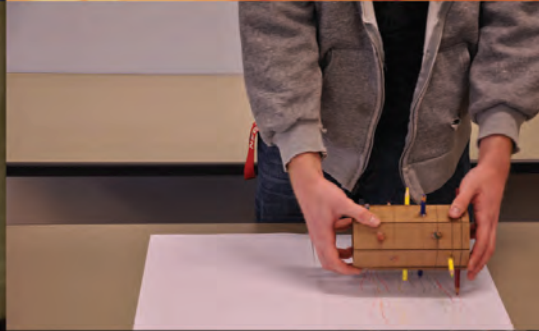
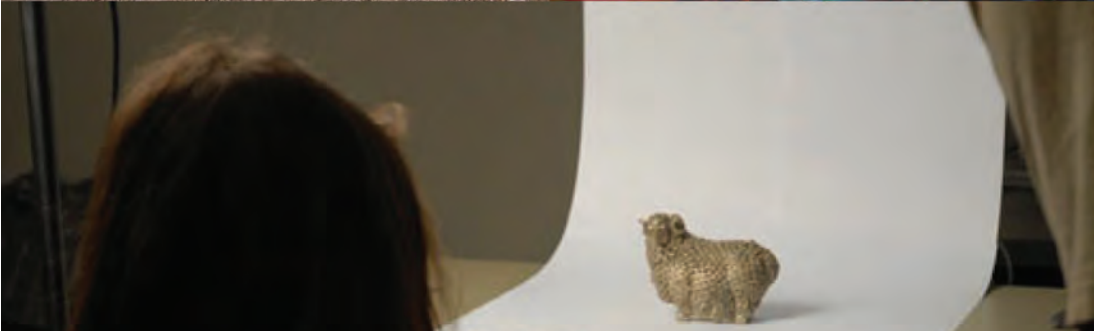
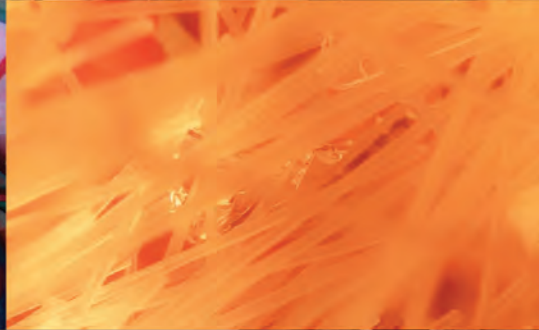
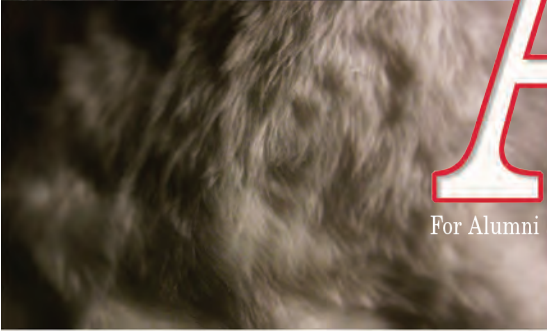




Fine and Performing Arts

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



DIGITAL ARTS

New program brings students, college into 21st century | page 14



First Carson Film gets fall premiere | page 19



Interdisciplinary Arts Symposium crosses borders | page 24



Drake inducted into Broadcaster's Hall of Fame | page 42

FROM THE DEAN

Dear Friends,

With our summer activities and events in full swing, I am delighted to bring you greetings from UNL and from the Hixson-Lied College. In my letter to you at this time last year, I mentioned that the University was in the process of finalizing plans for launching its *Campaign for Nebraska*, a \$1.2 billion capital campaign for its four campuses. I am pleased to report that the official launching festivities took place last October and that the Campaign is now up and running. Our College, of course, has an important role to play in this initiative. Our campaign goals are set, and our working and honorary committees are fully organized and ready to start their work on behalf of the College. We are intending to engage all of you in some way in our efforts to achieve our campaign goals, and hope that you will join together with us, as you have in the past, to move the College forward in new and exiting ways.

In addition to news about the capital campaign, this issue of our Alumni Magazine provides you with a variety of other interesting stories about some of the projects and activities that our faculty and students have been engaged in this past year. These include our innovative interdisciplinary curricular focus on Digital Arts, which began offering courses this past fall; our Johnny Carson Film Series collaborative project *Vipers in the Grass*, which is now in post-production; our new Interdisciplinary Arts Symposium, under the leadership of Professor Rhonda Garelick; the first Carson Lecture Series event, which featured Jeff Sotzing, President of the Carson Entertainment Group, along with three former writers from the *Tonight Show*; and the Community Arts initiative that Professor Sandra Williams from the Department of Art & Art History has been working on for the past several years. All of these projects would not have been possible without the special support that was made available by our Hixson-Lied and Johnny Carson Endowments, and other funding provided by alumni and supporters of the College in recent years.

You will also read about Matt Boring, a junior in the School of Music, who was named a Truman Scholar, the first for the University since 2004, and the first ever for

our College; recent doctoral graduate Kurt Knecht, who received the university-wide Folsom Dissertation Award this past year; graduate student Shannon Cameron, one of two students in the nation to be awarded a prestigious, national directing fellowship by the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival; and Alumni Board member Leta Powell Drake, who was recently inducted into the Nebraska Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame. In addition, this issue includes faculty profiles of Professors Dana Fritz and Sandy Veneziano, exiting news about our new graduate programs in the School of Music, and a tribute to Professor Rusty White from the School of Music, who retired after 29 years of service to the School and to the University.

This coming Fall, I will be starting my 10th year as your Dean, and as I look back over the past nine years, it is heartwarming to me to see all that our faculty, students, staff and alumni have accomplished, and the myriad ways in which everyone has banded together to do the work of this outstanding College, moving it squarely into the national higher education arena, where it belongs. It has been equally gratifying to work at a University that values the arts as vital to its academic mission and to the quality of life throughout the campus community. Finally, I am ever grateful for the long-standing support that has been provided by the University of Nebraska Foundation, as well as for the loyalty and commitment that you, our alumni, continue to demonstrate to UNL and to our College. We all are indeed most fortunate in so many ways!

Enjoy the stories and news that we have to share in this issue, and, as always, I invite you to visit us the next time you come to Lincoln.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Giacomo M. Oliva". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light gray, cloud-like background.

Giacomo M. Oliva
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean

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Fall 2010

For Alumni and Friends of the
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The cover shows a sampling of student projects from the new Digital Arts Initiative. Featuring the work of the following students (left to right, top to bottom) Dan Buhrdorf, Jennifer Rubinstein, Benito Sanchez, Ben Skudlarek, Mary Claire Rice, Natalia Kraviec, Jordan Kaiser, Kammie Russel, Ben Skudlarek, Bryan Klopping and James Chu, Keegan Baker and Logan Caldwell. The instructor is Assistant Professor Jeff Thompson.

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Stephan named permanent director of Lied Center

by *University Communications*

Bill Stephan, interim executive director of the Lied Center for Performing Arts at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, agreed to become the permanent director effective July 1, UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman announced in March.

Stephan has served as interim executive director since July 10, 2009, and has shown “tremendous leadership, vision and management skills,” Perlman said. Stephan joined the Lied Center staff in February 2009 as associate executive director. He had been the director of the Nampa Civic Center in Idaho for 10 years.

In the past year, the Lied Center has experienced higher ticket sales and consistent



Bill Stephan

rave reviews. The performances of 2008 Tony Award-winning South Pacific in February had attendance of 7,463 patrons, the largest number of ticket buyers for a Broadway show since 2005. Overall, ticket sales are up more than 10 percent over last season.

“I am thrilled to have the opportunity to serve as the executive director of the Lied Center,” Stephan said. “Nebraska’s ‘Home for the Arts’ is one of the leading performing arts centers in the United States with a first-class venue showcasing the finest artists in the world. Our organization’s

success is based on a great staff, wonderful volunteers and tremendous support from the Friends of Lied, the Lied Trust, Nebraska businesses and the University of Nebraska and the University of Nebraska Foundation. I am really looking forward to bringing more stellar artists to the Lied, reaching out to all corners of the state and inspiring our wonderful young people through the performing arts.”

Stephan is a graduate of Boise State University with degrees in business and music. Prior to his 10 years with the Nampa Civic Center, Stephan was the managing director at Idaho Dance Theatre for three years and served as the marketing, sales and development assistant at the Boise Philharmonic. ■

Banks retires from Lentz Center for Asian Culture

by *Troy Fedderson,*
University Communications

Barbara Banks has retired from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln after serving as the Director of the Lentz Center for Asian Culture for 16 years.

Banks joined UNL in 1993 and was the third Director/Curator of the Lentz Center, located in the lower level of Hewit Place, 1155 Q St.

In her tenure, Banks has increased the Lentz Center collection from a little more than 250 items in 1993 to more than 1,000 pieces of Asian art today. Her final exhibition this summer was “Director’s Choice,” which featured what Banks considered to be the best items from the collection.

Banks quietly started preparing for the exhibit as thoughts of retirement began a few years ago. However, those plans accelerated when a UNL budget reduction earlier this year called for the closure of the Lentz Center.

When the Lentz Center closed in July, the collection stayed in storage in Hewit Place. Workers from the upper-level Great Plains Art Museum will monitor the Asian art items. Banks said an advisory board is



Barbara Banks

being set up to decide what exhibitions will be featured in the space. The exhibition space will also be used by the Great Plains Art Museum. The Lentz Center collection will also be open for research and study.

Later this summer, Banks will leave Lincoln for retirement near family in Phoenix. She will stay involved with the art community, through colleagues in the area and by joining a group that supports the Phoenix Art Museum.

She also plans to convert her doctoral dissertation about horses in early China into a book. Her dissertation is titled, “The Magical Powers of the Horse as Revealed in the Archeological Exploration of Early China.”

“The book will be about how horses were originally buried, sometimes in large numbers,” said Banks. “Then there was a switch to clay and/or bronze horses in the burials. So the book will talk about that evolution.” She has tentatively titled the book, “Underground Horse.”

And, while she’s excited about moving on to other projects, the transition is bittersweet.

“I was just thinking the other day about what I’m going to do without all this wonderful art every day,” said Banks. “Moving away and having a different life will make things easier. But, I’m definitely going to miss UNL, the Lentz Center and all that I’ve accomplished here.”

The Lentz Center for Asian Culture is dedicated to the enrichment of knowledge and understanding of Asia and is the only museum in Nebraska devoted solely to Asian art. Its unique collection provides an opportunity for enhancing instructional programs on the UNL campus, as well as enriching the cultural environment of the citizens of the state of Nebraska. The Lentz Center was named for the longtime (1937-73) director of University of Nebraska bands, Donald Lentz, and his wife, Velma. Their many years of work and study in Asia led to the initial endowment and basic collection of the museum. The Lentz Center was approved by the NU Board of Regents in 1983 and dedicated in Morrill Hall in 1986. It moved to Hewit Place in 2000. For more info, visit www.unl.edu/lentz. ■



UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman speaks at a press conference announcing Nebraska's move to the Big 10 Conference on June 11 at the Van Brunt Visitors Center. Joining him are Big 10 Commissioner James Delaney and UNL Athletic Director Tom Osborne.

UNL to join Big Ten Conference

by University Communications

On Friday, June 11, Big Ten Conference Commissioner James E. Delany confirmed that the Big Ten Conference Council of Presidents/Chancellors voted to approve the application from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for Big Ten membership.

Earlier that day, the University of Nebraska Board of Regents voted to allow UNL Chancellor Harvey Perlman to apply for membership in the Big Ten.

"We are pleased that the presidents and chancellors of the Big Ten schools agree that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a proper partner," Perlman said. "From both an academics standpoint and an athletics perspective, this makes sense for the future of our university."

Perlman said the academic, research and engagement activities carried by UNL are an excellent fit with those achieved by Big Ten institutions.

"Our academic and research aspirations have held up to the high standards of the Big Ten," Perlman said. "We are honored to be included in the Big Ten."

In addition, UNL has received an

invitation to join the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC).

"This affiliation will bring many academic benefits to UNL," Perlman said.

The CIC is a consortium of the Big Ten universities plus the University of Chicago. The CIC leverages faculty, funding, facilities, investments and ideas to help the collective whole compete and succeed. Among its core projects are library collections and access; technology collaborations to build capacity at reduced costs; leveraging purchasing and licensing through economies of scale; leadership and development programs for faculty and staff; course-sharing mechanisms by which students may take courses at other consortium institutions; and study-abroad collaborations.

UNL's full membership in the CIC begins July 1, 2011, the same date the university officially joins the Big Ten.

"The CIC will be working with our academic leaders and faculty during the coming year to connect UNL with the resources and networks of the CIC," Perlman wrote. "Kudos to all of you who have worked so hard over the last several years to put our academic programs in a position to be so recognized." ■

Jazz Ensemble II students record new version of "Dear Old Nebraska U"

by University Communications

A spaghetti jumble of 24 wires converges in the center of a huge performance room in Westbrook Building, joining microphones to a computerized audio system designed to record every nuance of a musical performance.

Students in a new Digital Audio Recording and Production class carefully position microphones to capture distinct sounds from 17 musicians in the School of Music's Jazz Ensemble 2. Each instrument is recorded to a separate track so sounds can be individually manipulated another day.

But this evening, it's all about the performance, and capturing it on the hard drive of a loaded Apple computer.

"It's a rather massive undertaking," said Lecturer Tom Larson, who teaches the recording class. "We're going to use all 24 inputs on our mixing console, so we're maxing things out tonight."

Eric Richards, assistant professor of composition and jazz studies, presides over a half-dozen takes of a familiar Nebraska song. But the tune has a twist: School of Music Director John W. Richmond recruited Richards to arrange a swing version. The result is a playful "Dear Old Nebraska U" that Richards says is in the spirit of Doc Severinsen's Tonight Show Band.

The students of Jazz Ensemble 2 bring the short tune to life, while in the hallway, recording students monitor as the song feeds the system producing a flurry of blinking lights and waveforms.

Nick Tusa, a music major from Omaha who hopes to work in a recording studio, says the class opened his eyes to the techniques he'll need in the profession.

"This will help great in my career," he said.

Watch a video of the recording process here: <http://mediahub.unl.edu/media/1321>. You can also download an MP3 of the recording at this site. ■



Left: Associate Dean Christin Mamiya, James Wilson, Daniel Gilbert and Shannon Paulick at the College Honors Day Dinner on April 24. Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications. Right: Orrin Wilson.

Fourth Hixson-Lied fellows class graduates

The fourth class of Hixson-Lied graduate fellows graduated this May. 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.

Members of the graduating class of Hixson-Lied Fellows included:

Daniel Gilbert, *Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film*. Gilbert received his Master of Fine Arts in acting. Daniel received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in theatre from the University of Central Oklahoma. Daniel was a four-time Irene Ryan Nominee and an Irene Ryan Finalist at the Regional American College Theatre Festival for his work in University of Central Oklahoma Mainstage productions.

“The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film gave me the chance to train with experienced theatre professionals and has provided me with the invaluable education I needed in order to succeed in the highly competitive world of professional acting,” he said. “However, it was the Hixson-Lied Fellowship that opened the door for me and made it all possible.”

Shannon Paulick, *Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film*. Paulick received her Master of Fine Arts in costume design. She received her B.A. in studio art with a drama minor from Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Okla. Her costume design work for University Theatre includes “The Good Doctor” and “The Unvarnished Truth.” She worked on the costume construction crew for “Six Degrees of Separation” (in which she also served as assistant costume designer), “King Lear,” “You Never Can Tell,” “The London Cuckolds,” “An Experiment with an Air Pump,” “As You Like It” and “Carousel.” She is a lifetime member of The National Scholars Honors Society.

“In being given the freedom to focus solely on growing in my craft, I was able to emphasize my effort on practical experience courses that have trained my hands and understanding for their future endeavors,” Paulick said.

James Wilson, *School of Music*. Wilson received his Doctor of Musical Arts in choral conducting and conducted the East Campus Choir. He was a member of University Singers, Varsity Men’s Chorus and Chamber Singers. He conducted for the University Singers, as well as the operas “Amahl and the Night Visitors” and “Later the Same Evening.” In 2005, James completed a Master’s Degree in Choral Conducting at Boston

University’s College of Fine Arts under Dr. Ann Howard Jones and David Hoose. He completed his Bachelor of Music Degree in Voice Performance at The Hartt School in Hartford, Ct.

“I cannot speak more highly of my experiences at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln as a Hixson-Lied Graduate Fellow,” Wilson said. “With the help of this fellowship, I have been able to grow as a musician, teacher and scholar in ways I could not have imagined possible just three years ago.”

Orrin Wilson, *School of Music*. Wilson received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in trumpet performance. He received his Bachelor of Music in trumpet performance from Southern University A&M College, and he received his Master of Music in trumpet performance from Southeastern Louisiana University. Wilson participated in the Atlantic Brass Quintet and performed with the Baton Rouge Theater Orchestra for their production of “Cats” in 2007 and “Beauty and the Beast” in 2006.

“In the fall of 2007, the Hixson-Lied Fellowship allowed me the opportunity to take a series of private lessons with one of the world’s greatest musicians, Wynton Marsalis, in New York City,” Wilson said. “After these series of lessons with Mr. Marsalis, my passion for trumpet playing soared to new heights.” ■

Jason Francis played father figure to many

(Editor's Note: Jason Francis was scheduled to receive his Master of Fine Arts in acting this May and was the recipient of a Hixson-Lied Fellowship. He was diagnosed with cancer in October 2009 and passed away on Jan. 11. He left a tremendous legacy of service, dedication and commitment to the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Below is a tribute to Jason written by fellow MFA acting student Ryan Kathman, which appeared in the Daily Nebraskan.)

By Ryan Kathman, Daily Nebraskan

It's been said that you can never truly know an actor. That it can be difficult to penetrate the veneer of artifice performers sometimes carry into their everyday lives.

I myself am occasionally moody, introverted and standoffish in the misguided belief that this behavior makes me seem enigmatic, mysterious or cool.

The truth is that very few actors — or people, for that matter — are willing to risk any significant revelations of who they really are for fear of standing apart too much from the crowd, alienating themselves or simply appearing too vulnerable.

But there are exceptions.

And Jason Francis was as exceptional as they come.

Jason was a third-year graduate acting student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who was diagnosed with stage-four cancer last October. He lost his battle to the disease in the early hours of Jan. 11.

In the 2 ½ years he spent as an MFA student here, Jason had the opportunity to play several characters on stage in the Temple building and at various venues in Lincoln and Omaha. He was, without question, one of the most talented and generous performers I've ever worked with or seen. But it was the roles he played offstage — father, husband, teacher, friend — that reveal the most about his own inimitable character.

His first chance to tread the boards on the Howell stage came in the spring of his first year at UNL in the Johnny Carson School's production of "An American Daughter." Jason played the part of the doting and affable patriarch of an elite family of East Coast intellectuals. The role of loving father and husband was a natural fit for Jason, as he himself came to Lincoln by way of Seattle with his wife and daughter in tow.

But Jason's paternal instincts didn't stop with his literal family. His fellow grad students and I almost instantly anointed him our "father figure," regularly asking him to convey any difficult concerns we might wish to express to faculty members, as well as handle responsibilities ranging from the substantial — serving as our representative on various committees — to the menial — reserving rooms for rehearsals or leading group projects.

In fact, the entire undergrad contingent of the theatre department adopted Jason as its unofficial "Papa," too, turning to the 37-year-old theater veteran for advice, coaching or simply a compassionate ear. At a fundraiser event called "Cabaret for Jason" held last month, senior performance major Logan Pietz noted that Jason was responsible for teaching him, quite simply, "how to be a man."

The next few stage roles that followed not only allowed Jason to display his impressive range as an actor, but also to demonstrate several of the qualities that made him a singular human being as well.

In his role as the wealthy mill owner Mr. Bascombe in the 2008 production of "Carousel" at the Lied Center, Jason's compassionate leadership shone through, as did his selfless concern for others in his role as the doctor in the Nebraska Repertory Theatre's production of "The Cripple of Inishmaan" that same year. The following fall, Jason was perfectly cast as the insatiably positive Duke Senior in the Johnny Carson School production of "As You Like It." Then in the spring, a collage of Jason's admirable qualities and talents were on exhibit in the multiple roles he played in "The Good Doctor," including an authoritative politician, a patient banker, a cheerful husband and, once again, a selfless father.

The kinds of emotional and physical risks Jason took on stage were sometimes eclipsed by those he was willing to take in acting classes, where his fellow grad students knew he would always be the first and often only one of us to truly throw himself into an exercise with joyful abandon. But that was also how Jason approached each and every relationship in his everyday life. Especially as a teacher. Whether it was for a high school workshop, as a teaching assistant or as an instructor of basic acting courses, Jason formed indelible bonds with his students that continued long after the classes had ended.

The health problems that began to plague Ja-

son not long ago seemed impossible when considering how much he achieved and challenged himself physically while a student. In addition to taking elective dance classes to learn new musical theater skills (coupled with one of the most beautiful singing voices I've ever heard), Jason had the opportunity to participate last spring in a unique and exclusive movement and acrobatic troupe called Diavolo. He and I also paired up for an elaborate stage combat battle to earn our certification as actor/combatants in the Society of American Fight Directors, and I couldn't have asked for a more dedicated and committed partner.

Jason's final major stage role came this past summer in perhaps his most prestigious and impressive local performance. As the heroic Scottish soldier Macduff in the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival's production of "Macbeth," Jason not only had the chance to prove his amazing facility with Shakespearean language, but also his formidable combat skills in the play's final duel and unmatched emotional nakedness in his character's reaction to the death of his wife and child.

Like Macduff, Jason was a warrior of unparalleled courage in facing his own final duel with cancer. A week before his passing, the easy and generous laugh we all knew (usually accompanied by uninhibited clapping) was diminished, but he still grinned and chuckled through my stories, and his eyes shone with a spirit I'll never forget. Jason was endlessly optimistic and faced down this enemy with a faith that inspired scores of friends and family.

Although his diagnosis robbed Jason of the thesis role he prepared so vigorously for in last semester's "King Lear," he did manage to give one final performance last month. In the student-run sketch troupe Red Theatre's one-night-only show on Dec. 6, the full house of audience members was surprised to hear Jason's recorded voice reading from the blog entries he posted online throughout his ordeal. The voice, shaken but undefeated, led the audience in an impassioned chorus of, "Shrink, tumors, shrink!"

As always, Jason's final performance proved powerful and unforgettable, particularly because he was playing a character more fascinating, inspiring and graceful than any other he'd ever donned: himself. ■

Reprinted with permission from the Jan. 13, 2010, Daily Nebraskan.

Unique art exhibition 'Tagged and Collected' at Nebraska Hall

by University Communications

The Systematic Research Collections of the University of Nebraska State Museum and the University of Nebraska Department of Art and Art History presented an art exhibition this spring inspired by the collections in the museum's Division of Zoology. The student-produced exhibit titled "Tagged and Collected" was on display in Nebraska Hall in March and April.

"Tagged and Collected" evolved through a collaboration in the fall semester between Patricia W. Freeman, professor and curator of the University of Nebraska State Museum Division of Zoology, and Aaron Holz, associate professor of art and art history. The exhibit was organized by art and art history graduate assistant Victoria Hoyt.

In the fall semester, Holz's beginning painting class was given a tour of the Division of Zoology of the University of Nebraska

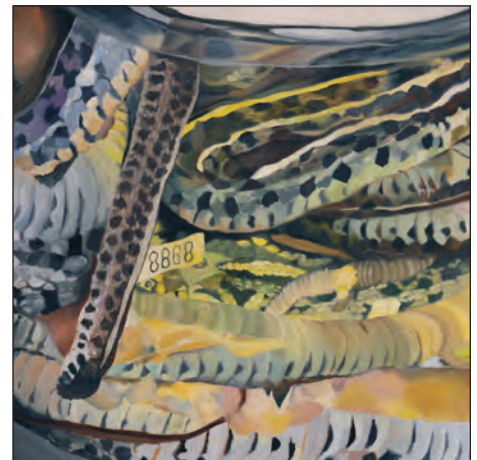
State Museum located in Nebraska Hall. The students were given the opportunity to view the collections that are normally kept behind closed doors. The collections include more than 400,000 specimens of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fish and mollusks. The students could decide which specimens to portray on canvas, which could be anything from a pattern on a feather, how a skull casts a shadow, or the lab environment in which the specimens are housed.

The students drew inspiration from what biologists see, such as species, geography, history—as well as more artistic elements such as textures, colors and organization. Using these influences, the students created paintings that showcased their individual take on the biological science of zoology.

A similar collaboration between the Zoology Division and the Department of Art and Art History is in the works for the 2010 fall semester. ■



"Birds of Paradise" by Lindsey Graef



"Snake Jam" by Nina Colgan



"Three Studies" by Ashley Brown



Petrie brothers visit Carson School

Donald Petrie (fourth from right) and Daniel Petrie, Jr., (second from right) visit with students in Assistant Professor of Theatre and Film Sandy Veneziano's design class in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

Donald Petrie is a director. His credits include the films "My Life in Ruins," "Welcome to Mooseport," "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days," "Miss Congeniality" and "Grumpy Old Men," as well as the television shows "Turner & Hooch," "Picket Fences" and "The Equalizer." He has also acted, with roles in the television shows "Falcon Crest," "Three's Company," "Little House on the Prairie" and "Buck Rogers in the 25th Century."

Daniel Petrie, Jr., is a producer, writer and director. His writing credits include "Beverly Hills Cop" and "Beverly Hills Cop II," "Turner & Hooch" and "Toy Soldiers." His producing credits include "Turner and Hooch" (both the 1989 movie and 1990 television show) and the television shows "The Big Easy" and "Stick with Me, Kid."

Carson School's Steger selected for National Theatre Conference

Paul Steger, the Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, was invited to join the prestigious National Theatre Conference (NTC).

"I am profoundly humbled and deeply honored to have been voted into the National Theatre Conference," Steger said. "The list of members, a virtual 'who's who' of the professional and academic theatre, are committed to celebrating theatre organizations and individuals who have had a tremendous impact on the professional and academic theatre arenas. Being a part of this organization brings the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and our programs and initiatives into a national spotlight and dialogue. These relationships will help to firmly establish the School's national reputation and provide opportunities for future collaborations with the profession."

Founded in 1925, the NTC is a cooperative association of distinguished leaders of the American theatre—university, community and professional. Membership to the conference is by invitation only and is limited to 120 members.

Current Vice President of NTC Dan Carter, who is Director of the School of Theatre at The Pennsylvania State University and a member of NTC since 1996, says Steger is a welcome addition.

"I find Paul bright and engaging and



Paul Steger

"I have appreciated my time with NTC because of the various opportunities it has provided," he said. "These include sharing challenges and best practices with some of the very best in the field, gaining insights into 'backstage' issues (both literally and figuratively), and 'giving a leg up' to young playwrights as well as honoring established theatres and artists. I believe Paul will be enriched and nourished by these exchanges."

The conference operates as a theatrical "think tank" and meets annually to review and confer on matters pertaining to the welfare and development of the theater and to honor outstanding achievement of organizations and individuals in the field.

The NTC took its name and its formal inception in 1931 at a conference at Northwestern University. At a second conference in 1932, a constitution was adopted and of-

capable of keen insights," Carter said. "He is perceived to be 'a rising star' in the field, and we all feel his contributions to our fellowship will be substantial."

He said Steger will benefit from the experience.

ficers were elected to complete the formal construction of the NTC.

The impetus for such an organization had grown out of the demise of theatre "roadhouses" after World War I, when theatre retreated to New York, and most of the roadhouses were converted to movie theatres.

To fill the vacuum, a number of amateur or community theatres were organized. These theatres paralleled the development of university theatre programs.

Among the leaders of such programs were George Pierce Baker at Yale, Thomas Wood Stevens at Carnegie Tech and Frederick Koch at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. E.C. Mabie, University of Iowa, and Garrett Leverston, Northwestern University, would soon join these leaders. And it was this group of educators who called the 1925 and 1927 conferences that would lead to the 1931-32 formation of the NTC.

Last year's meeting of the NTC was held Oct. 30-Nov. 1 in New York City at the Players and Actors Equity.

Steger became the Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and Executive Director of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre in July 2005. He is an actor, director and fight director.

He received his MFA in directing from Western Illinois University and his BA in theatre from St. Louis University. ■



Ceramics area hosts visiting artists

The Department of Art and Art History's ceramics area hosted two visiting artists in February. Tony Marsh (left) and Cristina Cordova (right) were on campus Feb. 20-24. They did simultaneous demonstrations of their working process in the ceramics studio and also gave lectures about their work.

Marsh earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1978 from California State University in Long Beach. He later spent three years at the workshop of Tatsuzo Simaoka in Japan. He earned a Master of Fine Arts in 1988 from New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. In 1989 he accepted a teaching position at California State University in Long Beach and is currently the chair of ceramics.

Cristina Cordova is a studio artist living in Penland, N.C. Originally from Puerto Rico, she received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez and went to earn her Master of Fine Arts from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. She was the recipient of an American Craft Council Emerging Artist Grant, as well as a North Carolina Arts Council Fellowship Award.

Some of the other visiting artists this year in the Department of Art and Art History included painter Kim Dingle, new media artist Piotr Szyhalski, sculptor Michael Jones McKean, photographer Carrie Mae Weems, photo/video/installation/performance artist Martha Rosler and UNL Presidential Artist Martinez Celaya.

Columbia professor, PBS host presented Geske Lecture in November

Gwendolyn Wright, a professor of architecture at Columbia University and host of the PBS television series, “History Detectives,” delivered this year’s Geske Lecture on Nov. 2 at Sheldon Museum of Art. Wright’s lecture was titled “Frank Lloyd Wright’s Progressive Suburbia.”

Frank Lloyd Wright has been praised and blamed for endorsing the American suburban ideal of distinctive single-family houses in bucolic landscapes. In fact, he advocated compact residential settlements throughout his career, although only a few were even partially realized. The most innovative design was a Model Suburb on the outskirts of Chicago for a 1913 competition.

Wright went beyond the program to propose mixed incomes (including apartments near mass transit for single men and women) and a mixed-use greensward woven through the center (including a women’s club, a kindergarten, a library and a cinema) to bring people together. This little known proposal situates Wright within Chicago’s progressive reform movement of the time, even as it offers precedents for contemporary architecture’s interest in landscape urbanism, community facilities, density and transit-based suburbs.

Wright is Professor of Architecture at Columbia University where, in 1985, she was the first woman to receive tenure in the Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. She also holds appointments in Columbia’s departments of history and art history. She received her M.Arch. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California at Berkeley. Academic awards include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Getty Fellowship, and election to the Society of American Historians, which honors literary quality.

Wright has focused principally on American architecture and urbanism from the late-19th century to the present day. She has also written extensively about transnational exchanges, especially colonial and more recent neo-colonial aspects of both



Photo by Kathe Andersen

Gwendolyn Wright films a promotional spot for “History Detectives” for NET in Architecture Hall.

modernism and historic preservation. She is the author of six books and scores of articles.

Her recent book is “USA,” part of the Modern Architectures in History series from Reaktion Books. “USA” recasts established ideas about American modernism by highlighting key shifts and conflicts about work, homes, and public life from 1865 to the present. Architecture and the entire built environment provide a matrix that interweaves social norms and individual imaginations, high art and popular culture, prevailing conditions and visions of change.

Since 2003 Professor Wright has also served as a host of the popular PBS television series, “History Detectives.” This program traces the dynamic processes and quandaries of historical investigations. Attracting professionals and the general public alike, the show reveals how historians track ideas and weigh conflicting evidence about what happened, why, and history’s implications for the present.

Next year’s Geske Lecture will take place on Monday, Jan. 31, 2011. Veronica Passalacqua, Curator at the C.N. Gorman

Museum, Department of Native American Studies, University of California, Davis, will deliver the lecture at 7 p.m. in Sheldon’s Museum of Art.

The Great Plains Art Museum is hosting an exhibition, guest curated by Passalacqua, featuring new work from Seminole photographer Hulleah Tsinhnahnjinnie and items from the Great Plains Art Museum’s permanent collection. The exhibition is tentatively scheduled for Jan. 4-March 27, 2011.

The Norman and Jane Geske Lecture-ship 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 the 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.

The invited scholar will present a public lecture open to the campus and the community, focused ideally on a single work, art form, or artist that will subsequently be published and distributed to major research libraries throughout the United States. ■

Garelick gets book deal on Coco Chanel, European politics

Rhonda Garelick, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Professor of English with a special joint appointment in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, has sold her book, entitled *Antigone in Vogue: Coco Chanel and the Myths of Fashion*, to Random House. The book, which situates fashion designer Chanel within the context of European politics, is scheduled to be published by 2012.

Garelick, a scholar of theater, dance, fashion and cultural politics, will capture the dramatic story of Chanel's life and her impact on 20th century culture.

"The book is what I call a cultural biography of Coco Chanel," Garelick said. "It looks at her life as a kind of prism through which to understand a large swath of European history, particularly the 1920s through the 1940s, the period between the two World Wars. It looks at Chanel as a hugely powerful influence not only on women's lives during those years, but on the rest of us for a century and still going on. I think she forever changed how we perceive women not only visually, but also socially."

Gabrielle Bonheur "Coco" Chanel (1883-1971) was a pioneering French fashion designer. Replacing the corset with comfort and casual elegance, her fashion themes included simple suits and dresses, women's trousers, costume jewelry, perfume and textiles.

Though she claimed a birthdate of 1893 and a birthplace of Auvergne, she was actually born in 1883 in Saumur, a peasant village. Her mother died of tuberculosis in 1895 when she was 12, and her father abandoned the family a short time later. Chanel spent six years in the orphanage of the Roman Catholic monastery of Aubazine, where she learned the trade of a seamstress.



Rhonda Garelick

She adopted the name Coco during a brief career as a singer. First a mistress of a wealthy military officer and then of an English industrialist, Chanel drew on the resources of these patrons in setting up a millinery shop in Paris in 1910. Her hats were worn by celebrated French actresses, which helped to establish her reputation.

"The Chanel Corporation remains one of the highest grossing corporations in the world," Garelick said. "And her name remains essential to their fame. The reason she was so successful was not only that she was good at fashion design—and in fact, there were other designers who were even better—but she had a life that was very public and she integrated the persona she created into her line of fashions."

Garelick said few people know that Chanel was also a costumer for stage and screen. In the 1920s and 30s, she costumed a number of Greek revival dramas, including *Antigone*, whence the book's title.

"She did costumes that were barely different from her regular fashion designs," Garelick said. "But when critics saw them, they thought they were authentic ancient Greek costumes because anything she did always seemed royal and important and classical. The reviews included comments on how authentic and Greek all her costumes were, even though what she designed for *Antigone* was an awful lot like her winter season featured in *Vogue* magazine."

Garelick said Chanel understood our

need to "slip into someone more comfortable."

She said, "That's theatre. She understood the theatrical part of human nature, especially in women."

Garelick has been researching the book for four years and received a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship for the original book proposal in 2006. She has also received special access to Chanel's private documents, which are kept in an archive at the House of Chanel in Paris.

"It took me two-and-a-half years and a lot of intervening on different people's parts to let me get in there," she said. "It's a treasure trove of photographs, magazines, articles and drawings. They have generously allowed me to go back twice, and I'm going back a third time shortly."

Because of the interest in her book, Garelick was accepted as a client by The Wylie Agency, a literary agent in New York and London.

"It's the only way you can have access to commercial trade houses, and that's what allowed the book to be bought at auction," Garelick said.

Garelick is thrilled that Random House purchased the North American rights to *Antigone in Vogue*.

"The biggest dream of my professional life was to write a book that would represent my intellectual interests, but also be of interest to a larger public," she said. "I've written two books that were published by Princeton University Press, and that has been wonderful, but those are primarily read by scholars. The fact that I was able to go to Random House and have had so much interest in the project tells me that I'm going to have a bigger conversation this time." ■

Become our fan on Facebook

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts is now on Facebook. Become a fan and keep up-to-date on what is happening in the College. Visit www.facebook.com/HLCFPA to sign up and learn what's going on in the College.

The Lively Arts calendar has suspended publication. The Summer 2010 issue was the final issue. We encourage you to visit our website at www.unl.edu/finearts, which has a calendar of events. We will also be expanding our web offerings soon.

UNL hosts American Liszt Society Festival 2010

Paul Barnes, Hixson-Lied Professor and Co-Chair of Piano in the School of Music, was the Festival Coordinator for the American Liszt Society 2010 Spring Festival: Celebrating Chopin and Schumann, held in Lincoln April 8-10.

“Inviting 50 of my favorite pianist, singer and string player friends from around the world to UNL for the ALS Liszt Festival was a glorious way to celebrate Chopin and Schumann,” Barnes said. “It was a tremendously successful festival thanks to the support of the Hixson-Lied College, the School of Music and the Lied Center for Performing Arts. My friends were greatly impressed by our college, facilities and quality of both students and faculty here.”

2010 marked the bicentennial of the birth of two of the greatest composers for the piano, Robert Schumann and Frederic Chopin. The American Liszt Society 2010 Festival celebrated the contributions of these two great composers at a three-day festival hosted by the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

Featured at the festival were a unique piano concerto gala on April 9 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts with world-renowned pianist Arnaldo Cohen performing Liszt’s Piano Concerto in E-flat Major



Photo courtesy of Paul Barnes

Paul Barnes (left) with Brazilian pianist Arnaldo Cohen on the radio at Live from the Lied.

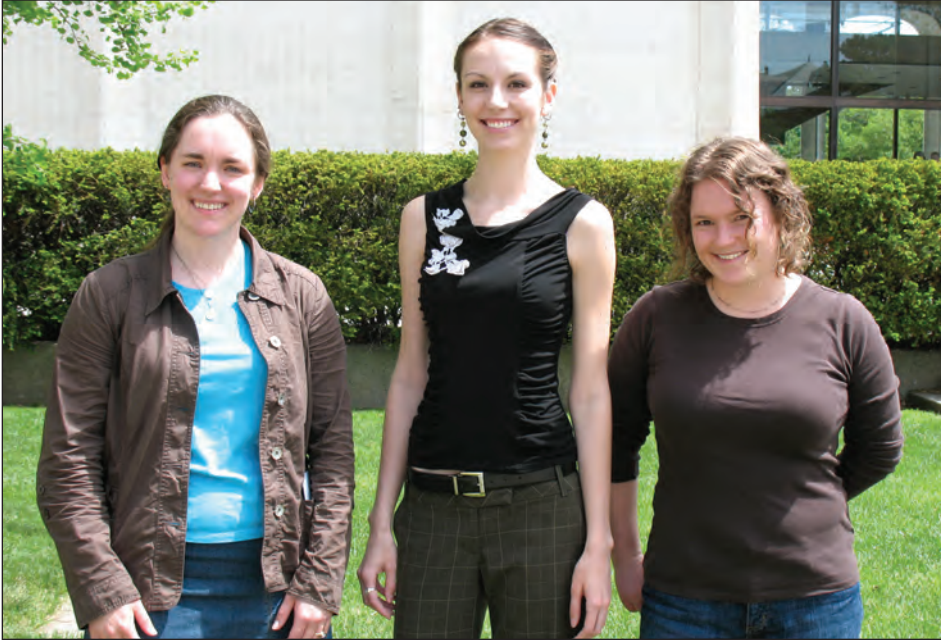
with the Lincoln Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Edward Polochick. Also featured on the program were performances of the Chopin F minor concerto performed by Alexandre Dossin and the Schumann Piano Concerto performed by Gila Goldstein.

Pianists from all over the world came to Lincoln to perform including Charles Webb, Evelyne Brancart, Luis de Moura Castro, members of the Korean Liszt Society and Asaf Zohar of the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. ■



Kjelson Distinguished Choral Residency welcomed Rao

Doreen Rao, the Elmer Iseler Chair in Conducting and Director of Choral Programs at the University of Toronto, was this year’s Kjelson Distinguished Choral Resident in the School of Music. She was on campus Sept. 22-25. The Kjelson Distinguished Choral Scholar Residency program was established in 2004 by UNL alumni Lee and Betty Kjelson. Lee Kjelson, a prominent choral scholar in his own right who passed away this past May, made it possible for esteemed choral directors from around the world to spend a few days sharing their expertise with UNL music students. Previous Kjelson Scholars have included Ann Howard, Boston University’s Director of Choral Activities; Weston Nobel, Director Emeritus of Choral Activities at Luther College; and Mack Wilberg, Artistic Director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Celebrated for her spirited and moving concerts, Rao’s commitment to choral music in education is recognized in her innovative programming, teaching initiatives, worldwide conducting appearances, and her award-winning publications with Boosey & Hawkes. Recognized as one of the world’s leading experts on children and youth choirs, Rao founded and chaired the ACDA National Committee for Children’s Choirs. This pioneering work inspired the children’s choir movement in America. The next Kjelson Distinguished Choral Resident is Jerry Blackstone from the University of Michigan. He will be on campus at the end of September. *Photo by Mike Edholm.*



Amy Waddle, Jennifer Olson and Kelly Kappen.

Five elected to Phi Beta Kappa

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts had five students elected this spring to Phi Beta Kappa. Phi Beta Kappa is the oldest and most respected honorary society in the United States. The organization recognizes and encourages a commitment to excellence in the liberal arts. Members are elected from candidates for degrees in the liberal arts and sciences who are in the top five to 10 percent of the graduating class.

Elected to Phi Beta Kappa from this College were:

Jessica Elwell, who graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre with High Distinction from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Originally from Des Moines, Iowa, she earned a 3.905 GPA.

Kelly Kappen, graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Music with High Distinction from the School of Music. She also received a Bachelor of Science in Fisheries and Wildlife from the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. She is from Lincoln and earned a GPA of 3.986.

William Kuehn, graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Criticism from the Department of Art and Art History, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the College of Arts and



William Kuehn and Jessica Elwell

Sciences. He is from Heartwell, Neb., and earned a GPA of 3.907.

Jennifer Olson, graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre with Highest Distinction from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. She is from Pierre, S.D., and earned a 3.960 GPA.

Amy Waddle, graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Music with High Distinction from the School of Music. She earned a 3.903 GPA and is from Palmyra, Neb. ■

Famous graphic novel adapted by UNL student

Comics are not just for kids anymore. Jennifer Olson, who graduated in May with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre with highest distinction, worked for six months with Will Eisner Studios, Inc. to adapt the first-ever graphic novel (comics' long form) *A Contract with God* into a play as part of her thesis.

The premiere reading of her script took place on March 6 at the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center. Performing in the reading were 16 local actors, mostly UNL students.

Through close work with Eisner's publisher, Olson also showed an award-winning documentary about the life of arguably the most influential person in American comics and author of *A Contract with God*.

Throughout a career that encompassed comic books from their early beginnings in the 1930s to their development as graphic novels in the 1990s, Eisner introduced the now-traditional mode of comic book production; championed mature, sophisticated storytelling; was an early advocate for using the medium as a tool for education; pioneered the now-popular 'graphic novel,' and served as an inspiration for generations of artists.

The event took place as a part of Will Eisner Week, a national initiative for the promotion of graphic novel literacy and their legitimacy as a literary medium.

In his career, which spanned more than 60 years, Eisner created "The Spirit" (a series called "the 'Citizen Kane' of comics"), be one of the first to develop comics for instructional and educational use, foster the development of today's graphic novel as both advocate and master, write the first textbooks on the art form and he served until his passing as its de facto elder statesman and most enthusiastic promoter. ■



COVER STORY

Digital Arts blend art, technology

New program brings Hixson-Lied College into 21st Century

BY BRITTANY STUREK

Steve Kolbe loves making things. Commercials, short videos, even major motion pictures. Over the last 20 years, Kolbe has helped create, design and produce them all. But all of Kolbe's projects have one important thing in common: cutting-edge digital effects.

In today's entertainment industry, it's all about digital arts and media. Films like "Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius" and "Kung Fu Panda," two of Kolbe's past projects, have transformed the entertainment landscape. Human actors are replaced with digital characters, complete with natural movements and voices. Imaginary worlds are brought to life with the help of computer programs. And we, the audience, are rewarded with clear animation and modern storylines.

Kolbe made his career working with 3-D technology. But that's not where he got his start in the business. After graduating from the University of Kansas in 1994 with a degree in advertising and graphic design, he worked on commercials for a while before realizing his passion was in production, not advertising. In 1998, Kolbe went to graduate school at the Art Institute of Dallas to further hone his 3-D skills before landing his first job as cinematographer and layout director for the Jimmy Neutron movie.

Kolbe's transition from journalism student to movie cinematographer is a recurring theme in today's ever-changing world. Now more than ever, college graduates are expected to acquire multiple skills and use them in more versatile job settings. Where there once was a group of people who completed each task in producing a commercial or composing a musical score, compa-

Charles Rhodes photographs an object for a class project.
Photo by Michael Reinmiller.



Photo by Michael Reinmiller

Assistant Professor Jeff Thompson (left) watches students film objects for their class project.

nies may now employ a single person to do it all. And it's up to colleges and universities across the country to educate students in these multiple areas with the most up-to-date technology.

That's just what the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts is doing.

As the new Assistant Professor of Film and New Media at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Kolbe came back to his home state last year to share his expertise with college students. His return is part of the larger Digital Arts Initiative in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. Along with Kolbe, the college recently hired Jeff Thompson, Assistant Professor of Art, last fall and Damon Lee, Assistant Professor of Digital Arts and Music Composition this fall. Together, these three faculty members have begun the collaborative effort of integrating digital arts and technology into the theatre, art and music curriculums at UNL.

The idea of incorporating digital arts came about five years ago. Giacomo Oliva, Endowed Dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, said the college was at a crossroads in preparing for the future.

"We realized the future of the arts has to embrace the digital arena in some way," Oli-

va said. "It was essential that as a college we adopt a unified approach to at least thinking about how we situate our curricula in the digital arts."

Oliva said that money for funding such an endeavor was a major concern, as well.

"Digital arts is very expensive, and you have to keep it current all the time," Oliva said. "So we knew that each of our units would deal with the digital arts in different ways, but we had to think about cutting across the boundaries of the units to share facilities, equipment and staff."

Oliva worked with Ed Forde, Chair of Art and Art History; Paul Steger, Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film; John Richmond, Director of the School of Music; Robert Fought, previous Associate Dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts; and David Bagby, Technical Coordinator for the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Together, they brainstormed ways to keep the college's curriculum current without becoming insignificant.

"We thought when students leave here, what's out there for them?" Oliva said. "We found that potential careers are less about the fact that they might have a major in graphic design or digital music composition and more about where there were possibilities to think across the disciplines."

As a result, they developed a Digital Arts Initiative to update the college's curriculum and technology capacity. With funding from a Program of Excellence grant from the UNL Office of the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the college was able to hire Kolbe, Thompson and Lee. Together, they are responsible for creating and developing new classes that incorporate digital technology and skills that can be used in art, theatre and music areas.

Kolbe, one of the new hires, said the college's progressive ideas made the position at UNL an enticing career opportunity.

"The Digital Arts Initiative is really what attracted me here," Kolbe said. "That's the really cool thing about UNL. The college creates very specific courses tailored to the feedback it receives from students."

Kolbe taught his first classes last year. He currently teaches three classes, including a video digital production course and an introductory after-effects course.

One of the main points of the Initiative is to give students outside of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts the opportunity to explore their talents in art- and digital-related areas, something that both Kolbe and Thompson are excited about.

"Dean Oliva and other professors have been inundated with other students trying to get into film, video or music composition classes, but we can't always accommodate those students" Kolbe said. "Now, we created a subset of art, theatre and music and made it open to the rest

'We realized the future of the arts has to embrace the digital arena.'

Dean Jack Oliva



Photo by Michael Reinmiller

Jessie Ren works on a video project.

of the university.”

Thompson, who received his Bachelor’s of Fine Arts degree from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and his Master of Fine Arts degree from Rutgers University, has exhibited and performed his work in museums and festivals all over the world. Though he is constantly surrounded by art, Thompson said he enjoys teaching students with backgrounds in areas other than art.

“Having students from outside the arts in the Digital Arts Initiative courses is one of the things that drew me to the position,” Thompson said. “I am always thrilled to work with non-artists, and our students being able to interact with others from outside their discipline is an amazing opportunity not many art schools can provide.”

Thompson will also be teaching three classes in the fall, including two digital liter-

acy courses about static and motion. Kolbe, Thompson and Lee will continue to tweak the curriculum and update classes as need be. Oliva said the goal is for the college to have an inventory of eight to 10 classes that will be taught in rotation, including two online classes. Classes are small, about 16 students each.

Students in these new digital arts classes will be able to use new equipment and resources purchased specifically for the Initiative. With \$350,000 worth of endowment money from the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, the college was able to purchase seven new laptops, updated software, new printers, 16 video cameras and two lighting kits, as well as music keyboards, audio recording equipment, animation software and magnetic whiteboards. The rest of the money was used to

renovate Room 17 in Richards Hall and update facilities in Woods Hall. Only students taking digital arts classes will have access to the equipment and facilities.

Several students have already had the chance to take the digital classes and work with the new equipment. Logan Caldwell is a Design/Technical Production major in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Caldwell took Thompson’s digital literacy class last spring, and is happy with his decision.

“I really enjoyed the fresh perspective I gained from working with all the different mediums of technology,” Caldwell said. “The digital arts classes help to show you simple and effective approaches to use, which does wonders for giving you a broader understanding of the work other people are doing in other fields.”



Photo by Michael Reinmiller

Students collaborate on a project for the Digital Arts class.

Tony Nguyen is another student who has taken a digital arts class. A graphic design major in the Department of Art and Art History, Nguyen took Thompson's digital literacy course about static images last semester. He believes technology has great benefit to the arts.

"Technology brings a whole different dimension to art," Nguyen said. "The biggest thing is that technology enables you to continually manipulate, change and eventually perfect your work. Digital arts allows you to use your head and solve problems. It takes critical thinking to another level."

But arts students aren't the only people taking these classes. Each class reserves at least four spots specifically for students outside of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. Thompson said he taught several students majoring in other areas, which made for a better learning experience for everyone.

"Last semester, I had advertising, biology and computer engineering students working side by side on projects with artists, designers, musicians and filmmakers," Thompson said. "All of these classes are designed to bring students of diverse backgrounds together and use their complementary knowledge and approaches to make projects that might not happen otherwise."

Both Caldwell and Nguyen think that art majors and non-art majors alike can benefit from digital arts classes.

"It's an eye-opener for both sides of the fence," Caldwell said. "It sparks so much creativity, especially in your own field of work."

"With digital arts, what's exciting is that it can be used as a bridge from fine arts to other areas such as engineering or architecture," Nguyen said. "Approaching ideas and concepts from an artistic point of view is a huge advantage over others in your field, even if you aren't an artist."

Another big appeal of this Initiative is the interdisciplinary focus. What students may learn in a visual literacy class may cross over into work they are doing in a digital music composition class. And non-art majors can learn even more skills for their future careers.

"We feel that the most unique part of the program is the interdisciplinary focus," Oliva said. "We want students to think across disciplines, to work together. For the student who has an interest in these subjects, the better these classes will prepare them for the work they're going to do."

Thompson strongly agrees.

"Contemporary visual arts practice, whether a fine artist or designer, is increasingly interdisciplinary," Thompson said.



Photo by Michael Reinmiller

Bryan Klopping and James Chu photograph an object for a class project.

"Artists draw not just from the history and contemporary practice of visual art, but also the other arts as well, like science, technology and anything else. Learning to work this way in dialog with what's around oneself is a critical skill for an artist and is something that is built into the curriculum from the introductory courses."

Just a year old, the Digital Arts Initiative will continue to grow as the college sees increased interest and enrollment in classes. The new faculty members are committed to expanding the Initiative and putting their own mark on the program. Kolbe already envisions building a student-manned production studio, where students would end up working on productions for companies throughout the country.

"The goal of this Initiative is to grow," Kolbe said. "This is a test bed where we can test different ways of teaching and different ways to collaborate within the entire university. That's why I like it because we can reach the kids outside the wall of our 'castle' and build something grander."

Richmond is confident that the Initiative will make a lasting impact at UNL.

"This Initiative will allow our students to be able to learn about and participate in the moving of the fine arts forward in the 20th century, exploiting the technology that surely will influence our work," he said. "It will make sure that our UNL graduates are the ones doing the moving, shaking and shaping." ■

Brittany Sturek is a senior journalism and political science major in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications from Hartington, Neb.



Producer/Screenwriter Jorge Zamacona (center) gives instructions to the crew prior to the day's filming in Ashland, Neb., in May 2009.

First Carson Film to premiere this Fall

BY ASHA ANCHAN

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film is putting an innovative spin on the term convergence. Pairing students with film professionals from Los Angeles and New York, the university has crossed state borders, connected strangers and grounded these bonds in an overarching passion for film.

This passion came to fruition in the completion of a short film, "Vipers in the Grass." That kind of student-professional interaction and learning is unique to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in its pur-

suit to prepare students for their future work in the film industry.

Funded by 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, the film is the first in the Johnny Carson School Film Series. The series will enable students to create a film every three years.

As is true of any film, the process is divided into three stages: pre-production, production and post-production. As "Vipers in the Grass" progressed through these three waves of development, writers,

producers, actors, editors and musicians pooled their talents to create a 25-30 minute short film.

PRE-PRODUCTION

Sandy Veneziano, assistant professor of set design at UNL, juggles her work on campus with her work as a noted set designer in Hollywood. It was her connections in the professional field that played a major role in drawing experts to UNL.

Veneziano helped write the grant proposal and also solicited professionals to participate. She knew that the experience and direction students gained from mak-



School of Music student David von Kampen (left) and Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film student Brad Flick discuss music for “Vipers in the Grass.”

ing this film with the professionals would be invaluable.

“I can’t take them all to Hollywood, so we decided to move the movie here,” Veneziano said. “It’s great to get hands-on experience and see if they like it, and the connections with the people that have been so gracious to come are great.”

The film involved about 170 students from the Johnny Carson School who had a variety of roles and degrees of input in the production.

“We had a call for people who were interested, and they submitted applications, and that’s how we decided on the cast and crew list,” said Sharon Teo, associate professor in film and new media production. “We really tried to get everyone that wanted to be involved in some way or another.”

The professionals worked with UNL students to create not only a film, but also the experience of what a day in the film-making business entailed.

Producer and screenwriter Jorge Zamacona was one of Veneziano’s professional contacts and handled a majority of the pre-production details. Zamacona wrote the

script for “Vipers in the Grass,” intending to create a “spooky little drama” that a student crew could produce.

As the film progressed, Zamacona’s time was split between working from his home in New York and traveling to look at locations, meet design teams and cast the film before the shooting started. However, Zamacona said the shifting between locations was well worth the final outcome.

“My favorite part was to give this professional access to the students because they are kind of landlocked in the middle of the country with no real outlet to professional media,” Zamacona said. “The students did the job really well, and there was a great, familiar vibe going. The worst part is that it’s over.”

During the process, Zamacona was reminded of his own experience. He dropped out of school to help make a film. Zamacona said his hasty decision and exposure to the professional side of the industry were vital to his future in the profession. Now, Zamacona is thankful for the opportunity he has to give back to students who are much like he was not so many years ago.

“I feel it’s incumbent upon any of us that are successful and professional to give it back,” Zamacona said.

PRODUCTION

When the cameras started rolling, the production phase began. As “Vipers in the Grass” entered seven days of filming, the atmosphere mirrored the set of a major motion picture with high-stress days of long hours and multiple takes in locations such as Ashland, Roca, Lincoln and Wahoo.

Hollywood actress Harley Jane Kozak played the role of an Omaha FBI agent in the film and said her work with “Vipers in the Grass” followed a familiar pattern.

“My normal day of working was exactly like a normal day on a Hollywood movie set; in other words, each day is different,” Kozak said. “But in this case I knew I was there to help out the students.”

She had attended UNL for three semesters and worked with the Nebraska Repertory Theatre for four summers, so the Lincoln native said she felt very comfortable being surrounded by people from her hometown.

While Kozak has been successful in her acting career, she believes that it’s important to share her talent and experience with other budding actors.

“I came from the same place, literally the same building. I think it’s easier for them to imagine themselves making a life in Hollywood or New York—in this industry—because so many of us former UNL students have done it before them,” Kozak said.

Josh Larsen, a May graduate of the Johnny Carson School, used the direction from the professionals as he stepped into his role as the unit production manager for the film. A “trial by fire experience,” the job involved managing the schedule of the film shoot.

“You learned a lot because there is a different culture and a different lingo as you move from the student world to the business world,” Larsen said. “It was a valuable experience to have because it was a risk-free zone in which you could learn without getting fired.”

Looking back on the hectic days he spent learning and working, Larsen noted

the difference in having professionals lecture about their work opposed to interacting in an occupational setting with these same individuals.

“It wasn’t just one or two people coming in and talking with students, it was genuinely working with these people,” Larsen said. “It was working with them in a peer-to-peer relationship which is so much different and so valuable; it should be done everywhere.”

The day after graduation, Larsen received a call from supervising first assistant director Ivan Fonseca with an offer to work on a film in Connecticut for a few weeks out this summer. It was an opportunity that would not have presented itself without Larsen’s work on “Vipers in the Grass.”

POST-PRODUCTION

According to Paul Steger, director of the Johnny Carson School, post-production is defined by three words: “details, details, details.”

That includes cleaning up the original files and laying out the video and sound so that they are in sync with each other. The post-production crew worked closely with Nebraska Educational Telecommunications professionals who helped mentor students through the editing process.

A few students had the opportunity to compose their own sound cues for the film. Music composition majors Garrett Hope and David VonKampen created cues that would add to the mood of the film.

“Jorge [Zamacona] talked with Garrett and I before we started writing,” VonKampen said. “He wanted a series of blanket cues, and he directed us in how he was hearing it happen as far as instrumentation.”

Hope and VonKampen each crafted 12 different cues based on Zamacona’s instruction. Sending cues to Zamacona for the final review, Hope and VonKampen are eager to see where their work will appear within the film.

“I think it’ll be exciting,” VonKampen said. “I’m looking forward to seeing how they use what we both wrote, and I think a discerning ear will be able to hear the difference between the two, but I’m excited to see how they put them together.”



Photo by Erin Carr

Academy Award-Winning Editor Mike Hill visits with Associate Professor of Film Sharon Teo.

“Vipers in the Grass” is tentatively set to premier in October so that many students and Lincoln locals will get to see the film. University administrators would like to see the film shown at various film festivals, too.

“The focus right now is getting the project complete and getting it to the highest quality possible,” Steger said. “Once it’s complete, the submission will happen over the next year, but the end goal is to get it out there so that people can see it.”

While festivals such as Sundance may be slightly ambitious for “Vipers in the Grass,” Steger said he and his colleagues are combing through the list of smaller festivals around the country where the film could be successful.

The film represents the work of many: experienced professionals, amateur students and nurturing professors.

For students, the opportunity to be highly involved in such a project is nearly unheard of in the film industry today.

Steger explained that in the earlier days of film, students would move to Hollywood or New York with the hope of finding a mentor, but those opportunities seldom exist anymore.

“Now the pressure is on for movie pro-

ducers and producing houses to reduce cost and make things happen very quickly, and the people that are working on those films can’t take a risk on someone who doesn’t know anything,” Steger said. “The project replaces the old-school way and allows students to go under the wing of professionals.”

Steger said he is excited for more student-professional films in the near future.

“The Johnny Carson School film series will become an ongoing, unique and invaluable experience for JCSTF [Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film] students and students in the other units of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, with a new film created every three years,” Steger said. “To the best of our knowledge, no other program in the country produces films in this manner. The Carson School Film Series will serve as a very public example of the unique educational opportunities students receive in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.” ■

Born in Omaha, Asha Anchan will be a sophomore at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln this fall. She is a news-editorial major in the University’s College of Journalism and Mass Communications.

White retires after 29-year career in School of Music

BY ASHA ANCHAN

So now the time has come to turn a page, and so you will. In this next, exciting chapter of your life, you will do what you always do— make a difference.

These were the closing words of John W. Richmond, Professor and Director of the School of Music, during ceremonies that recognized Associate Professor Rusty White's retirement at a reception in April. Completing 29 years at the School of Music as an associate professor of double bass and jazz performance, White was also honored with the title professor emeritus.

"It was a fun ride for me, and it was a good place to work, doing what I wanted to do," White said. "Working with people with common interests and being in a place where your mind is constantly stimulated is a pretty good deal."

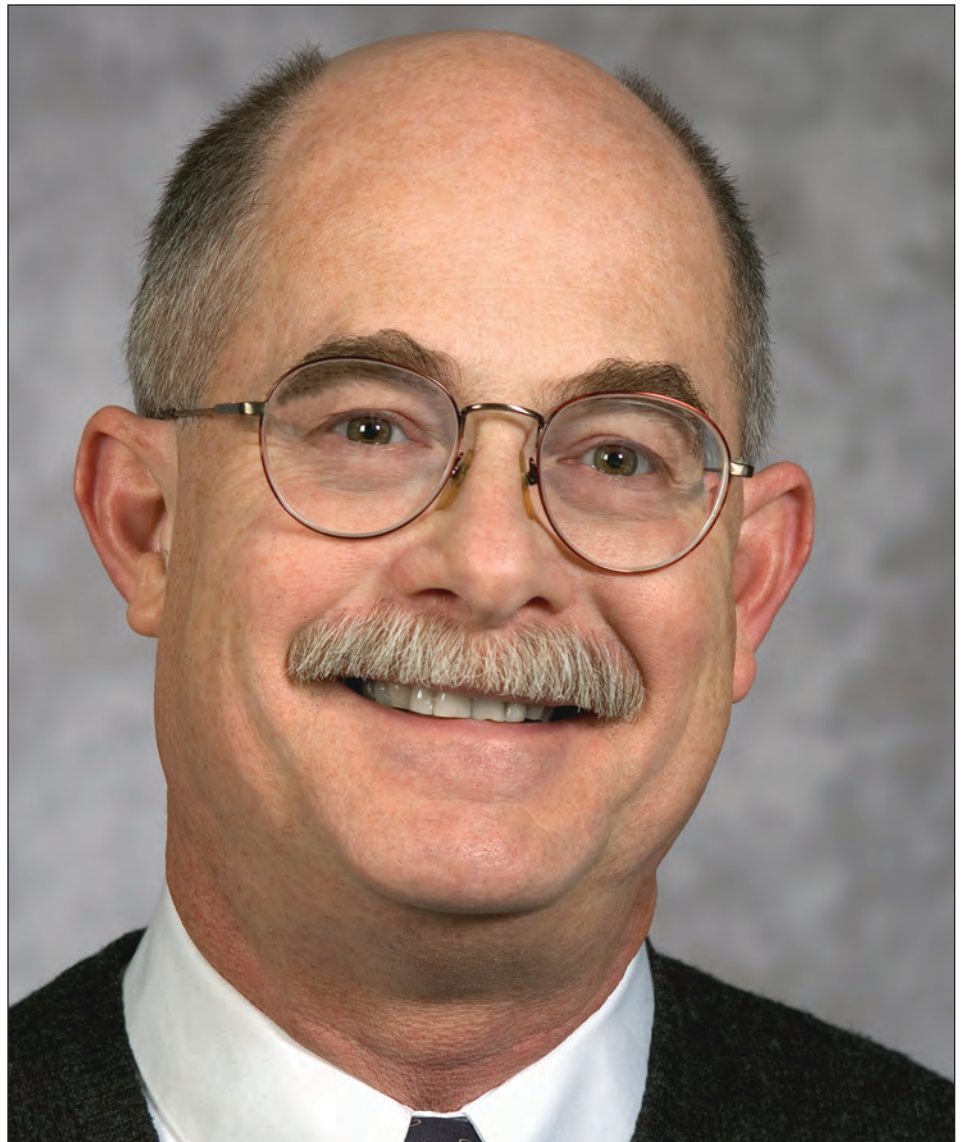
White explored the opportunity to teach at UNL after some prompting from one of his professors at North Texas State University. On leave from a job at Morehead State University to attend graduate school in Texas, White had every intention of returning to Kentucky upon finishing graduate school, but the possibilities in Nebraska were enticing.

While White had only driven through Nebraska enroute to other destinations, it didn't take him long to adapt to the state.

"Like everyone else in the rest of the nation, my primary notion was that Nebraska had 'Big Red' stamped on it," White said. "Topographically and geographically, it's a big change; that said, I was very attracted to Lincoln from the word go. I pretty much consider myself a Nebraskan."

In addition to teaching at the university, White put down roots in the music scene in Lincoln. It was here that student Sean Murphy first noticed his work.

Murphy, now a senior double bass performance major in the School of Music, spotted White performing with other faculty artists within the community. Because he wanted to be a bass major in college, Murphy began to take lessons from White during his senior year



in high school. At that time, Murphy was playing the electric bass, and White encouraged him to shift to upright bass.

"He's one of the best teachers I've ever had. He basically started me from scratch on a new instrument," but by the time Murphy enrolled at UNL, he was ready to major in the instrument, Murphy said. "I started on beginner level stuff and then worked really fast to be ready to audition for the School of Music."

White began playing the clarinet in the 4th grade band, and continued with the instrument until he was 21 when he sud-

denly realized the limitations of a clarinet within the jazz genre.

White's sudden switch to a different instrument, served as a model for Murphy's inspiration.

"The main thing I got from him is how to be versatile as a musician," Murphy said. "Just because you're doing one thing doesn't mean you're stuck there."

White's connections at the School of Music have allowed him to be an effective teacher and to develop his own musicianship as well.

Peter Bouffard and White have an extended history as collaborators. Bouffard came to the university in 1988 to pursue

RETIRING FACULTY

a master's degree in jazz, and White said Bouffard quickly went from being White's graduate assistant to his musical equal. The respect and appreciation is mutual.

"He's really been kind of a mentor over the years," Bouffard said. "We say musicians get better by playing with good musicians, and I think that's one of the main reasons I've been able to excel."

With Bouffard on the guitar and White on double bass, the two began playing together in shows and pushing each other to pursue greater musical undertakings.

Bouffard said that he and White have performed together more than 500 times throughout the years. Eventually, the two decided to combine efforts in a CD.

Released in 2007, *Contrafactum* was a reflection of the work that Bouffard and White had done over the years and served as a milestone in their musical progression.

"In one respect, it was to display what we could do, but more importantly it was to have a record of where we were musically," Bouffard said.

Listening to the collaborative CD gives Jason Lenz a certain sense of nostalgia. Not only is he listening to his professor play, but the instrument played in *Contrafactum* is now in Lenz's possession. A junior music education major, Lenz purchased the double bass to update his student model, but the purchase has additional meaning.

"It definitely has some sentimental value," Lenz said. "It's something he's had for a while so it's definitely special."

Like Murphy, Lenz first came in contact with White during his senior year of high school and took lessons from him before enrolling at the university. Lenz said his college decision was based on White's presence within the School of Music.

"I came to UNL to study with Rusty and get my music education degree," Lenz said. "I didn't come to be a part of the ensembles or anything, I just wanted to learn the applied lessons with Rusty."

White's own experience made a big difference in his relationships with his students and drew them to the university.

"That professional experience informed the things he had to say about the music business, and it always won him a certain sense of credibility that was prized by his students," Richmond said. "He always was a



Photo by Mike Edholm

School of Music Director John W. Richmond (left) and Rusty White at his retirement reception on April 28.



Photo by Mike Edholm

DiAnn and Rusty White.

person that took the work he did seriously, but he didn't take himself too seriously."

The retirement reception for White served as both a time to honor his work and display the connections that White made during his 29 years at the university. The ceremony also honored White's wife, DiAnn, who retired from the Lincoln Public School system that same month.

Richmond's remarks that evening reflected the relationships White had built during his career:

But whatever choices you make about your future, know that your UNL family is here, working hard, and such a better place because of the profound contributions you have made here as a teacher, an artist and a true citizen of our school. ■



The GIMP Project, which will perform as part of the Interdisciplinary Arts Symposium at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln on Oct. 29.

IAS places arts in critical context

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

Amidst jostling coastal cities and international urban sprawls, Lincoln, Nebraska, is only a pinhead-sized map dot in the Midwest. Relatively speaking, a city of 250,000 couldn't possibly give birth to an art scene or act as a cultural hub, could it?

Quashing rampant misconceptions, Professor Rhonda Garelick has helped put UNL and Lincoln on the international arts radar. A New York City native, Garelick came to Nebraska in 2008 as a full professor of English and performing arts. She headed the International Arts Symposium movement—a small idea that sprang from combining performing arts and academics. The 2009-10 academic year was the first season of the IAS.

The IAS is a joint effort between the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the Lied Center for Performing Arts. It consists of a public performance series featuring artists in residence, public lectures to enhance the performances and a Hixson-Lied seminar to explore the season's theme.

"IAS is a program devoted to placing the performing arts in a deeper, more critical and historical context, with a goal of demonstrating the role of arts in the life of a democracy and of a university," Garelick said. "The idea is to make performing arts something more than a mere diversion or entertainment and something deeply engaging to both the university and the greater community."

Garelick and Giacomo Oliva, Endowed Dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine

and Performing Arts, hatched the idea in spring 2009, and the IAS came to life in the fall with a \$60,000 grant from the Hixson-Lied Endowment. Additional grant funding from the Cooper Foundation and the Chancellor's Office for Research and collaboration with the Lied Center brought the IAS to fruition.

The IAS will continue for the next three to five years thanks to the renewal of the Hixson-Lied grant for the next several years and a National Endowment for the Arts grant awarded in May 2010. The \$25,000 Artistic Excellence Grant from the NEA is an impressive honor and gives UNL national recognition, Garelick said. She said it was won in partnership with the Lied Center for the fall 2010 season.

The overarching goals of the IAS are to draw diverse audiences to UNL and culti-

INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS SYMPOSIUM



Nilaja Sun, an actress and Obie-award-winning playwright, performed “No Child” as part of the Lied Center for Performing Arts’ 2009-10 season.

vate a wider audience for performing arts in Lincoln, according to a summary from the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. Garelick said the academic component places the arts in a more meaningful context to enhance learning and understanding for students and the public. Internationally renowned artists and world-class performers enrich the IAS, establishing UNL and Lincoln as a credible source for the arts, Garelick said.

“I want to make Lincoln and UNL a destination location for the presentation and discussion of cutting-edge issues in performance,” she said.

Petra Wahlqvist, Director of Community Engagement and Learning at the Lied Center, works closely with Garelick as an associate director. Wahlqvist assists with artist activities such as planning itineraries and schedules and confirming contracts. She also handles community events.

Wahlqvist said the main theme for the entire IAS is exploring all aspects of humanity, but each season also has its own subtheme.

The 2009-10 theme, “Race, American History and Performance,” explored how United States history and the complications of race could be better understood through theatre.

Wahlqvist said, “It’s an opportunity to

experience the performing arts in a bigger context, but you also get to hear about the history and the importance of these artists from renowned scholars.”

Experiencing the arts not only by watching but also by participating and learning about the context of the performance is a unique way to feel the energy of performing arts in a different venue, Wahlqvist said.

Last year’s performers included Thomas DeFrantz, a choreographer, playwright and professor at MIT, who performed a tap dance act about the life of The- lonious Monk.

Nilaja Sun, an actress and Obie-award-winning playwright, performed “No Child,” a solo play portraying 15 different characters, including a young version of herself. The play demonstrates the challenges of teaching in an inner-city New York classroom.

David Dorfman, an eight-time winner of the Bessie Award—equivalent to Broadway’s Tony Awards—and a Guggenheim award recipient, and his dance company performed “Disavowal,” a meditation on

the life of abolitionist John Brown.

The celebrated artists’ performances were enhanced with lectures by well-known scholars, providing the academic base for the IAS.

Jennie Livingston, an award-winning filmmaker for her documentary “Paris is Burning,” led an IAS lecture, as did Robert O’Meally of Columbia University, founder of the Jazz Studies Institute, and Marcia Siegel, an author and dance critic.

“All guest lecturers and performers took a turn at teaching my special IAS seminar, which is taught in Hixson-Lied,” Garelick said.

Wahlqvist said, “We had very diverse performances which also created very diverse audiences, and all the performers and speakers were absolutely world class.”

Garelick’s IAS seminars teach theoretical and critical perspectives of the artists and performances.

The 2009-10 class honed in on the history of the construction of race in dance, drama and performance art. Students who took the seminar kept a journal, which accustomed them to reading and observing performances, and wrote papers. The students came from a variety of majors including art history, studio art, music, journalism, dance and English.

Wahlqvist said the seminar is open to students across campus, and those students have the chance to work with each of the visiting artists.

Susan Levine, assistant professor of dance and head of the dance program, said working with the performers was an amazing experience. Her students worked with David Dorfman, Marcia Siegel and

Thomas DeFrantz.

“David came and taught a class for our advanced students,” Levine said. “It was a very intimate situation, and we love when we’re able to have the students interact with professional dancers. David’s work was beautiful and interesting and outside of the box, especially for what many people have

‘It’s an opportunity to experience the performing arts in a bigger context.’

Petra Wahlqvist

INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS SYMPOSIUM

the opportunity to see in Nebraska. Having the chance to get to know David and the dancers personally was a very inspiring and eye opening experience for the dancers at UNL.”

Marcia Siegel, a historian and critic, also spoke to Levine’s choreography class and offered a more serious perspective on the career tracks in dance, Levine said.

“Any different perspective on art is a brilliant thing,” she said. “Undergraduates often have a set idea about what they want to do with their degrees, and I think the opportunity to see work gives them the chance to see what else they can do with themselves.”

Wahlqvist said, “Students who are not in the symposium can attend free lectures or sit in the gallery to watch the artists work with the IAS students.”

The IAS also extends into the community, because the general public is invited to performances at the Lied Center.

“There are people in Lincoln who are very interested in the performing arts and wanted the opportunity to get a deeper knowledge,” Wahlqvist said. “They want to know the background and historical context and an international perspective, so there is a hunger for that kind of knowledge.”

Wahlqvist said the IAS is a real benefit for UNL because it fosters a discussion about performing arts beyond entertainment. It acts as a catalyst for discussions about deeper topics that many people can enjoy, she said.

The 2010-11 season is investigating the theme of “Technology, Prosthetics and the Body in Performance.” It will explore how bodies are enhanced, improved and altered through technology like film, lights, costumes and prosthetics.

“Our goal is to create as wide an audience as possible, to invite people to UNL who might not normally come to see our performances here, and this year, to open a discussion about how the performing arts can expand our notions of what ‘normal’ is, what a ‘body’ looks like and what bodies of every type can do,” Garelick said.

Once again, the IAS is working with the Lied Center to feature performers who explore ways in which art can reconfigure



Photo by Julie Lemberger courtesy of Time Lapse Dance/Jody Sperling

Time Lapse Dance will perform as part of IAS on Sept. 23.

notions about the body. Jody Sperling and Time Lapse Dance will perform dance enhanced by electronics and cinema, Garelick said.

Another performer will be Heidi Latsky and her dance company Gimp, which consists of dancers with physical challenges, including prosthetic or missing limbs and muscular dystrophy. Garelick said Latsky’s work forces people to question what normal means and what a dancer is. Close to the Gimp performance will be the Lied Center’s presentation of Axis Dance, which features dancers who use wheelchairs, Garelick said.

One of the main shows of next season is a performance by ORLAN, a French artist who reconfigured her face and body through plastic surgery to explore Western standards of feminine beauty. Garelick said ORLAN now experiments with digital photography, biotechnology and fashion to question the limits of human identity. ORLAN is a world-famous artist, whose career has spanned more than 40 years, taking her around the globe, Garelick explained.

Garelick and her husband Jorge Daniel Veneciano, the director at the Sheldon Mu-

seum of Art, edited “Fabulous Harlequin: ORLAN and the Patchwork Self,” a new book devoted to ORLAN’s work.

The University of Nebraska Press will publish it in October to accompany the exhibition at the museum and the performance at the Lied.

Garelick said the 2010-11 season will include outreach to organizations, schools and to the Madonna Rehabilitation Center. The IAS will also reach out to local veterans groups and hospitals and invite individuals with physical challenges to come to the shows, she said.

“We want to offer a rich, international context, providing background history and thought-provoking materials for UNL students and faculty, and the entire community of Lincoln, Nebraska, and beyond,” Garelick said. ■

Jessica Simpson is from Elkhorn, Neb., and is currently an advertising student with an emphasis in public relations in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications. She will graduate in May 2011. She considers writing a hobby and would like to combine it with a career in public relations after she graduates.

Narboni reaches across Nebraska with Piano-in-Tow

BY ASHA ANCHAN

Nicole Narboni still laughs as she remembers the performance at which a young boy eagerly responded to her inquiry about the difference between a banjo and guitar. He matter-of-factly stated that hillbillies played banjos, and rock stars played guitars. Needless to say, the audience found the innocent comment quite humorous.

“It was a wonderful moment, but it didn’t come from me. It was just that kind of interaction that helps to glue the idea of classical music to being a good thing,” Narboni said. “It was a positive experience for everyone, and I’ll treasure that memory for the rest of my life.”

Moments like these are what Narboni hoped for when she initiated “Piano-in-Tow,” a classical music tour across the Nebraska heartland. The senior lecturer at UNL’s School of Music has combined her love of classical music and a desire to see it reach the corners of Nebraska in an effort to educate and inspire.

“I’m trying to kindle an interest because I know it’s [classical music] dying,” Narboni said. “My goal is to open the world of classical music by letting them [Nebraskans] know it’s not stuffy even though it was written 200 years ago.”

Thanks to a \$10,000 Layman Fund grant, Narboni finished her third tour in March, and an October tour is well in the works. A typical “Piano-in-Tow” tour lasts just under a week and involves afternoon performances geared toward students and evening performances for adults.

Bruce Hird, principal of Garden County High School in Oshkosh, Neb., noted Narboni’s unique ability to engage students with musical compositions such as the Mario Brothers theme song played in a classical arrangement.

“She’s an amazing musician, but she also has a strong desire to teach,” Hird said. “I was really intrigued to watch our elementary students respond to her.”

Oshkosh, a western Nebraska com-



Nicole Narboni

munity with a population between 600 and 700, doesn’t have a chance to hear many classical musicians in person.

“The fact that Nicole is able to do this is a great asset to the state and the communities,” Hird said. “And the fact that she brought it all the way out to the panhandle is great.”

Taking her musical talent and performing abilities to the corners of Nebraska is relatively simple, but transporting her 1000-pound, Yamaha C-7 grand piano requires an extra set of hands.

Heath Cole works at Dietz Music and also acts as Narboni’s official piano mover for her tours. In addition to moving the piano, Cole also drives the van and trailer and has minimized his piano set-up time to approximately 15 minutes—if he gets adequate help from the locals.

“It’s nice to get out and see places I’ve never seen before and watch the reaction of the kids,” Cole said. “To watch them be awestruck by the big piano and how it comes and goes relative quickly; it’s kind of like a magic trick, but after you’ve done it for 13-14 years, it’s just a natural thing.”

Pulling in to a small town with a piano in the adjoining trailer usually draws some

attention, which is exactly what Narboni hoped. By bringing an instrument that is usually not considered transportable, she hopes to catch the eye of the locals and educate them about the joys of classical music, a joy that was nurtured in her own heart at an early age.

As a child, Narboni was encouraged to play the piano by her father, who simply wanted to stir a desire for music within his 5-year-old daughter.

“He wanted me to take piano lessons because he wanted me to appreciate music, and he didn’t want me to go through life without at least having an understanding of music,” Narboni said.

Decades later, passing on an appreciation for classical music has come full circle. As Narboni travels on her last, scheduled “Piano-in-Tow” tour this October she has high hopes of attracting additional funding so she can continue to haul her grand piano across Nebraska and maybe even the rest of the country.

“I would love to take “PiT” [Piano-in-Tow] on the road across the country. It’s all a matter of funding,” Narboni said. “My plan has been to start out small and expand when possible.” ■



School of Music Director John Richmond, Bill Tomek, Director of Bands Carolyn Barber and University of Nebraska Foundation Director of Special Projects Lucy Buntain Comine in front of the Marching Band trailer in June.

Tomek gives back with support for School of Music

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

“Excellence does not come cheap,” UNL alumnus Bill Tomek said. Across the UNL campus, donor support may seem invisible, yet signs of generous giving are everywhere. From the names on buildings to less conspicuous areas like scholarship funding, financial gifts are a much-needed component for the University’s functioning.

A 1956 graduate of the UNL College of Agriculture and 1957 graduate of the

master’s program in agricultural economics, Tomek has been giving to the University since 1966. Tomek gives, not to receive recognition, but because he thinks UNL graduates need to support the University to foster high quality education, he said.

“My support is simply motivated by giving back,” Tomek said. “Indeed I am not enthusiastic about publicity for gifts.”

Tomek gives to three funds at the University through the University of Nebraska Foundation. The John Tomek and Ruth Goodrich Tomek Memorial Scholarship

Fund, established in 1981, benefits students from Southeast, Neb., and Custer County, Neb., in honor of his parents. The William G. Tomek Agricultural Economics Excellence Fund, started in 2000, supports teaching, research and extension programs in the Department of Agricultural Economics. His most recent fund, The William G. Tomek School of Music Fund, established in 2010, reflects his personal love for vocal music and benefits students in the vocal music program.

“Although my major was in agricultural

DEVELOPMENT

economics, music was always meaningful to me,” Tomek said. “I played in the University band for five years, and I especially remember the band director Don Lentz. He was a wonderful man.”

Tomek played trombone in an army band from 1953 to 1955 and continued playing for the University band while attending school. He is still highly involved in music, cultivating his interest in classical music and singing in a small church choir. He also served on Cornell’s faculty committee on music.

Bethany Throener, a senior director of development at the University of Nebraska Foundation, works personally with Tomek to manage his donations. Throener and Tomek met in 2003 at Cornell University, where Tomek is a professor emeritus with the Department of Applied Economics and Management.

Throener said, “All of [Tomek’s] gifts provide invaluable support to the students in the form of scholarships. He’s very modest about his gifts to UNL, but delighted to help students and faculty. He cares deeply about helping people through his philanthropy.”

Tomek’s desire to give back to UNL was reinforced after joining the Cornell faculty in 1961. He said Cornell’s alumni attitude influenced his attitude toward giving.

“Alumni in Ivy League schools are exceptionally generous,” Tomek said. “They understand that tuition income and state support is insufficient to support a high quality education.”

Tomek said he recalled a talk by a Cornell alumnus who donated a gift of \$3 million, which helped him realize the significance of alumni giving. The Department of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell has about 40 faculty members, 12 of which are endowed by gifts from alumni, he said.

“I don’t expect any return from my gifts,” Tomek said, “except satisfaction that they are useful.”

John W. Richmond, a professor and di-

rector of UNL’s School of Music, can definitely attest to the value of Tomek’s gifts. Richmond heads all academic oversight of the college related to bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees in music and dance.

Richmond said he first became aware of Tomek’s interest in the music program through the NU Foundation after Tomek donated funds to help support the purchase of the marching band trailer. The trailer was a substantial investment and a fabulous gift, Richmond said.

“When we first acquired it, we had the truck on display the Friday before classes began in the fall,” Richmond said. “Band



Photo by University Communications
The Cornhusker Marching Band’s custom-painted trailer.

alumnus after band alumnus wanted to stand in front of it for a photograph. They were just so excited and so pleased. It’s inspiring.”

The trailer not only provided a practical benefit, because the band didn’t need to rent a trailer any more, but also acts as a billboard driving down the highway, Richmond said.

“It’s a huge statement about the institution and the importance of the band program,” he said.

Today, the trailer travels to all away games and postseason football games. It holds the entire band’s uniforms and in-

struments, and made the trip to the Big 12 Championship in Dallas, Texas, in December 2009.

Tomek’s most recent School of Music donation is the creation of an endowment to support vocal music and opera students. The endowment will eventually grow and support a graduate student, helping fund their study in addition to stipends.

Richmond said, “It empowers our recruiting efforts, and also gives us competition with other graduate schools in the U.S.”

The endowment will go untouched for a year and collect interest, but eventually it will fund the first and subsequent Tomek Fellows, Richmond said.

“We’re going to be looking for a really exciting vocal student,” he said. “It will be unbelievably powerful in helping us recruit the absolute pinnacle students to come to our graduate program.”

Although Tomek grew up in Table Rock, Neb., and still has family in the southeast area of the state, he doesn’t come back often. He said living 1,300 miles away in Ithaca, N.Y., makes it inconvenient to visit frequently.

Tomek is also busy and stays occupied by other philanthropic and community organizations he’s involved in. Tomek is the lay leader at his church and vice president of the Meals on Wheels Board for Tompkins County, N.Y. Currently, he’s completing a term as the chair of the Higher Education and Campus Ministry Team of the North Central New York Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Tomek is very modest and humble man and doesn’t like the being in the spotlight for his giving, Throener said.

Tomek said he was somewhat reluctant to be interviewed about his donations, but he does appreciate hearing from the students who receive his scholarships.

“I am hopeful that my support of vocal music will help a student,” Tomek said. “It is just that simple.” ■

University Singers pay tribute to Professor Emeritus Jenkins

BY KATHE ANDERSEN

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and School of Music, together with the University of Nebraska Foundation, celebrated the life and legacy of Professor Emeritus Earl “Pete” Jenkins, who passed away on Aug. 3, 2009, as part of the University Singers concert on Oct. 15 in Kimball Recital Hall.

“Pete Jenkins had a profound influence on my life, and I could recall that influenced many other students in the same way,” said Pamela Schaap Hemann (B.M. 1970), the President of Association Management Services, Inc., in Pasadena, Calif., and the chair of the organizing committee for this event. “In both my music career and other later professional choices, his influence went beyond being an exceptional vocal coach. He taught life lessons in that studio and in conducting choral groups. He taught ethics, tenacity, discipline and what having a passion for something meant in one’s life. It was through University Singers that I discovered the joy and discipline of outstanding choral music. I also learned about excellence from Pete’s great passion for the ‘perfect’ choral music performance.”

As part of the tribute, alumni were invited to join the University Singers for the finale performance of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah. More than 75 alumni participated.

“It was a special evening to be part of the tribute,” said Scott Root (B.S. 1971; M.M. 1979), who traveled from Virginia to participate. “It was just something I had to be part of. I thought the tribute was beautiful, and it was great to hear a bit of an opera rehearsal with [Professor] Bill Shomos.”

Jenkins earned a bachelor’s degree in education from NU in 1943, then served



Photo by Kathe Andersen

More than 75 alumni joined the nearly 80 current University Singers on stage for the finale performance of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah on Oct. 15 in Kimball Recital Hall as part of the Tribute to Professor Emeritus Earl “Pete” Jenkins. William Hatcher (B.M.E. 1957, M.M. 1960), also a former student of Jenkins, was the guest conductor for the finale performance.

in World War II. He joined the Nebraska faculty as an instructor in 1949 and earned his master’s degree in music in 1952. In 1963, he was named professor of voice. Over the years, he directed thousands of students in vocal and choral ensembles, including the University Singers. He directed his first congregate choral performance of Handel’s Messiah in the Coliseum in 1959 and oversaw the opera program in the 1960s. Jenkins earned several honors during his career, including the Builders Award in 1975 and 1977, induction into the Nebraska Music Educators Hall of Fame in 1995, and the university’s Distinguished Teaching Award in 1978 and the university’s Doc Elliott Award. He retired from the University in 1982.

“My main memories of Pete relate to

the University Singers,” said Jeffrey D. Sayre (B.M.E. 1969, M.M. 1974) of Omaha, Neb., who was in University Singers from 1966–1969. “I was always very impressed with how Pete lived through his music as a director. He took everything we did seriously. He got the most out of his singers in each and every concert. I always tried to do the same when I became a high school choral director.”

Sayre said he was glad he could be a part of the tribute to Pete Jenkins.

“I was proud to be a part of the planning committee, and I thought the rehearsal and concert were wonderful,” he said. “The current University Singers and their fine director, Pete Eklund, are to be congratulated on their outstanding concert. Pete Jenkins would have enjoyed every moment of it.”

DEVELOPMENT

Hemann agreed.

“What was going through my mind when we were up on stage singing the Hallelujah Chorus was that Pete would have gotten such a kick out of it,” Hemann said. “And that no matter how far or how long we had traveled away from the University and our music life there as students, we could, indeed, come back home. I think we all knew at the time we were there that we were part of something very special with the University Singers, and we cherished the opportunity to recapture that experience. We didn’t all know one another, but we knew we shared an amazing bond of music, UNL and Pete. That held meaning for all of us—how powerful is that?!”

Because of his numerous contributions to the School of Music and his enduring legacy to his students and our alumni, the Earl “Pete” Jenkins University of Nebraska Choral Endowment Fund has been established through the University of Nebraska Foundation. This fund will enhance the choral music program in the School of Music, for such programs as a choral composition commissioning, choral visiting scholars and choral music fellowships.

“I am so excited about the creation of the Earl ‘Pete’ Jenkins Endowment to support our UNL choral program,” said School of Music Director John W. Richmond. “This



Pete Jenkins

gift brings distinction to our University and School of Music, coming as it does at a time of true innovation and growth in our choral program.”

The School of Music now has three distinguished choral scholars on the faculty: Pete Eklund, Rhonda Fuelberth and Therees Hibbard.

“They are moving the program forward in ways that are garnering national attention,” Richmond said. “This endowment will do so much to catapult our choral program to the next level. I am deeply grateful to Pam and Ray Hemann for their inspired vision and touching generosity. They coupled vision and inspiration with initiative and savvy to make this amazing Endowment a reality. Many others have made such important



Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications
Jim Jenkins (second from left) addresses the crowd at the reception flanked by his siblings (left to right) Susan Jenkins, Mary Jenkins and Robert Jenkins. All four of Pete Jenkins’ children, along with his wife Janet, are graduates of the University of Nebraska.

gifts in moving us toward our goal. The distinguished tradition of choral music at UNL, made so stunning during Professor Jenkins’ tenure here, is sure to have a bright future, as well, thanks in no small part to his many family, friends and former students that have given and will continue to give in his honor.”

If you would like to make a contribution to the Pete Jenkins Endowment, please visit <http://nufoundation.org/jenkinsendowment>. ■

Earl “Pete” Jenkins Tribute Committee

Our thanks to the following members of the Earl “Pete” Jenkins Tribute Committee, who helped organize the Oct. 15 event:

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Campaign for Nebraska is underway

The University of Nebraska is a great university. But we have a dream and a plan to make it greater. We have launched a campaign to raise \$1.2 billion for the University of Nebraska.

The last campaign, which ended in 2000, created 1,000 new scholarships, 95 distinguished professorships, constructed critical research buildings and created academic programs that now attract the state's best and brightest students.

With hard work and your support, just imagine: What will the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts look like when this campaign ends? The Campaign for Nebraska: Unlimited Possibilities.

Seventeen years since its founding in 1993, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts is flourishing in so many ways. Our enrollment has more than doubled, remaining 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, we have been able to launch a rather wide range of special new projects and initiatives that have enabled wonderful and exciting opportunities for our students and faculty that have moved the College more and more into the national spotlight. Indeed, there is much to celebrate!

So much of what we have been able to ac-

complish would not have been 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. As we now move forward with the University's Campaign for Nebraska, it is our hope that you will join us as we seek to reach even higher levels of excellence.

Our campaign's Honorary Chair is Christina M. Hixson, the sole trustee of the Lied Foundation Trust. In 2000, the Lied Foundation Trust announced a gift of \$18 million to the University of Nebraska Foundation to benefit all areas of the college.

Our Campaign Co-Chairs are Rhonda and James C. Seacrest. James Seacrest graduated from UNL in 1963 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. He enjoyed a long career in the newspaper business as the president and chairman of the Western Publishing Company. The Seacrests have made donations to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support the School of Music's opera program traveling to Ireland for the Waterford Light Opera Festivals in 2002 and 2007, as well as a donation to support a chamber/opera orchestra, among other areas.

Listed on the next page are the members of our Working and Honorary Committees. The

College held its Campaign Kick-off event in January, and the Working Committee met for the first time on May 4.

The College's goal for the Campaign for Nebraska is \$20 million, broken down as follows:

Student Support: \$4 million (Includes support for graduate fellowships, undergraduate scholarships, and awards and recognitions.)

Faculty Support: \$3 million (Includes support for endowed faculty professorships, visiting artists and scholars, national and international faculty exchanges and collaborations, and awards and distinctions.)

Program and Facilities Support: \$13 million (Includes support for a wide range of innovative programs, projects and activities, and in particular, those that are interdisciplinary or rely heavily on cutting-edge technology for their long-term sustainability and success.)

With your support, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts can enhance and deepen the college's programs and activities that showcase and reward excellence. Your support also enables us to continue the research and creative endeavors of our faculty and students that would not otherwise be possible without outside support.

When called upon by our campaign committee, we hope you will step forward to play your unique role in helping to make this college truly extraordinary.



Sincerely,

Lucy Buntain Comine

Lucy Buntain Comine
Director of Special Projects
University of Nebraska Foundation



Dean Giacomo Oliva with Rhonda and James C. Seacrest.

Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Campaign Committee

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The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts gratefully acknowledges the following contributions to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support the College from May 1, 2008, to May 1, 2010.

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Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Circles

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts invites alumni and friends dedicated to enhancing the programmatic resources in each of our three academic departments to join the @rt Patron's Circle in the Department of Art and Art History, The Carson Circle in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, and The Encore Circle in the School of Music. Each Circle is designed with four giving levels to encourage donors at every stage of life. Gifts at any level help and enable so many opportunities for our faculty and students.

If you are interested in joining one of these Circles, please fill out the form enclosed in this magazine, or you can donate online any time by visiting our website at <http://www.unl.edu/finearts> and clicking on the "Give to the College" link on the upper right side of the page.

We are pleased to thank the following contributors, who accepted our invitation to join the @rt Patron's Circle, The Carson Circle and The Encore Circle from May 1, 2009, to May 1, 2010.

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Hixson-Lied Endowment Funding 2009-2010



Photo by Mark Stenbakken, University Communications

The Hixson-Lied Endowment continues to fund exciting and innovative projects. The Hixson-Lied Advisory Board meets twice a year, in the fall and spring, to review and approve expenditures.

Listed below are some of the newly funded programs this year. These do not include the on-going, multiple-year projects that were covered in previous publications, or faculty and student travel and research/creative activities projects.

Hixson-Lied Board Reports, which provide more information and reflections from faculty and students who have received funding, are available at: <http://www.unl.edu/finearts/about/hlendowment>. Additionally, the most recent three-year report, covering 2005-2008, is available at the same Web address.

Recently Approved Projects

Hixson-Lied Undergraduate Scholarships
Funding between \$75,000-\$100,000 a year was approved to create up to 20 awards for in-state students (\$1,700 each) and up to 10 awards for out-of-state students (\$4,500 each). Recruiting for these scholarships will begin next year and will be awarded beginning in the Fall 2011.

Lied Center for Performing Arts and Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts

Funding of \$40,000 was approved for a shared website model development with \$5,000 a year for an additional three years for maintenance.

Sheldon Museum of Art, in collaboration with the Department of Art and Art History, Interdisciplinary Arts Symposium, Department of Textiles, Clothing and Design and Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery

Funding of \$30,000 was approved to support the Fiber Art Exhibitions.

Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center

The Ross received \$5,000 to help provide reduced-price tickets for students in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts to attend the Met Opera broadcasts at the theatre.

Department of Art and Art History

Funding of \$45,000 (\$15,000 per year for three years) was approved to renew support for the Visual Arts Community Service Learning Program.

Department of Art and Art History

Funding of \$30,000 (\$10,000/ year for three years) was approved to support the student exhibitions program at the Eisentrager-Howard Gallery in Richards Hall.

School of Music

The School of Music received \$45,000 (\$15,000 per year for three years) to renew funding for the annual Chamber Music Institute to facilitate the formal incorporation of the Meadowlark Music Festival into the program.

Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts

Funding of \$460,000 over four years was approved to increase funding of the Interdisciplinary Arts Symposium (IAS).

Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts

The College received funding of \$60,000 over three years to create student outreach internships in collaboration with community arts organizations.

Department of Art and Art History

The Department of Art and Art History received \$105,000 (\$35,000 per year for three years) to renew the Visiting Artists and Scholars Program.

Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts

The College received an additional \$4,000 per year ongoing to increase funding for the Faculty/Staff Awards Program to establish two additional recognitions for staff (three awards total). ■

DEVELOPMENT



Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications.

2010 Nebraska Young Artist Awards (NYAA) recipients pose with Dean Giacomo Oliva on the Sheldon Museum of Art auditorium stage. This year's awardees included 78 students from nearly 45 high schools across the state. Next year's Nebraska Young Artist Awards will be on April 6, 2011. Applications, which will be available on our website at www.unl.edu/finearts in September, will be due on Friday, Dec. 10, 2010. The NYAA receives annual funding from the Hixson-Lied Endowment.

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Drake inducted into Nebraska Broadcasters HOF

BY KATHE ANDERSEN

The icons of television are included in the Nebraska Broadcasters Association Hall of Fame: Johnny Carson, Dick Cavett, Jack McBride, Ron Hull, Floyd Kalber and Tom Brokaw, just to name a few. In August, Leta Powell Drake (M.A. Theatre Arts 1967) was inducted into that Hall of Fame and took her place among Nebraska's best broadcasters.

"It is the capstone of my 46-year broadcasting career," Drake said. "There really is an august group of people that are in the Hall of Fame. To be listed among them is very special to me."

Drake is only the fifth woman to be inducted, following Catherine Hughes, Helen Duhamel, Martha Bohlsen and Georgia Crawford.

Lucy Buntain Comine, Director of Special Projects at the University of Nebraska Foundation, and who helped nominate Drake for the award, said the award was particularly special since so few women have been inducted into the Hall of Fame.

"The reason I'm so thrilled about this recognition for Leta is she was truly one of the pioneer women in broadcasting and television when being a woman in broadcasting and television was so difficult," she said.

Drake's long-time friend and nominator Ron Hull, Professor Emeritus and Special Advisor at Nebraska Educational Telecommunications (NET), said it was time for Drake to be recognized by the Hall of Fame.

"I think the Board immediately saw that here was a woman who devoted more than 46 years of her life—and she's still working—to being program manager at 10/11, being talent on 10/11, coming over to NET and being an absolutely fabulous on-air personality, raising money for us," he said. "She has an illustrious career on both the public side and the commercial side, and it was high time that she was honored."

Hull, who was himself inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2004, said Drake deserves the honor.



Photo courtesy of Leta Powell Drake

Leta Powell Drake as Kalamity Kate on Cartoon Corral on Ch. 10/11.

"Leta Powell Drake has had significant impact through her broadcasting career on countless thousands and thousands of people. A large share of that audience is children. Every time I go to lunch with Leta, someone comes up to her and says 'Oh, Kalamity Kate! I was on your show when I was eight years old.' That continues to this day, and that's not an exaggeration," he said. "I simply wanted her to be in the Hall of Fame because she earned it."

Born and raised in Duluth, Minn., Drake was bit by the acting bug early in life. When she was in the Brownies around the age of 5, she played "The Sun" in a play.

"I was crouched down wearing a sign that said 'The Sun.' And the narrator was reading and said, 'The sun rose.' And I stood up for the whole play. And then at the end, the narrator said, 'The sun set,' and I crouched back down. And everybody laughed. Bingo! I was bitten by the theatre bug," she said.

Later she wrote plays and put them on in the family basement. She made fudge and

charged one cent for admission.

"I was a little entrepreneur," she said.

By the time she got to high school, she was in every play.

She went to the University of Minnesota, dreaming first of becoming a lawyer.

"I had visions of Clarence Darrow and defending poor people everywhere," she said.

But finding that she didn't really know how to study, memorizing facts instead of having critical thinking skills, she found herself gravitating to things like English and literature.

She auditioned and got the lead in a play called "The Lady's Not for Burning."

"I finally said, 'I like this theatre stuff. It's kind of fun,'" she said. "And I was off and running."

It was during her freshman year at Minnesota that she met the late Professor Emeritus William Morgan.

"We just clicked," she said. "He was so precise. Everything was timed out—it was so perfect. And it got to the point where I

HALL OF FAME



Photo courtesy of Leta Powell Drake

Leta Powell Drake interviews Ronald Reagan.

did so many shows with him, that I knew exactly what he wanted. And I gave him everything I had, so he appreciated that, and he cast me in a lot of shows. I learned a great deal from him, and the productions he did were memorable.”

Drake graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Speech and English from the University of Minnesota. While at Minnesota, she had also worked at KDAL TV (now KDLH), the CBS affiliate in Duluth, as a night receptionist and commercial talent. She typed scripts and occasionally starred in commercials.

“At that time, the newsroom wasn’t just closed to women,” Drake said. “It was bolted, barred and locked. And they were putting in the rebar for the glass ceiling at the time. Women were not welcome in the newsroom.”

But by being there at night, she was available to be in commercials.

“I began to understand how live television worked,” Drake said.

She then became the “Bingo Girl” on a live Bingo program.

Morgan, meanwhile, took a job at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln during Drake’s senior year at Minnesota. He

offered Drake a graduate assistantship.

“The only thing I knew about Lincoln were the Charlie Starkweather murders,” Drake said. “And the reason they caught my attention, he had red hair like me and freckles and was just a few years older than I. So Lincoln stuck in my mind.”

But Drake decided to come to Nebraska in 1960. Theatre was her passion, and she expected to eventually go to Broadway.

Her graduate assistantship at that time paid only \$100 a month (\$89 after taxes), so Drake decided she needed more money.

With experience on TV in Duluth, she auditioned at KOLN-TV and became the TV spokesperson for Lincoln Telephone and Telegraph, the first of many commercial sponsorships in her career.

While studying for her Master’s degree and post graduate work at UNL, she

worked at KLIN Radio, advertising agencies and as a Radio and TV Director for Gold’s Department Store. She also did television work for Nebraska Public Television.

“When I met Leta, our television studios were in the basement of the Temple Building,” Hull said. “Dallas Williams, that remarkable man of the theatre was directing all those plays on the Howell stage up above our heads. We capitalized on those students. Leta has done a myriad of vignettes and acting. She was always available when we had something for television that we could use her for.”

She also continued to act in more than 100 plays, including at University Theatre and in the community, and had many memorable roles, including Martha in “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf” and Blanche in “Streetcar Named Desire.” Drake won five best acting awards while a student at UNL.

“Leta has a natural talent, which she has honed over the years of performances with some very fine directors. Dr. Morgan was one of her favorites and Dallas Williams,” Hull said. “They really mined that rich vein of acting talent that Leta has.”

Drake sees the parallels between theatre and live television.

“They have much in common,” she said. “In essence, you have to know your subject

‘I’ve had a fabulous ride, full of twists and turns and ups and downs and surprises.’

Leta Powell Drake

and know your lines, you have to be there on time and come prepared. You have to be ready to counter if something falls apart, which invariably it will. You’re communicating with an audience. That has to be real, so the audience feels a part of it.”

In 1967, A. James Ebel, President of KOLN/KGIN TV hired Drake, and she stayed for 28 years, hosting

and producing more than 10,000 television shows on the 10/11 Morning Show and Cartoon Corral with Kalamity Kate and eventually was promoted to Program Director.

HALL OF FAME

That's one and a half hours of live television shows per day that Drake produced and hosted.

"I had no idea of the power of television," Drake said.

For the Morning Show, Drake spent much time preparing for guests.

"Anybody who was coming to town, things were happening, I was a part of it. It was very exciting," Drake said.

Hull said she is an excellent interviewer.

"She's so intelligent and she's always learning," Hull said. "When you bring people into the studio to interview, she has this vast knowledge that she can draw upon to ask the right questions. That's really important."

Then, she had to get her energy back to do the children's show in the afternoon, while also preparing for the next day's morning show.

"I just had fun with the kids, but it was very creative. I had no idea of the impact," Drake said. "That show went off the air in 1982, almost 30 years ago. It used to be that hardly a day went by without somebody saying, 'Oh, you're Kalamity Kate.' Now it's probably once or twice a week. But still. For it to have been that long ago, and the kids who were on the show now in their 30s, 40s and 50s, they tell me exactly what happened."

She never realized the impact the show had on the young children who participated in the show.

"It had an impact, not that it was serious or making a great contribution to society, no," Drake said. "It was the fact that these children, for the first time in their lives, were in a live TV station to see how it worked and to see their friends on TV. And for a little child to be able to wave to his grandmother beyond North Platte, it was memorable for them. I did not realize that at the time. We really just had a lot of fun."

Comine said it was required viewing at her house.

"We watched that show religiously," she said. "My daughter Anne Buntain competed in a Barbie doll contest Kalamity Kate had and won a Barbie doll. My kids always knew when their friends were on."

Drake never dreamed that would be what most people remember.



Photo by David Dale

Leta Powell Drake

"For all the work I put into the morning show, no one remembers that," Drake said. "Everybody remembers Kalamity Kate and Cartoon Corral. That is astounding."

Drake later developed an interest in Public Television, volunteering for auctions and pledge drives for more than 30 years. She joined the staff at NET in 1989, programming the Nebraska Public TV Network for the next 13 years until 2002.

"I belonged there," Drake said. "That was a joy because I spent a great deal of time in screening the programs. I had been a viewer and a member all those years. It was a natural."

Hull said Drake was thorough in her preparations.

"I believe I can honestly say that of all the people that I know who have worked here, including myself, Leta was the only person that ever screened everything, all the way through," Hull said. "And then when she went on the air to raise money, she knew what she was talking about. Hands down over any of the rest of us who were out there in front of the camera, Leta knew all those casts from the British dramas down to the smallest little part. She did her job beautifully, and she made NET look very good over the years."

Drake left NET in 2002 and now serves as Director of Communications with The Salvation Army in Lincoln.

She continues to support the University. She made a donation to the University of Nebraska Foundation in 1967 so the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film's Acting Awards, which she used to win, now have a financial award. And she is active in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Board, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), Cather Circle and University of Nebraska Alumni Association, among many others.

"Leta continues to support our students, the Carson School and the College with scholarships for acting and service on the College Alumni Board and the Nebraska Repertory Theatre's Advisory Board," said Paul Steger, Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. "Leta is in excellent company in the Hall of Fame and her induction is well deserved. We are extremely proud to call her an alumnus of the School and congratulate her on this prestigious honor."

Drake said she enjoys continuing to learn.

"I care about the university," she said. "It's so thrilling now to be part of OLLI because there is an opportunity to stay connected to the university and to explore the areas of the university I didn't know existed. I continue to learn. Curiosity never retires."

Drake's son, Aaron, is also a University of Nebraska graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and was a scholarship swimmer for the Huskers.

She is now working on a book on her experiences as Kalamity Kate, filled with photos and stories she is collecting from people who appeared on the show with her as children.

"This will challenge me. I don't consider myself a writer," Drake said. "But I'm a storyteller. Now, I just have to tell the story on paper."

One thing she doesn't have is regret.

"I don't regret anything. I've had a fabulous ride, full of twists and turns and ups and downs and surprises. I'd do it all over again. I loved it," Drake said. "And I ain't done yet." ■

Veneziano mixes teaching, professional career

BY ASHA ANCHAN

There was a sudden lull in the conversation. Silence. Thinking. As Jacob Heger mentally sifted through his vocabulary, he searched for the right word, the one word to describe his professor, Sandy Veneziano.

“Professional,” said Heger, a graduate student in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, who also received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre from UNL in 2009. “She’s many things; she’s an educator, awe-inspiring, inspiring in general, but she’s really just a professional in everything that she does.”

Veneziano began designing sets in 8th grade and soon knew that she never wanted to do anything else. With time, her passion for the arts bloomed into a professional career and lifestyle.

She worked full-time in Hollywood for 25 years on movies and television shows such as “Dead Poet’s Society,” “Outrageous Fortune,” “Home Alone II,” “Star Trek: The Next Generation,” “Dallas,” “Terms of Endearment,” “Stripes” and “My Favorite Martian.” She was honored with an Academy Award nomination for art direction in “Terms of Endearment,” and she recently completed work on the film “Blood Done Sign My Name” and the television show “Gilmore Girls.”

After taking a step back from the industry to devote time to her family, Veneziano eventually shifted to teaching at the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film at UNL. However, becoming a full-time faculty member in the past few years has not hindered her work in Hollywood. Simultaneously managing her work as a professor and professional has only aided in her effectiveness at the university, she said.

Devoting summers to working in Hollywood and teaching during the school year has given Veneziano a defined schedule. Despite her habit of waking up at 4 a.m. nearly every morning, compliments of her body’s adjustment to “movie mode,”



Sandy Veneziano

Veneziano described the transition back and forth between teaching and working in Hollywood as relatively smooth.

“You just put one hat on and the other hat off,” Veneziano said. “I love teaching, and I love what I do, so it’s never a problem.”

Her extensive professional experience has made Veneziano’s direction at the Johnny Carson School is a major addition to the learning environment.

Heger remembers meeting Veneziano when he was an undergraduate student in her Scene Design I class. While Heger was unaware of her list of accolades, he soon realized what a privilege it was to have Veneziano as his professor.

“To be sitting in her office and have her as my mentor is something I could never put a price on,” Heger said. “I eventually got to know her really well, and she and I hit it off.”

Moving beyond the classroom techniques, Veneziano provides firsthand experience that draws students to her office and brings the Hollywood atmosphere to Nebraska.

“She’s really passing on 20 years of industry experience to her students not only in the classroom but also selecting

some of those students and putting them on an actual movie set,” said Paul Steger, director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

Veneziano often thinks back to the media professionals that mentored her from a “baby set designer” and the evolution she has seen because of their efforts; she hopes to do the same for her students.

“Once I got out to Hollywood, I found a great mentor in Hilyard Brown, and he taught me the in and outs of the business. Now it is all about giving back, giving students mentors to learn from,” Veneziano said.

Heger had the opportunity to visit Veneziano when she worked on the film “Blood Done Sign My Name” and was taken back by the opportunities that went along with his relationship with his teacher.

“I never would have imagined that, coming to a place like Nebraska, I would have the opportunity here that I do,” Heger said. “I’m very honored to be one of her students.”

Not only does Veneziano’s professor and professional mix benefit the Johnny Carson School and her students, it also makes her a well-rounded artist.

“I think it’s important in all of the arts for people to be both professionals and teachers because otherwise you create art in a vacuum,” Steger said. “As an artist you have to be an entrepreneur and generate your own business and make those connections and maintain those connections. That’s the only way you can survive and continue to do what you love.”

It’s her love for the industry and a drive to implant that desire in the hearts of her students that drives Veneziano to continue to rack up frequent flier miles between Hollywood and Nebraska.

“I’m an MFA [Master of Fine Arts] graduate of the University of Nebraska and am happy to help my students achieve their goals whatever they may be,” Veneziano said. “There will be a time when I grow weary, but for now I am happy in both worlds.” ■

Art professor explores the nature of nature

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

What is nature? What does it mean to create nature?

Dana Fritz attempts to answer these questions through her photography project “Terraria Gigantica: The World Under Glass.” Although seemingly straightforward, these questions carry heavy implications in Fritz’s work.

Fritz is an associate professor of art in the Department of Art and Art History at UNL. Although she teaches analysis and composition classes and perceptual drawing as part of the visual literacy program, her personal art doesn’t directly correlate, she said.

“What I’m interested in is exploring the idea of what nature is,” Fritz said.

Fritz’s “Terraria Gigantica” is a compilation of photographs from three locations: the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, Neb., Biosphere 2 near Tucson, Ariz., and the Eden Project in Cornwall, England.

The three locations are the “worlds under glass.” Each one is an enclosed landscape, designed to function and thrive as a natural habitat, similar to a massive greenhouse.

“I wanted to look at the world’s largest enclosed landscapes,” Fritz said. “I think that these three sites give me a unique opportunity to look at what happens when we create nature and what that means in the big picture. If we’re going to make rocks look real, that’s creating nature. But, there is also, philosophically, what does it mean to create nature?”

Mary Anne Redding, curator of photography at the Palace of the Governors and New Mexico History Museum, has known Fritz since the UNL faculty member was a graduate student in Tempe when Redding was the director of the Northlight Gallery there. Redding has continued to follow Fritz’s photography and exhibited “Terraria Gigantica” in Albuquerque, N.M., in a show called *Separating Species*.

Redding said Fritz is not only a



Dana Fritz, “Rain Forest Back Room, Biosphere 2.”

wonderful photographer, but her images are masterfully printed.

Redding said, “In ‘Terraria Gigantica’ she is really exploring the construct of artificial environments that in many ways mimic the real world. There is both humor and pathos in these regulated places that we visit as tourists and scientists.”

Fritz said she has always wanted to be an artist, and she considers herself an artist—not a photographer.

“I certainly have a much broader scope and appreciation for art; it’s not just photography. And that is one of the reasons I like to teach something other than what I make,” Fritz said.

Keeping her photography somewhat separate from her teaching is important, because otherwise it tends to get a bit too routine, she said. Fritz said anybody who has a real passion for something doesn’t want to teach it every day.

“I’ve done a lot of different kinds of work, but in order to really develop your work and get it out there, you have to focus on one thing, which in my case is

photography now,” she said.

When she was in sixth grade, Fritz started taking photos with her family’s 35 millimeter camera. After taking a photography class in junior high, she began to develop her interest in art, she said.

“I’m interested in composition and light and observation, and I think all of those things are in photography,” Fritz said. “I think that’s where my studio work and teaching overlap—is observation. There are ways to observe that overlap between drawing and photography.”

While photographing the three terrariums, Fritz is trying to capture things in a new way, she said.

“I can photograph things that no one else can see or from vantage points that no one else can get to,” Fritz said.

For the project, Fritz has been granted permission to explore the three locations without restrictions. Unescorted, Fritz is free to explore by herself and take photographs from an entirely different perspective than the general public sees. She is also an artist in residence at the

FACULTY

University of Arizona, which has taken over and maintains Biosphere 2.

Biosphere 2 was built in 1986 as a space colonization experiment. The entire compound is just over three acres and contains six different biomes, including an ocean, rainforest, savanna, thornscrub, marsh and desert. The intent was to sustain a group of humans inside of the colossal dome during the 1990's, but the facility now functions as a research center.

"The problem with Biosphere 2, when people were living in there, was that there wasn't enough oxygen," Fritz said. "Now it has been taken over. It's like the world's largest laboratory."

Redding said, "Biosphere 2 has become a tourist destination, as well as the site of ongoing experiments by students, professors and visiting scholars. Anyone looking at Dana's images is asked to consider why and how the experiments went bad. And what are we doing in Biosphere 2 that could lead to equally damning results?"

After the experiment with space colonization failed, the people living within Biosphere left. Now no humans inhabit the dome.

Fritz has full access to everything in Biosphere 2, including the back rooms. The back rooms operate behind-the-scenes and maintain perfect laboratory conditions, Fritz explained.

"[Biosphere officials] give me a key when I show up, and I can go in every biome. I can go from the rainforest to the desert to the ocean to the savanna," Fritz said.

She's even allowed to go into the control rooms and photograph the equipment that keeps the biomes alive. That's what inspires Fritz to delve into the gray area between nature and man's creation.

The Lied Jungle and Desert Dome at the Henry Doorly Zoo comprise Fritz's second location. Since the zoo is within driving distance, she can visit there more frequently than the other two locations, she said.

The Eden Project in England, Fritz's third enclosed landscape, includes two large domes containing artificial biomes.

Fritz explained that when the jungle was constructed in 1992 the idea was that visitors would feel completely immersed in a rainforest environment. With the more

recent structures, like the desert dome or Eden Project, the idea evolved. Now, the creators don't try to mislead visitors into thinking they are in a totally real ecosystem.

"The neat thing about the Eden Project is that it's the newest one, and I think they learned from everyone else, so they're not trying to fool anyone," Fritz said. "It is truly now the world's largest enclosed [greenhouse]."

Completed in 2000, the Eden Project contains one room that is three-and-a-half acres. She said the plants flourish so much



Dana Fritz

that they grows underneath doors and into control rooms.

Some of Fritz's photos capture the stark contrast between nature and human creation. One displays a man-made rock conspicuously placed among live cactuses and desert plants.

"It makes me ask 'what's real, and what's fake?'" Fritz said. "I hope that when other people look at my images, they might think about that, too."

As long as her photographs illicit some type of response from viewers, Fritz feels satisfied, she said.

Because Redding heads exhibitions of Fritz's work, she sees people's reactions firsthand, she said. She said she thinks

people are struck by the beauty and humor in Fritz's images.

"They begin to examine the underlying issues about how and why the places she photographs exist," Redding said. "Each viewer has to draw their own conclusions."

Fritz began *Terraria Gigantica* in 2007 and doesn't know exactly when it will be complete. It doesn't have an exact timeline, she said.

Her teaching takes up a huge amount of her free time, Fritz explained. Specifically, she has been planning a study abroad trip to Japan for the past year, which, she said, has "eclipsed her life-." These other obligations make it difficult to devote a lot of time to her project, so it will probably continue for another couple of years, she said.

Fritz is not in a hurry to complete the project, though. It is finally getting some traction this year and moving outside of Lincoln. She is enthusiastic about several shows where the project will be on exhibit, including in Albuquerque, N.M., in Florida and at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Mo.

"To me, having my work acquired by the Nelson-Atkins is a career highpoint," she said. "I'm from Kansas City, so that's my museum."

Fritz attended the Kansas City Art Institute for her undergraduate study and feels fortunate to have her work displayed alongside those of the luminaries of the art world, she said.

Fritz said she is grateful for the Hixson-Lied Endowment funding she has received to support her project. She has received grant money to pay for equipment, such as cameras and a printer, and for her travel to Arizona and England.

"I can't do it on my own," Fritz said. "It's really amazing and essential to have this support, and I feel really fortunate that my college has this endowment that I can apply to."

In the very back of her mind, Fritz said she is beginning to think about her next project.

"It's so unformed that I can't say anything about it yet," she said, "but I think going to Japan will have some kind of influence on it." ■

FACULTY NOTES

Scott Anderson, Professor of Trombone, was quoted in a story in the Chicago Sun Times in March about Jimi Hendrix, which also appeared around the country, including the Arizona Republic and Wilmington News.

John Bailey, Larson Professor of Flute, was a guest of Arizona State University in Tempe, Ariz., where he performed a solo recital and gave a pedagogy lecture on Moyses's Tone Development Through Interpretation in January. Bailey was named a National Arts Association by the UNL chapter of the international music fraternity, Sigma Alpha Iota. Bailey adjudicated at the 40th annual Seattle Young Artist Music Festival in March, giving written and oral comments to more than 70 flutists, ages 11-18, and was a finalist judge for the Concerto Competition, choosing six talented musicians from among 20 finalists. Bailey was a guest clinician for the Raleigh (N.C.) Flute Association's Flute Choir Day in April, coaching five flute choirs, including the professional Raleigh Flute Choir.

Diane Barger, Professor of Clarinet, received a Hixson-Lied Faculty Research/Creative Activity Grant (\$5,000) for her "CD Recording Project—The Works of Scott McAlister" project (to-be-recorded spring 2011). Her undergraduate student, Celeste Case-Ruchala (Junior B.M.) won the "Play with the Chiara" competition and was featured in a performance of the Mozart Quintet for Clarinet and Strings in late April.

Paul Barnes, Hixson-Lied Professor of Piano, performed in April in New York City. On April 5, he performed at Lincoln Center, where he performed his own transcriptions from Philip Glass' Orpheus for the 50th Anniversary of Lincoln Center and the 100th Anniversary of the Poetry Society of America. The second performance was April 26, where he gave the world premier of a new piano quintet with the Chiara String Quartet entitled "Nocturne of Light" by English composer Ivan Moody. This performance was part of the prestigious Cutting Edge Concert Series, where all composers must be living and present for the performance. This commission was made possible by the Hixson-Lied Endowment and the School of Music.

Dale Bazan, Assistant Professor of Practice in Music Education, was featured in an ABC News broadcast in November for a story on the disappearance of high school marching bands.

Anthony Bushard, Assistant Professor of Music History, had two publications in 2009. His review of Lalo Schifrin's *Mission Impossible: My Life in Music* published in *Notes* (Vol. 66, No. 2) in De-

ember 2009. He also had a publication entitled *From On the Waterfront to West Side Story, Or There's Nowhere Like Somewhere* published in *Musical Theatre* (Vol. 3, No. 1) in August. He presented "The Curious Case of Paseo Hall: Newspaper Coverage of the Kansas City Jazz Scene During the 1930s" at the Mediating Jazz Conference at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England, in November. He also presented "Duke Ellington's Far East Suite: An 'Historical' Concert" at the International Meeting of the College Music Society in Croatia last summer and at *Echoes of Ellington: A Conference on the Life and Music of Duke Ellington* at the University of Texas at Austin last April.

The Chiara String Quartet (**Rebecca Fischer** and **Julie Yoon**, violins; **Jonah Sirota**, viola; and **Gregory Beaver**, cello) performed at New York's West Village hot spot, (Le) Poisson Rouge, in a program selected especially for this venue in April. Steve Reich's Grammy Award-winning 1988 work, *Different Trains*, written for string quartet and tape, contrasts the romantic journeys by train that Reich made as a child during World War II between the two cities where his separated parents lived (New York and Los Angeles), with the journeys by train that he may have been forced to undertake as a Jew in Europe during those same years. The Chiara also performed April 25 at the Westport Arts Center in Southport, Ct., and April 26 at the Cutting Edge Concerts New Musical Festival in New York City. The Chiara has also initiated a commissioning project, *The Club Premieres*. The project commissions four prominent 'Generation Y' composers (Gabriela Lena Frank, Nico Muhly, Daniel Ott and Huang Ruo) to write pieces that will function equally well in a concert hall or a club setting. The project has already received \$37,000 in grant support from Meet the Composer (Commissioning Music/USA 2009 Grant for \$10,000), Chamber Music America (Commissioning Program Grant 2009 for \$17,000) and UNL Grant-in-Aid (2009 for \$10,000). Premieres are scheduled for the Fall of 2010 and Spring of 2011 in both established concert halls and club/bar/gallery spaces.

Rhonda Garelick, Professor of English with a special joint appointment in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, has sold her book, entitled *Antigone in Vogue: Coco Chanel and the Myths of Fashion*, to Random House. The book, which situates fashion designer Chanel within the context of European politics, is scheduled to be published by 2012.

Stanley Kleppinger, Assistant Professor of Music Theory, is the author of "Strategies for

Introducing Pitch-Class Set Theory in the Undergraduate Classroom," which will appear in volume 24 of the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy* later this year. As an invited lecturer for the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Music Colloquium Series he delivered "An Analytic Model for Post-Tonal Pitch-Centric Music" in April. He also was invited to present his research into perception-based analysis of post-tonal pitch-centric music to the annual meeting of Music Theory Midwest, held in May at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. In June he served once again as a reader for the Advanced Placement Exam in Music Theory, administered each year by the College Board and the Educational Testing Service.

Steve Kolbe, Assistant Professor of Digital Arts in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, was the technical director for the animated show "Back at the Barnyard" on Nickelodeon, which won an Emmy® Award for Outstanding Special Class Animated Program at the 36th Annual Daytime Entertainment Creative Arts Emmy® Awards last year from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Karen Kunc, Cather Professor of Art, is hosting an educational tour and studio workshop Aug. 7-14 exploring the passion and creativity from Guanajuato, Mexico, through the Boston Print-makers. Kunc's work was included in a show of "Prints" at the Atrium Gallery in St. Louis, Mo., March 12-May 16. She traveled to Cairo, Egypt, in February for the exhibition "Meeting the Other: American and Egyptian Prints" at the Sharjah Art Gallery at the American University in Cairo.

Susan Levine, Assistant Professor and Head of Dance, has recently received two major grants. "Dancing in the Sand, Bringing Dance to the Rural Schools of Cherry County, Nebraska" received a \$5,000 grant from the Nebraska Arts Council in 2009. She also was part of a Creative Campus Collaborative Grant of \$100,000 from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation for a project with the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the College of Education and Human Sciences.

The Moran Woodwind Quintet (**John Bailey**, flute, **William McMullen**, oboe, **Diane Barger**, clarinet, **Jeffrey McCray**, bassoon, and **Alan Mattingly**, horn), performed a concert in February on a series sponsored by the Sioux City (Iowa) Chamber Music Association.

Glenn Nierman, Associate Director of the School of Music and Steinhart Professor of

FACULTY NOTES

Music Education, was presented the Nebraska Music Educators Association's Distinguished Service Award at the Association's Annual Conference Banquet in November 2009 for 30 years of scholarly articles written and conference sessions presented.

Giacomo Oliva, Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Endowed Dean and Professor of Music, chaired the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) Accreditation Review for the School of Music at Colorado Christian University in Lakewood, Colo. Jack also served as pianist with School of Music faculty, graduate students and alumni, for the Sixth Annual Celebration of American Song on Jan. 25, featuring the music of Harold Arlen. He is presently serving a two-year term as Chair of the College Music Society Committee on International Initiatives.

Eric Richards, Assistant Professor of Composition and Jazz Studies, received a second commission in 2009 to compose a new work for jazz big band for the Shanghai Conservatory in China.

George Ritchie, Professor Emeritus of Organ, has announced that a box set containing a two-CD recording of his of J.S. Bach's complete Art of Fugue plus two films on DVD—a full-length documentary film about the Art of Fugue and a filmed lecture-demonstration by Ritchie on the 17 individual pieces—was recently released by Fugue State Films of Great Britain. The CD plus DVD boxes set is available in the U.S. from www.ohscatalogorg, www.RavenCD.com and from www.fuguestatefilms.co.uk/shop.

Pamela Starr, Professor of Music History, has begun her second term as secretary of the American Musicological Society.

Sandy Veneziano, Assistant Professor of Film, was the Production Designer for the film "Blood Done Sign My Name," released in February.

Robert Woody, Associate Professor of Music Education, has a chapter in the new Handbook of Music and Emotion: Theory, Research, Applications (edited by Patrick Juslin and John Sloboda, published by Oxford University Press). The chapter, co-authored with Gary McPherson, is entitled "Emotion and Motivation in the Lives of Performers."

The University of Nebraska Brass Quintet (**Darryl White** and **K. Craig Bircher**, trumpets; **Alan Mattingly**, horn; **Craig Fuller**, tuba; and **Scott Anderson**, trombone) performed the World

New Faculty

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



Jeffrey Eckels is Assistant Professor of Double Bass in the School of Music. Eckels comes to UNL from the University of North Texas in Denton. He received his doctorate in composition and his Master of Arts in double bass performance from the University of Wisconsin, and his Bachelor of Arts degree from the Berklee College of Music in Boston. He has performed extensively around the country. In 2005, he performed the Oscar Award-winning song *Al Otro Lado Del Rio* from "The Motorcycle Diaries" with singer-songwriter Jorge Drexler.



Damon Thomas Lee is Assistant Professor of Digital Arts and Music Composition in the School of Music. Lee composes instrumental, electronic, and multimedia works. His recent projects include chamber and solo works for the Ensemble Modern; a trio for Saxophone, Accordion, Cello, and live-electronics for the Ensemble *ecco* based in Freiburg, Germany; and an installation work for visual artist Lida Abdul realized at the Ok Centrum in Linz, Austria. Lee was previously Lecturer in music technology at the University of Huddersfield in England and a former Lecturer and Artistic/Scientific Associate at the University of Music Karlsruhe in Germany. Lee received his D.M.A. from Cornell University and his B.M. from the Eastman School of Music. He has also studied at the University of Music, Karlsruhe.

Premiere of Juraj Filas' piece for Brass Quintet and Wind Ensemble titled "Copernicus" on the UNL Campus with the UNL Wind Ensemble conducted by Carolyn Barber. Filas was in Lincoln for the performance. The commission is the result of funding from a grant from the Hixson-Lied Endowment. The quintet presented the European premiere of the work on May 4 in Prague, Czech Republic, with the Prague Castle Guard Band.

The following School of Music faculty members and graduate students have been invited to pres-



Carrie Lee Patterson is Assistant Professor of Practice in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. Patterson previously lived in Chicago, where she performed with Bailiwick Repertory Theatre, Pendulum Theatre Company, Borealis Theatre Company and Famous Door Theatre Company. Her favorite work includes playing Desdemona in *Othello* with the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, *Lizzie* in *110 in the Shade* for Canterbury Theatre, *C* in *Three Tall Women* at Bas Bleu Theatre Company and *Ophelia* in *Hamlet* with the Washington Shakespeare Festival. She has also performed with the Nebraska Repertory Theatre. Patterson is a graduate of Willamette University in Salem, Ore., and holds an M.F.A. in Acting from the University of Arizona.



Laurel Shoemaker is Assistant Professor of Lighting Design in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. She received her B.F.A. from UNL and her M.F.A. from Florida State University. Shoemaker returned to Nebraska in 1987 and acquired an Associate of Architectural Technology degree from Southeast Community College, Milford Campus. She served as production coordinator and architectural assistant at Berggren Architects from 1987 to the present. Three times in the past 10 years, the UNL Opera program has been honored with a National Opera Association Award for Best Production (1998 Mozart's *Così fan Tutte*; 2001 Kurt Weill's *Street Scene*; and 2008 Jake Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*), which Shoemaker set designed. In 2007, Shoemaker won for best sets at the Waterford Light Opera Festival in Ireland for *Most Happy Fella*. ■

ent at the 2010 World Conference of the International Society for Music Education (ISME) in Beijing, China, in August: Associate Professor of Music Theory **Gretchen Foley**, Associate Professor of Choral Music Education **Rhonda Fuelberth**, Assistant Professor of Voice and Voice Pedagogy **Kevin Hanrahan**, Steinhart Professor and Associate Director of the School of Music **Glenn Nierman**, School of Music Director and Professor **John W. Richmond**, Associate Professor of Piano Pedagogy and Keyboard Skills **Brenda Wristen** and Master of Music student **Gabriela Praetzel**. ■

Graduate student wins prestigious national directing fellowship

BY BRITTANY STUREK

For the second time in three years, a Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film's graduate student in the Directing for Stage and Screen program has received a prestigious national fellowship.

In April, Lincoln native Shannon Cameron was awarded the 2010 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Stage Directors and Choreographers Society Directing Fellowship. Only two students from the nation were chosen for the award.

Cameron participated in the Region V Festival, which includes other universities in Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota. The regional competition was the first step to getting the award. After writing an artistic statement and sending in her resume and letter of reference, she was one of 12 students selected from the region to participate. Each student had to choose a scene from five selected plays and direct it for the festival.

"I chose the Second Movement from Sarah Ruhl's 'Eurydice' because it felt like the most theatrical out of the five pieces and the most difficult," Cameron said. "I won the regional competition and was awarded participation in the National Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in Washington, D.C., all expenses paid."

The festival, which took place from April 12-18 at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., included workshops and performances for 10 regional winners throughout the country. Cameron spent the week attending classes and performances and preparing several things, like a director's concept of the opening scene of Macbeth. While in D.C., Cameron was able to work with leading individuals in the field.

"I attended master classes with incredibly inspirational people, including playwright David Ives, directors Aaron Posner and Libby Appel, and many other master teachers," Cameron said. "It was a life-changing week."

At the end of the week, it was announced that Cameron won the fellowship.

As part of the fellowship, Cameron became an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. She was also given \$1,000 to help offset the costs of a new career opportunity for next summer.

The fellowship further reinforced what Cameron had known all along: that she belonged in theatre.

"My interest in the arts started at age three when I began dancing, but it wasn't until eighth grade when I won a leading role in a junior high play at Lincoln East did I get bitten by the theatre bug," Cameron said. "I found a wonderful second family in theatre, and I felt I finally found my niche."



Shannon Cameron

After high school, Cameron attended Webster Conservatory in St. Louis, Mo., for a little over two years. But that wasn't quite the right fit for Cameron. However, after studying abroad in London for a semester and seeing a performance of "Mnemonic," Cameron again fell in love with theatre.

"'Mnemonic' blew my mind," Cameron said. "I had no idea theatre could be like that. I was hooked all over again."

In 2001, she graduated from Emerson College in Boston with a degree in theatre education. While in Boston, Cameron worked with several non-profit organizations to develop drama-based curriculum for the Boston Public Schools.

A few years later, Cameron moved back to Nebraska and worked as the theatre director at Hastings Senior High School for

four years. Cameron said the best part about working in a high school setting was the students. Cameron's students respected her just as much, as she was nominated twice for Nebraska Theatre Teacher of the Year.

Now, as a third-year Master's of Fine Arts candidate in Directing for Stage and Screen, Cameron is working as a graduate teaching assistant and an adjunct professor at Doane College. If that's not enough, Cameron is also developing a theatre company with other UNL students called Jesters & Prophets.

"We hope to produce an original piece in Lincoln next spring and then relocate to New York City in the fall of 2011," Cameron said. "My hope is to produce my own work while assisting other professional directors, therefore continuing my schooling in the professional theatre."

Cameron's mentors are confident that she can excel in her career. Paul Steger, Director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, said he knew right away that Cameron had serious skills.

"In her first semester of the M.F.A. program, Shannon served as my Assistant Director on a University Theatre production of Shakespeare's 'As You Like It,'" Steger said. "When one of the actors had to step out of a supporting role, I asked Shannon to step in. She handled the pressure easily and excelled in the role. I knew at that point, she was a true talent."

Virginia Smith, head of the directing program at UNL, said Cameron is a dedicated worker who gets along well with others.

"Shannon is very focused, and she works very hard," Smith said. "She has really pushed herself to take on challenging projects, and she's been a great leader and role model for our undergraduates."

Cameron views theatre as an important way to make a difference in her community.

"Theatre has an inherent power to get people to feel something, and feelings often lead to action," Cameron said. "My goal is always to make a show that is talked about for a while after the performance. To stay in the audience's head, make them think, feel and dialogue." ■

BRASS QUINTET

The University of Nebraska Brass Quintet tours Czech Republic

(Editor's Note: The University of Nebraska Brass Quintet visited the Czech Republic April 30-May 6 and among the highlights was the European Premiere of Copernicus for Brass Quintet and Wind Band. Below are reflections of the trip by Professor of Trombone Scott Anderson.)

BY SCOTT ANDERSON

The University of Nebraska Brass Quintet was funded by the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and the University of Nebraska School of Music to embark on a tour of the Czech Republic. The capstone and primary performance of the tour was the Czech Premier of a work commissioned by the quintet and the College by Czech Composer Juraj Filas entitled "Copernicus: A Concerto Grosso for Brass Quintet and Wind Band." The performance was with the Prague Castle Guard and Police Band conducted by Colonel Vaclav Blahunek.

The visit coincided with the 65th year Celebration of Liberation by the Czech Republic commemorating the date that allied troops freed Czechoslovakia from Nazi occupation. Through a series of fortuitous events, the brass quintet was also invited to perform in a series of recitals of World War II era American Music for three separate celebrations. The first of these celebrations was in the 16th century castle near the town of Klatovy. The performance was free to the public and was standing room only. We were very pleased to be able to invite a student quintet from the secondary school in Klatovy to perform a pre-recital concert.

The next day was a rehearsal with the Prague Castle Guard and Police Band in their rehearsal hall. The composer, Juraj Filas, attended the rehearsal. The band was of the highest professional caliber and the next day following a short sound check, the performance took place in the Spanish Hall in the Prague Castle. There were many national dignitaries in attendance including Department Ministers, military representatives, the head of the police in the Czech



Photo courtesy of Scott Anderson

The University of Nebraska Brass Quintet (left to right) Darryl White (trumpet), Scott Anderson (trombone), Craig Fuller (tuba), K. Craig Bircher (trumpet) and Alan Mattingly (horn) at the top of the Castle Klenová just outside of Klatovy in the Czech Republic.

Republic and representatives of the Prime Minister. The entire event was videotaped for Czech National Television. Following the performance, the performers and our composer, Mr. Filas, were invited to a reception where we were honored and presented with gifts of appreciation.

We had considered taking the next day as an off day to see the city, but were besieged by requests to perform at a number of cities and towns to commemorate the "Celebration of Liberation." We accepted performances in Domazlice and Katovice.

The celebration turned out to be an homage to the American troops who, along with the armed forces of the Soviet Union, were first on the scene to drive the Nazis out of Czechoslovakia. The day turned out to be one of the most moving events any of us can remember.

The gratitude of the Czech people was overwhelming as were the speeches given by surviving American troops who made the trip from the U.S. for the celebration. We performed selections of military music as well as swing music from the 1940s. We heard stories (through translators) from Czech soldiers and citizens who have not

forgotten what Americans and American means to them.

In the end, this tour was a success on many levels. We have developed an artistic tie with the most important and artistically excellent band in Eastern Europe, the Prague Castle Band. Our sponsors in the communities where we performed are among the most active presenters and music education advocates in their respective regions.

We have also developed a close personal relationship with one of the most outstanding living Czech composers, Mr. Filas. During our travels we have met and played for other important Czech composers. We are continuing to develop our knowledge of these composers, their works that we might perform in the future, and the potential for developing cross-cultural activities.

The University of Nebraska Brass Quintet is planning the next phase of work on the music from the Czech Republic. This includes a recording project that will capture not only the new music of Juraj Filas, but also the brass music of Czech mainstays such as Karel Husa, Vaclav Nelhybel and Petr Eben. ■

HONORS DAY



Theatre Alumni Achievement Award recipient John Stark (right) examines set models with Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film students (left to right) Jacob Boyett, Rachel Aguirre and Jacob Heger.



Music Alumni Achievement Award recipient Sharon Hansen visits with students in a graduate choral literature class.

Highlights from Honors Day Weekend April 23-24

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts celebrated its annual Honors Day weekend April 23-24. Three of the alumni participated in classes on Friday, April 23.

Awardees included: Alumni Achievement in Art, **Peggy Gomez** (BFA Art 1985); Alumni Achievement Award in Music, **Dr. Sharon Hansen** (MM 1978); Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre, **John Stark** (MFA 1982); and Award of Merit, **Harley Jane Kozak**.

Gomez opened Gomez Art Supply in Lincoln in 2003. She is also the founder of Tugboat Gallery in 2005, which is currently located above Gomez Art Supply on 14th Street in Lincoln, which provides showing opportunities for emerging artists as well as established professionals.

Hansen is director of Choral Activities and head of Graduate Choral Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She participated in a Graduate Choral Literature and Graduate Choral Conducting class, as well as provided comments at a dress rehearsal for the Women's Chorale and Men's Chorus performance of "Peaceable Kingdom."

Stark is the Head of the Design/Production Area for the School of Theatre at Illinois State University in Normal, Ill. He toured the Temple Building and Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center, and participated in a Scene Design class.

Kozak is a television and film actress and author. Her credits include "Parenthood," "When Harry Met Sally...," and the soap operas "Texas," "Guiding Light" and "Santa Barbara." She has also starred in Nebraska Rep productions, as well as the first Carson Film, "Vipers in the Grass." She has also written four novels, all of which feature greeting card designer and amateur sleuth Wollie Shelley. Kozak participated in Acting for the Camera and Acting for the Camera/Business of the Business classes on Friday.

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 Choral Music Education **Rhonda Fuelberth**, from the School of Music. Fuelberth is also chair of graduate music education.

The Leadership Award in Curriculum or Programmatic Development was given to Associate Professor of Film **Sharon Teo**, from the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

The Achievement Award in Academic Advising was presented to Hixson-Lied Profes-

sor of Music History **Peter Lefferts**, from the School of Music. Lefferts became chief advisor for music majors on the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Music degrees in 2007.

The Junior Faculty Achievement Award in Teaching was given to Assistant Professor of Music Theory **Stanley Kleppinger**, from the School of Music.

The Senior Faculty Achievement Award in Research and Creative Activity was presented to Cather Professor of Art **Karen Kunc**, from the Department of Art and Art History. Kunc has taught printmaking at UNL since 1983.

The Junior Faculty Achievement Award in Research and Creative Activity was given to Assistant Professor of Organ **Christopher Marks**, from the School of Music.

The Faculty Award for Outstanding Outreach, Engagement or Service was presented to Associate Professor of Art **Sandra Williams** from the Department of Art and Art History. She teaches Visual Literacy and also an Art in the Community class, which she created.

The Staff Award for Outstanding Service was given to **Janet Sievert**, administrative assistant for Director John Richmond for the School of Music. She is also responsible for School of Music admissions.

For a full listing of honorees, visit www.unl.edu/finearts/alumni/honorsday. ■

HONORS DAY



Award of Merit recipient Harley Jane Kozak (left) discusses her career with Lecturer Judy Hart in an Acting for the Camera class.



Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications
Dean Giacomo Oliva (left) with Hixson-Lied Award recipients (left to right) Stanley Kleppinger, Peter Lefferts, Sandra Williams, Sharon Teo, Janet Sievert, Karen Kunc, Rhonda Fuelberth and Christopher Marks.



Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications
Dean Giacomo Oliva (second from right) with student award recipients (left to right) Lindsay Graef, Jessica Machacek, David Eichelberger, Ryan LaBar, Terri Schilmoeller, Amber Naylor, Cecelia Sickler, Trent Stork, Garrett Hope, Mark Kranz, Candice Behrmann and Nathan Todhunter.

Art Alum receives Fulbright to study printmaking in Egypt

BY BRITTANY STUREK

Dominique Ellis may have grown up in the Midwest, but her passion lies in the Middle East.

Even though she was raised in Lincoln, Neb., Ellis loves Egyptian art and culture. Since first being exposed to ceramics and drawing as a young child, she was determined to make art her career. She hoped to one day go to Egypt and study its history and its people first-hand. Since graduating from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 2005 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, Ellis is now enjoying her ultimate dream: studying art in Egypt with the assistance of a Fulbright award.

Ellis' path to Egypt wasn't an easy one. After graduating from Lincoln Southeast High School, she wanted to major in Egyptology at the University of Illinois at Chicago. But finances were tight, so Ellis settled for an anthropology major at UNL. She soon realized that anthropology wasn't for her, however.

"Within my first semester or two, I changed my mind," Ellis said. "I switched majors to secondary art education so that I could teach art at the high school level."

But Ellis became bored with the idea of teaching and switched her major a final time to fine art.

"It took longer than desired to graduate with all the major changes," Ellis said, "and yet it was the best decision."

After graduation, Ellis decided to join the Peace Corps. She wasn't ready for graduate school, but she wanted to experience life outside of Nebraska.

"My understanding of the world was through the lens of Lincoln, Nebraska," Ellis said. "The principle reason for joining Peace Corps was to gain a worldly perspective and have experiences that inform my artistic practice."

Between September 2006 and November 2008, Ellis was involved in the Peace Corps in Amizmiz, Morocco. While there, Ellis taught an English class to teenagers, learned calligraphy and produced prints and sketches that were inspired by her surroundings. She was heavily involved in the local culture, attending more than 30 weddings in her village during her stay.

"Dance and music are very important



Dominique Ellis at the ceramic exchange in Morocco during her time in the Peace Corps.

modes of expression," said Ellis, "and it was a great way to connect to the community in a public or private setting."

Ellis enjoyed her time in Morocco, but it wasn't without struggle. Language barriers and cultural differences were present every day. But Ellis is grateful for the experience.

"It will change your life," Ellis said. "It's where I transitioned from a student in the classroom to a student of the world."

Ellis' time in the Peace Corps motivated her to apply for a Fulbright award, a prestigious grant sponsored by the U.S. State Department that allows recipients to conduct research internationally. Ellis began the application process in May 2008 while she was in Morocco. After a year of applications, proposals and anxious waiting, she received the award in May 2009 to study printmaking in Egypt.

Ellis thinks her Fulbright award is the perfect way to build upon her experiences in Morocco and to focus on academic research.

"I was motivated by this grant and challenged myself to make the most of this incredible opportunity to expand my own horizons and contribute to print and art practice in Cairo and Egypt," Ellis said.

Ellis' research focuses specifically on the relationship between calligraphy and printmaking in contemporary Egyptian art. In its simplest form, printmaking is the transferring of ink from one surface to another. Affiliated with the American University of Cairo, Ellis is exploring art and its use as a

cultural connector in Egypt and how it influences the multicultural population within Egypt.

"My research centers on the creative process and community outreach," Ellis said. "My process will result in handmade books, prints and artistic installations that integrate calligraphic markings and Arabic script into a visual urban landscape."

After Ellis completes her Fulbright research in November 2010, she plans to begin work on a Master of Fine Arts in printmaking. She hopes to one day teach printmaking in a university setting, something her mentor and Cather Professor of Art Karen Kunc believes will suit her well.

"She has such an eagerness for learning," Kunc said. "She asks questions about how things work and seeks understandings of the bigger picture of culture and art and how people live and express themselves."

Gail Kendall, professor of art, agrees.

"Dominique is so incredibly self-assured, self-confident and very capable," Kendall said.

Kendall worked with Ellis as a student and then as a Peace Corps participant, where Kendall got to witness Ellis' transformation from a busy student to a mature and confident artist.

"You can just tell when someone knows who they are what they're meant to do, and that's what Dominique's become," Kendall said. "She has set her goals, and I'm confident she will meet them." ■

UNL alum Johnston creates theatre documentary

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

Actor, director and producer Ryan Johnston is no theatre novice. He has worked in film and television and with live-stage productions. He has also dappled in Shakespeare and has played a thug in an animated video game. Coast-to-coast, Johnston has experienced notable success and still manages to make time for his hobby of competitive cycling.

Even though theatre has been the center of his professional life, Johnston still has doubts. Does theatre really make any difference?

In order to find an answer to that question—both for himself and for the public—Johnston is helping produce a documentary titled “Stage Matters.” It’s a collaboration between Firefly Films and the Theatre Communications Group. The short film, divided into three acts, poses the question “Does theatre matter?” and attempts to answer it with real-world evidence.

Johnston became involved in January when Steven Klein, a producer and founder of Firefly, asked him help produce the documentary. They didn’t know how the project would turn out or if they even wanted to hear the answer, but Johnston said he knew it needed to be done.

“I think there is a tendency for us to get up on our artistic soapbox,” Johnston said, “without really being able to say what it means that theatre matters in a tangible way.”

Johnston and Klein began brainstorming, asking themselves, “What are the real world metrics [for theatre] besides actors saying it matters?”

Johnston himself didn’t have a concrete answer, even after more than 10 years in the business.

After graduating from UNL in 1999 with a major in theatre and minor in vocal music, Johnston immediately packed up and moved to L.A. Spending seven years in California gave him new insight into himself and his career goals. It’s also where he met Klein, now his business partner.

“It’s interesting how things connect in a slight progression,” Johnston said. “Doing things you’re interested in with an open mind—I think that’s when good things happen.”

Johnston said his attitude today is to pro-



Photo by David Zaugh

Ryan Johnston.

duce something artistic, not chase fame and fortune as he did in his younger days, he said.

“Any good thing that has come in my career has come from that approach,” he said.

Johnston lived bi-coastally between L.A. and New York for a couple of years before permanently resettling in Brooklyn where he currently lives. His work producing theatre kept him working with Klein and Firefly Theatre and Films. Klein’s loose connection with Theatre Communications Group snowballed into the opportunity to collaborate on “Stage Matters.”

The Theatre Communications Group is non-profit organization founded to strengthen and promote professional not-for-profit theatre in America. Today, more than 700 member theaters and organizations and more than 17,000 individual members comprise TCG.

“Stage Matters” was funded through a TCG grant and will premiere in June at the TCG National Conference in Chicago. After the conference, the documentary will be distributed to TCG member organizations and individuals to use for publicity and educational purposes.

Johnston said he and Klein initially knew the documentary would be worthwhile and a great opportunity, but it wasn’t until they

became more involved that they really got excited.

“What we said to [TCG] was, if we are going to make this, we have to ask ‘does theatre matter?’” Johnston said, “and the answer has to be allowed to be ‘no.’”

After some brainstorming, Johnston and Klein came up with a rough outline for the documentary. From start-to-finish, the film will be only about 15 minutes long, Johnston explained. It is divided into three acts on the past, present and future of theatre.

Johnston and Klein interviewed dozens of people including theatre-makers, educators, business executives and students.

“One of the first things we looked at was community revitalization,” Johnston said.

The crew traveled to L.A. and examined a rejuvenated section of once-dilapidated theatres. It was evidence that theater can pump life back into a deteriorating area, Johnston said. Next, they examined theatre’s role in education.

Johnston said: “We talked to some of the country’s foremost experts on curriculum. We’ve lost lots of good curriculum that teaches kids to think and communicate. There were some really renowned and respected educators saying we need curriculum like that,” curriculum that includes the arts.

ALUMNI PROFILES

Their interview process even took them to a town in Nebraska.

"We talked to a high school student in Gretna, Neb., who came out as gay and was really having a hard time," Johnston said. "He talked about how doing a scene where he played a character who was gay helped him reconcile his relationship with his mother and communicate things he couldn't have communicated otherwise."

Act II answers the basic question: "Does theatre matter?"

Act III delves into the opinions of actual theatre-makers and TCG members. The documentarians also interviewed representatives

with the Omaha Theatre Company and the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

The artistic director of the Repertory Theatre, Virginia Smith, said she thinks the documentary is a terrific idea.

"It's great to be able to share those visions together and have an opportunity to talk about theatre," Smith said.

"At the end of it, when we finally finished shooting interviews, we learned a lot," Johnston said. "We felt like we really got an answer we didn't know for sure we were going to get."

Johnston said the project has convinced him theatre really does matter.

"I look at the world and all of its problems

and kind of wonder: 'Sure, we're putting on a play that communicates a message, but what if what I really want to do is help make the world a better place?' Throughout this process, I really did see people doing things that showed me that theatre matters," Johnston concluded.

"Stage Matters" is in the final stages of editing, and Johnston has turned his attention to two other projects. The first is a play called "Dirt" by writer Bruce Gooch. As for the second, he could only say he's excited to be working on a full-length documentary that has to do with Omaha, but he couldn't give any other details. ■

New graduate degrees offered in School of Music

BY BRITTANY STUREK

For the School of Music at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, it's been a long time coming.

Since the College of Fine and Performing Arts was created in 1993 at UNL, the faculty in the School of Music has wanted to offer a Ph.D. in music. More than 15 years of effort ended last May after the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education approved the new degree.

John W. Richmond, professor and director of the School of Music, said that the wheels were already set in motion to propose the move before he even arrived at UNL in 2003.

"In the early 1990s, the University decided to move the music education major from what then was called the Teacher's College," Richmond said. "It was a relatively easy process until it came to relocating the doctorate degree. Because doctoral studies in music education had been offered under the aegis of what was then called 'Curriculum and Instruction' and now called 'Education Studies,' the only way to relocate this doctorate was to propose a new degree. That's exactly what we did."

Richmond worked with other music faculty members and university organizations and eventually built the degree into its reaccreditation application.

"There were hoops to go through," Richmond said, "but we got unanimous approval at every single stage of the process. And now we have the first Ph.D. in the School of Music."

Richmond is confident students and fac-

ulty will make an easy transition to the new majors.

"Old students will just transfer over from the old program," Richmond said. "It couldn't be easier."

The School of Music has offered a Doctor of Musical Arts degree for many years. Last fall, the school added new Master of Music and Doctorate of Musical Arts degrees with emphases in jazz studies, making UNL one of the few schools in the country with such a major.

Richmond said the faculty at the School of Music recognized that a number of faculty members had a lot of expertise in jazz studies, and many students showed interest in the subject.

"I wanted to focus on jazz degree programs at the graduate level," Richmond said. "I formed an ad hoc faculty committee to look at this, and they put forth proposals for these degrees."

Steinhart Professor and Associate Director of the School of Music Glenn Nierman said Richmond's expertise, along with support from Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean Giacomo Oliva, was the key to making the degree additions successful.

"John did the very same thing at the University of South Florida, and Dean Oliva had done the same thing at the University of Florida, so they had both been through the process previously," Nierman said. "This wouldn't have happened without their good administration and leadership."

The new degrees aren't the only recent

changes in the music education curriculum. In 2005, the Master's program became a summers-only program. A fourth of this master's curriculum will be made available soon online, so earning this degree will take only three summers of residence instead of four.

A graduate certificate in arts entrepreneurship will be another addition soon to appear in the School of Music's curriculum.

"We had been concerned for some time for our students who get master's degrees in music and performance that they have to be much more savvy today in terms of business plans and how to market themselves," Nierman said. "Other schools in the Midwest have similar programs, so we thought it would help make us more attractive if we offered it."

Both Richmond and Nierman think the new additions will greatly benefit the School of Music.

"The jazz studies program will provide a means of attracting to Lincoln and Nebraska some of the most serious, dedicated jazz musicians in the world to do their graduate education here," Richmond said. "And the Ph.D. makes it easier for our graduates to market themselves for appointments in academe and the research community."

"It's just monumental," Nierman said. "To be able to get this done in this economic climate is nothing short of a miracle."

"We had the stars align with the Director of the School of Music and Dean Oliva both working on this," Nierman said. "They understood the process, and both believed in their hearts that this was the right thing to do." ■



HIXSON- LIED COLLEGE OF FINE & PERFORMING ARTS
2011 ALUMNI BOARD AWARDS

Nomination Form • Nomination Deadline: Dec. 10, 2010

Honors Day: April 16, 2011

Nomination for the following award:

_____ Alumni Achievement _____ Student Leadership
_____ Award of Merit _____ Faculty Service Award

I nominate the following person:

Name: _____

Class Year(s)/Degree(s): _____

Department: Music Dance Art Theatre/Film

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: Home () _____ Work () _____

E-mail: _____

Current employer or status: _____

Please attach the following to this nomination form:

- a) A resume, vita or biography of the person being nominated.
- b) A letter of nomination/recommendation that lists the qualifications and reasons for the nomination.
- c) (Optional) You may attach additional pages of information or supporting data. Please do not send original supplemental material, as nomination materials will not be returned.

Your name: _____ & Signature _____

Address: _____

City/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: Home () _____ Work () _____

E-mail: _____

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 Arts (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 has demonstrated continued interest in the College and has shared his or her time, energy, and guidance.

Faculty Service Award. 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.



PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY DECEMBER 10, 2010, TO:
HIXSON-LIED COLLEGE OF FINE & PERFORMING ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
102 WOODS ART BUILDING
LINCOLN, NE 68588-0144
or e-mail to kandersen1@unl.edu

ALUMNI NOTES

1947

Dieter Kober (B.M.) was honored when the City of Chicago declared Jan. 10, 2010, “Dieter Kober Day.” The Chicago Chamber Orchestra celebrated the 90th Birthday of its founder and musical director, Dieter Kober with a special birthday concert at the Chicago Cultural Center.

1958

Jim Cantrell (B.F.A. Art Ed.) won 1st Place in Watercolor Award for his painting “Barn near Murphy’s Park” at the prestigious First Brush of Spring Plein Air Event in New Harmony, Ind. Approximately 150 artists from around the country participated in the paint-out from April 15-17 sponsored by the Indiana Plein Air Painters Association. Cantrell maintains his studio at the Bardstown Art Gallery.

1963

Claire Eason (B.M.E., M.M. 1983) was recently awarded the title of Colleague of American Guild of Artists by The American Guild of Organists.

1972

Susan Brasch (B.F.A. Art Ed.) had a new painting series, “Gridworks” on display in May at the Burkholder Project in Lincoln. Brasch is a thematic artist who uses a variety of styles within the given grid fields. To view more of her artwork, visit www.susanjbrasch.com.

1976

Lawrence McFarland (M.F.A. Art) is the recipient of a 2010 U.S. and Canada Competition Creative Arts-Photography Fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. McFarland is the William and Bettye Nowlin Endowed Professor of Photography at the University of Texas at Austin.

1995

Christopher Ervin (B.F.A. Art) and his firm Velocity/Ape FX created the graphics and special effects for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Put Yourself on the Map campaign this fall (gobigred.unl.edu).

1998

Kristin Hensley (B.A. Theatre) has appeared in several national commercials, including Activia Yogurt, McDonald’s, Southwest Airlines and Secret deodorant.

1999

Jeremy Kolwinska (M.M.) was appointed chair of the Department of Music at Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minn. In addition to his administrative duties, Kolwinska also teaches all low brass.

2001

Andrew Strain (B.A. Music) toured with “Beowulf—A Thousand Years of Baggage” as a tenor trombonist.

2004

David Bogus (M.F.A. Art) has accepted a position at Texas A&M International Campus in Laredo, Texas.

Roxanne Jackson (M.F.A. Art) has accepted a position at State University of New York in Oswego.

2006

Firth MacMillan (M.F.A. Art) had her work in the exhibition “The Language of Flowers” at the CRG Gallery Jan. 9-Feb. 13 in New York City.

Dan Perry (M.F.A. Art) was commissioned to create the cauldron for the National Special Olympics held in Lincoln in July. Perry teaches sculpture at the University of Northern Iowa.

Joseph Pintz (M.F.A. Art) was awarded the Ceramic Innovation Award for his mixing bowl set accepted into the Strictly Functional Pottery National in 2009. Hixson-Lied Professor of Art Peter Pinnell was the juror for this national competition.

Melinda Yale (M.F.A. Art), had her work included in The Lower East Side Printshop Benefit in New York in February. Yale’s work was also featured in The Sketchbook Project Exhibition at Brooklyn Art Library in February. She also had work in the national juried print exhibition “Shy Rabbit” at the Shy Rabbit Contemporary Art Gallery in Pagosa Springs, Colo., last fall. For more information, visit her website at www.melindayale.com.

2007

Wendy Bantam (M.F.A. Art) was the featured artist at the annual Berkshire Hathaway Annual Meeting at the Qwest Center in Omaha in May. Her work, with the theme of Saturday in the Park, was featured throughout the Qwest Center.

Todd Beaty (B.A. Art 2007) is working for Bullseye Glass Company in Portland, Ore., Oregon’s largest art glass company. His job involves producing a wide variety of colored glass sheets for artists to use largely for fusing in various processes and applications.

Jessica Graff (B.A. Theatre) appeared in the Oct. 28 episode of CBS’ “Criminal Minds.” She played a jogger who gets murdered in the park. She has also recently appeared in episodes of “Nip/Tuck,” “Heroes” and “Numb3rs.”

2008

Elizabeth Aleksander (D.M.A.) has been selected by peer review competition as a finalist in the International Clarinet Association’s Research Competition in July at the ICA ClarinetFest® in Austin, Texas.

Katie Brennan (M.M.) is currently pursuing the Doctorate of Musical Arts at Michigan State University. She currently serves as principal bassoon of the MSU Symphony Orchestra, a position she also held for much of the 2008-09 school year.

Andy Converse (D.M.A.) has accepted a position at Northwest Vista College in San Antonio, Texas.

Susan Dewsnap (M.F.A. Art) had her work featured last summer at the AKAR Gallery in Iowa City, Iowa. Her work is viewable online at www.akardesign.com.

Justin Shaw (M.F.A. Art) had his work prominently displayed in the 2009 Outwin Boochever Portrait Competition at the National Portrait Gallery of the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. His life-size portrait in cast rubber was completed while he was a graduate student at UNL in 2007. He was one of 49 juried works accepted out of 3,300 entries.

2009

Autumn Cipala (M.F.A. Art) and Seth Green (M.F.A. Art) had their work appear in Ceramics Monthly magazine in an article about the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Regional Juried Student Exhibition they both were in the Spring of 2009 at the NCECA Conference in Phoenix. Green has also recently accepted a position at Moorhead University in Tennessee.

Lindsay Kerns (B.F.A. Theatre) was accepted to the Peter Stark Producing Program at the University of Southern California.

ALUMNI NOTES

Leonardo Lebas (D.M.A.) is the new Director of Choral Activities at Graceland University at Lamoni, Iowa.

Jessica Vansteenburgh (D.M.A.) has been selected by peer review competition as a finalist in the International Clarinet Association's Research Competition in July at the ICA ClarinetFest® in Austin, Texas. She was also selected by peer review to present a lecture at the College Music Society National Conference this September in Minneapolis.

Michael Yenny (D.M.A.) is the staff accompanist at Angelo State University in San Angelo, Texas.

2010

Joshua Deutmeyer (M.M.) has accepted the position of Middle School Band Director at Waukee, Iowa. He will begin teaching in the Fall.

Elisa DiFeo (M.F.A. Art) and David Eichelberger (M.F.A. Art) will be residents at the Appalachian Center for Craft at Tennessee Tech University starting in September. Eichelberger will also be a resident at the University of New South Wales in Australia in August.

Teresa Dwyer (B.M.E.) has accepted the position of Middle School Band Director at Columbus, Neb., for the upcoming school year. She will teach 6th-8th grade band and be assistant director for the high school marching band.

Aisha Harrison (M.F.A. Art) begins a one-year residency at Baltimore Clayworks in late August.

Carla Potter (M.F.A. Art) and Ryan LaBar (M.F.A. Art) were at California State University in Long Beach for a two-month residency this summer as guests of Professor Tony Marsh. In September, LaBar takes the directorship of the L.H. Project Ceramics Residency Program in Joseph, Ore. He has also been invited to work in China for one month as a guest of the director of a new museum of ceramic art. His work will become a part of the permanent collection of the museum.

James Wilson (D.M.A.) has accepted a position at Wesley College in Dover, Del., where he will conduct three choirs, teach private lessons in piano and voice and serve as music director to the downtown church. ■

IN MEMORIAM

Earl "Pete" Jenkins, 89, died Aug. 3, 2009. Jenkins was born in Tilden and raised in Blair. He earned a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Nebraska in 1943. Jenkins then served as a naval officer in World War II. Jenkins joined the faculty at NU in 1949. He worked for 33 years at the university, teaching voice and directing the University Singers and choruses. Jenkins earned his master's degree in music in 1952. In 1963, he was named professor of voice. He received many awards and honors including the Doc Elliott Award in 2002, presented by the Nebraska Alumni Association. He was inducted into the Nebraska Music Educators' Hall of Fame in 1995. He received the University's Distinguished Teaching Award in 1978 and University Builders' Awards in 1975 and 1977.

Peter J. Worth, 93, former chairman of the Department of Art and Art History, died May 3. Worth was a well-known and well-respected art historian and working artist. He was associated with the university from 1948 until his retirement in 1987. Born in Suffolk, England, he came to the United States in 1948. He joined the university as an assistant professor, and was promoted to full professor in 1959, the same year he became a naturalized U.S. citizen. He was acting department chair from 1953 to 1954, when he was named chair, a position he held until 1962. His work was exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, Denver Museum of Art, Nelson Gallery in Kansas City, the Walker Institute in Minneapolis and Lincoln's Modern Arts Midwest Gallery.

Frederick Gaines, 72, died April 19. Gaines received the Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre from the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts in 1995. He was born Aug. 28, 1937, in Lincoln. He graduated from the University of Nebraska and continued his education with graduate degrees in Theatre from the

University of Nebraska and the University of Manchester in England with a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota. He was writer in residence at the Children's Theatre in Minneapolis and later freelanced as a playwright, residing with his family in rural Somerset, Wis. In 1977, Fred joined the faculty at Lawrence University, teaching and directing in the Theatre Department until his retirement in 2000. He also continued as a playwright and has had plays produced in many professional theaters across the country as well as several in Europe. After retirement from Lawrence, Gaines taught at the Renaissance School for the Arts in Appleton, as well as frequent collaboration with many individuals in productions and writing workshops at the Oneida Reservation.

F. Pace Woods, II, 86, died July 26. Born in 1924 in Lincoln, Woods graduated cum laude from Lawrenceville School in New Jersey in 1943. He later earned his B.A. at Yale University, where he majored in creative writing and drama and minored in economics. Woods served Woods Bros Realty and the Lincoln real estate and development markets for 50 years, having retired in 2004. He was the recipient of the College's Award of Merit in 2004 and was inducted into the Nebraska Repertory Theatre Hall of Fame in 2001. He also made a donation to the University of Nebraska Foundation to create the F. Pace Woods, II, Scholarships in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Marjorie Jane (Jones) Woods, 87, died Nov. 17, 2009. Born in 1922 in Lincoln, Woods graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1943 and was an active community volunteer. She was a member of First-Plymouth Congregational Church, Country Club of Lincoln, The Patriarchs, Junior League of Lincoln, Kappa Alpha Theta, Sheldon Art Association, MEDICI, Fortnightly, Woods Charitable Fund and the Nebraska Club. ■



Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications

School of Music Director John W. Richmond (right) announces that Matthew Boring is the recipient of a Truman Scholarship at his Wind Ensemble rehearsal in Westbrook Music Building on March 29, 2010, as Dean Giacomo Oliva (center) looks on.

School of Music Junior wins Truman Scholarship

BY KATHE ANDERSEN

Matthew Boring from Lincoln, Neb., a junior Bachelor of Arts in music major with a business minor at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, is the recipient of The Truman Scholarship, a \$30,000 merit-based national scholarship awarded to undergraduate students for financial support to attend graduate or professional school in preparation for careers in government, the non-profit sector or elsewhere in public service.

The Foundation received 576 applications this year from 245 colleges and universities, and they selected 176 finalists. Only 60 finalists were selected this year as Truman Scholars.

School of Music Director John W. Richmond made the surprise announcement of

the honor during Boring's Wind Ensemble rehearsal on March 29.

Boring is the first UNL student to win the prestigious scholarship since 2004 and the first student in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts to ever win the award. He is the 13th UNL student to win the Truman Scholarship.

"It is a tremendous honor to be a recipient of the Truman Scholarship and to represent the University of Nebraska as a Truman scholar," Boring said. "Meeting the other finalists for the Truman was a great experience, and all of them were extremely talented candidates, so it is truly a privilege to be selected as a scholarship winner."

Truman Scholarship candidates must be in the upper quarter of their junior class and be nominated by their university's Truman Faculty Representative. Laura Da-

muth, UNL Director of Undergraduate Research, worked with Boring on his Truman Scholarship application.

The Truman Foundation looks for candidates who have extensive records of public and community service, are committed to careers in government or elsewhere in public service and have outstanding leadership potential and communication skills. The Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation honors the memory of our 33rd U.S. President, who was dedicated to education and public service.

"Matthew is one of the most disciplined students I've ever had," said his trumpet professor, UNL Associate Professor Darryl White. "It doesn't surprise me that he would win the Truman Scholarship. I'm very proud of him."

Richmond said Boring was an excellent

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

candidate for the award.

“I couldn’t be more pleased for and proud of Matt Boring on the occasion of learning that he has been named a Truman Scholar. Matt is a superb musician, an outstanding academic and a fully engaged citizen of the UNL School of Music,” he said. “Matt’s musical activities have taken him across the United States as a performer, teacher and consultant. Such accomplishments are truly rare in one so young, and I am simply delighted that the Truman Foundation recognized in Matt the exceptional qualities he possesses in such abundance.”

Boring, a 2007 graduate of Lincoln High School, is also the recipient of a Regents Scholarship at UNL and is a member of the University of Nebraska Honors Program. He serves as a rank leader in the Cornhusker Marching Band, principal trumpet for the University of Nebraska Wind Ensemble, assistant lead trumpet for the University of Nebraska Jazz Ensemble I and lead trumpet for the Big Red Express Pep Band. He also performs with the Scarlet Brass Quintet.

Boring is also the recipient of a UCARE (Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences) grant. He serves as a member of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Student Advisory Board and is the College’s Association of Students of the University (ASUN) Senator. He was a featured presenter at the National Service-Learning Conference on the topic of “Creating Cross-Sector Partnerships for Large-Scale Success” as a sophomore. He is also the President of Alpha Class of Phi Mu Alpha, a national music fraternity.

He is in his 11th year of playing trumpet, which he started in fifth grade.

“I got started in music at a young age, singing with my mother at home and on family outings,” he said. “I gained a love for the trumpet almost immediately after I started playing it, and haven’t put it down since.”

He is looking at graduate schools that offer dual MBA/MA degrees in arts administration and hopes to be involved in arts management as a career.

“The arts have made a significant impact on my life, beginning with an excellent music and theatre education that I received



Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communications

Matthew Boring (second from left) with Associate Dean Christin Mamiya, UNL Director of Undergraduate Research Laura Damuth and School of Music Director John Richmond at the College Honors Day Dinner on April 24.

in the Lincoln Public Schools. Throughout my life, I have noticed performing arts facilities throughout the country that enrich the communities they are in by being centers for cultural vibrancy and enriching the lives of the community members they serve,” he said.

In 2006, he had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., as part of a month-long fellowship in collaboration with the National Symphony Orchestra, which influenced his future goals.

“In addition to the musical training I received, it was enlightening to see the business and management side that fueled the diverse programming the Kennedy Center offers and the impact it is able to make on an extremely diverse audience through that programming,” Boring said. “I hope to design programming that engages students at an early age and develop their ability to creatively express themselves as well as ensure our national identity in the arts is continued.”

He credits UNL for helping him work toward his goals.

“My education at UNL has prepared me for my future goals by providing an education that is challenging, well rounded and timely with the events going on in our world,” Boring said. “The music education that I receive at UNL is truly first rate and prepared me for success in applying for the Truman Scholarship and for my future academic and career aspirations.”

Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Endowed Dean Giacomo Oliva is pleased with Boring’s selection as a Truman Scholar.

“We are all exceedingly proud that Matthew has been named a Truman Scholarship Award winner,” Oliva said. “What a most fitting tribute to this young man for his academic accomplishments and his generous commitment to public service. This is indeed a special honor for Matt, as well as for the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, UNL, and the state of Nebraska.” ■

Music student receives Boren Scholarship to study in Jordan

Zach Smith, a junior music and political science major from East Troy, Wis., is one of two University of Nebraska–Lincoln recipients of a prestigious Boren Scholarship.

He traveled to Amman, Jordan, this summer and fall to study the Arabic language and international relations in a program run by the Council on International Educational Exchange.

Boren Scholarships are funded by the National Security Education Program, which focuses on geographic areas, languages and fields of study deemed critical to U.S. national security, including Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Eurasia, Latin America and the Middle East. The scholarships provide up to \$10,000 for a semester-long study abroad program and up to \$20,000 for a year-long study abroad program.

“I was thrilled to hear that Zach won the Boren Scholarship,” said Hixson-Lied Professor and Director of Opera William Shomos. “He is one of the brightest, most independent-minded thinkers that I have had the privilege to work with over the years. I see this as an amazing opportunity for him to further round out his education in a way that is going to be so vital in serving his career goals.”

Stephanie Booth, an international studies major, is UNL’s other Boren scholarship recipient this year.

“It’s a dream come true,” said Smith, who received a \$20,000 scholarship. “This is exactly what I want to do.”

Smith will study Arabic this summer and will study both Arabic and political science in the Fall. He also hopes to continue studying music while in Jordan.

“Jordan is an optimal study-abroad environment; it is in the archeological and political heart of the Middle East, close to the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the classes offered are superb and exactly suited to my major,” Smith said.

At UNL, he has worked with political science professor Michael Wagner in the Undergraduate Creative Activities and Research Experiences program. Their research



Photo courtesy of Zach Smith

Zach Smith stands at the podium in the Roman Amphitheater in Amman, Jordan, in June.

involves conducting focus groups on Christianity and political behavior.

“I want to do the same thing in Jordan,” Smith said. “I want to conduct focus groups on students. How does Islam affect their voting behavior and their thoughts on politics and the West. And then, I can return to UNL and put it in a comparative study.”

Smith said he believes his study abroad will position him well to pursue his career goals of working in the foreign service or intelligence community.

The Boren Scholarship requires him to work for the government for a year after he graduates.

“When I graduate, I want to get a master’s degree in international affairs and preferably another one in international development. We’ll see how it goes,” Smith said. “Then the Boren will require me to work in government. I want to work in the foreign service in the diplomatic corps. After spending many years there, I would really like to be an Ambassador, preferably somewhere in the Middle East. I’m involved in politics now. It’s a dream of mine to do that. I hope that I would get the opportunity to pursue that.”

He came to UNL as a music education major.

“I decided in my first semester that I did

not want to conduct a choir for the rest of my life, although I admire the people who do. That wasn’t going to be my profession.”

He took a political science course. He declared a political sciences minor and changed degrees from music education to a Bachelor of Arts in music.

“I took an international relations course my second semester and realized just how interested I was in this,” he said. “I started writing position papers. Then I decided I want to study this.”

Now, he is a dual major in music and political science.

“I write for the Daily Nebraskan. I analyze policy. I read probably 10 political blogs a day plus news sites,” Smith said. “It’s what I live and breathe. I like policy. I like getting down to the details and seeing what works and what doesn’t work. And that works well with foreign service as well.”

Shomos said Smith deserves this success.

“Zach is an incredibly hard worker,” he said. “He is successfully double majoring; he writes a weekly editorial for the Daily Nebraskan; he is very active in political organizing. Everything he does, he does with passion and boundless energy.”

Smith is keeping a blog of his study and travel in Jordan. You can view it at <http://anamericaninamman.wordpress.com> ■

SOM grad wins Folsom Prize for Best Dissertation

BY KATHE ANDERSEN

Kurt Knecht, who received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in music composition in August 2009, is the recipient of the 2009 Folsom Distinguished Dissertation Award by the Office of Graduate Studies for his musical composition, “Missa Prolationem,” for soloists, chorus (soprano/alto/tenor/bass), organ and string quartet. The piece premiered in April 2009 by the UNL Chamber Singers with Assistant Professor Therees Hibbard conducting, Knecht on the organ and featuring the Chiara String Quartet.

Knecht is the first School of Music student to receive the award and received a \$1,000 honorarium. The awards are made possible by a gift from the family of Lowe R. and Mavis M. Folsom to the University of Nebraska Foundation.

“I’m honored to receive the prize,” Knecht said. “Given the current climate of our culture, there is a fantastic emphasis placed on work that can be assessed monetarily or practically. I would assume that all of the dissertations that made it to the final review process represented excellent research. It makes me very happy that I went to a University that still values someone doing creative work and trying to make a little room for beauty in the world.”

School of Music Director John W. Richmond said the School is proud to have Knecht be their first Folsom Award winner.

“We were delighted to learn that Kurt received the Folsom Award,” Richmond said. “Knecht is a gifted composer, organist, collaborative pianist and conductor. It has been a joy and privilege to have him here for the last 3 years.”

Knecht described “Missa Prolationem” as a “manifesto for me,” in the program notes.

“Many people are writing beautiful choral music right now. I love it very much, but I have a growing concern about the overwhelming vertical nature of the vast majority of the writing,” he wrote. “I wanted to write a large-scale work that would remind people of the beauty of counterpoint. It is

an art that, I think, is fading too much in our current musical culture. I don’t want choirs to forget the great rewards that come from preparing contrapuntal works.”

Counterpoint in music involves the writing of musical lines that sound very different and move independently from each other, but sound harmonious when played simultaneously.

Hibbard said the experience of premiering Knecht’s piece was memorable for everyone.

“Kurt is one of the most gifted, yet down-to-earth musicians I have had the

for all playing, singing, and listening,” Hibbard said.

Knecht is a composer, organist and conductor, who lives in Lincoln. His compositions have been described as “funky” and “joyous” in the Washington Post, and the American Record Guide has called him a “fresh voice.”

His compositions have become a staple of the modern choral festival literature having been performed on All State and ACDA concerts in more than 15 states. Recent performances of his compositions include international performances at festivals and concerts in Germany, the Netherlands, Singapore, Canada, Mexico, and a performance at the Kennedy Center by the Grammy Award winning Washington Chorale. He is regularly commissioned and publishes with Walton Music.

He has received the ASCAP Plus award (2008 and 2009) from the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. As an eclectic performer, Kurt has been a featured soloist with groups from Smokey Robinson to The Florida Orchestra.

He received the Bachelor of Music from the University of Tampa with concentrations in Piano Performance and Theory, and the Master of Music in Composition from Southern Methodist University.

Knecht remains in Lincoln, where he is the music director at St. Mark’s on the Campus Episcopal Church in Lincoln. He conducts the choir and plays the organ. He has also developed a new contemplative service for students with Jonah Sirota from the Chiara String Quartet at St. Mark’s.

His oldest son is a senior at Lincoln Southeast, who plans to attend UNL next fall as a music major. His youngest son is also at Southeast. What happens next year “depends on the job market,” Knecht said.

Richmond expects he will contribute to our musical culture.

“I have every confidence that his brightest and most important contributions lay ahead and in the not-too-distant future,” he said. “We all look forward to the creative contributions he will major to our musical culture.” ■



Kurt Knecht

pleasure to work with during my time here at UNL,” she said. “His beautiful and challenging ‘Missa Prolationem’ was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bring a piece of music to life for its very first hearing. And to have the composer with us in each rehearsal (he was our rehearsal pianist for three years) guiding our interpretation—it was amazing to be a part of it all.”

Hibbard said each of them—UNL Chamber Singers, the Chiara String Quartet and Knecht—influenced each other.

“Together we reached levels of performance we could not have accomplished individually. It was a true synthesis of professionals influencing students, influencing the music, creating something wonderful

Community arts class promotes service learning

BY JESSICA SIMPSON

The guidelines are simple. Students have three weeks to complete the remodel: one week to design the room and two weeks to build. The budget is \$1,000, and the room must be functional and emotionally appealing. The best design will be selected.

This sounds like a pilot for the latest show on Home and Garden Television, but it's actually the assignment Sandra Williams gave her freshman speculative drawing class in fall 2009.

In an effort to combine the elements of service learning and hands-on application, Williams, an associate professor of art, transformed her idea into a reality through a Hixson-Lied community outreach grant.

"Several years ago, I mentioned to my chair that one of my little fantasy classes was to take a group of UNL students into more at-risk areas in the community and do big art projects," Williams said. "The chair and the dean got together, and before I knew it, the community arts class came to fruition. I couldn't do it without the grant."

The first room students redesigned was the Teaching and Learning with Children, or TLC, room at Cedars. Designated for pregnant teens and teen moms, the room was institutional and unappealing, Williams said.

Peg Sneller-Hamilton, a service area manager with Cedars, was invited to the student-team presentations to help choose the room's design. She said she was impressed with the thought and work that went into the students' designs, which looked very professional.

Sneller-Hamilton said, "We identified the concepts, colors and designs that we admired, and they combined them to redo the room. The result was dramatic and significant. It brought life and style to the room, made the space work more efficiently for residents and staff, and the girls loved it."

Williams' curriculum focused on not only teaching her students art and design



Associate Professor Sandra Williams (center) discusses the students' designs with Cedars representatives (left to right) Emily Wessel, Liz Switzer and Nichole Hurst, and Russell Meyer.

concepts but also demonstrating how design can be emotionally and psychologically appealing.

"I was very fascinated with this idea of art and catharsis," Williams said.

Williams also took a risk by introducing this new class to freshmen. She said millennial students are digital natives and drawn to service learning projects.

"Why not have a service experience the freshman year?" she asked.

Williams was a little worried that 18-year-old students wouldn't be up to the challenge, but after pondering the kind of talent she had seen in her past freshman classes, she said she knew it would work.

"I just think it's so important for freshman coming into school to have an initial experience with a professor so that they have a home to come to," Williams said. "To me, the foundations are the most important part of a young person's education, because it's what everything else is built upon."

Williams looked for a way to resolve the issue of combining service learning with speculative drawing. She united the elements of emotional and psychological color and communicating design visions.

Perspective drawing, elevation and plan use, room design and color theory melded to create Williams' vision for the class.

Williams connected with Cedars through a personal friend and learned about the TLC room. The project became known as "Shelter from the Storm."

Williams said she was originally nervous about undertaking such a huge project, so she enlisted the help of a friend and former student, Russell Meyer.

"I called my good friend Russell, who 10 years ago was my student in visual literacy," Williams said. "We've been staying in contact, and we have a lot of the same philosophies in terms of community and society."

When Meyer enrolled in Williams' class, he had already established himself as a master carpenter and was remodeling a Victorian house, Williams said. Meyer now runs his own company, Urban Workshop and Design, in Lincoln.

Now that Williams had the assistance she needed, the final component was out of her control: a motivated group of students.

"You don't know until they walk in the door," Williams said. "You've got to have a class where you have about 80 percent of

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the people on board. Most of them have to be gung-ho and really enthusiastic.”

Even though the project was time-consuming and involved, it was very successful and the students responded phenomenally, Williams said.

In her successive service-learning classes, Williams’ students were just as responsive. Williams’ color theory class and community arts class, both in spring 2010, worked on service projects, as well. The color theory class headed the Cedars Northbridge project, and the community arts class worked on a street mural near Randolph Elementary School in Lincoln.

Hands-on, real-world application in an art class empowers students, Williams said. Sometimes it’s difficult for art majors to know what their skills entail, she said.

“They were able to have a physical manifestation of what their skills were, and they were able to have an impact on the community,” Williams said. “They became more aware of the community, rather than having a compartmentalized little life where they’re just walking around on campus.”

Williams and Meyer also learned from the projects. Williams said she enjoys being challenged in her teaching and moving outside of the norm.

Meyer said, “For me personally, the benefits are to be able to continue to use my skills to teach students about what good design is and offer my knowledge and expertise. Students are always asking me to learn things, too, so I am learning as much as they are about new materials and that type of thing.”

“As an instructor you always want to change and grow and improve your curriculum,” Williams said. “You want to keep it exciting for yourself as well and meld research and different philosophies into your teaching.”

In the Cedars TLC room, the class transformed the space by removing the two-way mirror and replacing it with drywall, Williams explained. They also built an entertainment center, a book shelf and storage so everything could be neatly contained, she said.

Williams said, “It’s amazing what you can do together when you put your mind to it. It fosters a sense of community between

the students. They really bond together as a class after that.”

The Cedars Northbridge multipurpose room was just as rewarding for Williams and Meyer. Their challenge was to make a cramped space look larger, more comfortable and more domestic, Williams said. The room served as a staff room, tornado shelter and interview room, and it was so full of stuff, no one could get into it, she said.



Photo courtesy of Sandra Williams
The finished room at Cedars Northbridge.

Sneller-Hamilton said the transformation of the Northbridge room was meaningful to the staff and teachers who use it.

“It made the teachers’ space more of a sanctuary,” Sneller-Hamilton said, “They knew it was done especially for them, which meant a lot, as they did not have office space in which to work.”

Williams said she was surprised at the wealth of knowledge and drive her students had in completing the Northbridge project. She visited the art room one evening at 8 p.m. and found her students working to finish putting polyurethane on a piece of furniture.

“It bonded them together,” she said.

Marisa Esch, an art education major, was a freshman in the color theory class that worked on the Northbridge project.

“Students interested in art and design further understood how their talents could be used to make a difference in the community and to change the lives of others for the better,” Esch said.

Williams’ community arts class in spring 2010 completed a service-learning project at Randolph Elementary school. Williams was contacted by a resident of the neighborhood and art professor’s wife. The resident, Sarah Holz, wanted to know if Williams’ class could paint a street mural near the school to help beautify the area and slow down traffic.

Williams said, “I thought this was such an interesting function of art and that it would be really interesting to see this.”

Holz told Williams about some street murals in Oregon that actually slow down traffic and helps decrease crime in an area. When Holz noticed people speeding down 37th Street near the school, she wanted to take action.

Williams said, “My class broke into teams and came up with designs. It couldn’t be directional. There couldn’t be writing on it. They presented the mural and [Randolph staff] agreed on it.”

The design combined sketches from hundreds of Randolph students, so in the end, it was a composite of many different sketches from many different students, Williams said.

Williams said the effects of service-learning projects on the community are rewarding, and she would like to do some again if she can find help. She said it is kind of a “thank-you” to the community.

Mary Claire Rice, a student in Williams’ speculative drawing class, said she enjoyed the TLC project.

“Being able to see the reactions from the girls and the staff members was inspiring,” Rice said. “Creating a little bit of harmony in someone’s life can never be a bad thing.”

Williams is sold on the service learning idea.

“There are a lot that students of all descriptions—UNL students and elementary, middle school, high school students—can learn by working together,” she said. “They learn communication skills, and the younger children have enhanced self-esteem.” ■

'Tonight Show' insiders featured in first Carson Lectureship

BY KATHE ANDERSEN

Four people with ties to "The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson" shared unique, behind-the-scenes insight about some of Carson's most legendary clips when they presented the first Johnny Carson Lectureship on Oct. 16.

Three former "Tonight Show" writers, Anthony DeSena, Andrew Nicholls and Darrell Vickers, joined Jeff Sotzing, the president of Carson Entertainment Group and nephew of Johnny Carson, as they shared clips and stories about the legendary Carson and his Tonight Show. Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film Director Paul Steger moderated the presentation.

The four also participated in undergraduate and graduate classes that day. They met with graduate acting and directing students in the morning and undergraduate intermediate acting students in the afternoon, prior to the lecture.

The biennial Carson Lecture Series was created to celebrate the contributions of entertainment icon and UNL alumnus Johnny Carson.

"By bringing those who knew or were influenced by Johnny to campus, the community can continue to celebrate Johnny's contributions to the entertainment industry," Steger said. "The series is also a vehicle for students, faculty and the general public to gain a deeper understanding of the inner workings of The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson."

Sotzing said events like the Carson Lecture help keep Johnny's name alive.

"This is where Johnny got his inspiration. This was obviously a place that was very special to him because he made this tremendous donation and always felt very much connected to Nebraska," he said. "So whatever we can do to keep his name alive is a good thing."

Sotzing grew up in Philadelphia, Pa., which was 90 minutes away by train from New York City, where his uncle, Dick Carson, had just become the director of the Tonight Show, and his uncle, Johnny Car-



Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communications
Jeff Sotzing, Anthony DeSena, Darrell Vickers and Andrew Nicholls answer questions during the Carson Lectureship in the Mary Riepma Ross Media Arts Center.

son, became the host in 1962.

"I sat in the control room watching Johnny and Dick work with some of the greatest talent in America," Sotzing said.

After three years in the armed forces, he moved to California to pursue a short-lived career as a musician. He then went back to school and took a course in videotape editing at Pasadena City College.

"Considered ground-breaking at the time, the course was a great training aid for early 2-inch video editors," he said.

A summer job at the Tonight Show in 1978 turned into filling for the show's commercial production assistant.

"The producer that I worked for was responsible for making all the live commercials done during the show," he said. "This was exciting as things always went wrong. The sight of Johnny running backstage to eat the Alpo that the Alpo dog wouldn't eat was hysterical."

His editing background led to becoming the Associate Producer of the Anniversary Show specials and then other projects at Carson Productions.

He now owns the company that controls the rights to The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson.

"Needless to say, Uncle John has been a big part of my life," he said.

Nicholls and Vickers, both British-born, met in junior high school and have

been writing comedy together for print, stage, radio, TV, and film since 1976. They moved from Canada to Los Angeles in 1983, and from 1986 to 1992 were writers (from 1988, head writers) of the Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson, for which they received four Emmy nominations.

DeSena has written Funniest Commercials of the Year and World's Funniest Commercials each of the last three years. Previously, he was a staff writer on The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson, Late Night with David Letterman and Saturday Night Live.

His freelance credits include Everybody Loves Raymond, Late Night with Conan O'Brien, The American Music Awards, The Writers Guild Awards and Super Bowls' Greatest Commercials. He served as head writer on Later with Greg Kinnear, Sesame Street, for which he won an Emmy Award, and for the past 10 years, The Creative Arts Emmy Awards.

Writing for The Tonight Show, Nicholls said, was "a specialized, unusual and demanding job." It was also "terrifying."

"Nobody wanted to disappoint Johnny," he said. "It's 17 years later, and I still have nightmares every night about needing to hand in a monologue or a sketch in half an hour and not having any ideas. Or the typewriter's broken, or there's no paper."

Sotzing said Johnny's varied interests enhanced his show.

"Johnny was interesting because he was interested," he said. "If there was someone on the show who had a book, he read the book. If someone was plugging a movie, he saw the movie. He had lots and lots of interests. He could go off on all sorts of tangents. That showed when he talked to people like Carl Sagan. He could make something that was very clinical very interesting."

DeSena said Carson was very audience-conscious.

"He always knew what the audience liked and was willing to do it," he said. "He was an old-fashioned show man in that way. He just liked to go out there and make them laugh." ■



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Photo by Mike Edholm, School of Music

World-renowned Cellist Yo-Yo Ma (center) gave a masterclass to two School of Music chamber ensembles on March 22, following his March 21 performance at the Lied Center for Performing Arts. The first group, shown above, included (left to right) Lily Spader, piano; Kristi Jenkins, violin; Jessica Dussault, cello; and Lexi Woodard, viola. Also participating were Meredith Ramsay, violin; Tim Paek, cello; and Michael Glur-Zoucha, piano. "I worried for days before the masterclass," Dussault said. "But Yo-Yo Ma was so down-to-earth and approachable that he put the quartet immediately at ease." Dussault said his advice regarding generous allowance of time for expression within music will change her approach to music. "I have a difficult time breaking away from a rigid metrical beat unless approaching cadences or musical changes of some kind, but Yo-Yo Ma's enthusiasm for creating music from the notes with less regard for exact tempo than for flexibility has convinced me to reexamine the way that I approach a piece."

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