



# Fine and Performing Arts

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

# OUTREACH



# *and* ENGAGEMENT

Hixson-Lied College teams with 4-H to bring arts across the state

# LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends,  
I hope this finds you all well and enjoying some restful and interesting summer activities. Our lives here on campus this summer and throughout the past year have been busy and exciting, as you will read in this latest edition of our Alumni Magazine. In fact, this entire year has been the busiest since my arrival as Dean five years ago, and as you read through the pages that follow, I am sure you will agree that our College is indeed prospering in so many interesting and varied ways.

One of the focus areas for this edition of the Magazine is that of outreach and engagement, which is among the top strategic priorities of our College. In this regard, you will see a featured article by Dr. David Myers from Georgia State University, along with our cover story about a collaboration with the Cooperative Extension Division in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. This collaboration began as a conversation with Cooperative Extension Dean Elbert Dickey as to how our College could embrace the University's land grant mission of outreach and engagement by partnering with Cooperative Extension on initiatives that would bring the Arts to communities in various parts of the state. My goal was to have a process that would involve both faculty and students from our College. Fortunately for us, Dean Dickey was extremely receptive to the concept and over the course of the next six months he and I developed a plan for having students from our College serve as interns in three residential 4-H summer camps. The plan was initiated in summer of 2003, and



since that time more than a dozen of our students in visual art, drama, music and film have become involved. As an outgrowth of this program, we have also begun to establish short duration day camps in various counties that focus exclusively on the arts, in which our students work with children of all ages.

This past year marked a milestone for two of our faculty in the School of Music, Quentin Faulkner and George Ritchie, both of whom have retired after long and distinguished careers. Since their arrival over thirty years ago, Quentin and George have built and nurtured our program of studies in Organ to a level that has earned it recognition both nationally and internationally. They both have also made significant and lasting contributions to the growth of the School of Music and the College for which we are all sincerely grateful. Indeed, they will both be missed!

With the inauguration of our Donor Recognition Day Luncheon in the fall of 2004, we began a focused effort to recognize all those donors to the College have made a difference in the range and quality of scholarships, fellowships, and other opportunities that we are able to provide for our students. With this issue of the Magazine, we continue this focus through our featured Donor Profiles of Ron and Chris Harris, Dan and Barbara Howard, and Jim and Rhonda Seacrest, whose generosity has enabled the establishment of special initiatives in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, the Department of Art and Art History, and the School of Music, respectively. We plan to continue these Donor Profiles in future editions of the Magazine and Newsletter.

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### FALL 2006

FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE HIXSON-LIED COLLEGE OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

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STUDENTS SHOW OFF THE MOSAIC THEY CREATED AT THE 2005 FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS CAMP IN WILBUR, NEBRASKA. THEY WERE TAUGHT BY DEPARTMENT OF ART AND ART HISTORY STUDENTS ABBY BYORTH (BACK ROW, FAR LEFT) AND JEREMIE MEMMING (BACK ROW, SECOND FROM RIGHT). PHOTO COURTESY OF UNL EXTENSION 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.

### PHOTOGRAPHY

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# LETTER FROM THE DEAN

Let me also call your attention to our newly-formed donor “Circles” that have been organized to better recognize alumni and friends who are dedicated to enhancing the programmatic resources of the Department of Art and Art History, the School of Music, and the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Each circle is designed with four giving levels to encourage donors at every stage of life. Lists of contributors to the various Circles have been included in a special section of the Magazine.

Last year at this time we were just concluding arrangements to have the Chiara String Quartet serve a three-year chamber music residency in the School of Music. Since their arrival last fall, the members of the Quartet have not only established new benchmarks for the chamber music curriculum, but have also had a significant impact on our campus as a whole, as well as on the Lincoln Community. They began the year with featured performances for the NU Foundation Board and as part of the Chancellor’s State of the University Address, and have since become wonderful ambassadors for our College, as well as for the University as a whole. This coming year they will be undertaking several initiatives that will embrace the outreach and engagement missions of the College, the University, and the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

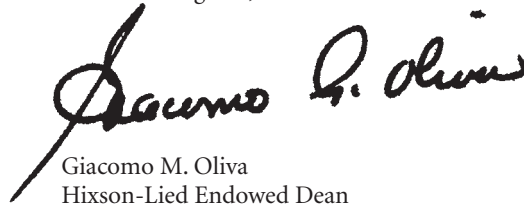
I could not conclude my introductory remarks without telling you that we are about to break ground for the expansion of the Temple Building that was made possible through Johnny Carson’s generous gift. This expansion will include the construction of a new scene design shop, as well as a new black box/film sound stage, two high tech classroom and computer design spaces, additional side stage and storage areas, newly designed scene and lighting rigging, and for those of you with fond memories of UNL in its earlier days, the reopening of the “R” Street entrance to the building. As you will see later in the magazine, the fences have gone up and the construction vehicles have

arrived, and it is our hope that next year’s publication will include photos of the completed project, along with details concerning the special dedication event that we are planning for the Fall of 2007. Stay tuned!

Finally, let me remind you all to visit our College website often. A major redesign of the website was completed last fall, and we continue to make small adjustments to it on a routine basis to ensure that it keeps our extended College family, as well as our prospective students and their parents, well informed about all that is going on. Along these lines, be sure to read the story about the STARTS (Students in the Arts) project, which was funded by a \$25,000 University-wide Initiative for Teaching and Learning Grant, and matched in part by funds from the Hixson-Lied Endowment. When completed, the project will result in an interactive webpage for newly-admitted students that should have a significant impact on the ease with which they make the transition to becoming new members of our College student body.

As always, we in the College remain truly grateful for all that you, our alumni and friends, continue to do for our students and faculty. We are indeed making great strides and accomplishing great things, and to be sure, your participation and contributions have played a major role along the way. Please stay in touch with us, and be sure to visit if you are in the neighborhood!

With warmest regards,



Giacomo M. Oliva  
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean

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# School of Music student selected for NATS internship

Jamie Reimer, a Doctor of Musical Arts student in the School of Music who studies under Professor Donna Harler-Smith, was one of 12 students selected from the United States and Canada for the prestigious 2006 National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) Intern Program. Anthony Price Radford, who received his D.M.A. from UNL in December 2005, was also selected as a NATS Intern this summer, representing Canada.

The NATS Intern Program pairs experienced and recognized master teachers of voice with talented young members of NATS to improve

substantially the studio teaching skills of these promising young teachers.

“Jamie is the third of my students to have been selected for the NATS Internship Program, and I am very proud of this,” Harler-Smith said.

The program took place this summer at the NATS Conference, June 13-23, at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music. Reimer was paired with master teacher Stephanie Samaras, a private studio teacher from New York City.

“This was the second year I applied, so I was really thrilled to be selected,” Reimer



Jamie Reimer

said. “I have heard wonderful things about the program, and I know and respect the work of several teachers who attended as interns in previous years. It is quite an honor to be counted among them.”

Reimer plans to pursue a tenure-track position on the voice faculty at a respected post-secondary institution following the completion of her D.M.A. at UNL.

“This experience will allow me to hone my teaching skills under the guidance of some of the best teachers in the United States, as well as develop professional relationships that will be helpful as my career progresses.”



Associate Professors Virginia Smith and Sharon Teo at the Lincoln premiere of “Almost Normal.” Smith starred in the movie.

# Teo’s ‘Almost Normal’ premieres

“Almost Normal,” a film by Sharon Teo, associate professor of film, had a gala premiere at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center on Sept. 23 at the start of its one-week run at the Ross. Teo produced and edited the film, which was shot in

Lincoln using many faculty and students. The film also received a grant from the Hixson-Lied Endowment.

Teo’s film secured national distribution rights, and the DVD is now available nationwide at retailers and rental outlets.

# Grad conductors work with Slatkin

National Symphony Orchestra Music Director Leonard Slatkin did a masterclass for School of Music graduate conducting students on March 31. The National Symphony Orchestra was in town for a performance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts on March 30.

The entire graduate student body, along with additional undergraduate students and faculty, observed the masterclass by Maestro Slatkin.

The American-born and trained

conductor Slatkin combines the roles of internationally celebrated musician, staunch advocate for music education and champion of American music and musicians in his role as Music Director for the National Symphony Orchestra. He is the founder and director of the National Conducting Institute, a groundbreaking program that assists conductors in making the transition from leading part-time or academic orchestras to working with full-time major symphony orchestras.



National Symphony Orchestra Music Director Leonard Slatkin works with graduate conducting students at a masterclass in Westbrook Music Building.

# Kunc, Souto attend exhibit in Egypt

Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc and Assistant Professor of Art Francisco Souto traveled to Cairo, Egypt, in November to attend the opening of the exhibition “Open Expression: Contemporary Printmaking Art” at the American University in Cairo. A grant from the Hixson-Lied Endowment and a Woods Grant from the Department of Art and Art History sponsored the trip.

The exhibition was a project initiated and curated by Kunc in collaboration with Dr. Wael El Sabour El Kader, a professor of art at Elminia University in Egypt, who was a UNL visiting scholar in 2001-2003. The exhibition consisted of two prints by 30 American artists, including Kunc and Souto, as well as several UNL alumni, including Brian Curling (M.F.A. 2004),



Photo courtesy of the artists  
Assistant Professor of Art Francisco Souto (fourth from left) and Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc (third from right) in Cairo at the opening of the exhibition “Open Expression: Contemporary Printmaking Art.”

Joshua Luther (M.F.A. 2005), Debora Oden (M.F.A. 2003), Matthew Wittmer (M.F.A. 2000), Jessica Mills (B.F.A. 2004) and Andrew Schroeder (B.F.A. 2005).

In addition to attending the opening of the exhibition, Kunc and Souto conducted seminars with Egyptian students, faculty and artists.

# Tyler White wins ASCAP Nissim Prize honorable mention

Tyler White, associate professor of conducting and composition and director of orchestral activities at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln School of Music, received honorable mention in the 26th Annual American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Foundation Rudolf Nissim Prize Competition.

White received honorable mention for *Mystic Trumpeter* (Symphony No. 2), a 22-minute piece for baritone and large orchestra with text comprised of fragments of several poems by Walt Whitman.

“I am naturally very pleased by this recognition,” White said. “Composers

always like to see their music gain notice and life beyond the first performance or two—and unfortunately, that doesn’t always happen. The Nissim Prize is one of the significant awards in American composition, and the jury’s singling out of my work may speak well, I hope, for the piece’s prospects to attract future performances.”

Associate Professor William Shomos and the UNL Symphony Orchestra premiered *Mystic Trumpeter* (Symphony No. 2) under White’s direction in April 2005 as part of “Leaves of Grass: The 150th Anniversary Conference,” which brought prominent poets and Whitman scholars from around



Tyler White

the world to the UNL campus. The composition and premiere of *Mystic Trumpeter* were supported by a Maude Hammond Fling Faculty Development Grant from UNL and by a Composer Assistance Grant from the American Music Center.

The Nissim Prize is funded by The ASCAP Foundation through a bequest of the late Dr. Rudolf Nissim, former head of ASCAP’s International Department. The Nissim competition is open to all ASCAP members who compose concert works requiring a conductor that have not been professionally premiered.

# MFA Student wins Southern Graphics Council Fellowship

Sherry Black, an M.F.A. in art student from Ephraim, Utah, is the recipient of the Southern Graphic Council's Graduate Student Fellowship for 2006. Only one graduate fellowship is awarded each year.

Black just completed her first year at UNL and is studying under Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc and Assistant Professor of Art Francisco Souto.

Black will present her work at the SGC

Conference in Kansas City in 2007.

Catherine Meier (B.F.A. 2005) was the recipient of the Undergraduate Fellowship in 2005.

The Southern Graphics Council is a nonprofit membership organization that advances the professional standing of artists who make original prints, drawings, books and hand-made paper.

# 2006 Mary Riepma Ross Awards

On May 22, the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center presented its 2006 Mary Riepma Ross Awards to June Levine and Lew Hunter.

The awards pay tribute to established film or video artists whose roots or artistic concerns are grounded in the Great Plains region and culture, and whose lives and work have contributed significantly to the art of cinema and the culture of our nation.

Levine is famous for her development of film studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. A member of the Department of English, she taught from 1958-1993. Hunter, a native of Guide Rock, Neb., has gained his reputation through screenwriting for numerous television programs and his highly revered text, "Screenwriting 434," written during his tenure at UCLA's film school.

# Krecklow selected for musical

Rob Krecklow, a junior theatre performance major and musical theatre minor, was invited to audition for and was contracted to reprise his role of "Dusty" in the Equity premier production of the new musical "The Burnt Part Boys." The reading premier of this new musical was presented by a cast of UNL students on April 29 in Kimball Recital Hall.

The musical's professional premier was June 21-July 2 at Barrington Stage Company in the Berkshires (Mass.). The limited run served as an out-of-town tryout for this new musical, which is being considered by several producers for future production in New York City.



**Rob Krecklow**

"The Burnt Part Boys" is a bittersweet, comic musical adventure with book by Marianna Elder and lyrics by Nathan Tysen and music composed by Chris Miller. The lives of two teen-age brothers and their friends are shaped by the loss of their fathers, who died a decade earlier in a tragic mining accident. A journey to the Burnt Part of the mountain changes everyone.

# Hixson-Lied graduate fellows finish program

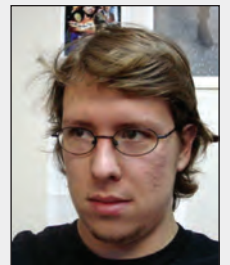
The first class of Hixson-Lied graduate fellows graduated in May. The five students began their careers at UNL in the fall of 2003.

The Hixson-Lied Graduate Fellowship program, created with funding from the Hixson-Lied Endowment, provides supplemental funding to the regular graduate assistantships that each academic unit awards, making them the most prestigious fellowships in the College. The supplement varies by department.

"Our Hixson-Lied Fellows have made the most of the opportunities afforded them, and in the process, they have represented the College exceptionally well," said Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean Giacomo Oliva. "Their accomplishments have helped us set a high standard for our graduate programs in all three arts areas."

Members of the first graduating class of Hixson-Lied Fellows were:

**Mike Legate**, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Legate received his Master of Fine Arts in sound design. At UNL, he designed or co-designed nine theatrical productions and



**Mike Legate**

led or assisted with the sound design of 10 student films. He plans to teach.

**Sarah MacMillan**, Department of Art and Art History. MacMillan received her Master of Fine Arts in studio art

and served as a Hixson-Lied Fellow at the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden, where she promoted exhibitions and facilitated relationships between students and faculty and the Sheldon's collection and staff. She also initiated and implemented an active student docent program with Sheldon Curator of Education Karen Janovy. She begins a residency at Hunter College in New York City in September.

**Ausra Motuzaitė-Pinkevičienė**, School of Music.

**Motuzaitė-Pinkevičienė** received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ. She has returned to her home in Lithuania and plans to publish part of her dissertation in the scholarly journal *Ars Organi*.



**Ausra Motuzaitė-Pinkevičienė**

**Nancy Vogt**, School of Music.

**Vogt** received her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in trombone. She performed with the Plymouth Brass and the Monday Night Big Band in Lincoln. She was the assistant program director at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan.



**Nancy Vogt**

**Melinda Yale**, Department of Art and

Art History. **Yale** received her Master of Fine Arts degree in studio art with an emphasis on printmaking. She has moved to New York City to pursue her art career. She has begun a one-year Keyholder Residency at the Lower-Eastside Printshop in Manhattan.



**Melinda Yale**

## First Hixson-Lied professors named

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts has begun a Hixson-Lied Professorship program to recognize the work of our most outstanding faculty. Two professors from the Department of Art and Art History, Gail Kendall and Christin Mamiya, were named as the first Hixson-Lied Professors at the College's Honors Day Dinner on April 22.

"It has been our goal all along to implement a faculty recognition program with the Hixson-Lied funding that recognizes outstanding faculty accomplishment over a sustained period of time," said Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean Giacomo Oliva.

Eligibility for consideration of these prestigious fellowships is limited to tenured faculty in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts at the rank of associate or full professor who do not already hold a named professorship, who have demonstrated exceptional overall performance over an extended timeframe, and whose accomplishments have gained significant recognition beyond the University.

The Hixson-Lied Professorships carry a \$3,000 annual stipend that can be used to augment the recipient's salary or to support the recipient's creative or scholarly work.

"The selection committee had a tough job this year, as the pool of nominees was very strong," Oliva said. "Christin and Gail are most worthy to receive this special recognition, and we feel strongly that their selection will bring increased national recognition and visibility for them, as well as for our College."

Members of the Hixson-Lied Professorship Committee included Peter Bleed, UNL professor of anthropology and geography; Ellen Weissinger, executive associate dean for graduate studies; Tice Miller, professor of theatre; Karen Kunc, Cather professor of art; and Glenn Nierman, Steinhart professor of music education.

The first two faculty members to be named as Hixson-Lied Professors are:

**Gail Kendall**,

**Hixson-Lied Professor of Art.** Kendall is a ceramic artist and dedicated teacher, who has shown her work in more than 22 solo and two-



**Gail Kendall**

person exhibitions and more than 150 group exhibitions, including the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Sculpture Garden, the John Michael Kohler Art Center in Wisconsin, the Clay Studio in Philadelphia and the Fusions Gallery in Australia. Her ceramic work is included as part of the collection at the Minneapolis Institute of Art and the General Mills Corporation in New York City.

Kendall has presented more than 80 workshops and lectures nationally and internationally. She was selected last spring to present a Nebraska Lecture on her work as part of the 2006 Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series.

**Christin Mamiya**, Hixson-Lied Professor of Art History. Mamiya is an authoritative voice on contemporary art. Her book "Pop Art and Consumer Culture: American Supermarket" led to invitations nationally and internationally to write and speak about artists of the later 20th century.

She also wrote "Renaissance to Postmodern Art" for "Gardner's Art Through the Ages," an award-winning textbook that has introduced a generation of students to the issues and works of modern aesthetics.



**Christin Mamiya**

Mamiya was selected for membership in the Academy of Distinguished Teaching at UNL in 2005 and received an Annis Chaikin Sorensen Award for Distinguished Teaching in the Humanities in 2001.

# College receives \$25,000 grant for STARTS program

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts received a \$25,000 grant from the UNL Initiative for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE) awards to develop a pilot program designed to assist new students in making the transition to life at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

STARTS (Students in the Arts) is a comprehensive program of advisement, mentoring and retention services for students entering the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts either as freshmen or as transfer students. The dynamic program includes:

- a dedicated College advising team comprised of faculty, staff and peer advisers during the period of transition.
- development of an online introduction of advisers and first-semester instructors.
- special College orientation events and programs to assist students new to the College and the University.
- formation of a peer advising program.

The College, in cooperation with its academic units, is integrating these components into an overarching structure of support spanning the period from New Student Enrollment in the summer through the end of the fall semester.

“Every year, new students come to the University with diverse backgrounds, expectations and levels of confidence,” said Associate Dean Robert Fought, the project coordinator. “The STARTS program will help the College send a message to all of these students that there are people at UNL who want them to succeed and who will give them support as they face a new set of challenges.”

The other members of the project team are Sara Feddersen, advising coordinator; Aaron Holz, Department of Art and Art History; Robert Woody, School of Music; and Todd Jensen, UNL Information Services. A faculty member from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film will be named to replace faculty member Robert Mond, who left UNL this summer.

The student mentors will be Joy Barlean,



Photo courtesy of UNL Publications

The STARTS team includes (clockwise from upper left): Todd Jensen, Robert Mond, Aaron Holz, Robert Fought, Sara Feddersen and Robert Woody.

Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film; Benjamin Kamprath, Department of Art and Art History; Nathan Ohlrich, Department of Art and Art History; Brooke Stevens, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film; Devon Strosahl, School of Music; and Jamie Unger, School of Music.

“I applied for a position as a STARTS mentor to get more involved with my College,” said Kamprath, who is a junior. “I remember feeling lost as a freshman with no idea of how the College worked or how my degree was structured. Being a part of the mentoring program allows me to guide new students as they make the transition into a college scene.”

Helping new students get more involved is the reason Barlean, a senior, wanted to get involved.

“I applied for a position for the STARTS

program because I wished there were a program like this when I was a freshman,” she said. “I am hoping to get incoming students involved in the department and more informed on such things as when to apply for scholarships or to help out with questions about registration.”

The College and UNL’s Information Services produced a rich media presentation, including streaming video and a Web site that included a directory of all academic advisers in the College and instructors of selected core courses.

The program, designed as a one-year pilot study, will be evaluated next spring. STARTS’ goals are to result in clarified and communicated program requirements, closer identification of incoming students with the College, eased transition into the University, and increased retention and degree completion. ■



## Kunc to receive Printmaker Emeritus Award

Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc will receive the prestigious Printmaker Emeritus Award at the 36th annual conference of The Southern Graphics Council in March 2007. The Southern Graphics Council is the largest non-profit printmaking organization in the country.

The Printmaker Emeritus Award, created in 1978 and presented annually, is a distinction bestowed by the Southern Graphics Council on an individual who has demonstrated outstanding accomplishments and made lasting contributions to the art of printmaking.

“It is a wonderful surprise and honor,” Kunc said. “I will be in really a favored company of past recipients.”

Southern Graphics Council Immediate Past President April Katz said of Kunc: “The beauty of her relief prints and artist’s books, her innovative approaches to the medium, and her international engagement all have had a tremendous impact on the print world.”

Kunc joins a prominent list of printmakers who have received the award, including Michael Mazur, Elizabeth Catlett, Kenneth Tyler, June Wayne, Nancy Spero and Robert Blackburn.

“This is a very well-deserved recognition for Karen and for all the work she has done in building her outstanding career, as well as the national and international reputation of the printmaking program here at UNL,” said Assistant Professor of Art Francisco Souto. “Obviously I am thrilled and excited to be working with one of the best printmakers in the nation.”

The Southern Graphics Council conducts an annual conference that brings together artists and scholars from around the United States and the world. Kunc’s prints will be featured in an exhibition at the 2007 Conference next March in Kansas City, where she will receive her award.

“I hope many of my colleagues, students and alumni can be there, and they would join the network of printmakers I know from all over the country—as I have been everywhere,” she said.

Kunc has an international reputation

as a printmaker and artist whose works have been exhibited in venues as varied as Kearney, Neb., and Laramie, Wyo., to Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Iceland, Italy, Japan and Russia.

Kunc’s medium is reduction wood cut print, a painstaking process that works in the negative and in stages. Using a variety of tools to extract layers of wood, carving patterns and strokes and lines, the technique



Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc

creates prints in stages, color by color, layer by layer. Her prints are bold, dramatic, calculatedly puzzling. They are instantly recognizable due to her unique style and dazzling color. She was Nebraska’s Artist of the Year in 2000; in 1998, she received the University’s Outstanding Research and Creative Activity Award.

Kunc began her printmaking career in high school and when she came to UNL for her undergraduate degree, she already knew that this is what she wanted to continue to do. She earned her B.F.A. from UNL, where she studied under Michael Nushawg.

“I succeeded him and knew I stepped

into some big shoes to fill when I came back,” Kunc said. She returned to teach at UNL in 1983 after receiving her M.F.A. from the Ohio State University.

Kunc said three things drew her to the field of printmaking.

“There were fewer people in printmaking than in the painting studios,” she said. “I could work among people in a community studio, but I didn’t have to talk as I was quite shy, and it suits my aesthetic—my interest in line, shape and drawing.”

She says certain things have remained consistent in her work over the years. She has always been interested in abstraction and has always worked in color.

“The evolution [in my work] is understanding what my voice is and the decisions I make about composition. I find meaning in things that seem purely formal, as I put ideas into issues of perception and transmission of visual sensation.”

Kunc takes equal pride in her teaching at UNL and in her work as an artist.

“I’m best at the one-on-one relationships with students,” Kunc said. “Helping them with technical problem-solving and resolving their conceptual development. I like the strong relationships that happen from teaching. I believe that conversations over the working table bond people. That atmosphere is something I’ve valued and tried to cultivate.”

In addition to the honors scheduled for next spring, Kunc has two important international exhibitions coming up.

She has been invited to participate in the International Print Triennial in Krakow, Poland, in September. She will also have a solo show at the Seventh Triennale Mondiale L’Estampes et de la Gravure Originale in Chamalieres, Auvergne, France, which opens in October. Kunc won second place in the 2003 Triennale for her work titled “Echo Spring,” earning her the solo show at the 2006 Triennale.

“Indeed, I have been fortunate to be part of the international print world, even being from Nebraska, which has not been a drawback for me—which even has a sense of the exotic out there,” Kunc said. ■



Stacia Blasé, who was in the beginning ceramics class, works on painting her tile.

## Ceramics classes create tiles for Selleck Dining Hall

BY KATHE ANDERSEN

Students in Hixson-Lied Professor of Art Gail Kendall's beginning and intermediate ceramics classes last spring created ceramic food-themed tiles that were installed this summer at the University's Selleck Dining Hall as part of an interior finish upgrade to the dining facility. University Housing made a \$2,000 donation to the UNL Ceramics Guild in exchange for the tiles.

"The challenge issued to us by UNL Housing was to incorporate color into the

monochromatic servery, using ceramic tile," said Jennifer Rohn, an interior designer with Erickson Sullivan Architects in Lincoln. "We wanted to take the idea one step further and introduce some colorful food-themed tiles, to not only add color, but a theme and pattern. However, such commercial tiles are hard to find and quite expensive, and that's where the idea was born to get the UNL art students involved."

Kendall said she was intrigued by the project when she was approached by architect Dave Erickson.

"It was exciting that the architects and University Housing were embracing the idea of handmade artwork in a commercial plan," she said.

Each student in Kendall's beginning and intermediate ceramics classes created two 12-inch relief tiles (approximately 48 in all) based on food themes found in the serving area at Selleck, such as soup, deli, breakfast, Italian and desserts/ice cream.

"We are thrilled with the finished products," Rohn said. "They are creative, colorful and completely unique."

Ellen Hardy, program coordinator for

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the Selleck Dining Hall, agreed.

"I think they are awesome," she said. "They add a touch of whimsy to the dining room. They exceeded my expectations."

Master of Fine Arts student Susan Dewsnap, who was Kendall's graduate teaching assistant in the two ceramics classes, said the final tiles were varied in style.

"The tiles are beautiful, colorful and varied," she said. "Ideas for the tiles were based on trips to Selleck Dining Hall, as well as looking at other sources of how to compose food, such as historical and contemporary still life paintings. The outcome runs the gamut from the classic, like fish served on a plate, to the more contemporary hotdog with a bite taken out of it and served with tater tots."

At the beginning of the project in March, students went to Selleck Hall to see where the tiles would be presented and to get ideas about what foods are served in the dining hall.

"Although initially students seemed to view this project as a bit of an intrusion into the flow of their creative ceramic work, once work started on the tiles, it generated an abundance of talk, sharing ideas and creative laughter among the students," Dewsnap said. "The project brought to bear the cycle of ceramic making: the labor of hand-pounding out individual 12-inch by 12-inch tiles, conceiving an idea and figuring out how to execute that idea on a tile. Finally, students painted the tiles with a white slip and then applied bright colored underglazes to bring to fruition their tiles."

Megan Mag-samen, a Bachelor of Arts major from Lincoln in the intermediate ceramics class, said students enjoyed the extra freedom of this project.

"I was in the dessert group, and we decided to do a colorful variety of as many different kinds of desserts as we could think of," she said. "We tried to use bright



Finished tiles.



Susan Dewsnap and Gail Kendall hold up two of the finished ceramic tiles.

colors, as well as patterns, to make the tiles as unique as we could. Professor Kendall let us decide as groups what ways we wanted to decorate and design the tiles. We were given a lot of freedom. I liked best that we had creative freedom when we made the tiles, and that it was so different from anything that most of us had done in other ceramics classes."

Students also realized they were leaving their mark on campus for years to come.

"There is always a feeling of pride when you leave

something behind at your school to be seen by all in the future," said Kim Nuss, an art education senior from Aurora, Neb., who was in the intermediate ceramics class. "I think I will be even prouder if I actually come back and see them after

graduation."

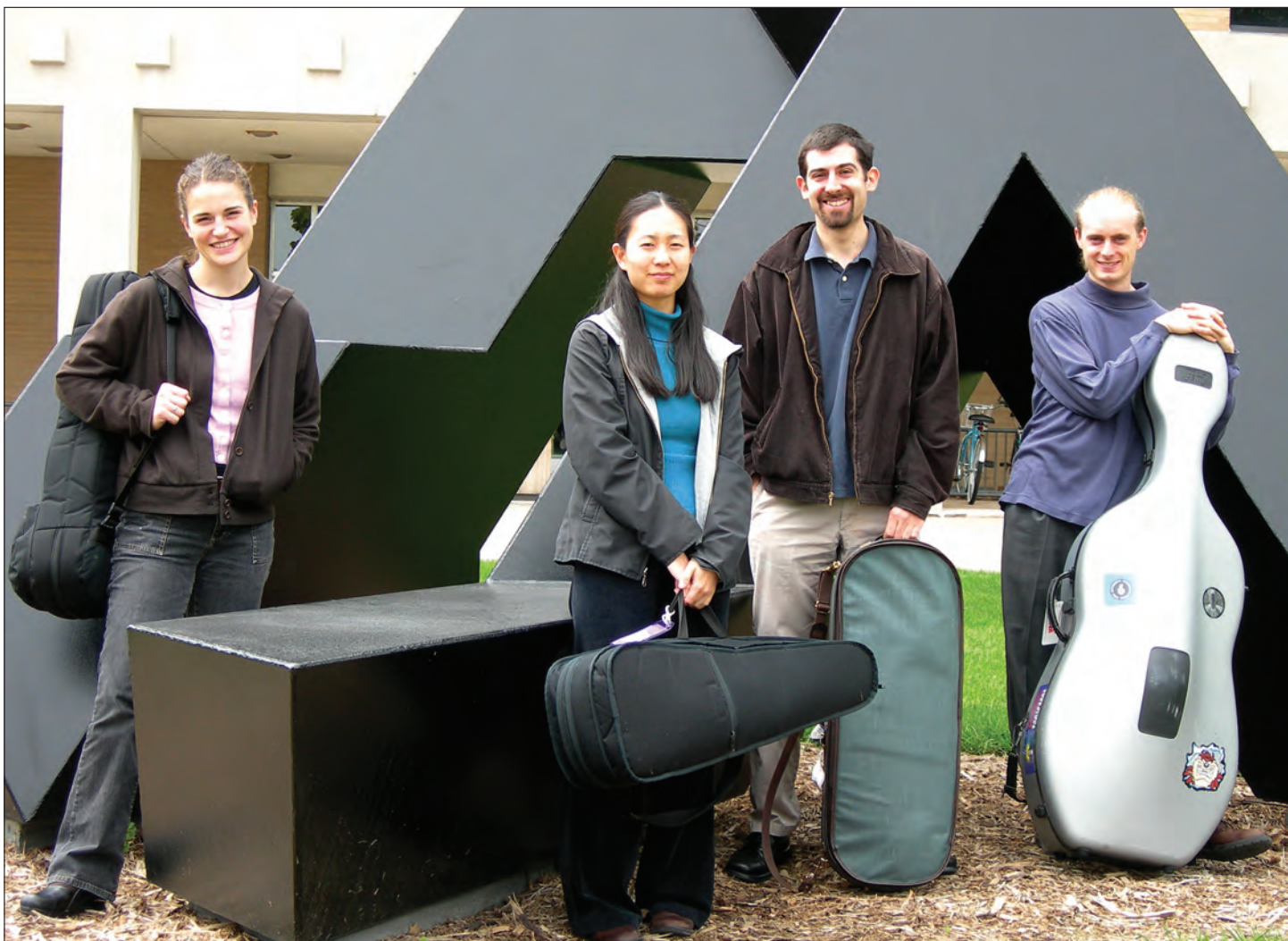
A lasting legacy for the students was one reason the architectural firm wanted to use the students' work.

"We felt that the concept of integrating student art into the wall design was a great way to foster a shared-authorship of the final design with the students, some of which will use the facility for several years," Rohn said. "And since the ceramic tiles are an element of the permanent wall finish, they will be enjoyed by other students and faculty for many years beyond the original artists' time at the University."

Dewsnap fired and glazed the tiles in May, and they were scheduled to be installed in July by Krogman Tile. Students will see the finished work when the dining hall re-opens this fall.

"I'm excited to see the tiles up," said Stacia Blasé, a studio art sophomore from Liberty, Mo., who was in the beginning ceramics class. "The vibrant colors are going to make that cafeteria look awesome." ■

# Residency begins with rave reviews



The Chiara String Quartet: Rebecca Fischer, violin; Julie Yoon, violin; Jonah Sirota, viola; and Gregory Beaver, cello.

By JILL HAVEKOST

The Chiara String Quartet hit all the right notes when the group played classical music for the crowd gathered at University of Nebraska–Lincoln Chancellor Harvey Perlman’s State of the University address last September.

But the group really struck a chord when it played “There is No Place like Nebraska.” For a moment, the audience sat in shocked silence. Then people enthusiastically

clapped in time to the Husker fight song.

“It was great because people were really shocked,” said Rebecca Fischer, one of the Quartet’s violinists. “People went crazy. It was nice because we felt really welcome.”

The September performance marked the first of many well-received presentations given by the Quartet, which began a three-year residency at UNL in the fall semester of 2005.

Dr. John W. Richmond, professor and director of the School of Music, said the

School expected great things from the Quartet when it arrived from New York—and that it has not been disappointed.

“We’re very excited about their presence here,” he said.

The Quartet, composed of violinists Rebecca Fischer and Julie Yoon, violist Jonah Sirota and cellist Gregory Beaver, comes to the University after occupying the Lisa Arnhold Residency in the Julliard School of Music in New York City.

Fischer said the Chiara String Quartet

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hopes to heighten the awareness of string performance, chamber music and orchestral music during its time in Lincoln. To accomplish all that, they plan to teach and coach UNL and public school musicians, to develop a graduate certificate program and to play a robust national concert schedule.

Richmond said the Quartet has already helped the School of Music to realize some of its educational goals in dramatic ways.

For example, the school has experienced explosive growth in the number of its chamber music ensembles since the arrival of the Quartet. A year ago, six to eight student chamber music ensembles rehearsed. Last fall, there were 28.

“Their charge is principally energizing the chamber music program,” Richmond said. “And we’ve seen a 155 percent increase in their first semester.”

They have also been working with Dr. Terry Sebor and the Nebraska Center for Entrepreneurship to create a graduate certificate program in Arts Entrepreneurship.

Richmond said the group’s educational contributions have been profound and have helped students at all levels to recognize the potential of chamber music.

“Continuing to raise the consciousness of our students concerning the potential and benefits of chamber music has been their single greatest contribution because it works with other faculty who also are active chamber musicians,” he said.

The group’s efforts extend beyond the campus realm. The Quartet has reached into the greater Lincoln area to encourage aspiring young musicians. Senior Lecturer Ann Chang-Barnes coordinated Chiara String Quartet performances in local public schools. She and the Quartet have also tried to form chamber music ensembles at the high school level.

Fischer said coaching and performing in public schools help the musicians with one of their chief professional ambitions: to share their art with the multitudes.

“You know we love the music; we love what we do,” Fischer said. “But one of our dreams is to share string quartet with as many people as possible. That’s really important to us.”



Photo by Troy Fedderson, courtesy of The Scarlet

**Beaver and Sirota perform at the Chancellor’s State of the University address at the Lied Center for Performing Arts last September.**

To that end, the Quartet plans to play in concert halls and homes around the world. They will be raising not only awareness of chamber music on their tours but also the visibility of UNL’s School of Music.

Richmond believes that the Chiara String Quartet’s charge to help maintain the school’s high profile is vital to the success of the School of Music.

“I hope they will continue through their robust concert schedule to raise the visibility of the School of Music in the minds of Americans and other folks all around the world,” Richmond said. “Because they concertize internationally, they represent us wherever they go as artists-in-residence of the School of Music of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.”

For the dates between August 2005 and April 2006, the Chiara Quartet had scheduled concerts in cities throughout the United States. The Quartet planned to perform several times in Lincoln during July and again later this fall.

Fischer said that whether they are playing for a living room of a few dozen or a concert hall of several hundred, in a

rural Nebraskan town or a cosmopolitan European city, the Quartet strives to forge connections with individual audience members and to give each one a meaningful experience.

“We want to make everyone in the community feel comfortable coming to a concert of ours and want to come,” she said.

For those who cannot attend a live performance—or who have and cannot wait to hear more—the group has developed a line of CDs under their record label New Voice Singles.

They received critical acclaim from *Fanfare* and *American Record Guide* for their “Triptych” CD, a musical recreation of the events of Sept. 11, 2001. Fischer said she thinks that the work demonstrates why music touches people so deeply.

“It’s an experience we all shared, in a way,” Fischer said. “And people are really interested in art that helps them understand things, because you can’t put into words what happened. And music makes that a little easier because it’s more abstract.”

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Fischer said chamber music particularly resonates with audiences for several reasons: composers wrote the music passionately, the musicians of a quartet work as equals and performances have a certain intimacy.

Fischer said that the Chiara String Quartet incorporates a variety of music into its repertoire, though such a large quantity of chamber music exists that a group could spend a lifetime focusing on a single time period. But Fischer said she would not complain about the wealth of chamber music available.

“We’re very fortunate to play some of the greatest music ever written,” Fischer said. “Basically we love everything we play. You can’t go wrong with string quartet music, because it’s all really good.”

Fischer said another aspect of chamber music that makes the performances memorable is the democratic nature of a small group of musicians. Richmond also noted the unique dynamic of a four-person group.

“There’s only one musician on a part in chamber music, and because there’s no conductor in chamber music every musician is part of the musical decision-making process, and that really is a very empowering thing. It advances their musicianship as well or better than anything else I can name,” Richmond said.

What truly separates chamber music from other music in Fischer’s opinion, however, has nothing to do with the way a musician plays. It has everything to do with why a musician plays.

Fischer said the Chiara String Quartet plays for its audience, not for the sake of a paycheck or rave reviews.

“I’m not such a fan of the idea of walking out on stage, not saying anything, sitting down and playing, having no interaction with the audience. That is just not interesting to me,” Fischer said.

What Fischer does find interesting is the connection.

“The interaction between the performer and the audience is just so magical. It’s one of the reasons we love it. We want to try to make that magical connection even more so,” Fischer said.

The group’s belief in that magical connection—and their quest to perfect



The Chiara String Quartet discuss a piece during rehearsal in Westbrook Music Building.

it—drew them together 10 years ago and continues to bind them to this day, Fischer said.

She said that the group has grown close over the decade they have spent together. Fischer and Beaver played together at band camp as children, all four of the Quartet’s members studied at Julliard together and all took their first steps into the world of professional music hand-in-hand.

“A string quartet really operates as a family,” Fischer said. “You’re so close to these people.”

And she said she hopes her musical family stays close-knit as the group continues to pursue its career goals.

“We continue to love doing what we do, and we continue to respect each other as musicians. And we continue to further the life of the string quartet,” she said. “Those are the more abstract things. I’m the most proud of those things, even if they’re not necessarily tangible.”

The Quartet does, however, boast many tangible accomplishments. Its deep, rich sound has won it the Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, and they were prizewinners at the 2005 Borciani International String Quartet Competition. They first came to Nebraska as the

headliner group of the 2004 Meadowlark Music Festival.

They made an excellent first impression.

“They did a wonderful job,” Richmond said. “They played brilliantly, they coached really well, they taught really well. They were personable and affable and charming.”

Richmond said that he felt thrilled when a group of such talented and friendly musicians agreed to accept a residency at UNL. And he feels even more excited about the potential the future holds.

“We’re very excited about their presence here,” he said. “We’re very excited about what the future of their residency might mean for the School of Music.”

Fischer said the Quartet is also glad to be at UNL. Nebraska has struck a chord with the Chiara String Quartet.

“We really like it here,” she said. “We really like living here. We feel really welcome here. People have embraced us; the community has embraced us. And we are really grateful for that.” ■

*Jill Havekost is a junior advertising major in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications from Scribner, Neb.*

# Temple Building construction under way

BY JOEL GEHRINGER

The fences are up and the machinery is running as construction gets under way for the renovation and expansion of the Temple Building, home to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

The renovations were made possible by a \$5.3 million gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation from Carson, who died last year. The improvements will include expansions to the building's Howell Theatre, a new theatre and sound stage, a new scene shop and storage area and an improved main lobby.

It's the first work done on the 100-year old building in 30 years, and both department leaders and project architects said the renovations will not only bring the aging building up to standards, but also will make UNL's program one of the most competitive in the region.

"It's a great time for us as a school and for the university to be adding a gem like this to the campus and to open up what's already great in this school for much greater things to happen," said Paul Steger, director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

## The Howell Theatre

In its current state, the Howell Theatre is a bit outdated. The rigging isn't up to par, there's no stage left, and the scene shop is on an entirely different level. All of these issues limit the scope of UNL stage productions.

That will all change soon, said Production Manager Brad Buffum, who's acted as liaison between the school and the architects, dictating to designers what improvements and changes would be best for the program.

"It's been a very interesting process to go through all of this," he said. "I've been mostly giving advice on how the theatre stuff works."

Per Buffum's and others' recommenda-



Weitz Construction fenced off the construction area in late June to begin work on the Temple Building renovation.

tions, the Howell Theatre will soon get a new wing on the south end, allowing space for storage and an exit for actors, adding more options and diversity to productions.

"It will improve our ability to move sets during a show," Buffum said. "Right now we don't have any way to do it."

The stage will also receive a new, computerized section of rigging, which can be programmed to drop scenery at the push of a button. Part of the current rigging will remain.

"We've been working with this fly system in the theatre, and it's old, but it's very functional," Steger said. "It's just not up to what a student should leave here with in regard to experience. Now what we'll end up with is a way for them to work with what is the newest technology, and what is old."

It's also going to be much safer, said Stephen Clymer, an architect with Bahr Vermeer Haecker who helped design the renovations.

"We're not going to have to take students on these catwalks to load and unload this rigging," he said. "It's a new system that utilizes electric drums that raise and lower curtains and drops. It's state-of-the-art."

In addition, a new scene shop will be built behind the stage in the space between the Temple Building and the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center.

"This is probably the biggest challenge of the whole project," campus architect Paul Couture said. "We're constructing an addition between two buildings and it's a very narrow space."

The scene shop will be on the same level as the Howell stage, and a large door will connect the two.

Underneath the shop will be storage areas for scenery and props, which will allow for quicker access than the current storage spaces on the fourth floor.

The shop will also contain all new tools, including a ventilated welding area and dust collectors for saws and routers, and a freight elevator to lift scenes and

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## Filling in the gap



Photos courtesy of Bahr Vermeer Haecker Architects

Above left, the new addition is seen from overhead between the Temple Building and the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center. The photo on the right includes an artist rendering of the new addition.

materials from street level into the shop. “It’s going to improve the flexibility of our scene designs 100 percent,” Buffum said.

### The Sound Stage

The space north of the Howell Theatre that formerly acted as the Temple scene shop will soon become a combination black box theatre and sound stage. With dual capabilities as a live performance area and a film studio, the new theatre is the main “gem” Steger previously mentioned.

“This sound stage puts us ahead of all the schools in the Midwest,” he said.

Schools like UCLA, USC and some Florida film schools have similar stages, but UNL’s will be the only one in the region.

“For us to have a sound stage out here in the middle of everywhere, it provides a place for filmmakers in the middle here to have somewhere to do their own work,” Steger said.

The stage will have green screen capabilities and could be ideal for live

television performances down the road.

“We have a burgeoning film and new media program, and the students require some place to shoot their films and control what happens on that camera and that film,” Steger said.

Right now, students shoot at remote locations—outdoors or in homes and apartments—but the new space will allow for construction of custom scenery for films and control over entire environments.

Two of the biggest and most useful features of the sound stage will be the sound control booth, located above the theatre with a window out to the stage, and a lighting grid with 10 independent sections that can be lowered to the floor for programming and adjustments.

The lighting system will be much safer and convenient, Steger said.

The space itself will be another space for live theatre performances. Currently the plan calls for just under 200 seats to be installed on the north and west sides. It could also open the performance schedule for more productions, but Steger said no

additional shows are in the works just yet.

“It’s going to be an amazing huge advantage,” said senior film and new media major Jason Slaughter. “It will make student work 10 times better, and we’ll be able to advance skill sets in both those areas of art, be it film or theatre.”

### The Lobby

As construction continues, the lobby of the Temple Building is a temporary storage area for scene shop materials and tools.

It doesn’t look pretty, but when construction is finished, that will certainly change.

Though the lobby’s improvements are not the most important or technologically advanced changes to the Temple Building, architect Stephen Clymer believes the renovations in that area might be the most visible and striking to visitors.

“Everything we’ve done is kind of behind the curtains,” he said. “Most of the public will never know we did anything at all. But with some of the bids being lower than expected, we looked at updating the lobby.”



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The lobby will receive new carpeting, and on the north side of the building, next to the new sound stage theatre, the former north entrance will be reopened, with new stairwells leading to the main level.

“People will be able to enter the building from the north and the west then,” Steger said, “and it will be a nice entrance into the new theatre.”

In addition, access to restrooms will be improved, and the main elevator will receive some refurbishing. The current elevator car’s interior is heavily banged up from moving props and scenery, but with the new storage area and freight elevator, the main elevator will no longer be needed for that purpose.

The improvements also will make the main floor the most visible area to the public, as the third floor stage will primarily be used for class work and additional classrooms will be added on the northwest end of the main floor.

### Construction

Work began on the building in late June, and campus architect Couture said he expects construction to continue through May 2007, if the project stays on schedule.

Additional improvements will bring the building up to current code — especially those dealing with sprinkler systems, heating, air, energy and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Clymer said.

Improvements to the building structure will also be made. The aging structure needs new supports on some of the weaker walls.

All in all, the architects said they expect construction to run smoothly and on schedule, but that still means the majority of the work will be done while school is in session.

“Essentially, we’re a production program,” Steger said, “and without having a theatre and scene shop, we’re essentially going to have to do smaller and fewer shows.”

The school will put on four productions instead of the usual five during the upcoming season. They’ll be held in the third floor studio theatre, with one in the Lied Center’s Johnny Carson Theater.



The lobby of the Howell Theatre has become a temporary storage facility for items from the scene and prop shop.

*‘It’s a great time for us as a school and for the university to be adding a gem like this to the campus.’*

**Paul Steger,  
director of the Johnny  
Carson School of  
Theatre and Film**

As for the academic year, Steger acknowledged students might be a bit inconvenienced by construction.

“It will be a little crazy throughout the

year, and the students will definitely feel the impact of it,” he said. “But next year we’ll end up with a new theatre, a new classroom and an additional class space that will open. It helps us out immensely.”

Slaughter said he wouldn’t mind the construction, even as a senior who probably won’t be around in time to take advantage of the full improvements.

He said he understands the sacrifices will greatly improve the school and be a huge advantage to student work and recruitment.

“Even though I might not get to be able to fully utilize it, even as an alumnus I’ll be able to come back and work with it and see what the students are doing,” he said. “I know the type of people going in that school are going to be of the highest quality. Knowing this has Johnny Carson’s name on it, knowing he was a person that sought out talent throughout his career, this is a definite legacy for him.” ■

*Joel Gehringer is a junior news-editorial major in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications from Papillion, Neb.*



Aaron Von Seggern used his Hixson-Lied Undergraduate Research/Creative Activities Grant to fund his sculpture of John the Baptist.

# Von Seggern creates marble masterpiece

BY JILL HAVEKOST

The Bible relates the story of John the Baptist—the man who baptized believers in the Jordan River, wore clothes fashioned from camel hide and lost his head at the request of a harlot—in more than 20 scattered verses.

Aaron Von Seggern tells the story in a single sculpture.

Von Seggern completed a white marble

bust of John the Baptist with the aid of a Hixson-Lied Undergraduate Research/Creative Activities Grant last year.

The senior sculpting and painting major added the sculpture to a portfolio thick with artistic accomplishments.

But before he did, Von Seggern had to chisel through a series of obstacles to make his vision of a decapitated John the Baptist. He did so with dedication and determination—but he also needed time.

He needed patience. He needed a rock.

“I had no money, and I wanted to carve stone,” Von Seggern said. To make his idea possible, he said he had two options. He could sacrifice his body to participate in a medical study or he could apply for a grant.

Von Seggern chose to apply for the grant. He received a \$1,590 Hixson-Lied Undergraduate Research/Creative Activities Grant.

Von Seggern had conquered a major obstacle in his quest to sculpt John the Baptist, but then he faced another daunting task: actually sculpting John the Baptist, a man dead for two millennia and revered around the world.

“Being an artist, bringing about a visual image is not easy,” he said, “because you always question your creation.”

But Von Seggern accepted the challenge nonetheless. He started to find answers to some of his questions by studying the work of Bernini and Michelangelo. Then he traveled to Kansas to study stone cutting under Miles Schnider.

Von Seggern also sought out UNL religious studies professor Dr. Stephen Lahey to be a model for the work. Von Seggern said he felt that the professor possessed the “age, soul and the physically intense look” that he had envisioned.

And finally, the young artist spent hours in the sun, the sleet and the other elements to create his sculpture. Von Seggern said that the work was not exactly glamorous, involving lots of shivering, sweat and physical labor.

“I was outside all day hammering,” he said. “It is not the thing that movies or television shows are made of.”

It was, however, the dedication it took to create a piece of highly praised art that has won Von Seggern respect and recognition.

“What makes him exceptional is that he works around the clock,” said UNL Associate Professor of Art Mo Neal. “Where other students think they’ve done enough after an extra 10 hours work outside class a week, Aaron is putting in an additional 30 to 40 hours per week.”

That dedication paid off when Von Seggern received three awards in the last year, including the F. Pace Woods Award and the Dan and Barbara Howard Creative Achievement Award.

Neal has also nominated him for two more awards: the International Sculpture Center’s Outstanding Student Award and the National Sculpture Society Award.

“One cannot be lazy — intellectually or physically — and expect to make good art,” Neal said. “Aaron isn’t,” and the art he creates measures up. ■

# Music runs in the family

By JILL HAVEKOST

People’s blood types range from A through B and AB to O.

But Tom Salistean seems to boast a new blood type: A sharp. The UNL sophomore music education major has music in his bones, boasting a family tree with deep musical roots.

Salistean’s mother, Kim, graduated from UNL’s School of Music with a degree in music performance. His aunt, Tami Pederson, wife of UNL athletic director Steve Pederson, followed suit. His older brother, Rob, also graduated from the School and now works as the assistant director of bands at Lincoln North Star High School.

Salistean, of Lincoln, continued the family tradition when he enrolled in UNL’s School of Music and joined a host of musical bodies. During his freshman year he marched with the band, occupied a seat in the orchestra and jammed with the jazz ensemble. He also earned the respect of his peers and professors.

“I’m enjoying him right now. And I’m really looking forward to the next three years with him,” said Assistant Professor Paul Haar, Salistean’s jazz ensemble leader.

Several of Salistean’s professors said some of his success is due to his musical lineage and natural talent, but his trumpet professor, Associate Professor Darryl White, said most of it is the result of a single value Salistean cherishes.

“Hard work,” White said. “He puts a lot of time into his instrument and a great deal of focus. He has a good attitude.”

Salistean said he spends at least an hour or two a day practicing. His dedication has been rewarded with scholarships, a place in the Cornhusker Marching Band (and therefore free football tickets) and lifelong friendships with fellow musicians.

Salistean says he enjoys being a part of the music program, but there are times when it is difficult.

“Playing in college is a lot of fun, but there’s definitely a serious aspect to it,” he said.



Tom Salistean

Salistean’s professors noted his ability to take music’s difficulties in stride and to accept their advice as he strives to become a better player.

“He is willing to listen to ideas, new ideas,” White said. “He takes constructive criticism very well.”

Professors also noted Salistean’s desire to help others battle through difficult aspects of music. Salistean illustrated their point when he spoke of his younger brother Adam, an eager eighth-grade pianist.

“The kid amazes me,” Salistean said. “I’m not the greatest teacher yet, but I try to help him when I can.”

His professors expressed their beliefs that Salistean has the talent and personality to help many more students begin musical careers.

“All of us, in music, had a teacher with Tom’s personality,” Haar said.

There is music in Salistean’s blood. But more importantly, there is music in his heart. And Tom Salistean is likely to pass the music on to more than his relatives.

“Tom is so friendly, and that makes the perfect educator,” Haar said. “He can create other great musicians. He is going to make a difference.” ■

# Student and stuntwoman

BY JILL HAVEKOST

It's a bird!  
It's a plane!  
It's Superman!

Wait — no! It's Jessica Graff — the University of Nebraska-Lincoln senior theater performance major, movie and television stuntwoman and pole-vaulting phenomenon who plans to live a life that a superhero would envy.

“My goal in life is to tell stories that are so incredible that people who first meet me will think that I'm a pathological liar,” she said.

Graff, who was born in New York, already boasts some professional accomplishments that might be hard for people to believe. At 22, she has earned her Screen Actors Guild card and has appeared in three film productions including “Bones” and “The Visiting.”

While working to become a stuntwoman, she has studied circus gymnastics, practiced falls from three-story buildings and driven vehicles during car chases. She has also taken circus gymnastics, ridden cattle, jumped trains and rafted down the Mississippi — but that's just for fun.

Graff said she fears only two things: mediocrity and getting fat. Everything else is fair game — even heights. Especially heights. What makes most peoples' hearts pound makes Graff's glow.

“I'm kind of in love with heights,” Graff said.

Graff said she hopes to specialize in film fighting and aerial work. As a pole-vaulter on the UNL track team, Graff has had ample practice free falling. The academic All-American said that pole vaulting has helped her to prepare her for a stunt career.

“Pole vaulting is a stunt,” she said. “To be a stunt person, you have to train like an



Senior Jessica Graff plans to fall into a career as a stuntwoman.

athlete. It's all about body-awareness and timing, which is crucial to stunts.”

Pole-vaulting coach Kris Grimes said he loved Graff's dedication, work ethic and intelligence.

“She's disciplined and focused and has a really good understanding of what it takes to be competitive,” he said.

Grimes said that he trusted Jessica's judgment so much that he rarely felt nervous about her off-the-field escapades.

“I think her adventures are more entertaining than they are scary,” he said.

After she graduates, Graff may not trade in her track uniform for tights and a cape,

but she plans to live a life that would make for an entertaining comic book series.

She plans to move to Los Angeles, be in an Asian pole-vaulting commercial, study at a stunt school in Seattle and a circus school in Hollywood and maybe jump off a speeding motorcycle and into the window of a moving car.

Graff said she cannot help seeking out excitement. And if she doesn't find it, she said it has a way of finding her. Just as Superman can always find Lois Lane and Batman can always spot an evildoer, stuntwoman Jessica Graff can always find a new adventure. ■

# Organists Ritchie, Faulkner retire

BY JOEL GEHRINGER

It's May 17 and, other than a few papers and office supplies on the desk, George Ritchie's office is completely empty.

He and Quentin Faulkner are meeting in the office down in the basement of the Westbrook Music Building on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus. The two UNL organ professors retired this summer after a combined 54 years of teaching.

But there's more to these two men than college courses. They're also two of the most respected figures in local music, as founders of the Lincoln Organ Showcase, and internationally accomplished performers and scholars in their own right.

They're here in this empty basement office to discuss their work and accomplishments one last time, taking a break from wrapping up their final school business and preparing for summer.

Faulkner's got a little more time — he says he won't be vacating his office until July.

As for Ritchie, this is it.

"You won't be able to reach me here anymore," he says. "As soon as we're done here, I'm closing the door for good."

But first, they've got an entire career of stories, research, community work and performances to talk about.

Ritchie arrived in Lincoln in 1972.

A California native, he first taught organ at Duke University, where he was also chapel organist. Then he accepted the job at UNL. Faulkner, from New Jersey, arrived two years later after serving as assistant organist of St. John the Divine Cathedral in New York. He would succeed legendary music professor and internationally known church and concert organ music composer Myron Roberts.

There was no Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts at the time — the School of Music was still under the auspices of Arts and Sciences. Nevertheless, organ instruction and research was thriving.

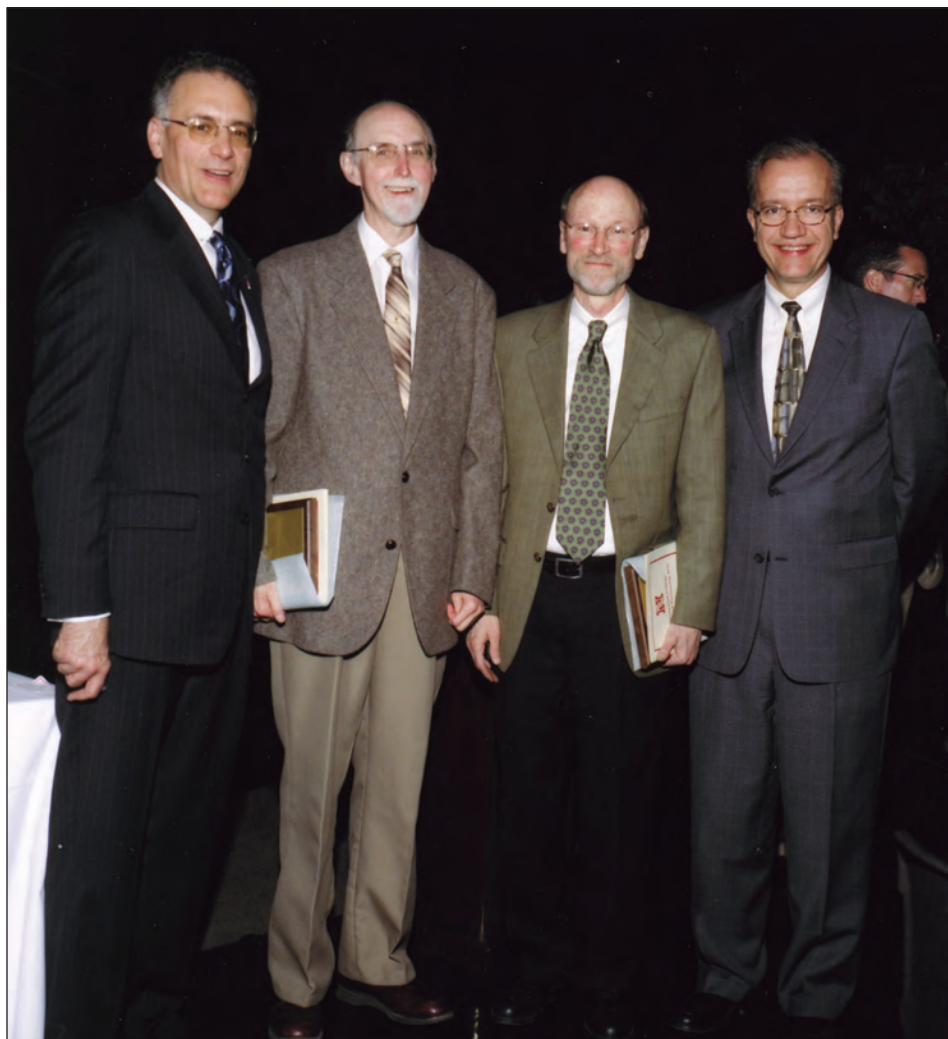


Photo by Tom Slocum of University Photography

Dean Giacomo Oliva, Quentin Faulkner, George Ritchie and School of Music Director John W. Richmond at the College Honors Day Dinner.

From Roberts, the two learned the tradition and workings behind the program, which had already garnered much attention thanks to Roberts' work.

"Myron Roberts really put (the organ program) on the map, largely because of his composing," Faulkner said. "So we inherited a heritage."

Of course, each had his own research interests, but they soon discovered time for research and performance was limited.

In the late '70s, the philosophy of the University shifted, Faulkner said, and

suddenly there was demand on professors for publication and visibility. To make that happen, teaching loads had to be limited.

"It was only when that happened that either of us found the time to focus more on other things," Faulkner said.

Well, wait, Ritchie says, wondering if those last few parts came across correctly.

He bounces a few ideas off Faulkner, which sets off a quick exchange of numbers and dates about teaching loads and performances.

While they try to figure out exactly how

## RETIRING FACULTY



Photo courtesy of Quentin Faulkner

Quentin Faulkner at Cornerstone Church in 1977.

to phrase the ideas, each seems to know exactly where the other is trying to go.

It's nothing new. The two have always worked well together, transcending ego in a field where competition is the name of the game.

"That's very unique in the music world," said Lincoln organ builder and longtime friend Gene Bedient. "It's very common at prestigious conservatories for people to be very at odds and very competitive, but those two have always been very cooperative and generous."

That cooperative spirit made Faulkner and Ritchie successful in all of their endeavors, Bedient said, whether they were instructing students, researching new techniques or putting together the next Organ Showcase.

"Plus," Bedient added, "I think it speaks very much to the very large and generous human beings they are."

Meanwhile, the two professors have come to a consensus and are ready to continue.

From the beginning, Ritchie and Faulkner have tried to make sure their students understand something about organ music: there's an intellectual side and a performance side, and neither side works correctly without the other.

*'The organ conferences were intentionally designed to destroy stereotypes.'*

### Quentin Faulkner

In 1977, the two professors formulated the perfect way to drive that point home—they would put together an annual organ conference.

At the time, there was nothing like it.

"The organ conferences were intentionally designed to destroy stereotypes," Faulkner said. "Everybody knew pretty early on we were interested in early music and techniques, and we took pains to make sure the organ conferences were not strictly like that."

The conferences attracted some of the world's top professionals, including German organ pioneer Harald Vogel and

master organ builder Charles Fisk, who gave credit for the success of his Meyerson Concert Hall organ in Dallas to what he learned at the "Organ and the Conference Hall" conference in 1981.

There have been 24 UNL conferences so far, and when the two professors retire, they said, it's up to their successor, Syracuse organ professor Christopher Marks, to determine the future of the series.

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At this point, Ritchie grabs a stack of brochures, one of the last remaining paper bundles on his desk.

The brochures are a virtual timeline of the conferences. Some look classic and gothic, while others have a funky, new-wave feel, illustrating the wide variety of topics they've explored.

The organists go through the brochures, pointing out highlights from key years.

Starting the conference was a challenge for the two professors, but UNL Professor of Music History Pamela Starr saw it as part of their proactive and altruistic nature.

"It was an act of love and commitment on their part," she said. "It isn't just that they made huge contributions in their area and that was it. They really took their roles as leaders of the faculty seriously. They just gave and gave and gave."

Ritchie puts the brochures away for now. It's time to talk about research.

To put it simply, Faulkner's and Ritchie's research centers around the music of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Ritchie recently completed an 11-CD collection of Bach's complete organ works. It's being released on the classical music label Raven Recordings.

It's the first collection to document the music performed with the same early techniques Bach used, which have long been forgotten by modern organists. Ritchie also co-authored a book on those techniques.

Meanwhile, Faulkner authored "J.S. Bach's Keyboard Technique: A Historical Introduction," a book Ritchie called "the most important book yet about Bach's playing technique."

Between Ritchie's performance and recordings and Faulkner's research and publications, the two changed the academic world's understanding of Bach.

But some of the work was hindered by

## RETIRING FACULTY

limited availability. At the time, nearly all of the organs Bach originally played were in East Germany — behind the curtain of Communist rule and, therefore, unreachable.

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So when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, it was, as Ritchie put it, “Christmas in July.”

The new information broadened the two researchers’ work and inspired UNL’s first international organ conference, which took 115 people to Naumberg, Germany, in 2003.

Now, Faulkner and Ritchie realize what they’re talking about isn’t the most accessible of topics, and they’re taking great pains to make sure they’re understood correctly.

But they’re not elitist or condescending. In fact, they’re quite patient.

It’s their signature teaching style, said Sara Schott, a former student and co-chairwoman of the Lincoln Organ Showcase and director of music at Grace Lutheran Church.

“They’re incredible teachers, and students were gifted with their partnership,” she said.

Schott, a 1996 graduate, took organ instruction from Ritchie.

“He was the pickiest man alive, and I never made a mistake he didn’t make a comment on, but he was so nice about it that I always tried harder and harder to do my best,” she said.

She also took courses on church music from Faulkner and uses what she learned daily at Grace Lutheran.

Once all the gritty details about recordings and transcriptions have been cleared up, it’s time to move on to the next topic.

Despite their forthcoming departures from the University, neither man is very interested in retiring.

Faulkner is heading to Germany for a year to teach historical organ practice courses and to discuss with students their country’s historic instruments.

He’s staying near Bach’s hometown, and he’ll be checking out the various organs in the area while doing research.

Meanwhile, Ritchie plans on catching up on “about 10 lifetimes” of interests, including reading, watching films, hiking



Photo courtesy of Quentin Faulkner

**Church Music Workshop Panel Discussion Leaders in Naumberg (Maria Magdalenen Kirche): Quentin Faulkner, George Ritchie, Christoph Wolff and Robert Clark.**



From the March 1982 American Guild of Organists magazine

**1982 UNL Organ Conference leaders (left to right): Robert Emile, Maurice Peress, Charles Fisk, Gene Bedient, William Albright, Robert Newman, Richard French, Quentin Faulkner, Eugenia Earle, Myron Roberts, George Ritchie and Raymond Hagg.**

and traveling.

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Both said they want to ensure a smooth transition for Christopher Marks. But they also know it’s time to move on.

That’s part of the job, they both agreed, and they hope it’s one thing those around them will remember.

“We are only links in a centuries-long chain of people trying to keep a tradition going,” Ritchie said. “We’re here for a relatively short time here in the big picture, so we try to take what we’ve learned and pass it on from one generation to the next.”

There’s plenty more to talk about, but eventually the two professors decide they’re content with what’s been said.

They add they’re grateful to the University for its support, and they hope their students will remain involved with performance, the Showcase and the American Guild of Organists just like they have, but other than those few notes, everything’s been touched upon.

After all it’s time to close that office door. ■

*This story first appeared in the Lincoln Journal Star. Reprinted with permission.*

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# DEVELOPMENT

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Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Magazine  
Hixson-Lied College of Fine & Performing Arts  
102 Nelle Cochrane Woods  
Lincoln NE 68588-0144

## Hixson-Lied Endowment Funding 2005-2006

*The Hixson-Lied Endowment continues to fund exciting and innovative projects.*

*The Hixson-Lied Advisory Board meets twice a year, in October and April, to review and approve expenditures.*

*The board was created to review and react to requests for expenditures of income from the Hixson-Lied Endowment to benefit the College and its affiliated organizations.*

*The board encourages requests for funding that will truly advance excellence in the college and enhance its national reputation.*

*Additionally, the Board is involved in overseeing the investment of the endowed funds in cooperation with the University of Nebraska Foundation's Finance Committee.*

*Miss Christina Hixson, the sole trustee of the Lied Foundation Trust, announced a gift of \$18 million to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support UNL's*

*College of Fine and Performing Arts in January 2000.*

*The endowment, named the Christina M. Hixson-Lied Foundation Trust Endowment for the College of Fine and Performing Arts, benefits all areas of the College. Half of the fund's income provides support for programs in the College and the College's affiliated organizations, including the Lied Center for Performing Arts, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Lentz Center for Asian Culture and the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.*

*The remaining funds are divided equally to support faculty and students.*

*What follows is a report on the new projects that were approved in 2005-06 for funding in the three funding areas: Program Support, Faculty Support and Student Support.*

*These do not include the on-going, multiple-year projects that were covered in previous alumni publications.*

### Program Support

**Lied Center for Performing Arts**, \$25,000 over two years, for Major University Presenters Value and Impact Study. This groundbreaking marketing research project aims to better understand the values driving performing arts participation, and how to use this information to gain a clearer picture of the personal benefits and public value that university presenting programs create in their communities.

**Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery**, \$35,000, "Forming American Identities" initiative. This new initiative will examine how artists express their identities and share formative influences within their work. The thematic thread, titled "Forming American Identities," will connect numerous museum programs, artists and exhibitions during coming seasons.

**Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery**, \$28,400 over three years, to continue

the Sheldon Graduate Fellowship, a collaboration between the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery and Department of Art and Art History, to place a graduate Master of Fine Arts studio art candidate at the Sheldon for a three-year period. The Sheldon Graduate Fellow will be trained by and work with Sheldon Curator of Education Karen Janovy to develop and increase audiences for the Museum and its programs.

**Nebraska Repertory Theatre and Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film**, \$40,000, for the celebration of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre's 40th Anniversary, the 100th Anniversary of the Temple Building and the Temple Renovations Dedication, all happening in the summer of 2007.

**Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Dean's Office**, \$45,000 over three years, to match College funding for College publications, including our College DVD and Alumni Magazine.

**Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Dean's Office**, \$5,000 to match a \$25,000 University Initiative for Teaching and Learning Grant to enhance college advising through the STARTS (Students in the Arts) program.

### Faculty Support

#### • FACULTY RESEARCH/CREATIVE ACTIVITY TRAVEL GRANTS

*These grants are awarded on a competitive basis to offer partial support to faculty members who are invited to present their creative and scholarly work in regional, national and international settings.*

#### Art and Art History

**Santiago Cal**, \$702: Presentation of "Landings2" at Centro de Artes Visuales in Merida, Mexico.

# DEVELOPMENT

## Hixson-Lied Endowment Funding 2005-2006

**Santiago Cal**, \$790: Participation as an Artist in the 11th Annual Havana Biennial in Havana, Cuba.

**Michael Hoff**, \$720: Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Archaeological Institute of America in Montreal.

**Aaron Holz**, \$650: Presentation of "Studies of Vellum" at the MPG Contemporary Art Gallery in Boston.



Aaron Holz

**Christin Mamiya**, \$450: Presentation of a paper at the North American Victorian Studies Association/North American Society for the Study of Romanticism Conference.



Sandra Williams

**Sandra Williams**, \$1,225: Support for her solo exhibition at the Stevenson Gallery at Southern Oregon University.

### School of Music

**John Bailey**, \$820: Presentation of a recital at the National Flute Association Annual National Convention.



John Bailey

**Ariel Bybee**, \$1,150: Performance as concert soloist and master class conductor as part of the 11th Annual American Festival Tour in China.

**Gretchen Foley**, \$545: Presentation of "Contour Transformation as Motivic Process" at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester in New York.



Gretchen Foley

**Gretchen Foley**, \$650: Presentation of a paper at the College Music Society National Conference in San Antonio, Texas.

**Rhonda Fuelberth**, \$1,700: Presentation of a paper at the ISME World Conference in Malaysia.

**Paul Haar**, \$700: Presentation at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago.

**Kevin Hanrahan**, \$1,700: Presentation of a paper at the ISME World Conference in Malaysia.

**Peter Lefferts**, \$700: Presentation at the Medieval Academy of America Annual Meeting in Boston.

**Susan Levine**, \$400: Presentation of a Lecture/Demonstration at the McKinley Center in North Platte.

**Glenn Nierman**, \$600: Presentation of a paper at the MENC Biennial Meeting in Salt Lake City.



Glenn Nierman

**Glenn Nierman**, \$1,700: Presentation of a paper at the ISME World Conference in Malaysia.

**Robert Woody**, \$710: Two presentations at the MENC Biennial Meeting in Salt Lake City.



Robert Woody

**Robert Woody**, \$1,700: Presentation of a paper at the ISME World Conference in Malaysia.

**Robert Woody**, \$1,100: Presentation of two papers at the 9th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition in Bologna.

**Brenda Wristen**, \$860: Presentation at the Performing Arts Medicine Symposium in conjunction with the Aspen Music Festival in Aspen, Colorado.



Brenda Wristen

**Brenda Wristen**, \$680: Presentation at the MTNA Annual Conference in Austin, Texas.

### Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film

**William Grange**, \$510: Presentation at the Comparative Drama Conference at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.



William Grange

**William Grange**, \$1,715: Presentation of a paper at the 11th Annual International Ibsen Conference in Oslo, Norway.

## Hixson-Lied Endowment Funding 2005-2006

**Sharon Teo**, \$960: Presentation of her film at the Dodge College of Film and Media Arts at Chapman University in Orange, Calif.

### • FACULTY GRANTS

*These grants are awarded on a competitive basis to support projects that assist faculty with their research or creative activity in ways that bring national and international attention to the College and the creative and scholarly work of the faculty.*

### Art and Art History

**Aaron Holz**, \$5,000: Project entitled "Painting Hybrids."

**Francisco Souto**, \$3,000: Project entitled "Mezzotint as Testimony."



Francisco Souto

## Student Support

### • INTERNATIONAL STUDY

*Partial support for students who are selected to study abroad. Funding is intended to help defray costs such as travel, lodging and meals that are associated with study in a foreign country.*

**Christian Bohnenstengel**, School of Music, \$1,200: Participation in the Ameropa Chamber Music Festival in the Czech Republic.

**Rachel Charlop-Powers**, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, \$1,100: Study at Canada's National Voice Intensive.

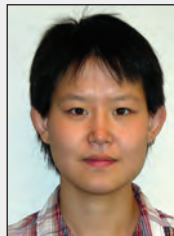


Rachel Charlop-Powers

**Eric Guttormson**, School of Music, \$1,200:

Participation in the Ameropa Chamber Music Festival in the Czech Republic.

**Hye Won Lee**, School of Music, \$1,300: Participation in the Casalmaggiore International Music Festival in Italy.



Hye Won Lee

**Shannon Postier**, Art and Art History, \$1,200: Singing Study in Lied, Austria.

**Melissa White**, Art and Art History, \$1,300: Study in French through Cultural Experiences Abroad in Paris.

### • PRESENTATION OF SCHOLARLY/ CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

*Partial funding support for students who are selected to compete, perform, make presentations or present exhibitions in regional, national or international venues and programs.*

**Melinda Yale, Jennifer Ghormley and others**, Department of Art and Art History, \$2,000: To assist with the presentation of an exhibition at the Haydon Art Center.

**Javier Montilla**, School of Music, \$1,200: Performance at Santa Fe University in Argentina.

**Denis Plutalov**, School of Music, \$1,200: Performance at the International Russian Music Competition.

### • UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH/ CREATIVE ACTIVITIES GRANTS

*Support for research, exploration and development of an idea or set of ideas in which an undergraduate student is thoroughly engaged and actively pursuing. Provides partial support for students who wish to produce work otherwise difficult to accomplish due to cost. The program is intended to encourage students to think of their chosen field as a discipline, rather than a series of courses, better preparing them for life in that discipline.*

**Mark Romano**, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, \$1,800: "Improv-A-Palooza" project. Romano produced a 52-hour improv show that took place in Chicago this past spring. The event consisted of 15 students from Lincoln, as well as students from Sioux Falls, S.D., and Miami, Fla., and professional performers from Second City in Seattle and Los Angeles. There were four groups of improvisers that rotated being on stage for a total of 52 hours in order to break the current world record for longest improv show.

**John Skinner**, Department of Art and Art History, \$1,035: "Art of Communication" project. Skinner has been photographing Nebraska's communication hardware as a personal project and to document the electronic pathway that connects Omaha to Kearney. The result was a multimedia portfolio presented as a solo show in Lincoln in March 2006.

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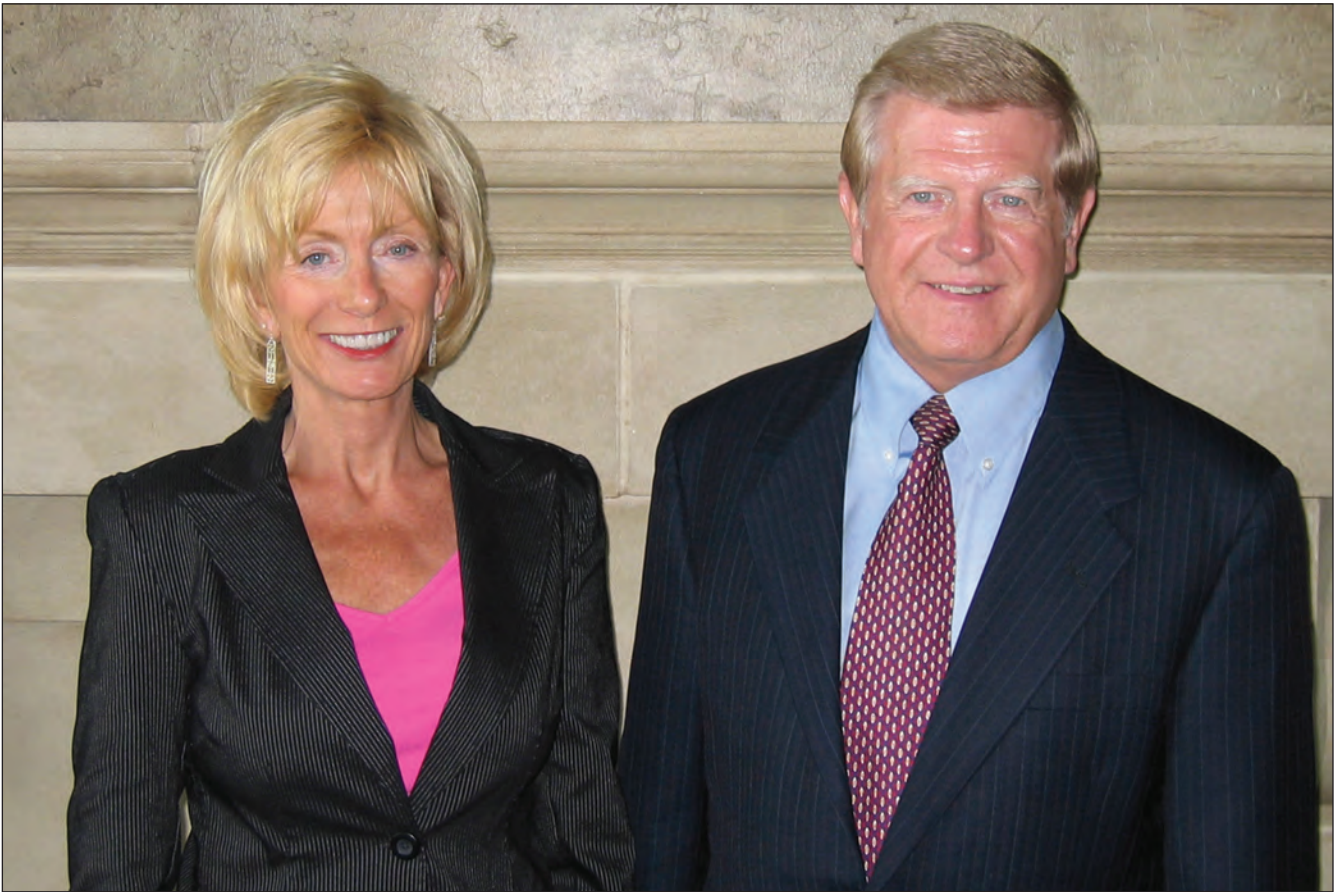
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Chris and Ron Harris

## Harris' passions include giving back

BY KATELYN KERKHOVE

Ron and Chris Harris share a passion for philanthropy, but the motivation behind their support for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts often has stumped even them.

For years the Harris' have helped fund the Ron and Chris Harris Lectureship Program, which brings successful movie-makers to UNL.

Paul Steger, director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, said while the Harris' admit to knowing little about film, they still understand the impact these guests have on the program and its students.

"Often they'll say, 'I have no idea who

this person is,'" Paul Steger said. "But it's such a great thing to have such a fun and loving couple providing this opportunity for our students."

And while the students eagerly await the arrival of these famous guests, the Harris' sometimes struggle to understand who, exactly, the visitors are and why they are so important to the film industry.

"Even though they aren't 'movie buffs,' they have a great appreciation," Steger said. "They've always been very gracious. I can see why they would say they aren't movie buffs, but they help those of us who are."

The Harris' have spent many years helping people by giving to the community and university that have helped shape them individually and as a couple.

Ron Harris grew up in Lincoln, was a Lincoln Southeast graduate and is an alum of UNL's College of Business Administration. Chris grew up with a military family in Europe, but the couple met in college and, since then, has never permanently left Nebraska.

For years the Harris' have owned and operated the family business, Harris Laboratories, a medical testing lab in Lincoln that grew to worldwide status.

Ron Harris said he feels obligated to give back to the community, and his business networks give him a great advantage in helping bring people and resources to his home town.

He serves on numerous community, corporate and university boards while also giving his time to the lectures in honor of



# DEVELOPMENT



From left, writer and creator Jorge Zamacona, producer Mel Efras, designer Sandy Veneziano and actor Ernie Hudson meet with students in the Film and New Media program last fall.

his father, Dr. Lewis E. Harris, through the corporation of the Lewis E. Harris Lecture on Public Policy and the E.N. Thompson Forum. He also started a scholarship program to help business students study abroad.

He is the service chair for the Madonna Rehabilitation Center and said he considers it a “hidden jewel” that provides care that isn’t truly appreciated until a person’s loved one has been treated there.

Chris’s main efforts have focused on the Cedars Youth Services and Fresh Start programs. With two children of their own, four grandchildren and another on the way, Chris said organizations for children have always pulled at her heart.

Overall, picking a favorite cause was difficult for both Ron and Chris.

“I would say we have been bigger supporters, consistently over the years, of charitable community-based organizations,” Ron said. “We’ve also given money to the university in a variety of ways, if not anything but by buying football tickets.”

Considering their commitment to their community and the university, it’s

really not too surprising that the Harrisises started a lectureship series for the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. It’s another way to give back.

But the way the series started was mostly luck.

A carpenter who did some work on their house almost a decade ago and who is now deceased, discovered that the Harrisises planned to vacation in Canada. He enthusiastically suggested they meet his wife, Sandy Veneziano, when they were in Toronto.

Veneziano, a successful set designer and UNL graduate, happened to be working on the set of “That Old Feeling,” starring Bette Midler. When the Harrisises walked onto the set a few weeks later, Veneziano gave them a tour and introduced her new acquaintances as “my friends from Nebraska.” She then asked them to walk Bette Midler’s dog, but not to lose it.

The rest is history.

“I think they are a couple very much in love and just wonderful, giving people...” Veneziano said this summer. “Ron has a very scientific mind. He’s a huge reason for the Harris Labs finding cures for

cancer. Chris is a very strong, independent woman. I can’t say anything but great things about them.”

With the Harrisises’ new connection through Veneziano to people in the film industry, Chris Harris said the couple chose to support the lectureship series because of the benefit it would have for the students.

Students have a chance to hear from professionals what it’s really like in the film industry, something Ron said he felt was vital to their success upon graduation.

Steger agreed, saying the most important part of the series is the connections the students can make. Moving to Los Angeles is scary and, as Veneziano pointed out, the business is tough, so to know a familiar face is both comforting and important.

“I think any time you are studying a certain field of interest, it is really great to get outside the academic environment and hear people talk about it,” Ron Harris said. “They can learn set design and editing in classes, but when Mike Hill—who edited ‘A Beautiful Mind’—comes in, they learn from the practical and realistic side.

“And while many of these students probably won’t end up as Hollywood notables, they may very well end up working in a local television studio, a community playhouse or something like that. If they don’t make it a career, they’ll at least make it a hobby. . . .”

While speakers for the lectureship series are based a lot on luck—who is available at what time—it has been a great source of inspiration for students. The Harrisises said that even though they don’t interact with the students every day, it is wonderful to see their enthusiasm and excitement about the people who come to speak.

“I think they are a great couple,” Steger said. “They love to go out for dinner with whomever we bring in (for the lectures), even if they don’t know them. They are both really friendly people and extremely supportive of the arts. . . . but they don’t like to have much of the spotlight. They work behind the scenes.” ■

*Katelyn Kerkhove is a junior News-Editorial major in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications from Omaha.*

# Howards create Art, Art History award

BY JOEL GEHRINGER

It's been nearly 50 years for Dan Howard.

Painting, drawing, instructing, administrating and just plain working for the last half century kept him occupied, and it paid off in its own huge way.

The expressionistic painter and former chairman of the Department of Art and Art History has received his fair share of national attention and awards. He's been called "Nebraska's leading award-winning artist," and he knows he's a lucky and fortunate man.

But through all those years, Howard never forgot what helped make him who he is: the teachers, professors, fellow artists and friends who encouraged him and instilled in him an interest in fine art.

Well, that and a love for comics, but more on this later.

Howard understood just how important the extra boost from those around him was, and with that in mind, he and his wife, Barbara, recently donated \$3,000 a year to the University of Nebraska Foundation to create the Dan and Barbara Howard Creative Achievement Awards, two awards, one for an undergraduate and one for a graduate student. The awards have become the most prestigious in the Department of Art and Art History.

The gift is the latest in a long tradition for the Howards, who have been supporters of the art school and art community since arriving in Lincoln in 1974. The couple fervently believe they should return the favors they received early on.

"Since we've been able to (give back), and since we've been in the position to do it, we've done it," Howard said. "Coming up, it was important to me to receive support and reinforcement from others, and this is one way we can support the up-and-comers in the department."

It's hard for Howard to recall a time when he wasn't influenced by the arts. As a child in Iowa City, Howard became exposed to the arts through his mother,



Dan and Barbara Howard with the first recipients of the Dan and Barbara Howard Creative Achievement Awards, Amanda Smith (M.F.A.) and Aaron Von Seggern (B.F.A.).

*'An art gallery is as important to the training of an artist as a recital hall is to a music student...'*

## Dan Howard

who enjoyed music and played piano, and his father, who founded the wrestling program at the University of Iowa.

"I think it was just inbred in him," Howard said of his father's love of visual arts. "He never studied art or music, but he had a natural flair for drawing, and he

used to get me to go to bed at night by drawing me a picture of an animal."

But as a paperboy, Howard also developed an interest in comic strips. He was a fan of "Terry and the Pirates," "Dick Tracy," "Flash Gordon" and "Krazy Kat." He also read the Sunday newspaper comic book insert "The Spirit"—his favorite of all comics.

"Those strips fed my determination to make it as an artist myself," Howard said. "I didn't know I was going to become a serious artist, but I first did cartoons, sketches and drawings that led to my going to art school."

In grade school and high school, he received further support from his art teachers. That encouragement drove Howard to pursue his career and led to his enrollment in the University of Iowa.

After earning his undergraduate degree in 1953, Howard shipped off to Lackland Air Force Base in Texas as part of his two-year ROTC commitment. There, he used his talents to work on designing manuals and training aids for the basic training program. Howard joked he joined the

## DEVELOPMENT

military only to be surrounded by civilians in his office. But the experience he received further strengthened his determinations.

“Coming back from the service, I was ever more persuaded I wanted to pursue art at the graduate level,” he said.

Back in Iowa City for graduate school, Dan met Barbara through a university choral group, and the two started dating. In the meantime, Dan was starting to exhibit his work in galleries and competitions.

“I’m a competitor by nature, so it’s always been important for me to test and gauge my progress against comparable artists,” he said.

In one particular show — the University of Iowa graduate art gallery — Dan was exhibiting two pieces, as required by all graduate students at the school.

“After two days up, one of the paintings was stolen,” Barbara Howard said. “He didn’t know whether to take that as a compliment or what. But the second work he sort of half promised to me.”

After the show ended, Dan went to visit Barbara, but he didn’t have the painting he had promised her.

“I was sort of crestfallen,” Barbara said, “and I asked, ‘Where’s the painting?’”

As it turned out, a collector had offered to buy it, and Dan had accepted. But he still had a gift for Barbara.

With the money from the sale, Dan bought Barbara a diamond engagement ring. That was 49 years ago.

“And I never did give her her painting,” Dan said.

“Well,” Barbara answered, “that’s not really true.”

After completing his Master of Fine Arts degree in 1958, Howard took his first teaching job at Arkansas State University. After 13 years, he moved to Kansas State University, then to UNL in 1974 as the Art and Art History Department chairman.

He was also showing his work, eventually exhibiting in and winning some of the country’s biggest shows, including the New Orleans World’s Fair, the Palm Beach Society of the Four Arts National Show and the Chataqua National Exhibition in New York.

As department chairman, Howard saw many assets and a potential for growth.



Photo by Tom Slocum of University Photography  
Dan and Barbara Howard with Eisentrager-Howard Fellowship recipient Xanthe Isbister at the 2005 Donor Appreciation Lunch.

He was responsible for hiring some of the department’s first female faculty, and he continued developing art and art training. He also looked to introduce new ideas to the department. Howard took particular pride in hosting the Midwest College Art Conference in 1976 and inviting comic book legends — including “The Spirit” creator Will Eisner — to discuss the past and future of comics.

But after 10 years, Howard wanted a more active role in student development.

“The administrative aspects became less and less interesting, and I was more and more inclined to want to spend time working with students,” Howard said. “So I went back into teaching full time and taught until 1996.”

Howard retired after that year, but he and Barbara stayed involved in the

school and community. They continued to support the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, the Nebraska Art Association, the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, the Lincoln Arts Council, the Museum of Nebraska Art in Kearney and the Lied Center.

But perhaps the Howards’ most notable contribution after retirement was their funding of the Eisentrager-Howard Gallery in Richards Hall along with former UNL Professor Jim Eisentrager, who died in 2002, and his wife, Dorene. The gallery provides a space for art students to exhibit their work on a regular basis.

“An art gallery is as important to the training of an art student as a recital hall is to a music student and a theatre is to a theatre major,” Howard said. “Since the inception of that gallery, we have

supported that gallery. We and Dorene Eisentrager continue to contribute on an annual basis.”

That was about eight years ago, and the Howards felt it was time to take the next step in supporting student achievement.

“With the gallery functioning on a regular basis, we determined there weren’t many incentives or encouragements for both undergraduates and graduates to do their level best, to push themselves in a meaningful way for the furtherance of their training,” Howard said. “Barbara and I decided one conspicuous way of encouraging this would be to establish a new award. So this last year, in conjunction with the University Foundation, we established the Howard Creative Achievement Award.”

The first two recipients were undergraduate student Aaron Von Seggern and graduate student Amanda Smith. Von Seggern used his award to travel to Rome and visit as much art as possible. Smith bought a camera and traveled to Italy.

“That’s exactly the type of thing we’d like to see happen,” Howard said. “This isn’t to be used for lunch money. If they’re good enough to receive these awards, it means they’re good enough to want to excel, and they’re going to use this extra dollop of support to do something meaningful that will be helpful to themselves.”

Von Seggern said he’s grateful for the opportunity the award gave him.

“(The Howards) are both incredible people for seeing the benefit in the arts and supporting the department,” he said. “It is a good thing for students to work towards achieving this honor. It creates competition, which always brings about hard work. Plus, it supports artists, where financial support is hard to come by.”

The Howards said they look forward to continued involvement in the department, and Howard said he has no plans to slow his work down, even after all these years.

“I can’t imagine not being engaged and involved in art,” he said, “I have to exercise my mind and my capacities as an artist. It’s just something that’s ingrained in me. I’ve been doing art for almost 50 years now, and I can’t think of anything else I’d rather be doing.

“I’m not a rocking chair type at all.” ■



Photo by Steve Hermann/UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications  
A gift from Jim and Rhonda Seacrest allowed UNL opera students to compete in Ireland.

## Seacrests support opera

BY JILL HAVEKOST

Giving is sweet. James and Rhonda Seacrest have a bottle of Canadian maple syrup to prove it.

A Canadian graduate of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts mailed the

sweet, thick, fine maple syrup. She also sent a note to express her gratitude to the Seacrests for sending her and the UNL opera program to Ireland to compete in the Waterford International Festival of Light Opera in 2002.

And while the Seacrests appreciated her thank-you, they did not fund the trip because they need breakfast condiments. The Seacrests find pleasure from

## DEVELOPMENT

philanthropy.

"We enjoy doing it," Jim Seacrest said. "I think there's almost a selfish aspect to it. If we can get a kick out of helping someone, why not do it?"

Seacrest said it was that spirit that inspired the couple to donate \$60,000 to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support a chamber/opera orchestra and another commitment to sponsor a second trip to Waterford Festival in 2007.

"They really have a tremendous sense of civic duty and of commitment and of concern," said Dr. John W. Richmond, professor and director of the UNL School of Music. "They are thoughtful, dedicated, extraordinarily generous friends and neighbors, citizens of Lincoln and citizens of Nebraska."

Richmond said the school was grateful for the Seacrests' support, which has increased the school's international visibility and improved the educational experience of hundreds of UNL students, including those who attended the 2002 Waterford Festival.

"It was powerfully important to the students," Richmond said of the 2002 trip to Ireland. "It really created for them a sense of perspective of their work and helped them to gauge the next steps they needed to take in their own professional preparation."

The trip also brought awards and recognition to the School of Music. The 2002 UNL group performed "The Bohemian Girl" and returned to the United States with four awards, including the Best Operetta Award.

Such international recognition brings visibility to the School of Music, which Richmond said attracts new students and young artists, a crucial factor in the continued success of the UNL music program.

"The visibility of our program is an engine that drives our future, that drives our growth," Richmond said. "It's very, very important."

The group that will head to Ireland in 2007 plans to perform "The Most Happy Fella." Associate Professor of Voice Ariel Bybee will co-direct the production with UNL Associate Professor of English



Photo courtesy of the School of Music  
UNL Opera's "The Bohemian Girl" won Best Operetta at the Waterford International Festival of Light Opera in Ireland in 2002.

Jim Ford. "The Most Happy Fella" is an operatic American musical featuring Frank Loesser's show-stopping and beautifully haunting songs.

Jim Seacrest said as much as he enjoyed financing the performance in 2002, he is equally excited to seeing UNL's newest and brightest opera stars on stage.

"I think that there's talent out there. Real talent. There may be another Pavarotti out there," Seacrest said of the current and future UNL opera performers.

In addition to sending Nebraskan musicians abroad, the Seacrests also work to support the opera/chamber music program within the state. Their donation to the University of Nebraska Foundation helped to make it possible to sustain a chamber orchestra to play for opera performances on and off campus.

The Seacrests said it was important to them that everyone at least have the opportunity to experience the arts, though they recognized that some people choose not to participate.

"The arts can elevate the human spirit," Rhonda Seacrest said. "But that has to be an individual's decision. The philanthropist just puts the plate out there."

Jim Seacrest echoed his wife's sentiments.

"There are people who will never enjoy the arts," he said. "And that's too bad because I think they're missing out on

some important parts of life."

Seacrest said that people who believe the arts and humanities are important need to open their hearts and their wallets to ensure they continue to exist at their current level of excellence at UNL and so they improve in towns and cities across the state.

"I would say to Nebraskans: support the arts and humanities, no matter how big or small the community is," he said. "Support it, support it, support it. It's impossible to put a price tag on the arts and humanities, and if we don't support it, it might not be there at all."

The Seacrests have worked hard not only to ensure the continuing success of the arts in Nebraska but also to support the education of future business and communications leaders. The couple donated a total of \$1 million to the College of Journalism and Mass Communications and the College of Business Administration. Jim Seacrest said their commitments stem from a sense of duty instilled in him and his wife.

"My parents tried to explain the spirit of philanthropy," Seacrest said. "They told me, 'Of those to whom more is given, more is expected.'"

Seacrest said he always hoped to make a major gift to the University after he graduated from UNL in 1963 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. After a long career in the newspaper business as the president and chairman of the Western Publishing Company, Seacrest was glad to have the opportunity to fulfill his dream—and hopes to keep fulfilling it for years to come.

"If we have the ability to continue to give; I hope that we will continue to give," Seacrest said.

Richmond said the Seacrests and their continuing generosity set a high bar for Nebraskans to meet.

"I think the Seacrests are standard bearers who set a marvelous example and that all of us should be inspired to follow their lead, to look for opportunities to make a difference," Richmond said. "They do that well. We should be inspired to do likewise." ■



Students perform "Alice in Wonderland" at the theatre 4-H camp in Nebraska City in June.

# College, Extension team up for 4-H

BY KATELYN KERKHOVE

Among the things Cullen Wright took away from the 2003 4-H camps was something very special: a nickname.

Known as "movie guy" to the teens he interacted with at 4-H camps statewide, Wright was one of the first two participants in a collaboration project between the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension's 4-H

program. A UNL film student at the time, Wright was chosen by Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean Giacomo Oliva to document the work of then-theatre student Abby Miller.

What began as a small summer project by two students in 2003 has—in three short years—developed into a program with eight students involved during the summer of 2006 and plenty of enthusiasm for the future.

"I had always thought we were missing a chance, especially in a land grant school, if

we were not trying to find ways to get our kids involved in 'service learning,'" Oliva said. "With this program, we get them out there and put them in situations where they have to work with kids, teaching and communicating about their art. I believe that while all of them might not teach in a formal way when they get out of school, every artist has to be able to communicate with his or her audience."

The collaboration between the 4-H program and the College has provided a better education for all students

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involved, both college and junior high. Through it, the middle school-aged teens are exposed to theatre, music and art, and undergraduates learn how to communicate their art through teaching.

By incorporating the arts into the already established 4-H camps, teenagers have a chance to explore options they may not have been exposed to in school. The camps vary in length, and each summer has seen a different focus, whether music, theatre or art.

Having worked in land grant schools for almost 20 years, Oliva saw a need for the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts to contribute to UNL Extension's duties of reaching out and engaging Nebraska communities.

Historically, the engineering and agriculture programs had been the most active in the 4-H camps, but, according to Oliva, over the past couple of decades many other people in academia have been trying to figure out ways to bring their knowledge into the mix.

Of the three arts—music, theatre and visual art—music has had the most outreach practice, putting on concerts throughout the state for many years now.

Over time, Oliva realized that incorporating all three into some sort of program would be beneficial for his students and many Nebraska communities.

“Being in a land grant school in a rural state, where you have lots of people who are distant (from the university campus), it occurred to me that this might be a good place to work on a project,” Oliva said. “I thought when I came here it would be a wonderful opportunity to talk with the folks on East Campus in UNL Extension and see if they had some inclination to do this type of thing. I was overwhelmed by the fact that the dean of UNL Extension was like, ‘Look, let’s talk. We think this is a really good opportunity.’”

The first conversation between UNL Extension and Oliva started in the fall of 2002. With both sides interested in putting together a project that would expose rural Nebraskans to the resources of the university, discussions began on how the arts could be integrated into the 4-H summer program.



Photo courtesy of UNL Extension 4-H Youth Development

**Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film senior Mark Romano works with students at the Gretna Arts Camp in June.**

Allowing arts students to participate in residential 4-H camps—where teen participants stay overnight—was the most logical idea, said Beth Birnstihl, associate dean of UNL Extension.

“The kids get to see new opportunities and career choices that they may not have thought about,” Birnstihl said. “From the standpoint of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and Extension, it has opened up a whole new set of resources for both of us. Fine and Performing Arts has a lot of students who need internships and experiences, and we have a lot of communities who have young people who need to make new discoveries.”

While the first summer's collaboration consisted of only one student teacher and a student documenter, the experience for all involved showed the program's potential.

Selected by Oliva, Wright and Miller attended the camps. Wright said he considered himself an “honorary counselor,” participating in the activities with the teens more than being in charge of the process. But, as his documentary progressed, Wright's unique role was crucial.

“(Being a counselor) gave me the right attitude and that connection,” Wright said. “I’m a big kid at heart anyway, and I had been to this exact camp when I was in the sixth grade. Being an honorary counselor helped bring me back to that age. It helped me shape the attitude of the piece itself.”

As “honorary counselor” Wright participated in many of the campers' activities. His documentary became a publicity piece for 4-H and a great learning experience for Wright.

Wright said he owes a lot to Oliva and the camp experience. It was the first time he had been in charge of a full project, and the “real world” experience helped him land his first job after graduating in 2005.

“I learned a lot about shooting on location and shooting freely and spontaneously,” Wright said. “In school we were always taught to create a moment, but in this situation, I had to capture the right moment. I had to get that one kid laughing hysterically or that look of excitement.”

Since then, the entire process has made some necessary adjustments in recruiting instructors and students, increasing

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(Above) Students work on their film at the 4-H Filmmaking Camp.

(Right) Associate Professor of Film Sharon Teo guides high school students at the 4-H Filmmaking Camp.



efficiency in publicity and improving preparation for clerical work and curriculum.

According to 4-H youth development specialist Kathleen Lodl, assigning student-instructors to camps has been the most difficult task. In an effort to work with most college students' schedules, the 4-H program likes to arrange the camp schedules to fit the availability of its student-instructors. What used to take many weeks to organize has become somewhat more efficient, but Lodl says more can be done.

More exciting than the mundane clerical work is setting up the camps themselves. While student-instructors were originally selected by Oliva and other faculty, now students are taking the initiative.

With the help of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts' Undergraduate Student Advisory Board, Oliva publicized the work opportunity last spring and was happy to get a positive response.

"The program is starting to gain some traction," Oliva said. "We went from theatre and film, then art and then music, so this

year I made a pitch to all the students through the student advisory board. We had many more students interested. They are realizing that it's a reasonable summer employment for them."

After being selected, students must develop their own curricula. They begin by deciding what they would like to accomplish in their allotted teaching time. Since the amount of time varies among the different camps, the student instructors have to be able to adjust. Once they have an idea of their material, they design marketing brochures that will attract the age group they are targeting.

Throughout the process, Lodl and members of her department are always available to help. As the main connection between the communities and the students, the experience she brings is crucial.

"This is an interesting process for the college students because they are really learning how to do an educational program," Lodl said. "They are learning things like how long it takes for kids of a particular age group to do an activity, so we help with that part—what the timing is going to be like—and what to put on the brochures to get the kids excited."

Senior theatre performance major and vocal minor Rachael Miller was introduced to the program by a friend and, after attending a meeting, she chose the 4-H camps as her summer employment.

Miller said she was excited to be selected and was looking forward to trying different things with the students.

"I know what excites me about theatre, but I don't know what they'll enjoy, and I'm looking forward to finding that out with them," Miller said.

With three years under its belt, the program has become something more than it was originally. At this point, Miller's duties have developed into those of a teacher and counselor.

But beyond the development of the instructors' roles, the camps themselves have evolved. While only a couple of arts students each year have been involved since that first attempt in 2003, this summer's eight students will allow all three art forms—music, theater and art—to be taught at different times but at all the



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camps.

Also, instead of participating in the three residential camps alone, arts students are now participating in community camps as well.

While the arts instructors stay overnight in the communities they are teaching in, just as they did in the residential camps, their students participate only during the day, returning home at night. These camps last, at most, four days, but, because they involve only one community, a celebration of campers, parents and community members concludes each camp.

The celebration gives the camps' participants and student instructors a chance to show their accomplishments by putting on a play, concert or exhibition for the community. Camp counselors also use the closing festivities to inform and recruit students into the College. By sharing the different opportunities the students have had personally at UNL, the College hopes to show communities that the arts can be a profession, not just a hobby.

As the years pass, new ideas and recommendations will only help improve the project. Oliva said the student instructors are required to keep journals during their work. The journals help students analyze their teaching methods and the developments of their campers.

In addition, the students are invited to one-on-one meetings with Oliva at the end of the summer to give evaluations of their experiences. Lodl hopes that process will improve. She would like to see more solid feedback from the arts students as well as from the communities and the camp participants.

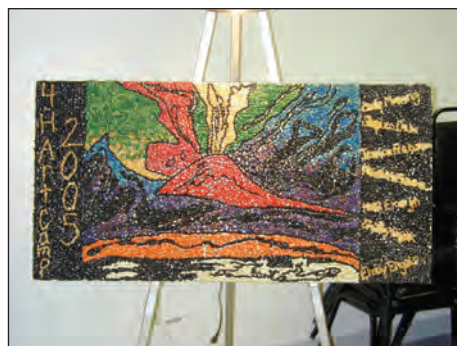
With a solid foundation built over the past three years, continuing the camps and developing them further has people from all three areas excited.

Oliva, Birnstihl and Lodl all agreed that the main goal is to make the experience as positive as possible for the arts students and camp participants. But Oliva wants to see as it as a fixture in the College for years to come.

"I, personally, as the dean, want this to be seen in our college as a program," Oliva said. "It isn't for credit, and it doesn't lead



Photos courtesy of UNL Extension 4-H Youth Development



(Above) Students work on a still life drawing project at the Fine and Performing Arts Camp in Wilber, Neb., in June 2005, with the assistance of Department of Art and Art History senior Jeremie Memming.

(Left) The mosaic created at the 2005 Fine and Performing Arts Camp.

to a degree necessarily, but it's a program of things we do that's very important. And it's important that it be seen as a real collaboration between us and the agriculture college."

As the program becomes entrenched, Oliva hopes future campers and student instructors will continue to benefit from the experience.

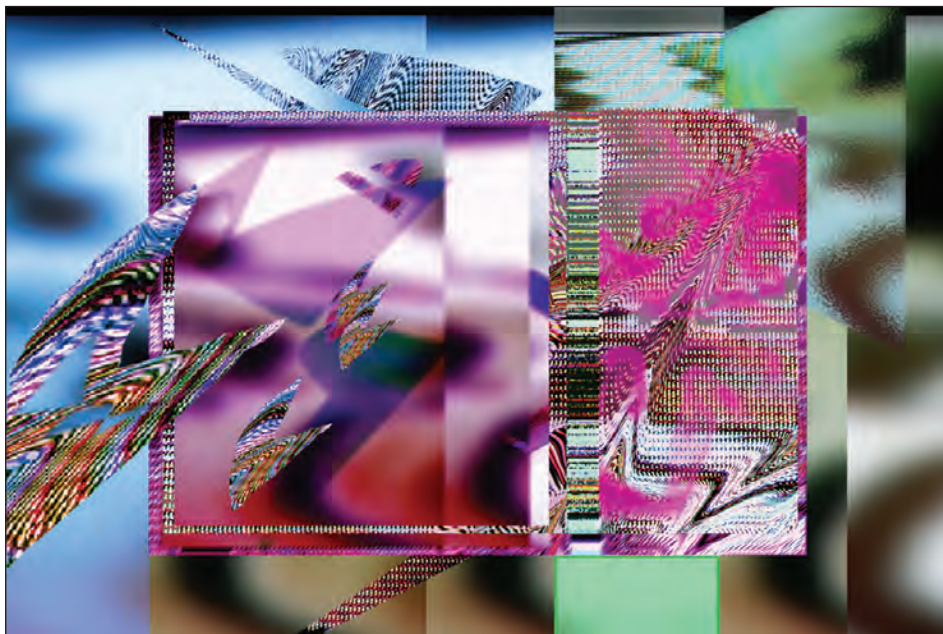
Besides his "movie guy" nickname, Wright earned what he called a "college graduate's dream job," upon graduation. At Out Post 12 Studios, a full production studio, Wright is in charge of videography, motion graphics and does some 3-D work. And he said he owes a lot of it to the camp

experience.

But more than his personal benefit, Wright hopes that the teens experience something they can't get anywhere else.

"I hope it creates a venue and an opportunity for kids to really experience the arts in a fun atmosphere verses something like a school play where the teacher has the a whole vision that the kids don't create," Wright said. "In this they get to experience theatre in a more engaging way. It's not so rigorous, and it helps shape them to be confident in themselves in front of others. And, maybe, it can give them a drive to excel in the things that they are passionate about. It did all that for me." ■

## FACULTY NOTES



Ron Bartels' "Another Viewpoint II" lenticular print.

**Scott Anderson**, Associate Professor of Trombone, performed with a number of ensembles including the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra, where he played lead trombone on a new NETV production on the evolution of swing music in Nebraska. Filming was done at the historic Sokol Theatre in Omaha. He premiered Michael Colgrass' *Mystic with a Credit Card* for trombone and synthesizer with the New Music Agency at a January concert and received an invitation to guest conduct two trombone choirs at the Siouland Trombone Festival in February. Anderson presented his faculty solo recital at UNL which featured trombone works from the Paris Conservatory, and the University of Nebraska Brass Quintet presented their on-campus recital featuring guest artists Jay Wise and Mary Bircher on works by Rayner Brown and Ingolf Dahl. The quintet is made of the brass faculty at the School of Music.



Scott Anderson

**John Bailey**, Larson Professor of Flute, was the featured artist for the Las

Vegas Flute Festival at the University of Las Vegas in March. He gave a recital, two masterclasses and a lecture on flute history.

**Carolyn Barber**, Associate Professor and Director of Bands, presented a session at the 2006 College Band Directors National Association Convention in Evanston, Ill., March 9-11. "Influencing Sound: Revising Pedagogical Practices to Improve Conductor Efficacy" focused on the pitfalls of contemporary conducting instruction, and suggested an alternative physics-based approach based upon Barber's recent research and writings.



Carolyn Barber

**Paul Barnes**, Associate Professor of Piano, recently taught for distinguished professor of Music Menahem Pressler at Indiana University. Barnes was on the campus of IU from Jan. 25-29 and taught Pressler's entire piano studio and gave a masterclass. On Feb. 12, Barnes performed a solo recital featuring works of Albeniz, Mozart, Glass, and Barber on the Mostly

Music series in Chicago. While in Chicago, on Feb. 14, Barnes gave a lecture/recital on symbolism in music for the music students of Northeastern Illinois University. Barnes was also a featured clinician in the Omaha Conservatory's Spring Workshop held March 3-4. Barnes performed Mozart in a faculty recital and gave master classes to pianists in the Omaha region. The official recording of the Lewis and Clark concerto Barnes recorded last September in Seattle with the Northwest Chamber Orchestra has been released by Orange Mountain Music and distributed internationally.



Paul Barnes

**Ron Bartels**, Associate Professor of Art, had his lenticular print work selected for inclusion in a show devoted to university professors from five different countries and 16 universities. Bartels' work, "Inside Out" and "From Here in Time" was selected for exhibition in the Digital Media category. The exhibition, "New Generation 2005: The International Exhibition of Professors in Graphic Design" was hosted

## FACULTY NOTES

by Sangmyung University, Anseo-dong, Chonan, Chungchongnam-do, South Korea. Bartels' digital video QuickTime® motion file, "The Art of Lawn Mowing," has been selected in an international competition sponsored by ColorCalm™ DVD. His work is designed from several still video capture files and manipulated in a 20-minute, time-based motion file that expresses abstract views. This work will be compiled with Brian Eno's Ambient Music for a Color Calm™ DVD entitled "Motion Art," scheduled to be released in November 2006.

**Peter Bouffard**, Lecturer in Music, was commissioned by Abendmusik to arrange a piece for large brass ensemble and percussion for their February concert at First Plymouth Church in Lincoln. He was also commissioned by Nebraska ETV to write an arrangement for a documentary entitled "Hard Times Swing." In March, he was a featured performer and clinician at the Nebraska Jazz Festival.

**Stan Brown**, Associate Professor of Theatre, taught workshops at the National Theatre School of Canada in Montreal, Quebec, in February.



Stan Brown

**Mark Clinton**, Associate Professor of Piano, appeared with the recently formed "Trio Nuovo" on the Kimball Hall stage on Feb. 5. He joined Lincoln Symphony Orchestra concertmaster Anton Miller and Associate Professor of Cello **Karen Becker** in a recital featuring the "Ghost" Trio (op. 70, no. 1) by Ludwig van Beethoven, and the Piano Trio in D minor by Anton Arensky. Two days later, Clinton presented a recital with Larson Professor of Flute **John Bailey** featuring works for flute and piano by Blumer, LaMontaine and Heiden. On Feb. 15, he appeared on the Kimball Hall stage with mezzo-soprano Anne Donnadieu, cellist **Karen Becker**, and the **Chiara String Quartet** in a recital of works by Brahms, Chausson, Saint-Saëns, Gounod, Thomas, Weill and Oscar Straus. On March 23, Clinton was

the featured guest soloist with the **Moran Quintet** in a Kimball Hall performance of the Sextet for Winds and Piano by Czech composer Bohuslav Martinů.

**William Grange**, Professor of Theatre, has been appointed to the Fulbright-University of Vienna Distinguished Chair in the Humanities and Social Sciences. His tenure begins in March 2007. He played Caldwell B. Cladwell under Equity contract in "Urinetown" at the Haymarket Theatre this winter. He presented "The German Theatre and the German Presidency" at the Comparative Drama Conference in Los Angeles earlier this year and presented "Reaffirming Distinctions through Indecisive Assertions" at the Mid-American Theatre Conference in Chicago. He published "Hitler Laughing," a 200-page scholarly monograph on comedy in the Third Reich through American University Press this year.

**Kevin Hanrahan**, Assistant Professor of Voice and Voice Pedagogy, was selected for a poster presentation at the National Association of Teachers of Singing National Convention this July.



Kevin Hanrahan

**Tammy Meneghini-Stalker**, Senior Lecturer in Theatre, received her Fitzmaurice Certification in voicework in January.

**Giacomo M. Oliva**, Professor and Dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, served as judge for the University of Illinois School of Music Concerto Competition on April 9.

**John W. Richmond**, Professor and Director of the School of Music, presented guest lecturers on music education, philosophy and leadership to undergraduate and graduate classes at Northwestern University in May. He also represented the UNL School of Music at

the Big XII Music Executives Conference in Santa Fe, N.M., in May. Richmond and Dean **Giacomo Oliva** presented on "Composition Education in the 21st Century" to the 2006 World Conference of the International Society for Music Education in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in July.

**Francisco Souto**, Assistant Professor of Art, received the Gracefield Arts Centre International Prize at the 6th British International Miniature Print Exhibition in the United Kingdom. Souto's recent exhibitions include "Francisco Souto Recent Prints" at the Slugfest Gallery in Austin, Texas; 7eme Mondial de L'Estampe et de la Gravure Originale Triennale de Chamalieres in France; The International Mini-Print Biennial Cluj-2005 at the Cluj-Napoca Art Museum in Romania; the 6th British International Print Exhibition at Gracefield Arts Centre; 7th Bharat Bhavan International Biennial of Print-Art 2006 at the Roopankar Museum of Fine Arts in India; and The Bibliotheca Alexandrina Second International Biennale for Artist's Books at the Library of Alexandria in Egypt. Souto has also been a visiting artist at the University of Texas at Austin and at Kansas State University.

**Alison Stewart**, Professor of Art History, had her recent book, "Saints, Sinners and Sisters: Gender and Northern Art in Medieval and Early Modern Europe" reviewed in the College Art Association (CAA) Reviews online.

**Sharon Teo**, Associate Professor of Theatre and Film, received a \$2,000 award for Independent Artist Fellowship in Film from the Nebraska Arts Council in April.

**Sandra Williams**, Associate Professor of Art, had a solo exhibition at Southern Oregon University in April and May and will have one at McHenry County College in Chicago in September and October. The exhibitions were made possible with the assistance of a Hixson-Lied Travel Grant and a Woods Travel Grant. Williams also participated in "Tugboat Presents" at Hot Shops in Omaha, and the 2nd Annual Regional Exhibition, Barton Community College in Great Bend, Kan. ■

# ALUMNI NOTES

## Codes:

B.A.=Bachelor of Arts

B.F.A.=Bachelor of Fine Arts

B.M.E.=Bachelor of Music Education

B.F.A. Ed.=Bachelor of Fine Arts in Education

B.S. Ed.=Bachelor of Science in Education

M.M.=Master of Music

M.F.A.=Master of Fine Arts

M.A.=Master of Arts

D.M.A.=Doctor of Musical Arts

Ph.D.=Doctor of Philosophy

## 1954

**John S. Kudlacek** (B.F.A. art, 1958 B.F.A. Ed. art) was the 2006 recipient of the Kansas Artist Fellowship in Crafts (ceramics). The award of \$5,000 is based on artistic merit and recognizes sustained achievement and excellence. Now Professor Emeritus of Emporia State University, he resides near Topeka, Kan., where he continues to work in his rural studio.

## 1955

**J. Dolores Rodgers** (B.F.A. art) was the featured artist in this year's annual "Wings over the Platte" show and competition at the Stuhr Museum in Grand Island. She was awarded the visual artist of the year in 2005 by the Moonshell Arts and Humanities Council of Grand Island. She had an exhibition at the Prairie Winds Art Center (where she is part-owner) in Grand Island in June called "Black White and Gray All Over."

## 1958

**Jim Cantrell** (B.F.A.Ed. art) had an exhibition of his work last October for Bardstown's 225th Birthday at the Bardstown, Ky., Old Courthouse.

## 1960

**Frank Tirro** (B.M.E.) is still teaching music history at Yale University. He just finished a book, *The Birth of the Cool of Miles Davis and His Associates* that should be available within the year. Tirro was recently on campus to receive the Alumni



J. Dolores Rodgers, "Waverly Roses."

Achievement Award in Music, and visited with Joan Reist, John Marshall, Dick Moses and Carolyn Coffman Hansen.

## 1964

**Carol Copeland Huntington** (B.M., 1968 M.M.) is retired from teaching orchestra and string classes in the Corvallis Public Schools (Ore.). She plays in several chamber music groups just for fun.

## 1969

**Linda Ross-Happy** (B.M.E.) received the Platinum Award for Excellence in Teaching from the U.S. Distance Learning Association at its national conference last October. The organization's highest honor recognized her creation of an online course in the history and development of rock and roll for college students. Dr. Ross-Happy was also awarded emeritus status upon her early retirement from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music. She is now developing music courses for educational television and the web.

## 1972

**Charlotte Bumgarner** (B.S. Ed., 1973 M.M.) is currently working for the North Carolina Association of Educators as a UniServ Director. She works with certified and classified personnel as it pertains to their member rights and facilitates various leadership trainings and works with members on lobbying for education causes. She has worked in this capacity in Nebraska, Oklahoma, Illinois and now North Carolina. Bumgarner is still singing in church, as well as some concerts.

**Robert Jones** (B.M.E.) is currently Associate Professor of Voice at North Dakota State University.

## 1973

**Glenda Dietrich Moore** (B.F.A. art) works as an artist, art instructor, leader for creativity and spiritual life retreats and is the program secretary for the UNL Women's and Gender Studies program. She has had several paintings used for magazine covers and illustrations. The magazine, "Zion's Herald," used her

# ALUMNI NOTES

painting, "Holding Up the Heaviness" on the front cover of the March/April 2006 issue. Glenda's artwork is also used for the UNL Women's and Gender Studies program posters and brochures. Glenda was the speaker at the Church of the Brethren Clergywomen's Breakfast at the General Conference in Des Moines in July.

## 1976

**Lawrence Gwozdz** (M.M.) conducts The Sax-Chamber Orchestra, which recently released a CD entitled "Parabolically Bach" (Romeo Records). The 11-member ensemble is comprised of students at The University of Southern Mississippi. The CD is an all-Bach program of works originally for keyboard, choir and orchestra.

**Albert Sperath** (M.F.A. art) continues to serve as Director of the University Museum and Historic Houses at the University of Mississippi. Recently William Faulkner's home, Rowan Oak, was placed under the museum's responsibilities and a multimillion dollar restoration of the house and grounds is continuing.

## 1977

**Nancy Anderson** (B.M.E.) recently returned from New York City, where her Sheldon High School Varsity Choir performed Haydn's "Paukenmesse" with the Willamette University Singers under the direction of Dr. Wallace Long at Carnegie Hall in New York City, where they received a standing ovation.

## 1978

**Val (Vollers) Bard** (B.S. Ed. theatre) has been Managing Director of the Little Red Hen Theatre in Wakefield, Neb., since 1994. They completed their first year in their new black box theatre on May 1.

**Donald Callen Freed** (M.M., 1991 Ph.D.) was appointed Associate Professor of Vocal Music at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas. He was awarded a

Teaching Council Grant from Sul Ross and nominated for the Outstanding Teacher of the Year in 2005-2006. He was the musical director for the Big Bend Theatre's production of "Annie Get Your Gun" this summer. Freed has had articles published in the Journal of Singing and Choral Journal this year. The Sul Ross Choir premiered his new choral work, "The Sacred Hoop," on the text from Black Elk Speaks. The piece was in memory of his mother, Mary Louise Callen Freed, who died Dec. 4, 2005, and was a UNL alumna. Freed also had two other choral works, "In the Lord You Are Light" and "Bleak Midwinter" that came out last spring.

**Rob Hartung** (B.M.E., 1988 M.M.) has been Director of Bands at Madison Public Schools (Nebr.) for 12 years. He has been named Outstanding Band Director of the Year at the Mid States Conference three times, and he has been nominated to Who's Who of American Teachers three times. He received a Golden Apple Teaching Award from Nebraska Wesleyan University. He is the lead trumpet and Director of Music for the Columbus Jazz Orchestra and leader of the jazz sextet The High Tops. He also plays trumpet in the Nebraska Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Band, The Smoke Ring, and is the Praise Band Director for First United Methodist Church in Norfolk.

## 1979

**Jeanine York Garesche** (B.M.) is a replacement player with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra and has performed, recorded and toured with them. She is also a very active freelance performer throughout the St. Louis area and the Midwest. She is a faculty member of Webster University and the University of Missouri-St. Louis and a former member of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic in Fort Wayne, Ind.

## 1980

**Lia M. Jantz Hansen** (B.F.A. theatre arts)



**Larry Lawless**

is currently working as Assistant Professor of Theatre and Costume/Makeup Designer for Vanguard University of Southern California. She is a member of the founding production team for American Coast Theatre Company (ACTC).

## 1981

**Michael Fowler** (M.F.A. art) is the Mary Durban Toole Chair of Art and Associate Professor of Design at the University of South Carolina at Aiken.

## 1982

**Larry Lawless** (M.M.) and his The Lawless Percussion and Jazz Ensemble went into the studio this summer to record their debut CD, "Behind Bars." The CD consists of all original jazz music composed by each of the five members of the ensemble, performed entirely on percussion instruments. The release is set for October 2006 at [www.lawlesspercussion.com](http://www.lawlesspercussion.com).

**Craig Lee** (B.F.A. art) is a fine artist living in Omaha. He is primarily a painter and has done a wide range of murals, paintings, drawings and theatre scenery.

**Tom Mitchell** (M.F.A. theatre arts) has been appointed Acting Head of the Department of Theatre at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

## 1983

**Lynn-Steven Johanson** (M.F.A. theatre arts), had his play, "A Tale from the North

# ALUMNI NOTES

Woods,” win Arizona’s East Valley Community Theatre’s 2006 Playwriting Contest, and it is scheduled for a February 2007 production. In addition, his play, “The Crucifixion of Moe and Ira,” was produced by the Makor Theatre in New York City in July 2005 and was scheduled for production at the Great Plains Theatre Festival in Omaha in June 2006.

## 1986

**Kari Sigerson** (B.A. art history) is co-founder of Sigerson Morrison, which designs and produces luxury ladies shoes and accessories in Italy. She operates branded boutiques in New York City and Los Angeles.

## 1987

**Susan LaFever** (M.M.) attended the Barry Tuckwell Institute at Gettysburg College in June. Besides participating in masterclasses, she performed the “Nocturne” by Franz Strauss for horn and piano and the first movement of Eric Ewazen’s “Grand Canyon Suite” for eight horns.

## 1988

**Judith Wynhausen** (M.F.A. theatre arts) is a professional storyteller and has recently been accepted on the Missouri Arts Council Touring Roster and School Touring Roster of Performing Artists. She performs in costume as Mother Goose and recently completed a translation of 38 traditional Mother Goose rhymes into Spanish.

## 1991

**Christine Winkler** (B.M.) is performing the role of Irene in Henrik Ibsen’s “When We Dead Awaken” at the Commonweal Theatre Company in Lanesboro, Minn. Christine is currently a Resident Company Member, Managing Director, Actor and Musical Director for the Commonweal Theatre Company. In March, she directed a high school production of “You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown.” Last December, she assistant directed a world premier production of “The Nutcracker and the



Judith Wynhausen as “Mother Goose.”

Mouse King” at the Commonweal.

## 1992

**Judith K. Sweney** (M.A. museum studies) is Professor of Art at Union College and Southeast Community College.

**Ann VanAllen-Russell** (M.M.) has been appointed Senior Lecturer and Deputy Head of Undergraduate Programmes at Trinity College of Music in London. She received her Ph.D. in 2004 from the University of London Goldsmiths College.

## 1994

**Missy Thibodeaux-Thompson** (M.F.A. theatre arts) and **Eric Thibodeaux-Thompson** (M.F.A. theatre arts 1992) are living in Springfield, Ill., where Eric has been Director of Theatre and Assistant Professor of Theatre in the Communication Program at the University of Illinois at Springfield since 2002. His recent directing credits include “Hedda Gabler” and “Oedipus the King” for the 2005-2006 UIS season. He performed again this summer with the Illinois Shakespeare Festival in Bloomington/Normal. Missy started this

Fall as an Assistant Professor of Theatre also in the Communication Program at UIS. Her recent directing credits include “Stop Kiss” and “The Glass Menagerie” both at Illinois College, where she was a half-time Assistant Professor of Theatre. Eric and Missy have a 5-year-old daughter, Emma.

## 1996

**Ron Gann** (M.M.) is a saxophone/clarinet player with the U.S. Air Force Bands and currently a Military Training Instructor for Lackland Air Force Base (Texas) Drum and Bugle Corps. He is responsible for initial military training with all members of the U.S. Air Force Bands program.

**Tom Woldt** (Ph.D. Dramatic Arts) took over as Chair for Region V of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in April. He will serve a three-year term as Chair of the seven-state Great Plains Region, coordinating the yearly regional festivals and representing the region as a member of the national committee at the Kennedy Center. Tom continues to serve as Chair of the Department of Theatre Arts at Simpson College in Iowa, where he both lives and works with **Ann (Niergarth) Woldt** (M.F.A. 1993).

## 1997

**Ben Strain** (B.M.E.) is the band director and percussion coordinator at Blue Valley High School in Stilwell, Kansas. He just completed his Masters of Music degree from the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

## 1999

**Jeremy Kolwinska** (M.M.) has been named Chair of the Department of Music at the University of Tennessee-Martin. In addition, he plays trombone in the Jackson Symphony.

## 2000

**Ruth Foley** (D.M.A.) is Associate Professor of Voice at Liberty University, where she has been since 1992.

# ALUMNI NOTES

**Godwin Sadoh** (M.M.) was appointed to the position of Assistant Professor of Music at LeMoyne-Owen College (LOC) in Memphis, Tenn. He coordinates the sacred music program of the Department of Music and directs the LOC Concert Choir. In May, Sadoh completed his fourth book, "Intercultural Dimensions in Ayo Bankole's Music." It will be published by Wayne Leupold Editions, North Carolina, in 2007. The world premiere of his "Nigerian Suite No. 2 for Organ Solo" was June 21 at the Rochester Christian Reformed Church in Penfield, N.Y. The world premiere of his "Ose Baba [Thank You Father]" was July 9 at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Fayetteville, N.Y.

## 2001

**Elizabeth Schuller** (B.M.E.) is currently teaching strings and general music in Chesapeake, Va.

## 2002

**Abby Miller** (B.A. theatre arts) is acting in Los Angeles. She appeared in the May 9 episode of "Gilmore Girls" on the WB network.

**Mitchell Wininger** (M.M.) was recently named Coordinator of Secondary Fine Arts for the Galena Park Independent School District in Houston. She will be responsible for art, band, choir, dance and theater at the secondary level (grades 6-12).

## 2003

**Jefferson Campbell** (D.M.A.) accepted the position of Assistant Professor of Bassoon and Music History at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

**Gina Goettl** (B.A. music) is assistant principal horn of the Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra.

**Amy Hutchinson** (B.F.A. art) is currently at the University of Iowa in the School of Library and Information Science and Center for the Book joint program pursuing a Master's degree.

**Jessica Hutchinson** (B.A. theatre arts) started in February as the Education and Community Programs Assistant at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, where she had previously completed an internship from January-June 2005.

**Catherine Wallis** (B.F.A. theatre arts) was a production stage manager for a film festival live show this past year. She stage managed for the Snowy Range Summer Theatre in June and July and will be stage managing "Babes in Arms" at the Missouri Theatre in the fall.

## 2004

**Denise Brady** (M.F.A.) has been appointed Executive Director of the Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts in Nebraska City. Denise directed the Nebraska Book Arts Center since its founding in 1989 at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and has served on the boards of the Omaha Printmaker's Guild and the Nebraska Center for the Book. She is a book artist and fine printer whose handmade limited edition books and broadsides of contemporary poetry are held in private and public collections in the U.S. and Great Britain.

**Travis Richter** (M.M.) performed Monostatos in "The Magic Flute" and Sellem in "The Rakes Progress" for Des Moines Metro Opera. He was a guest recitalist at Minnesota State University and the University of Southern Alabama. He is currently pursuing his D.M.A. in voice performance at Louisiana State University.

**Michelle Warner** (B.F.A. technical theatre) has been accepted to the University of Nevada-Las Vegas to pursue a Master of Fine Arts degree.

**Gary P. Wilson** (D.M.A.) has been hired as Director of Choral Activities at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tenn.

## 2005

**Kimberly Alspaugh** (B.M.E.) is teaching general music at a bilingual elementary

school in Boulder, Colo. She just purchased a home and enjoys spending time in the mountains on the weekends. She is also teaching private piano lessons and beginning classwork toward her Master's degree.

**Michelle M. Bennett** (B.M.E.) just completed her first year of teaching K-5 elementary general music at McKinley, Emerson and Roosevelt Elementary Schools in Sioux City, Iowa.

**Anna Drozda** (B.A. art history) has been awarded a competitive 2006 Fulbright grant to study in the Czech Republic.

**Shauna Goodsman** (B.F.A. art) is working for Walt Disney World Parks and Resorts in sales and marketing.

**Esme Guenther** (M.F.A. art) was featured in the Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman-Reviews weekly entertainment insert on June 9 as an emerging artist profile.

**Rafael Mevorach** (D.M.A.) has been appointed Professor of Music at DIA University in Norwalk, Calif.

**Peter T. Scherr** (B.F.A. art) and his wife, Stacy, celebrated the birth of their daughter, Olivia Rose Scherr, on January 6, 2006. Olivia underwent successful open-heart surgery on April 27 to correct a congenital heart defect.

## 2006

**Joshua Harris** (B.M.E.) has accepted a position with the Grand Island (Neb.) Public Schools to teach elementary band and assisting at the high school and junior high.

**Sarah MacMillan** (M.F.A. art) will begin a residency at Hunter College in New York City this September.

**Dan Perry** (M.F.A. art) was included in an exhibition of Iowa artists entitled "There's No Place Like Home" this summer at the Des Moines Art Center. ■

# ALUMNI WEEKEND

(Below) Members of the Undergraduate Student Advisory Board had lunch with the Alumni Achievement Award winners at Selleck Dining Hall on April 21. From left, Joy Barlean and Jason Slaughter, both of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, Bob Askey, Frank Tirro, John Nygren, Curtis Moeller of the School of Music, and Blair Diers of the Department of Art and Art History.



(Right) From left, Frank Tirro, Hixson-Lied Dean Giacomo Oliva, Bob Askey and John Nygren at the Honors Day Dinner on April 22.



Photo by University Photographer Tom Slocum

## College Alumni Weekend held in April

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts celebrated its annual Alumni Weekend with its Honors Day Dinner on Saturday, April 22 in the Johnny Carson Theater on the UNL campus.

More than 170 people gathered to celebrate the achievements of students, faculty and alumni at the Honors Day Dinner.

Alumni Achievement Award, Award

of Merit and Student Leadership Award winners are selected by the College's Alumni Board from nominations submitted by the general public, faculty and alumni. The alumni achievement award winners met with students on Friday, April 21.

Other scholarship award recipients are selected by their respective academic departments.

Other honorees included recognition of the first two Hixson-Lied Professors, Gail Kendall and Christin Mamiya, and the recognition of retiring organ professors Quentin Faulkner and George Ritchie. ■

For a full listing of award recipients, please visit <http://www.unl.edu/finearts/honorsawards.shtml>.



Photo by University Photographer Tom Slocum

(Left) From left, Sarah Hranac, Taylor Bendgen, Traci Christensen, Hixson-Lied Dean Giacomo Oliva, Caitlin Applegate, Jennifer Ghormley, Megan Ratchford, Cessa Cantrell and Helen Nosova.



(Left) Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre recipient Bob Askey (center) meets with Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students (left to right) Jim Hopkins, Flynt Burton, Acquah Dansoh and Ja'Nelle Taylor.





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# Putting a face to a familiar voice

BY JOEL GEHRINGER

*Bob Askey received the 2006 Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre.*

Maybe it's the broadcast training and years and years of radio experience, but there's a certain tone in Bob Askey's voice that lets you know he's been a few places, met a few people and seen a few things.

After all, he's been a sports broadcaster in Lincoln, a helicopter traffic reporter in Denver and the mayor of Longmont, Colo.

He was a classmate of both Dick Cavett and Johnny Carson. In fact, he watched his first television program in the Carsons' living room.

But that same quality in Askey's voice also gives away the fact he's proud of his work and content with life in retirement, knowing he's done more than his fair share to give something back to his community and the world.

Once again, it was all in the voice.

Born and raised in Lincoln, Askey enrolled in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1948 after graduating from Lincoln High School.

He wanted to be an English teacher, but along the way, he found an interest in radio and changed his curriculum to mainly broadcasting courses.

It was in those classes he met his now famous peers, though he was more of a friend to Dick Carson, Johnny's younger brother, than to the famous "Tonight Show" host. Nevertheless, Dick invited Askey and a few other classmates to his house one night because his father, Kent Carson, an electrician, had recently bought a 12-inch, black-and-white television set.

"They'd invited a bunch of radio and TV guys — actually, it was a bunch of radio guys. There were no TV guys at the university quite yet," Askey said. "So I went on down there, and it was in their house that I first saw television."



**Bob Askey**

Of course, Carson and Cavett would go on to careers in television, but Askey took a different route.

Through college, Askey worked as a copywriter for KOLN Radio to pay his tuition bills. One summer day in 1949, he was in studio with Jack Hyland, who was calling a Lincoln Chiefs baseball game.

"We also had a guy who would read the commercial breaks in between innings," Askey said. "Well, he left the building for a moment. He thought the inning would be longer than it was."

But sure enough, the inning ended quickly, leaving no one to read the advertisements.

"I was the only guy there, so I just sat down and read the commercials on the radio," Askey said. "And that was my start. I was 19 years old, and I've been doing it ever since."

Now 76, Askey enjoyed a long career on radio after graduating from UNL with a B.A. in speech. His radio career took him through stints at KFOR, KLIN, KHOW in Denver, where he called traffic reports from the air, and KAAT in California, which broadcasted out of Hugh Hefner's old Playboy Club.

"It was the only place I worked where the studios had wallpaper with red hearts."

He settled in Longmont, Colo., in 1967 and was elected to the city council in 1975 and as mayor in 1979.

"I found that a mayor is the servant of the people, because while I'm out there looking at 50-year water or electrical plans, my constituents were calling me at home and saying, 'Bob, could you fix that pothole down there?'"

Askey decided to serve only one term because he had found another job as the voice of Talking Book Publishers, an audio book company that recorded literature for the blind. For 30 years, Askey lent his voice to tales from Tom Clancy, Dr. Seuss and even the Bible.

Askey said the techniques for recording came quite naturally.

"That preparation and training was all back from the University of Nebraska," he said.

Often, Askey would record all parts in the book himself.

"It was very much like reconstructing an old-time radio show, and I was the one-man band," he said. "It's quite a trick to do that."

Among his community of listeners, Askey became a celebrity, receiving fan mail and phone calls from across the country. Often, he phoned back so people could hear his voice in person, and anyone who sent him a letter would receive a handwritten Askey response — though he did have to start sending mass mailings after letters started arriving in the thousands.

He even received the Narrator of the Year Award from the American Federation for the Blind in 1986 and 2002.

Askey retired in 2004, and since, he's been into investing, photography and travel.

He said he doesn't know what his next project will be or where his retirement travels will take him.

But one thing's for sure in his made-for-radio, loved-by-millions voice: Wherever his travels take him, he'll be ready. ■

# The history of History of Jazz

By JOEL GEHRINGER

*Frank Tirro received the 2006 Alumni Achievement Award in Music.*

Anyone who has ever taken a contemporary music history course should know the name Frank Tirro.

Most don't, of course, but they should. Tirro is the one they have to thank for courses like the history of jazz, blues or rock 'n' roll.

Before Tirro, academics didn't study modern music, but the accomplished jazz musician and aficionado changed all that with one simple presentation in 1966.

Born and raised in Omaha, Tirro first experienced music through violin lessons at age 4 and piano lessons at 6.

As a student at Central High School, Tirro was involved in ROTC and eventually earned the position as drum major of the Central ROTC band.

Upon graduation in 1953, Tirro initially left Nebraska to earn an engineering degree at Cornell University, but his father's death led him to return and enroll at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

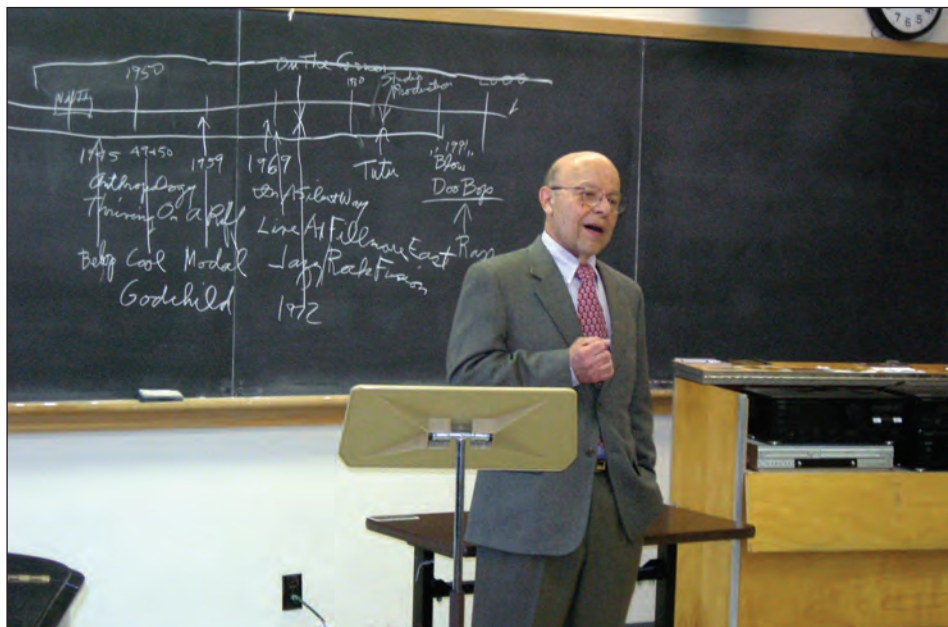
While studying engineering, Tirro stayed involved in music, playing in jazz bands at small gigs and fraternity parties.

As a senior in engineering, just credits shy of his degree, he decided he would switch to music. He finished the degree in two years and three summers, graduating in 1960 with a bachelor of music education. He then earned a master's degree from Northwestern University and began his doctorate at the University of Chicago.

Now, up to this point, Tirro exclusively studied classical and Renaissance music.

"The University of Chicago had some very well-known Renaissance scholars," he said. "That's all that was being taught. That's what was being focused on at the time."

Through his doctorate program, Tirro joined the American Musicological Society, which held its 1966 annual meeting in New Orleans.



Frank Tirro talks about Miles Davis in Professor Pamela Starr's music history class in April.

As a nod to the history of the city, the society decided to hold a session on jazz.

"When I saw this session, I had a great idea for a presentation," Tirro said. He wanted to present a comprehensive history of jazz music. The society accepted his abstract, and Tirro traveled to the convention to give his presentation.

And though it was an unconventional topic, the presentation and accompanying article, "The Silent Theme Tradition in Jazz," were well-received.

After presenting his piece, Tirro was approached by all kinds of researchers and historians.

"A couple of people came up to me asking if I would write a book," Tirro said. "From that came the book that was published in 1978."

That book was "Jazz: A History," the first comprehensive jazz history text and the leading text for history courses across the country.

Needless to say, Tirro's book was quite a jump for his career.

"It got both of my kids through college," he joked.

After completing the doctorate, Tirro

traveled to Italy for two years in 1971 and 1972. When he returned, he took a job at the University of Kansas, where he started his first jazz history course.

From there, he was hired as chairman of the department of music at Duke University before becoming dean of the Yale University School of Music.

As dean at Yale, Tirro discovered students were learning music and performance without understanding where their styles and techniques came from. He reworked the curriculum so students would learn more about the history of their music.

Tirro stepped down as dean a few years ago, but he still teaches music history courses. Right now, he said, he's enjoying the extra time and searching for his next big project.

"I'm just trying to get a little fun out of life," he said. "I've just finished a book on Miles Davis" — it's called "The Birth of the Cool of Miles Davis and his Associates" — "and I think I'm going to start something on Benny Goodman or his arrangers. I've got to find the materials and support the ideas I have, but I think that's probably where I'm going to go next." ■

# Renowned glass artist has roots in Nebraska

BY JOEL GEHRINGER

*John Nygren received the 2006 Alumni Achievement Award in Art.*

For all intents and purposes, John Nygren is a one-man operation.

He has no partners in business, no assistants and no collaborators.

Everything that comes from his glassblowing workshop in Walnut Cove, N.C., is entirely his own. Even the tools and equipment he uses are hand made.

But even for a man who has made himself one of the most respected glass artists in the country, Nygren can't stress enough the importance of his mentors—especially those at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln who introduced him to the world of glasswork.

Today, Nygren specializes in glass, and his pieces often reflect themes of nature, which Nygren said has its roots in his childhood.

Nygren was born in Big Springs, but his family moved often, as Nygren's father was a civil engineer. He remembers living in Ashland, Denver, Mead and Ceresco, though he said he just considered himself a citizen of Saunders County.

But the moves didn't distract from his two main interests: art and nature.

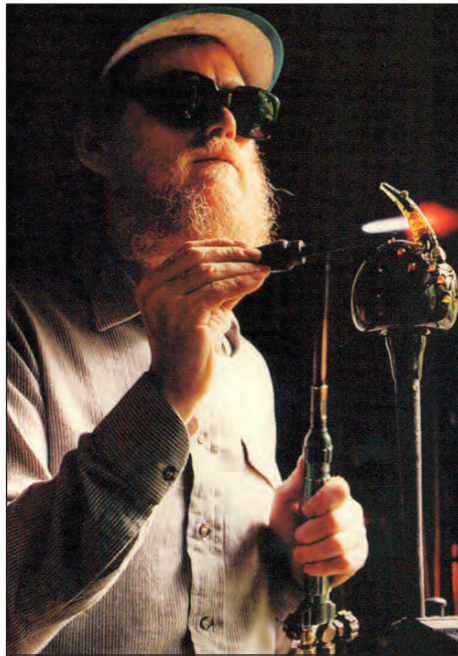
"Apparently, I was drawing pretty early on," Nygren said. "But I was also interested in outdoor stuff in general — insects and that in particular."

When Nygren graduated from Ashland High School in 1958, he had a tough decision to make about his future.

"I had to decide whether I was going to be an entomologist or an artist," he said. "Well, I decided on art. I had visited the Ag college, but their interest was really more how to kill insects. I was more interested in how cool they were."

After a short period at Luther College, Nygren came to UNL, where he worked under professors Norman Geske, Jean Richards and Richard Hegelberger, among others. He also studied with Tom Sheffield, whom Nygren considers his mentor.

"I think the whole art department was such an incubator of students at this time,"



John Nygren

he said. "I can't stress enough the power of that faculty. They welcomed us into their worlds."

It was at UNL where Nygren was opened up to new ideas and mediums, and he gave credit to two specific instances for steering him toward glasswork.

"When I went in, I wanted to be a painter, and I started in that direction," Nygren said. "Well one day, I was walking past the pot shop and a kid I knew who had just been through ceramics called me in."

After that, Nygren was hooked and knew he wanted to work with three-dimensional mediums.

Then, in 1962, Geske, Richards and a group of professors returned from a trip to Italy with examples of contemporary Italian glasswork.

"I remember looking at those pieces and wondering, 'How did they do that?'" Nygren said.

Nygren eventually blew glass as a senior project, but it was the last he would work with glass for a while.

After graduating in 1965 and receiving his M.F.A. from the Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1967, Nygren found a job teaching

at Wilmington College in North Carolina.

While teaching there, Nygren reconnected with Curt Hoard, a student he knew from Cranbrook who was coincidentally teaching glassblowing classes in another North Carolina school.

Nygren went to visit Hoard and returned to Wilmington with 100 pounds of glass. His casual interest would soon become a serious business.

Nygren quit teaching in 1970 and moved to Walnut Cove to open his studio, but it was a difficult time for contemporary glass artists.

"There weren't any galleries then, and there were very few glass artists, even," he said. "But probably the big break came when the first New York gallery called."

That gallery was the Contemporary Art Glass Group, formed by now famous gallery owners Doug Heller and Josh Rosenblatt.

Nygren was one of four artists exhibited, even though most times, his work was shown for a short while at random shows then stored for long periods of time.

"There was really no place to show it," he said. "There was no market for it."

But Nygren knew the market was opening up when Rosenblatt called one day after a New York antique show to tell him his work had been sold out and buyers were fighting over his pieces.

Contemporary glasswork was finally receiving the attention it deserved, and Nygren soon saw his work accepted into collections across the country, including the Smithsonian Institution and the Corning Museum of Glass.

"I guess mostly it's been a really good life," Nygren said. "We've never had a lot of money, but we've had time and I've pretty much been able to do what I wanted to do and make what I've wanted to make."

Today, Nygren said he's more or less retired, taking time with his wife Sharon at their Walnut Cove home and enjoying the 35 acres of wildlife sanctuary they own.

But Nygren said there's still a chance he'll return to working if inspiration were to strike.

"People ask me if I'm retired," he said, "and I say, 'Yeah, but never say never.'" ■



**University of Nebraska–Lincoln Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts  
2007 Alumni Board Awards**

**Call for Nominations**

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Board requests nominations from alumni and friends for awards to be given to outstanding alumni, students, and supporters of the College. The awards will be presented at the College Honors Day program on April 21, 2007.

*Note: All nominations for the Alumni Achievement Awards are kept on file and remain in consideration for three years.*

**Alumni Achievement Award.** This award is made to an alumnus who has demonstrated outstanding achievement and overall professional excellence. Three awards will be presented, one each in Art and Art History, Music (including Dance) and Theatre (including Film and New Media). The Alumni Achievement Award recipients will be invited to interact with current students in classes during the alumni weekend.

**Student Leadership Awards.** Currently enrolled students or recent graduates of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts who have demonstrated leadership in academics or in student life are eligible to be nominated.

**Award of Merit.** Presented to an individual, not necessarily an alumnus of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, who demonstrated continued interest in the College and has shared his or her time, energy, and guidance.

**Faculty Service Award (NEW this year!).** Presented to a current or emeritus (emerita) faculty member in the College who has demonstrated outstanding and dedicated service to the community and to the College. "Service" is defined as contributions to professional and public service activities. Professional and/or public service activities may include activities in the faculty member's discipline, art, profession or society, or activities outside of the faculty member's discipline. The award honors significant contributions that strengthen the ties between the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the community.

The deadline for submitting nominations is Friday, December 8, 2006. Fill out the nomination form below, or download a form at <http://www.unl.edu/finearts/alumni.shtml>.



**Nominations are due Friday, December 8, 2006. Return to: Kathe Andersen, Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, 102 Nelle Cochrane Woods, Lincoln NE 68588-0144. Or download a form at <http://www.unl.edu/finearts/alumni.shtml>.**

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Check one:  Alumni Achievement  Student Leadership  Award of Merit  
 Faculty Service Award

I nominate the following person:

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Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

# College aims to incorporate digital arts

BY KATELYN KERKHOVE

Ed Forde can't decide what artists of the 13th century would think of today's technology.

But Forde, chairman of the Department of Art and Art History, knows that at least a few would appreciate it.

Even in the time before advanced photography, Renaissance artists were using cameras to copy their images. Now, hundreds of years later, artists can create their work digitally on computers, and Forde thinks maybe some 13th century artists would have liked this option.

"Artists are eccentric, and they respond emotionally to a lot of things, so there will always be artists who are resistant to technological applications," Forde said. "But if you go all the way back to the Renaissance, artists were using cameras before they even had real cameras to mechanically reproduce their images. This is still controversial. However, it's not a big deal in the professional art world anymore at all."

As technology advances, it has become increasingly evident that the University of Nebraska–Lincoln's Department of Art and Art History must keep up with the new trends.

Just as movies require musical scores and films require graphic designers for movie titles, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts feels required to keep up with ever-changing technology—if not for the betterment of the College and its programs, then for the future of its graduates.

In an effort to prepare students for their professional careers, the College has begun a collaboration process to incorporate digital arts into its curriculum.

"Technology isn't going away; it's moving forward," Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean Giacomo Oliva said. "Whether or not that's good or bad doesn't matter, because we are responsible for giving our students the opportunity to make an



Photo by Candace Frank

M.F.A. student Mary Gaetz works on editing software in the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center computer lab.

educated choice."

According to Oliva, the digital arts begin with visual media. Musicians, though not working with visuals directly, must put music with visual pieces, and graphic design students must learn to create their work on computers.

But the definition of digital arts is somewhat elusive, Forde said. In general, the College defines digital art as it relates to the use of visuals such as graphics, animation, motion graphics and simulations, he said. He also includes the use of text and graphics or the applications that could be used in different media forms like Web pages, animation, commercial animation, research animation or simulations for certain projects or topics. Associate Professor Ron Bartels, who teaches graphic design, defined the digital arts to incorporate music as well.

"Over the last 15 years there's been a synthesis of equipment into the digital

sphere," Bartels said. "What used to be hard physical things, like a guitar, a horn, a paint canvas or a camera—those have all become digital. Because of that common digital base, there's been a lot of cross-fertilization of different kinds of collaborations in the creative realm."

With this fluid definition, Forde said that the College believes that digital media is "the next big frontier that all the disciplines at the university need" and "all the colleges are having to include in their research and their publicity."

He said he could not recall any college or program that did not have an established Web site to display its work and its research or to just promote its cause.

"It seems to me that this touches on everything at the university," Forde said. "That means not just the academic part of the university, but it has to do with the administrative part and the student programs that the university administers."

# TECHNOLOGY

With this grander perspective on the need for technology university-wide, Oliva said that the development of the digital arts is based more on collaboration between the different types of communications than on the technology itself. If more of an effort were placed on providing a fluid climate between the different art forms, the technology piece would shortly follow, he said.

That goal is part of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts' current proposal for the advancement of the digital arts: "the realization of our digital media offerings in ways that bring film, video, animation, design, music composition and Web-based applications together."

Graphic design is the fastest growing arts program with almost 50 percent of arts majors—150 students—choosing it. In this major students have no choice but to use technology because graphic design is done almost solely on the computer.

Bartels has begun to implement projects into his curriculum that have graphic design students working with students in various majors, especially film.

Bartels' students have designed film titles and promotional programs and posters for student films and the student film festival. Since most directors are not graphic designers, it was up to the graphic design students to create the look of the film, Bartels said.

"(The students) loved it," Bartels said. "Whenever there is something like TV or film or something that moves, whether you are 2 years old or 20, you are attracted to that flickering light. When you can do exotic and interesting things with typography and images, it's very evocative to the students."

Even Forde's passion for art history has begun to digitize.

While professors had always used slides to project images on the wall for students, the art history program has recently received a grant that will help put all the images in a digital archive, accessible to professors and students.

"It's a sucker punch," Forde said. "Now all kids know how to use a computer at the university, and it's easier for them if they

can study at their dorms. And the quality of digital imagery is better than what you get in printed books. It's going to be much more convenient for students to study and to master their coursework."

While departments are individually incorporating technology into their curricula, Oliva still stresses the need for collaboration among them. Whether this happens inside or outside the College, mixing and mingling among the different university programs is crucial, he said.

Forde described the situation candidly, saying that for any sort of digital arts program to begin, the College had to show how the university as a whole would benefit.

*'What used to be hard physical things, like a guitar, a horn, a paint canvas or a camera—those have all become digital.'*

**Ron Bartels  
Associate Professor**

"By collaboration we mean we have to work together with other programs and departments inside and outside our college," Forde said. "We already have some successful experiences with other colleges—the visual literacy program with the journalism college—but any kind of initiative like this is going to affect other programs and colleges across the university. We need to form partnerships because it's going to take extra resources, and the university administration prioritizes resources that can be shared among programs and colleges."

But this isn't to say the process hasn't

already been started.

According to the proposal, there is already an established curricular framework for tenure-line faculty in film and new media, in graphic design and in music composition. Also, 50 percent of visual literacy coursework already is being produced on the computer.

All of the projects so far have been put in place for one main purpose: to enrich the educational experience of the students. Oliva said he hopes advancing the technological part of the College will attract more students to the university and to the College more specifically.

Looking into the future, Forde said he would like to see digital arts become a normal, major part of the curriculum. He said the College has the ability to remain current in the state of the art with the external industries, and he hopes the university will take a leadership role in the effort so that graduates will be more competitive and more successful in their endeavors.

As American culture continues to develop, technology will be at the forefront. With it, Bartels said, there will be less definition between the spectrums of arts and almost every profession. There's no doubt that keeping up with the progress is imperative to the development of the College.

According to Oliva, the College is responsible for preparing its students for the "real world" in which all the different forms of art will come together.

In a time when the line between music and computer is fading, musicians must have the educational background to compose music in a digitized format. Artists must appreciate the development of computerized forms, and graphic designers must understand their non-computerized artistic counterparts.

Oliva and Forde know that technology isn't going to go away, and it is up to them and the university to make sure it is accessible to students.

"I just see it as something we are naturally going to do," Forde said. "And, really, I think every generation is going to expect it when they come to the university." ■

## College welcomes five new faculty members

### Department of Art and Art History

**Suzanne Spencer** is a Senior Lecturer, who will teach general art survey courses, courses in modern and postmodern art and architecture and seminars in American art and architecture. This fall, she will teach a special topics course titled "Modernism/Postmodernism: Architecture and Design in the 20th Century."



Suzanne Spencer

Spencer received her Ph.D. from Emory University and her B.A. with honors from Loyola Marymount University. She has taught before in the Department of Art and Art History and for the College of Architecture. She was the assistant humanities editor for the University of Nebraska Press from 2002 to 2004. Spencer is a member of the College Art Association and the Society of Architectural Historians.

### Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film

**Wenhai Ma** joins the faculty as Associate Professor of Scene Design. Ma received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Theatre Design from the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing in 1982. Later, he was granted a full scholarship to Carnegie Mellon University for his graduate studies. With a Master of Fine Arts degree in both scene and costume design from CMU, he returned to the Central Academy of Drama to teach scenic design from 1984 to 1987. He then taught in the Drama Program at Duke University from 1987 to 1998. He moved to Hong Kong and started teaching at the



Wenhai Ma

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in September 1998.

During the past 20 years, Ma has designed a great number of productions in the U.S., China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. His most recent set designs include No.1 Restaurant in China for Spring-Time Theatre; Family and A Midsummer Night's Dream for Chung Ying Theatre; An Absolute Turkey for the Hong Kong Repertory Theatre; Forever Teresa Teng for the TNT Production Ltd. (in Taiwan); and Falling in Love with Her for Spring-Time Theatre.

He has also illustrated several children's books for publishers in the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

### School of Music

**Anthony J. Bushard** is Assistant Professor of Music History. Bushard received a B.A. in music (piano) from St. John's University in Collegeville, Minn., as well as a Masters and Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Kansas. He is a member of the American Musicological Society, College Music Society, Society for American Music, Pi Kappa Lambda and Phi Kappa Phi honor societies, and a two-time recipient of the Milton Steinhardt Scholarship in musicology at the University of Kansas. Also while at KU, he was a harpsichordist for the KU Collegium Musicum and the Spencer Consort.



Anthony J. Bushard

Bushard's research interests are in Contemporary American music with a special focus on jazz, blues, and film music. His masters research dealt with the jazz and blues club scene in Kansas City during the 1930s. He has published sections of that research in the New Grove Dictionary of Jazz, Second Edition. His dissertation, titled Fear and Loathing in Hollywood: Representations of Fear, Paranoia, and

Individuality vs. Conformity in Selected Film Music of the 1950s, considers the musico-dramatic implications of the scores for High Noon (1951), The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951), and On the Waterfront (1954) alongside sociopolitical undercurrents of the 1950s. Bushard has presented his research at a SAM national meeting, as well as regional meetings of the AMS, CMS, film and jazz symposia, and at various lectures throughout the Midwest.

A native of Sioux Falls, S.D., Bushard has taught previously at the University of Kansas and the University of Missouri, Kansas City. This fall he will be teaching Music for Film, History of Jazz from 1900 to Bop and Introduction to Undergraduate Studies in Music.

**Christopher Marks** is Assistant Professor of Organ. From 1999 to 2006, he taught organ and served as University Organist at Syracuse University. An active proponent of new music, Marks has premiered a number of commissioned organ works. His diverse stylistic interests also steer him toward a variety of other repertoire, especially that of the German Baroque period. Equally comfortable with solo and collaborative playing, he performs frequently with ensembles such as the Boston Brass.



Christopher Marks

He holds degrees from University of Richmond (B.M. piano), University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (M.M. piano and M.M. organ), and the Eastman School of Music (D.M.A. organ), where he studied with Michael Farris. His performances have garnered him top prizes in competitions, including the Arthur Poister Competition, the San Marino Competition, the Fort Wayne Competition, and the Mader Competition.



His recent recording on the historic Walter Holtkamp organ at Syracuse University represents his varied musical interests, featuring music spanning four centuries that is rarely performed and recorded. The disc is titled Discoveries and is available on the Raven label.

**Alan Mattingly** is Assistant Professor of Horn, where his duties include the private instruction of the horn studio, conducting the horn choir, and teaching music theory and aural skills classes.



**Alan Mattingly**

His other teaching assignments have included orchestration, wind and percussion pedagogy, music appreciation, and serving as the graduate coordinator. Mattingly received his Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Alabama and his Master of Music and Doctor of Music degrees from Florida State University.

While attending the University of Alabama, Mattingly played third horn with the Tuscaloosa Symphony Orchestra. While at Florida State University, he was principal horn with the Albany (Ga.) Symphony Orchestra and second horn in the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra. He took first prize at the state and regional rounds of the MTNA Collegiate Artist Competition and had a second place finish in the University Division of the American Horn Competition. His other orchestral engagements have included the Owensboro (Ky.) Symphony Orchestra and the Paducah (Ky.) Symphony Orchestra. Mattingly has performed throughout the United States, Canada, England, and Russia with major performances at conventions of the International Horn Society, and the International Trumpet Guild. In addition to his previous teaching duties at Western Carolina University, Mattingly was the principal hornist with the Spartanburg (S.C.) Philharmonic Orchestra, the Hendersonville Symphony, and associate principal/third horn with the Asheville (N.C.) Symphony Orchestra.

## In Memoriam

**Thomas L. Fritz**, Professor Emeritus of Piano, died Feb. 4. Fritz began at UNL in 1959. He became Associate Professor in 1964 and full Professor in 1970. He retired in 1992. Fritz received his D.M.A. from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles; his M.M. from Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.; and his B.M. from the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore. Fritz performed extensively in solo and ensemble recitals and as a soloist with orchestras.

**Velma Lentz**, who helped establish the Lentz Center for Asian Culture with her husband Donald Lentz, died Feb. 7. Donald and Velma Lentz established the Lentz Center along with an endowment fund with the 1983 donation of their Asian Art collection to the University. The Lentz Center for Asian Culture opened in Morrill Hall on September 9, 1986, and moved to the Hewitt Place in 2000. Velma Lentz served as the first director of the Lentz Center.

**Ann Blomquist Poll**, who was a member of the Hixson-Lied Advisory Board, died on May 2.

She graduated from the University



**Ann Blomquist Poll**

of Nebraska-Lincoln with a Bachelor of Music Education degree and a Master of Music in voice. After graduating, she moved to New York City. She joined the New York Public Library's Music Division, which allowed her to continue her vocal studies for the next five years. For the next 35 years, she focused on a career in the field of financial services' computer systems. She contributed to the design and implementation of computer systems for the American and New York Stock Exchanges and NASDAQ. She also served as consultant and employee in banking, creating and implementing computer systems for the Retail Banking Division and Private Wealth Management Division at Banker's Trust. Later at Deutsche Bank, she played a key role in maintaining their international back office computer operations. Blomquist Poll continued her music study and performed regularly in solo recital and with choral music.

## Next Geske Lecture Nov. 13

The next Geske Lecture will be presented Monday, Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. in the Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery auditorium. William Wallace, the Barbara Murphy Bryant Distinguished Professor of Art History at Washington University in St. Louis will be the lecturer. The event is free and open to the public. A reception will follow the lecture in Sheldon's Great Hall.

Wallace received his Ph.D. in art history from Columbia University in New York in 1983 and is currently Professor and Chair of the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Washington University. He teaches Renaissance art and architecture (1300-1700) and is an internationally recognized authority on Michelangelo and his contemporaries.

The Norman and Jane Geske Lectureship in the History of the Arts was established in 1995 through the generosity of Norman and Jane Geske and features noted scholars in the history of visual arts, music, theatre, dance, film or architecture. The lectures are intended to advance the understanding and appreciation of the arts with creative writing and thinking that reflect the importance of historical perspective of the arts.

# Toward a culture of public engagement in the arts: The role of higher education

BY DAVID E. MYERS

*Can you offer me any advice on what to tell my dad? He's giving me a hard time about my major. He keeps asking how this degree is going to prepare me to earn a living.*

—A frustrated vocal performance major

The persistent issue of career viability, often expressed as it is in the above scenario, has not been lost on arts programs in higher education. In the last decade, a growing number of institutions have implemented career awareness initiatives for students as a complement to discipline-based curricula. The most forward thinking of these models place real-world career demands and opportunities in a larger conceptual context that includes the role of the arts and artists in society. Broader than jobs training, these new models seek to empower students with enriched perspectives, leadership capacity, self-confidence and initiative, and the ability to adapt within a dynamic culture.

The Arts Leadership Program (ALP) at the Eastman School of Music is one example. According to the school's website, "The ALP recognizes that success as a professional musician requires more than superb technique and artistry: Success also requires entrepreneurial savvy, strong communication skills, fluency with emerging technologies, commitment to audience education, and public advocacy for music and the arts. . . the future health and growth of our musical culture relies on the energy and imagination of the next generation of musicians and artists." In addition to seminars, internships, and interchange with practicing professionals, Eastman instituted Music for All, which requires chamber ensembles to present educational programs in the community. Now, a decade after the ALP initiative, there is field-wide momentum around linking career development more closely with professional arts preparation.

Happily, the conversations are not one-sided. Professional associations, philanthropic foundations, and arts organizations are considering similar topics; and they are dialoguing with higher education about the need for a seamless continuum from undergraduate and graduate preparation through lifelong career development. The Pittsburgh Symphony, for example, has engaged musicians in a variety of community activities and provided support to help them be effective. In the late 1990s, the American Symphony Orchestra League founded the Orchestra Leadership Academy (OLA) to provide growth opportunities for career-entry and experienced professionals,



as well as for volunteers. The Eastman School recently implemented a professional development website for orchestral musicians, demonstrating that shared goals between higher education and the professional world can reap important practical benefits for both established and aspiring artists.

In my view, the importance of public engagement as a central tenet of these expanding opportunities cannot be overstated. Higher education must resist any tendency to permit the prescient initiatives of the last decade to revert to seminars on "how to get ahead in the arts," or worse, "how to survive in an arts career." Among musicians, data indicating that 12 percent or less of the adult population attend live classical music, jazz, and opera events, and that participation rates have been static for 20 years, ought to be cause for concern. On the other hand, the fact

that classes based on personal engagement with the arts have yielded increased participatory rates over that same period ought to be cause for possibility-thinking (NEA, 2004).

As artists, we can legitimately be exercised over the fact that in-school arts programs reach indefensibly small percentages of student populations; yet this reality should energize us to understand how schools can connect with the independent drive for arts learning that large numbers of youth exhibit outside of school. We need to contemplate why adults seeking arts knowledge and experience are often intimidated during their initial efforts; but we should also be encouraged by research showing that expressive outlets and creativity constitute important dimensions of meaning-making throughout the life course. The point of these observations is not to suggest that aspiring artists should be confronted with discouraging information too early in their development. Rather, it is to argue for instilling beliefs and attitudes about how passionate practice of the arts in our communities leads toward the transcendent values we all espouse for the public good.

Two RAND reports (2001; 2004) note that the quest to expand arts participation has recently relied on supply-side marketing strategies, essentially promoting the idea that a broader array of arts products will draw larger audiences. Though community engagement has been part of such efforts, the implicit policy perspective has been more about the potential impact for arts organizations and artists than about building a public demand through public benefit. The RAND authors make two important points: 1) that the intrinsic values of the arts, rather than instrumental benefits such as economic growth and improved academic test scores, should lie at the heart of individual engagement and any resulting personal and social benefits; and 2) that sustained,

high-quality personal engagement with artists and the arts is a potent avenue for broadening, deepening, and diversifying audiences, and for instilling desires that transform people from occasional to frequent arts participants.

A rather pointed example of a troubling perspective may help highlight the critical need for public engagement training. A book entitled *How to Make Money Performing in Schools* (Heflick, 1996) offers musicians, actors, and dancers a number of practical suggestions for presenting effective school programs. However, a statement on the back cover indicates that “schools spend hundreds of thousands of dollars every year presenting performing-arts assemblies. You have all the ingredients you need to get your share of this money.” A citation attributed to the Booklist of the American Library Association avers that “this should be a real boon to artists attempting to break into an expanding, lucrative market.”

By way of contrast, it would be intriguing to research the dispositions of artists who have participated in the CONNECT project at London’s Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Founded over 20 years ago by Peter Renshaw, CONNECT engages Guildhall students with East London’s large immigrant population. The project emphasizes four areas of activity: youth music/creative partnerships; arts and community development for healthcare and disability centers; new landscapes in music, art, and performance; and trans-cultural collaboration and research. Among other goals, Renshaw sought to train a new kind of service-oriented artist, one with a sense of accountability for integrating high levels of artistic creativity and performance into community life.

Sean Gregory, the current head of professional development at Guildhall, believes contemporary music schools should position themselves as “cultural catalysts, encouraging learning environments that offer the widest possible access to participation in the arts without compromising reputations and aspirations for excellence” (2005, p. 19). Gregory sees CONNECT-style training as “central to the development of an all-round excellent musician, fit for the purposes of the twenty-first century as a performer, composer, leader, and teacher.” (p. 20)

The Center for Educational Partnerships in Music (CEPM) at Georgia State University has been integrating community engagement into its programs since 1999. CEPM’s Sound Learning partnership with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and seven elementary schools fosters sustained cultures for music learning that are built on the collaborative efforts of teachers, community musicians, and university students. University music majors are inducted into Sound Learning through seminars and guided internships that focus on research-based principles of high-quality music education. Examples of lessons learned to date include the following:

1. Collaborative community engagement work among composition, performance, and music education majors can encourage curricular change that bridges the traditional divisions among sub-disciplines in the field of music
2. Community engagement is consistent with both the artistic and the humanistic dispositions of music majors
3. University students who have participated in community engagement believe that it enhances their own creative development because it requires more conscious thought about communicating both artistically and verbally with a variety of audiences
4. University students exhibit attitudes of leadership, collaboration,

and commitment to community engagement as a part of career visioning; and they plan to ensure the availability of participatory arts opportunities in their communities

Institutional change, whether in higher education, public schools, or community arts organizations, is a challenging task that requires models from which principles can be derived, disseminated, replicated, and adapted. Recently, a young composer posted an internet message asking why student composers have not been introduced to working in schools and communities as part of their training. She had been investigating composers-in-schools programs dating to the 1960s and could not understand the absence of this topic in degree curricula. The simple answer is that emotional investment in the inertia of existing systems, no matter how ineffective, inhibits significant and productive change. The more complex answer is that the prevailing culture of composer education has not embraced, or perhaps even acknowledged, community engagement as an integral and legitimate component of career success.

To effect systemic change that integrates community engagement in the curricula of higher education requires that we confront and articulate dimensions of complementary knowledge that underlie the preparation of complete artists for the twenty-first century. Not only do aspiring creators, performers, and producers need to think in new ways about their work, but arts educators must consider the educational value of participatory experiences that involve the community with practicing artists, both in and beyond schools. Active leadership from higher education will help move the world of the arts toward a rich and generative duality between career fulfillment for artists and a fully engaged public. ■

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**David E. Myers is Professor of Music Education, Associate Director of the School of Music, and Founding Director of the Center for Educational Partnerships in Music (CEPM) at Georgia State University, where he has worked since 1987. He has published, presented, and consulted widely in the areas of lifelong learning and collaborative arts education programs. As founding director of CEPM, Dr. Myers developed and oversees Sound Learning, an internationally recognized, groundbreaking music education collaboration with the Atlanta Symphony and seven elementary schools. Dr. Myers holds degrees from Lebanon Valley College, the Eastman School of Music, and The University of Michigan.**



Photo courtesy of Arts Are Basic

*Arts Are Basic, an aesthetic education program in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, has been taking music, dance, theater and visual arts to Cherry County (Neb.) rural schools since 1994. In 2005, as part of a visual art unit of study, students and teachers from 15 of the Cherry County schools created “Bitty Bulls” that went on display during the Valentine Bull Bash in February.*

*Cherry County boasts that there are more cows than people in Nebraska’s largest county. During the Bull Bash, Valentine’s Main Street is closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic to accommodate several live bulls in pens.*

*Valeri Luepke (M.F.A. 2004) created the Bitty Bulls, which were about the size of a large dog. Cherry County students and teachers researched famous artists, such as Van Gogh, Warhol and Monet, and then chose one artist they wanted to replicate on the bull sculpture. The Bitty Bulls were displayed alongside the real bulls during the Bull Bash.*

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