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F&PA Fine & Performing Arts Newsletter

Johnny Carson School completes principal photography on first film

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film completed principal photography in May on its first film in The Carson School Film Series, entitled *Vipers in the Grass*. Filming was completed at seven locations in Lincoln, Roca and Wahoo, Neb., from May 14-21.

"This film set was different from any other one I've worked on in about every way I could imagine. I've never worked on a set with that many people, that many professionals or that much organization," said John Brende, a junior in the film and new media program from Yankton, S.D., who worked in the grip/electric department during the entire film shoot. "Film sets at the university will be forever changed."

The unique project featured film industry professionals working with students and faculty from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film to create a 25-30 minute short film. The film will also utilize the resources of the School of Music, Department of Art and Art History, the College of Journalism and Mass Communications and



Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film Senior Zach Janky claps the clapboard to begin a scene for *Vipers in the Grass* during filming in downtown Ashland, Neb., on May 18.

Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET) to complete the project.

"It was fun. The environment on the set was cool," said Jenifer Dorman, a Bachelor of Arts in theatre senior from Moon Township, Pa. "You

went home every night feeling you earned your exhaustion."

Dorman said the 12-hour shooting days made it seem like a "real" film set.

"The professionals were pushing us, and would tell you if you messed up," she said. "But they also encouraged questions so you would know why it was wrong and how to fix it. They were letting us take responsibility on our own shoulders."

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film is committed to the philosophy that prospective practitioners of theatre, film and new media must be provided with thorough education, training and practical skills for employment in industry and educational settings.

"In pursuit of this mission, the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film is proud to be producing the first film in the Carson School Film Series," said Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film Director Paul Steger. "The project uses the creative resources of all of the units in the Hixson-Lied College

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New music composition lab in Westbrook

The School of Music has created a state-of-the-art music composition studio in the basement of Westbrook Music Building.

"With our focus on composition, it was critical to have a space as high-end professional as possible," said Brian Moore, Associate Professor of Music Education and coordinator for the music technology offerings in the School of Music.

The lab includes two powerful Mac workstations with two notation programs, Finale and Sibelius, along with a digital audio workstation with Logic software and Final Cut Express digital editing software.

"We wanted to create a state-of-the-art facility that would be as close as possible to a studio in the industry," said Assistant Professor of Composition Eric Richards. "We wanted a lab for our students to compose and create realistic computer mock-ups of their pieces for their portfolios."

The lab continues the advancement and progression of the School of Music's composition program.

"[Professor Emeritus] Randy Snyder laid the groundwork," Richards said. "I'm excited about taking that work forward."

Moving that work forward involves teaching students to become a "comprehensive composer," Richards said. That involves giving students the experience, tools and language development to work in both the academic and professional environments.

"Ideally a successful graduate might work on chamber music one week, a commercial jingle the next week, and then in week three work on an arrangement for a vocalist with orchestra," Richards said. "We want to create great composers who can function as both scholars and practitioners."

The lab is used by both undergraduate and graduate students in composition, which is about

19 students. In addition, the lab will be used for some of the music technology and development courses that Moore teaches.

"A professional audio person would say that they would rather have someone with really good ears who can learn the software and the technical side," Moore said. "The buttons and knobs they can learn on their own."

The lab is also connected to the Temple Building, which will allow composition students to compose music for films created by students in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and other collaborations.

"Both sides will learn from the process," Richards said.

Collaborative projects will only help students. "They will be able to collaborate with students in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film like the industry collaborates,"

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From the Dean's Desk

Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you all well and enjoying your summer. Sixteen years since its founding in 1993, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts is flourishing in so many ways. In spite of the fiscal



challenges that have been facing higher education across the country, our enrollment has remained strong in all of our degree programs, and the scholarly and creative work of our faculty, students and alumni continues to gain increasing national and international

recognition each year. Similarly, the various special new projects and initiatives that we have initiated over the past several years, to include our Donor Recognition Luncheon, our Summer Chamber Music Festival, our annual Graduate Showcase, our expansion of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre season, and our outreach and engagement activities with the Chiara String Quartet and faculty members in Art and Art History and Theatre and Film are all doing very well. Indeed, there is much to celebrate!

This past year has witnessed the launching of three new ventures along these lines, all of which are interdisciplinary and made possible by funding support from the Hixson-Lied and Johnny Carson Endowments. Two new state-of-the-art facilities, a digital music composition studio in Westbrook Music Building and a Digital Media Lab in Richards Hall, were just recently completed and will become important resources for the College's new Digital Arts Initiative, which will begin offering courses in the fall. Also beginning this fall will be the College's new Interdisciplinary Arts Symposium that will bring internationally acclaimed artists/performers to

campus throughout the term to interact with faculty and students campus wide to address broad issues that have relevance across the academic spectrum. Finally, the Johnny Carson School launched the new Johnny Carson Film Project, which will bring together all of the students in the School, as well as students from graphic design and music composition every three years to work and collaborate with movie and television industry professionals on the creation of a short film. The filming of this year's movie took place right here on campus and surrounding areas just this past spring.

This past year also witnessed the retirement of our Associate Dean, Bob Fought, who, throughout his distinguished 35-year career as a faculty member and administrator, made so many important and memorable contributions to the School of Music, the College, and the University. From his early days as Director of the University Marching Band and teacher of saxophone, to his more recent terms as Interim Director of the School of Music and Associate Dean of the College, Bob touched his students and faculty colleagues alike in ways that have inspired them to grow as musicians and to participate in the life of the College in ways that have helped bring it to where it is today. We salute you, Bob, and wish you the very best as you embark on your new journey.

As you have heard me say many times, so much of what we do would not be possible were it not for those alumni and friends of the College who have made generous contributions of all sorts over the years in support of scholarships, facilities, workshops and residencies, special activities and events and academic programs. We are indeed most grateful for everything that you and others have done. In this regard, we are now working with the Chancellor and the University of Nebraska Foundation to establish our College's plans for participating in the university-wide Capital Campaign that will be launched this coming fall. Our College's Campaign Committee should be in place by the end of the summer, and it is my hope that when I or a member of the Committee call on you, you will join together with us as you have in the past to play your individual and unique role in our efforts to move the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts to

new and expanded levels of excellence.

Now, as you read through this newsletter, please enjoy and be proud of the exciting news about our faculty, our students and our alumni that we have to share with you. Do stop in to see us if you are in the neighborhood!

With warm regards,

Giacomo M. Oliva
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean

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Arts Are Basic: A look back at 20 years

by Rhea Gill

After 20 years of training more than 300 teachers, UNL undergraduate and graduate students and teaching artists; educating tens of thousands of students; and introducing aesthetic education into schools from Omaha to Lake Minnetonka, Neb., Arts Are Basic is leaving UNL.

When the Lied Center for Performing Arts was still in its formative stages, a statewide advisory council requested that, as part of its mission, it develop a strong statewide arts education program. The Junior League of Lincoln funded the start-up of the program, ultimately called Arts Are Basic.

Arts Are Basic was one of approximately 18 arts education programs throughout the United States, all affiliated with the Lincoln Center Institute for Aesthetic Education in New York City. Many, but not all, were also affiliated with colleges and universities. It moved from the Lied Center to the new College of Fine and Performing Arts when it was created in 1993.

That same year AAB received the North

American Association of Summer Sessions Creative and Innovative Award of Merit. In 2001 the program was the recipient of the Lincoln Mayor's Arts Award for Excellence in Education. Throughout its 20 years, AAB was the recipient of almost \$1 million in grants, which came from local, regional and national foundations and government agencies.

AAB, in partnership with LPS, undertook a three-year study in Cultural Perceptions of Middle School Students. AAB, with First Plymouth Preschool, also partnered in a five-year research project of how children ages 3-6 develop Visual-Spatial perceptions and abilities.

One of the most rewarding areas of teaching/learning was AAB's partnership with the rural schools in Nebraska, and particularly with those in Cherry County. In addition to training teachers in these schools in the use of arts across the curriculum, and in introducing teaching artists as team teachers in these schools, and in addition to bringing some of these children to the UNL campus, AAB also presented performances in the small communities and

schools throughout the county.

Arts Are Basic also created an after school program call the Multicultural Youth Arts Project or (MYArts Project), which created arts opportunities for troubled and at-risk youth by partnering with cultural centers and community organizations around the city of Lincoln.

Arts Are Basic also received a gift of \$150,000 from UNL Professor Emerita Priscilla Parson to ensure its continuation of presenting performances from cultures throughout the world. In five-year segments, the arts of Africa, Asia, Europe and the Western Hemisphere were presented to teachers and students through the state of Nebraska.

AAB intends to continue its work to assist teachers in incorporate arts within the basic structure of education and will follow its mission throughout the state by keeping artists and their works central to learning in both our classrooms and communities.

To learn more about AAB, contact Director Rhea Gill at (402) 304-5090.

Carson School film

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of Fine and Performing Arts and supplements these resources with industry professionals and technology currently used in professional digital cinema production."

Produced and written by Jorge Zamacona, whose industry credits include *Wanted*, *Oz*, *Homicide: Life on the Street*, *The Saint* and *Law and Order*, *Vipers in the Grass* is about a young girl named Fanny who has gone missing in a small Nebraska town. Sheriff Frank Devine (Hollywood actor Dean Cain, who has appeared in *30 Rock*, *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*, *Life on Mars* and *Rescue Me*) and FBI Agent Celia Bowman (Hollywood actress Harley Jane Kozak, who has appeared in *The Guiding Light*, *When Harry Met Sally*, *Parenthood* and *Arachnophobia*) are on the case. The community comes together to solve the case.

Other industry professionals who worked on the film include Producer Mel Efron (*Wanted*, *Line of Fire*, *Gilmore Girls* and *Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman*), Director Alex Zakrzewski (*Oz*, *Homicide: Life on the Street*, *CSI: NY*, *Cold Case* and *Numb3rs*), First Assistant Director Ivan Fonseca (*Rescue Me*, *The Black Donnellys*, *Law and Order*, *Oz* and *The Wire*), Director of Photography Sid Sidell (*Life*, *Smith*, *Wanted* and *Grave Matters*) and Camera Assistant Bob Heine (*Charlie Wilson's War*, *The Santa Clause 3: The Escape Clause* and *Wild Hogs*).

Many of the film professional connections came through Assistant Professor Sandy Veneziano, who has worked as a production designer, art director and set designer in Hollywood.

"The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film's objective has been to provide students with an opportunity to work directly with faculty



Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students Aaron Nix (left, 1st Assistant Camera) and Amanda Levy (Assistant Editor and Loader) prepare the camera prior to a shot.

and outside professionals to create a professional production that is larger and broader in scope than can reasonably be expected of students working independently," Steger said.

Brende worked with professionals Craig Ladwig (gaffer) and Paul Eichler (best boy / key grip) from *Lights On* in Omaha.

"They treated us like professionals all the way up to punishments for mistakes, but because this was a learning experience they showed us what we did wrong, and we would correct it for next time," he said. "I learned so much that I will carry with me to teach fellow students about grip and electric work."

Brende hopes to become a director of photography, so his work in the grip department on *Vipers in the Grass* helped him.

"When a director of photography needs a light set up or controlled, that's the job of the grip / electric department," he said. "So working with the tools Sid Sidell (*Vipers'* Director of Photography) was calling for allowed me not only to see how he controls light, but also the effect of each little change. The experience was extremely unique, and I couldn't have more pride for the work our school is doing."

The *Vipers in the Grass* project is unique, blending curricular projects with a creative product. It will be submitted to film competitions and festivals around the country.

The *Vipers in the Grass* film project will incorporate more than 120 students across the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the College of Journalism and Mass Communications, with more than 25 faculty and staff members involved from the Johnny Carson School, the School of Music, the Department of Art and Art History and NET. These students, faculty and staff are coordinating and implementing all aspects of production including location scouting, production design, scenic and costume design and construction, camera operators, lighting and grip, graphics, composing the score, working on contracts, travel and housing for outside professionals, budgeting, shooting schedules, etc.—all the aspects of production that you would find on professional film projects.

In addition to the film itself, a select group of students are working on a "Making of . . ." documentary throughout the production process.

"I had never been on a film set before," said Dorman, who begins a marketing / graphic design internship with the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Ky., in August. "It was absolutely fascinating to see that process at work. I really liked it."

Brende said he came away from the project with a greater appreciation for the work of everyone on the film set.

"The biggest point to take home is that these



Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students Trace Vardsveen (left) and Brad Flick (center) talk with producer and writer Jorge Zamacona on set.

films are a product of a lot of people's hard work," he said. "There is no one person who can take more credit than anyone else on the success of this experiment."

Steger said the production was able to use a new type of camera for the shoot.

"One of the most unique aspects of the production is the fact that the *Vipers in the Grass* project used a new type of camera called The Red One, that allowed our students the opportunity to work with new, emerging technology that is setting the standard in film making in Los Angeles and New York," Steger said.

Dorman said the experience was invaluable for everyone on set.

"The fact that we got to work with the professionals and they now know who we are—that's priceless," she said. "It's all about making connections. We had a chance to prove ourselves, and we did that well."

The *Vipers in the Grass* project is being funded through a grant from the Program Enhancement Fund through the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Endowment and the Johnny Carson Theatre and Film Endowment.

"Their generosity made the experience very fulfilling and rich for everyone," Dorman said. "We had the resources available to make a solid project."

Brende said there was nothing else he would have rather been doing than working on this film set during the first weeks of summer.

"To the people who made the whole thing possible, thank you for supporting all of us," he said. "We are better film students and friends because of the opportunity. And I know I will remember our work for a long time."

The post-production work on the film will occur over the next 10 months with help from NET. A gala premiere will take place in late spring or early fall 2010.

Fought retires after 35 years of service

Associate Dean Robert A. Fought retired from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln on July 1 after 35 years of service. A retirement party was held in his honor for faculty and staff on April 30 in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film's Studio Theatre.

"As it does for many people, my retirement affords an unique opportunity for both reflection and anticipation of new experiences," Fought said. "Not only has it spurred recollections of my accomplishments, it has allowed me to look through a long lens at the many stages of growth within the School of Music, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the University. I feel most fortunate to have associated with so many talented and dedicated students, faculty, staff, and administrators who were, and are, members of the UNL community."

Appointed to the UNL music faculty in 1974, Fought was the Director of the Cornhusker Marching Band from 1975 to 1983. During that time the band frequently appeared at high school, college, and professional football games. He was Director of Bands at UNL from 1983 to 1992. Under his direction the Symphony Band earned state, regional, and national recognition with performances at professional meetings and conventions, including the College Band Directors National Convention and the Music Educators National Conference.

Fought's administrative assignments have included serving as Associate Director of the School of Music from 1994 to 2000 and Interim Director from 2000 to 2003. He began his service



(left to right) Professor of Music Education Glenn Nierman, Dean Giacomo Oliva, Associate Dean Robert Fought and School of Music Director John Richmond at Fought's retirement reception on April 30. Photo by Tom Slocum, Univ. Communications.

to the College as Associate Dean in 1998, serving on a part-time basis from 1998 to 2003, and in a full-time capacity since.

Fought received his undergraduate and doctorate degrees from the Pennsylvania State University and his Master of Music degree from Northwestern University. He has appeared as guest conductor, clinician, adjudicator, and soloist in the central United States and Canada. He has received distinguished service awards from the Nebraska Music Educators Association and the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association, and he has served as Past-President of the Nebraska State Bandmasters Association.

Mamiya named Associate Dean

Hixson-Lied Professor of Art History Christin Mamiya became the College's new associate dean on July 1.

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



Mamiya

textbook that has introduced a generation of students to the issues and works of modern aesthetics.

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

She has taught art history in the Department of Art and Art History since 1987.

Mamiya received her B.A. cum laude in art history from Yale University and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in art history from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Music Composition studio

(Continued from page 1)

Moore said.

For the composer, the use of technology has advantages that are both practical and technical.

"In the old days, after you worked on your piece, in order to get it ready for performance, you had to copy the individual parts and pass it out to the musicians," Richards said. "They would play it, and you would find conceptual or typographic errors. So you would collect the parts back up and repeat the process for round two. With the computer, you can fix many mistakes before it ever reaches the musicians. It's typically 99 percent perfect when the musician gets it for the first read-through.

"No computer can create the musicality of a musician, but the software enables composers to get instant feedback on their arrangements, which is invaluable. You can arrange for various instruments with a single click."

In addition, the composer's creativity is not limited to the musicians he/she has available.

"You can conceive projects virtually, making it easy to put together," Richards said. "If I want to compose something for 56 flutes, I can do this more easily in the virtual world versus finding



Assistant Professor of Composition Eric Richards works in the new Music Composition Lab in Westbrook.

56 flute players in the real world to play my composition."

With this composition lab, students can now compose with 9,000 instrument timbres with an infinite number of permeations of those timbres. Timbre is the quality of a musical note or sound that distinguishes different types of sound production, such as voices or musical instruments.

Moore said with the technology available students can change from composers to audio engineers.

"Students can use the technology to make their piece sound good. For example, for a human the 32nd note is the fastest. But for a computer, the 1024th note is the fastest. They can get into very detailed inputs like that to really get it to sound exactly as they want it to sound. It ramps up what the composer can do."

Moore said the School of Music is interested in finding qualified students, in areas like computer science, engineering or math, for example, to become music technology minors.

"We want computer science people to think creatively," he said. They can use their skills to create software for iTunes and iPods, for example.

The composition studio puts the School of Music at the forefront of composition and music technology.

"There are very few music programs that have such a powerful facility," Richards said. "And then to have it already set up to connect to the film program. That provides both the student composers and student filmmakers a robust resource for the creation of new projects."

Graphic design alumnus creates special effects in Hollywood

Trent Claus, who received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art in 2006, works for Lola VFX, a special effects company in Los Angeles, that was part of the team that received the Academy Award in Visual Effects this year for their work on *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

"We were hard at work on our next big projects and deadlines were looming, so celebration time was minimal," Claus said. "I did get a chance to watch the broadcast though."

Claus was also featured in a story that aired on Good Morning America on ABC in the week leading up to the Oscar broadcast on Feb. 22 about the visual effects in *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*.

The movie, starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, was adapted from the 1920s story by F. Scott Fitzgerald about a man who is born in his 80s and ages backwards. Lola VFX was responsible for around 300 shots on *Benjamin Button*, and Claus worked on more than 60 of those.



Claus

"Tasks are divided up by shot. A shot is any time there is a cut or a change of camera angle," he said. "Ideally, they try to give all shots within a scene to one artist to maintain continuity, but sometimes for longer scenes, multiple artists will collaborate. On *Benjamin Button*, I was responsible for more than 60 shots."

In addition to their Oscar, they also received a BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts) Award for Best Visual Effects and Visual Effects Society Awards for Outstanding Visual Effects and Outstanding Compositing.

"I'm very pleased with our work on *Benjamin Button*," Claus said. "It was an ideal project for us really, because we specialize in cosmetic effects, so the premise allowed us to showcase our skills very well."

Claus, as a Flame/Inferno artist at Lola VFX, worked on aging and de-aging the characters throughout the movie.

"Towards the beginning of the film, Brad Pitt's character needed to look much older while Cate Blanchett's character needed to appear younger," he said. "As the film progresses, we needed to reverse the process—make Brad's character younger and the other characters older."

Flame/Inferno refers to a compositing platform.

"As a compositor, I take elements for a shot and assemble them together to create the final image the audience will see on screen," Claus said. "To do this, I will use things such as matte paintings, CG (computer-generated footage) and particle effects combined with the actors' performances and any other practical (in camera) effects or scenery. Any shot that requires something not filmed in camera will

pass through the hands of a compositor."

Claus has been at Lola VFX since May 2007. After graduating from UNL in 2006, he continued to work for Nebraska Electronic Transfer Systems, a job he had held throughout college, while applying for art-related jobs throughout the country.

He also created a website, www.claustrophobe.com, to showcase his work, before moving to Los Angeles to work at Lola VFX.

"I got lucky in that I knew someone who already worked for the company. He informed me of a possible opening, and I flew out to speak with the owners and to review my portfolio," he said.

While at UNL, Claus was a graphic design major, who was interested in pursuing illustration, animation and special effects.

"I tried to take all the illustration-related courses that were available, as well as some of the courses through the Film and New Media program," Claus said. "I never intended to go into graphic design, but felt that was as close as I could get at the time to the kinds of courses I wanted. My time at UNL certainly helped my ability to give and receive meaningful critiques. Being able to analyze work constructively and contribute to the artist's process is very important."

Claus also was a UCARE (Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences) student at UNL, who worked with Associate Professor of Art Sandra Williams. During his first year in the program, he worked with her to develop a website for the series of paintings she was working on at the time, as well as to help her in the studio. In his second year, his personal project was to create a series of pen and ink drawings of downtown Lincoln, using a very time-consuming style similar to engraving.

"The project was definitely the most useful thing I did while at UNL, as it let me explore my own ideas and interests," he said. "It became one of the key elements of my portfolio when I began searching for a job."

Williams said Claus helped foster a healthy competitive environment in her classroom.

"Trent definitely set the bar for some of his classmates—in terms of concept, in terms of work ethic and in terms of craftsmanship. He's extremely focused," Williams said. "I am not at all surprised by his success. I'm excited about his



Brad Pitt starred as Benjamin Button, who ages backwards in the movie *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. Alumnus Trent Claus works for LolaVFX, the special effects company responsible for the aging effects in the movie. Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures.

success, but I always knew."

Williams said UCARE presents a unique opportunity for faculty to work one-on-one with a student.

"UCARE is an excellent tool to help students draw connections between all the different courses that they are taking and then giving students experience facilitating those skills. Trent wasn't all that crazy about physically making some of the work—the smelliness and dustiness of the methods I use are probably not that appealing to him—but I think he liked the duality of the content of my work," Williams said. "Both of us had an attachment to comic books, graphic novels, archetypes, narrative art, and film. He had an innate understanding of the work—he understood the content, the process and the research and story behind each piece. I was very lucky to have someone that was so familiar with the work create the website."

Claus said he has always been a fan of the movies.

"I've always been a big movie buff and grew up watching *Star Wars* religiously," he said. "I've always loved the idea of being able to create whole environments and characters on film that were never there in-camera. The big on-location glass matte paintings blew my mind, especially as a kid."

Some of the other projects he has worked on at Lola VFX include the recently released "new" version of *Blade Runner*, *Iron Man* and the new *Star Trek*, released in May.

"*Blade Runner* was another film I grew up with, so it was really exciting to be a part of it," Claus said. "It was also great to be part of *Iron Man*. It was a fun movie to work on, and I really enjoyed watching the movie. I'm a big comic book fan so getting the chance to work on the current flurry of comic-inspired movies is perfect."

Claus plans to continue with his compositing work.

"I would also enjoy getting back into doing some more line drawings—once I find the time."

Wind Ensemble performs in Holdrege

by Brady Jones

Members of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln’s Wind Ensemble didn’t feel like guinea pigs when they set out for an April concert in Holdrege, Neb., but they were a part of a larger, working experiment whether they knew it or not.

Eight years ago a kind of partnership was forged between the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources in order to continue fulfilling the mission of land-grant universities like UNL.

“Part of that mission is outreach and engagement with the community of Nebraska, broadly speaking, in a lot of different ways,” said Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Dean Giacomo Oliva. “There have been some historic disciplines where that’s been taking place for decades—agriculture is one of the main ones. So we thought, building on that sort of concept that we might promote the same type of activity with respect to the fine and performing arts. Historically we haven’t thought of the arts that way. It’s not to say we don’t get the arts off campus, but we’ve never, at least on this campus, thought of the arts in this kind of outreach and engagement mode.”

And so, in the years since, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts has sent arts students to various 4-H camps to promote artistic knowledge and enrichment for youngsters in communities across the state.

Then two years ago, Oliva worked to set up a series of performances by the university’s Chiara String Quartet—but in a twist, had his agriculture partners pick the venues and promote the concerts.

This year, Oliva wanted to push this evolving initiative even further, creating more than just a typical concert experience by encouraging greater interaction between the student performers and their audience. He saw a Wind Ensemble concert in Holdrege at The Tassel Performing Arts Center on April 20, planned a year ago, as a perfect starting place.

This time he brought other entities such as the Alumni Association and the University of Nebraska Foundation into the mix adding new layers to the project.

Diane Mendenhall began her new position as the executive director for the Alumni Association last October. She said she was impressed with Oliva’s passion not only for the fine and performing arts, but for the university’s responsibility to the state’s communities as a land-grant institution. So she jumped on board to encourage the connection with university alumni in the Holdrege area.

The concert also served to honor alumni Bruce and Carol Hendrickson for their support of UNL. The Wind Ensemble’s concert at The Tassel was supported in part through a grant made possible by the generosity of the Hendricksons to the University of Nebraska Foundation, providing important private support for UNL outreach activities in the area.



Left to right: UNL Alumni Association Executive Director Diane Mendenhall, Bruce and Carol Hendrickson, and Dean Giacomo Oliva at The Tassel in Holdrege, Neb.

“In these tough economic times we need to come together as Nebraskans to help move our university to even greater heights,” Mendenhall said. “Whether it’s a football team or a wind ensemble, we are proud of the hard work, dedication and high expectations that reflect the persona of the state. It’s unification behind a common mission that will advance the university.”

Besides the Tassel concert, ensemble members traveled to area schools working with high school students in clinics.

Carolyn Barber, Associate Professor and Director of Bands at the School of Music, coordinated the schedule, set up the performance program and prepared the ensemble for performance. She said these clinics allowed high school students to see musical and artistic possibilities they might not have otherwise seen.

“Many of those students are now intent on joining us here in Lincoln at UNL for their college careers,” she added.

In addition a reception with refreshments was set up after the concert allowing the members of the community to mingle with the student performers and faculty for an even more integrated relationship.

Barber added, “The project with The Tassel enabled us to connect the UNL School of Music with a new and very enthusiastic audience. It also demonstrated our hope that what happens in Lincoln won’t stay in Lincoln—no offense to Las Vegas. It was clear that the people from Holdrege and the surrounding communities were energized by an opportunity to come together for an unusual musical experience, and many of them expressed an eagerness to do so more frequently.”

Oliva said the college doesn’t need to add special performances to the schedule as students and faculty do a lot already. But he sees more opportunities for community engagement surrounding the planned events.

“We’re really not inventing anything new in terms of performances, but we’re trying to get back to reconnecting music with the audience in a more personal and more accessible way.”

Brady Jones is a senior news-editorial major in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications.

Four new faculty in College this fall

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts welcomes the following new faculty members this Fall:

Ian Borden is Assistant Professor of Theatre in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. An actor, director, scholar and fight director, Borden teaches a variety of performance and academic classes. He earned his B.A. degree from Simon Fraser University and his M.F.A. in Acting and Directing from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. This last spring he completed his Ph.D. in Theatre Studies from Florida State University, writing on the theatre of the Restoration and early 18th century. He has published and presented on a variety of topics, including Elizabethan and Spanish Golden Age theatre, the performance of Shakespeare, historical and modern stage combat and translating and performing ancient Greek drama. Borden is also a Certified Teacher of Stage Combat with the Society of American Fight Directors and has staged fights for numerous plays all around North America and the Caribbean.

Steve Kolbe is Assistant Professor of Theatre and will be teaching the new digital arts courses this fall. Kolbe has previously worked as VFX Director for Reel FX Creative Studios in Dallas. Some of his projects there included layout supervisor for *Open Season 2*, CG Supervisor for *Kung Fu Panda: Secrets of the Furious Five* and VFX Director for the marketing campaign for commercials with the *Shrek* and *Bee Movie* casts. He received his B.S. in advertising and graphic design from the University of Kansas and he received his Associates Degree in computer animation from The Art Institute of Dallas.

Jeffrey Thompson is Assistant Professor of Art. Thompson will be teaching the new digital arts courses this fall. He received his M.F.A. from Rutgers University, and he received his B.F.A. from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. He previously taught at Montclair State University (N.J.), Harvestworks (N.Y.), Transart Institute (based in Linz, Austria) and 3rd Ward in Brooklyn. He recently curated the exhibition “Stored and Filtered: Technology, Time and Landscape” at the Texas Firehouse in Long Island City, N.Y. His recent exhibitions include “Investigations of Place” at the Jersey City Museum and “Resonance in Residence” at the 3rd Ward Gallery in Brooklyn.

Marissa Vigneault comes to UNL as Lecturer in Art History from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania, where she will defend her Ph.D. in the History of Art in the fall of 2009. Vigneault holds a B.A. in Art from Hood College, and a M.A. in Art History from American University. She specializes in modern and contemporary art, with a focus on feminist and psychoanalytic theory. Vigneault previously taught at Moore College of Art and Design, The College of New Jersey and Neumann University.

Film alum follows the crowd to animation success

"How can you not be proud of a shot that involves, literally, a barrel of monkeys?"

So said Scott Raymond, who worked as a "Crowd Artist" at DreamWorks Animation for the hit sequel *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa*. The sequel to 2005's "Madagascar," in which New York Zoo animals, Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe and Gloria the Hippo, still stranded on Madagascar, start to leave the island. All of a sudden, they land in the wilderness of Africa, where Alex meets the rest of his family, but has trouble communicating with them after spending so much time at the Central Park Zoo.

"The crowds in *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa* were huge, both in size and quantity. I think something like 80 percent of the film had crowds in it, and some were shots that would have to have about 7,000 zebras in them," Raymond said. "Jobs are pretty specific at DreamWorks Animation, and the production is broken down into those specific departments—art, layout, character animation, effects, lighting, etc. And crowds. So we just worked on crowd shots for the whole time on the film."

Several shots that he worked on bring a smile to his face.

"I have some lemurs on the edge of a runway cheering that always gets a laugh and was in the trailers," he said. "I did the whole sequence of the Lions in an arena watching a battle that I enjoyed. Sometimes in just one shot, like Alex the Lion crowdsurfing, so much effort goes into it, using the crowd system and balancing that with some hand animation between me and the Animation Department, that it really sells the shot. I'm very proud of those moments."

Raymond graduated in 2003 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in theatre with a double major in both film and new media and theatre design/tech production. He was one of the first two students to graduate with the film and new media major. He also had a double minor in mathematics and studio art.

"Scott was always energetic, enthusiastic and eager to learn," said Associate Professor of Film Sharon Teo.

After doing freelance theatre work with the Lincoln Community Playhouse after he graduated from UNL, he went to graduate school to obtain a Master of Fine Arts in Animation and Visual Effects at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

"During my first summer in grad school, I did a summer internship with ElementFX," Raymond said.

ElementFX asked him back as an assistant technical director for a big, all 3-D shot they were doing for the film, *Invincible*.

"Initially I was going to help with backups and the renderfarm, but my role expanded to populating the football stadium in the shot with a



One of Scott Raymond's animal "crowd" scenes from *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa*. Photo courtesy of DreamWorks Animation.

digital crowd. After tackling that, I re-thought my graduate thesis project to include crowd shots."

Having this crowd experience led to his being interviewed by DreamWorks Animation for the new Crowd Department they were forming for the work on *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa*.

"I started working for them in the fall of 2007. I was hired on as a 'Crowd Artist' for *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa* at their Redwood City studio, PDI/DreamWorks," Raymond said.

Last fall, his wife, who also works in the industry as a matte painter, received a job offer in Los Angeles, so Raymond transferred to the DreamWorks Animation studio in Glendale.

Raymond said his work day at DreamWorks Animation is a combination of both individual and social.

"The DreamWorks Animation employees tend to be a very outgoing bunch, so whether it's impromptu ping-pong game breaks or a studio-sponsored short film competition, there are lots of excuses to be social away from the desk for a little bit," Raymond said. "The majority of the day is just working on your shots on the computer, which are reviewed multiple times by our Crowd Lead, and the FX Supervisor, and eventually the Director, so you are always working towards that next review. It's an amazingly fun, supportive and creative atmosphere at DreamWorks Animation, and I'm admittedly very, very spoiled working here."

His work in the film and new media program at UNL helped prepare him for his career in animation.

"I would say that the best thing I learned at UNL was how to collaborate and have creative discussions within a team. This is something I deal with every single day at work—how crowds can work with the animation team, the effects and lighting artists, to smoothly add that extra something to a shot," he said. "And it's a hard skill to learn, how to work with other, sometimes very passionately creative individuals. I think I learned this the most in collaborating on productions with other designers and directors in the Theatre Department. It's also necessary with the collaborative nature of film shoots in the film and new media department. Film and new media was essential in learning the language of film,

and how to visually tell the story. At the end of the day, all our decisions at work is 'what tells the story best—what most supports this moment in the story.' In film and new media, we learned what those filmatic tools are, and how to best utilize them."

Raymond initially learned animation while at UNL. He began in the College of Architecture, but changed his major to theatre when he learned about the 2D and 3D software that the theatre arts department was teaching.

"I switched my major that semester, and made sure to take all the computer design classes that were just starting up with [Former Professor of Theatre] Chuck O'Connor and Sharon Teo," he said. "Computer art is an odd

beast. It's both left and right brained, creative and logical at the same time. This is really the attraction for me. It's the reason I have minors in art and math—because they're both equally fascinating to me. It's a very similar pairing that one sees in film or theatre design—the collaboration between art and technology. Computer animation is just the newest storytelling tool that utilizes this."

His advice to current film and new media majors is to learn how to work creatively with others.

"You may think that it's just you at a computer making beautiful images, but it's a crazy collaborative process with dozens to hundreds of other people," Raymond said. "Having the skills to have an intelligent and creative discussion is probably the best skill to have. Tools, such as specific software, is not what will get you a job—what will is how you can use those tools, whatever they are. As several of my professors at UNL taught me, you can learn specific techniques and skills as you need to, but the ability to think critically and creatively is essential."

Up next for Raymond and DreamWorks Animation is *Shrek Forever After*, which is scheduled to be released on May 21, 2010.

"I plan on staying at DreamWorks Animation for as long as I can. It's a great company, and I've already had a few chances to learn other aspects in the process, such as character animation and effects work," he said. "I've always been a huge fan of animation, and I feel very, very lucky to have the chance to work and contribute to the world of animation."

Teo said she knows Raymond will go far.

"I'm very excited about his success, but I'm not surprised at all by it," she said. "He was just one of those students who was very hungry to learn and who you know will always be successful."

Later, Raymond might pursue teaching.

"At some point, I'd love to come back to college to teach," he said. "My college career has been so enjoyable and life-shaping for me, I'd enjoy the opportunity to give back."

Faculty Notes

John Bailey, Larson Professor of Flute, was the featured guest artist for the annual Flute Day of the Flute Society of St. Louis in March. Bailey gave a pedagogy lecture, conducted a flute choir reading session, gave a masterclass and performed a solo recital. Bailey also gave a masterclass at the University of Arizona in Tucson in January. Bailey conducted the International Flute Orchestra (35 professional flutists and teachers from the U.S. and Canada) on tour in Poland in May, giving concerts in Krakow, Zakopane, Warsaw and Gdansk. Bailey was also a featured soloist, along with Professor **William McMullen**, English horn, in a performance of Honegger's *Concerto da Camera* with the UNL Symphony Orchestra last December.

Carolyn Barber, Associate Professor and Director of Bands, conducted the La Crosse Central High School Wind Ensemble in a performance at the Wisconsin Music Educators Conference in Madison, Wisc., last October. In January she worked with the Simpson College Symphonic Band and High School Honors Wind Ensemble in a clinic in Indianola, Iowa. Also, she wrote another chapter for the Teaching Music Through Performance in Band Series, "An Analysis of James Barnes' *Dream Journey*," *Teaching Music through Performance in Band*, volume 7 (Edited by Richard Miles. Chicago: GIA Publications, December 2008).

Diane Barger, Professor of Clarinet, is one of the newest educational recording artists for the Carl Fischer Music Co. "Trade Winds" ensemble. Barger recorded in Tampa, Fla., with "Trade Winds" in January and performed in concert with the ensemble at King High School.

Paul Barnes, Professor of Piano, performed a solo recital on the South Nyack Recital Series last November. Barnes also conducted a masterclass and gave a solo recital at Nyack College in November. Barnes served as adjudicator for the Music Teachers National Association West Central Division piano competition held at St. Olaf College in Northfield Minn., in January. Barnes performed with both the **Moran Woodwind Quintet** and the **Chiara Quartet** on the UNL Faculty Recital Series.

Dale Bazan, Assistant Professor of Practice in Music Education, presented on recruiting and retaining students in band programs and incorporating popular music into music classrooms at Music Conference Alberta (Red Deer, Alberta, Canada) last October. He had a paper on recruiting and retaining band programs accepted to an issue of the Canadian peer-reviewed pedagogical journal *Canadian Winds*. Bazan traveled in April to present on two research studies, one on after school rock bands and their perceived value to adolescents, the other on the instructional planning and assessment practices of Iowa high school band directors at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association in San Diego, Calif. He was also involved in a panel discussion on the use of student-directed instruction in band programs at the Biennial Colloquium of IMTE (Instrumental Music Teacher Educators) in Mt. Sterling, Ohio,

on May 15.

Peter Bouffard, Lecturer of Guitar, premiered a new arrangement of *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* with the Nebraska Jazz Orchestra in December. In February, he was a featured guest performer and arranger with the Plymouth Brass for their annual Mardi Gras concert and was an adjudicator at the South West Iowa Jazz Festival. In March, Bouffard was a featured clinician at the Bellevue East Jazz Festival. He was Director of Jazz Activities at the *University of Maine Summer Youth Music* program in July.

William Grange, Professor of Theatre, had his book Cultural Chronicle of the Weimar Republic published by Scarecrow Press last fall. Grange was also invited to present a paper titled "Marlon Brando and the Stella Adler 'Michpoche' in the mid-1940s" at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City for the "Jews in Theatre and Performance" Conference in February.

Gail Kendall, Hixson-Lied Professor of Art, was selected to receive the Excellence in



Kendall

Teaching Award from the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA). The award was presented at their national conference in April. The Excellence in Teaching Award places Kendall in the elite company of the finest educators in the country, recognized for their many years as extraordinary

teachers, as well as demonstrated excellence in their own work and continuing accomplishments among students.

Hixson-Lied Professors of Art **Gail Kendall** and **Pete Pinnell** each served on panels at the National Council on Education in the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Conference in April in Phoenix. Kendall, Pinnell and Associate Professor of Art **Eddie Dominguez** also exhibited work at exhibitions at the conference, including the Ceramics Research Center on the Arizona State University campus.

Stanley Kleppinger, Assistant Professor of Music Theory, was recently designated a Friend of the Arts by Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity for Women.

Peter M. Lefferts, Professor of Music History, attended the annual conference of the Society for American Music in Denver in March, where he read a paper entitled, "Native American Boarding School Bands and Their Bandmasters."

Christopher Marks, Assistant Professor of Organ, performed the *Symphonie Concertante* by Joseph Jongen with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra in April. He also presented a recital at Oklahoma City University in March, along with a lecture-recital on the organ music of Seth Bingham, in connection with his recent recording of Bingham's organ works. One of his students, **Michael Emmerich** (B.M. senior) won first prize in the regional competition (Region VI) for young organists sponsored by the American Guild of Organists (AGO).

Jeffrey McCray, Assistant Professor of Bassoon, performed as principal bassoon with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic for subscription series concerts in April and May. While in Colorado, McCray also gave a masterclass at Colorado State University in Fort Collins. McCray was a featured artist in the "Bassoonists of Today" recital series at the University of Arkansas, where he presented a masterclass and recital in October. He also performed as principal bassoon with the Colorado Springs Philharmonic for two Classical Series concerts. In November, McCray performed as principal bassoon with the Sioux City Symphony Orchestra, and he made a repeat appearance with that orchestra in January.

Nicole Narboni, Senior Lecturer in Piano, was featured in a remote broadcast from the Lied Center for Performing Arts in March with Steve Robinson from WFMT 98.7FM in Chicago. Robinson, formerly with NET Broadcasting and now the Executive Vice President for Radio and Project Development at WFMT, talked to Narboni about her recently released CD, *The Solo Piano Works of Jean Francaix*, and she performed selected works from the CD during the interview.

Glenn Nierman, Associate Director of the School of Music and Steinhart Professor of Music Education, was elected to the Nebraska Music Educators Association Hall of Fame and was presented this award at the Association's Annual Conference Banquet in November. Nierman was invited to present a session on assessment at the North Central (NC) Division Conference of the MENC—The National Association for Music Education in Indianapolis in January. As President of the NC Division, he also chaired a meeting of the Division Board at the Indianapolis Conference. In April he traveled to Gainesville, Fla., to present a paper on his Student Musical Instrument Capability Test to the 2nd International Symposium of Assessment.



Potter

Clark Potter, Associate Professor of Viola, was selected as the String Teacher of the Year by the Nebraska chapter of the American String Teachers Association for 2008.

Jamie Reimer, Lecturer in Voice, had her proposal to present a poster on Robert Owens' *Heart on the Wall* accepted for the International Congress of Voice Teachers' Conference in Paris in July. Her article, "Revealing Robert Owens: A study of compositional style and performance practices in the song cycle *Heart on the Wall*," has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Singing*, the official journal of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Reimer's lecture, "Journeys to Other Spheres: The song cycle *Heart on the Wall* as an example of Robert Owens' compositional style and poetic interpretation" was accepted for presentation

(Continued on page 9)

Faculty Notes

(Continued from page 8)

at the Phenomenon of Singing International Symposium VII in Newfoundland, Calif., in July.

John W. Richmond, Professor and Director of the School of Music, was elected to a three-year term on the Commission on Accreditation of the National Association of Schools of Music at the annual National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) Conference in Seattle last November.



Associate Professor Janice Stauffer (left) receives the Kennedy Center Gold Medallion from the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival on Jan. 23.

Janice Stauffer, Associate Professor of Costume Design in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, was selected by the Executive Committee of Region V to receive the highest honor that the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival can give, the Kennedy Center Gold Medallion. The award is given for a significant body of work related to KC/ACTF and its students. She received her medallion Jan. 23 at the Region V Festival Awards at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.



Teo at the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Foundation in Los Angeles.

Sharon Teo, Associate Professor of Film and New Media, was selected as one of 20 participants to attend the 20th Annual Academy of Television Arts and Sciences foundation Faculty Seminar in Los Angeles last November. As a Faculty Seminar Fellow, she participated in discussions, panels and interactions with

writers, producers, directors, designers, editors and studio executives from shows like "Brothers and Sisters," "Six Feet Under," "Family Guy," "Desperate Housewives" and "Scrubs." Faculty can only be selected for this fellowship once.

Robert Woody, Associate Professor of Music Education, was appointed to the Editorial Committee of the *Journal of Research in Music Education*.

Tyler White, Associate Professor and Director of Orchestral Activities, was one of three composers awarded a commission to create a musical composition to be premiered by members of the National Symphony Orchestra at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. The commissioning project is part of the NSO American Residency Program.

**Hixson-Lied College
of Fine and Performing Arts
Alumni Award Nominations
due Friday, Dec. 11, 2009.**

Download a nomination form at:
<http://www.unl.edu/finearts/alumni.shtml>
or call (402) 472-9355 to receive one.

Awards include the Alumni Achievement Awards in Art, Music and Theatre; Award of Merit; Faculty Service Award; and Student Leadership Awards.

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Please clip and return this form to F&PA Newsletter Editor, 102 Woods Art Building, Lincoln, NE 68588-0144 or e-mail your news to kandersen1@unl.edu.



Adrienne Dickson (left) and Tom Gunther starred in *Dead Man Walking*. Photo by Joel Stuthman.

School of Music opera wins national award

The School of Music 2008 opera production of Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking* won the National Opera Association (NOA) Award for Best Production this year. It is the third time in 10 years that UNL Opera has won the award.

The 1998 UNL productions of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Così fan tutte* and the 2001 production of Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* were past winners.

"On many levels it doesn't make sense to 'compete' with artistic projects. One doesn't do these things to 'win,'" said William Shomos, Professor and Director of Opera. "We try to create something beautiful, something truthful, something that will make people think, something that will make people feel. However, it is always nice to have some outside affirmation that your work might be achieving those goals. The 'win' just reminds me of how very proud I am of these remarkable young people here at UNL."

The opera *Dead Man Walking* is inspired by Sister Helen Prejean's book about a caring nun who receives a desperate letter from a death row inmate trying to find help to avoid execution for murder. The book was also turned into a movie in 1995 starring Sean Penn and Susan Sarandon.

UNL's production starred graduate students Adrienne Dickson (D.M.A.) and Tom Gunther (M.M.) in the leading roles.

Dead Man Walking was staged by Shomos and conducted by UNL Director of Orchestral Activities Tyler White. Laurel Shoemaker was the set designer, and Todd Clark was the lighting designer.

In addition, doctoral students Jeff Richmond (composition) and James Wilson (choral conducting) also contributed. Richmond produced a "summer-stock" reduction of the full orchestral score, which permitted the UNL Philharmonia of 30 pieces to perform an orchestral score originally written for a full orchestra of 70 pieces. Wilson served as Chorus Master for the production, preparing all of the choral pieces in this opera creation.

The NOA was founded in 1955 under the auspices of the National Music Council. The NOA seeks to promote a greater appreciation of opera and music theatre, to enhance pedagogy and performing activities, and to increase performing opportunities by supporting projects that improve the scope and quality of opera.

Alumni Notes

1958

Jim Cantrell (B.F.A.Ed. art) had an exhibition of new small oils at the Bardstown Art Gallery in Bardstown, Ky. His image, "Oil," was featured in the spring 2009 issue of The Bourbon Review magazine.

1985

L. Curtis Hammond (B.M.) served as interim chair last year of the Morehead State University Department of Music. The department currently has 35 faculty and 265 music students.

1994

Therese Laux (M.M.), Omaha North High School Magnet School educator, was selected by Apple, Inc., for their Apple Classroom of Tomorrow Today curriculum development team last year. Apple chose 20 of their distinguished educators from across the nation to develop project-based units leveraging Web 2.0 technology and creative applications. At Apple, Inc., in Cupertino, Calif., Laux worked on an interdisciplinary team to develop innovative high school materials for a high school curriculum designed to prepare students for life and work in the 21st century.

1996

Sheryl Monkeliën (M.M., Ph.D. 2001) is Associate Professor and Director of Music Education at Mansfield University in Mansfield, Pa. She is serving as the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Eastern Division Vocal Jazz Repertoire & Standards Chair. Most recently, the Mansfield University Vocal Jazz Ensemble—the Mansfieldians, which she directs—participated in the 2008 World Choir Games in Graz, Austria. The Mansfieldians were awarded a Gold Level V Certificate during the qualifying round and were named World Champions of the Vocal Jazz A Capella Category during the competition round. The Mansfieldians were one of only two American choirs to be named champions of the World Choir Games (the other was the Mansfield University Concert Choir).

1999

Susan Belau (M.F.A. Art) has been appointed Assistant Professor of Art at San Francisco State University.

2000

Sarah Detweiler (B.F.A. Art) was promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Her work was recently published in the book *Crammed Organisms*, published by Cranky Yellow in St. Louis, Mo. In January and February of this year, her work was exhibited at Morehead State University in an exhibition juried by Eleanor Heartney.

Amy Smith (M.F.A. Art) joined Hixson-Lied Professor of Art **Gail Kendall** at The Red Lodge Clay Center in Red Lodge, Mt., in February for a five-person Artist Invites Artist event.

2003

Roxanne Jackson (M.F.A. Art) has been accepted into a residency at the Berlin Ceramics Center in Berlin, Germany.

Scott Raymond (B.F.A. Film and New Media), has worked on several "crowd shots" and other full animation for the movie *Madagascar Escape 2 Africa* from DreamWorks Animation.

2006

Meredith Brickell (M.F.A. Art) recently completed a ceramics residency in Denmark.

Joseph Pintz (M.F.A. Art) was one of six selected out of more than 60 nominations for the Emerging Artists presentation at the National Council on Education in the Ceramic Arts Conference in Phoenix in April.

Melinda Yale (M.F.A. Art) recently launched her artist book, "What Mom Says," published by the Women's Studio Workshop through their 2008 Art-in-Education Residency.

2007

Caitlin Applegate (M.F.A. Art) curated the exhibition "Personal Histories" at Lincoln's Tugboat Gallery in July.

Wendy Bantam (M.F.A. Art) was the featured artist in June 2008 at the Nebraska Furniture Mart's Design Gallery in Omaha.

Michael Burton (M.F.A. Art) was selected as "Best in Show" at the Sioux City Art Center's 61st Juried Exhibition. The exhibition was juried by Christoph Heinrich, curator of the Denver Art Museum. The exhibition ran through Feb. 15.

Rhonda Willers (M.F.A. Art) was interviewed on Wisconsin Public Radio's Spectrum West show on her artwork and exhibition at the Space: A Center for Creativity in New Richmond, Wisc. Willers was also elected to the NCECA Board at their conference in April.

2008

Susan Dewsnap (M.F.A. Art) won an award in the competitive National Council on Education in the Ceramic Arts Conference National Juried Exhibition in April. Only 55 were selected from approximately 3,500 entries. Dewsnap's piece, "Four Small Plates," was accepted into The 5th World Ceramic Biennale 2009 in Korea. The competition drew nearly 3,200 entries from 1,726 applicants from 70 countries. The exhibition was April 25-June 21 at the Icheon World Ceramic Center and Gyeonggi Ceramic Museum. Her work was featured at the AKAR Gallery in Iowa City, Iowa, this summer.

Mary Gaetz (M.F.A. Theatre) had her film "Caretakers" screened at the University Film and Video Association (UFVA) annual conference on Aug. 14, 2008, in Colorado Springs.

Cecilia Lee (D.M.A.) completed a residency at the Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada. She will return for a three-month residency next fall.

Matt Miller (B.A. and B.F.A. Theatre) became an assistant lighting designer at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago.

Michael Reichman (B.M.) conducted a concert entitled "Musical Diplomacy: A Concert

and Discussion on Rights and Responsibilities during Wartime" in March at the New England Conservatory, where he is a Master of Music student. Created and performed entirely by students the event used "music as a means to spark discussion on current political issues."

News and Notes

The career and legacy of Professor Emeritus Earl "Pete" Jenkins will be celebrated at the



University Singers concert on Oct. 15, 2009, at 7:30 p.m. in Kimball Recital Hall. Alumni are encouraged to attend and may also join the University

Singers in their finale that evening. In addition, an endowment is being created through the University of Nebraska Foundation in his honor. For more information or to receive an invitation, please contact Kathe Andersen at (402) 472-9355 or e-mail kandersen1@unl.edu.

The first Johnny Carson Lectureship will take place on Friday, Oct. 16, 2009, in the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center at 3:30 p.m. Jeff Sotzing, the president of Carson Entertainment Group and nephew of Johnny Carson, will be joined by three former "Tonight Show" writers, Anthony DeSena, Andrew Nicholls and Darrell Vickers, for a unique look at the "Tonight Show" and behind-the-scenes insight into some of Carson's most legendary clips. They will also participate in undergraduate and graduate classes that day.



The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts presented a framed photo of Johnny Carson to the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity at UNL, which Carson belonged to during his time at the University of Nebraska. The photo was a gift of appreciation for their help with the Dedication of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film in October 2007. From left to right: John Osterholm, President, Lambda Nu Graduate Association; Dr. Joseph Skradski, D.D.S., Chairman, Capital Campaign; Dean Giacomo Oliva; John Russell, President, Lambda Nu of Phi Gamma Delta; Chris Benner, Recording Secretary, Lambda Nu of Phi Gamma Delta; and Eric Drumheller, Secretary, Lambda Nu Graduate Association.

In Memoriam

John C. Angle

John C. Angle, 85, died Sept. 23, 2008. He was a retired Chairman of the Board and CEO of The Guardian Life Insurance Company of New York City. He and his wife, Catherine, lived in Lincoln from 1946 to 1953 and returned to Lincoln in 1989. Angle was a founding member of the Hixson-Lied Advisory Board and has been president of the Nebraska Art Association and of the Friends of the Libraries at UNL. Angle and his wife are founders of the College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Dr. Howard A. Dinsdale

Dr. Howard A. Dinsdale, 78, died Sept. 30, 2008. He and his wife, Barbara, are founders of the College of Fine and Performing Arts. Born in Palmer, Neb., he graduated from UNL and the University of Nebraska College of Medicine. After interning in Minnesota, he moved to Lincoln and practiced general ophthalmology from 1967 to 1989. He was forced to retire due to an automobile accident in May 1989, which left him a quadriplegic. He also served on the board of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

Robert Anders "Bud" Emile

Professor Emeritus Robert "Bud" Emile, 80, died

Sept. 12, 2008. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Emile was emeritus professor of violin and theory, and conductor of the University Orchestra at UNL from 1975 to 1998. He was also music director and conductor of the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra, 1975 to 1993. Emile played with the Omaha Symphony following his retirement from the Lincoln Symphony.

David Fowler

Professor Emeritus David Fowler, Jr., 90, died March 5, 2009, after a short illness. Born in 1918 in Fremont, Neb., Fowler served as Vice-Chairman of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln School of Music and an adviser to graduate students. He was also the lead professor for the design team for Kimball Recital Hall, Westbrook Music Building and the Lied Center for Performing Arts. A violinist, Fowler conducted the All State Orchestra. He was a founder of the Nebraska Bandmasters. He was also a World War II veteran with service in the U.S. Army Air Corps in China, Burma and India.

Lee R. Kjelson

A native of Stromsburg, Neb., Kjelson, 82, passed away on May 4, 2009, in Coral Gables, Fla. Kjelson was director of choral activities at the

University of Miami from 1967 until 1993, when he became professor emeritus. He leaves a legacy of excellence in the professional field of choral music, having conducted and taught throughout the world. Kjelson received the Alumni Achievement Award in Music in 1997. He and his wife, Betty, established the Kjelson Visiting Choral Scholars Residency Program in the UNL School of Music in 2004, which annually brings visiting choral scholars to the School of Music.

Audun Ravnar

Audun J. Ravnar, 83, died June 9, 2009. A native of Bergen, Norway, Ravnar was professor of piano at UNL for 36 years until he retired in 1993 as the George Holmes Distinguished Professor of Piano and past chair of the piano department. Often referred to as the "Dean of Nebraska's Pianists," he was named Teacher of the Year by the Nebraska Music Teachers Association (MTA) in 2002. He has been honored with the University's Distinguished Teaching Award and the Mayor's Arts Award from the city of Lincoln. In 1981, he was the first individual artist to receive the Governor's Arts Award, Nebraska's most prestigious arts honor. He served as president of the Nebraska MTA from 1966 to 1970.

Honors Day Weekend honors faculty, alumni, student achievements

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts celebrated its annual Honors Day weekend April 24-25.

Three distinguished alumni were in classes on Friday, April 24. They were recipients of the Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Board's Alumni Achievement Awards.

Thomas J. Riesing (B.F.A. 1970, M.F.A. 1973), Alumni Achievement Award in Art, is Professor of Painting and Drawing at the University of Tennessee. **Laurie Scott** (M.M. 1979), Alumni Achievement Award in Music, is Associate Professor of Music and Human Learning and Director of the String Project at the University of

Texas at Austin. **Breanna Benjamin** (B.S. 1961), Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre, founded Creative Talent Company, a talent management company that guides the careers of a select group of actors and has served as a casting director for film, television, theatre, commercials, industrials and animation voices.

Other award winners included **Larry and Bets Frederick**, who received the Award of Merit; **Jon Nelson**, who received the Faculty Service Award; and **Sarah Barnard-Blitz**, who received the Student Leadership Award.

Funding support from the Hixson-Lied Endowment was created to establish an ongoing awards program for faculty and staff, to recognize outstanding performance and accomplishments in the areas of teaching, research and creative activity, faculty service, outreach and engagement, and staff service to the College and University.

The College Distinguished Teaching Award was presented to Associate Professor of Trombone **Scott Anderson**, from the School of Music.

The Leadership Award in Curriculum or Programmatic Development was given to Associate Professor of Music Theory **Gretchen Foley**, from the School of Music.

The Achievement Award in Academic Advising was presented to Associate Professor of Theatre **Virginia Smith**, from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

The Junior Faculty Achievement Award in Teaching was given to Assistant Professor and Head of the Dance Area **Susan Levine**, from the School of Music.

The Senior Faculty Achievement Award in

Research and Creative Activity was presented to Professor of Art History **Alison Stewart**, from the Department of Art and Art History.

The Junior Faculty Achievement Award in Research and Creative Activity was given to Associate Professor of Printmaking **Francisco Souto**, from the Department of Art and Art History.

The Faculty Award for Outstanding Outreach, Engagement or Service was presented to Associate Professor of Music Education **Brian Moore** from the School of Music, who coordinates the music technology offerings for the School.

The Staff Award for Outstanding Service was given to **Michele Deaton**, Business Manager for the School of Music.

For a full listing of honorees, visit www.unl.edu/finearts/news/2009/honorsday.shtml.



Back row (L-R): Larry and Bets Frederick and Thomas Riesing. Front row (L-R): Laurie Scott, Giacomo Oliva and Breanna Benjamin. Photo by Tom Slocum, University Communications.



Hixson-Lied Faculty and Staff Award Recipients. Back row (L-R): Michele Deaton, Dean Giacomo Oliva, Susan Levine and Brian Moore. Front row (L-R): Scott Anderson, Virginia Smith, Alison Stewart and Gretchen Foley. Not pictured: Francisco Souto. Photo by Tom Slocum, University Communications.

Students collaborate with Diavolo for Lied performance

Jason Francis came back from Los Angeles in January with a “beautiful bruise” on his hip. And his legs. And his arms. And in a few other places. But he wasn’t complaining.

“Little did I know what a spectacular cost this would be on my body,” said Francis, who just completed his second year in the Master of Fine Arts in acting program in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre of Film.

The intense training he endured in Los Angeles was part of The Diavolo Project: Nebraska. The Lied Center for Performing Arts and Omaha Performing Arts joined creative and collaborative forces this spring with the internationally acclaimed movement troupe Diavolo to present The Diavolo Project: Nebraska.

The Diavolo Project: Nebraska engaged Nebraska-based performing artists, educators and communities with Diavolo in a multi-project exploration of their unique approach to the art of movement.

Diavolo’s residency program, “Learning to Fly,” offers a broad range of community and educational workshops complementing the company’s dance performances. Employing the Diavolo technique, the program encourages risk-taking, trust and teamwork as a means for achieving personal goals and interpersonal aspirations.

Eight Nebraska-based teaching artists were selected to participate in this project, including

Francis, UNL Lecturer in Dance Sarah Brown and Daniel Kubert, a professional choreographer, actor and educator from Lincoln who has been a guest artist in the UNL dance program.

The project included one week of professional training at Diavolo’s headquarters in Los Angeles; the creation of a new, theatrical, movement-based dance work; the selection of 12 additional Nebraska-based participants for the new work; and public performances and workshops at both the Lied Center for Performing Arts in Lincoln and the Holland Performing Arts Center in Omaha.

“To perform on the Holland and Lied stages was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” Francis said.

Founded in Los Angeles in 1992 by Jacques Heim, Diavolo takes a collaborative team of dancers, gymnasts and actors and combines them with outrageous, surrealistic sets for a thrilling experience. Everyday items such as doors, chairs and stairways provide the back-drop for dramatic movement—leaping, flying, twirling—that creates metaphors for the challenge of relationships, the absurdities of life and the struggle to maintain our humanity in an increasingly technological world.

“It required so much upper body training,” Francis said. “You soon realize, ‘Someone’s life is in my hands.’”

Following the performances in April, the teaching artists began conducting Diavolo-centered, multi-day residency programs in

communities across Nebraska in May.

“For me it has been art transformative,” Francis said of his experience with Diavolo. “I learned commitment, which taught me to be fully committed to movement in any scene. I also learned to take risks. Theatre doesn’t have time for someone making an easy choice.”



Jason Francis (left) and Sarah Brown work with Diavolo in Los Angeles in January.