runge and Kyle Murphy discussed how skills developed by students in the Carson Center will be essential in the changing workforce during "The New Economy Panel" during the dedication weekend last November. For more on the panel, visit <http://go.unl.edu/dspm>.



# Elliott reflects on the Carson Center's first year

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts opened its doors last fall. Preparations for the Center were launched in 2015 with a \$20 million gift from the foundation of iconic talk show host and Husker alumnus Johnny Carson. We visited with Founding Director Megan Elliott to discuss the first year of operation and what comes next for the Carson Center.

**Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts (HLCFPA):** It's been one year since you opened. How would you describe the first year of the Carson Center?

**Megan Elliott (ELLIOTT):** It's been an exhilarating and challenging first year. It was so exciting to open last August with our first cohort of talented students. And then we had the dedication in November, which was a grand celebration. And then we ended last spring with the campus changing to remote learning due to the coronavirus. It's been a whirlwind. But through it all, our faculty and students have just been amazing in remaining dedicated to the Center and what we're trying to create. It's full steam ahead for the Carson Center, no matter what challenges the world throws at us.

**HLCFPA:** You began the year last year by earning a Hewlett Packard/Educause Campus of the Future designation. What is that, and what does it mean for the Center?

**ELLIOTT:** We were, in fact, the first program in the Big Ten to get that designation. It's a partnership with a Fortune 500, global corporation, that is giving us access to the latest high-tech equipment and putting Nebraska in the



company of such luminaries as MIT, Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, Yale University and Dartmouth College, to investigate ways augmented reality, virtual reality and 3D scanning and printing technologies can benefit teaching, learning and research.

Through this partnership, we have had access to the latest HP Virtual Reality technologies, including the HP ZVR virtual reality backpacks, the latest HTC Reverb G2 virtual and augmented reality head mounted displays, as well as HP DreamColor 227x studio displays. This is truly amazing technology that we are able to get into the hands of our faculty and students.

**HLCFPA:** How would you describe the facility itself?

**ELLIOTT:** The Center itself focuses on creativity, flexibility and adaptability. As we were designing the space, we still didn't know exactly what we would be teaching as we were still designing the curriculum at the same time. That was certainly a challenge. But we designed large, open spaces that could be flexible that we can change and adapt as we go along.

What I'm really proud of, though, is that the Carson Center is growing into a hub for both the university and the greater community. We've hosted a variety of events this year, including ethics and technology conferences, the Inside Outside Innovation Summit, hackathons, gaming events, First Friday dance performances, and more. Our students already hang out here all the time, and we are proud to be a gathering spot for the community as well. We want the Carson Center to be in the middle of everything, and I think we are building that sense of community. Any time people gather in our building, that builds opportunities for collaboration, innovation and interdisciplinary projects.

**HLCFPA:** One of the highlights of the year had to be the Dedication Weekend in November. What did that weekend mean to you?

**ELLIOTT:** It was a fitting celebration of the Johnny Carson Foundation's generosity and bold vision to dare us to dream the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts into reality. We can never thank them enough for that. It took more than seven years of hard work by our own faculty, students and alumni, as well as our colleagues across the campus, community members and industry partners, to create the Center. I just remember when I got up to speak at the dedication, I paused to look out over the crowd and was just overwhelmed with gratitude to see so many of our colleagues across

the campus and around the community come and join us for the celebration. It was a proud moment for everyone to have the Center be open. I'm also grateful to our Advisory Council members who took time out from their busy lives to join us that weekend and participated in the Carson Conversations Forum. They also believe in the mission of the Center and wanted to show their support.

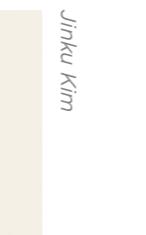
But I am also humbled by the fact that this is just the beginning for the Carson Center. We have so much more to accomplish.

**HLCFPA:** What is in store for the Carson Center this next year and beyond?

**ELLIOTT:** We hired three brilliant faculty members in Anna Henson, Robert Twomey and Jinku Kim, which gives us a nearly full complement of eight faculty members. I think we will continue to see our faculty build bridges and continue to collaborate on important research projects with our colleagues across campus.

**HLCFPA:** Any final thoughts?

**ELLIOTT:** I just want to thank everyone for their support of the Carson Center. What drew me to this role after living all over the world, is that everybody here wants us to succeed—from the university administration, to the Mayor and other elected officials, to the heads of industry. Everyone! We are so grateful for that support, as well as from the support of the Johnny Carson Foundation, who made it all possible. We are all building this Carson Center together. Stay tuned! There's a lot more to come. ■



JINKU KIM

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE IN

EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

Degrees: B.M. Berklee College of Music; M.F.A.

California Institute of the Arts;

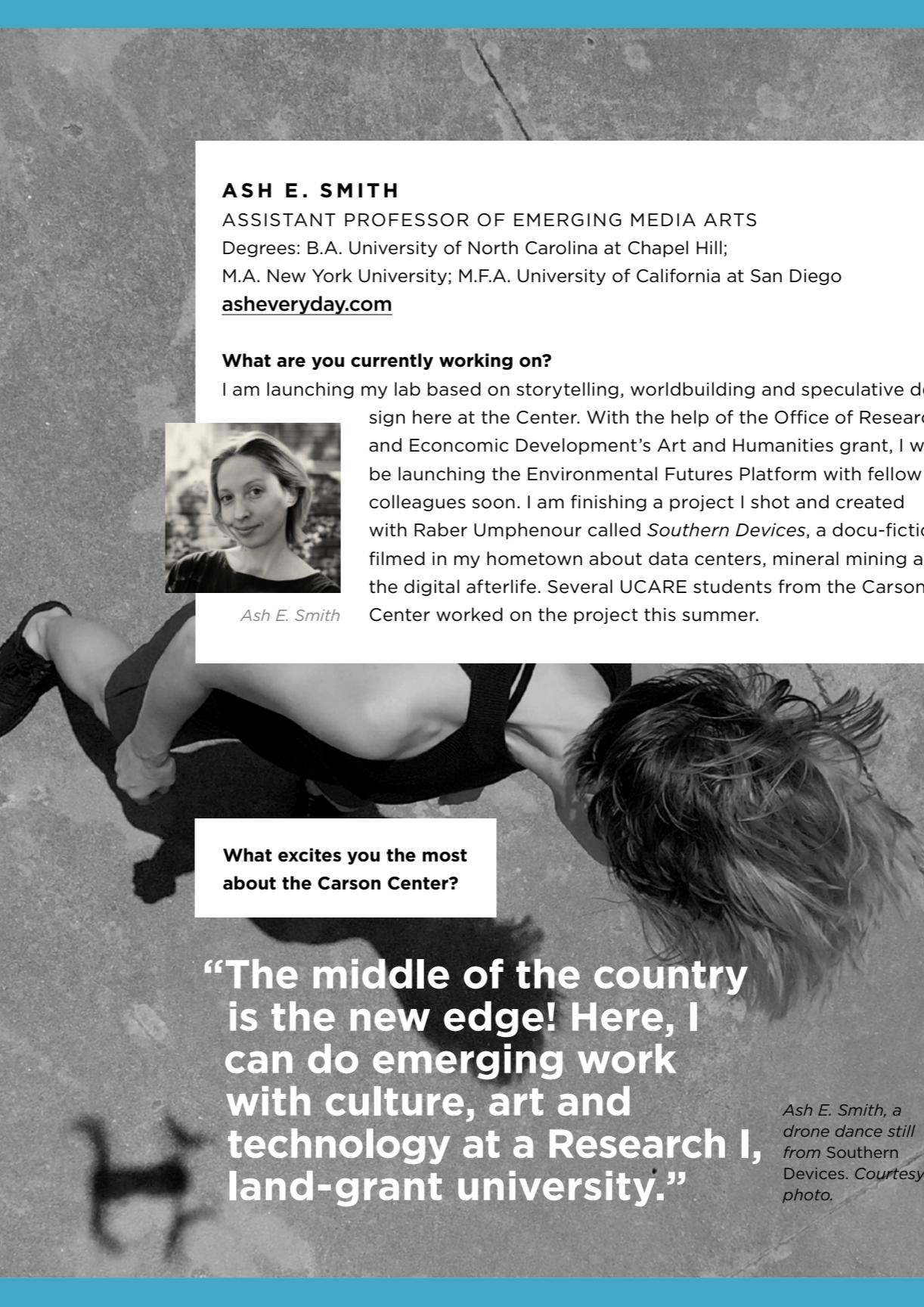
Ph.D. Brown University

[grayscale64.com](http://grayscale64.com)**What are you currently working on?**

In my current project, I am exploring the disparity between the real and the virtual. I am investigating several variables in order to construct a new kind of “reality” unique to VR. I am trying to create an experience that is not only “real” and “immersive,” but also illusionary by emphasizing the difference between the two entities. Through this connection between virtual and real elements, I am able to create an intriguing experience while moving away from approaching new media within the framework of old media. Instead, I hope to explore how to add and connect these new layers to our experiences.

For full bios of the faculty, please visit [go.unl.edu/carsoncenterfaculty](http://go.unl.edu/carsoncenterfaculty).

Left: Jinku Kim's "Hard-Wired Wonderland" audio visual installation. Courtesy photo.

**ASH E. SMITH**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

Degrees: B.A. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill;

M.A. New York University; M.F.A. University of California at San Diego

[asheeveryday.com](http://asheeveryday.com)**What are you currently working on?**

I am launching my lab based on storytelling, worldbuilding and speculative design here at the Center. With the help of the Office of Research and Economic Development's Art and Humanities grant, I will be launching the Environmental Futures Platform with fellow colleagues soon. I am finishing a project I shot and created with Raber Umphenour called *Southern Devices*, a docu-fiction filmed in my hometown about data centers, mineral mining and the digital afterlife. Several UCARE students from the Carson Center worked on the project this summer.



Ash E. Smith

**What excites you the most about the Carson Center?**

**“The middle of the country is the new edge! Here, I can do emerging work with culture, art and technology at a Research I, land-grant university.”**

Ash E. Smith, a drone dance still from *Southern Devices*. Courtesy photo.

**RICHARD ENDACOTT**

PROFESSOR OF FILM AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

OF THE CARSON SCHOOL

Degrees: B.A. The Colorado College;

M.S. Boston University

**What are you currently working on?**

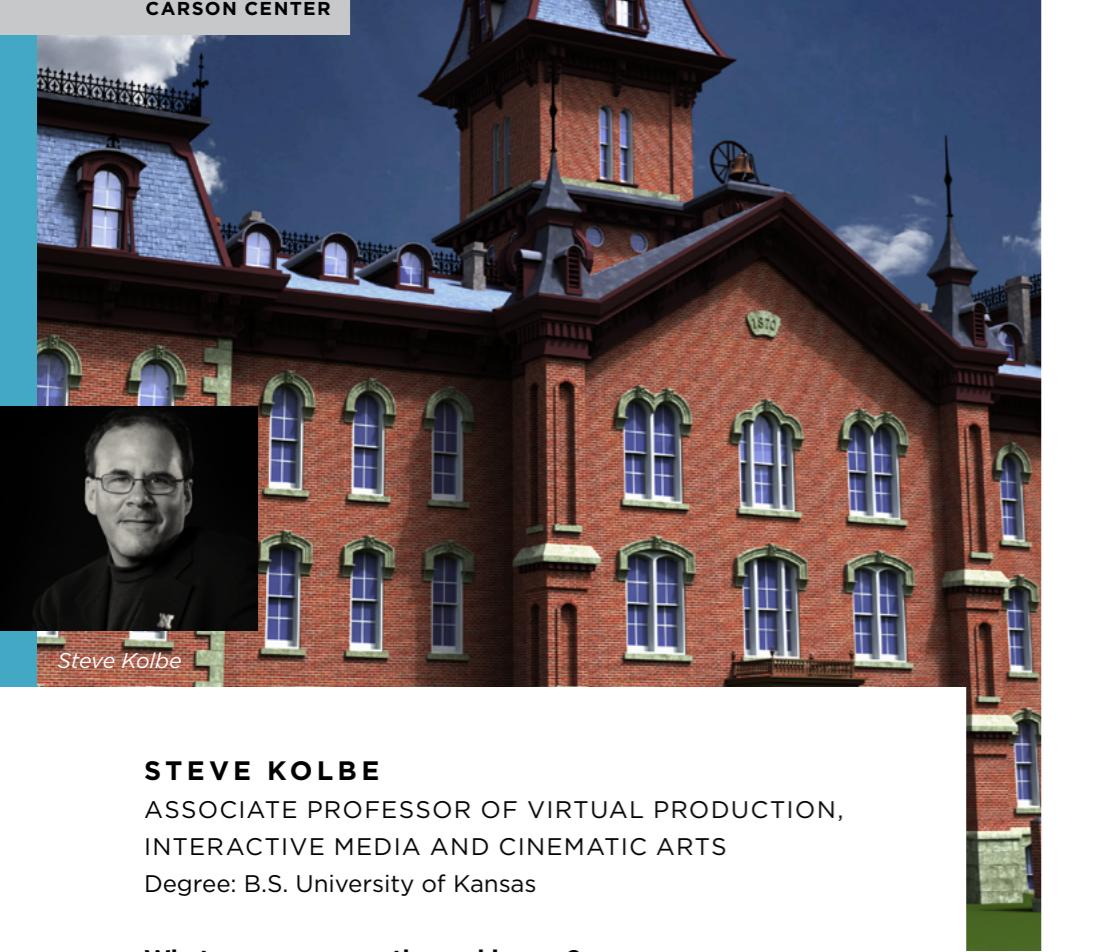
While I have taken on new responsibilities within the Carson School and Center, I continue to write and develop screen projects as much as I can. Currently, I'm interested in exploring the subculture of folks interested in restoration of old things. Growing up, my father had an old Ford tractor on the farm that was beaten up but worked like a champ. Recently, I saw a ‘tractor parade’ that included a perfectly restored version of the same 60-year-old model. I know, it sounds a bit like a niche documentary topic, but my interest is in building a short narrative film with old tractors as the backdrop.

**What excites you the most about the Carson Center?**

**“The curriculum of the Emerging Media Arts still includes cinematic studies, but it expands and explores an amazing range of new and evolving areas in the digital arts. Areas that are essential for the success of our students now and in the future.”**



Richard Endacott

**STEVE KOLBE**

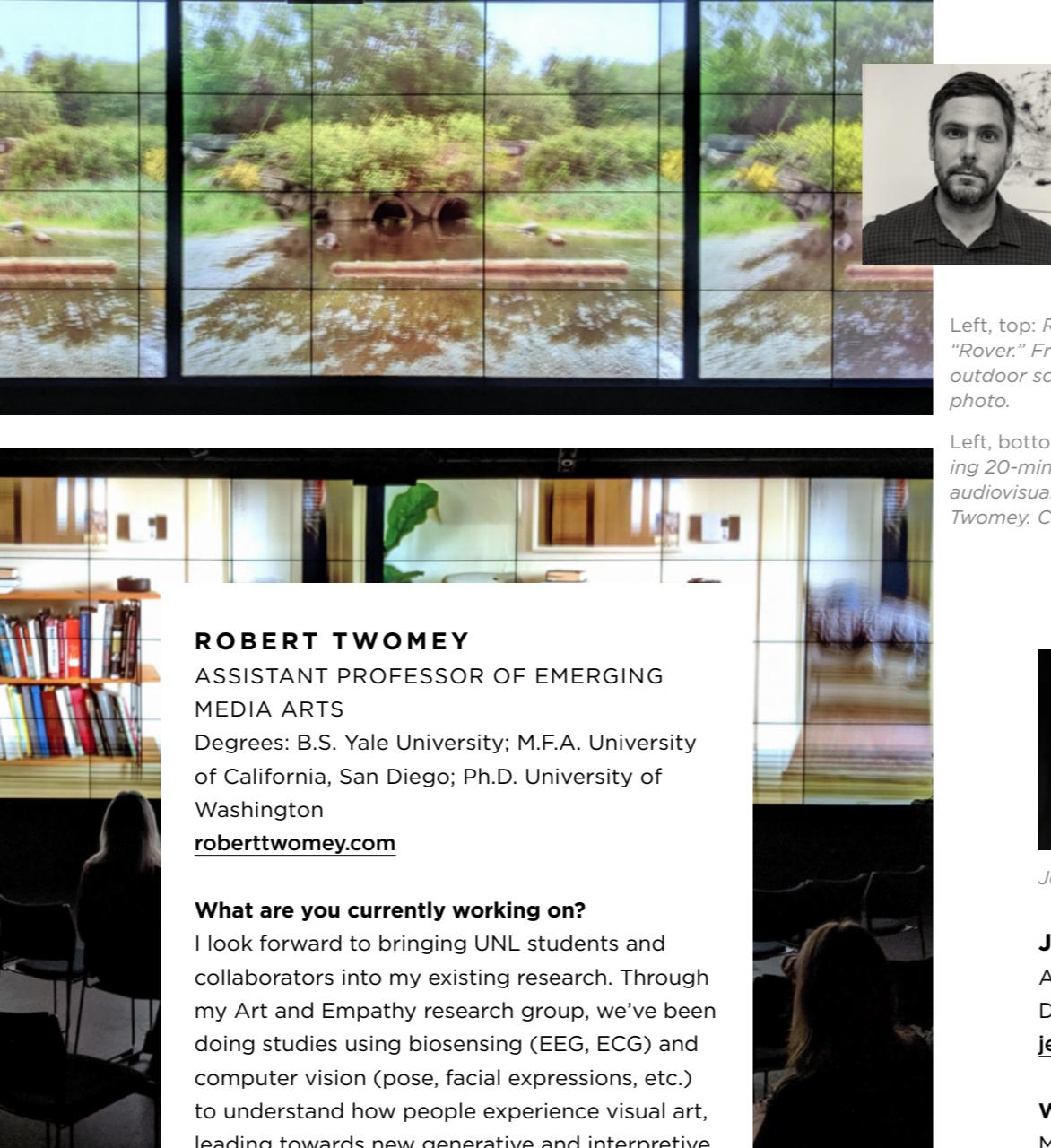
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VIRTUAL PRODUCTION,  
INTERACTIVE MEDIA AND CINEMATIC ARTS  
Degree: B.S. University of Kansas

**What are you currently working on?**

I am currently working with the athletics department on developing some VR-based wellness applications for various athletes. Also with the athletics department, I am creating an immersive, personal experience for potential recruits utilizing high resolution 360 video and VR technology. In addition, I am starting a project with National Parks to create more immersive and personal experiences utilizing high resolution 360 video and VR technology. With funding from NET, I am developing a virtual history of UNL, starting with the first building on campus, University Hall, as it stood in 1870.



Above: Steve Kolbe is part of a team creating a VR re-creation of the first building on campus, University Hall, as it stood in 1870. Courtesy photo.



Robert Twomey

**SHARON TEO GOODING**

PROFESSOR OF FILM  
Degrees: B.S. University of Texas at Austin; M.F.A. Ohio University

**What are you currently working on?**

I am editing a documentary in collaboration with a scientist from the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California.

**What excites you the most about the Carson Center?**

Sharon Teo-Gooding



**"As one of the two founding faculty of the Film and Emerging Media Arts program, I am gratified that the success of the film program has led to the expansion into the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts."**



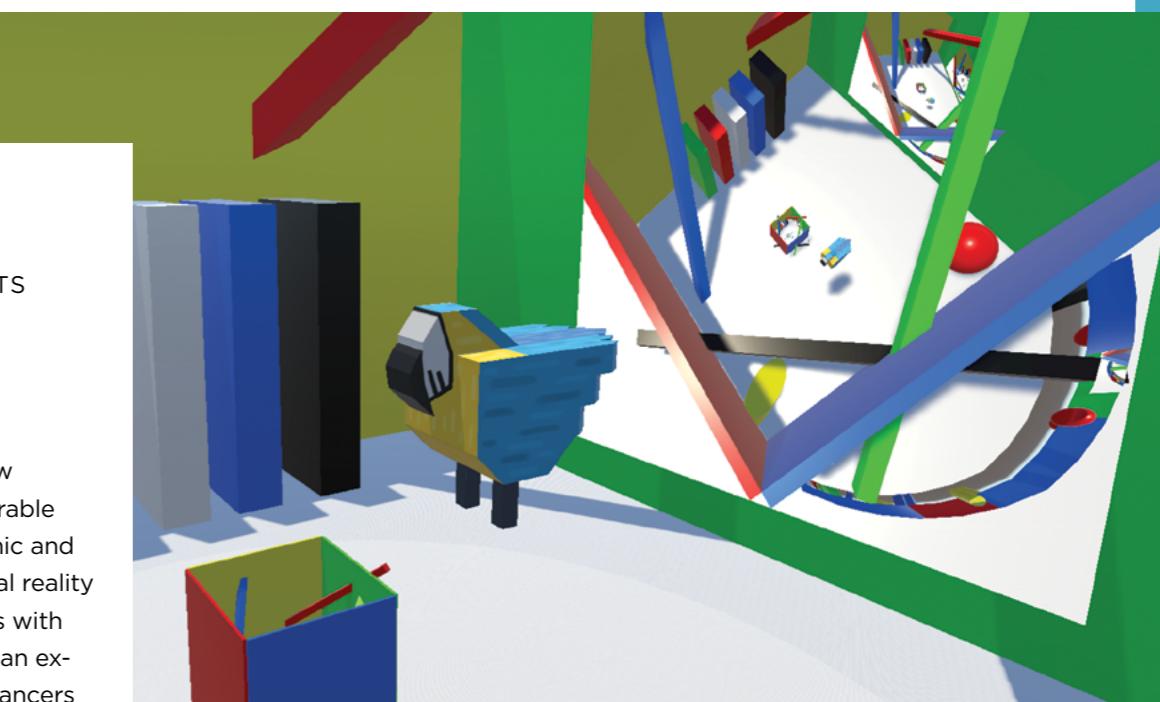
Robert Twomey

**JESSE FLEMING**

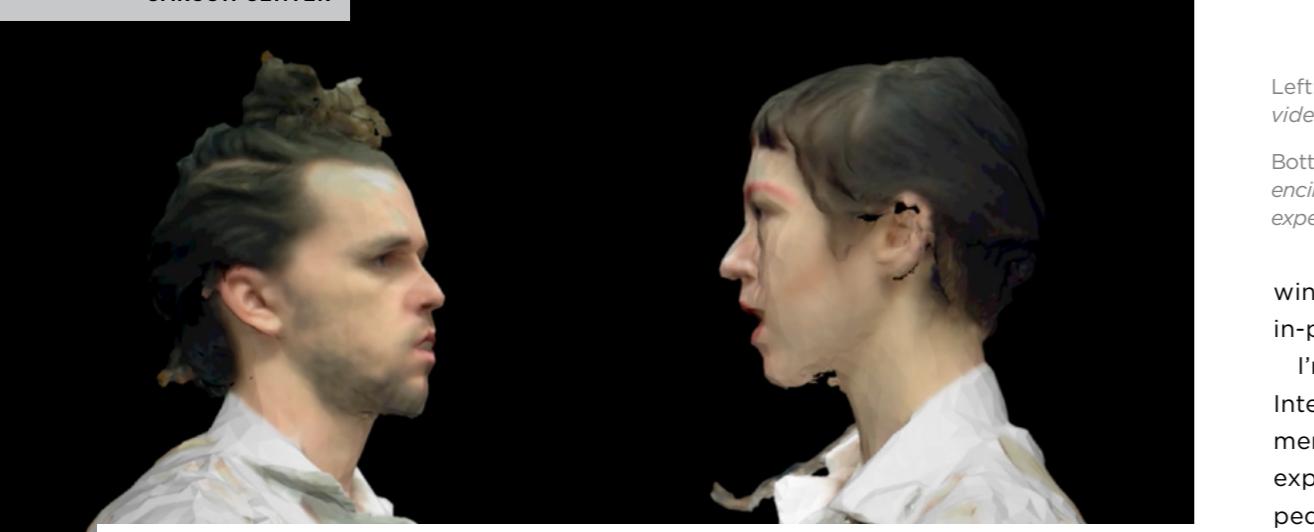
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF EMERGING MEDIA ARTS  
Degrees: M.F.A. UCLA; B.F.A. San Francisco Art Institute  
[jessefleming.com](http://jessefleming.com)

**What are you currently working on?**

My Perceptual Technologies Lab has been developing a few projects within this focus: an audio augmented reality wearable that tracks the position of the head and presents a harmonic and emergent sound scape based on the user's motion, a virtual reality experience that explores eye tracking and user interactions with their sight alone such as teleportation and telekinesis, and an expanded body dance performance that motion tracks the dancer's body, translating their movement into a spatial audio performance.

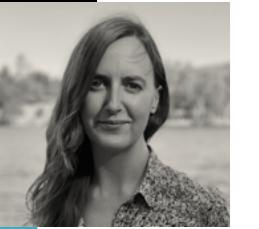


Parrot Eyes, created in Jesse Fleming's Perceptual Technologies Lab. Courtesy photo.

**ANNA HENSON**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE IN EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

Degrees: M.S. Carnegie Mellon University; M.F.A. The Glasgow School of Art

[annahenson.com](http://annahenson.com)

Anna Henson

**What excites you the most about the Carson Center?**

**“I’m excited to create a program that directly engages the swiftly changing creative and technical industries, while being committed to rigorous and expansive academic research and creative expression.”**



Left: Still from Anna Henson's *Body, My Body* music video. Courtesy photo.

Bottom: A dancer and participant in headset experiencing Anna Henson's *Wake*, a guided mixed-reality experience. Courtesy photo.

winter and refitting the live performance for evolving in-person guidelines.

I'm also continuing my research in Human Computer Interaction, collaborating with psychology and movement practitioners to investigate social and emotional experience in immersive technologies, and developing pedagogical methods for teaching concepts of embodiment within technology contexts. At Nebraska, I plan to develop interdisciplinary research collaborations that address questions of health and wellbeing, new forms of storytelling, ethics in technology, and inclusive pedagogies around these subjects. ■



Students collaborate in EMAR 160 Computation and Media Studio. In this year-long laboratory of exploration, students develop a diverse, digital toolkit.

# Emerging Media Arts curriculum focuses on flexibility



**I**t's very comprehensive, in that sense that if the goal of what we set out to do was to make our students that graduate robot-proof, future-proof, flexible, students of the new liberal arts, then I think that we've done that."

That is the assessment of Professor of Film and Associate Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre Arts Richard Endacott on the new Bachelor of Fine Arts in Emerging Media Arts degree that was created and launched last year, created by faculty and administrators at Nebraska, in consultation with Advisory Council members and industry leaders.

The Johnny Carson Foundation, in making their \$20 million commitment to the university to create the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, challenged Nebraska to

go beyond traditional filmmaking. They hired a consultant, Norm Hollyn, former professor of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California's School of Cinematic Arts, who died in 2019 just a few months before the Center opened, as a consultant to help reimagine the program.

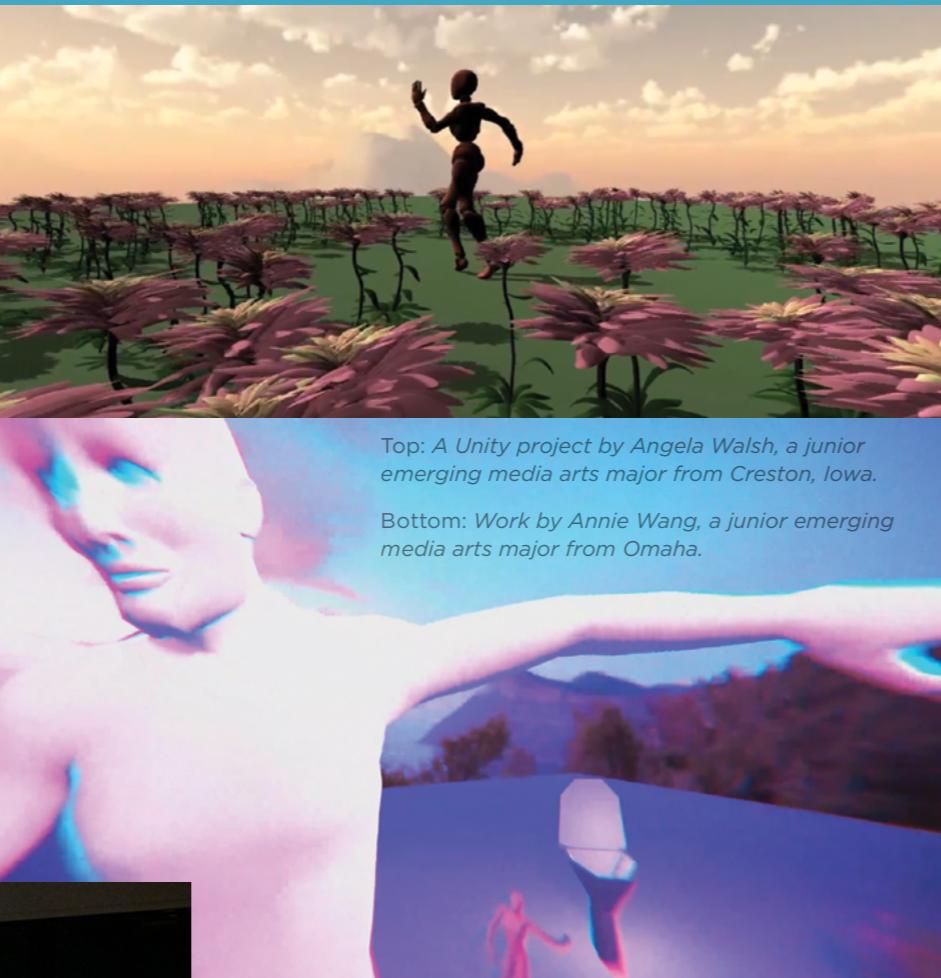
"His perspective was that while there is no shortage of film production programs across the country, we were kind of the only one in this part of the country," Endacott said. "I think his sense from the Carson Foundation was that they wanted to do something beyond just adding money to what we would like to believe was already a successful film program. But what Norm was observing at USC and other universities and in the industry in general, is the future of virtual production, which is really an extension of traditional live-action filmmaking, and utilizing a lot of the digital arts that we were already starting to teach."

A key component of the emerging media arts curriculum is the hybridization of technology and creativity.

"In all of our conversations, we kept coming back to what I call the 'liberal arts of technology,'" Endacott said. "It's essentially all of the



*Professor of Film Richard Endacott (left) instructs students in the Lighting for Film course.*



*Top: A Unity project by Angela Walsh, a junior emerging media arts major from Creston, Iowa.*

*Bottom: Work by Annie Wang, a junior emerging media arts major from Omaha.*

humanities and liberal arts aspects coupled with the necessities of the future—things like coding, data, understanding large data sets and how human beings can pick out patterns, relevance and connections that machines just aren't capable of doing."

Endacott said the fundamental principle of the degree is that we're trying to teach students to be lifelong learners.

"That's a core of what a liberal arts education is, and the only big difference is that technology and connectivity are more ubiquitous and essential, so you have to fold those in," he said.

Endacott describes the curriculum as an "evolution," and notes that changes will continue to be made to innovate and to refine it. While it's not rigid, it does require a sequential process. It also focuses on hands-on learning.

Currently in their first year, students focus on three core areas: 1. Storytelling (two semesters of Story Lab), 2. Visual Expression Studio, where students learn all the different ways to use visuals to tell stories, and 3. Computation (two semesters of Computation and Media Studio), where they develop a digital toolkit to learn the fundamentals of human computer interaction and computer programming. They also take Games, Play and Performance and an ethics course.

**"I THINK THE STRENGTH OF IT IS THAT BY THE TIME YOU GET THROUGH THAT FIRST YEAR, WHERE YOU LEARN A LOT OF THE INTEGRATION OF THESE PILLARS, THEN YOU REALLY ARE READY TO START MAKING SOME REASONABLY INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT THE EMPHASIS TRACKS THAT YOU GET TO CHOOSE," ENDACOTT SAID.**

In their second year, students begin to choose two of eight emphases from experience design, immersive+interactive media, cinematic arts,



*Emerging Media Arts students view a work in progress. Photo by George Gathera.*

story, sensory media, virtual production, sonic arts, and data+art. They take four courses per emphasis. They also add courses in entrepreneurship and history of emerging media.

In their third year, students take Innovation Studio. Each year, faculty, students and industry partners will collaborate to select a unifying idea or theme and conduct a series of projects, readings, and field trips that relate to this theme.

Finally, in their fourth year, students take Capstone, where they will develop a team to create, organize, prototype and complete a fully realized work ready for distribution via the appropriate media. They also take World Ready, where they learn about emerging media arts industries and how they work.

Within the curriculum is also nine hours of an interdisciplinary concentration, where students take three courses in a discipline outside of emerging media arts, which might include ethnic studies, energy science or human rights, as examples.

Another highlight in the curriculum is the IGNITE colloquium that all emerging media arts students currently take. IGNITE includes guest lectures, workshops and seminars around creative and professional development.

"It was popular. There were people from the community showing up," Endacott said. "It's great to have that kind of brown-bag lunch sort of thing for students, public, and other people on campus and faculty to get together for an hour and hear talks about whatever the subject might be."

Endacott said a remarkable group of people promoted this program and have allowed it to succeed.

"It is that innovative and enthusiastic spirit coupled with interest in collaboration from every corner of campus that is exciting," Endacott said. "How to develop the Center's potential for amazing teaching and research collaboration is our next big challenge. But in the past two years, our three film faculty have been joined by five outstanding new faculty. They come to us with remarkable ideas, energy and enthusiasm. I have no doubt they will lead the way in promoting collaboration and connections across campus." ■

# Students intern with branching narrative film project

**F**ive emerging media arts students in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts worked as interns last year on a new branching narrative film project that will debut later this year on major platform.

Non-disclosure agreements prevent details about the project from being released yet, but the project has received backing from Hollywood insiders.

"It is a science fiction project that takes place in space, and it has a really vast story and worldbuilding," said Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts Ash E. Smith, who is also working on the project. "My role in it has been doing story consulting, some worldbuilding and then acting in it."

Emerging Media Arts students Annie Wang, Mitchell Guynan and Parker Reil all did previsualization work on the project remotely in Lincoln last fall. Guynan, Reil, Ally Hall and Ryan Hovland worked in various roles on the project over the winter break in Boston through paid internships.

Guynan, a junior emerging media arts student from Blair, Nebraska, said everyone was wearing a lot of different hats on the production.

"The director was not just the director," he said. "He was an editor. He was an actor. He was a producer. The original director of photography was also sound mixing. We were

editing, but we were also production hands. We were also running errands, and we were also giving and getting feedback about the work itself, which is extremely bizarre for a film set to be talking to the director as much as we did. It was super cool just to see how everything worked firsthand. It was the most collaborative experience I've ever had."

Hall, a junior emerging media arts student from Lincoln, also had the opportunity to work with costume designer Erin Robertson, who won season 15 of *Project Runway*, during the internship.

"She worked in a different part of Boston," Hall said. "I went to her studio a couple of times and shot some behind-the-scenes there. It was really fun to see how she was making the costumes, and they were doing fittings and stuff."

Real-world experiences like this are important for emerging media arts students.

"There's something to be said for project-based, experiential learning where you are working to create a final project," Smith said. "It's definitely real-world networks and connections and living in places—the same kinds of reasons that study abroad is really healthy for you as you get outside of your comfort zone and to see other people's kinds of processes and ways of working that can help influence your own systems and techniques and approaches to making work." ■



Ally Hall (left) had the opportunity to work with costume designer Erin Robertson (right) during her internship with a new branching narrative film project last winter. Courtesy photo.



# Emerging Media Arts faculty receive research grants

Three faculty from the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts have received major research grants recently.

**ROBERT TWOMEY**, assistant professor of emerging media arts, has received a National Science Foundation grant of nearly \$750,000 for a project titled "An Embodied, Augmented Reality Coding Platform for Pair Programming." He is co-principal investigator on the grant, along with Ying Choon Wu, an associate project scientist at the University of California-San Diego's Swartz Center for Computational Neuroscience. He will be creating a virtual environment for writing computer code, create a new programming language for that environment, and then do studies to evaluate how these tools compare to traditional approaches in helping high schoolers learn how to program.

**ASH E. SMITH**, assistant professor of emerging media arts, and **JESSE FLEMING**, assistant professor of emerging media arts, were two of three University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty who were selected for seed funding from the Office of Research and Economic Development's Arts and Humanities Research Enhancement Program.

Smith will collaborate with colleagues from across more than 10 departments at the university to launch

the Environmental Futures Platform, a consortium to incubate interdisciplinary projects that link art, nature and technology. Participants will use a speculative approach, a research methodology that asks "what if" questions to generate new directions. In its first year, the EFP's themes are rural-urban interdependence and human and nonhuman collaborations. The Carson Center and the Prairie Pines Nature Preserve, a 145-acre nature preserve in Lincoln, will serve as incubator hubs where researchers prototype experiments, collect data about the university's interdisciplinary methods and create media like podcasts, videos, photos and animations to showcase their results.

Fleming will collaborate with Nebraska physicist Kees Uiterwaal to develop an augmented reality experience that allows users to "see" the submicroscopic world of quantum physics. Fleming, founding director of the Perceptual Technologies Lab at the Carson Center, will create the AR experience based on Uiterwaal's analysis of quantum-dynamical processes. Users will wear a head-mounted, location-aware head display that senses its environment and projects interactive 3D objects into the space. ■



# We Are Nebraska interns grow as diverse, inclusive leaders

**A**new internship program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln titled “We Are Nebraska” uses applied improv and applied theatre techniques to explore the personal stories with social impact of its interns from across the campus and present them in a theatre experience that has been inspiring, educating and entertaining the campus and community for the past year.

“I think people connect to our show because it’s entertaining and engaging,” said Julie Uribe, the director and facilitator of the We Are Nebraska Internship and Theatre Experience. “People are hearing authentic, personal stories without feeling lectured to, and they can feel that our goal is not to lure them to change their beliefs. We have a variety of points of view. I know applied improv works because these students, who could not be more different, love and respect each other.”

The theatrical experiences feature challenging topics like addiction, transphobia, depression and even suicide. The intention of the program is for students and broader audiences to gain awareness and empathy through emotional connection.

“It’s interesting. This approach has been called ‘revolutionary.’ And it’s really back to humans telling stories to other humans, which we’ve been doing since time began,” Uribe said. “Perhaps it is revolutionary with all of us on our smart phones.”

At press time, Uribe was recruiting for this year’s interns. Her 14 interns last year were diverse in every way.

“I have everybody from deep, Christian faith to agnostic. They are diverse in race, sexual orientation, gender, economic status and majors. I have people from small towns and large, international cities,” Uribe said. “In addition to the raw and bold stories, we include music, song, dance and video expressions, to provide different art forms for emotional connections. It’s all about storytelling.”

In July, We Are Nebraska joined forces with other campus and community partners to create a pop-up, drive-in theater experience for the community to help with isolation in the coronavirus pandemic.

“Let’s face it, isolation can make us all go crazy, but staying safe is the priority,” Uribe said. “Then, the killing of George Floyd happened, and everyone in our group was asking what we can do to take action? So the idea came in May and with the help of other UNL and local sponsors, the creation of a pop-up, drive-in theater started to quickly take shape. More than just a movie, the two-night event in the Champions Club parking lot also included live music, food trucks and giant puppets, designed by Andy Park, artistic director of the Nebraska Rep, and grad student Jill Hibbard. A diverse, inclusive and free event was born with themes of love, hope, unity and friendship.”

Uribe said *The Lion King* was the perfect feature for the event.

“The evenings felt organic for people to dance, share some soul food and make a friend different from themselves,” she said. “And one of the best parts is that we raised over \$1,000 for Matt Talbot Kitchen and Outreach.”



This summer, many of the interns have been attending the Black Lives Matter marches and other community conversations with the Lincoln Police Department and other Black community leaders. Wanting to do more, We Are Nebraska invited a group of Lincoln police officers, including Chief Jeff Bliemeister, to join in a workshop with them. Using the same techniques of applied improv the interns practice, the two groups started to emotionally connect during a two-hour session.

“Our goal wasn’t to solve big problems in a couple of hours, but a good place to start is with deep listening,” Uribe said.

Uribe looks forward to this year’s performances, which are scheduled to begin Oct. 7 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

“I feel very optimistic and hopeful when I’m around this age group,” she said. “There are so many phenomenal students out there.”

For more information, visit [go.unl.edu/wearenebraska](http://go.unl.edu/wearenebraska). ■

Right, above: Julie Uribe introduces the We Are Nebraska interns during a performance last year at the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

Left: Fourteen We Are Nebraska interns shared their stories during performances last year.

Performers wave banners and giant puppets in the Champions Club parking lot during the pop-up, drive-in theater experience in July. Photo by Grace Trexel.

# Nebraska Rep, Black Rep to collaborate for #RealChange

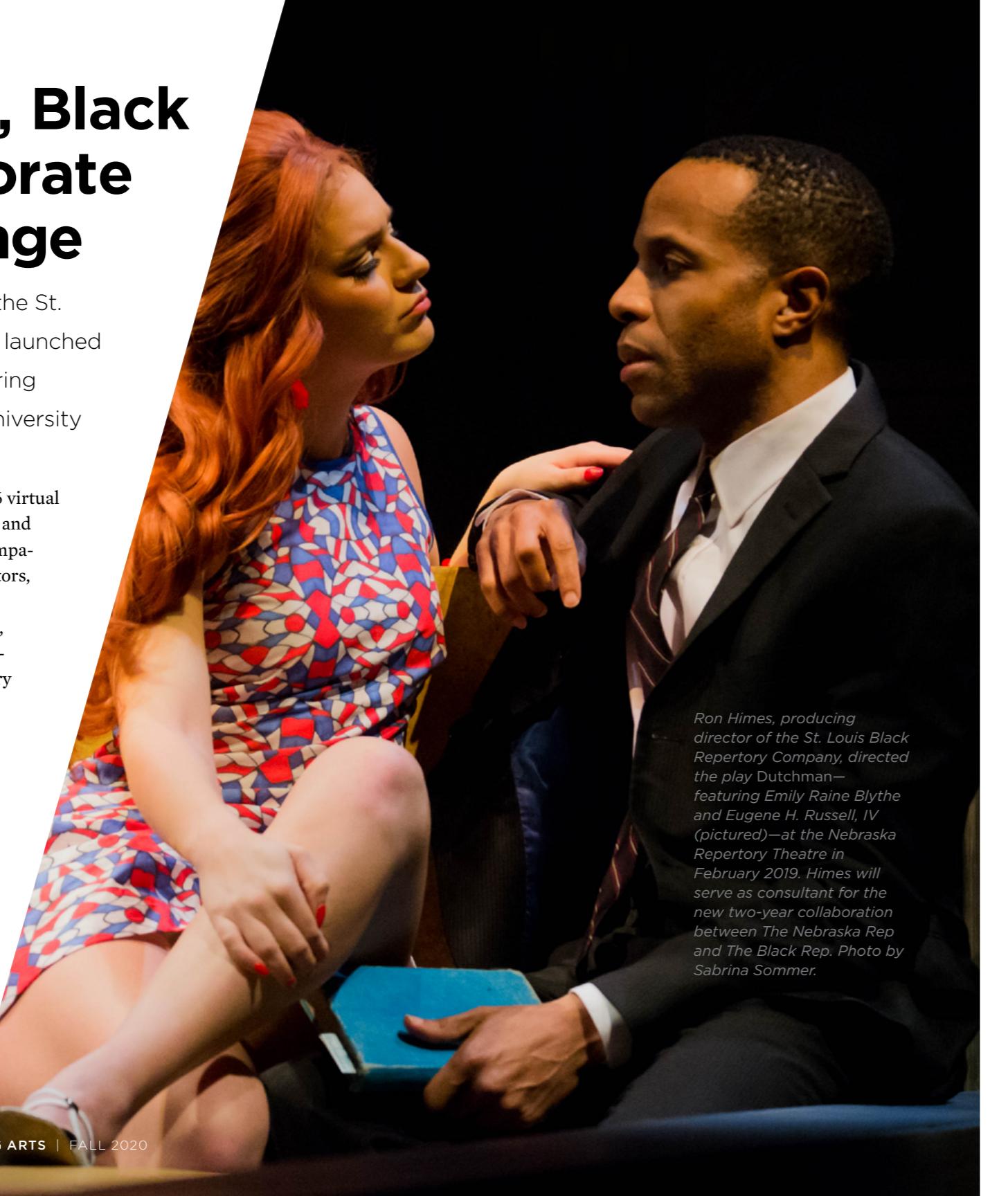
The Nebraska Repertory Theatre and the St. Louis Black Repertory Company have launched a two-year partnership that aims to bring about positive social change at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and beyond.

The partnership will begin with Oct. 2 and Nov. 6 virtual events featuring performances by Black Rep actors and conversations hosted by leaders of both theater companies. Each evening will feature discussions with actors, scholars, activists and audience members.

Ron Himes, producing director of The Black Rep, will serve as consultant for the collaboration. He directed the play *Dutchman* at the Nebraska Repertory Theatre in February 2019.

"This collaboration with Nebraska Rep and the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film is consistent with our mission to heighten the social, cultural and educational awareness of our audiences," Himes said. "Our company was cast in the spirit of the Black Arts Movement, and our work has always addressed issues of social justice and disenfranchisement of the BIPOC (Black, indigenous and people of color) communities in America, then and now."

Beginning with the 2020–21 season, Himes will serve as the coordinator and planner of three events associated with Nebraska Rep's #realchange racial justice initiative, working in



Ron Himes, producing director of the St. Louis Black Repertory Company, directed the play *Dutchman*—featuring Emily Raine Blythe and Eugene H. Russell, IV (pictured)—at the Nebraska Repertory Theatre in February 2019. Himes will serve as consultant for the new two-year collaboration between The Nebraska Rep and The Black Rep. Photo by Sabrina Sommer.

close collaboration with Nebraska Rep Executive Director Christina Kirk and Artistic Director Andy Park. A highlight of the collaboration is a joint, full production, directed by Himes, to be staged in Lincoln in fall 2021. The collaboration will culminate with a special event in spring 2022.

Himes will also serve as a liaison to a task force consisting of Carson School students, faculty and alumni. The group will help guide and shape the goals and scope of the initiative and offer input about programming. The initiative is focused on identifying systemic racism within the school and Nebraska Rep and creating an anti-racism action plan to foster learning, growth and real change.

## FOLLOWING THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT AND CURRENT NATIONAL CONVERSATION ABOUT SYSTEMIC RACISM, NEBRASKA REP SOUGHT THIS PARTNERSHIP TO ANSWER THE CALL FOR ACTION.

"The Nebraska Repertory Theatre has chosen to embrace the Black Lives Matter movement and engage in the current national conversation about systemic racism," Kirk said. "We have been horrified and outraged by the events unfolding in our country. It is a call to action for our theater community. Now more than ever, we need to be collaborating across campus and with community support groups, and other local and national arts organizations, to seek ways to help each other in these efforts."

Park said the collaboration fits with the mission of Nebraska Rep.

"The Rep is committed to becoming the theater of all Nebraska," he said. "This collaboration is an incredible opportunity to grow as theater artists and to open our arms even wider. Theater brings

a diverse group of people together to share a common experience, and in that space, everything is possible. We can make real change in this country, and this partnership with The Black Rep bears witness to the value of collaboration in tackling systemic racism and making clear that at Nebraska Rep, Black Lives Matter."

Himes said: "These are very trying times, and we are dealing with two crises, the epidemic of racism and the pandemic of COVID-19. We will survive COVID-19, but overcoming the racism we have been fighting since 1619 will take all of us working together. When we do, we will be stronger for the planning and the hard work we're about to do to level the playing field and to prepare a brighter future for generations to come."

The Black Rep is one of the largest professional African-American theatre companies in the nation and the largest African-American performing arts organization in Missouri. The company has developed a national reputation for staging quality productions from an African-American perspective.

Himes founded The Black Rep Company in 1976 while still a student at Washington University. He has produced and directed more than 200 plays at The Black Rep,

including all 10 plays written by August Wilson. For more information on the Nebraska Repertory Theatre, visit [nebraskarep.org](http://nebraskarep.org). For more information on The Black Rep, visit [theblackrep.org](http://theblackrep.org). ■

The ensemble performs in the Black Rep production of *Crossin' Over*. Photo by Stewart Goldstein.



# New Carson School student organization promotes diversity, equity, inclusion

A new student organization in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film seeks to promote diversity and provide support to all Carson School students by promoting inclusiveness and equity.

The Johnny Carson School Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee was formed by students last winter.

"There are about 130 students in the Carson School, and about five percent are students of color. My vice president and I saw the need, and we hopped on it," said junior performance major Nadia Williams, who co-founded and serves as president of the organization.

This semester they are planning a variety of projects.

"This semester we are working very closely with the Nebraska Repertory Theatre on the #RealChange initiatives," Williams said. "We will also be doing the Carson Play Summit. We are bringing in playwrights for a Zoom session to talk about their work and their professional and how they've gotten to where they are."

Vice President Brannon Evans, a sophomore performance major, said it was important to work together to make the Carson School even better than it is now.



Nadia Williams

"I decided to start this club with Nadia because I am very passionate about providing a safe space for our diverse student body in the Johnny Carson School, and I wanted them to both be exposed to artists who represent them and also have a space to feel that they are seen and heard," Evans said.

Mariana Hermosillo, a sophomore performance major, said diversity and inclusion have always been a part of her.

"I come from a very small, white town, so often I felt like an outsider," Hermosillo said. "Being one of the few Latino kids in my high school and town, I have always felt that it's necessary that no one feel 'left out.' There was also no diversity and inclusion committee in my high school. So when I heard that the Carson School was planning to form one, I had to join. I want to make this School better, and I know this committee can do that."

## BEING SEEN AND HEARD IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF MAKING CHANGES TO THE OVERALL CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL, WILLIAMS SAID.

"Dreaming of a better future is not creating a better future," Williams said. "It's about being actionable instead of performative, in terms of creating change and actually making it happen." ■

# The American Prize caps productive year for White



Lenn Korff School of Music Professor of Composition and Conducting and Director of Orchestras Tyler White's orchestra work *A Brand-New Summer* was awarded The American Prize in Composition (orchestra division) for 2019–2020 this summer.

Founded in 2009, The American Prize is an annual national competition in the performing arts providing cash awards, professional adjudication and regional, national and international recognition for the best recorded performances by ensembles and individuals each year in the U.S. at the professional, college/university, church, community, and secondary school levels.

It capped off a productive year for White, who also received the Hixson-Lied Senior Faculty Award in Research and Creative Activity in April.

Last fall, his opera *The Gambler's Son* premiered in both Cozad, Nebraska, in October, and in Lincoln in November by UNL Opera. The opera was composed by White with a libretto by Laura White, John E. Weaver Professor of English and Coordinator of Literature at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

*The Gambler's Son* is adapted from Mari Sandoz's 1960 novel, *Son of the Gamblin' Man*, which tells the true story of the founding of Cozad, Nebraska,

"It capped off a productive year for White, who also re-

Tyler White conducts the UNL Symphony Orchestra performing *The Gambler's Son*. Photo by Taylor Sullivan.



# Received the Lied Hixson Lied Senior Faculty Award in Research and Creative Activity April

Left to right: Trey Meyer, Maddy Stark and Matthew Clegg in *The Gambler's Son*. Photo by Taylor Sullivan.



of its larger-than-life founder, John J. Cozad, and of Cozad's son, the illustrious American painter Robert Henri.

The story was compelling to White, who is a professor of composition and conducting and director of orchestras.

"It's intensely dramatic," he said. "It's got all the kinds of conflicts you expect from an opera or really any great story. You have the basic literary conflicts of man against nature, man against man, man against himself."

William Shomos, the Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Voice and Director of Opera, said he was on board from the get-go to produce the opera from White, who also composed the opera *O Pioneers!* based on Willa Cather's novel, which premiered at the university in 1999.

"I've been given the gift of a lifetime, and I feel the responsibility to be the best possible steward of that gift," Shomos said.

Shomos said the story is especially suited for opera.

"The subject matter of John J. Cozad's past, even though true, feels so much larger than life," he said. "There's Wild West violence, danger, betrayal, and risk. . . all on a grand scale. Cozad was this enormous personality, with an enormous vision for what could become of the 100th Meridian in western Nebraska. And yet, there is also an intimate focus on the uneasy relationship between a son and his father, which speaks to us on the most personal of levels."

Patrick McNally, a graduate student in the Glenn Korff School of Music, who played John J. Cozad

in the opera, was thrilled to premiere a work centered on the founding of Cozad in the town itself.

"We at UNL have three primary missions of teaching, research and service," McNally said. "Doing a brand new work that has a component of outreach beyond our direct community seems to accomplish all three quite well. We strive to be a cultural resource for the whole state, and it's projects like this one that help us achieve that goal."

The work was created with the generous support of Jane Rohman, the family of Willard Bellamy, the family of Ivan and Shirley Paulsen, the Lincoln Community Foundation, the UNL Friends of Opera, and the Wilson Foundation. The production tour to Cozad was made possible by a generous gift from the James C. and Rhonda Seacrest Tour Nebraska Opera Fund. ■

There were more than 300 submissions to the annual Emerging Artist competition.

"I was pretty shocked, to be honest," Bissonnette said of the honor. "The application is open to any

ceramic artist, both U.S. and international, who has been actively pursuing a career in ceramics for less than 10 years, so to be selected this year is a huge honor."

Sijan said it felt like her work was being noticed.

"I was really excited because I have been reading *Ceramics Monthly* since I was in undergrad," she said.

"I am particularly grateful now to have been chosen as one of the 2020 emerging artists because so many of my other opportunities were canceled this spring and summer due to the pandemic, and this feels like my hard work is being validated."

Tete graduated from Nebraska in 2019. Last year,

she had two of her works accepted into the 2019 National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Juried Student Exhibition.

"I have been making new work and had a solo show titled 'Just Before' in March," Tete said. "Right now my partner and I are making plans to navigate a tricky move back to the U.S. During the 2020-2021 academic year, I will be a visiting artist at the University of Florida in Gainesville. I will also be doing a fall residency at Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Snowmass, Colorado."

■

Bissonnette holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in graphic design from Minnesota State University-Moorhead.

"I try not to let awards define my success as a maker, but it does feel good to know that people appreciate the work that I'm creating," he said. "Many of the past recipients of his award have gone

Taylor Sijan, a third-year Master of Fine Arts student in ceramics, alumna Iren Tete (M.F.A. 2019) and first-year Master of Fine Arts student Andy Bissonnette were among 20 ceramic artists nationally chosen as 2020 Emerging Artists by *Ceramics Monthly* magazine.

## Three Husker ceramic artists selected as *Ceramics Monthly* 2020 Emerging Artists



Top: Andy Bissonnette's Gourd Vase, stoneware and terra sigillata, carved, burnished, fired to cone 06 and reduced in sawdust, 11" w x 18" h, 2019.

Bottom, left: Taylor Sijan's "Rainy Pitcher," porcelain, underglazes, fired to cone 6 in oxidation, 2019.

Bottom, right: Iren Tete's Unnamed and Nameless, ceramic, mica, 2020.



# Williams completes residencies in Florida, Mexico



Sandra Williams, "The Dance of the Animal Brides."

**A**ssociate Professor of Art Sandra Williams completed two artist residencies in Key West, Florida, and Puebla, Mexico, during her faculty development leave during the spring semester.

"The goal of a residency is always the work, but embedding yourself in a new place gives you the opportunity to present your research in a new place," Williams said.

Williams completed a residency at The Studios of Key West in Florida from Dec. 16 to Jan. 14.

"The focus of my work is investigating the intersection between nature and culture, so when I was investigating the area, I became interested in the Key Deer, but also the reefs and Dry Tortugas," Williams said.

While visiting a wildlife rescue her first morning, Williams discovered a middle passage memorial.

"I started reading a lot about African Bahamian history in the Keys," she said. "I went to the Maritime Museum. I was able to get out to Big Pine Key and No Name Key to photograph the Key Deer."

Williams creates intricate cut-paper artwork, creating detailed imagery and text.

"When you're cutting paper, some of the structure is as fine as a thread," she said. "If you lose focus or your eyes or hands get twitchy, you can compromise the architecture of the whole piece, so I go back and forth between a few

pieces. For a long time, nothing will be done; and then, everything will be done."

Shortly after returning from Key West, Williams traveled to Mexico for an Arquetopia Foundation residency in Puebla from Feb. 15-March 20. Williams was there with six other artists.

"They really carefully vet people because you live and work together, so they need to make sure that everyone is going to get along," she said. "And that's part of the point. These residencies bond you because of the shared experience. You see through other people's eyes who have different experiences."

She made a piece titled "The Dance of the Animal Brides." She also created a zine, a self-published print work, about axolotls, to take advantage of the many screen printing businesses in Puebla.

"Mexico was significant because of the history of the technology of paper in the Puebla State and amate paper, made of bark," Williams said. "They are part of that history of keeping ideas in a transportable way. I know other areas tend to claim that invention, but I wanted a broader perspective, so there was a material research I wanted to do."

While exhibitions are not always the goal of artist residencies, Williams has two potential upcoming exhibitions, including an exhibition at Stone Soup in Key West between Dec. 17 and mid-February 2021 and a potential exhibition and residency in Mexico City in the summer of 2021.

Williams said residencies like these are important for artists.

"Taking you out of context allows you to open an avenue to ask an even larger question, even if you don't have the answers

**"The focus of my work is investigating the intersection between nature and culture."**



Sandra Williams, "The Rabbit, The Wabasso."

yet," she said. "Art making is like searching. I think I am present as a creator in a very different way than I am in my studio. I may decide to use my technique—or I may be pushed to use my technique in a different way." ■

The nomination form for our 2021 Alumni Board Awards is available at [go.unl.edu/pg27](http://go.unl.edu/pg27). We will not be taking new nominations for Alumni Achievement Awards and the Award of Merit this year, but nominations for the Student Leadership Awards are due Friday, Dec. 4, 2020. See the website for full details or e-mail [unlarts@unl.edu](mailto:unlarts@unl.edu) to have a nomination form e-mailed to you.

# In Memoriam



## JEREMY BLOMSTEDT

Jeremy Blomstedt, 45, died Aug. 5 after a months-long battle with cancer. Blomstedt was the Equipment and Technology Associate for the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and Digital Arts Initiative, where he had worked since the fall 2018.

He was also an actor and filmmaker. He recently starred in the Nebraska Repertory Theatre production of *Mother Courage*. Blomstedt was also an alumnus, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in performance in 2017.



## ANN RAWLEY

Ann Rawley, 96, died Dec. 27, 2019. After graduating from Smith College in 1944, where she majored in theater arts, she went on to act in many theater productions at Sweetbriar College, while her husband, James, was a professor there.

Rawley served on the board of the Sheldon Museum of Art and was active in the Lincoln's Children's Zoo, the Lied Center for Performing Arts, and the Lincoln Community Playhouse. She also served on the Board of Directors for the Friends of the Rep and in 2001 was elected to the Nebraska Repertory Theatre Hall of Fame. In 2006, Rawley received the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Award of Merit.

# Alumni Board recipients to be recognized in 2021

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts had to cancel its annual Honors Day Dinner last April due to COVID-19.

Last year's Alumni Achievement Award and Award of Merit recipients will be recognized at this year's Honors Day celebration, which is scheduled for April 24, 2021.

For a full listing of awards and bios, including the 2020 Hixson-Lied Faculty and Staff Awards recipients, visit [go.unl.edu/kpvd](http://go.unl.edu/kpvd).



## AWARD OF MERIT

Johnny Carson Foundation

Dean Charles O'Connor (left) and Carson Center Founding Director Megan Elliott (third from left) with Johnny Carson Foundation members Lawrence Heller, Allan Alexander, Larry Witzer and Jeff Sotzing at the Carson Center Dedication on Nov. 19, 2019.

## ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN ART

Maurice M. Dixon, Jr.  
(B.F.A. 1970; M.F.A. 1973)



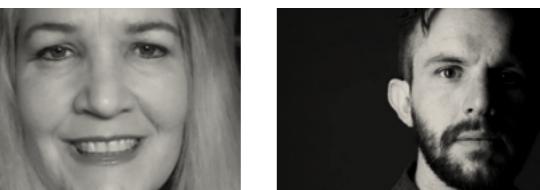
## ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN MUSIC

Robert Krueger  
(B.M.E. 1984; M.M. 1994)



## ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN THEATRE AND FILM

Kara Thomson (M.F.A. 1998)



## STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARD

Terry Ratzlaff, School of Art, Art History & Design



# May Capstone exhibition moved online due to COVID-19

**W**hen the University of Nebraska-Lincoln moved to remote learning in May due to COVID-19, it created a dilemma for the School of Art, Art History & Design, which was preparing for the May Stone Exhibition for the graduating seniors in studio art and graphic design.

"We're all evolving and surviving, but we can take a moment to reflect on our ability and our focus about our future."

“It’s definitely a moment of conflict because we had put a lot of energy—mental, emotional, physical—into planning of that physical exhibition,” Eisentrager-Howard Gallery Director Alicia Davis. “The students and faculty all invested in it becoming physical. We did all that planning, and it’s gone out the window. We learned a lot from it though, so taking that experience forward, it wasn’t wasted effort in any way.”

ead, they created an online capstone exhibition viewable at [unlcapstone.com](http://unlcapstone.com). The exhibition will be open to the public from April 1 through May 31.

"to figure out how to adapt, but not just to survive," Davis said. "So how do we take advantage of this adaptation? How do we live it to the best of our abilities? How do we formulate how to think about our practices?"

At first, disappointing to seniors.

ard the news about the learning, I was devastated. Linda Finn. "There were been looking forward few weeks of the semester wasn't going to get to several music performances the Exhibition. I was disappointed having the usual gal- but I knew I'd personally

“My project wouldn’t be  
a challenge to move online.”

Finn, a double major in graphic design and music, created a book titled *More than Music*, containing more than 50 stories from current members and alumni of the 14 Big Ten Conference marching bands.

For me personally, the online exhibition was a huge success," Finn said. "I shared the link with several online marching band communities that I'm a part of, so lots of people got to see my work. It's so heartwarming to see that my project means as much to other Big Ten bands as it does to me."

Sculptor Christie Asuoha's project was titled *The Heads of Asuoha*. The pandemic forced her to change her vision for her exhibition.

*The Heads of Asuoha* was originally an idea for a series of sculptures depicting my family members in the likeness of the famous Heads of Ife, which are a series of sculptural portraits of Nigerian

royalty,” she said. “However, due to the closure of school caused by the pandemic, I was unable to finish materializing this idea into sculptural form. And thus, I turned to digital collage as a way of depicting what the sculptures might have looked like. The collages feature prints and accessories that reference the ways in which each person in my family has assimilated into American culture. The intent was to show how in my family, and in many other immigrant families, each person is unique in how they reflect the cultural duality and balance the culture from back home

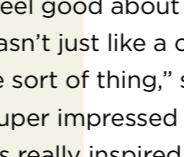
**Personally, exhibition  
the success.”**

with the dominant culture of their new country.”

Davis said she was pleased with how the online exhibition experience went.

"Seeing it online, it sort of polishes it together in a way that's completely different, and it unifies it differently than it would physically," she said.

Davis hopes students feel good about the online exhibition.



"I hope they feel good about it, and that it wasn't just like a consolation prize sort of thing," she said. "I was super impressed with them and was really inspired by their ability to pull it off." ■



*Miranda Finn's More than Music book was organized into nine chapters based on common themes among the submitted stories about the marching band experience.*

**ASUOHA  
WINS  
BEST OF  
SHOW IN  
THE 202  
SECCA  
STUDENT  
SHOWCASE**



**C**hristie Asuoha, who received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in studio art from the School of Art, Art History & Design in August 2020, won Best of Show in the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) Student Showcase 2020.

The virtual exhibition of artworks by high school and college students in art and design fields is viewable online at [www.seccashowcase.org](http://www.seccashowcase.org). SECCA is an affiliate of the North Carolina Museum of Art.

"I was very surprised and elated to receive the news that I won the Best of Show award in the SECCA student showcase," Asuoha said. "I could barely contain my excitement when I received the news over the phone. I was flattered to hear from the news-bearer that the jurors really liked my work."

For more on Asuoha, visit [go.unl.edu/n6t](http://go.unl.edu/n6t)

# Acting courses required ‘creative solutions’ for remote learning

**A**ssociate Professor of Theatre and Head of Performance David Long admits to feeling a certain level of anxiety last spring when he learned his intermediate acting and advanced movement courses might be pivoting to remote learning due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“The anxiety was certainly there,” he said. “But I think being an actor and being an artist, that’s just part of what we do. In the face of adversity, you find creative solutions.”

He knew he would have to adapt his assignments to the new platform of Zoom.

“Because of the physical challenges and overall rigors of the course, the students supported and encouraged one another developing a real sense of ensemble,” Long said. “And then we’re getting the news that we were going remote. I instantly thought, ‘How can I continue with this development of the ensemble across this new platform?’”

Michael Zavodny, a senior theatre performance major, was in Long’s advanced acting course.

“Although I thought it was necessary to move to online classes to help curb the Covid outbreak I was pretty nervous about how it would all play out,” Zavodny said. “Some classes, like voice, were

easier to visualize online over Zoom versus movement and acting classes, where physical presence and interaction are usually a big factor.”

One of the principal assignments in the advanced movement course is a solo, physical narrative that students would normally perform in front of the class.

“That solo narrative assignment that I’ve been teaching for 15–20 years, is presented as a live exploration,” Long said. “To adjust to the new platform, we maintained the same requirements of the assignment, but

students recorded it on their phones, edited the content and uploaded it to VidGrid. We spent the following class time watching and responding to the work.”

In another assign-

ment, the students

incorporated a physical gesture sequence into music videos they created.

“I created a physical gesture that included the spine, body and breath. One that represented my physical and emotional state at the time,” Long said. “But it had to be a full body gesture. All students were then assigned to develop their own repeatable gesture. Then over Zoom, they would have to repeat my gesture. I would then pick somebody at random, and they would teach their gesture to the class, becoming the actual contributors

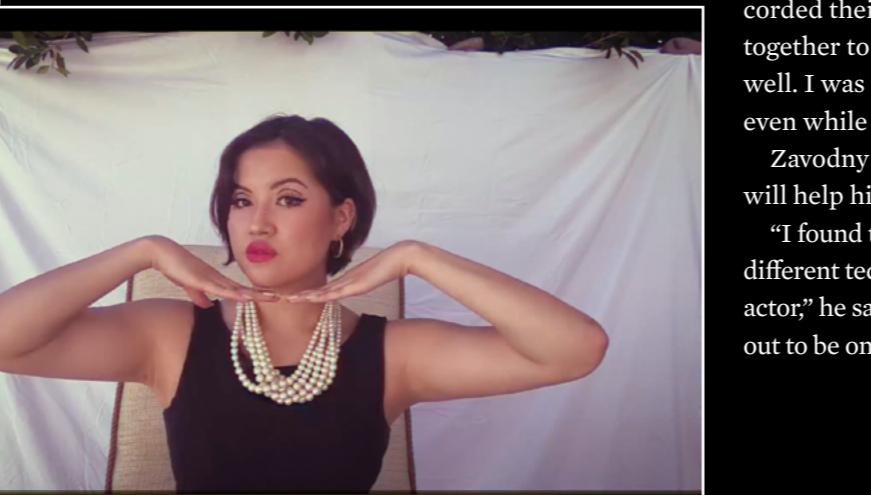
**[...] I think being an actor and being an artist, that’s just part of what we do. In the face of adversity, you find creative solutions.”**



Top: Beck Damron (left) and Malin Hayden in their group narrative film in Professor David Long’s advanced movement class. Courtesy photo.

Middle: Students in Professor David Long’s advanced movement class participate in some in-class devising on Zoom. Courtesy photo.

Bottom: Nikki Wang in a scene from the expressive gesture/music video assignment in Professor David Long’s advanced movement class. Courtesy photo.



to the development of this exercise. It became choreography, as one flowed into the other.”

Long then had them create a music video and film it. At some point in the video, they had to incorporate this expressive gesture sequence.

“It really brought back that sense of an ensemble because everybody had some kind of investment in each other’s work,” Long said. “And that was fun.”

Zavodny was impressed with the final result.

“Not that I ever doubted Professor Long, but I was pretty amazed at how well it did work,” he said. “It made us look at and think about things in a different way than what we’re used to, which sparked a lot of creativity. I was amazed at how unique and expressive each piece was, even though we used the exact same movements.”

The final assignment was an ensemble narrative. Long broke the class up into three groups and gave them each a list of elements that needed to be included.

“They had to take and incorporate those elements and present them in a comprehensive way,” Long said. “A lot of them recorded their parts individually, and then they would edit them together to create a narrative. That assignment was successful as well. I was so pleased how they maintained a sense of ensemble, even while they were separated.”

Zavodny said some of what he learned during remote learning will help him become a better actor.

“I found that learning to control my body in a different way with different techniques to get the energy rolling really helped me as an actor,” he said. “Applying that to the video was a lot of fun. It turned out to be one of my favorite projects during my college career.” ■

## FACULTY ADAPT SPACES FOR WORK



Marguerite Scribante Professor of Piano Paul Barnes sits at the Steinway piano in his home while teaching a one-on-one lesson with student Cameron Berta, who returned home to Dallas in the wake of the university’s shift to remote instruction. With the aid of Zoom, his iPad and an app called forScore, Barnes can share and mark up sheet music as easily as he did in person. Barnes had 14 undergraduate and graduate students taking one-on-one lessons with him in the spring semester. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.



Walker Pickering, assistant professor of art, works in his home office/backyard sunroom. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.

## FACULTY ADAPT SPACES FOR WORK



Assistant Professor of Practice Hye-Won Hwang smiles to the camera at the end of a ballet routine being recorded for students at the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts dance studios. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.



David Tousley. Courtesy photo.

## Husker theatre alum helps sew masks for New York City hospitals

**J**ohnny Carson School of Theatre and Film alumnus and New York City resident David Tousley (M.F.A. 2015) used his theatre and sewing skills to help sew masks for hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Towards the end of our first week of quarantine, I was feeling very depressed and defeated," Tousley said. "I was on the phone with a friend from California, and I was so upset about what was happening in our city. She suggested I find a way to volunteer and help out. Soon after that conversation, my aunt texted me and suggested I make masks for the city. I reached out to the New York City artist community to see if anyone was in need of a sewer to help out, and the responses were immediate. I didn't have a sewing machine of my own, so I created a GoFundMe, and in about an hour, I had enough donations to order a great inexpensive model."

He joined Fashion on the Front Line and Art Makes Masks. These groups brought together fashion and theater artists to make masks. Tousley made around 500 masks and nurse caps combined from April to June.

"The immediate demand for handmade PPE was no longer quite so urgent, so we decided to take a break," Tousley said. "We might start back up in the winter should we go into another lockdown. It feels like ages ago when we were all quarantining and fearing the worst." ■

Tousley has lived in New York City for over four years since he graduated from the Carson School in 2015.

"It's been a non-stop whirlwind of project after project. Non-stop until a few months ago," he said. "I have no idea when Broadway will open up again. It's quite eerie to see the theater district so empty."

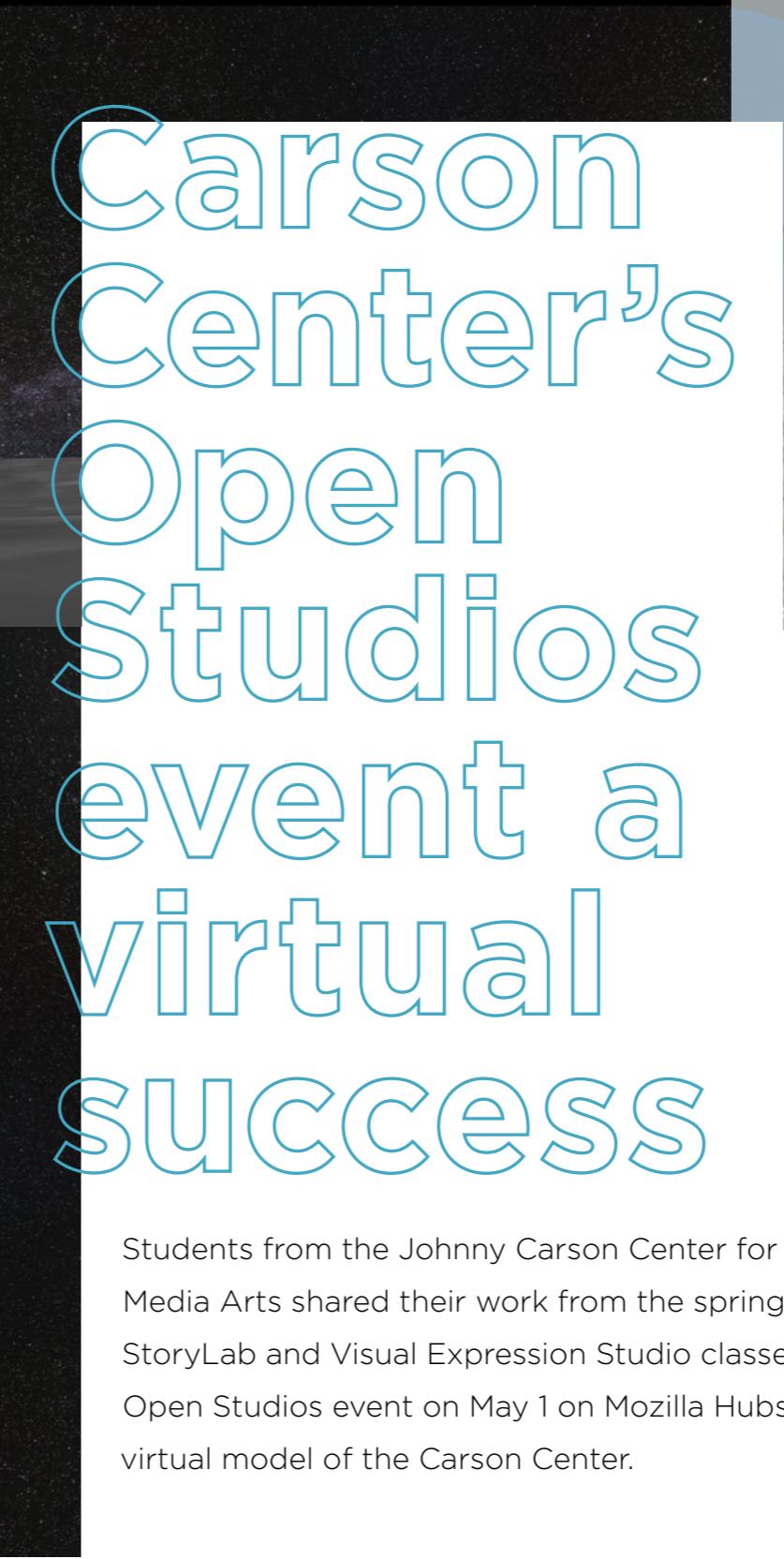
This fall, he collaborated with Director of Opera William Shomos on the opera *The Cunning Little Vixen*.

"We are using puppets (big paper mache heads on poles) and a giant LED screen to serve as the set," he said. "I'm illustrating about 100 slides that will help to tell the story. It's been a lot of fun to work with Bill and Jill [Hibbard] and the rest of the team."

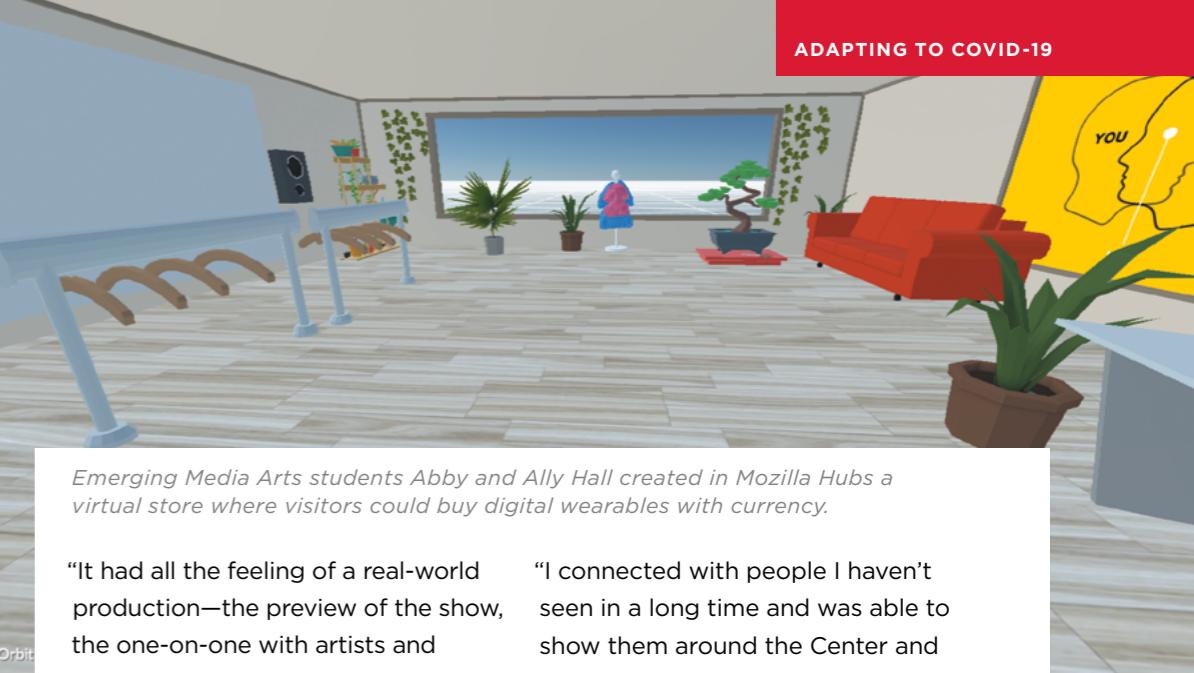
He never imagined his theatre and sewing skills coming to good use during a health crisis.

"I did not, but I'm so happy I could help," Tousley said. "My grandma taught me how to hand sew when I was eight years old, and soon after that, I started sewing using her PFAFF. I would spend summers quilting and making gowns for my cousin's Barbie dolls. I did a ton of sewing in Nebraska making props and costumes with Janice Stauffer. We made some fun costumes, including a dinosaur and a Wooly Mammoth. These masks are a walk in the park compared to that Mammoth." ■

*Patterns for masks that have been cut and prepared for assembly were delivered to Tousley, who assembled and sewed them and applied the elastic straps. Courtesy photo.*



Students from the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts shared their work from the spring semester StoryLab and Visual Expression Studio classes in a virtual Open Studios event on May 1 on Mozilla Hubs inside a 3D virtual model of the Carson Center.



Emerging Media Arts students Abby and Ally Hall created in Mozilla Hubs a virtual store where visitors could buy digital wearables with currency.

"It had all the feeling of a real-world production—the preview of the show, the one-on-one with artists and 'gallery' goers, the DJ, the catharsis, the fatigue, the excitement and exhilaration, the feeling of absence and collapse after the show closed," said Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts Jesse Fleming. "It was not real, and it also was very real. There were limitations, and there were new affordances. It was, what a lot of our world has become and will be becoming increasingly—liminal."

Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts Ash E. Smith said the event helped expand the connections they could make.

"I think the ability to bring in guest critics and reviewers from around the world and have people from all over attend the Open Studios was really special," she said.

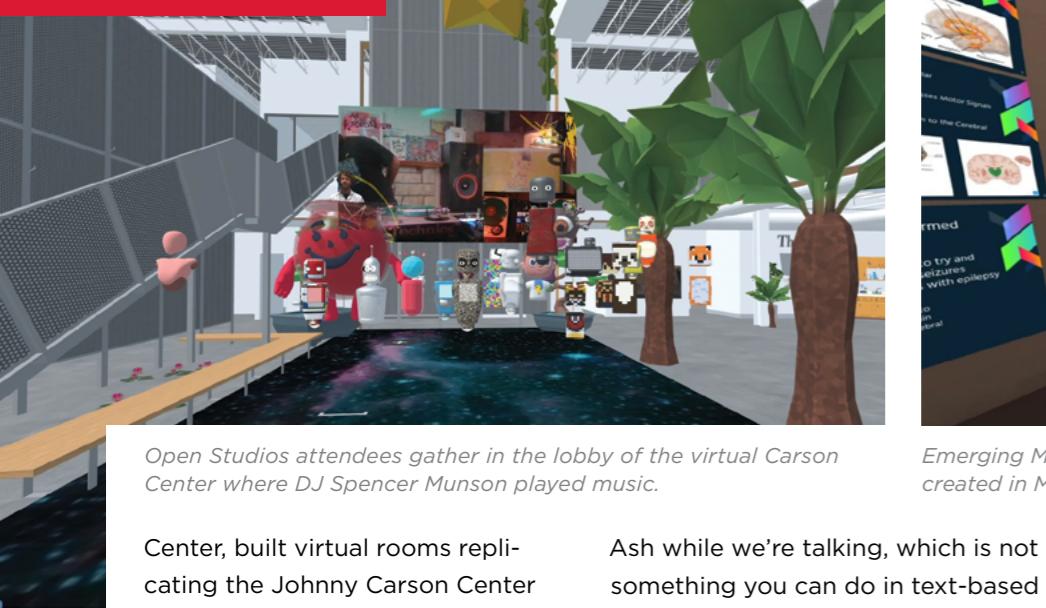
"I connected with people I haven't seen in a long time and was able to show them around the Center and connect them with students."

The use of Mozilla Hubs created new opportunities for students and faculty in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts to create connection, community and art making during COVID-19.

The Carson Center used Mozilla Hubs to teach, build community and display work during the period of virtual learning at Nebraska that began on March 30 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mozilla Hubs is a browser-based, 3D, virtual-world chatroom accessible on most computers, mobile devices and virtual reality headsets and is also an open-source project that explores how communication in mixed reality can come to life, according to Mozilla Labs.

Ben Kreimer, a creative technologist-in-residence at the Carson



Open Studios attendees gather in the lobby of the virtual Carson Center where DJ Spencer Munson played music.

Center, built virtual rooms replicating the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts' physical space at 13th and Q streets.

"HDR architect Tyson Fiscus gave me the official sketch-up architectural model [3D files] of the Carson Center, and then I converted them and set them up inside of Mozilla Hubs," Kreimer said.

Smith said Mozilla Hubs was an extension of their Carson Center community.

"We have so many different platforms going on and discourse," she said. "We have Canvas, Twitch, Zoom, Jitsi, Slack. And now we actually have Mozilla Hubs and exploring different ways of embodiment in this time of 'stay home' messaging."

"And unlike those kinds of platforms," Kreimer said. "Being able to communicate in 3D, it kind of brings out a lot of the other feelings. I'm looking at Jesse or I'm looking at

Ash while we're talking, which is not something you can do in text-based chat. We're bridging what it's like to communicate in real life."

Fleming said the Mozilla Hubs space created community while building on what they teach in the Carson Center.

"This space gives a sense of connection that's unfounded in other forms of virtual communication," he said. "You feel like you're in a bit more of a community. It also plays into areas that we're already exploring—virtual reality, augmented reality, immersive media, virtual production."

Smith also liked Mozilla Hubs because she found it liberating from her physical being.

"I find this space really liberating because sometimes in Zoom, there's



Emerging Media Arts students meet inside the virtual Carson Center created in Mozilla Hubs to review their projects.

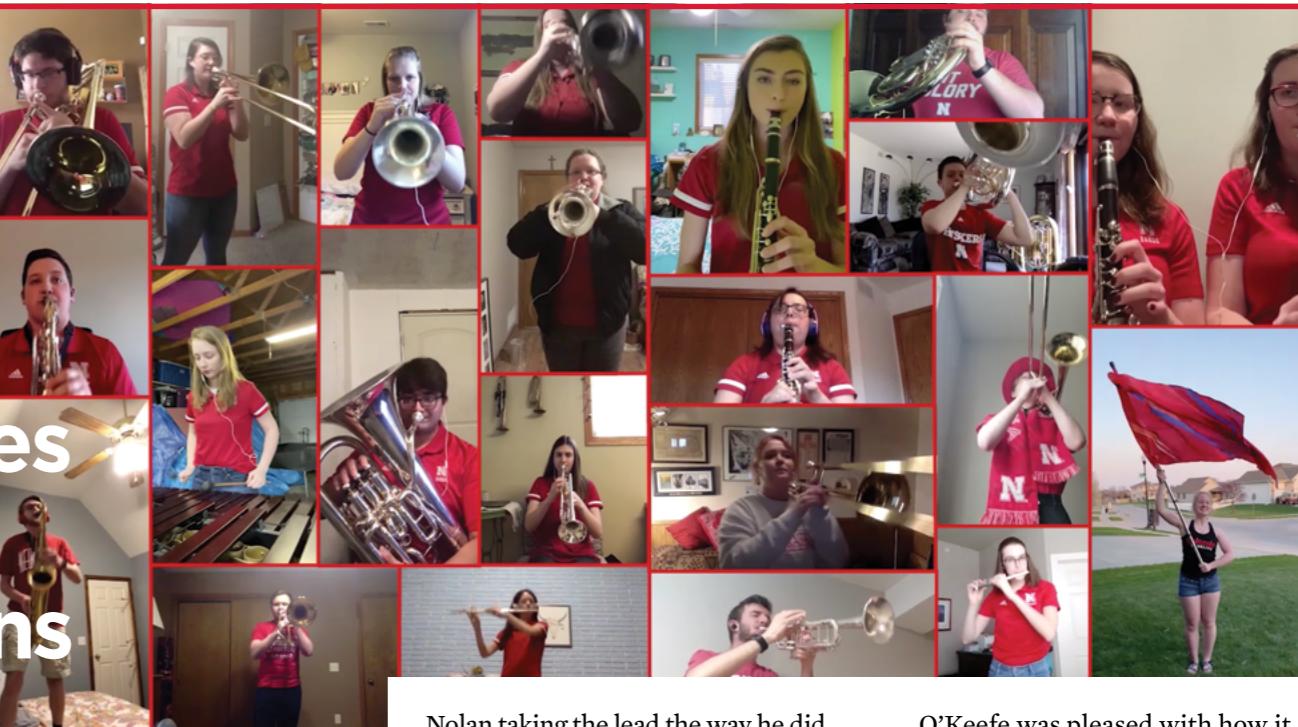
too much pressure on my camera, and not that I'm always looking at myself, but just even considering the way I'm looking and everyone else is looking and all of our faces in the squares," she said. "I feel very liberated when I'm in here hanging out. I can really play with my identity and be kind of free of my IRL [in real life] body. That feels liberating to me and helps me explore community and relationships in new kinds of ways that aren't linked to my physical characteristics." ■

## "This space gives a sense of connection that's unfounded in other forms of virtual communication."



A virtual Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts was created inside Mozilla Hubs so students could continue to build community and showcase their work during remote learning.

## Cornhusker Marching Band provides virtual spirit for Husker fans



Nolan taking the lead the way he did and making it happen," said Tony Falcone, senior lecturer and director of the Cornhusker Marching Band.

Videos like these, popular to create by various musical groups during the pandemic, are not as easy as they look to produce, Falcone said.

"Most people don't realize how difficult those are to put together," he said. "They're not done on Zoom, as it may appear. You can't sync the timing. The students recorded their parts individually with instruments they had at home, and Nolan collated, edited, synced and mixed the whole thing together. It's a tremendous amount of work that he turned around in less than a week. Thanks

The Cornhusker Marching Band presented Dear Old Nebraska U

O'Keefe was pleased with how it turned out.

"I am very proud of the final product," he said. "The audio came out great, and it was really interesting to watch all the bandmen having fun in each of their videos."

O'Keefe is grateful to Falcone for providing him with this opportunity and all of the bandmen who participated in the video.

"Without them, there is no video," he said. "I hope everyone is staying safe during these times, and that while we are separated, we are all united by the scarlet and cream colors that define UNL."

For more details on how the video was created, visit [go.unl.edu/2g8w](http://go.unl.edu/2g8w). ■

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Dr. Jack F. & Dr. Mollie B. Snyder	Ms. Kathe C. Andersen	Mr. Morton Dickson, III	Mr. & Mrs. Keith W. Holmes	Mr. Pat L. & Mrs. Susan R.	Mr. Richard E. & Dr. Susan E. Spangler
Mr. Bartholomew Z. Stephens & Ms. Christina F. Sposato	Bard	Mr. Daniel C. & Mrs. Valerie A. Downing	Dr. Dennis K. Cox & Ms. Elizabeth A. Downing	Mr. Mark V. & Mrs. Julie L. Hopp	Mr. Dennis D. & Mrs. Kathy A. McClaughry
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Dr. Anthony P. Radford & Ms. Sarah J. Thrasher	Dr. Phyllis L. Robertson & Mr. Robert Bedell	Ms. Maggie Fey	Johnson	Col. Herbert N. & Mrs. Marie J.	Mr. Richard P. Steen & Ms. Geraldine Powers Steen
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Ms. Barbara R. Zach	Mr. Kyle E. & Mrs. Karen L. Cartwright	Mr. Justin O. & Mrs. Christine A. Graver	Mr. John D. Graham	Mrs. Marilyn A. Ringquist	Dr. & Mrs. William J. Seiler
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The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts invites alumni and friends dedicated to enhancing the programmatic resources in each of our three academic units to join the Art Patron's Circle in the School of Art, Art History & Design, the Carson Circle in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, and the Encore Circle in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

Each circle is designed with four giving levels to encourage donors at every stage of life. Gifts at

any level help and enable so many opportunities for our faculty and students.

If you are interested in joining one of these circles, you can donate online any time by visiting our website at [go.unl.edu/givefpa](http://go.unl.edu/givefpa).

We have created a new Dance Program Fund to support the UNL Dance Program. If you would like to contribute to this new fund, please visit [go.unl.edu/danceprogramfund](http://go.unl.edu/danceprogramfund).

Beverly A. Eyberg	SECOND CALL -
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Mary Ellen Mulcahy	Father Daniel L. Torson
Dr. & Mrs. John C. Nelson	Judith & Lynn Vrbka
Janet Noddings	Diana Warner
Richard Olney & Ann Haskins	Barbara K. Zaroban
Olney	TAKE A BOW - \$25 TO \$49
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Paparozzi	Dennis Cox & Elizabeth Downing
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Mrs. Jane M. Rohman	Mr. Deutmeyer
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Laurel Shoemaker	David Hughes & Donna Carnes
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Bobbi Schmidt Peterson	Christine Tucker
Drs. John A. & Maryann Z. Skrabal	Charles Twomey
John Graham	Mark & Barbara Wendell
Dr. Martin A. & Mrs. Ruth A. Massengale	Barbara K. Zaroban
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Mr. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Dr. John W. & Mrs. Jill W. Richmond
Mr. Peter T. Worth	Sallye S. Benecke
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Del & Phyllis Toebben
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Williams	William G. Tomek
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Donald & Diane Weldon
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Williams	Carole Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	John Young & Sara Wagoner
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Young
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Donald & Marsha Dunn
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Barbara Zach

## ENCORE CIRCLE

### Glenn Korff School of Music

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Thomas & Carol Geu	RAVE REVIEWS -
Sherry Grout	\$100 TO \$499
Dr. Thomas M. & Mrs. Nancy S. Heiser	ARTISANS - \$25 TO \$49
Mr. Ronald & Mrs. Judy Legg	Dr. David J. Brinkman
Mr. Larry H. Lusk	Carolyn Barber
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Mrs. Larry H. Lusk
Mr. & Mrs. Brian Williams	Robert & Ethel Beetley
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Dr. John W. & Mrs. Jill W. Richmond
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Sallye S. Benecke
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Del & Phyllis Toebben
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	William G. Tomek
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Donald & Diane Weldon
Mr. & Mrs. Brad L. & Ms. Michele J. Scherr	Carole Davis
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	John Young & Sara Wagoner
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Young
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Donald & Marsha Dunn
Mr. & Mrs. Peter T. Worth	Barbara Zach

## CARSON CIRCLE

### Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film

\$500 AND ABOVE	\$100 TO \$499
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Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Witzer	Christi & D. Doc Chaves
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Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman	Donald W. Woods
Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman	Carole Davis
Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman	John Young & Sara Wagoner
Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman	Young
Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman	Donald & Marsha Dunn
Dr. Jon J. Hinrichs & Mrs. Dr. Dan E. Tolman & Dr. Bruce & Linda Chapman	Barbara Zach

# 1614 ‘Antiphonarium Romanum’ book donated



Anita Breckbill displays the title page for *Antiphonarium Romanum*, published in 1614.

46

HIXSON-LIED COLLEGE of FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS | FALL 2020

Karen R. Lusk of Lincoln has donated a copy of the book *Antiphonarium Romanum*, published in 1614 in Tournai, Belgium, to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries Special Collections.

There is only one other known copy of the book, which is located at Yale University, per WorldCat, a global catalog of library collections.

*Antiphonarium Romanum* is a book of Gregorian Chant for the Roman Catholic Church. Its music dates back to the early Middle Ages, although this copy of the book reflects the major reforms of the Council of Trent, held in three parts between 1545 to 1563, which revitalized the Roman Catholic Church in many parts of Europe during the Renaissance.

“Quite specifically, it’s the Liturgy of the Hours rather than for mass,” said Professor of Music History Peter Lefferts. “There is this day-long cycle of services called Hours, and actually the mass is one of the Hours—it’s the most important. But this is the music of the daily services, except for the mass.”

Lusk donated the book in honor of her husband, Dr. Larry H. Lusk, the founding dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

“This book was given to Larry by my

sister and brother-in-law when they lived in Belgium,” Lusk said.

Her brother-in-law was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force and was stationed at SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) near Mons, Belgium, just outside of Brussels, in the early 1970s.

“They were always looking for gifts to send us from there, and they went to antique stores where they knew they would not be duplicating anything we would have,” she said.

Lefferts said the book was special being donated in honor of Lusk.

“Larry wasn’t just a performer or an administrator, but he was an educator,” Lefferts said. “He was a classroom teacher, and so he had a breadth of knowledge and a breadth of interest that was special. He was a man with broader cultural interests and curiosity about the history of the arts.”

Professor and Music Librarian Anita Breckbill is glad the book made it to the UNL Library.

“It was printed in Belgium back in the 1600s, so it might have been floating around in Belgium for those 400 years, but now it’s in Nebraska,” Breckbill said. “It is very nice to have this in honor of Larry Lusk.”

For more on the book, visit [go.unl.edu/sy66](http://go.unl.edu/sy66). ■

**NO MATTER  
THE MEDIUM,  
ARTISTS  
DREAM  
BIG.**

Help support the dreams of  
Nebraska’s arts students  
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Fine and Performing Arts  
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University of Nebraska  
FOUNDATION

# College welcomes 6 new faculty

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts welcomes the following new faculty this fall. For full bios, visit [go.unl.edu/zmj4](http://go.unl.edu/zmj4).



**BEN EVJEN**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE  
IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

Evjen comes to Nebraska from Utah Valley University, where he was assistant professor and program coordinator in the Art & Design Department. He has also served as an adjunct instructor at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia.

His professional experience includes art director for Real Salt Lake in Sandy, Utah, as well as senior designer for iFrogz in Logan, Utah, and designer for the Polynesian Cultural Center in Laie, Hawaii. He was also a designer for Victorinox Swiss Army Knife Design Team in Switzerland in 2006 and for the International Committee Red Cross Design Team in Switzerland in 2005.

Evjen received his M.F.A. summa cum laude in design/visual communications from Virginia Commonwealth University, and his B.F.A. cum laude in graphic design from Utah State University.



**MICHELLE HARVEY**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
OF LIGHTING

Harvey comes to Nebraska from Kansas City Repertory Theatre (KCRep), where she had been lighting and video supervisor since 2014. She has also served as lighting designer for numerous productions at KCRep, including *Welcome to Fear City* and *Lot's Wife*.

Her lighting design credits include The Missouri Theatre, Show Me Opera, Feral Tale Theatricals, Nevada Ballet and Nevada Conservatory Theatre, among others. She was an instructor at the

University of Nevada-Las Vegas from 2010-2014.

She has also toured with The Magic of Curtis Adams, Dance Affiliates: Thank-You Gregory, and the American Indian Dance Theatre.

Harvey received her M.F.A. in theatre arts from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and her B.F.A. in theatre arts from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



**ANNA HENSON**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE  
IN EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

Henson is an artist and researcher working in embodied and social interaction design for spatial computing and immersive experiences. She creates and prototypes interactions, environments, and user journeys which center participant agency, new narratives,

and unite our digital and physical worlds. Henson's creative research focuses on XR (mixed reality), volumetric capture, and new forms of storytelling.

Henson has a Masters of Science in Computational Design (XR, Interaction & Experience Design, Volumetric Capture) from Carnegie Mellon University; a B.S.S. in Fine Art from Cornell College; and an M.F.A. from the Glasgow School of Art where she was also the recipient of the Emerging Artist Award.

To see her work, visit [www.annahenson.com](http://www.annahenson.com).



**JINKU KIM**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE  
IN EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

Kim has more than 15 years of experience working as an educator and multidisciplinary artist. He has extensive experience in audio-visual production and digital art, including audio-visual performance and installations, hardware and software design, and site-specific projects, as well as digital modeling and fabrication. Kim has taught undergraduate/graduate courses, including audio-visual narrative, and hardware and software instrument design.

His works have been performed and installed at REDCAT in the Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, STEIM in Amsterdam, and The New Children's Museum in San Diego, among others.

Kim has a Ph.D. in Computer Music and Multimedia from Brown University; an M.F.A. in Integrated Media and Experimental Sound Practice from California Institute of the Arts; and a B.M. Professional Music: Electronic Production and Design from Berklee College of Music.

To see his work, visit [www.grayscale64.com](http://www.grayscale64.com).



**ROBERT TWOMEY**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
OF EMERGING MEDIA ARTS

Twomey is an artist and engineer exploring the poetic intersection of human and machine perception. He exploits the potential of new technologies while critically revealing their limits. Engaged with the messy conditions of everyday life, his works ask questions about our technologies and ourselves to reveal moments of insight and points of failure. He has been an Artist-in-Residence at the Arthur C. Clarke Center for Human Imagination (UCSD) and the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, Carnegie Mellon University.

Twomey has presented his work at SIGGRAPH (where he won Best Art Paper in 2017), the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, the Seattle Art Museum, the Athens Digital Arts Festival, and has been featured by Microsoft and the Seattle Times. His research has been funded by NVIDIA and Amazon.

Twomey received his B.S. from Yale with majors in art and biomedical engineering, his M.F.A. in visual arts from the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), and his Ph.D. in digital arts and experimental media from the University of Washington.

To see his work, visit [www.roberttwomey.com](http://www.roberttwomey.com).



**RAFAEL UNTALAN**

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE  
IN ACTING

Untalan (AEA/SAG/AFTRA) is an actor, director and Assistant Professor of Practice in Acting at the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. He has served as a guest artist at Radford University in Virginia, Washington College in Maryland, and the Actor Training Program at the University of Utah.

He earned his membership in Actors' Equity Association at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where he appeared in a dozen productions; served as a Teaching Artist for the OSF Institute; completed six annual tours for their School Visit Program (SVP); and led student workshops at institutions spanning the West Coast, including Stanford and the University of Oregon.

Untalan recently directed *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show* at Imagination Stage, in Bethesda, Maryland, which was nominated for a Helen Hayes Award.

Untalan earned his M.F.A. in classical acting at the George Washington University, and his B.A. at the University of Oregon.

# Grange's 12th book 'The Business of American Theatre' published

Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film Professor of Theatre William Grange's 12th book, *The Business of American Theatre*, was published in July by British publisher Routledge, an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Publishing Group in the United Kingdom.

## William Grange The Business of American Theatre



William Grange's 12th book, *The Business of American Theatre*, was published in July by Routledge.

It covers a wide range of subjects, including traditions of investment, marketing, labor union contracts, advertising, leasing arrangements, ticket scalping, zoning ordinances, royalties, and numerous other financial transactions that have influenced the art of American theatre for the past three centuries.

Yet the book is not a dry reiteration of hits and flops, bankruptcies and bamboozles, Grange says. It is instead a highly readable resource for anyone interested in how money, and how much money, is critical to the art and artists of American theatre.

"I became interested in the economic and business features of the American theatre when I was an actor in New York back in the 1970s," Grange said. "At that time, almost everything was going bankrupt, including the city of New York itself. The theatre was in terrible shape; buildings were falling apart, the murder rate was horrific, while drug dealing and prostitution were pervasive in the theatre district around Times Square, where I often had to go for auditions and dance lessons. Then the theatre and Times Square New York enjoyed a wholesale refurbishment. As the 20th century progressed, more and more shows made money; theatres were rebuilt, and by 2015 Broadway had become literally a billion-dollar enterprise."

The book is available through the publisher at [go.unl.edu/yeiq](http://go.unl.edu/yeiq), Amazon.com and other retailers.



Scott Anderson

**Scott Anderson**, professor of trombone, presented a solo recital and masterclass at the 2019 Iowa Bandmasters Association. Anderson served as principal trombone in Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra and interim principal trombone with the Des Moines Symphony for the 2019–2020 season. Anderson developed two new courses for the UNL Honors program including one dedicated to Native American Rock and Roll and another on the music of Bob Dylan.



Carolyn Barber

**Carolyn Barber**, Ron and Carol Cope Professor of Music and Director of Bands, founded the Ensemble Performance Lab at UNL to connect the work of our students in the wind ensemble with teachers and musicians nationwide. The work in the lab is disseminated through webcasts, a new website ([www.carolyn-barber.com](http://www.carolyn-barber.com)), and clinics and workshops around the country.

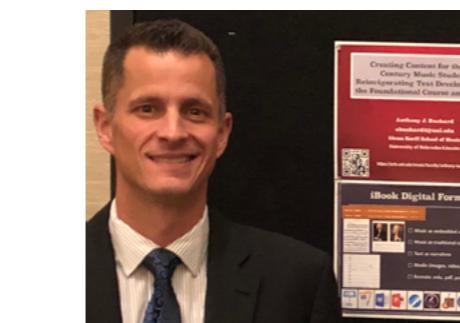
Since starting the lab in August of 2019, concepts from the lab have spread to colleagues in Georgia, Ontario, Manitoba, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Nebraska, Delaware and South Dakota. Those experiments have, in turn, looped back to influence the wind ensemble here at UNL. Highlights of her off-campus work included

guest conducting the Kansas City Metro All-District Band and the Iowa Collegiate Honor Band, classes and ensembles in a week-long residency at Western University in London, Ontario, and a week-long series of workshops at the Minnesota Band Directors Association Summer Teaching Symposium.

**Diane Barger**, professor of clarinet, released her CD with her Amicitia Duo (with Dr. Denise Gainey, clarinet, from the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Glenn Korff School of Music Professor of Piano **Mark Clinton**), *Play Pretty*, in March 2020 on the Potenza Music label (recorded and edited by Assistant Professor of Composition, Emerging Media and Digital Arts **Tom Larson**).

**Anthony Bushard**, associate professor of music history, presented "Creating Interactive Content for the 21st Century Music Student: Reinvigorating Text Development in the Foundational Course and Beyond" at the National Meeting of the American Musicological Society in Boston last November.

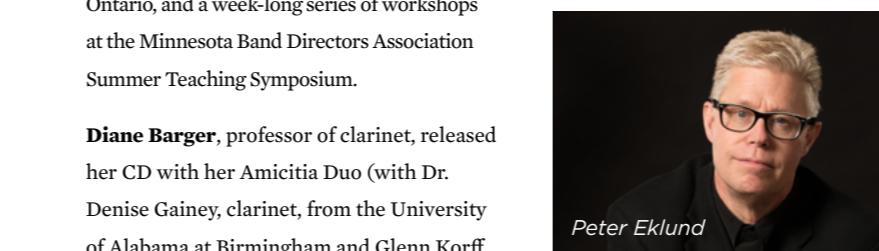
**Jesse Fleming**, assistant professor of emerging media arts, was among three University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty who were selected for seed funding from the Office of Research and Economic Development's Arts and Humanities Research Enhancement Program. He will collaborate with Nebraska physicist Kees Uiterwaal to develop an augmented reality experience that allows users to "see" the submicroscopic world of quantum physics. Fleming also had his video work, titled "Jane the Baptist," acquired by the permanent collection of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. To see more about "Jane the Baptist," visit his website at [go.unl.edu/4y97](http://go.unl.edu/4y97).



Anthony Bushard presents at the national meeting of the American Musicological Society in Boston last November.

**Marques L.A. Garrett**, assistant professor of music in choral activities, traveled to Indonesia with the Festival Singers of Florida to co-lead a workshop on composition and serve as an assistant conductor with the choir. He was also

1930s" at the Documenting Jazz conference at Birmingham City University in Birmingham, England. In February, it was published in *Jazz Research Journal* 13:1–2.



Peter Eklund

**Peter Eklund**, Hixson-Lied Professor of Music and Director of Choral Activities, was presented the National Federation of High Schools United States Section IV (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Wisconsin) Outstanding Music Educator award at the Iowa All-State Music Festival last year.

**Michael Hoff**, professor of art history, received a nearly \$200,000 grant last year from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey, for his archaeological research in Turkey.

**Wendy Katz**, professor of art history, released her latest book, *Humbug! The Politics of Art Criticism in New York City's Penny Press* in February. *Humbug!* traces the relationships, class animosities, gender biases and racial



Marques L.A. Garrett

the festival conductor for the Georgia Music Educators Association District IV High School SATB Honor Chorus, Montana State University Men's Choral Festival, Omaha Public Schools All-City Vocal Festival, and Abendmusik Youth Masterworks Festival. Garrett also had a guest residency at the University of Central Missouri where he lectured and conducted one choir.

**Danni Gilbert**, associate professor of practice in music education, completed a research project, "An examination and comparison of the perceived levels of anxiety and depression of university music majors and non-music majors." Results from this study suggest that music majors perceive themselves to be statistically significantly more anxious and depressed than their non-music peers. Gilbert was selected to share the findings of this project at the Florida Music Educators Association Conference in Tampa in January as well as the International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts in Athens, Greece, in June. The project is under review with the *Journal of Music Teacher Education*.



David Hall

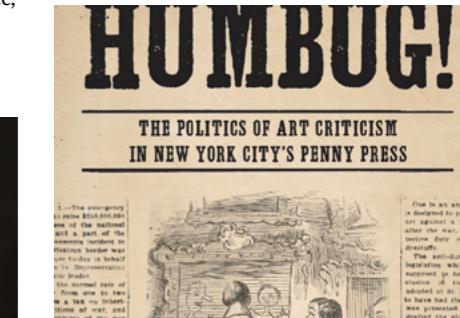
**David Hall**, associate professor of percussion and jazz studies, directs the University

of Nebraska-Lincoln Percussion Ensemble, which won the Percussive Arts Society's International Percussion Ensemble Competition last November. The Percussion Ensemble was one of three university percussion ensembles to perform during the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) in Indianapolis, Indiana. It was the second win for the ensemble, which won for the first time in 2016.



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Wendy Katz's book, *Humbug! The Politics of Art Criticism in New York City's Penny Press* was released in February.

projections that drove the terms of art criticism, from the emergence of the penny press to the Civil War. She also created an accompanying website at [katzsnnewspapers.org/home](http://katzsnnewspapers.org/home). Last fall, Katz was the recipient of the year-long Reynolda Fellowship, funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. She was a partner with Wake Forest University in the fellowship.



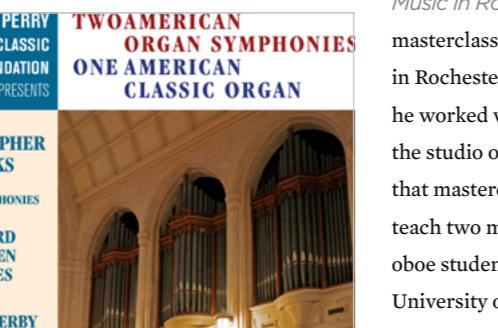
**Nathan Koch**, assistant professor of bassoon and music theory, performed a solo recital at the conference of the International Double Reed Society in Tampa, Florida.

**J.D. Madsen**, assistant professor of theatre, designed a recent production of *Ordinary Days* at NextStop Theatre Company in the Washington, D.C., area in Herndon, Virginia.



*Carl Williams as Warren in Ordinary Days. Assistant Professor of Theatre J.D. Madsen was the scenic designer for the production at NextStop Theatre in Herndon, Virginia. Courtesy Photo.*

**Christopher Marks**, professor of organ and associate dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, released a new CD recently titled *Two American Organ Symphonies One American Classic Organ*. The CD includes performances of two major organ symphonies, Leo Sowerby's *Symphony in G Major* and Edward Shippen Barnes' *Second Symphony*, Op. 37. Both were performed on the 1959 Aeolian-Skinner Opus 1308 organ at St. Mark's Cathedral in Shreveport, Louisiana.

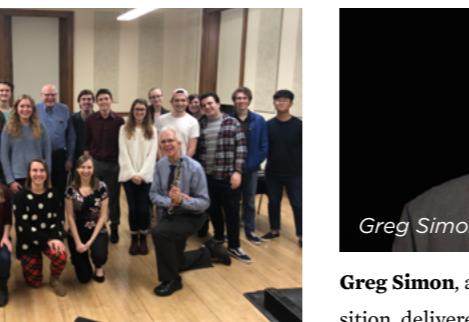


Christopher Marks has released a new CD titled *Two American Organ Symphonies One American Classic Organ*.



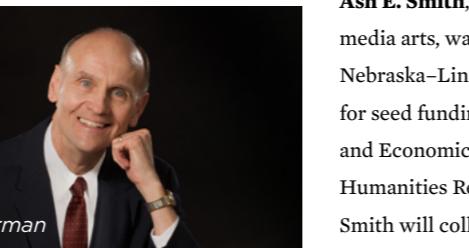
**Jacqueline Mattingly**, assistant professor of practice in music, is the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts' new Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Her duties began in January and focus on students, student diversity and inclusion, success, retention and advising. For more information, visit [go.unl.edu/7piv](http://go.unl.edu/7piv).

**William McMullen**, professor of oboe and music theory, was invited to teach a



*William McMullen (first row, far right) taught a masterclass at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, in February.*

masterclass at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, in February, where he worked with five of the oboe students from the studio of Richard Killmer. In addition to that masterclass, McMullen was also invited to teach two masterclasses using Zoom with the oboe students at the University of Kansas and University of Iowa in April.

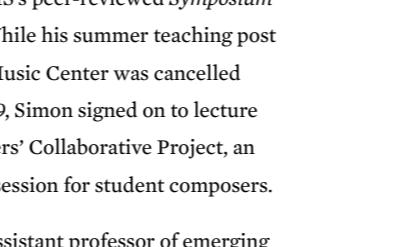


**Glenn Nierman**, associate director, professor of music education and Glenn Korff Chair of Music, delivered a Presidential Session during the 34th World Conference of the International Society of Music Education (ISME) in August. Only 10 Presidential Sessions were selected by ISME President Susan O'Neill from among 1,500 submissions worldwide for the conference. Nierman's paper was titled "Using Assessment to Enable Young Musicians' Growth—An Issue of Equity." It is archived on ISME's YouTube channel at [go.unl.edu/38to](http://go.unl.edu/38to).

**Alison Stewart**, professor emeritus of art history, co-edited the book *Crossroads: Frankfurt am Main as a Market for Northern Art 1500–1850* with Lisa M. Kirch (University



**Greg Simon**, assistant professor of composition, delivered his paper on composition pedagogy "Tell Me a Story: Teaching Music Composition Through Narrative Design" at the College Music Society's 2019 national conference last October. The paper was also published in CMS's peer-reviewed *Symposium* in September. While his summer teaching post at the Brevard Music Center was cancelled due to COVID-19, Simon signed on to lecture for the Composers' Collaborative Project, an online summer session for student composers.

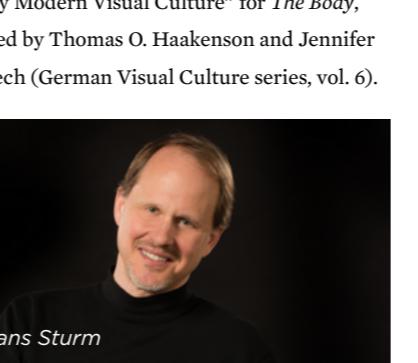


**Ash E. Smith**

, assistant professor of emerging media arts, was among three University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty who were selected for seed funding from the Office of Research and Economic Development's Arts and Humanities Research Enhancement Program. Smith will collaborate with colleagues from across more than 10 departments at the university to launch the Environmental Futures Platform, a consortium to incubate interdisciplinary projects that link art, nature and technology. Smith co-curated the exhibition "STREAMING" at the gallery@calit2 at the University of California San Diego's Qualcomm Institute. To learn more about the exhibition, visit [go.unl.edu/p3un](http://go.unl.edu/p3un).

**Robert Twomey**, assistant professor of emerging media arts, has received a National Science Foundation grant of nearly

of North Alabama) and Birgit Ulrike Munch (University of Bonn, Germany). The book originated in sessions the editors organized at the Renaissance Society of America conference in Berlin in March 2015. Stewart also wrote the first chapter in the book, "From Nuremberg to Frankfurt: Sebald Behalm and New Opportunities in Printing." She has a forthcoming book chapter, "Arousal, the Bible, and Bruegel's Codpieces: The Male Body in Early Modern Visual Culture" for *The Body*, edited by Thomas O. Haakenson and Jennifer Creech (German Visual Culture series, vol. 6).



**Robert Woody**

**Hans Sturm**, Hixson-Lied Professor of Double Bass and Jazz Studies, produced and released BluRay and CD versions of *A Romantic Evening with Jackie Allen, Live at the Rococo Theater*. The project was mixed by UNL Assistant Professor **Tom Larson** and mastered by acclaimed British mastering engineer Simon Heyworth. A 30-minute film of the concert was picked up by PBS and shown in over 40 markets, and the CD was released to jazz radio and played on over 150 stations nationally. Sturm gave unaccompanied recitals and masterclasses at Baylor and Rice Universities in October and a week of masterclasses at the Instituto Nacional de la Música in San José, Costa Rica, in February.

\$750,000 for a project titled "An Embodied, Augmented Reality Coding Platform for Pair Programming." This research builds on previous projects and interests for Twomey that explore possible applications for Augmented Reality (AR) technology. Twomey is co-principal investigator on the grant, along with Ying Choon Wu, an associate project scientist at the University of California-San Diego's Swartz Center for Computational Neuroscience.



**Robert Woody**, Steinhardt Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music (Music Education), released his book *Becoming a Real Musician: Inspiration and Guidance for Teachers and Parents of Musical Kids*. To support this, he did author talks and book signings in multiple locations in Nebraska, as well as in South Dakota and Iowa. A more nationwide book tour started in February when he did a series of talks in Gainesville, Florida, but it was cut short by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in him giving only virtual talks to audiences in Pennsylvania and Delaware, with another one that had people in attendance (via Zoom) from all around the U.S.

**Diane Barger**

**Hans Sturm**, Hixson-Lied Professor of Double Bass and Jazz Studies, produced and released BluRay and CD versions of *A Romantic Evening with Jackie Allen, Live at the Rococo Theater*. The project was mixed by UNL Assistant Professor **Tom Larson** and mastered by acclaimed British mastering engineer Simon Heyworth. A 30-minute film of the concert was picked up by PBS and shown in over 40 markets, and the CD was released to jazz radio and played on over 150 stations nationally. Sturm gave unaccompanied recitals and masterclasses at Baylor and Rice Universities in October and a week of masterclasses at the Instituto Nacional de la Música in San José, Costa Rica, in February.

# Barger elected President-elect of International Clarinet Association

**G**lenn Korff School of Music Professor of Clarinet Diane Barger was elected President-elect of the International Clarinet Association (ICA).

She began a two-year President-elect term Sept. 1 and then will move to the position of President on Sept. 1, 2022, for a two-year term, followed by a two-year term as Past-President beginning Sept. 1, 2024.

"I am overjoyed and honored to have been selected as the incoming President-elect of this magnificent organization that has given me so much over the last several decades," Barger said. "I am excited to build upon the great work the current ICA Board of Directors has done and look forward to offering my leadership, support and service to our members within this global organization."

Barger has been a member of the ICA for more than 30 years and has served the organization in a variety of capacities, including as Nebraska State Chair (2010–2020), Pedagogy Chair (2016–2018), Artistic Director of ICA's ClarinetFest® in 2012, Treasurer (2000–2010) and High School Solo Competition Coordinator (2003–2005).

# Harler-Smith retires after 44-year career focused on students

**D**onna Harler-Smith has seen a lot in her 44 years of teaching in the Glenn Korff School of Music. But finishing her final semester before retirement with remote learning in the middle of a coronavirus pandemic was not something she expected.

"It was horrible," she said. "My academic class turned out okay online, but I cannot teach voice online. I tried very, very hard. We had lessons, but I don't think they were worth that much, and I made up some other assignments for my students. But I'm just devastated that I can't say goodbye to them in person. It's horrible."

Students have always been at the heart of the matter for Harler-Smith.

"I have had so many awesome students," she said. "I'm super proud of all my music education students that are teaching, well, around the country, but definitely in Nebraska. I had a good 44 years."

Harler-Smith holds a bachelor of arts degree from Denison University and a master's degree with the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati. She has performed extensively throughout the United States.

Prior to coming to Nebraska, she had previously taught at Holyoke Community College, the University of Massachusetts, Amherst College and Indiana University.

"When I interviewed [at Nebraska], John Moran was the director of the School of Music," Harler-Smith said. "He was one of the neatest human beings I've ever known. He just was so proud to be from Nebraska and so proud of what the school was doing, and so proud that UNL treated its music education

*Photo courtesy University Communications.*



students just like its bachelor of music students. John just convinced me that it was a good place to be, and I didn't think I would stay very long, and it doesn't seem like it's been that long. But I've been so incredibly blessed."

Glenn Korff School of Music piano accompanist Michael Cotton said Harler-Smith was one of the first people he met at Nebraska when she was on the search committee when he interviewed here.

"That performance proved to be the first of many we would give together over the years," he said. "Musicians consider themselves lucky to have had even a handful of performances where everything 'just worked,' magical times that really were effortless, when the music was all there was. I can honestly say that nearly every recital with Donna was such an occasion. Her innate talent, combined with thorough and disciplined preparation, impeccable musicianship and mastery of languages, always made those rare experiences a real possibility and made my job as accompanist immensely satisfying and joyful."

Her influence was felt by her students.

**"There is not a day that goes by in my teaching that Donna Harler's influence is not with me."**

"There is not a day that goes by in my teaching that Donna Harler's influence is not with me," said Tim Fredstrom (M.M. 1991; Ph.D. 1999), who is Professor of Choral Music Education at Illinois State University, where he teaches choral methods, conducting and directs the Men's Glee. "She taught me to think like a musician and educator. My voice lessons were much more than just learning to sing. The things I learned from her, I continue to pass onto my students. Donna's teaching was transformational in my life, and I am thankful."

Julie Anne Wieck (M.M. 1987; D.M.A. 1997) is Associate Professor of Music, Voice and Opera Workshop at Washington State University. In 1985, she entered the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's master's degree program after teaching public school in two years, intending to return to the classroom.

"Through Donna's wonderful teaching and mentoring, I found my voice and

true profession, completing both my M.M. and D.M.A. degrees in vocal performance," Wieck said. "I have had a fulfilling career as a performer and university professor, teaching voice and directing opera/musical theater productions at Washington State University. Her knowledge of pedagogy, languages and literature, combined with a caring and nurturing spirit, have guided many students to success during her years of teaching, making a tremendous impact on them and the world."

Harler-Smith has been singing since she was very little—she has a record of her singing "Beg Your Pardon" when she was four years old. But her father wanted her to be a computer scientist when she went to college.

"When I went to college in second-year calculus, I just thought I should do something else," Harler-Smith said.

She played the piano, but then eventually became a singer.

"I don't think I have a beautiful voice, but I've been so blessed by so many people who have written compositions for me," she said. "I think I can use it in very expressive ways, and I've been given the chance to do that. I even got the lead in 'Die Fledermaus' in the Lied Center when we did an opera there. I mean, no opera company would have hired me to do that, but I got to do it, which was really fun."

She has learned what she believes is the role of a singer.

"What I love personally about singing, and it's what I think I've gotten pretty good at teaching other people to experience, is when you sing, you're taking a poet's work and a composer's work that's been given to you as a gift," she said. "And your job, I think, is to let the poetry and to let the mu-

sic go through you, but your ego goes away. You become a vessel for sharing beauty. When I first started singing, I thought it was all about showing off your voice and showing off yourself. It's not about that at all. And it's wonderful when you can run something so beautiful through yourself without that ego being dominant. It's the best. And when I watch students feel that, learn that and be able to do that, it's life changing."

Seeing those transformations in her students is what she'll miss the most.

"I'm going to miss the students," she said. "I don't know if I'll be teaching now that I'm going to be living in Colorado. I haven't figured out what my next career move is going to be, but I'm going to miss terribly the opportunity to actually be in the presence of another person and watch music change them for the good. I mean, there's nothing like that." ■



## Kunc built printmaking program to international prominence

**C**ertainly, I will miss the people and being part of something that's well-known in an institution," said Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc, who retired this spring after a 37-year teaching career at Nebraska.

"I will not miss the perennial ebb and flow of the schedule," she added with a laugh. "Gearing up and then crashing, gearing up and then crashing. It's a hard pace to keep."

Kunc has taught at Nebraska since 1983 and was named a full professor in 1998. In 2003, she was named Willa Cather Professor of Art.

Highly respected nationally and internationally among her peers, she has had more than 110 solo exhibitions, received more than 90 awards, 60 grants and commissions, eight residency awards, and her work has been shown in more than 350 exhibitions nationally and internationally. In 2007, she received the prestigious Printmaker Emeritus Award from the Southern Graphics Council International.

Originally from Omaha, Nebraska, Kunc graduated from Archbishop Ryan High School.

"I always say I knew I was an artist even before kindergarten," she said. "I always had an identity as an artist. Not that I could do very realistic, or functional stuff that everybody wants the class artists to do—cartoons and caricatures and posters, things like that. That wasn't ever me. But that identity of being interested in art and wanting to do art all the time was in me."

She became an art major at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and began taking printmaking courses under Professor Michael Nushawg.

"I thought it was a great group of people at that time that I could aspire to join and look up to," Kunc said.

After graduating from Nebraska in 1975, she earned her Master of Fine Arts from The Ohio State University in 1977. She taught at Columbus College of Art and Design for five years, before returning to the University of Nebraska in 1983 to teach.

"I wanted to be closer to home and to family," she said. "It was a one-year sabbatical replacement for Michael Nushawg."

It turned into a second year visiting position before she applied and was accepted for a tenure-track position.

"It was interesting because I had been away, and I had grown up during that time," Kunc said. "But now I had colleagues that were the professors I had studied with and that I respected so much—like Jim Eisentrager and Gail Butt and the art historians like Robert Spence and Peter Worth."

Kunc said what she loved about teaching was having to explain various ideas and processes to her students.

"I do best with that one-on-one with the students and having to explain things in a million different ways," she said. "Every time you're talking to the next person, I had to think of a new way to explain about art, about making, about being driven, about pushing yourself. All of those explanations were a challenge to find a variety of ways to express myself and to get through to the students."

Deb Oden (B.F.A. 1996; M.F.A. 2003) said learning from Kunc had a profound impact on her career.

"Karen led her students with an intensely curious mind and rigorous discipline," said Oden, who teaches printmaking at the Savannah College of Art and Design. "She led her students to make connections and insights that we were not aware we were capable of. She brought out the best in us. We didn't want to let her down. I am immensely grateful for her wise and compassionate leadership. She has been the most profound mentor in my personal and artistic life."

Sean P. Morrissey (M.F.A. 2011), who is Associate Professor of Art in Printmaking at the University of Arkansas School of Art, said Kunc was important to their development as an artist and educator.

"Karen's guidance during graduate school will always be an important part of my time at UNL and beyond," they said. "Observing Karen balance an extremely significant creative research agenda with extraordinary teaching helped me discover my own voice as an artist and educator. Her contributions to the field and establishing an internationally recognized program at UNL continues to be an inspiration for me and my own program. Through all of this, Karen has created an incredible network of artists,

educators, designers and scholars who will continue to share her exceptional legacy for many years to come."

In 2014, Kunc founded Constellation Studios in Lincoln, a space where she shares her passion for printmaking with the community. It is her studio, a printmaking exhibition space, as well as a workshop and teaching center. She plans to continue her work there in retirement.



Karen Kunc with students in her contemporary woodcut workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in 2013, as part of her Fulbright Specialist Project Grant.

"It's a good thing that I already had started Constellation Studios as a creative business, because now I have set in motion something that can carry me forward," Kunc said. "I started it at the time because I could foresee the future of what would be for me a way to continue having activity and engagement with others and teaching young people, but not at the academic level or an academic situation. It still has a long way to go, and it will always be growing, but it gives me some direction. I'm not going to be lounging around on my patio." ■

# Starr: ‘I couldn’t have imagined a better job’

Professor of Music History Pamela Starr just knew it was the right time to retire this spring.

“You just reach a certain time, and I thought after 33 years, and the fact that I was starting to teach the children of the students I had first taught, it probably was time to hand off to somebody else,” she said. “You just kind of know when it’s time.”

Her research has centered on the music and musicians of the early Renaissance period, especially that of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. More recently, she has begun research into musicians at the margins in the culture of Early Modern England.

Her research has been supported by the American Association of University Women, the Fulbright Commissions, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the American Council of Learned Societies, The American Philosophical Society and the University of Nebraska’s Research Council.

For Starr, the highlights of her career at Nebraska focus on her students.

“The highlights were really arriving at UNL and finding out how much I had to learn about being a good teacher,” she said. “And ending it by thinking I might have learned something from my students in that regard. I know I’ve done some very good work in terms of research—a couple of my articles were game changers in my field—so I know I had the respect of my professional colleagues. But the real headline for me was sort of waltzing into a classroom in 1987 thinking I knew everything because I had graduated from an Ivy League institution with a doctorate and quickly realizing I knew nothing about how to reach students. And it’s been a 33-year journey to find out ways of reaching them.” ■



Kurt Knecht (DMA 2009), a composer, organist and conductor and co-founder of MusicSpoke, currently living in Kansas City, Missouri, said Starr had a profound impact on him.

“When I consider my educational career, and I think of the teachers who had the most profound effect on not only my own thinking, but my approach to teaching, Pamela is one of the top influences,” he said. “I only teach graduate students in the summers now, but I set up my classroom in a circle, just like Pamela taught, and I try to carry along the legacy that she passed along to me. That’s the best way I know how to express the profound gratefulness I have in my heart for having her as a teacher.”

Barb Schmit (B.M.E. 1993; M.M. 1997) said Starr helped further her love of music.

“My husband Nolan and I entered our first music history class with very little knowledge of music history, and we finished with our minds full of dates, interesting stories, intensified curiosity, and the ability to identify composers and titles of pieces at the ‘drop of a needle’—back when records were our means of listening,” she said. “While furthering our love of music, we also discovered a love... of each other, thanks to Dr. Starr’s rigorous curriculum inspiring many late-night study sessions.”

A native of New York City, Starr holds a Bachelor of Arts in voice from Harpur College of the State University of New York at Binghamton, a Master’s degree in library science from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in music history from Yale University.

Starr said she couldn’t have imagined a better job.

“One of my great mentors in college said, ‘Pamela, you have a nice voice, but you have a first-class brain. Why don’t you go into musicology?’

“I honestly did not know much about Nebraska, but I was so thrilled to get a tenure-track position,” she said. “I realized it was a good school with a good music program. And then the first weekend on a game day, I’m looking out my window. I was working

in my office, and I see this Sea of Red. And I realized, oh my God, that’s what Nebraska is all about.”

She had many good early mentors in the School of Music.

“Dr. Raymond Haggh hired me. He was a constant advisor about how to reach the students where they were and bring them to where you want them to be,” Starr said. “The two organ professors, Dr. Quentin Faulkner and Dr. George Ritchie, were amazing role models because they

place it in the historical context of its existence. And I was given this amazing chance for 33 years to think about that, do that, and to listen to music and be paid for it. I can’t imagine a better job.”

Starr plans to keep busy in retirement. She has a book in progress, *Musicians at the Margins and Early Modern England*, as well as other articles and other research. She will also be teaching two courses this year as a lecturer.

“I plan to get back to all of it and also to teach

**“One of my great mentors in college said, ‘Pamela, you have a nice voice, but you have a first-class brain. Why don’t you go into musicology?’ And I never looked back.”**

kept their creative activities and their research at the highest levels, and they were superb teachers. They taught me how to do both of those things.”

for the OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute) program,” she said. “That’s on my bucket list to do after retirement.”

She will miss both her colleagues and her students, but she is thankful for her time in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

“Finding out what Nebraska was all about and finding out what Nebraska music students were all about was just an amazing find,” she said. “I just have a sense of gratitude for a 33-year ride with some of the best colleagues and students I could have asked for.” ■



# Stewart's career highlights student engagement, research

**N**ow is the time," said Professor of Art History Alison Stewart on her retirement after 31 years at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. "You get to a certain age where you think that you've done what you've wanted to do and what you felt like you needed to do professionally. There are other things to do."

Her research, centered around secular imagery of the 15th and 16th centuries in Germany and the Netherlands, has been supported by Fulbright, National Endowment for the Humanities, Getty Research Institute and International Fine Print Dealers Association fellowships and grants.

Her most recent book is *Crossroads. Frankfurt am Main as a Market for Northern Art 1500–1850*, edited by Stewart, Lisa M. Kirch and Birgit Ulrike Münch. Other books include *Media Revolution: Early Prints from the Sheldon Museum of Art*, edited by Stewart and Gregory Nosan in 2012; *Before Bruegel: Sebald Beham and the Origin of Peasant Festival* in 2008; and *Saints, Sinners and Sisters: Gender and Visual Art in Medieval and Early Modern Northern Europe*, co-edited with Jane Carroll, in 2003.

One of the highlights for her from her time at Nebraska is her seminar courses, such as History of Prints, where she had more student engagement.

"I really liked working with the Sheldon Museum and with the students to put on print exhibitions," Stewart said. "In the last decade or so, we had three exhibitions and then e-books came out of them."

She also enjoyed her special topics course this spring titled Museums & Collecting Art.

"For me, it was kind of a challenge to have my own interests and research because my area is in Northern Renaissance and prints. How do you get that to work in a department that is studio-oriented and where they want more modern art?" Stewart said. "In the end, it worked."

Darius Spieth (B.A. 1993) is Professor of Art History at LSU's College of Art+Design. He studied art history at Nebraska between 1990 and 1993 and remembers taking almost all of the upper division art history courses she offered, including the History of Prints.

"It has been (almost) an amazing 30 years since I met Prof. Alison Stewart at UNL," he said. "In retrospect, what I remember best about my numerous interactions with Alison was her thoroughness as an art historian. She not only loved the subjects she taught, but she also conveyed to her students what could be described as 'the art historian's craft.' That is the art of writing, of researching, of citing sources. She was very rigorous and empirical in her approach, qualities which I appreciate the more from the rear-view mirror of today."

Claire Kilgore (M.A. 2017), who is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in art history at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, said Stewart had high standards, both in the classroom and in her own research.

"My first introduction to Professor Stewart was through a voicemail she left me, notifying me of my

acceptance to the art history graduate program and encouraging me to come visit Lincoln and learn more about the many resources that Nebraska had to offer, such as Special Collections in Love Library and the Sheldon Museum," Kilgore said. "Alison has continually offered me advice and support, not only while I was her student at Nebraska, but beyond as I continue my studies in the Ph.D. program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I am incredibly grateful for her guidance and support, not only while I was enrolled at Nebraska, but even after my graduation."

Stewart received her Bachelor of Arts in art history and journalism from Syracuse University, her Master of Arts in art history from Queens College of the City University of New York, and her Ph.D. in art history from Columbia University.

She started her undergraduate career as a journalism major.

"I had to have a second major, and I picked art history," she said.

She held numerous jobs before coming to Nebraska to teach.

"I was an intern at the Philadelphia Museum of Art for a year," she said. "I wanted to finish writing my dissertation. I went back to Columbia University and taught there for two years and finished the dissertation."

Then, I worked at the Getty Research Center for the History of Art and Humanities for four years and taught at UCLA. And then I came here. I had a number of years of experience, both in terms of museums, working with prints and teaching, that got me a beginning teaching job here."

For Stewart, art history is an entry point to looking at history.

"For me, I look at the prints or paintings that I work with, and I try to understand when they were made, what was the context, who made them, what was censored," Stewart said. "Half the time in my field, we don't even know who the painters or the printmakers are. Trying to put it all together to create a really rich historical context is what I try to do. The history of art is really the history of all humanity, of men and women and what their tastes were, what they liked, what they hated, what they wore, how that changed, that kind of thing."

**"I am incredibly grateful for her guidance and support, not only while I was enrolled at Nebraska, but even after my graduation."**

Stewart said she will miss contact with people on campus when she retires.

"This was the place where I taught and that supported my research for 31 years," she said. "I will miss the faculty and students when I retire." ■



# Souto earns international, national recognition for his work

**S**chool of Art, Art History & Design Professor and Director Francisco Souto has received both international and national attention for his work this year with two important recognitions.

Last October, he was presented the Lorenzo il Magnifico Award for works on paper at the XIIth edition of the Florence Biennale. Last November, he also learned he was one of 60 artists selected for the "State of the Art 2020" exhibition at the Momentary and Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas.

"It's kind of hard to believe. Obviously you put all this time in making the work; you believe in the work. And you know in your heart that you're doing very important things," Souto said. "But when that passion gets recognized externally, then you know this is something you have to follow. I'm working and working, and now more people are paying attention to it. I think that is very rewarding."

Francisco Souto, "Long Food Line (detail)," graphite and acrylic, 96" x 24", 2016. From the collection of Marc and Kathy LeBaron of Lincoln.



Francisco Souto, "Long Food Line," graphite and acrylic, 96" x 24", 2016. From the collection of Marc and Kathy LeBaron of Lincoln.

Souto was one of 480 artists from 76 countries and four continents represented at the Florence Biennale, a major contemporary art exhibition in Florence, Italy, which is regarded as an outstanding showcase of the international contemporary art production.

Souto showed four works at the Biennale, including "Little Bird (Pajarito)," which came from his exhibition titled "Dicotomias" (Dichotomies). He spent a week at the Biennale with support from the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

"One of the five international jurors said it was refreshing to see a body of work that required so much attention from the viewer. As you pay attention to the piece, the content engulfed you. I was appreciative of that comment," he said. "As you know, a lot of contemporary art is pretty loud. I'm not making a judgment call here, but my work is not. Even though the content is pretty strong, the delivery is soft spoken. For me it was really important to compete at that level and get recognized for it, ultimately that's the power of the work."

The work selected for the "State of the Art 2020" exhibition was "Long Food Line," a panoramic graphite drawing of about 100 people standing in line for a food handout, which is owned by Marc and Kathy LeBaron of Lincoln.

The piece was originally part of "Memory in Peril," a compilation of works he started in 2015

in response to the current reality affecting his native land of Venezuela. The drawings are visual testimonies of the social, economic and political deterioration that is eroding Venezuela.

More than 100 artworks were featured in "State of the Art 2020" with most of the work being created in the last three years.

"When your work gets narrowed down to only 60 nationwide, it says a lot about the way they're seeing things, the way I'm making things, or the combination of both," Souto said. "It's a vote of confidence because they are experts in the field, so to me, it's very, very important. It's humbling, and it's a big honor."

The exhibition was on view at the Momentary and Crystal Bridges earlier this year. It's also available through a virtual reality experience at [go.unl.edu/gt87](http://go.unl.edu/gt87).

"Obviously, you work hard. You know you might be doing the right thing, but this is like a seal of approval," Souto said. "That's what is exciting about this show. I'm in the mix." ■



Right, top: Francisco Souto, "Little Bird (Pajarito)," colored pencils on paper, 50cm x 50cm, 2018. One of four works Souto displayed at the Florence Biennale.



Right, bottom: Francisco Souto (second from left) receives the Lorenzo il Magnifico Award for works on paper at the XIIth edition of the Florence Biennale in Italy.



**1972**

**Mitch Tebo** (B.F.A. Theatre) played the supporting role of Andrew Carnes in the 2019 revival of *Oklahoma!* The production was nominated for eight Tony Awards and won two, including Best Revival of a Musical and Best Performance by an Actress in a Featured Role in a Musical for Ali Stroker. *Oklahoma!* played its final Broadway performance on Jan. 19, 2020.

**1994**

**Anne Madison** (B.M.) is chair of the piano department at the Omaha Conservatory of Music. She is also a regular faculty member of the Tyrolean International Piano Academy in Innsbruck, Austria.

**1997**

**Laura Kendall** (B.A. Theatre; M.A. 2008) was named the executive director of the Velma V. Morrison Center for the Performing Arts at Boise State University last year. She had previously worked for Omaha Performing Arts, where she was vice president for programming and education.

**2000**

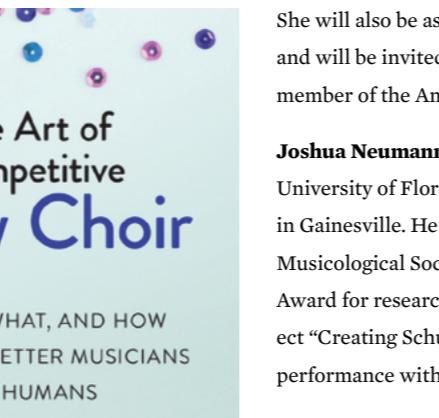
**Sarah Detweiler** (B.F.A. Studio Art) was promoted to the rank of full professor at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay in May.

**2005**

**Richard Fountain** (M.M.; D.M.A. 2008) is professor of piano at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas. He is principal keyboard with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra and Lubbock Symphony Orchestra. He received the Nebraska Alumni Association's Early Achiever Award in 2017.

**2003**

**Jennifer Randall** (B.M.E.) has written *The Art of Competitive Show Choir*, the essential how-to guide for building and sustaining a thriving show choir program. Randall is entering her 18th year as a high school choral director. For more information on the book, visit [go.unl.edu/w6sk](http://go.unl.edu/w6sk).



*Jennifer Randall has written a book titled The Art of Competitive Show Choir.*

**2004**

**Kate Bingaman-Burt** (M.F.A.), an illustrator and professor of graphic design at Portland State University, had an essay published in the New York Times on Oct. 10, 2020, titled "Draw Your Life, One Coffee Mug at a Time," ([go.unl.edu/qvn4](http://go.unl.edu/qvn4)) where she discussed how taking the time to sketch your belongings can help capture moments and memories.

**2005**

**Richard Fountain** (M.M.; D.M.A. 2008) is professor of piano at Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas. He is principal keyboard with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra and Lubbock Symphony Orchestra. He received the Nebraska Alumni Association's Early Achiever Award in 2017.

**2008**

**Josie (Azzam) Schrodek** (B.F.A. Theatre-Film and New Media) is the 2020 recipient of the Sundance Institute's Sally Menke Memorial Editing Fellowship. As a fellow, she will work as an editor at the Sundance Institute Directors Lab and edit the workshop scenes of two directors selected for the lab. She will also be assigned two editing mentors and will be invited to become an associate member of the American Cinema Editors.

**2011**

**Jeni Houser** (M.M.), soprano, made her Metropolitan Opera debut on Jan. 2 in New York City, performing as The Queen of the Night in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*. Based in Madison, Wisconsin, Houser has sung the role previously for a number of other companies, including the Los Angeles Opera and Dallas Opera. For more on Houser's debut, visit [go.unl.edu/idq8](http://go.unl.edu/idq8).



*Jeni Houser (M.M. 2011) performs as The Queen of the Night in Mozart's The Magic Flute at the Metropolitan Opera in New York City in January.*

To submit your Alumni News, please send your name, year(s)/degree(s) and your news to [unarts@unl.edu](mailto:unarts@unl.edu).

# Armstrong excels in Austin creative scene



*Adrian Armstrong. Photo by Megan Baker.*

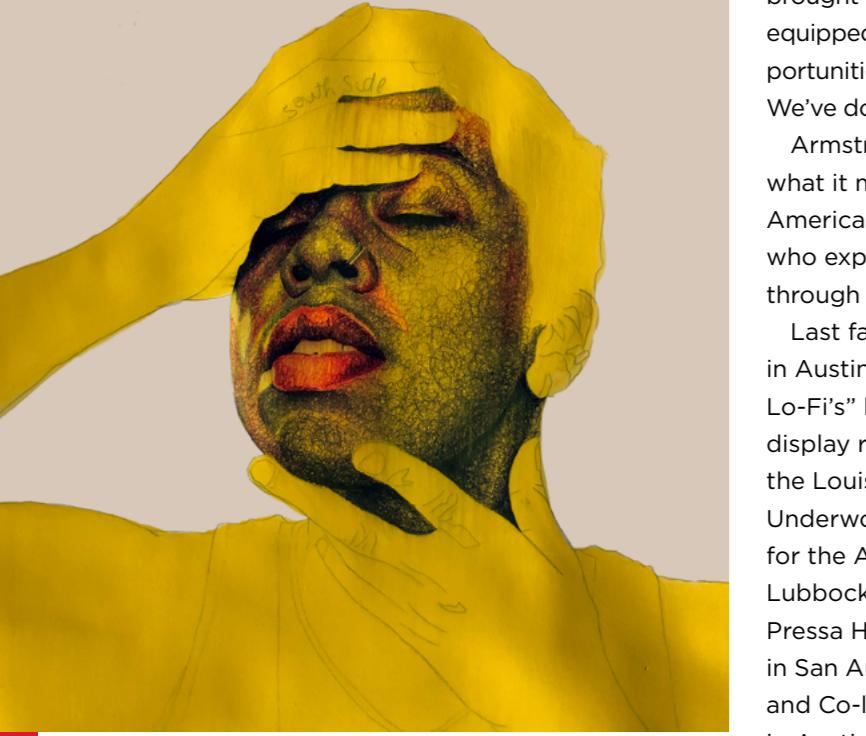
**S**chool of Art, Art History & Design alumnus Adrian Armstrong (B.F.A. 2014) was recently named one of "34 talented Black artists you should be following on Instagram" by Popsugar.com.

"I have to admit, it was amazing," Armstrong said of the honor. "I was really surprised. I've been working hard, so I feel good to get that recognition. It was really cool."

Armstrong (@adrianarmstrongart), who is originally from Omaha, Nebraska, moved to Austin, Texas, shortly after graduating from Nebraska. He has been active in the Austin creative and cultural scene.

In 2017, he co-founded Brown State of Mind ([www.brownstateofmind.com](http://www.brownstateofmind.com)), an art collective dedicated to strengthening the community through advocacy, education and contemplative practice, according to its website.

"I started it because when I had moved to Austin, I just found it to be really difficult to get into the art scene," Armstrong said. "I was trying to go in head on and network as much as possible, but it kind of just felt so impossible. And the more creatives I met, especially the more creatives of color that I met, we all kind of had the same experiences. I started getting more involved in the



Adrian Armstrong, "Touched by the Morning Sun," ballpoint pen and acrylic on paper, 22" x 30", 2020. See more of his work at <http://adrianarmstrongart.com/>.

community and involved more in an activist role. I started realizing there were a lot of these barriers that were up for creatives of color, and there wasn't access to resources that were available, so I felt like there needed to be somebody or an organization that was that bridge between these creatives and these resources and opportunities."

Armstrong said Brown State of Mind is making an impact in Austin.

"I think people really like Brown State," he said. "I think it's made a really great impact, especially as far as the underground scene goes and bringing that into the light. When I first moved down here, a lot of POC [people of color] artists weren't getting those opportunities, especially musically. I feel like we were part of those pioneers for it. We've brought a lot of attention to artists, and we've equipped artists with a lot of information and opportunities. I also think it's still just the beginning. We've done a lot, but there's also a lot more to do."

Armstrong's own work explores identity and what it means to be Black identifying in modern America. He aims to depict the very real people who experience these scenarios on a daily basis through large-scale portraiture.

Last fall, he had his first residency at The Line in Austin. His current solo exhibition, "Highs and Lo-Fi's" has been on display recently at the Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts, in Lubbock, Texas; the Pressa House Gallery in San Antonio, Texas; and Co-lab Projects in Austin. The exhibition includes 12

pieces of art, and an album with 10 songs on it.

The multi-sensory exhibition explores the topic of mental health in African American culture. It is partly an exploration of Armstrong's own personal struggles with mental health and a discussion about why mental health is often a taboo topic in the culture he was raised in.

"I've dealt with depression since I was diagnosed at 13, and it's just something that I've dealt with. And the older I've gotten, I've met more

people who are also dealing with that, as well as other mental health issues," Armstrong said. "The common thing that I found with people who are Black and dealt with it is that it's kind of difficult to talk about or it's downplayed or overlooked or misdiagnosed. I wanted to, first and foremost, deal with my own depression in this way because art is therapeutic for me."

By pairing music with the artwork, he created a multimedia experience for the audience to fully convey the highs and lows of mental health issues.

"I wanted the show to be a multisensory exhibition, which was also just me challenging myself to go beyond just 2D works and see how I can create a full experience for the audience," he said.

Armstrong said he loves the act of creating.

"What drives me to create is just the need to express myself," Armstrong said. "I've always had

that need and that desire to express myself, and I feel like creatively, that's where I thrive. I think it's fun. I love challenging myself. I love just the act of creating, and I feel like it's something that helps me heal and helps me grow as a person. I feel

like it can help so many people, and I enjoy that."

It's why art and activism can go together.

"I think art is the opportunity to really tell your story and tell your truth," Armstrong said. "Over the years, what I've learned is that art can be a powerful weapon. A lot of people shy away from confrontation. But they can be struck by a painting. Art, in an activist role, can be just as powerful as a speech or music or anything like that. At the very minimum, it creates that conversation." ■

# UNL Jazz Singers 'fly away' with DownBeat Award

BY BRIAN REETZ, GLENN KORFF SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The Glenn Korff School of Music Jazz Singers were recently named a winner in the 43rd annual DownBeat Student Music Awards. The Jazz Singers were winners in the Large Vocal Jazz Ensemble Undergraduate College Outstanding Performances category.

Established in 1976, the DownBeat Student Music Awards are considered the most prestigious awards in jazz education.

Directed by David von Kampen, the Jazz Singers submitted only live, unedited recordings from fall semester concerts in Kimball Recital Hall of *Groovin' Hard* (arranged by Dave Barduhn); von Kampen's arrangements of *Fly Away Birdie*; and *Maria Walks Amid the Thorn*.

"I like that these three selections have a broad stylistic range, and they really show off all the different things the group does well," von Kampen said.

Jazz Singers last year included: Casey Allen, Halley Benjamin, Matthew Carter, Justin Eisenbeis, Noah Floersch, Michael Golden, Tess Jisa, Matthew Lowe, Elias Lozada, Greyson McCown, Olivia McCown, Madeline Reddel, Erik Skoog, Maddy Stark and Stefanie Vanderbeek.

The UNL Jazz Singers.  
Photo by Taylor Sullivan.

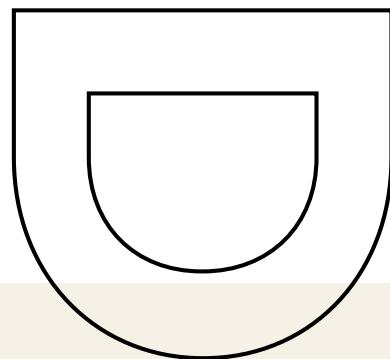
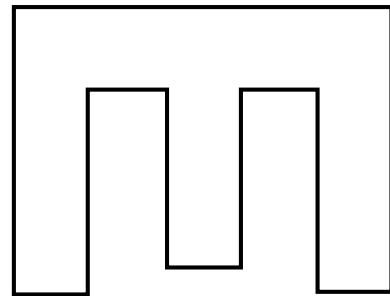


The rhythm section was Andrew Wray on drums and Christian Chesanek on bass.

Vanderbeek was also mentioned individually as part of the DownBeat award as Outstanding Beginning Soloist in *Fly Away Birdie*.

See the performance of *Fly Away Birdie* at [go.unl.edu/mtqe](http://go.unl.edu/mtqe).

"It's a huge honor," von Kampen said. "This is an important milestone for Jazz Singers. The best collegiate jazz choirs in the country win Downbeat awards regularly, and that's my goal for this group. I hope this is the first of many." ■



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