

# HIXSON-LIED

COLLEGE OF FINE  
AND PERFORMING ARTS

**‘Once-in-a-lifetime’**  
*trip to France for*  
**UNL choirs**

ALSO INSIDE:  
Meet Dean  
Andrew Belser

FALL 2022





## DEAN'S LETTER

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I am honored to serve as the Dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. I am looking forward to building on the incredible strengths of college, set in place by strong faculty, staff and leadership over decades of hard and creative work. As I look around the country, few arts colleges are as well positioned as ours to take a leadership role in creating a truly contemporary model for arts and design training. Many colleges dream of eventually having such a strong portfolio of endowments, or a center for Emerging Media Arts, or a strong and celebrated faculty who are training change-making students, or a collaborative and human-centered organizational spirit.

The college's many assets situate on the edge of greater national and international prominence; we now need an organizing vision and plan

for what that looks like and how to get there. We have work to do. Now, in what we all hope is a post-pandemic era, we are ready to work on a collaboratively constructed college strategic plan that will align with the university strategic plan to direct our resources on a steady path toward some big aspirations. We are also primed with some exciting new student-success plans that are already underway. These plans are multi-dimensional and will feature plenty of ways for our supporters to get involved. These are exciting times for the college, and I look forward to getting to know as many of you in person to share ideas and to celebrate our many successes.

In this issue of our Hixson-Lied College magazine, we are thrilled to highlight our choral trip to France, which was

supported by the Hixson-Lied Endowment, Hixson-Lied College and Glenn Korff School of Music. The University Singers and Chamber Singers were in France from May 14–24, and they performed at extraordinary concert venues. It was a life-changing trip for the students. One of the trip participants, doctoral student Mary Daugherty, shares her perspective of the trip with us.

Several of our alumni are also featured in this issue, as we include profiles of Richard Svoboda, our Master's Week participant and principal bassoonist of the Boston Symphony; Violinist Meredith "Ezinma" Ramsay, who catapulted into digital stardom when she began performing covers of viral trap hits on Instagram and recently returned to Lincoln to perform for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Meadowlark Music Festival; and actress Abby Miller and trumpeter Tim Andersen, who both returned to Lincoln this spring for Honors Day as recipients of our Alumni Achievement Awards.

Fall is also a time of transition. While I begin my tenure as dean and we welcome several new faculty, we also said goodbye last spring to five faculty and staff from the Glenn Korff School of Music with a combined service total of 150 years! We thank Colleen McDonald, Alisa Belflower, Gretchen Foley, Peter Lefferts and Glenn Nierman for their service and profile the faculty members in this issue.

These and many other stories await you in this issue. I thank you for your support of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. It's good to be here!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew W. Belser". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

**Andrew Belser**

DEAN

*Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts*



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AND PERFORMING ARTS

## FALL 2022

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

### Hixson-Lied Dean

Andrew Belser

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**Cover photo:** UNL Choirs performing at St. Vincent Cathedral in Saint-Malo, France. Photo by Don Grigg.

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# Meet the new dean: Andy Belser

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*On July 11, Andrew (Andy) Belser became the fifth dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.*

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“I am thrilled to welcome Andy to Nebraska,” said Executive Vice Chancellor Katherine Ankerson, upon announcing his appointment in March. “He is a passionate advocate for the arts with an impressive history of creating interdisciplinary connections and dynamic partnerships with communities and external partners. His commitment to collaborative work, creative activity and his dedication to inclusivity will fuel the college’s continued trajectory toward excellence and innovation in contemporary arts education.”

Belser comes to Nebraska from the University of Arizona, where he was director and professor in the School of Theatre, Film and Television and led arts and medicine initiatives. Prior to Arizona, he was a professor of movement, voice and acting at The Pennsylvania State University, where he taught and researched at the intersection of

cognitive neuroscience and performance. He was also founding director of the Arts and Design Research Incubator, where he mentored artists, designers and scientists in the research and creation of art and science projects targeted for further funding and presentation at national and international venues.



Andy Belser.  
Photo by Craig  
Chandler, University  
Communication.









*Belser discusses his new job and his plans for the college.*

## **What interested you in this position at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln?**

So many things attracted me to this position. Among the easily recognizable strengths of the college: the quality of the curricular, engagement and research programs; strong faculty in programs across the college; the longstanding leadership vision to raise substantial endowments; and the foresight to occupy a national/international leadership role in understanding how emerging technologies are changing arts industries, careers, creative processes and training.

As I talked with the college faculty, staff, students and university administrators, I experienced a palpable human-centered vision at the University of Nebraska, which appeals to me very much.

## **What does an excellent college of fine and performing arts look like to you?**

This is a terrific question and one that has been on the minds of higher education arts administrators for at least the past two decades. If you look broadly across industries, opportunities for students who engage in our training seem to be increasing, but many of those opportunities are shifting away from traditional arts-based fields and into emerging cultural spaces. Our challenge must now be to shift our training to match those opportunities. Importantly, this does NOT mean throwing away or diminishing our strengths in the fundamentals of traditional artistic training. Rather, a contemporary college of fine and performing arts should seek first to understand where the opportunities are for young artists and should look to partner with and learn from a broad range of organizations in civil, industry, and multimedia sectors that are all dealing with a

changing world. My dream for the college would be to train young people for flexible and creative careers and to be recognized as a leading model for what contemporary arts training can look like.

## **What are you most looking forward to doing in your first year at Nebraska?**

Meeting people and learning from them. I am looking forward to spending time with faculty, staff and students in classes, performances, discussions and planning sessions. I want to experience firsthand how this college has grown to be so strong, and to learn from those who have been here making that happen. I am also looking forward to meeting with our donors, alumni and board members to learn their particular passions and ideas for the college.

Like many during the pandemic, I have missed the communal experience of joining with others in audiences to attend

performances, showings, lectures and other artistic activities. Now, I get to satisfy my longing through being a part of audiences in my new home.

## **What is your message to the rest of the campus and other external partners, in terms of opportunities for collaborations?**

Imagining and cultivating cross-disciplinary partnerships will be an important focus for the college. Nationally and internationally, the arts are leading and joining in broad partnerships that may include areas such as wellness and healthcare, creative placemaking and environmental sustainability. Public and private funders alike are calling for artists to be at the center of impactful research and engagement.

These partnerships are also likely to include significant collaborations with national industry partners where the mixing and crossing of disciplines have been happening within creative industries for a long time. Arts and media industries are creating markets for skilled artists and storytellers at an astonishing speed. Our curriculum must help students understand how disciplines are becoming fluid and adaptable. While fundamentals of theory and practice within professional arts training have never been more important, learning must be married with expansive thinking across disciplines. Multi-disciplinary thinking is not just some curricular or aesthetic choice, but an ethical mandate in arts education if we are to prepare students to learn to create flexible careers in industries that are blurring disciplinary boundaries with dazzling speed.



## **What kind of students do you want to recruit to the Hixson-Lied College?**

This question goes to what we want our college's regional and national "brand identity" to be. The qualities of this identity are importantly tied to a college-wide strategic planning endeavor that we will be undertaking in my first year. The answers must be found through collaborative thinking and discussion. I am inclined toward being known as a place that helps young artists and arts educators to imagine broad cultural impact in their careers. I believe our mission must be to grow our students' imaginations for what a creative life might look like, and to invite them to train with us toward such a life that might look very different than what they imagine as they come to us. In this regard, our Emerging Media Arts program is no less than a national treasure. Even the word "emerging" names exactly how we want our students to consider the way they will apply creative skills in fields and spaces between fields that do not even exist yet.

## **What is your message to the alumni of the Hixson-Lied College?**

Alumni are the lifeblood of our college and are often the most powerful storytellers about their time studying with us. I look forward to gathering alumni at regional events where we can share stories and ideas about how alumni can continue to be involved as mentors and ambassadors for the college's robust programs.

## **What are your plans to continue to make the college more inclusive and diverse?**

Action toward sustainable infrastructure and culture change must be our focus in promoting inclusive excellence in higher education. While some infrastructure change might happen quickly, experts in the diversity, equity and inclusion space confirm that changing infrastructure and culture is slow work. Performative responses will generally be seen for what they are. The substantive and important work lies in a long game of culture change wrought by an enduring commitment to stating measurable goals/outcomes and returning to them to assess our success in demonstrable, public ways. Diversity, equity and inclusion must be a part of arts education, in part, because the world that our students are entering will likely present them with complexities that they need help learning to address.

## **What will success for the college look like for you in five years?**

Five years is a good start, but honestly, I think about what the college will look like in 10 or 25 years.

In five years, I am hoping that we will have made some significant progress toward national and international prominence gained through signature interdisciplinary programs that prepare our students to be known as ready to tackle the sorts of challenges that employers often tell me they are looking for. I would also hope that five years from now, we are able to adapt our already-strong curricula, so we are viewed by prospective students, potential benefactors and external partners as a place with a forward-looking

vision for arts education. I also hope that we will be more visible through engaging with communities across Nebraska and across the Midwest.

In the next decade or two, I hope that we are viewed throughout arts-based industries with a signature brand of arts education that trains students who are ready to meet the contemporary world with power and confidence. Industry leaders across broad sectors of creative fields all seem to say a version of the same message—"Teach your students to be flexible, to have aesthetic skills and taste, to understand creative processes and basic languages of different fields. We will teach them the rapidly changing industry best practices and technologies."

The industry-informed approaches I am talking about implementing are aimed at offering vital added value for our students. It's important to recognize that any of these changes must hold the strengths of our existing arts-training programs as vital to student learning. There is no substitute for studio work in developing young artists and designers, or for the rigors of learning research methods and the contours of a field like art, music or theatre history.

## **Any final thoughts?**

Thirty years ago, I took a cross-country train trip, and my favorite part of the trip was sitting for hours in the observation car surrounded by the big sky expanse of the Great Plains. I was stunned by an immense sense of grandeur. Coming to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln also feels a bit like a full circle life story for me. I grew up on a farm in Hershey, Pennsylvania, surrounded by a large extended family of teachers, farmers and preachers. Serving students through the land-grant mission of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln feels like a return to my own roots. ■



# NEWS

## Mattingly named interim director of Korff School

Alan Mattingly, professor of horn and assistant director, has been named the interim director of the Glenn Korff School of Music. Mattingly's appointment began May 23 and continues until a new director is appointed.

"I am proud and honored to be named the interim director of the Glenn Korff School of Music for the upcoming academic year," Mattingly said. "Our school has long enjoyed a tradition of excellence in teaching, research and community engagement, but there are particularly exciting things happening this year



*Alan Mattingly*

as we welcome new faculty, plan for the design and construction of a brand new facility, and prepare for a major renovation of Kimball Recital Hall. I look forward to being part of this continuing momentum and am grateful to the administration, faculty, staff and students for placing their trust in me to serve in this position. These are thrilling times, and we are excited to begin this journey of growth and engagement on UNL's historic campus."

Mattingly has taught at UNL since 2006. He has served as assistant director of the Glenn Korff School of Music since 2018. For more on Mattingly, visit [go.unl.edu/nofu](https://go.unl.edu/nofu).

Mattingly replaced Sergio H. Ruiz, who stepped down as director and is returning to the faculty. Ruiz had served since 2017.

A search for a permanent director of the Glenn Korff School of Music begins this fall. ■

## Historic drum returns to campus







Members of the Cornhusker Marching Band walk with the five-foot tall “Big Bertha” drum during the 2021 homecoming parade. The drum was recently refurbished through the Nebraska Alumni Association. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.

The drumbeats of campus life were just a little bigger last fall at Dear Old Nebraska U.

Through a collaboration between the Nebraska Alumni Association and Cornhusker Marching Band, the university’s five-foot tall bass drum (known colloquially as a “Big Bertha” drum) has been refurbished and returned to service on campus.

“Over the years, it had become part of the alumni center’s

collection,” said Andy Washburn, associate executive director of operations for the Alumni Association. “When plans for the university’s N150 celebration came together, we decided it was the perfect time to repair the drum and return it to campus in all its glory.”

For more on the drum, visit [go.unl.edu/h2nm](http://go.unl.edu/h2nm).

— Troy Feddersen, University Communication

# Jazz Singers perform at Jazz Education Network conference

The Glenn Korff School of Music’s Jazz Singers were invited to perform at the Jazz Education Network Conference in Dallas, Texas, in January.

The Jazz Education Network is dedicated to building the jazz arts community by advancing education, promoting performance and developing new audiences. The annual conference draws thousands from jazz beginners to experts for a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The Jazz Singers are under the direction of Lecturer David von Kampen, himself a composer and six-time Downbeat Award winner in

graduate-level jazz writing categories.

“It was a terrific experience,” von Kampen said. “The students gave a great performance for an amazing audience of jazz educators and students from around the country.”

Von Kampen said being invited to perform was a “huge honor” for the ensemble.

“The very best ensembles are accepted to perform at this conference, and we were so happy to be among them,” he said.

The Jazz Singers will perform this November for the Nebraska Music Education Association’s 2022 fall conference. ■



The Glenn Korff School of Music’s Jazz Singers performed at the Jazz Education Network Conference in Dallas. Courtesy photo.



# Korff School hosted George Walker Festival

The Glenn Korff School of Music hosted the George Walker Festival on April 5 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth. Walker (1922–2018) was the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music for his work *Lilacs* for voice and orchestra in 1996.

"Beyond work that choirs have done in recent years, within the



last seven or eight years, I haven't seen any concerts or festivals with the School of Music that have ever celebrated black composers, so this just made total sense for us to have a festival that includes many different people, and not just choirs," said Assistant Professor of Music in Choral Activities Marques L.A. Garrett, who organized the festival.

The Glenn Korff School of Music's University Singers, Chamber Singers and UNL Symphony Orchestra all participated, as well as Hixson-Lied Professor of Piano Mark Clinton and Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music Jamie Reimer.

Two local choirs from Lincoln Northeast and Lincoln High also participated.

Highlighting the festival was the premiere of a new piece commissioned by the Glenn Korff School of Music titled *We Are the Music Makers*, composed by Reginal Wright, a composer, conductor and educator from Arlington, Texas, who has won many awards during his 20-year career at the middle and high school levels.

The piece was guest conducted by A. Jan Taylor, director of choral music activities and assistant professor at Prairie View A&M University in Texas.

Garrett hoped the festival helps students diversify their repertoire choices.

*George Walker. Photo courtesy of [georgewalker.com](http://georgewalker.com).*



Left to right: Assistant Professor of Music in Musicology Paula Harper, Assistant Professor of Music in Choral Activities Marques L.A. Garrett, Prairie View A&M University Director of Choral Activities A. Jan Taylor, Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music Jamie Reimer and Assistant Professor of Composition Greg Simon participated in a pre-concert panel discussion prior to the George Walker Festival evening concert in Kimball Hall. Photo courtesy of the Glenn Korff School of Music.

"I hope that they see that even though you can identify a composer based on any of the physical characteristics, that it does not have to necessarily give you an idea of what their music will sound like,"

he said. "George Walker's music can stand up with Shostakovich and with John Cage and Aaron Copland. Hopefully they start thinking about how they can diversify their repertoire choices." ■

## Nebraska Rep continues partnership with St. Louis Black Rep

Last fall, the Nebraska Repertory Theatre presented *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea*. The production was directed by Ron Himes, the founder and producing director of the St.

Louis Black Repertory Company and the Henry E. Hampton, Jr., Artist-in-Residence at Washington University.

The production continued the Rep's partnership with the

St. Louis Black Rep, which also featured Himes directing *Traveling Shoes*, a collage of poetry, prose, music and dance featuring students in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

The 2022–2023 Rep season begins Oct. 13–30 with the annual haunted attraction, *ShakesFEAR*. Arthur Miller’s American classic *Death of a Salesman* takes the stage Nov. 15–20 and will feature Himes as Willy Loman and Nebraska Rep Executive Director Christina Kirk as Linda Loman. In the spring, the season continues with Diana Son’s *Stop Kiss* in March and closes with the regional debut of the hilarious *The Play That Goes Wrong* by Henry Lewis, Henry Shields and Jonathan Sayer in May. For tickets and more information, visit [nebraskarep.org](http://nebraskarep.org). ■

## Carson School offers 2 new degrees this fall

**T**he Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film began offering two new degrees this fall.

The Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in acting offers rigorous professional actor training that provides unique opportunities to work in professional theatre while also receiving extensive instruction in film and emerging media. This newly imagined degree balances foundational and advanced performance practices in theatre and film with exposure to specialized performance techniques in voice over, gaming, motion

capture, green screen and other emerging disciplines. Actors have the opportunity to perform with professionals at

Nebraska Repertory Theatre, Nebraska’s premier professional Equity theatre.

The Bachelor of Arts in theatre targets students interested in versatile careers in theatre arts, theatre creation and theatre management. Students in the program will develop their

skills as artist entrepreneurs.

“It has been exciting to re-imagine these two degrees with an emphasis on preparing students for a rapidly evolving arts and entertainment industry,” said Christina Kirk, director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and executive director of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

“The focus in both degrees is on offering state-of-the-art industry expertise and experience. The artist entrepreneurs emerging from these programs will shape the future.”

For more information on either degree, visit [go.unl.edu/qnz4](http://go.unl.edu/qnz4). ■

**“[...] The artist entrepreneurs emerging from these programs will shape the future.”**



*The Nebraska Repertory Theatre performed Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea last fall. Lighting design by Aja M. Jackson (B.F.A. 2013). Photo by Kyle Andersen.*



# 5 theatre students assist with rigging at Eric Church concert

**F**ive Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film design/tech students traveled to Boise, Idaho, in May with Assistant Professor of Practice Bryce Allen to get hands-on rigging training and professional experience while working a load-in and load-out for the Eric Church concert at the Extra Mile Arena.

This training is an educational outreach program sponsored by EKO Crewing in Boise, Idaho, and was coordinated by Allen.

“When I came here from northern Utah last year to take up the post as Technical Director here, I brought with me my entertainment rigging certification for the theatre, which is something that currently only

two people in Nebraska have,” Allen said. “And it just so happened that one of my friends started his own company in Boise about the same time we moved to Lincoln. He basically now runs the entire entertainment crewing in-

dustry in the Boise area and eastern Idaho. He was really interested in continuing the education of the

younger generation of riggers, which is difficult because it’s a very hard thing to do, and it’s a risky thing to learn. Shad Horn offered this opportunity through an educational outreach program from his company, and I took it.”

An entertainment rigger works on ropes, booms, lifts and hoists for a stage production, film or television show.

“For people that go on the upside, it’s you and a rope and about 100 pounds of machinery and about 100 feet in the air walking on an eight-inch beam or smaller,” Allen said. “There’s no sugar coating it. If you drop something or something falls during the process, bad things happen.”

The students that participated in the experience included graduate students Joseph Shelly, Jr., Stephanie Schlosser, Abbey Smith and Kennedy Wilcher and undergraduate student Liam Romano.

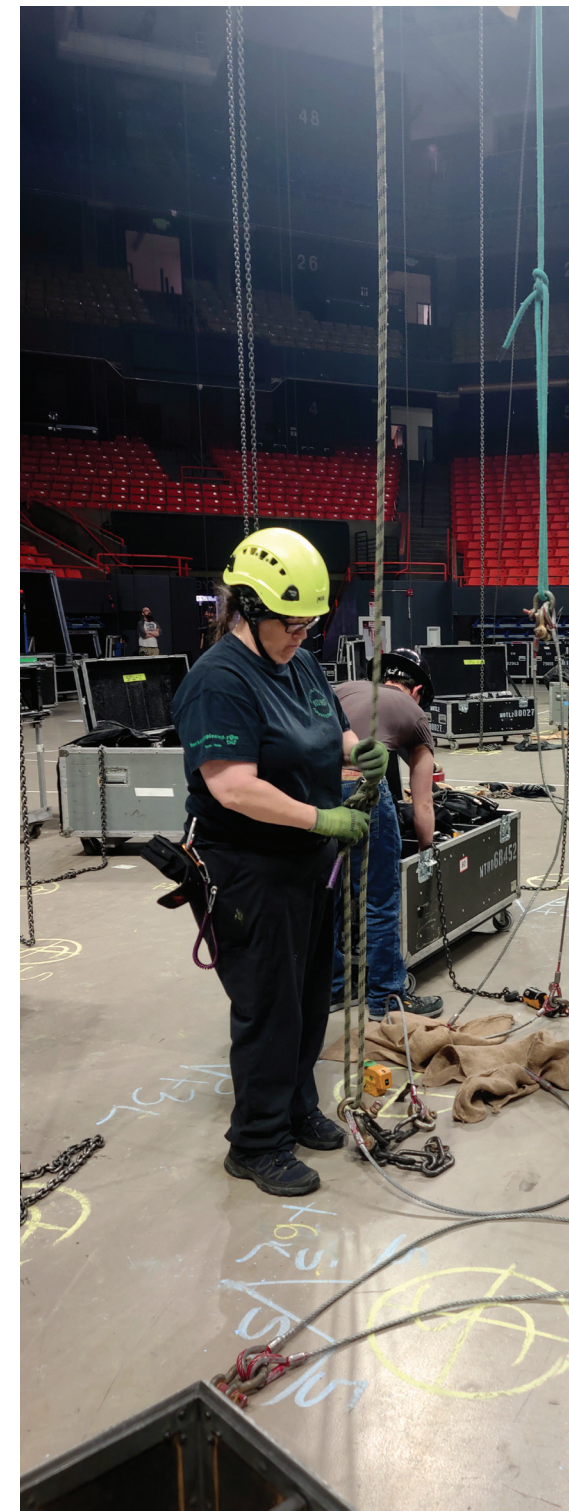
“Three of them were part of my entertainment rigging class that I’m teaching this semester,” Allen said. “Not everybody in my class was able to go, so I was able to fill the other two slots with some of my technical direction students.”

Allen was in charge of safety at the event.

“I was watching everybody’s backs, not only my students, but also the professionals that we worked with there and making sure everybody was doing what they



*Left to right: Liam Romano, Kennedy Wilcher, Stephanie Schlosser, Abbey Smith, Bryce Allen and Joe Shelly, Jr., in Boise, Idaho. Courtesy photo.*





Abbey Smith (right) and Liam Romano (with his back to the camera) work with Victorita Raaen (left) from EKO's down rigging team during the load-in for the Eric Church concert in Boise, Idaho. Courtesy photo.



needed to do and staying safe,” he said. “The students were shadowing professional riggers during the event so that they would have hands-on experience learning with professional people. I was careful to pair them with people that I know that I’ve worked with in the past that are able to provide that type of student training.”

All of the students had taken the entertainment rigging course either this semester or earlier.

“So they got a whole semester’s worth of math and physics and engineering and safety drilled into them,” Allen said. “And then we spent about two weeks before we left really going over the processes and the procedures and how you connect all these cables and shackles and chains and connect them correctly.”

Allen said the classroom is very different from the tour environment.

“There’s a different urgency than what we have in the classroom, and it has quite a bit of pressure,” Allen said. “In the classroom, we can spend six weeks learning these skills and perfecting them. Out there in the house, you’ve got two days—one day to put

**“I was in a rigging class at the time we went on this trip, so being able to physically apply elements that we’d been studying [...] was invaluable.”**

scenario—was invaluable. Career-wise, the experience gained could allow me to work in additional non-union production gigs that I



Five students in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film had the opportunity to work the load-in for an Eric Church concert at Extra Mile Arena in Boise, Idaho. Courtesy photo.

it up and one day to take it down. There is no room for error.”

Schlosser said she was able to apply what she learned in the classroom.

“I was in a rigging class at the time we went on this trip, so being able to physically apply elements that we’d been studying—specifically in a real-world

previously haven’t had access to.”

Smith said in an educational environment, students learn a great deal, but in a controlled environment.

“Applying what we learn in a new environment with different people with different experiences of their own is a great way to test what we’ve learned and expand on it,” she said. “The real-world experience allows us to get a taste of what it’s actually like to do the work as a career rather than learning about it theoretically.”

Allen hopes to do it again in future semesters.

“It was a lot of fun,” he said. “I was really proud of my students, and I was pleased that they were able to get it done. I hope to do it again.” ■



# Theatrix creates connection with Indian Center



Above, left: *The Indian Center in Lincoln. Courtesy photo.*

Below, left: *The cast of The Thanksgiving Play with members of the Indian Center, including Kevin Abourezk (third from right). Courtesy photo.*

Above, right: *On stage at the Nebraska Union auditorium, left to right: Michael Zavodny, Hannah Mason and Liam Romano. Courtesy photo.*

**T**heatrix, the student-run theatre company in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, presented a staged reading of *The Thanksgiving Play* last fall at three locations in Lincoln, including the Indian Center, Nebraska Union and Lab Theatre in the Temple Building.

In this play by Larissa Fasthose, a troupe of terminally “woke” teaching artists scrambles to create a pageant that somehow manages to celebrate both Turkey Day and Native American Heritage Month.

Associate Professor of Theatre Jamie Bullins said Fasthose was having trouble getting her plays produced because theatres and academic institutions typically don’t have a lot of indigenous actors.

“So she wrote this very satiric *The Thanksgiving Play*, and it’s about four white people who get together

to put on a politically correct Thanksgiving play, and it’s quite hilarious,” Bullins said.

But some students in the Carson School were uncomfortable with the idea of the production. Bullins reached out to Kevin Abourezk, a

journalist and vice chairman of the Board of Directors at the Indian Center in Lincoln, for help.

“I made a call and talked to Kevin and told him what we were doing,” Bullins said. “I asked if he would read the play and tell me what he thought. He read it, and he was like, ‘It’s hilarious. I love it.’”

Abourezk led a talk-back after the readings and interacted with audiences about the importance of the play. He also helped them hold one of the readings at the Indian Center.

Philip Crawford, who graduated in May as a theatre major and was the artistic director for Theatrix, wanted to produce the play.

“As far as we know, UNL had never put on a show by an indigenous playwright,” he said. “And so finding this show that she wrote so





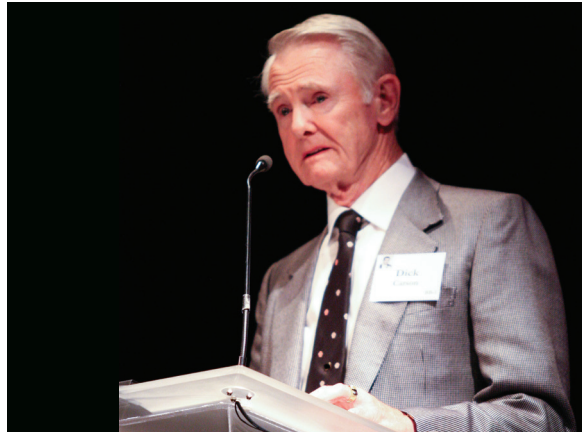
indigenous voices can be heard in places where they are not, it was really important to us.”

“I think everybody recognized how important it was to start the conversation,” Bullins said. “I think the reading at the Indian Center really opened their eyes in terms of how welcoming and how excited that the people there were.”

Bullins said Theatrix plans to do the play again this year at the Indian Center, and the experience has led to a committee exploring a permanent land acknowledgement/art piece in the Temple Building.

“That was one of the most interesting things that has come out of this,” Crawford said. “It’s a very simple thing, really, but it has big impact.” ■

## In Memoriam



*Dick Carson at the 2007 dedication of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Photo by Leisha Smith.*

**RICHARD “DICK” CARSON**, age 92, passed away on Dec. 19, 2021. He was the younger brother of Johnny Carson.

Born in Clarinda, Iowa, the family eventually settled in Norfolk, Nebraska.

He was an alumnus of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. While a student at UNL, he acted in productions on campus and in community theatre in Lincoln. He graduated in 1952 majoring in speech and radio and was named “Best Announcer” by his National Honorary Radio Fraternity.

An accomplished television director, Carson won five Emmy awards in a career that spanned more than 40 years. He directed *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, *The Merv Griffin Show*, *Wheel of Fortune*, and more.



*Joseph M. Ruffo*

**JOSEPH M. RUFFO**, age 80, passed away on Aug. 30. He was chairman and professor of art in the School of Art, Art History & Design from 1984 until his retirement in 2003.

Some of his accomplishments during his time as chairman include rebuilding the art and art history curriculum, receiving National Association of Schools of Art and Design accreditation, the renovation of Richards Hall and establishing a departmental gallery, which is now the Eisentrager-Howard Gallery.

Ruffo received his M.F.A. from the Cranbrook Academy of Art and his B.F.A. from the Pratt Institute.

His own work in printmaking, book arts and graphic design was exhibited extensively nationally and internationally.



# Musical Film Premieres

The Glenn Korff School of Music presented the world premiere of *The Real Gemma Jordan* in February at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center. The red-carpet gala premiere was followed by a reception sponsored by the Friends of Opera in the Lied Commons.

The Glenn Korff School of Music commissioned the work, which featured a score by Broadway composer Rob Rokicki with lyrics and screenplay by Anna K. Jacobs.

The film was directed by Senior Lecturer Emerita Alisa Belflower and alumnus and award-winning, independent filmmaker Alexander Jeffery (B.F.A. 2011) and his Bespoke Works Production Company. It featured a cast of UNL students, along with guest appearances by David Long, Lauren Silverman Durban, Brad Boesen and Judy Anderson.

*The Real Gemma Jordan* will be submitted in regional film festivals.



*The cast of The Real Gemma Jordan following the premiere in February.*



## Fine and Performing Arts invests in student pantry, success center

**B**uilding upon its efforts to meet student needs, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts opened a pantry and Student Success Center on March 24.

The pantry, which is located in the Student Success Center in Woods Art Building Room 111, supplies personal hygiene and non-perishable food items to any Husker student in need.

The pantry and success center are the latest in a series of efforts to meet student needs identified by the college's student advisory board and results from a university-wide survey that showed more students are becoming food insecure.

To help meet that need, Jackie Mattingly, interim associate dean for student success and assistant professor of practice in music,





*Emily Griffin Overocker, Fine and Performing Arts' student success coordinator, arranges the shelves in the new pop-in pantry in the Hixson-Lied Student Success Center. The center in the Woods Art Building opened March 24. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.*

The college started by providing well-being pop-up sessions, through which students were able to express additional resources that they'd like to see.

partnered with Big Red Resilience and Well-Being to deliver resources to the fine and performing arts corner of campus.

**“In the Hixson-Lied College, we care about each dimension of student wellness and look forward to providing resources close to our students’ academic homes,” Mattingly said.**

As a result, the college has set up its own pantry in conjunction with the Husker Pantry and Big Red Resilience and Well-being.

The pantry serves as an extension of the resources located at the Husker Pantry, which has additional offerings including perishable food items. The pop-in pantry is free and open to all students.

Hixson-Lied faculty, staff, students and student organizations have already shown their dedication to student success by uniting to collect and make donations to the pantry.

For example, Glenn Korff School of Music choral ensembles kicked off the donations by collecting donations at their Evening of Choirs concert on March 13. There are

also donation bins located in each Hixson-Lied building.

“It has really become a community effort,” Mattingly said.

College leaders recently selected Emily Griffin Overocker to serve as student success coordinator. Her duties include overseeing the pantry and other college initiatives.

“Student success starts with basic human needs because students cannot focus on learning if they do not have food or shelter,” Griffin Overocker said. “Hopefully, this new pantry will free up mental bandwidth for students to be able to focus more on their classes.”

College leaders expect that the Student Success Center will become a hub of support and a home for student success initiatives, including future well-being sessions. The college and student success team will continue to listen to students and improve and change offerings as needed.

“By focusing on students holistically we hope we are able to help remove barriers for students so they can maximize their opportunities here at the university,” Griffin Overocker said.

— Kateri Hartman, University Communication



*Students look over what's available at the food pantry inside the Student Success Center in Woods Art Building during the grand opening event in March.*



A photograph of Richard Svoboda, a man with glasses and a blue blazer, standing and holding a bassoon. He is looking down at a music stand in front of him. Hailey Cheek, a young woman with long dark hair wearing a tan jacket, is seated and also holding a bassoon, looking at the same music stand. The music stand has a black cover with 'UNL' in white and a white sheet of paper with 'Melodious Etudes Bassoon' and 'Svoboda' written on it. In the background, there is a grand piano and a chalkboard with musical staves.

# Svoboda returns for Alumni Masters week

*Richard Svoboda, principal bassoonist  
for the Boston Symphony Orchestra,  
gives a masterclass to Hailey Cheek,  
a sophomore music student in the  
Glenn Korff School of Music.*



"It's really special being back, and I'm going to be able to share with the students my path and how I managed things while I was here. It's really nice," said Richard Svoboda (B.M.E. 1978), who was on campus this spring as part of the 2022 Alumni Masters Week.

Svoboda, who is the principal bassoonist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and a member of the Boston Symphony Chamber Players, was one of eight alumni named to the 2022 class of Alumni Masters by the Nebraska Alumni Association.

Since 1964, more than 400 alumni have participated in the Alumni Masters. Selection is competitive, and candidates are alumni who have shown great promise, success and leadership in their fields.

While at the Glenn Korff School of Music, Svoboda spoke to all music students during convocation, attended a UNL Symphony rehearsal and conducted a masterclass for bassoon students.

"The part of my job that involves working with young people has always appealed to me," Svoboda said. "It's just kind of the unselfish part of what I do. Playing in the orchestra to me seems selfish, in a way, because it's so much fun, and it's what I've always wanted to do. But teaching is much more altruistic. It's a way to share what I can and help people be what they can be."

Glenn Korff School of Music Assistant Professor of Bassoon Nathan Koch said it was an honor to host him in the bassoon studio.

"We were honored and incredibly grateful to have Mr. Svoboda return to his alma mater to work with and speak to our students," Koch said. "He brings with him such an immense wealth of expertise from being part of many of the top performing arts organizations in the country (Boston Symphony, Tanglewood, etc.), and I know the students really enjoyed working with him throughout his visit. This was an event that we'll all be talking about fondly for years to come."

At the Glenn Korff School of Music convocation, he told students that when he was at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, he practiced about three to four hours per day.

"I had these dreams that I wanted to see if I could do, first to be a college professor because that's what I knew, and then later to play in an orchestra," Svoboda said. "And I didn't really see how I could possibly get there unless I worked as hard as I could."

While at UNL, Svoboda studied with Professor Emeritus Gary Echols.

"He was very sort of low key and nonchalant and laid back," Svoboda said. "I remember once early freshman year, I was not really practicing enough my

etudes. I was concentrated on the sonatas and concertos, and he told me the etudes are what are going to make you good, so that's all I needed to hear. He never steered me wrong. He just sent me in the right direction."

Svoboda took advantage of every opportunity he had in the School of Music.

"If there was an orchestra coming to town, I reached out and tried to get a lesson," he said.

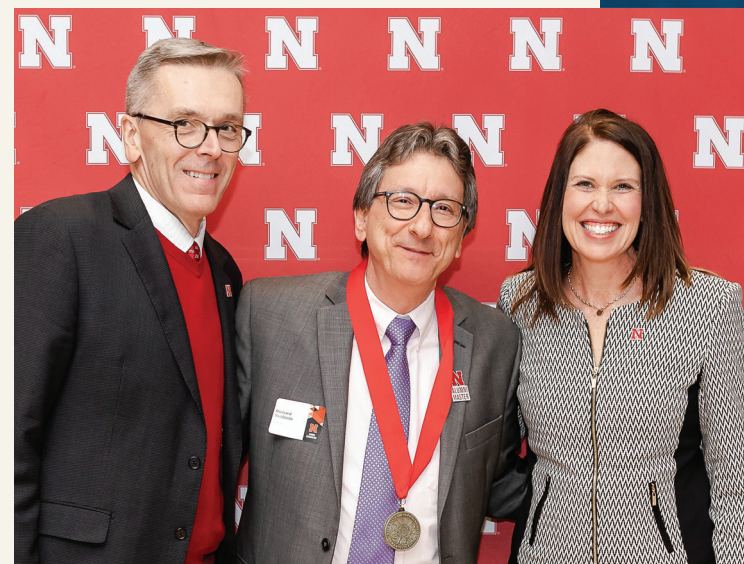
Svoboda has been principal bassoonist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra since 1989. He is also currently on the faculties of the New England Conservatory, the Tanglewood Music Center and the Sarasota Music Festival and has given masterclasses throughout the world. Prior to his appointment to the Boston Symphony, he performed for 10 seasons as principal bassoonist of the Jacksonville (Florida) Symphony.

Svoboda said the experience of playing with the Boston Symphony Orchestra is hard to describe.

"It's the Shangri-La, nirvana, whatever you want to call it," he said. "Especially in the last decade or so, it seems like individually in the orchestra, there's a very high-level work concept. Everyone comes prepared, and everyone is an amazing musician. It's fabulous."

Svoboda says he feels very lucky to have the career he has had.

"I worked as hard as I could, but I will acknowledge that I didn't know if it would be enough," he said. "I would have loved being a band director. I think I would have been super happy and that would have been a rewarding experience. But I feel really lucky that the combination of things that I did somehow enabled me to be good enough to follow the path that I did. I feel lucky, but also grateful the good work I did led me here." ■



Left to right: Chancellor Ronnie Green, Richard Svoboda and Nebraska Alumni Executive Director Shelley Zaborowski. Photo by Laura Elizabeth Photography.





*Innovation Studio students filming Seabreeze residents with Assistant Professor Ash Eliza Smith. Courtesy photo.*

## Emerging media students examine Black land loss, climate futures in immersive storytelling project

**“Y**ou really got to see the community of Seabreeze. And then you also go to see how much was taken away from it. But interviewing people, it was really good to capture what Seabreeze is and what they hope for,” said Ebben Blake, a senior emerging media arts student.

Blake was among eight students that traveled to Seabreeze, North Carolina, over spring break with Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts Ash Eliza Smith to learn more about the community and interview people as part of the Innovation





Left: 360-video captured at Seabreeze and experienced as Augmented Reality (AR), created by Sam Lawton and Alex Gee. Courtesy photo. Right: Interactive map of 360-video captured at Seabreeze and experienced as Augmented Reality (AR) in A-Frame created by Sam Lawton and Alex Gee. Courtesy photo.

Studio course project titled *Seabreeze Bop City* in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

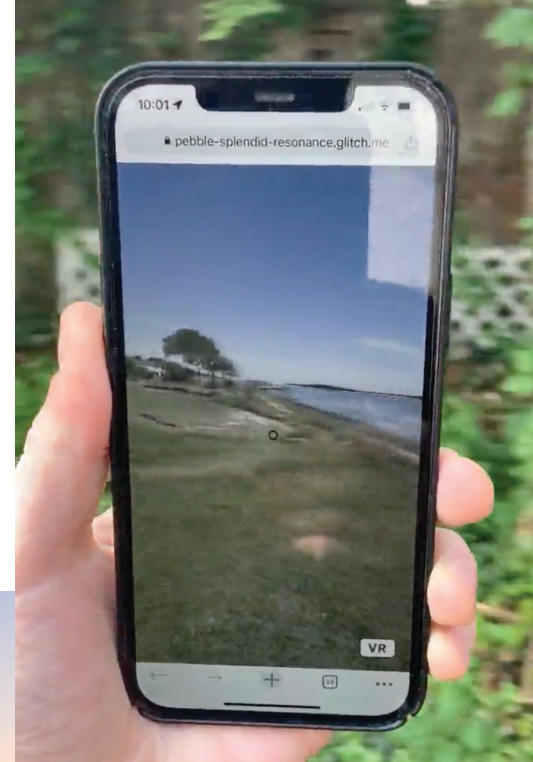
*Seabreeze Bop City* is an immersive storytelling experience that explores the rich history of Seabreeze, a thriving Jim Crow-era beach community where Black people owned the land and all of the businesses, giving them a chance to relax and celebrate along the seashore.

Motels and boarding houses, a dance hall, juke joints, an amusement park, fish fry stands, and more filled Seabreeze during this era. It was a prominent stop on the Chitlin' Circuit, a network of performance venues throughout the Midwest and Southeast where black musicians and entertainers could perform freely during segregation.

But Seabreeze is also the story of African American land loss due to "heirs' property" policy. Heirs' property is family-owned land that is jointly owned by descendants of a deceased person whose estate did not clear probate. The descendants, or heirs, have the right to use the property, but they do not have a clear title to the property since the estate issues remain unresolved.

"What makes this project really important and exciting is there's a case near Manhattan Beach in Los Angeles County that Governor Gavin Newsom just gave land back to the family, which is also an heirs' property beach," Smith said. "I think it's a moment people are starting to think about land and whose land."

A simple way to think about heirs' property is that the land was owned and passed on from generation to generation, but not using that formal kind



*Cape Fear River in Wilmington, North Carolina. Documentary film still by Hannah Romell. Courtesy photo.*

"What makes this project really important is [...] I think it's a moment people are starting to think about land and whose land."



*A 3D representation of the hangout spot "The Barrel" at Seabreeze created by the immersive team for a VR storytelling experience. Courtesy photo.*



of institution system. There's not the same kind of paper trail."

The overall project's team includes Smith, as well as Bob Wynn, the founder of Land Rich, which works on land loss issues and heirs' property; and Chris Lasch, the president of the School of Architecture founded by Frank Lloyd Wright.

Through *Seabreeze Bop City*, students in the Innovation Studio course worked to document Black land loss in Seabreeze to raise



Top: Emerging Media Arts students gather on the beach with residents of Seabreeze, North Carolina. Courtesy photo. Bottom: Interview with Billy Freeman at Seabreeze, North Carolina, with Choul Luak and Hannah Rommell. Courtesy photo.

"I think that's what I really loved about this—knowing you can use any media or medium to portray a story."

broad public awareness while providing an evidentiary tool that families can use to communicate their ancestral lands' significance during the heirs' property legal process.

The projects include architectural reconstructions presented in augmented reality (including recreating the juke joint in AR), narrated oral histories, field recordings, interviews, an online VR experience, and more, to provide a multi-dimensional experience of the city and connect the past and future of Seabreeze.

"The first time we drove up there, we drove up and saw all these really big, brightly colored houses, and then there's this patch of land that one house sits on. It just really showed us what was taking place," Blake said. "We saw these signs that said 'Welcome to Seabreeze Beach,' and it's, of course, very commercial, and it's not

supporting the original idea. It was kind of sad to look at. We finally got to see the reality of all of it."

In addition to conducting interviews, the VR and AR teams on the project scanned buildings, tombstones and other assets that may be needed for the project.

"It was great to have a project that had a story and was for a purpose, and not just to be on display," Blake said. "It's so easy to forget it because there is really nothing left except for the stories and the people, and I think that's what really stuck with me. I think that's really powerful. I think that's what I really loved about this—knowing you can use any media or medium to portray a story."

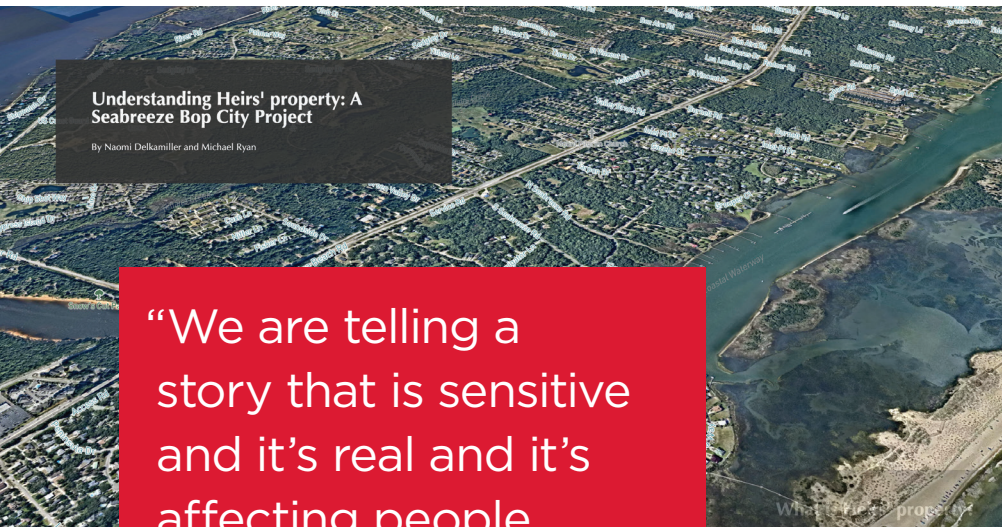
Naomi Delkamiller is a freshman journalism major in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications who was in the course.

"I'm not in the major, but I really do appreciate that I was given this opportunity because, as a journalism major, there was just a lot of application to this project, and I think there's a lot of harmony between journalism and emerging media arts," she said.

The project has given her many new experiences.

"This trip was my first time traveling with a team with equipment and figuring out how to get everything through airports and holding each other accountable," she said. "That was a new sense of community for me in college. And to have this





*Interactive storytelling site using GIS (geographical information system) data by Michael Ryan and Naomi Delkammer. Courtesy photo.*

Delkammer said the trip wasn't just fun. It was serious, too.

"We are telling a story that is sensitive and it's real and it's affecting people across the country," she said. "We had a job, and there were things that we needed to collect so that we could come back and continue telling the story."

Choul Luak, a sophomore emerging media arts major, was on a team creating a 10-minute film that tells the story of Seabreeze through the lens of music.

"It's bridging the past and future of Seabreeze through the lens of music because it has a huge music history, not only with its juke joints, which gave it the name Bop City, but seeing how music really tied together the city and created community," she said.

Luak said this real-world experience helps students learn about career options.

"I think it helps a lot of people to figure out whether or not this is the part of the field you want to do," she said. "Do you really want to be a director? Are you more interested in VR? Are you more interested in writing? It helps you figure out what you do and do not like."

Smith said this kind of experiential learning is invaluable for students.

"I think there's just something about doing something for the real world," she said. "When they're actually working with a family that's co-designing, it takes a certain kind of open mindedness and flexibility for students. I think students in our program are getting all of that for sure. They're learning by doing." ■

third grade, I told my Mom I wanted to be a traveling journalist, and so I feel like this was the first step into kind of doing what I want to do with my life."

Delkammer worked on a data visualization project with the heirs' property in Seabreeze.

"When I was there, I was helping out on interviews. I was asking questions about people who have experienced these laws and the challenges behind them and the passing of land through wills and oral processes," she said. "I got to sit in on interviews, ask questions, set up cameras and lighting and really just kind of be a sponge and take everything in. And then there was one day that I actually spent in downtown Wilmington, going to the library, looking through archives, going to

chance as a freshman was unbelievable. When I was in the

the City Museum and the Registrar of Deeds. I just really got to do a deep dive into research."

*Ebben Blake in the process of conducting a LiDAR scan of community member Barbara Dinkins. Courtesy photo.*





# ME





# REDITH EZINMA RAMSAY

## returns for Meadowlark anniversary concert

Meredith Ezinma Ramsay (B.M. 2012), known professionally as Ezinma, stood on the Kimball Recital Hall stage on April 1 looking out to an audience of approximately 300 Lincoln Public Schools high school orchestra students. It wasn't that long ago that she was in their shoes, a Lincoln Southwest high school student who played the violin and performed with the Lincoln Youth Symphony.

*Ezinma. Photo by  
Kevin Mazur/Getty  
Images for TIDAL.*







“For those of you that want to go into music, it’s so important in this day and age with the social media and anyone being able to upload a song on Spotify, there’s a lot of noise,” she told the students. “It’s important to bring something different to the table. I didn’t come up here and play long sonatas for you. I kind of took an exit ramp and started to experiment, and it’s been super exciting. And that’s how I was able to lay the foundation for my career, which I’m still working on very much.”

Lance Nielsen, supervisor of music for Lincoln Public Schools (LPS), said the workshop was valuable for the Lincoln high school students.

“This was a memorable experience for our LPS high school orchestra students to attend this workshop and to hear from an alumna of the LPS music department who is creating new pathways in music,” he said. “Lincoln born and raised violinist Ezinma (Meredith Ramsay) described and demonstrated her fusion of hip-hop and classical music and how her experiences in performing is now influencing her work as a composer. Meredith encouraged the students to be a disruptor in their space. Bring something different and unique to your art. Ask the question: What is it about you that is authentic and unique and then bring that forth unapologetically.”

Following her graduation from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Ezinma completed her master’s degree in violin performance at The New School in New York City. While there, she experimented and found her sound. In addition to performing at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and Symphony Space, she took production classes, studied jazz violin, joined a few bands and pushed past the limits of the classical genre.

Ezinma gained viral fame in 2017 by performing a violin cover of rapper Future’s hit *Mask Off*. In 2016, she was approached by Beyoncé to join her all-female band. She accompanied her at the end of her Formation World Tour, the release of *Lemonade* and performed alongside her at Coachella in 2018. She has performed with Stevie Wonder, Kendrick Lamar, Yo-Yo Ma and others; and has composed for film, commercials and numerous recordings. Her first solo recording, *Classical Bae*, is available on Decca Records.

She returned to Lincoln to perform with Voices of Victory Gospel Choir for the 20th anniversary of the Meadowlark Music Festival on April 2. Ezinma won the Meadowlark Larsen Young Artist Competition when she was in high school.

Hixson-Lied Professor of Double Bass and Jazz Studies Hans Sturm said that as the Meadowlark Board was discussing what to do for their 20th anniversary, they thought about the challenges of Covid. Their 20th anniversary actually fell in 2021, but they were unable to celebrate until now.

“The idea came forward that we might consider the idea of a homecoming—that is inviting an artist who originally came from Lincoln, went out into the world, and became successful to come back home,” he said. “Meredith was a perfect choice for a number of reasons. When she was very young, she was one of the first winners of Meadowlark’s Young Artist Competition. She was born and grew up in Lincoln, played with the Lincoln Youth Symphony, won the Lincoln Symphony Young Artist competition, attended UNL, and had not performed in Lincoln since she left for graduate school in New York back in 2012.”

Her success was something Meadowlark wanted to celebrate.

“Ezinma is a force to be reckoned with,” Sturm said. “She is doing world-class work in many areas—as a violinist, she has recorded for Decca Records and continues to make special guest appearances with major artists touring the world. As a model, she is currently working with Estee Lauder on a new line of cosmetics. As a spokesperson, she has represented Lexus, Gucci and other luxury brands. As a film scorer, she worked on *Black Panther* and is currently working on the new Marvel movie. Despite all this activity, she has found time to create a non-profit to help support young string students with instruments and lessons, and she gave several education outreach sessions during her Nebraska visit. The final concert attracted one of Meadowlark’s largest and most diverse crowds in recent years.”

Her advice to students in the Glenn Korff School of Music was to take risks.

“Take musical risks,” she said. “Maybe put something out on YouTube and just see what happens, or maybe put on a community concert featuring Filipino composers. Do something that feels maybe like something many people won’t get it. Because I think when you step outside that comfort zone and that sort of container of expectations, then you can really tap into something that might just take off.”

Much like Ezinma has done with her career.

“When I first started out making this music, it was horrible,” she said. “Like it was really dorky and sounded stupid. Nobody got it. But I continued to just take risks, exit ramp on this way, take a turn here, and make a U-turn there. I took time to figure out who it was that I wanted to be. And I couldn’t have done that if I stayed in the safe zone. You have to get uncomfortable to really do something awesome.” ■

Clockwise from upper left: (Left to right) Meredith Ezinma Ramsay, Voices of Victory Gospel Choir Director Ananias “Markey” Montague and Hixson-Lied Professor of Double Bass and Jazz Studies Hans Sturm, who is the executive director of Meadowlark Music Festival; Meredith Ezinma Ramsay performs at the 20th anniversary of Meadowlark Music Festival concert in Kimball Recital Hall on April 2; Meredith Ezinma Ramsay speaks to Lincoln Public Schools orchestra students during a workshop in Kimball Recital Hall. Photos courtesy of the Glenn Korff School of Music.



# Dion engages with art students in visit

Conceptual artist Mark Dion visited the School of Art, Art History & Design last fall as part of the Hixson-Lied Visiting Artist & Lecture Series.

Dion's work examines the ways in which dominant ideologies and public institutions shape our understanding of history, knowledge and the natural world. He frequently collaborates with museums of natural history, aquariums, zoos and other institutions mandated to produce public knowledge on the topic of nature.

Dion, who visited with students in printmaking, sculpture and painting/drawing during his visit, said he enjoys working with students.

"When I studied, there were a handful of people around me who really mentored me and saw in me something, a level of commitment that was something that they really fostered," Dion said. "So I always thought that, in some way, fostering the next generation is part of

the job if you're an artist. It's really important."

As part of his visit, he collaborated with three graduate students in the School of Art, Art History & Design to create an edition of prints—Hannah Demma, Sarah Jentsch and Kim Tomlinson. Undergraduate students also assisted with the project.

"We did a sort of experiment where we've taken this same basic image, but we're using two different techniques to produce this, silkscreen and lithography," Dion said. "So it's a way of being able to judge these two techniques against each other. It's a good way of teaching these already advanced students about editioning and the rigors of editioning versus just printing for yourself. When



you're printing for other people, you have to be even more demanding than printing for yourself."

Demma said she enjoyed the process of working with Dion.

"It was just fun to see a professional artist," she said. "He's pretty dang famous, but he's really approachable and a good teacher, and he was super generous with his time."

Visit [go.unl.edu/markdion](https://go.unl.edu/markdion) to read more about his visit. ■

Left to right: Graduate students Sarah Jentsch, Kim Tomlinson and Hannah Demma with the edition of prints they created with Mark Dion. The image is of a lobe-finned fish surrounded by a list of terms that refer to corruption.



Mark Dion (third from left) tours Morrill Hall with Director Susan Weller and graduate students from the School of Art, Art History & Design. Dion also toured the research collections with museum curators.



# Honors Day returns to in-person event

**T**he Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts honored alumni, faculty, staff and student achievement at its annual Honors Day dinner on April 22, the first in-person Honors Day gathering since before the pandemic in 2019.

The award recipients included the following alumni board award recipients:

- Alumni Achievement Award in Art: **Emma Nishimura** (M.F.A. 2013)
- Alumni Achievement Award in Music: **Tim Andersen** (B.M.E. 1982)
- Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre and Film: **Abby Miller** (B.A. 2002)
- Award of Merit: **Dan and Barbara Howard**
- Student Leadership Awards: **Zack Cheek**, Glenn Korff School of Music; and **Brannon Evans**, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

For a full listing of this year's award recipients, visit [go.unl.edu/26if](https://go.unl.edu/26if).



*The recipients of this year's Hixson-Lied Faculty and Staff Awards. Back row, left to right: Robert Woody, Joseph Holmes, Byron Anway, David Long, Brenda Davis and Robert Twomey. Front row, left to right: Rhonda Fuelberth, Andrea Gruber, Ella Durham, Peter Pinnell and Interim Dean Christopher Marks. Not pictured: Katie Anania and Brad Buffum. To learn more about these recipients, visit [go.unl.edu/x6dg](https://go.unl.edu/x6dg).*

**NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR 2023 ALUMNI BOARD AWARDS**

The nomination form for our 2023 Alumni Board Awards is available now at [go.unl.edu/fpaawards](https://go.unl.edu/fpaawards). Nominations for the Alumni Achievement Awards, Award of Merit and Student Leadership Awards are due Friday, Dec. 2, 2022. 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.



# Miller finds her path in acting

**In 2003, Abby Miller (B.A. 2002) won the Student Leadership Award at the college's Honors Day celebration. This April she returned to Honors Day to receive the Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre and Film.**

"I can't believe it's been 20 years," Miller said. "But then I see all that you guys have done, and I'm like, oh yeah, it's been 20 years."

A film and television actress in Los Angeles and represented by the prestigious Principal Entertainment LA agency, Miller currently stars on the Apple TV+ original series *Home Before Dark*. Prior to that role, she appeared as a series regular on *The Sinner*, where she played Officer Caitlin Sullivan opposite Bill Pullman.

Her turn as Charles Manson follower Mary Brunner on *Aquarius* came on the heels of her dynamic turn as Ellen May on the FX original series *Justified*. Her other TV credits include *The Magicians*, *Imposters*, *Station 19*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *Mad Men*. She has also appeared in numerous feature films, such as the 2010 Sundance Selection *One Too Many Mornings* and the indie feature *Congratulations*, which she co-wrote.

"It's just so trippy being back because, I mean, some of it hasn't changed at all, like stepping into the Lab, which we used to have as the Studio Theatre," Miller said. "It felt just like being back my senior year doing *The Shape of Things*, and it was really incredible. And then seeing the actors performing there, it really just felt like time stood still. But also seeing all the new additions you guys have worked so hard on, it's really



Abby Miller

exciting, and it doesn't feel like the same university. So it feels like home, but it also feels like I'm entering a whole new realm of possibility for these students, which gets me really excited."

During her time on campus, she met with the performance faculty, had a question and answer session with performance students and met with the senior performers.

"When I was a student here, I only thought I'd do theatre. I didn't know that my path would be so seriously filled with film and TV work," she said. "That's all I've done for almost 20 years until recently when I've started writing theatre. So if somebody had told me, like 18-year-old Abby, would I have gone to study theatre if I had known? But it doesn't really matter. My path





was my path. I met one woman who changed the trajectory of my life—Crystal Carson [who taught a workshop at UNL on auditioning for film and television]. She said you'll make a living in L.A., and I went to L.A. But I had zero training [in film and television]. Like absolutely zero. I think I get very excited about talking to students because it's a chance to give them a little bit more of a leg up than what I had."

But whatever Miller lacked in formal training in film and television acting, she made up for it in belief in herself.

**"I wanted to find a community to grow as an actor and as a person and to prepare myself to make a living doing what I love. And all of those things happened at UNL."**

"Part of it is from being told you can't do something. I had that happen numerous times before I even came here," Miller said. "My parents were very strict, for lack of a better word. And even me coming to the university was a big deal because I was from a really small town, and my Dad really wanted me to go to a different school that was smaller and safer. I think coming

here, along the way, I had professors, directors, educators and students tell me I wasn't good enough. When you hear that, you either allow it to take you down or you allow it to build you up and make you stronger. I was just one of those people that when

somebody told me I couldn't do something, I was determined to do the thing."

Miller credits a six-month study abroad experience at Middlesex University London as life-changing.

"It was incredible," she said. "I really believe in like really shaking things up. It made me start to have to be present and listen and also to be able to trust myself. Like who do I want to be? What do I want to put out in the world? That was when everything shifted for me and changed my performing. I came back and really felt like I was a different person. I was ready to go wherever I needed to go and believed in myself."

Miller can be seen on Netflix in *Florida Man* and has two plays she is getting ready to workshop.

"One is called *St. Mary: Star of the Sea* and the other one is called *Trauma Play*. I'm getting ready to workshop them at some point this next year, and I'm getting ready to go out with a TV pilot idea to try to sell it," she said. "So it's just a very busy time."

She is grateful for her time at UNL.

"UNL, for me, and I could say this to the students, you get out of it what you put into it," Miller said. "And for me, I wanted to find a community to grow as an actor and as a person and to prepare myself to make a living doing what I love. And all of those things happened at UNL."

"I can't believe it's been 20 years." ■

Abby Miller (third from right) visits with students and faculty in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film during her time on campus for Honors Day.





# Andersen earns honor for performance, teaching career

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**T**im Andersen (B.M.E. 1982) has combined a successful teaching and performing career in the Dallas/Fort Worth area over the past 38 years. His accomplishments earned him the Alumni Achievement Award in Music at this year's Honors Day celebration.

"It was very emotional when I got the e-mail," Andersen said. "I got pretty choked up. It was an unexpected honor. To be recognized by the school that you have such an affinity for is quite an honor for me."

Andersen is a Yamaha Performing Artist and has performed with the five-time Grammy-nominated Dallas Winds for 33 years and has held the position of co-principal trumpet since 2007.

He performs, records and tours frequently with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra and has performed numerous times at the Texas Music Educators Association Convention, Texas Bandmasters Association Convention and the Midwest Band and Orchestra Convention. Andersen began his 25-year public school teaching career in 1988.

While back on campus, Andersen met with brass students in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

"I start talking trumpet, and I geek out," he said. "I love talking trumpet. It's fun helping kids get better at something. They have fun doing it, and I love teaching it."



*Tim Andersen*



While at UNL, Andersen studied with Professor Emeritus Dennis Schneider, who died in 2016.

“His legacy just lives on. It’s unbelievable,” Andersen said. “Taking lessons with Denny was my first exposure to what taking a private lesson was, and it felt like I was in heaven. I wish I could have recorded every lesson I had with Denny. He could get you to do things you didn’t think you could do.”

Andersen also appreciated the other opportunities he had at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

“Playing in the Plymouth Brass, sitting next to Denny in the Lincoln Symphony, the competitions I was involved with—the International Trumpet Guild and the MTNA. Playing in the wonderful bands and orchestras here, going on tour and getting to play solos with the band,” he said. “And when you have the churches around Lincoln that had fantastic music programs combined with the opportunities in Omaha, I couldn’t have received a better education.”

Born and raised in Gering, Nebraska, Andersen also lived in Lincoln and Scottsbluff. It was here in Lincoln that he began playing the trumpet in fifth grade.

“Mr. Rogers was my fifth grade band director, and the band met before school twice a week. There was no band class during the school day,” he said. “When I moved to Scottsbluff, there was a marvelous band program led by two outstanding directors. Georgene Diers and Dean Maxwell. They made it fun while setting high expectations.”

Andersen loves performing.

“I’m not the most outgoing guy until I get a trumpet in my hand and get on that stage,” he said. “I love being on stage, and you never would have known that when I was in high school. I was so scared to even play my trumpet in public. I played with the choir one time in high school, and I couldn’t even get the tuning note out, I was shaking like a leaf. But now, if you put a trumpet in my hand and put me up in front of people, it’s like I get to play a different



*Tim Andersen gives a masterclass for trumpet students in the Glenn Korff School of Music.*

role, I guess. When there’s music and trumpet involved, it brings out something in me that otherwise is in the background. It makes me want to light up an audience as much as it lights me up.”

His advice for students is simple.

“Keep practicing,” he said. “And make connections. The cliché ‘it’s not what you know, it’s who you know’ is more applicable than you think. The reason I’m subbing with the Dallas Symphony for 32 years is because of David Bilger. Dave and I competed in the 1981 International Trumpet Guild Student Solo Competition at the University of Colorado. We tied for first place in that competition. Dave won a position in the Dallas Symphony Orchestra around 1986 and moved to co-principal trumpet shortly after that. He found out I was off the road with the Dallas Brass in 1988 and asked me to sub in the orchestra.”

Andersen is also inspired by friends like Ryan Anthony. Anthony, a former member of the Canadian Brass and the Dallas Symphony’s principal trumpet emeritus, died in 2020 of multiple

myeloma at the age of 51. Anthony created the CancerBlows concert series to raise awareness and money to further research about Multiple Myeloma. The foundation has raised more than \$3 million. Andersen played with Anthony in one of his final public performances. The documentary *Song For Hope* is the story of Anthony’s battle with cancer and has won numerous awards.

“He was an inspiration to so many people,” Andersen said. “He would play a concert with the Dallas Symphony in between chemo infusions. That was his life for probably the last five years of his life. He was an amazing person. Ryan continues to inspire me. CancerBlows is near and dear to my heart. Ryan was an important influence in my life and a wonderful friend.”

He is also grateful for his time at UNL.

“I can’t describe how much those five years did for my career,” Andersen said. “They were the foundation. Studying with Denny and being here at UNL was incredible. Wonderful, fond memories.” ■





# ‘Once-in-a-lifetime’

trip to France for  
UNL choirs

BY MARY DAUGHERTY

“Traveling—it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller.” How perfectly the words of Ibn Battuta describe the UNL 2022 choir tour of France! Although tired from the stress of finals and the long journey, the University Singers and Chamber Singers choirs were ready for adventure when we arrived in Paris on May 15.

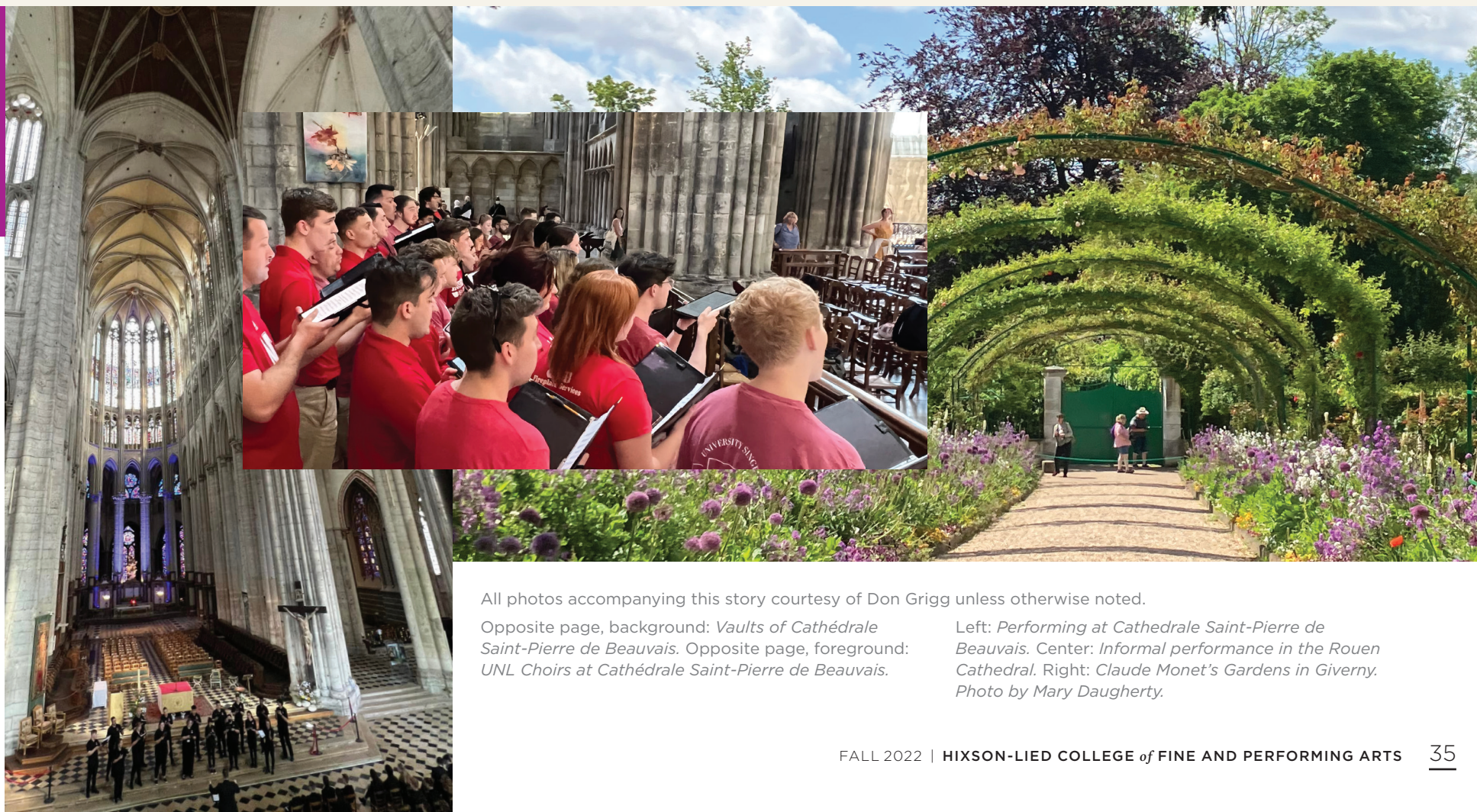


Our guide and bus driver greeted us and took us to the 13th century Gothic *Cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Beauvais*, which was once the highest man-made structure in the world. We basked in the glorious echoes our sound created at that first informal afternoon concert. Two of our graduate students were thrilled to try out the organ as well, and one remarked that it was the high point of the tour for him. That evening we did not have a scheduled concert, so what else to do but try escargot at a lovely Paris café? Definitely a one-time treat for this particular world traveler, but others in our group found it delightful.

**DAY TWO** began with a special gift from the University: a paid visit to Claude Monet's house and gardens. Truly a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and a wonderful bonding time for students and faculty alike. We then traveled to the Gothic Cathedral in the city of Rouen (painted by Claude Monet over 30 times), which before the Eiffel Tower, was the tallest building in France. Our informal concert there was well-received by locals who were very excited to ask us about our University. We were touched to see flyers advertising our concert on the church doors and proud of the sound we created in this stunning space.

Our evening was spent in the lovely harbor town of Honfleur, originally built for trade and fishing. The scenes in Honfleur attracted many impressionist artists in the 1800s, and their influence is still evident in the city today.

**DAY THREE**, we took a morning trip to the beaches of Normandy. First, we saw a 360° D-Day film. Then, we drove to the American Cemetery in Normandy and were greeted by a large crowd and an excited tour guide. She had been looking forward to our visit for over two years. Our outdoor concert near the cemetery felt like a dream. The gravity of the location combined with the quiet



All photos accompanying this story courtesy of Don Grigg unless otherwise noted.

Opposite page, background: *Vaults of Cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Beauvais*. Opposite page, foreground: *UNL Choirs at Cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Beauvais*.

Left: *Performing at Cathédrale Saint-Pierre de Beauvais*. Center: *Informal performance in the Rouen Cathedral*. Right: *Claude Monet's Gardens in Giverny*. Photo by Mary Daugherty.



respect of our audience created a myriad of feelings that I'll not soon forget.

After our outdoor concert, the tour guide showed us two very special graves of Nebraska natives who died on D-Day in 1944. She told the stories of both Nebraska soldiers. There weren't many dry eyes in the group as she offered her thanks to America for saving her homeland, and her pledge to watch over our soldiers' graves daily on our behalf.

After leaving the cemetery at Normandy, we traveled to a small historic town nearby for a formal concert in the *Eglise Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption*. The community, who had been awaiting our performance for months, were so enthralled, that they gave a standing ovation prompting two encores. The mayor was equally charmed, greeting us with a private wine and cheese reception before the concert, and giving us a pizza party afterwards.

**DAY FOUR** was the long-awaited trip to Mont St. Michel, and it did not disappoint. Amid exploring the famous tidal island, we stopped for an impromptu performance in one of its chapels, drawing quite a crowd with our combined choir piece, *Uncoloured Day*. Next, we performed in a mass service at the St. Vincent Cathedral. Our sacred Latin pieces were a perfect fit for the solemn mood in that sacred space. For many, (myself included), this was our first Catholic mass ever. This service bridged our knowledge of masses from music history, with the corresponding mass texts we've sang for years. How eye-opening to experience those pieces in the context for which they were intended.

Left, top, center and bottom: Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial. Right: Mont St. Michel. Photo by Mary Daugherty.







Left: Performing at St. Vincent Cathedral in Saint-Malo. Above, top: Saint-Malo. Photo by Mary Daugherty. Above, left: Mary Daugherty and Paul Robinson explore the city of Saint-Malo. Photo by Mary Daugherty. Above right: Cathedral of Saint Julian of Le Mans. Photo by Mary Daugherty.

**DAY FIVE** was a day off to rest and explore the walled city of Saint-Malo. Highlights included walking the ramparts, exploring the fort and enjoying the beach. Of course, this was the perfect opportunity to have our fill of baguette sandwiches, crepes, foie gras and other bucket-list foods. Many lovely memories were made within those walls. We were, as Dr. Eklund says, “Fresh as a flower” the following morning for our next engagement.

**DAY SIX** was spent in Le Mans, which famously hosts the “24 Hours of Le Mans” endurance sports car race. We began with an informal



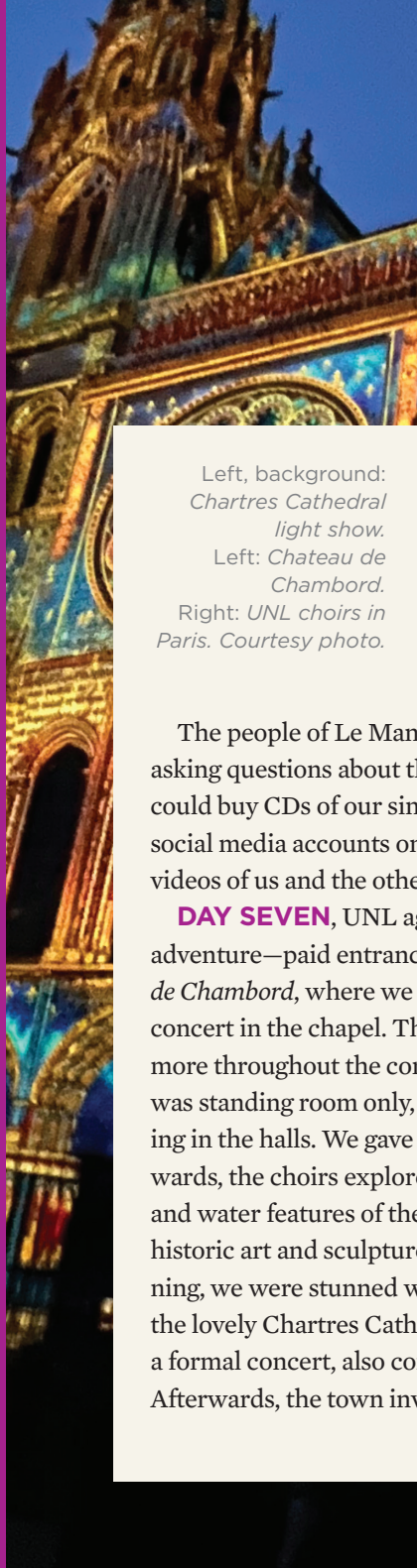
concert in the massive Le Mans Cathedral where our sound echoed throughout the halls like I’ve never heard before. Our next performance was at a mass in a Gothic Cathedral down the street. We had several audience members from the first performance follow us to the second, including a man named Thibaut Noel, who had gone to the first cathedral to pray and mourn the loss of his recently deceased mother.

He heard our music, was deeply moved, and accompanied us to the second concert with tears in his eyes, claiming that we were “a piece of heaven

**“How eye-opening to experience those pieces in the context for which they were intended.”**

on earth” that “gave him back a part of [his] humanity.” How fulfilling to make such a difference in the life of this precious man!





Left, background:  
*Chartres Cathedral*  
light show.

Left: *Chateau de*  
*Chambord.*

Right: *UNL choirs in*  
*Paris. Courtesy photo.*



The people of Le Mans were friendly and warm, asking questions about the University, and if they could buy CDs of our singing. Several followed our social media accounts on the spot, hoping for more videos of us and the other UNL choirs.

**DAY SEVEN**, UNL again treated us to an adventure—paid entrance to the lovely *Château de Chambord*, where we performed an informal concert in the chapel. The chapel filled more and more throughout the concert, and by the end there was standing room only, with more tourists listening in the halls. We gave two encores, and afterwards, the choirs explored the extensive gardens and water features of the castle and enjoyed the historic art and sculpture throughout. That evening, we were stunned with the size and beauty of the lovely Chartres Cathedral where we performed a formal concert, also complete with two encores. Afterwards, the town invited us to a light show

projected on the exterior of the cathedral and remained talking to us long after dark. We were sad to leave the lovely people of Chartres.

**DAY EIGHT** was perhaps my very favorite as we headed back to Paris to sing in a gorgeous Sunday morning mass at Napoleon's *Cathédrale Saint-Louis des Invalides*. This was the most formal of all our concerts, complete with an organist, three priests and burning incense. We stood reverently in

the upper galleries, and our sound washed over the audience below. Our double-choir, antiphonal *Ave Maria* piece was at its best in this space, and the men put their souls into their performance of it.

After the mass, we were called down to the front of the cathedral to sing several more numbers for lingering churchgoers as well as passers-by who began to accumulate. This was a sacred experience I won't soon forget.





The next performance that day was at the gigantic St. Eustache in Paris. Imagine our shock when we realized that Liszt and Berlioz had performed in that space. Luckily, we made it there early enough to see a fabulous organ concert an hour before our mass. The evening mass drew such a crowd that the bishop called me over and asked if the audience were members of our families that we had brought with us. Both priests were blown away with the size of the audience that evening, and we truly sounded our absolute best at that performance. I had the privilege of directing the closing number, our combined choir piece, *Unclouded Day*, and saw many a smile and perhaps a tear or

**“I can’t thank the Hixson-Lied Endowment [...] enough for their support of the trip.”**

two on the tired, happy faces of our UNL students. What an amazing end to the musical portion of our tour!

**DAY NINE**, we split up into mini groups to go see the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, Paris Opera House, Notre Dame Cathedral, and so

much more. My iPhone tells me I walked over 12 miles that day, but I made up for it by sleeping on the flights home.

I can’t thank the Hixson-Lied Endowment, the Hixson-Lied College, and the Glenn Korff

School of Music enough

for their support of the trip. Thank you for rescheduling so many times through the craziness of Covid. Thank you for working tirelessly to provide as much funding as possible. Thank you for creating opportunities for us to share our music. Thank you for believing in us and showing that choral music is thriving at UNL! Thanks to you, we now live the words of this Mary Anne Radmacher quote: “I am not the same, having seen the moon shine on the other side of the world.” ■

— Mary Daugherty is a D.M.A. student in choral conducting in the Glenn Korff School of Music from Rochester, New York, and a member of University Singers.

Left: Performance inside Cathédrale Saint-Louis des Invalides. Background: Vaults of the Le Mans Cathedral. Above, right: Performance at the Le Mans Cathedral. Below, right: (left to right) Paul von Kampen, Mary Daugherty and Paul Robinson in Paris. Photo by Mary Daugherty.





# Generosity of Johnny Carson Foundation continues with \$5 million scholarship gift

A \$5 million gift from the Johnny Carson Foundation, announced last fall by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, will provide tuition assistance to even more students in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

The gift augments the Johnny Carson Foundation Opportunity Scholarship Fund, which was created in 2010 at the University of Nebraska Foundation with a \$1 million gift in honor of the late entertainment icon and Nebraska alumnus Johnny Carson. Carson died in 2005.

The permanently endowed fund enables the university to award annual scholarships to students enrolled in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. The university may award both need-based and merit-based scholarships from the fund.

With the increased funding, the scholarship fund is expected to provide scholarships to 50–60 students annually totaling approximately \$300,000 in aid. The scholarship

currently helps 15–25 students annually totaling approximately \$100,000.

Christina Kirk, director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and executive director of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre, said the university is grateful for this generosity that provides additional tuition support.

“We have been awarding these scholarships for several years, and they have helped us recruit many of the most talented students from right here in Nebraska,” Kirk said. “I am so grateful for this gift, which will allow us to award even more scholarships in the years to come and to extend these opportunities to students from around the country.

**“WE PROUDLY CARRY THE NAME OF JOHNNY CARSON ON OUR SCHOOL AND ON THESE SCHOLARSHIPS. HIS LEGACY CONTINUES TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION OF ARTISTS.”**

Megan Elliott, founding director of the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, said the

center’s goal is to “find the wizards, pirates and magicians that will be the next creative leaders.”

“The Johnny Carson Foundation Opportunity Scholarships are a critical part of attracting the most talented students to the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts from Nebraska and around the world,” Elliott said. “These scholarships help make the outstanding education our students receive affordable, and with this generous gift we will be able to recruit even more students every year. My deepest thanks to the Johnny Carson Foundation for this extraordinary gift and for their ongoing support for our students.”

Allan Alexander, president and a director of the Johnny Carson Foundation, said, “Johnny Carson is quoted as saying, ‘Talent alone won’t make you a success. Neither will being in the right place at the right time, unless you are ready.’ The foundation Johnny created is committed to ensuring that even more future generations of students are ready for success because of an education at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the support of the Johnny Carson Foundation Opportunity Scholarship.”

Carson was born in Corning, Iowa, on Oct. 23, 1925, and grew up in Norfolk, Nebraska. He served in World War II in the Navy as an



ensign before enrolling at the University of Nebraska in 1947. He received a bachelor of arts degree in radio and speech with a minor in physics in 1949.

Carson hosted *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* from 1962 to 1992. He earned six Emmy Awards, a Peabody Award and was inducted into the Television Academy Hall of Fame. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1992 and received the Kennedy Center Honors in 1993.

In 2004, Carson donated \$5.3 million to support theatre and film programs in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. It also enabled the renovation and expansion of the Temple Building, at 12th and R streets, home to the theatre program and where Carson studied.

Following Carson's death on Jan. 23, 2005, the university received an additional \$5 million gift from Carson's estate for endowed support of programs in theatre, film and broadcasting. In recognition of his generosity, UNL renamed

its Department of Theatre Arts to the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

Renovation of the Johnny Carson Theater at the Lied Center for Performing Arts was made possible with a gift of \$571,500 from the Johnny Carson Foundation announced in 2013.

Plans for the premier Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts were announced by UNL in 2015, following a \$20 million gift from the Johnny Carson Foundation. The center opened in fall 2019. ■

*A \$5 million gift from the Johnny Carson Foundation, announced last October, augments the Johnny Carson Foundation Opportunity Scholarship Fund. Students enrolled in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts are eligible for the scholarships.*





# Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Giving

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts gratefully acknowledges the following contributions to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support the college from June 1, 2021, to May 31, 2022. If you are interested in making a gift, visit [go.unl.edu/givefpa](https://go.unl.edu/givefpa).

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We are pleased to thank the following contributors, who accepted our invitation to join the Art Patron's Circle, the Carson Circle, the Encore Circle and the UNL Dance Program from June 1, 2021, to May 31, 2022.



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# New music building

## DESIGN PLANNING CONTINUES

South lightwell of the proposed new music building with offices, practice rooms and student lounges. The design process is ongoing. Photo courtesy of BNIM/Sinclair Hille Architects.

The design team for the new music building includes: UNL Facility, Planning and Construction Project Managers: Joe Goodwater and Matthew Scerbak; Construction Manager-at-Risk: Hausmann Construction, Lincoln, Nebraska; Local Architect: Sinclair Hille Architects, Lincoln, Nebraska; Design Architect: BNIM, Kansas City, Missouri; Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and IT Design: Morrissey

Engineering, Inc., Omaha, Nebraska; Acoustical Engineering & Performance AV: Kirkegaard, St. Louis, Missouri, and Houston, Texas; Theater Consulting: Schuler Shook, Chicago, Illinois; Landscape Design: Confluence, Kansas City, Missouri; Structural Design: Structural Design Group, Lincoln, Nebraska; Civil Engineering: Olsson, Lincoln, Nebraska; Cost Estimating Consultant: CMR, Kansas City, Missouri.

Planning and design for the new music building for the Glenn Korff School of Music (GKSOM) continues, as architects continue to meet with faculty, staff, students and other stakeholders to create the premier creative center for music and dance excellence.


Currently, the project will include 75,000 square feet of new construction mixed with 26,000 square feet of renovated space in the existing Westbrook Music Building south wing.

Design and construction documents are scheduled to be completed in March 2023. Construction of the new facility will begin in early 2023 and last approximately two years with the new building opening anticipated in June 2025.

The new facility is made possible thanks to the generous support of the state of Nebraska. Not only will the new building enhance our current students' experience, but it will help attract the very best students and faculty to Nebraska.

We are committed to filling this space with all that these remarkable artists will need to hone their talents and share them with their communities. If you are interested in supporting these talented artists or have any questions, please contact Haley Shaw at the University of Nebraska Foundation at [haley.shaw@unfoundation.org](mailto:haley.shaw@unfoundation.org) or (402) 458-1201.





*The following architects and designers for the new music building gave us an update on design planning: John Kay, Principal Project Manager, Sinclair Hille Architects; James Pfeiffer, Design Principal, BNIM; Joyce Raybuck, Associate Principal Architect/Designer, BNIM; and Bren Walker, Principal Performance AV Designer, Kirkegaard.*

### **Talk about the conversations you've had with faculty, staff and administration about the new music building during this process.**

We held several engaging sessions with faculty, students and staff early in the project to discuss GKSOM's goals for a high-quality music building. There certainly is a lot of excitement for the new facility, along with a little frustration over some of the less-desirable aspects of the 55-year-old Westbrook Building, including sound bleed between teaching studios and concerns for hearing health. For the GKSOM to continue its impressive history of leadership and innovation, it needs facilities that correct so many current shortcomings and complement its award-winning faculty, staff and students. Work sessions with the leadership team launched in March 2021 and were followed by 10 focus group meetings over the course of the next two weeks.

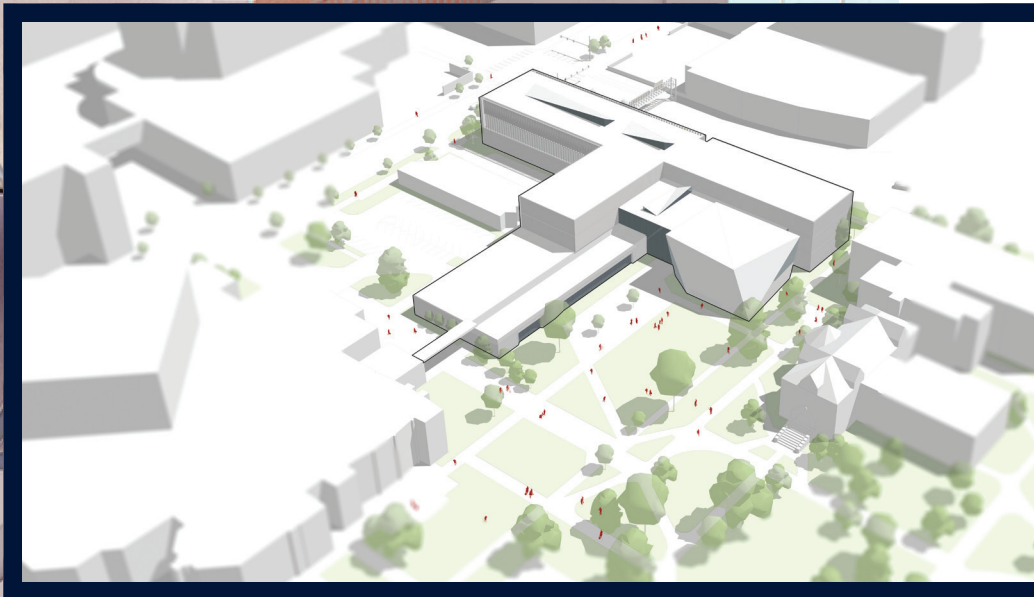
### **How important is it to make the new building a focal point for its location at 10th and Q streets?**

As a gateway location for the campus on 10th and Q streets, this building must reinforce the campus identity and provide a welcoming presence. We also believe the building should have an appropriate urban response on 10th and Q, and visual presence for GKSOM to the downtown.

### **On the flip side, how will the building interact with the arts quadrangle?**

We feel strongly that the new facility becomes an extension of the Arts Quad and provides a visual identity for GKSOM on the campus side. The building will look for opportunities to engage the Arts Quad on the northeast side of the site, situating itself in relationship to Kimball Hall and visibility along the R Street corridor. We also want to consider the building massing in relation to its context and ensure that it is appropriately scaled, with a direct relationship to both its urban and campus context.

*Massing view from the arts quadrangle of the new music building. The design process is ongoing. Photo courtesy of BNIM/Sinclair Hille Architects.*



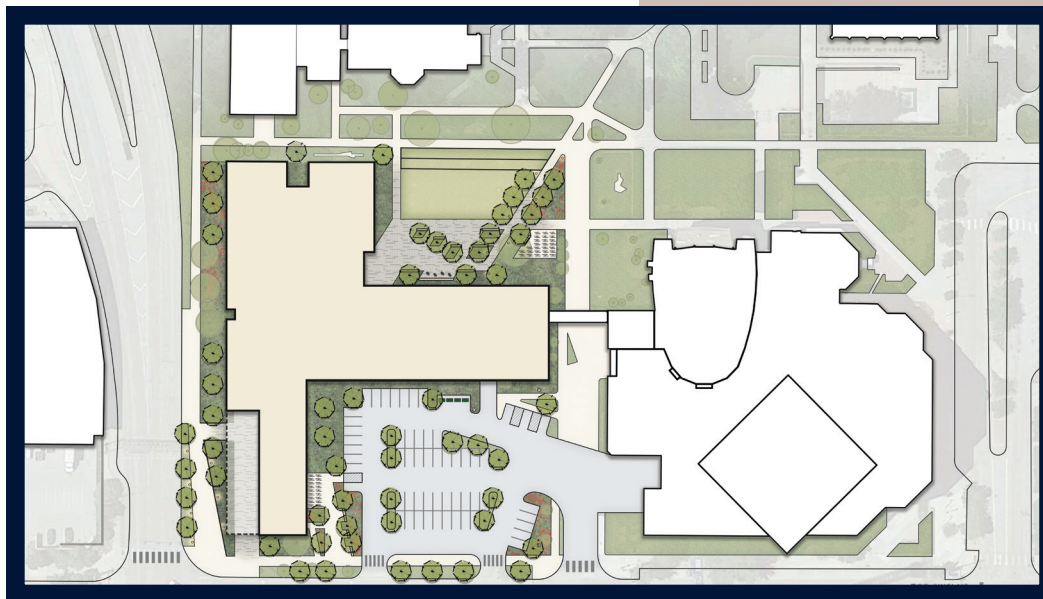


## What are some of the new features that will address health and wellness for occupants of the new music building?

Designing the new facility as a model of health and wellness was one of four influencing factors identified during focus group sessions with faculty, staff and students. The goal is to optimize building performance strategies with a focus on human health and wellness. This includes providing an acoustic environment conducive to the protection of hearing health and to the best music learning, exploration, creation and performance. Additionally, we are organizing the building to allow for maximized daylight and views. The solution is to find opportunities to make the building massing porous. This allows daylight, natural ventilation and views to occur, and creates an identity of openness while supporting users. The building organization will also encourage interaction, collisions and chance encounters between students and faculty. During the next stages of design, our team will look for opportunities to further enhance occupant health through connections to the outdoors, use of non-toxic natural materials and a focus on comfort to support student and faculty success. Moreover, by marrying this approach with strategically located public spaces and “in-between” program spaces will ensure that the new building offers a wealth of places that people want to be.

## What are some of the ways the new music building will be environmentally friendly?

Our team held a Sustainability Workshop with a large stakeholder group, including GKSOM leadership, faculty, staff, students, City of Lincoln representatives and UNL facilities to discuss goals for the project in six categories: energy, water, ecology, wellness, equity and resources. Some strategies that are being considered are Net Zero Energy Ready, providing infrastructure for future rooftop photovoltaic solar panels, along with opportunities for adaptive native raingardens on site to capture stormwater and conserve water. The team will also be considering bird-friendly glazing and strategies for inclusive design and accessibility.



*This site plan shows the location of the new music building at 10<sup>th</sup> and Q streets, just to the west of Kimball Recital Hall and the Lied Center for Performing Arts and south of Architecture Hall. The design process is ongoing. Photo courtesy of BNIM/Sinclair Hille Architects.*

## Talk about the current plans for the smaller recital hall.

While the exact location of the recital hall is still in exploration, we have received positive feedback from GKSOM on a location that places the hall on the terminus of the R Street view corridor (looking west). The recital hall has been referred to as a “jewel box” and is a prominent aspect of the project.

## What can you tell us about the plans for a recording studio?

It is a little too soon to provide specific details on the recording studio, but audio systems will provide full fidelity in spaces where critical listening is paramount. This includes the recording suite, recital hall, rehearsal rooms, ensemble rooms, classrooms for music and appropriate faculty studios and offices.



*Left and right: A rendering of the lobby in the new music building. The design process is ongoing. Photo courtesy of BNIM/Sinclair Hille Architects.*



We are exploring the use of Dante (Digital Audio Network Through Ethernet) for audio networking, and the performance, rehearsal, instruction and practice spaces will have recording capabilities that can be controlled from the Recording Suite.

### **Tell us about some of the technology infrastructure that will be incorporated into the new music building.**

Our primary objective is to create an ecosystem for engagement, learning, creativity, innovation and content creation that enables students, faculty, staff, collaborators, guest artists, patrons and community members of all ages and abilities to participate and interact with media and technologies that bring performing arts to life for users today and into the future. All systems will be designed to a high level of quality, comparable with what we have experienced and designed for top arts programs and exceeding the competition in the Big Ten within a reasonable budget. Infrastructure will be robust to support ever-increasing volumes of data and accommodate hungry interactive technologies like augmented reality, virtual reality and research-based artificial intelligence applications

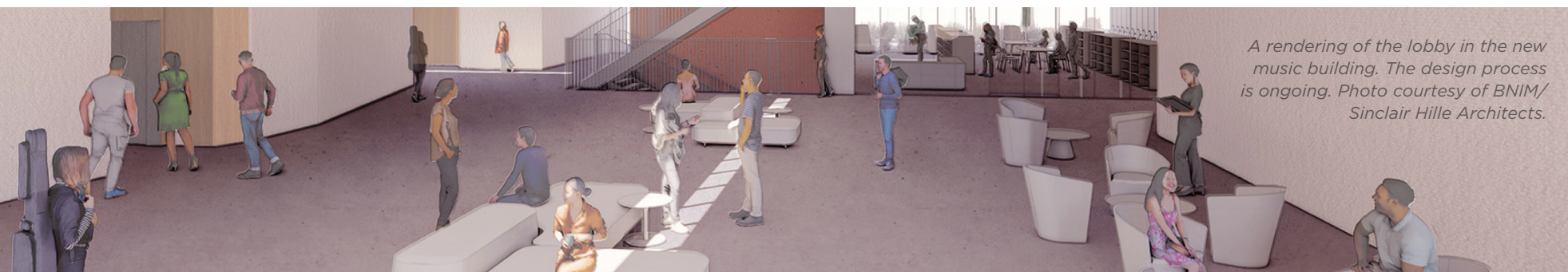
that may be implemented in the future. Systems will provide flexibility for delivering curriculum, collaborating, rehearsing, performing or presenting, including a hybrid and hyflex models that support remote collaboration and global audiences. “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) friendly environments on a secure network will empower users to create, capture and distribute media and content, and enable members of local communities of performers, composers and makers to connect and share while on site through social media and other distribution platforms.

### **What will the ensemble rehearsal spaces be?**

We are currently planning on a mixture of ensemble rooms ranging in size from 160 square-feet to 450 square-feet. Additionally, there will be a variety of large rehearsal rooms ranging in size from 1,200 square-feet to 3,000 square-feet. Flexibility has been a major topic of discussion, and one of our design goals is a facility that allows multiple functions to occur within the variety of programmed spaces. All spaces will be designed to a high level of acoustic quality.

### **Are there any other highlights of the new building that you’d like to spotlight?**

The new design incorporates student lounges and lobby space that are multi-functional and interconnected throughout the building providing a spectrum of spaces for gather, study and collaboration. It was also important to the users for this building to express “creativity in action.” The design incorporates key moments of intentional sound bleed to ground-level public spaces and visual vertical connectivity, highlighting activity. Faculty are excited by the idea of pop-up performances in the lobby, as well as outdoor spaces. Another exciting feature will be the Sonic Playground. This will be in one of the large rehearsal rooms, where infrastructure and/or performance technology for immersive audio and video will be provided. The intention is for it to be capable of fully immersive audiovisual presentations and may have electroacoustic enhancement to simulate different acoustics environments. Projection systems will provide portability and flexibility for mapping immersive video. ■



*A rendering of the lobby in the new music building. The design process is ongoing. Photo courtesy of BNIM/Sinclair Hille Architects.*



*South lightwell of the proposed new music building. The design process is ongoing. Photo courtesy of BNIM/Sinclair Hille Architects.*



# FACULTY NOTES

**Katie Anania**, assistant professor of art history, received a \$200,000 supplemental grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to host two postdoctoral scholars in environmental art history for the 2022–2023 academic year. Together with selected undergraduate and graduate students in art history, the scholars, Jessica Santone of Cal State University East Bay and Dorota Biczal of the University of Houston, will form part of a consortium called Art, Data and Environment/s (ADE/s). ADE/s is linked to a larger NSF project across six U.S. universities and will create scholarly work and programming on contemporary art and ecology. The ADE/s team will workshop their research at the Conference on Biological Stoichiometry at UNL in March 2023. In June, Anania will take part in a two-week National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute *Engaging Latinx Art: Methodological and Pedagogical Issues* in Houston, Texas. Anania also received \$9,986 from the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University to conduct research in the archives there. In July, she was in residence at Yale studying the photography archives of the United Farm Workers, a labor union co-founded by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta in 1962.

**John Bailey**, Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music and Professor of Flute, performed Daniel Dorff's *Concertino* for flute with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra in February, which was streamed all over the U.S. Also on the concert was Kent Kennan's *Night Soliloquy* for flute, strings and piano; and Copland's chamber version

of the suite from *Appalachian Spring*. Bailey performed with the Moran Trio (**William McMullen**, oboe; and **Nathan Koch**, bassoon) in a special invited concert for the Nebraska Music Teachers Association (NMTA) annual state conference last October. In August 2021, Bailey gave a virtual masterclass for adult amateurs as part of the National Flute Association's (NFA) annual national convention. He conducted flute ensembles on four concerts at the NFA 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary national convention in Chicago in August.

**Carolyn Barber**, Ron and Carol Cope Professor of Music and Director of Bands, conducted the Wisconsin State Honors Band, the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA)-Eastern Division Intercollegiate Band, and performed with the UNL Wind Ensemble at the CBDNA-North Central Division Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. While in Wisconsin, the Wind Ensemble



The UNL Wind Ensemble, under the direction of Carolyn Barber, conducted workshops at Sun Prairie High School in Wisconsin. Courtesy photo.

brought the inner workings of UNL's unique Ensemble Performance Lab to four different bands in workshops at Sun Prairie High School.

**Diane Barger**, Ron & Carol Cope Professor of Music (Clarinet), performed in a featured recital at the International Clarinet Association's (ICA) 2022 ClarinetFest® in Reno, Nevada, in June where she also served as president-elect of the ICA and as Coordinator of the ICA Young Artist Competition. She assumed the role of President of the ICA in September 2022 (through August 2024).

**Tony Bushard**, professor of music history, presented 'What to Do Over the Week-End: Towards an Understanding of *Distraction, Advertising and Newspaper Coverage of the Kansas City Jazz Scene in the 1930s* at the national meeting of the College Music Society and the national meeting of the American Musicological Society last fall. He also published book reviews in *American Music* (39:2; Summer 2021) and *Notes* (78:2; December 2021).

**Emma DeVries**, lecturer, joined the faculty as Eisentrager-Howard Gallery Director in the fall of 2021. She previously worked at the International Quilt Museum (IQM) as an exhibition assistant. She received her Master's in museum studies from the University of Leicester in the U.K. and her dual bachelor's of art from UNL in art and anthropology with a minor in business in 2016. DeVries has overseen several installations, most notably *Building a Narrative: Production Art and Pop Culture*, which is now open in the Eisentrager-Howard

Gallery until October and *Nancy Crow: A Retrospective* (2020) and *Dualities: Emiko Toda Loeb* (2019) at the IQM.

**Eddie Dominguez**, professor of art, is working on public art pieces for Bryan East and Bryan West hospitals in Lincoln. They are large monuments to honor the Covid experience of first responders. His work is also now in the collection of the Columbus Museum of Art. He has also had recent exhibitions in Dallas and at the Kiechel Gallery in Lincoln.

**Dana Fritz**, Hixson-Lied Professor of Art, had her work from *Views Removed* included in a two-person exhibition at Rocky Mountain College in Billings, Montana, and a solo exhibition at Augustana University in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. All four of her limited edition artist books, *[Pocket] Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape*, have been acquired by significant public and private collections at the Hirsch Library at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston; Candela Collection in Richmond, Virginia; Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University; and Clapp Library at Wellesley College.

*Dana Fritz's [Pocket] Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape was recently acquired by four significant public and private collections.*





**Marques L.A. Garrett**, assistant professor of music in choral activities, conducted honor and festival choirs in and from Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska and Texas. Garrett also completed a commission for Harvard University's Eileen Southern Initiative where he conducted the premiere with more than 200 singers as part of his residency at Harvard.



Marques L.A. Garrett conducts the premiere of his commission for Harvard University's Eileen Southern Initiative. Photo by Michele Stapleton/Office for the Arts at Harvard University.

**Danni Gilbert**, associate professor of practice in music education, presented a session titled *Music technology to create, perform, and respond for ALL students* at the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) international conference in New Orleans in June 2022. In January of 2022, she presented two research projects at the Florida Music Educators Association (FMEA) conference: *Action research for pre-service music educators in field experiences* and *Faculty opportunities for advancement in higher education music settings*.

**William Grange**, professor of theatre history, had an essay on the Nebraska Repertory Theatre's production of *Our Town* accepted for publication in the *Thornton Wilder Journal*, a peer-reviewed journal published by

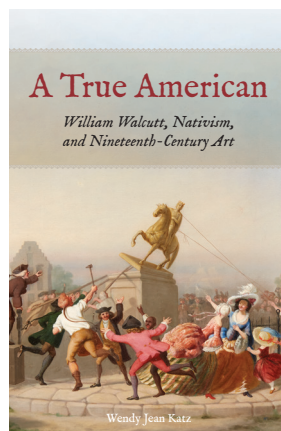
Penn State University Press. He also recently released his 13<sup>th</sup> book titled *Cabaret*, which is part of the Forms of Drama Series from Methuen Drama in London. For more information on the book, visit [go.unl.edu/98tO](http://go.unl.edu/98tO).

Right: *The Nebraska Repertory Theatre's production of Our Town* is featured in an essay by William Grange accepted for publication in the *Thornton Wilder Journal*.

**Kevin Hanrahan**, associate professor of voice and vocal pedagogy and director of faculty development for the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor's Faculty Affairs team, received the James A. Lake Academic Freedom

Award at the Faculty Senate meeting last September. The award recognizes an individual whose efforts have helped preserve the freedom to seek and communicate the truth.

**Wendy Katz**, professor of art history, had her book, *A True American: William Walcutt, Nativism and Nineteenth Century Art* published recently by Fordham Press. The book argues that nativism, the hostility especially to Catholic immigrants that led to the organiza-



tion of political parties like the Know-Nothings, affected the meaning of 19<sup>th</sup> century American art in ways that have gone

Wendy Katz's most recent book, *A True American: William Walcutt, Nativism and Nineteenth-Century Art*.



included most male artists at some stage in their careers. But as importantly, its patriotic message about the nature of the American republic also overlapped with widely shared convictions about the necessity of democratic reform. Movements directed toward improving the human condition, including anti-slavery and temperance, often consigned Catholicism, along with monarchies and slavery, to a repressive past, not the republican American future. To demonstrate the impact of this political effort by humanitarian reformers and nativists to define a Protestant character for the country, this book tracks the work and practice of artist William Walcutt.

**Stanley Kleppinger**, associate professor of music history, presented a workshop at *Pedagogy into Practice*, a conference on the teaching of music theory. The biennial event, which took place in June at Michigan State University, is sponsored by the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*. In his workshop, he presented the philosophy and sample activities from a new course, piloted in the fall 2021, that is tailored to meet the practical music-analytical needs of graduate

unrecognized. In an era of industrialization, nativism's erection of barriers to immigration appealed to artisans, a category that

music students in any specialization.

Kleppinger's *Appropriating Copland's Fanfare* was also released on SMT-V, the videocast journal of the Society for Music Theory. His video tracks the influence of Aaron Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man* upon other music—by Copland and other composers—for film, ballet and the Olympics. All SMT-V content is available to view at [smt-v.org](http://smt-v.org).



Stanley Kleppinger presents a workshop at *Pedagogy into Practice*, a conference on the teaching of music theory in June. Courtesy photo.

**Tom Larson**, Steinhart Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music, completed two new books for Kendall/Hunt Publishing, *Film Scoring in the Digital Age* and *Sound Recording in the 21st Century*. He also presented his piece *Trilateral* at the International Society of Jazz Arrangers and Composers Symposium in Austin, Texas.

**Jen Landis**, assistant professor of practice in graphic design, donated more than \$26,000 of empowering Pincurl Girl calendars to City Impact and Food Bank to spread inspiration and encouragement to underprivileged youth across the Lincoln area. Her research project, *Art Gang*, an empowering online art club for girls 8–13 years old, teaches girls that it's okay to mess up, helps with socialization skills, boosts self-esteem, fuels the imagination and encourages problem-solving skills. Landis will be serving on two new non-profit committees in 2022–2023—Child Advocacy Center and Inspire Lincoln. Landis will receive the Gladys Lux Art Education Award in the 2022 Mayor's Arts



Awards for her work to create three educational art communities for girls and young women. In addition, Landis presented at the *You Grow Girl Summit*, a conference dedicated to growing girls' self-love, wellness and leadership.

**Jacqueline Mattingly**, interim associate dean for student success and assistant professor of practice, was this year's recipient of the Dr. Charles Riedesel Outstanding Academic Advising Award from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor. This award recognizes an exceptional faculty or staff member who directly delivers advising services to undergraduates.

**William Shomos**, Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music (Voice) and Director of Opera, created a new English singing translation of Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, which UNL Opera premiered in November 2021. In December, he produced a UNL Opera touring production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors* for the Golden Husk Theatre in Ord, Nebraska. In the spring, Shomos shared the stage with Glenn Korff School of Music students as he performed the role of Mr. Maracek in UNL Opera's spring production, *She Loves Me*, staged by **Alisa Belflower** and conducted by **Tyler White**.



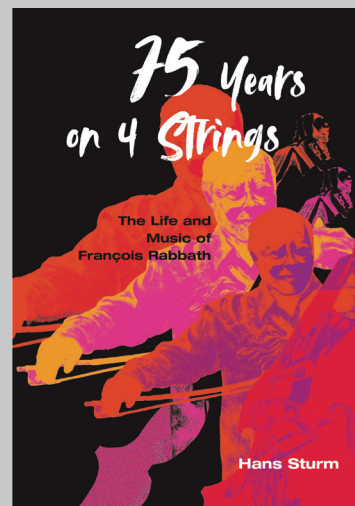
UNL Opera premiered *The Magic Flute* in November 2021, which featured a new English singing translation by William Shomos. Lighting design by Abbey Smith.

**Francisco Souto**, professor and director of the School of Art, Art History & Design, was a finalist for the prestigious Foundwork International Artist Prize. This juried prize recognizes outstanding practices by contemporary artists working in any media from across the world. More than 2,100 contemporary artists from around the world were in contention for the prize. Souto's solo exhibition *Diaspora II* was on display at Kiechel Fine Arts in Lincoln last fall. His work was also part of the group exhibition, *State of Art: Locate* at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Jacksonville, Florida. In collaboration with Crystal Bridges, the Museum of Contemporary Art presented a selection of 20 artists from the group of 61 artists from the original *State of the Art 2020: Discovering American Art Now* exhibition.



Francisco Souto, *Exhausted*, 2021, colored pencil on paper, 11" x 11", from the exhibition *Diaspora II* at Kiechel Fine Arts last fall.

**Robert Twomey**, assistant professor of emerging media arts, had one of 15 projects selected for the SIGGRAPH 2022 art papers program for the annual conference in August. Twomey's paper is titled *Three Stage Drawing Transfer*, and the project creates a visual-mental-physical circuit between a Generative Adversarial Network (GAN), a co-robotic arm, and a five-year-old child. The SIGGRAPH conference is the world's leading annual interdisciplinary educational experience showcasing the latest in computer graphics and interactive techniques.



Hans Sturm has written *75 Years on 4 Strings: The Life and Music of François Rabbath*, a new biography of the legendary bassist.

is played and taught. Sturm has worked with Rabbath since 2000.

"For the bass world, I can say he completely revolutionized the way the bass is played," Sturm said.

Sturm said this was a dream project for him.

"François has had such a profound influence on my life and the lives of so many of my friends and colleagues—everyone I contacted to share their experiences were eager to participate," he said. "For me, to play a part in telling his life's story has been a great honor. My hope is that readers will enjoy the stories and come away with an appreciation of his marvelous life in music, and, perhaps, learn from his experiences as he originally intended."

For more on the book, visit [go.unl.edu/z03j](https://go.unl.edu/z03j). ■

## STURM'S BOOK IS BIOGRAPHY OF INFLUENTIAL BASSIST RABBATH

Hixson-Lied Professor of Double Bass and Jazz Studies Hans Sturm has written a biography about François Rabbath, a French double-bass virtuoso, soloist and composer who has influenced countless bassists around the world.

*75 Years on 4 Strings: The Life and Music of François Rabbath* is available on Sturm's website at [avant-bass.com](https://avant-bass.com).

Rabbath, who is now 91 years old, is renowned in the bass world for his innovative left-hand technique and pedagogy that has revolutionized the way the bass



David von Kampen's *12 More Very Short Pieces for Solo Piano*.

**David von Kampen**, lecturer of theory and literature, released an album and score in April titled

*12 More Very Short Pieces for Solo Piano*. The recording is streaming everywhere, and the score can be purchased as a digital download from [musicspoke.com](https://musicspoke.com).

**Sandra Williams**, associate professor of art, had a solo exhibition titled *Anthropocene Blues: Nature and the Social Imagination* at The Blanden Museum of Art last fall. *Anthropocene Blues* investigates the boundaries between



human and animal, realms perceived as entirely separate by the modern mind. The works in this exhibition posit that we can understand the interrelationship as an ecotone—an area where two communities meet and integrate. It explores the ecotone of nature and culture, and the resulting tension. Williams also presented a paper *Magic and Loss: Images of Indigeneity in Latin American Street Art* at the 2022 Southwest Popular and American Culture Association conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The paper is part of a forthcoming book project *Voices of Resistance: Protest, Citizenship and Public Space*.

**Robert Woody**, Steinhart Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music (Music Education), has done Zoom-based speaking sessions at Northwestern University School of Music and the Elizabeth Mandell Music Institute at the Crossroads School for Arts and Sciences in Santa Monica, California. He has also presented a series of sessions in-person at the School of Music and Performing Arts at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette.

## WOODY'S BOOK 'PSYCHOLOGY FOR MUSICIANS' IS RELEASED

Robert H. Woody, the Steinhart Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music and Professor of Music Education in the Glenn Korff School of Music, had his most recent book, *Psychology for Musicians: Understanding and Acquiring the Skills*, published recently by Oxford University Press.

This 2<sup>nd</sup> edition is an update to the 2007 book he co-wrote with two other authors, Andreas C. Lehmann and John A. Sloboda.

“There has been a great deal of new research in music psychology done over the last 15–20 years, so the new edition is much more than an editing of the original text,” Woody said. “It is a complete re-write based on the updated body of research. This was no small endeavor.”

Woody said that while the main target audience for the book is musicians, it is written to be accessible to all kinds of musicians at any skill level.

“I’m proud of the work I did on this second edition and especially pleased with how the final product came out, with the help of the editorial team at Oxford University Press,” he said. “My goal



Robert Woody's book, *Psychology for Musicians: Understanding and Acquiring the Skills*. For more information on the book, visit [go.unl.edu/7skf](https://go.unl.edu/7skf).

for the writing was two-fold: First, to offer insights into music and music-making that are based on the research, rather than opinions and anecdotal experiences of mine or anyone else's (there's already plenty of this in the music world); and second, to communicate these insights in a very readable way. That is, readers need not have psychology training or experience with human sciences research in order to learn from the book.” ■



## WILLIAMS CREATES MURAL IN HEMINGFORD

Associate Professor of Art Sandra Williams collaborated with School of Art, Art History & Design alumna Kyren (Conley) Gibson, the executive director of the Carnegie Arts Center in Alliance, Nebraska, to create a mural titled *This Must Be the Place* on the side of Dave's Pharmacy in Hemingford, Nebraska, this summer. They were assisted by Cicely Pickel (B.F.A., 2022), as well as 4-H and community members. Courtesy photos. ■



# College welcomes new faculty

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts welcomes the following new faculty this fall. For more on our new faculty or additional hires, please visit our website at [arts.unl.edu](https://arts.unl.edu).



**ANDY BELSER**  
Dean and Professor

Andy Belser is the new dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. He came to Nebraska from the University of Arizona, where he was director and professor in the School of Theatre, Film and Television and led arts and medicine initiatives.

Prior to Arizona, he was a professor of movement, voice and acting at The Pennsylvania State University, where he taught and researched at the intersection of

cognitive neuroscience and performance. He was also founding director of the Arts and Design Research Incubator, where he mentored artists, designers and scientists in the research and creation of art and science projects targeted for further funding and presentation at national and international venues.

His creative endeavors are many and varied, and he has directed theater works spanning from reimagined classics to devised works. He recently launched the Stories Travel project, engaging youth from regional Latinx and indigenous communities in film, sound and performance projects to help them imagine their stories as important elements of potential university study and beyond. As a principal investigator on the National Institutes of Health-funded iLookout for Child Abuse, he wrote and directed films to educate child care workers. He also created film and theater projects for a National Science Foundation-funded project educating citizens about environmental and social concerns around gas drilling in Pennsylvania.

Belser received a Bachelor of Arts in communication arts and theater from Grove City College, a Master of Arts in theater from Villanova and a Master of Fine Arts in directing from Virginia Tech.

## ELLEN HEBDEN

Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology

Ellen Hebden comes to Nebraska from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, where she was visiting assistant professor of music and anthropology. She has also held visiting positions at Eastern Illinois University and Beloit College.

She completed a joint Ph.D. in cultural anthropology and ethnomusicology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and has an M.M. in ethnomusicology from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies.

Her research examines the intersections of music and dance performance, gender and sexuality, and mobility politics. Her current book project, *Beauties in Motion: Performance, Affect and the Gendered Politics of Mobility in Mozambique*, documents the innovative ways in which dancers pursue mobility amidst political, economic and social restraints, by foregrounding the aesthetic innovations, play and feminine beauty practices that are central to “tufo” and its performance. Her secondary project on “veteranos”—night clubs for the elderly in northern Mozambique—examines listening, dancing and DJing practices to understand the relationship between aging, memory and care.







## SOPHIE ISAAK

### Assistant Professor of Printmaking

Sophie Isaak comes to Nebraska from Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, where she was a visiting assistant professor.

After graduating from the University of Vermont with a degree in English and studio art, Isaak went on to receive an M.A. and M.F.A. in printmaking from the University of Iowa.

Bound to intense colors, awkward and surprising forms and idiosyncratic compositions, Isaak utilizes printmaking, drawing and painting techniques to create complex compositions. Her work has been displayed nationally in several solo and juried exhibitions.

Isaak has completed artist residencies at Vermont Studio Center and Zea Mays Printmaking. In 2021 she served as a visiting artist at Keene State College in Keene, New Hampshire, wherein she completed a print project and curated an exhibition of contemporary printmaking. Isaak is a member of the Mid-American Print Council and Southern Graphics Council International.

For more on Isaak and to see her work, visit her website at [sophieisaak.com](http://sophieisaak.com).



## DAN NOVY

### Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts

Dan Novy (also known as NovySan) comes to Nebraska from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Media Lab, where he was a research scientist working to decrease the alienation fostered by traditional passive media consumption; to increase social interaction through transparent, interconnected and fluid media; and to create enriched, active and inspired immediate experiences.

Novy received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theatre and a Master of Arts degree in theatre history from the University of Illinois at

Urbana-Champaign. He received his Master of Science and Ph.D. in media arts and science from MIT.

He is the former chair of the Visual Effects Society's Technology Committee, former visiting scientist at Magic Leap and co-instructor of the Media Lab's *Science Fiction-Inspired Prototyping* and *Indistinguishable from Magic* classes.

For more on Novy, visit his website at [novysan.com](http://novysan.com).

## ALESSIO OLIVIERI

### Assistant Professor of Music History

A native of Italy, musicologist and classical guitarist Alessio Olivieri is also a research associate at the Center for Iberian and Latin American Music (CILAM) at the University of California Riverside. Before coming to Nebraska, he served as a guitar instructor at Nebraska Wesleyan University and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and as an associate instructor at the University of California Riverside.

His research examines realism and verismo in the Spanish musical theater at the crossroads of the 19th and 20th centuries, with particular emphasis on the Spanish realist operas informed by Italian verismo.

Other research interests include Italian chamber romances (art songs) of the 19th century—with his book *Le romanze da salotto di Michele Bellucci. Le edizioni a stampa e i manoscritti autografi* (2010). Olivieri has presented his scholarship at national and international conferences in the U.S., Italy and Australia.

As a professional classical guitarist, he has performed throughout the U.S., Italy, Australia and New Zealand, especially as a duo with his wife, soprano Elisa Ramon.

Olivieri is a Ph.D. candidate in musicology at the University of California Riverside, and he holds a Master of Music in classical guitar performance from Manhattan School of Music (New York City), a Master of Music (summa cum laude) in music publishing, a diploma in classical guitar, and a Bachelor of Music in musicology from the Cesare Pollini Conservatory in Padua, Italy. ■







# Nierman retires after distinguished music education career

**G**lenn Nierman, the Glenn Korff Chair of Music, professor of music education and associate director of the Glenn Korff School of Music, retired this summer after 43 years of service to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

*Glenn Nierman*



"To do my job as I wanted to do it, administrative+teaching+research, takes a lot of hours from each day and most weeks seven days per week," Nierman said. "I want to travel and spend more time with family and friends. My health (or my family's) could change at the flip of a coin. I don't want to have any regrets. Fifty years devoted to my career is long enough."

Nierman is past president of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and a recent member of the Board of Directors of the International Society of Music Education. He has authored numerous journal articles, made presentations at national NAFME conferences and has given addresses at ISME World Congresses on five continents. He also served on the editorial board of *The Bulletin* of the Council of Research in Music Education for 17 years.

"Since Lowell Mason is widely considered the father of public music education in America, then Dr. Glenn Nierman should be considered the dean of music education," said Lance Nielsen (B.S. Ed. 1991; M.M. 1998; Ph.D. 2011), the supervisor of music for the Lincoln Public Schools. "His passion for music education and for his students throughout the years is monumental. He mentored and advised countless Masters and Doctorate students during his career at UNL; many of

those students have gone on to teach in higher education or serve in arts administration. Glenn leaves a legacy that will continue to impact music education for generations to come."

**"Since Lowell Mason is widely considered the father of public music education in America, then Dr. Glenn Nierman should be considered the dean of music education."**

Nierman oversaw the expansion of the UNL music education program from an undergraduate-only program offering the Bachelor of Music Education degree to a comprehensive program that now includes both a Master of Music and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in music with music education specializations.

He recently co-authored a chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of Assessment Policy and Practice in Music Education* with Richard Colwell—a work he considers the highlight of his research and creative activity; and was recognized as a Lowell Mason Fellow by NAFME for distinguished service to music education at the state, division and national levels.

"Glenn has been the consummate professional and a remarkably positive representative of our institution," said Robert Woody, the Steinhart Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music and Professor of Music Education. "The awards and honors that have been bestowed on Glenn—by the institution and the music education profession—are too numerous to mention here, even to form a representative list. Suffice it to say, though, that these honors include multiple distinguished service and professorship awards. In fact, the word 'distinguished' aptly describes Glenn Nierman's lengthy and dedicated service to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln."

Nierman, who grew up in Wright City, Missouri, said his interest in music began in 5<sup>th</sup> grade when he first learned to play the trumpet.

"My family was not particularly musical, but my Mom and Dad saw that I had every opportunity to be engaged with music. They enjoyed music in their lives," he said. "We didn't have a piano, but our neighbor across the street was a music teacher. She gave my brother and me piano lessons and a key to their house so we could go in and practice any time. Later, when I was in high school, my Dad drove me to trumpet lessons 100 miles round trip each Saturday."

Excellent teachers guided him along the way.



NAfME President Glenn E. Nierman was named a Lowell Mason Fellow during National Assembly. Photo credit: Documentary Associates, LLC, dacorporatephoto.com.



“When I was in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade and throughout high school, I had an excellent instrumental music teacher in our small public school,” Nierman said. “I was in high school band as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader. This teacher had been a former baseball player with the Chicago Cubs. He was a trumpet player, as well. I wanted to be just like Mr. Ed Hayes. Then, in college, I had an excellent music education professor, Dr. John Buckner, who also accompanied me on piano for solos and juries. He inspired me to want to teach at the college level.”

Nierman began teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1979.

“I came to UNL because it was the best offer I had from a university in the Midwest. It was important to me to be able to stay in the Midwest to teach—close to my family,” he said. “No, I never thought I would stay for 43 years, but Lincoln was an excellent place for us to raise a family, and I got lots of support from my department chairs to travel and present my research.”

He describes three phrases that formed the basis for his teaching philosophy.

“One, music is important in the lives of all people because it helps them to understand and to express their inner-most feelings—those that cannot be articulated in words,” he said. “Two, it is important not only to make music (be able to), but also to be able to understand (be able to know) something about the music that you are making. And three, music is not just for the ‘gifted few,’ but for the not-so-gifted many.”

Nierman saw many changes in the arts at Nebraska during his tenure, including the creation of the College of Fine and Performing Arts in 1993 and the naming gift for the School of Music from Glenn Korff in 2013.

“The Korff gift is very significant,” Nierman said. “The Korff funds have allowed students and faculty to have more support for scholarly travel and touring, which are extremely important in telling our story and showcasing our program offerings to a larger number of potential students. We were able to plan for the new music building because of the Korff funds.”

He also noted the significance of getting a Ph.D. in music approved.

“I think that having the Ph.D. in Music approved around 2010 under Jack Oliva’s tenure as Dean and John Richmond’s Glenn Korff School of Music Directorship was a huge accomplishment that will be an important part of the college’s program offerings for years to come,” he said.

His lasting memories of his time at Nebraska will revolve around the people he met along the way. He paid tribute to his parents, his teachers and to the many staff members, faculty colleagues and administrators at the university with whom he worked, singling out his long-time administrative assistant, Colleen McDonald, as well as his brother, children and his wife, Shari.

“I would like to thank all those who supported me along the way,” he said. “I will miss the interactions with my colleagues in the Glenn Korff School of Music, my students and my many dear friends across the university. I look forward, however, to being able to travel without regard to the school calendar and spending more time with my grandchildren and family spread out across the country. It’s been an exciting and rewarding journey.” ■



*Glenn Nierman was recognized at this year's Honors Day Celebration by Interim Dean Christopher Marks.*



# Lefferts leaves legacy of research

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Peter Lefferts, professor of music history in the Glenn Korff School of Music since 1989, retired this spring after 33 years of service to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

“It really was a practical decision. I am 71, so that’s certainly the time to go,” Lefferts said. “There’s time to be home more. And part of that is that my wife retired a year ago. In fact, she got emeritus status from Chancellor [Ronnie] Green. I was just made



Peter Lefferts



emeritus. So if the two of us are walking the dogs, that's a pretty classy couple walking the dogs."

Lefferts' teaching responsibilities have spanned a broad range from introductory courses in listening for freshman non-majors; courses in music history and theory for undergraduate majors; to doctoral seminars.

"Teaching is about figuring out what the students need to know and how much of it you know and how to deliver it to them and figure out who you have in the classroom," Lefferts said. "And that's going to change every time you teach the class."

His career was about introducing students to music.

"I can remember moments in my own student life when somebody walked in with a piece of music that I didn't know well or hadn't thought about at all, and it just is stunningly powerful," Lefferts said. "Barber's *Adagio for Strings* or Rachmaninoff's *Third Symphony*. It was just a name or just on a list to be memorized, but suddenly—wow. You want your students to enjoy music. And part of the music historian's job is to present it to students who are listeners, but whose

love of music usually comes from making music. That is always a wonderful moment. It's almost like giving the students a gift."

His areas of research specialization include medieval and Renaissance English music, the medieval motet, early music

notation, early music theory in Latin and English, the tonal behavior of 14th and 15th century songs and the relationship between church architecture and liturgy. He was also awarded a Hixson-Lied Professorship from 2009–2015.

"I was able to be productive from the beginning to the end of my career," Lefferts said. "One of the reasons I was hired was to preserve and increase the research profile of the School of Music and the college."

His most recent book, *The Dorset Rotulus: Contextualizing and Reconstructing the Early English Motet*, co-written with Margaret Bent and Jared C. Hartt, was published by Boydell Press in London.

"Peter's tireless dedication to music and education locally, nationally and internationally through teaching, scholarship and engagement at all levels have been exemplary throughout his career and promises to have wide-reaching implications well into the future," said Associate Professor of Music History Anthony Bushard.

In the fall of 2007, Lefferts was appointed chief adviser for music majors pursuing the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Music degrees, and in 2010, he won the college's Achievement Award in Academic Advising.

"My role was getting our kids through the curriculum and explaining its nuts and bolts," he said. "I work with students on creating four-year plans and two-year plans, and, of course, fixing

problems. There is, in fact, a satisfaction to being fairly aware of what students do, what some of the choices are. It's another one of these things that I personally find satisfying."

He also was involved in administration, serving as the associate director for the Glenn Korff School of Music from 2014–2016, serving one year as interim director in 2016–2017 and reassumed the position of associate director for one year in 2017–2018 before returning to the teaching faculty.

Lefferts' own interest in music began with church choirs from about the age of three.

"For the longest time, I thought I might even end up being a singer," he said. "I sang with the adult choir in my church starting in junior high around the age of 13 or 14."

He also was exposed to a lot of music at home.

"One of the things my parents purchased for us was a set of records, the Time Life Music Series from *Time* magazine," he said. "That series

**"Peter's tireless dedication to music and education [...] at all levels have been exemplary throughout his career and promises to have wide-reaching implications."**

ended up being lots of records that went all the way back to Gregorian Chant and the beginnings of Western polyphonic music and Bach and all the way up. So I sang in the church choir. I was



playing the saxophone in band. And there was also that other kind of music, music that I wasn't really playing or singing, but classical music that really attracted me and was something that I was desperate to get more of and learn more about."

That love of music translated into his teaching music history.

"I love all kinds of music. I really do," he said. "It gives me the opportunity to walk into the classroom five days a week and hear a ton of music and talk about it. You have to be hooked that way to be a music historian. It just comes with the job. It became sort of a calling for me. I love the teaching, but I love that what I was teaching was music and turning students onto that."

What he will miss the most in retirement are the people.

"I will miss my colleagues, and colleagues have been my friends," he said. "And I will miss the contact with the students, just a diverse and continually refreshing body that is being refreshed. Every year there were new students to meet and interact with."

He plans to stay busy in retirement and is working on another book, a facsimile volume of 14th century English polyphony. It follows his 2016 book, *Manuscripts of English Thirteenth-Century Polyphony (Early English Church Music)*, published by Stainer & Bell, Ltd.

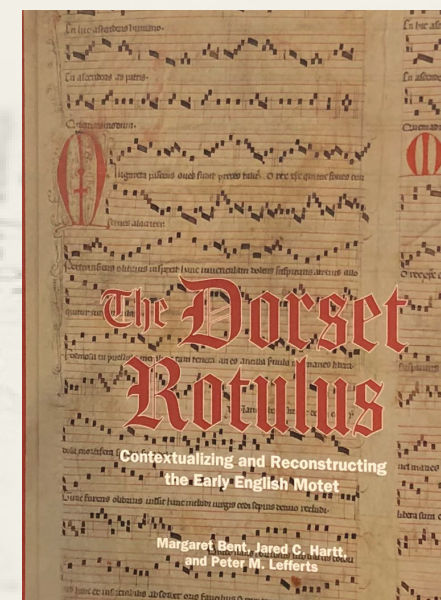
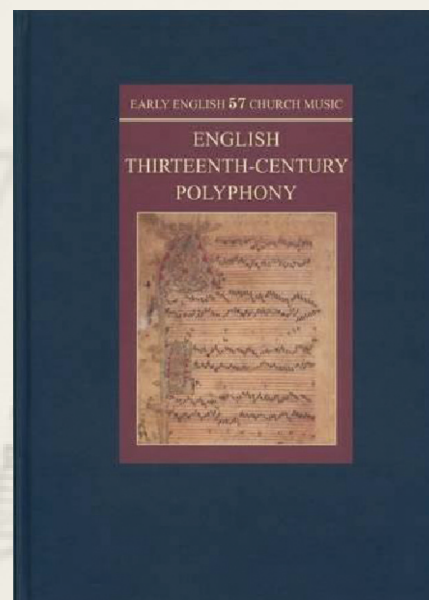
"There's plenty of work to do," Lefferts said. ■



Top: Peter Lefferts conducts research with Margaret Bent, an emeritus fellow of All Souls College in Oxford, for their book *The Dorset Rotulus: Contextualizing and Reconstructing the Early English Motet*. Courtesy photo.

Bottom, left: The cover of Lefferts' *Manuscripts of English Thirteenth-Century Polyphony*.

Bottom, right: The cover of Lefferts' *The Dorset Rotulus: Contextualizing and Reconstructing the Early English Motet*.







Alisa Belflower

# Belflower grew musical theatre program

Alisa Belflower retired last spring after 22 years as Coordinator of Musical Theatre Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. During that time, she music directed, coached and/or staged more than 100 productions.

Belflower joined both the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film's acting/directing faculty and the Glenn Korff School of Music's voice/directing faculty in 2000. She was also an associate producer in musical theatre development with the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

The highlights of her career focus on her students.

"One is the amount of professional exposure that I've given the students with national and international award-winning professionals both through my work at the Lied Center and through

contracts that I've personally negotiated with 27 Broadway-experienced professionals to come be on campus with the students," she said. "And the other aspect is the success my students have had in terms of their winning awards, their lucrative offers from prestigious graduate schools and the professional work they've secured performing in a very short time after their graduation."

The musical theatre development process happening on UNL's campus was invaluable for students.

"I know that most college programs in musical theatre offer a large-city



showcase where they take their students to perform in Chicago or New York, typically, or sometimes both, and invite music theatre professionals to come and see the show,” she said. “And usually talent agents or theatres might send an assistant or student interns to go watch the show and report back to them. At one of those shows, they might hear a student perform two selections lasting 3–4 minutes. By bringing professionals to campus, the professionals get a much longer exposure to the students and get to know their work over a period of days, if not weeks.”

Belflower’s own interest in musical theatre began in elementary school when she attended a high school performance of *Li'l Abner*, composed by Gene De Paul with lyrics by Johnny Mercer.

“It’s a musical comedy, and it’s fairly silly,” she said. “So it had a great appeal to an elementary school student.”

Belflower said musicals demonstrate the power of music.

“I love that it is like a colloquial art where there isn’t a language barrier for the students to be able to learn the power of music to be both beautiful and expressive and be a powerful form of communication,” she said. “Musical theatre also encompasses so many different styles of music from pop to jazz to swing to folk to rock and roll.”

Positive momentum kept her at Nebraska.

“I stayed because I love the work,” Belflower said. “I love my students. I loved working with my colleagues in the theatre school and in the School of

Music. And because I was able to accomplish so much that made a difference in my professional organizations, the reputation of UNL and for the students. There was no reason to leave something that was gaining so much positive momentum on a national and international level.”

Recently to keep momentum going during the pandemic, the Glenn Korff School of Music commissioned *The Real Gemma Jordan* by composer/lyricist Rob Rokicki (*The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*) and screenwriter Anna Jacobs (*Pop!*). It was created during the pandemic year 2020–2021, filmed in August 2021 and premiered in February. Belflower co-directed the film with Husker alumnus Alexander Jeffery (B.F.A. 2011).

“I loved Alisa’s creative approach to finding a way for her students to work on a challenging and creative project during the Covid-19 pandemic,” Jeffery said. “When everyone was going to Zoom for performances, Alisa dreamed up a more ambitious project to give her students an opportunity to create. I’m also her former student, and it was wonderful to work together in this capacity.”

Belflower was recently elected the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) national vice president for auditions for 2022–2024, where she will supervise and coordinate the NATS National Student Auditions and National Young Artist Awards competitions.

Though she’s retiring from UNL, her work is not finished.

“I will continue doing what I love and what I was born to do,” she said. ■



Alisa Belflower (left) with the cast of *The Real Gemma Jordan* at the premiere in February.



UNL Opera’s *She Loves Me* last spring was directed by Belflower. Photo courtesy of the Glenn Korff School of Music.



# Foley retires after noted career of teaching, research

**A**ssociate Professor  
of Music Theory  
Gretchen  
Foley retired

this spring after 21 years of service to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

“Due to health reasons, it’s just the right time,” Foley said.

Foley said the highlights of her time in the Glenn Korff School of Music focus on her students.

“Seeing over the 21 years how many students have graduated with a master’s in theory and have gone on to either careers or being accepted into Ph.D. programs and then go on to careers after that,” she said. “Seeing graduate students presenting at conferences. And with my undergraduates, especially with my freshman class, seeing how far they come in a short amount of time. I take a real joy in that.”

Her other highlight was working with her fellow faculty in the Glenn Korff School of Music.



*Gretchen Foley*



"I've had terrific colleagues, and together we've worked the program to get it to what we want it to be," she said. "And I think that's probably one of my biggest accomplishments is reworking the entire freshman music theory and freshman aural skills programs and seeing all of that work come to fruition with students being much more successful."

As part of that work, Foley is under contract to publish an e-book, *Foundations of Tonal Music*, with Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company.

"The textbooks are entirely original and the corresponding workbooks," Foley said. "And then integrating software programs for the students to be able to practice on their own. It's a big step forward from the way it used to be when I was an undergrad."

She is also proud of the awards she has won, including the Hixson-Lied Award for Outstanding Leadership in Curriculum and Program Development (2009) and the College Distinguished Teaching Award (2007).

"I've also won several UNL parent's awards, which always mean a lot for parents to actually recommend their student's theory professor," she said.

Andrew Gades (BM 2007; MM 2009), who is the Music Associate Professor at The College of Idaho, was placed into Honors Musicianship I with Foley during his first semester of undergraduate study.

"That class set the stage for my music degree at UNL, and I followed its model of readings and discussions incorporated into traditional music fundamentals for the curriculum at the College of Idaho," Gades said. "If I had to pick a single, defining experience, it would be Dr. Foley's

post-tonal analysis class at the beginning of my graduate studies in the fall of 2007. One day after class, Gretchen suggested that I attend the annual meeting of the Society for Music Theory that November. She told me that she thought I could be successful as a music theorist, and the conference would be an opportunity to better understand what it is that music theorists do."

Because of that mentorship, he changed his focus from music performance to music theory.

"I cannot overstate the formative influence of those experiences since, without them, I would not have become a music theorist. But perhaps the most useful and lasting lessons that I still refer to on a regular basis are from her music theory pedagogy class. That course, more than any other, taught me how to be an effective teacher, from sequencing lesson plans to planning out a semester or different ways of asking a question when teaching," he said.

Foley is also a noted scholar. Her research interests focus on George Perle's theory of 12-tone tonality and music theory pedagogy, with additional interests in analysis for performance, genre fusion and progressive rock. She has presented her work internationally, and her research has appeared in a variety of journals,

including *Music Theory Online* and the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*.

"Dr. Foley is an eager and enthusiastic pedagogue and scholar," said Associate Professor of Music Theory Stanley Kleppinger. "The impressive profile she has built in her field has paved the way for leadership positions in Music Theory Midwest, an editorship at Music Theory Online, and most recently, her election as secretary of the Society for Music Theory."

Her own interest in music theory began when she was an undergraduate at Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada.

"I found I had an affinity for it," Foley said. "When I was in my senior year taking a class where a history professor pointed out some really interesting theoretical points about a piece, and it was like a lightbulb went off. And then when it came time to go to grad school, I had to decide whether I wanted to work in collaborative piano or in

**"The impressive profile she has built in her field has paved the way for leadership positions [...] most recently, her election as secretary of the Society for Music Theory."**

theory. I chose theory and never looked back."

Foley said she will miss her interactions with faculty and students the most in retirement.

"It's the people connection that is strongest," she said. "I love teaching." ■



# NOTES

## 1958

**Jim Cantrell** (B.F.A.) had his exhibition, *Refracted Reality: The Work of Jim Cantrell* on display last year at the Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art in St. Joseph, Missouri. The exhibition was a retrospective of more than six decades of work by the Kentucky-based artist.

## 1973

**Dee Schaad** (M.F.A.), who is professor and art chair emeritus at the University of Indianapolis, was recently honored by the university. The Dee Schaad Student Art Gallery in the new art building was dedicated during 2021 Homecoming at the university. Schaad taught at the University of Indianapolis for more than 40 years.

## 2005

**Amber Eve Anderson** (B.F.A.) had a solo exhibition this summer titled *Something Worth Doing* at Hamiltonian Artists in Washington, D.C. The work was a playful reflection on the objects with which we surround ourselves and the comforts they provide, both physically and psychologically. The exhibition included scriptures made of natural

materials, online purchases, cardboard boxes and inherited objects, as well as a series of photographs and monoprints.

## 2006

**Trent Claus** (B.F.A.) was featured in the episode of *Disney Gallery: The Mandalorian* to discuss his special effects work on the Disney+ TV series *The Mandalorian*, bringing Luke Skywalker back to the Star Wars franchise. Learn more about the project at [go.unl.edu/de2x](https://go.unl.edu/de2x).

**Jared Rawlings** (M.M.) is Associate Dean for Faculty & Academic Affairs in the College of Fine Arts at the University of Utah. Rawlings is an associate professor of music education, served as the associate director of the School of Music at the University of Utah, and as music education area head and director of undergraduate studies.

## 2009

**Jason Smith** (B.M.E.), who is the band director at Wahoo Public Schools in Nebraska, was named the 2021 Music Educator of the Year by the Nebraska Music Education Association. During the 2021–22 school year, his high school marching band earned



*Trent Claus being interviewed in the episode of Disney Gallery: The Mandalorian. Photo courtesy of Disney+.*

superior awards in all five of the competitions they were entered, including the State Marching Band Contest.

## 2011

**Matthew Boring** (B.A.) was named Deputy Director of the Lied Center for Performing Arts. In his new role, he leads all marketing, development and patron experience activities, as well as strategic planning for ticket sales and donations. He has been part of the Lied Center team since 2011, most recently as associate director of marketing and patron development.

**Alexander Jeffery's** (B.F.A.) film, *A Chance Encounter* (formerly known as *Molto Bella*), will be released by Samuel

Goldwyn Films this fall. In the film, two Americans, one an aspiring poet (Paul Petersen) and the other an established folk musician (Andrea von Kampen), cross paths in the scenic, coastal town of Taormina, Sicily. Their instant chemistry sparks collaboration, leading to an unexpected, weeklong writer's retreat at a beautiful villa in the Sicilian countryside. As they immerse themselves in the local culture, they challenge each other to express their thorniest secrets, growing closer all the while. Jeffery and Peterson wrote the script, which received the Audience Choice Award at the 2020 Heartland Film Festival. Jeffery and Peterson also produced with Richard Wharton.





Alfonzo Cooper, Jr.

## COOPER FINISHES FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

**Alfonzo Cooper, Jr.** (M.M. 2015; D.M.A. 2020) finished his first year as the inaugural Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian Diversity Teaching Scholar in vocal performance at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois.

“My first year of teaching has been a whirlwind,” Cooper said. “However, I was extremely prepared. I have the best mentors and teachers who prepared me for college teaching. I would not have been so successful had I not been extremely organized and focused. I have enjoyed watching my students discover

that they are more talented than they give themselves credit for. I enjoy watching my students grow and mature.”

The C.T. Vivian Diversity Teaching Scholar program at Western Illinois University was designed to attract, hire and retain more faculty of diverse backgrounds, specifically faculty of color. Starting in August, his title changed to assistant professor of music (voice).

Cooper said diversity matters on college campuses.

“A college campus community should be able to come to school, to work and to experience a campus and find a place where they fit,” he said. “Campus communities should recognize that if they wish to see their campuses grow, they should tailor their efforts to accommodate everyone.”

His advice for current music students is to trust themselves and their abilities.

“It’s okay to NOT know everything, but in your lack of knowledge, fill the void,” he said. “Be responsible for your learning. Don’t be discouraged when you are told no or you’re not a fit. Find a way to make your dreams come true—someone, somewhere is willing to help.”

He has many lasting memories of his time in the Glenn Korff School of Music and said the adage “There is no place like Nebraska” is true.

“I will have to say holding the record (unofficially) for singing the national anthem at the most UNL commencements and being hooded as doctor as a first-generation college student are my favorite lasting memories,” Cooper said. “Thank you, Nebraska, for helping my dreams come true.” ■

## 2014

**Brian Jeffers** (B.M.) and **Emily Triebold** (M.M. 2017) were two of 27 emerging artists selected from more than 1,000 applicants to participate in the Saratoga Opera 2022 Summer Festival as members of the Young Artist Program.

## 2015

**David Tousley** (M.F.A.) will be the graphic designer on the upcoming *Beth and Don* movie from Nicole Holofcener and starring Julia Louis-Dreyfus. It will be his first major motion picture credit. He will also be a graphic designer for the new miniseries *Manhunt* on Apple TV+, which is about the manhunt for John Wilkes Booth. Tousley is also a graphic designer for *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* on Amazon Prime Video.

## 2016

**Alexis Borchardt** (B.F.A.) was recently spotlighted in the university’s Ask an Alum feature on Medium ([go.unl.edu/hrt8](https://go.unl.edu/hrt8)). After graduating with a degree in film and new media, Borchardt has worked on big-name films and most recently on the Disney+ series *The Bad Batch* as a production coordinator.

## 2017

**Madeline Cass** (B.F.A.) had her photographs featured in the *New York Times* article *You Can Learn to Love Being Alone* on Feb. 24 ([go.unl.edu/c9a5](https://go.unl.edu/c9a5)).

## 2018

**Kelli Griffin** (B.A.) is the dance program director at Bradford High School in Kenosha, Wisconsin. She is the only dance teacher at a high school in the district. She created a dance team at Bradford as well. She is also teaches private lessons at RG Performing Arts Studio, L.L.C., and has created different movement classes for many beginning students in the city.

## 2019

**Karen Richards** (B.A.) was the first recipient of The Rebecca Luker Theatrical Partnership. The initiative,



Karen Richards

from Clear Space Theatre Company in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, and stage manager James FitzSimmons, helps widen audience outreach to underserved communities. The partnership’s work with Richards revolved around Clear Space’s June production of **Jeff Talbott’s** (B.F.A. 1986) *The Submission*, directed by and starring Richards.

## 2021

**Katie Bosley Sabin** (M.F.A.) was one of 24 artists selected as 2022 Emerging Artists by *Ceramics Monthly* magazine. She is currently the artist-in-residence at Mudflat Studio in Boston. Learn more about Sabin at [katiebosleysabin.com](https://katiebosleysabin.com).



Katie Bosley Sabin

**Terry Ratzlaff** (M.F.A.) was recognized with an international Urbanautica Institute Award for his M.F.A. thesis



exhibition in photography titled *Take Your Time*. Thirty winners were selected and will be published in a catalog of this edition. In *Take Your Time*, Ratzlaff explored the ways trains connect worlds. *Urbanautica* is a journal of visual anthropology and cultural landscapes. For more on the partnership, visit [go.unl.edu/9hyr](http://go.unl.edu/9hyr).

**Mikayla Zulkoski** (B.A.)

left in January for up to a year to return to Japan to teach through the JET program (Japan Exchange and Teaching Program). She was in Japan previously in the spring of 2019. To learn more about her experience, visit [go.unl.edu/Oifw](http://go.unl.edu/Oifw).



*Mikayla Zulkoski in Nakameguro, a residential district in Tokyo, Japan, in the spring of 2019. Zulkoski has returned to Japan to teach through the JET program. Courtesy photo.*



*Dance alumni and students attended the alumni meet and greet on April 24. Courtesy photos.*

## DANCE ALUMNI GATHER TO BUILD CONNECTIONS

On April 24, the UNL dance alumni board held an alumni meet and greet at Screamers Family Restaurant following the Evenings of Dance performance.

Board members Cary Twomey, Kari Swanson Neth and Shelley Brackham Fritz introduced themselves and promoted the UNL dance alumni endowment fund ([unldancealumni.org](http://unldancealumni.org)).

Associate Professor of Dance Susan Ourada and four student choreographers discussed the works at the concert and the process of their choreography.

For more information on the UNL dance alumni board, e-mail [unldancealumni@gmail.com](mailto:unldancealumni@gmail.com). ■

## ROGERS IS FIFE INSTRUMENTALIST WITH MILITARY BAND

Staff Sergeant **Katie Rice Rogers** (M.M. 2017) is a fife instrumentalist with the Army's Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps stationed at Ft. Myer in Arlington, Virginia. A small team from her unit performed in Omaha in May as part of the patriotic events for Memorial Day weekend.

"Being a fife instrumentalist involves a lot of marching and the ability to perform primarily from memory," Rogers said. "The Corps performs all ceremonies, parades and shows completely memorized and at a high level of precision. This comes with a lot of daily practice individually, with the fife group, and as a full corps to ensure we are always ready for any mission we are tasked with."

Rogers said anyone interested in a military performing career should be someone who is both determined and flexible.

"It is a very rewarding career, but it takes a lot of work to become a military musician," she said.



*Katie Rice Rogers*

"Along with a high level of musicianship, aspiring military musicians must also meet and maintain the qualifications for the branch of service they plan to enter. In the military, tasks are always changing and you have to be ready for whatever comes your way—sometimes those tasks end up being the most interesting things you do on the job."

For more on Rogers, visit [go.unl.edu/g369](http://go.unl.edu/g369). ■





# Animation, production art featured in ‘Building a Narrative’

A summer exhibition in the School of Art, Art History & Design's Eisentrager-Howard Gallery featured original artwork from popular films, animated television series, comics and trading cards from a local collector.

Left: A 1986 concept drawing by Kelly Asbury for Disney's *The Little Mermaid*. Courtesy photo.  
Back: Building a Narrative featured a grid of 90 animation cels from 90 different TV series.  
Above: Walt Peregoy's *Living with the Land* concept art from Epcot Center's *The Land Pavilion*.

As part of the Lincoln Collects series, *Building a Narrative: Production Art and Pop Culture* was comprised of selected works from the private collection of alumnus Trent Claus (B.F.A. 2006), who is a visual effects supervisor for Lola VFX.

Lincoln Collects is an ongoing series hosted by the school to showcase works belonging to notable art collectors in the Lincoln area.

"We were extremely excited to show Trent's extraordinary collection of production artwork including concept art, storyboards and visual effects from popular culture spanning TV and film," said School of Art, Art History & Design Director Francisco Souto. "Trent's concept art collection gave the community a rare glance of the impact of storytelling has on popular culture and how it has shaped our own personal narratives."

Claus has been collecting this art for 25 years.

"What everything shares in common is that it's a piece of art that was generated on the way to the final product," Claus said. "So a lot of the pieces don't get seen a lot by the general public, and a lot of the artists aren't known by the general public. It's exciting to shed a spotlight on them and their work and see all of the artistry and collaboration that goes on behind the scenes of the things we all know."

The exhibition included highlights from everything from *Star Wars*, including a concept piece from *Return of the Jedi* by artist Ralph McQuarrie to *Star Trek*, *The Goonies*, *Labyrinth*, *Ghostbusters*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Dances with Wolves*, and much more. The exhibit also included original comic art and paintings from the Garbage Pail Kids trading cards.

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





# First emerging media arts alumni graduate

Among the nearly 120 Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts students who graduated on May 14 were the first nine emerging media arts graduates from the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

The Carson Center opened in the fall of 2019. Preparations for the center were launched in 2015 with a \$20 million gift from the foundation of iconic talk show host Johnny Carson.

The following students graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in emerging media arts. For more on these students and their future plans, visit the Carson Center's Instagram at [@carsoncenterunl](https://www.instagram.com/carsoncenterunl).

**Payton Bergkamp**, of Salina, Kansas.

**Mitchell Guynan**, of Blair, Nebraska.

**Kayla LaPoure**, of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

**Allison Lund**, of Omaha, Nebraska.

**Mike Rapsys**, of Naperville, Illinois.

**Madeline Schmit**, of Lincoln, Nebraska.

**Angela Walsh**, of Creston, Iowa.

**Megan Whisenhunt**, of Mascoutah, Illinois.

**Annie Wang**, of Omaha, Nebraska.



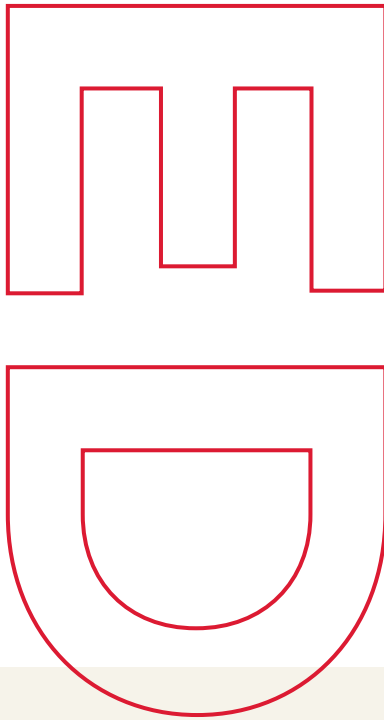
Left to right: Payton Bergkamp, Mike Rapsys, Kayla LaPoure, Mitchell Guynan, Allison Lund, Megan Whisenhunt, Madeline Schmit, Angela Walsh and Annie Wang are the first Emerging Media Arts alumni.



HIXSON-LIED COLLEGE of FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS  
FALL 2022



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