

HIXSON-LIED

COLLEGE OF FINE
AND PERFORMING ARTS

DANCE PROGRAM
**TAKES ITS
NEXT STEPS**



Also inside:
**College announces
new music building**

FALL 2021



Dean's Letter

As we begin the fall semester, we have returned to in-person instruction at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Last year had been a challenging year spent mostly apart during this global pandemic. We look forward to gathering together in person again to share performances, concerts, exhibitions and all the ways that the arts bring meaning to our communities. We missed our audiences last year and are eager to welcome you back to campus to enjoy the arts in person safely again.

In this issue of our Hixson-Lied College magazine, we introduce plans for our new music building for the Glenn Korff School of Music, scheduled to open in 2025. We are also highlighting the UNL Dance Program in the Glenn Korff School of Music. They recently moved into beautiful new facilities in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. We are so grateful to the support of our alumni and friends who understand the value of dance at Nebraska as that program grows and thrives.

We also have an update on the partnership between the Nebraska Repertory Theatre and the St. Louis Black Repertory Company, which will culminate in a special performance this season of *Dantrell, Who Kissed the Sea*. Finally, we feature a faculty profile of Marques L.A. Garrett, whose research helps elevate the work of black choral composers.

All of these good things would not be possible without your support. In September, I announced that I will be stepping down after nearly a decade as dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts on Jan. 3, 2022. I plan to return to my full-time faculty role in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film. It's been an honor and privilege to see the transformations in our academic programs. At 10 years, I feel assured that we are on track to achieve all that we set out to do. I am forever grateful to the faculty, staff, students, university leadership and our community of supporters for the opportunity they gave me to lead this special college. Thank you again for your support.



Chuck O'Connor
Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean
twitter: @charlesoconnor

Photo by Madeline Cass.

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AND PERFORMING ARTS

FALL 2021

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

Hixson-Lied Endowed Dean

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Cover photo: Thao T. Duong performs *my body is a system of memories* at Evening of Dance on April 28 at the Lied Center for Performing Arts. Photo by Eddy Aldana.

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College announces new music building

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts has received funding to begin design and construction of a new \$75 million music facility and \$15 million renovation of Kimball Recital Hall. These funds were approved by the Nebraska Legislature earlier this year.

“This is the culmination of years of hard work and discussions with our community, supporters and university, but our dream is now on the verge of reality, and we could not be more excited about the opportunities,” said Chuck O’Connor, endowed dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. “Now, our Glenn Korff School of Music will have a facility to match the stature of our faculty and programs. We are eager to visit with alumni and other interested

donors about the exciting plans we have for the new building and earn their support for this vital project.”

Toward that end, the University of Nebraska Foundation, the Hixson-Lied College, and the Glenn Korff School of Music are seeking \$15 million for additional facility expenses and to provide naming opportunities for music spaces to support music scholarships, professorships, student opportunities and special equipment.

Music has been a vital part of the

university since 1894, and the Glenn Korff School of Music has enjoyed exceptional growth and national prominence throughout its history.

“The time has come to replace our friend, the Westbrook Music Building, and renovate our beloved Kimball Hall,” said Sergio Ruiz, director of the

Glenn Korff School of Music. “These hallways have been filled with incredible music created by the talented students and faculty at UNL for more than 50 years. We are excited about this new chapter to create new and expanded facilities to meet the continued growth of the school and to keep

Conceptual image of the new music building, as seen from the northeast corner of the building, which will be located at 10th and Q streets. Renderings are courtesy of HGA. The design has not been finalized and is subject to change.



music and dance education thriving for years to come.”

The new building will replace Westbrook, which was built in the mid-1960s.

The proposed site for the music building and recital hall is the northeast corner of 10th and Q streets, where

it will stand as an iconic entrance to the southwest corner of UNL’s city campus and connect the Haymarket district in downtown Lincoln to the campus.

The project will accommodate rapid growth in enrollments in music and dance majors in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

If you are interested in learning more about the project, please contact Dean Chuck O’Connor at (402) 472-9339 or email coconnor@unl.edu, or Director Sergio Ruiz at (402) 472-5775 or e-mail sergio.ruiz@unl.edu. ■

Anticipated new spaces in the new facility will include:

- an elegant 300-seat recital hall
- rehearsal halls of various sizes to house bands and the opera program, as well as UNL’s percussion, jazz, orchestral, choir and chamber music ensembles
- a state-of-the-art digital recording facility
- instructional space, offices and practice rooms for faculty, staff and students
- fresh food options for music and other students in the arts sector of campus
- refurbished organ, stage and audience facilities in the Kimball Recital Hall

DANCE PROGRAM TAKES ITS NEXT STEPS



Left: UNL dancers perform "Phoenix, Nebraska," in Evening of Dance last spring.

This year's Evening of Dance performance took place on the majestic main stage of the Lied Center for Performing Arts. Among the performances on the program was *Phoenix, Nebraska*, choreographed by Associate Professor and Head of the Dance Division Susan Ourada and featuring six senior dance majors performing.

A phoenix rises, after all. And the six seniors on stage together for the last time had been through a lot together.

Thao Duong performs in Evening of Dance on April 28. Photo by Jordan Opp for the Nebraska Alumni Association.

"I just thought it was sort of a subtle and beautiful homage to the year," Ourada said. "They were the seniors performing, and for some of them, this will be their last chance to be in Evening of Dance. It was just really fun. It was a really hard year, but our students never lost their dedication to dance. You could see that at Evening of Dance. They danced beautifully."

The triumphant performance at the Lied Center capped off an eventful two years for the dance program, which resides in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

"The highest high was moving into the new building at the beginning of Fall 2019," Ourada said. "And then we thought the lowest level was the

2020. But then it got lower with the proposed budget cut of dance last fall. Thankfully we were spared, but that also made us realize the kind of support that we have, from alumni, from across campus and from across the country. People really do think of dance as being part of the fabric of the university. Now, we're just looking forward to next year, to having our guest artists return, to having live performances on First Fridays."

Assistant Professor of Practice in Dance Hye-Won Hwang said Nebraska is a great place to study dance.

"We offer dance theory and practice classes," Hwang said. "It's a great place for students who are eager to learn about dance, not just as something to enjoy for fun, but as really a place for them to dance and think about dance as an academic discipline and also as a life experience and culture project. This is a place for everybody. They don't have to have a strong, technical background if they have potential. We're looking for students that have the passion and are open-minded to learn something new."

The dance program has nearly 30 majors and more than 20 minors.

"We're a small, intimate program in a giant university," Ourada said. "And the dance minors are really a vibrant part of our program because they bring in the rest of the university to us and us to them."

The UNL dance program offers a Bachelor of Arts degree—the only undergraduate dance degree offered in the state of Nebraska. Modern dance and ballet are the primary techniques offered, but elective classes are offered in other areas, including hip-hop, yoga, Tai Chi and other styles of dance.

“Our baseline has been modern with ballet also required,” Ourada said. “We are broadening our offerings and inviting students from across the campus to come and join us.”

Hwang is eager to expand the offerings in dance.

“I’m super happy about that because of my cultural background, but also my academic background,” she said. “I studied at the University of California Riverside, and my program was critical dance studies, and that tells a lot. I’ve been looking for some opportunities for me to provide more than just Eurocentric dance forms or even theory. I’m super excited we’re branching out to explore more than just modern and ballet, which are foundations. But how about we explore something else.”

They are in the process of redesigning the curriculum for the Bachelor of Arts degree in dance to make it more open for students to study other areas.

“Anybody can take dance as a life experience,” Hwang said. “So a student majoring in women’s studies, for example, can maybe make connections between dance and gender. I think this is a really

great place for them to talk about that.”

An audition is required for acceptance into the program.

“Our mantra has been potential, not perfection,” Ourada said of recruiting for the program. “I think that’s a perfect mantra for a student entering a dance program from high school. It can be difficult for a student to transfer from dance as recreation to dance as an academic pursuit.”

She said they look for students who want to do a variety of things and not just dance professionally.

“A dance degree teaches them so many things about cooperation and independence and critical thinking, and all the kind of things that make you a great employee or a great student,” Ourada said.

Dance alumni are doing a variety of things, from dancing professionally all over the country to becoming teachers, studio owners, doctors and even ministers.

“They do amazing things,” Ourada said.

Bottom left and top right: Senior dance majors performed in “Phoenix, Nebraska” at Evening of Dance on April 28.



We’re a small, intimate program in a giant university,”

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAM

Dance has a long history at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln going back to the 1920s when it was offered as part of physical education training. Following the appointment of Mabel Lee (1924–1952) as director of physical education for women, a teacher specializing in dance joined the staff. Folk dance and a type of interpretive dance were then added to the sports and gymnastics classes already offered. As the program grew, new courses were added, including rhythm fundamentals, clog, square and social dance.

Dudley Ashton (1952–1972), a dance enthusiast, sponsored and encouraged the growth of dance. In the late 1960’s, Ashton implemented the dance major, first through the College of Arts and Sciences and then through what was then called Teachers College. During the explosion of dance as an art form, a new and complete dance major program was established. The program enlarged its offerings to include modern, ballet, jazz, tap, ethnic, folk, social and square dance.

In 1983 Dance joined the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, which became part of the new College of Fine and Performing Arts in 1993. In 1999, dance moved to its current home in the Glenn Korff School of Music, becoming the dance division. In 2012, the program received accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Dance.



NEW FACILITIES

From 1968 to 2019, the dance facilities were located in the Women’s Physical Education Building, which was re-named Mabel Lee Hall in 1977. In 2019, the UNL Dance Program moved to brand new facilities in the newly opened Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

“It’s so great,” Ourada said. “Number one, we’re downtown, and we have visibility. People walk into the building, and they see us, or they hear us. It’s just so welcoming.”

“We feel like we’re so hip,” Hwang said. “Moving into a new building, which is very innovative and also close to

The new dance studio in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts is equipped with “sprung” floors that protect dancers against impact that could lead to injury.



downtown. It gives a different vibe. When we were at Mabel Lee, we were kind of isolated in a way. I feel like we are part of our arts family.”

Made possible by a \$1.3 million investment from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, along with support from the Glenn Korff Endowment and



Students in Lynne Nevin's ballet class in the first-floor studio of the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.

Hixson-Lied Endowment, the new dance facilities now include 10,000 square feet of dance spaces that include two dance studios, showers and changing rooms, a laundry room, offices, and areas to eat and study.

The two dance studios are equipped with "sprung" floors that protect dancers against impact that could lead to injury. The additional studio also enables the program to offer more classes.

"We have beautiful, smart TVs in all the classrooms and the studios, including the faculty one, so we can be streaming. We can let the students see themselves," Ourada said. "Even

the first semester, when we didn't have to change spaces, we had students upstairs with the instructor and students downstairs taking class simultaneously. That would not have been possible in Mabel Lee."

Being in the same building with the Emerging Media Arts program has also opened up possibilities for further collaboration.

"We do a lot in the big lobby. If I'm working on choreography projects with the students in class, we separate out, and you'll see them in the lobby, in the hallway, just everywhere. In our first fall, we did a choreography project that was kind of an homage to the space. Everybody took a spot and did some choreography there. One of the EMA students mashed it together. That was our very first across-the-students collaboration."

Dance has also been able to host First Friday performances in the new space.

"Our first one was just packed," Ourada said. "And the one we did with Dave Hall and the Percussion Studio was also packed. I'm sure they will be again after the pandemic ends. I think people are eager, even more so now than ever, to see live performance."

Hwang enjoys being able to host First Friday events.

"I personally adore First Friday events," she said. "First Friday gives us opportunities to show work in progress, so it doesn't have to always be polished works. Students have less pressure to show something that they're working on."

Ourada said these First Friday events are important to the dance program.

"It allows the community to come and see our space and come into our space and see what I would refer to as more downtown dance," she said.

Ourada said they plan to continue streaming their First Friday performances on Instagram and Facebook Live even when the pandemic ends.



UNL Dance students participate in a masterclass with Rennie Harris Puremovement in January 2019. Photo by Justin Mohling.

GUEST ARTISTS

A vital part of the UNL Dance Program is its robust guest artist and masterclass programs. The program tries to bring in at least two or three guest artists of its own for 10-day residencies each year, in addition to their partnership with the Lied Center for Performing Arts to offer masterclasses with the dance companies that visit the Lied Center each year.

"It's given our students contact with people in other places," Ourada said. "And it just gives them a different vision of things."

Previous residencies have included Jennifer Nugent, Lauren Simpson, Paul Besaw, Melissa Templeton and Jeff Curtis, among others. Lied Center residencies have included Troika Ranch, Pilobolus, STREB, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, among others. Other Lied Center masterclasses have included Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theater, Hubbard Street Dance, Martha Graham Dance Company, and many more of the biggest names in dance. A number of Broadway touring productions have also held masterclasses with dance students, including cast members from *South Pacific*, *In the Heights*, *Chicago*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and more.



Susan Ourada teaches Modern Dance I class in front of Love Library on Sept. 17, 2020. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.



Susan Ourada

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF DANCE

Currently teaching: Dance Composition, Dance Kinesiology and Injury Prevention, Dance Pedagogy and Modern Dance.

Ourada is Associate Professor and Head of the UNL Dance Program. After earning her M.F.A. from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, Ourada taught at several colleges in New England before coming to Nebraska in 2004.

Ourada is the founder of sloDance, an itinerant band of performers, with whom making and presenting work is sheer joy.

WHY DO YOU DANCE?

I first began my study of dance at a very strict, but loving, ballet studio in New York City under the tutelage of former Ballet Russe principal dancers. I loved the structure and the rigor of ballet, always trying to do more: more turns, higher jumps, faster feet. I discovered Modern Dance in college. My eyes were opened to new and exciting facets of creativity and invention. It was true love! As my career has progressed, my passions in dance slowly shifted from seeking physical virtuosity to seeking to create dances that honor the capabilities of the people performing.

MEET THE FACULTY

Guest artists help students broaden their horizons. “We want them to see that a lot of these people did not grow up in New York, but they moved to New York and have very happy lives there,” Ourada said. “We want them to see that success does not necessarily mean being in Mark Morris or the American Ballet Theater, but it can be living your life in New York or Los Angeles or wherever you want to be, dancing when you can.”

Cody Hartshorn, a senior in the program who graduated in May, said guest artists were important experiences for students.

“I think it’s really important for me because I get to see these people in action, and I get to see how they dance and apply it to my own dancing, which is really cool,” he said. “Taking a class from a professional, someone that’s going where I want to be, is really important to me because it’s somebody I can look up to.”



E.N. Thompson Forum with Misty Copeland from the American Ballet Theatre on Feb. 13, 2018. Photo by Greg Nathan, University Communication.

COLLABORATION

The Dance Program is committed to interdisciplinary collaborations.

“It’s really exciting to do collaborations with other people outside the arts because, you know, everybody is creative,” Ourada said. “It’s really wonderful to mesh people who are considered to be creatives with people who do not consider themselves to be creative and see the sort of commonalities in our processes or in the way that we look at things. I’m hoping for more and more of that.”

Last year dance collaborated with UNL Assistant Professor Sandra Starkey and her students in the

“It’s really wonderful to mesh people who are considered to be creatives with...”



The costumes for “Phoenix, Nebraska” were designed by Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design students.

Department of Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design to create costumes for the performance of *Phoenix, Nebraska* at Evening of Dance.

“Her students came to rehearsal and dressed the dancers,” Ourada said. “The fabrics that were used were no waste. The students picked out their own that they wanted to wear, and alterations were made so they could be danced in.”

Students in Starkey’s apparel design course end the semester with an improvisational draping project.

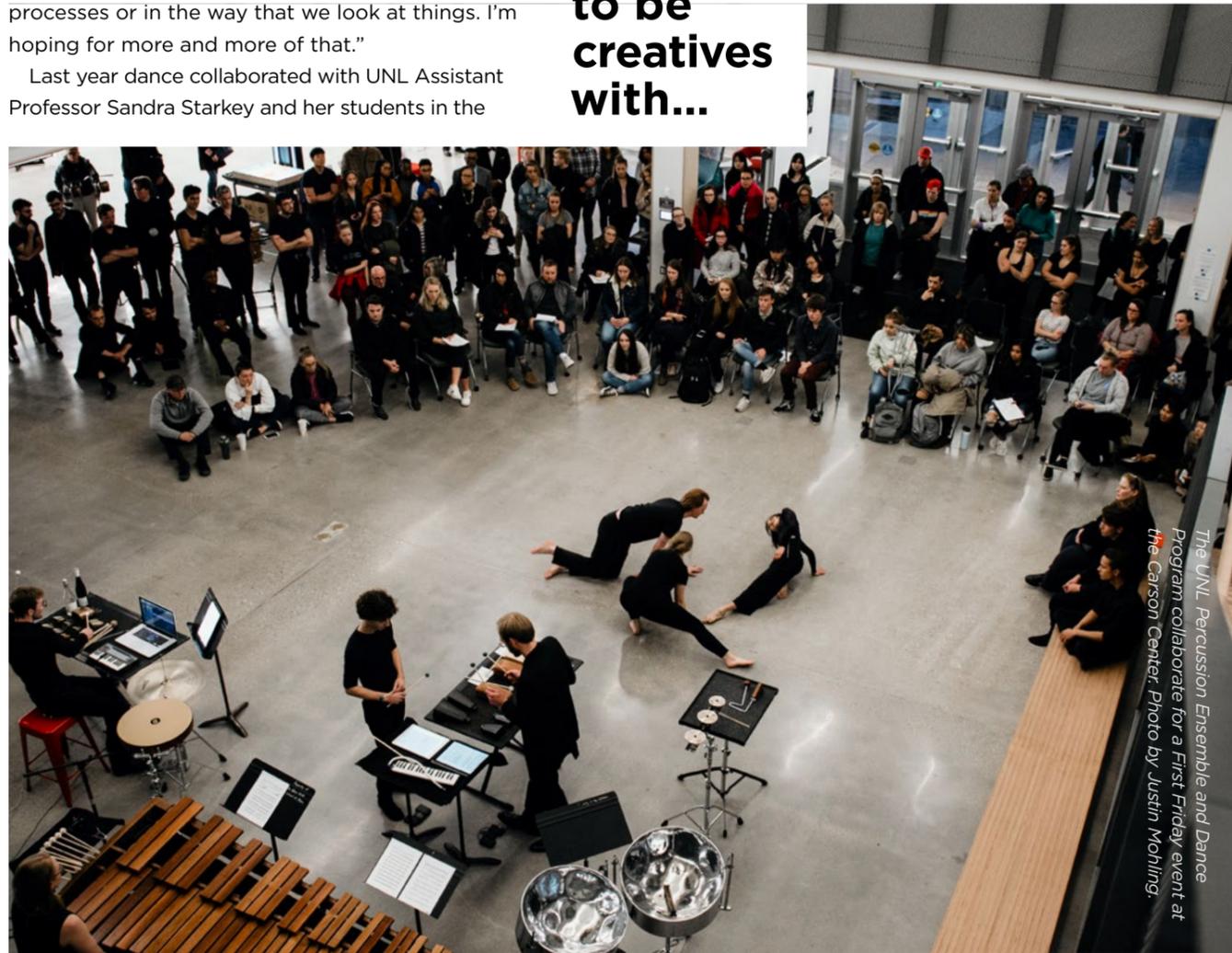
“I always felt like there could be some kind of collaboration,” Starkey said. “For this assignment, they approach the project

with no preconceived ideas about their design, which is kind of contrary to how we normally approach it. But for this project, they take the fabric and are developing right on the dress form maker in 3D.”

The six students in the dance piece had about 12 garments to pick from.

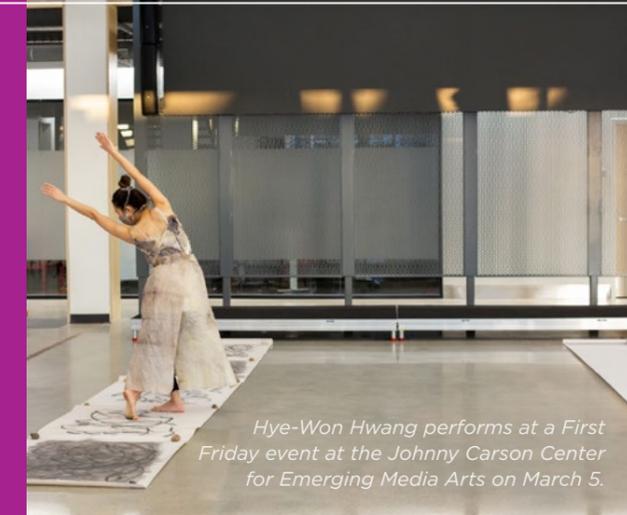
“The fabrics were somewhat similar,” Starkey said. “But all of the designs were unique.”

Starkey said it was a good experience to collaborate with the dance program on this project.



The UNL Percussion Ensemble and Dance Program collaborate for a First Friday event at the Carson Center. Photo by Justin Mohling.

...people who do not consider themselves to be creative and see the sort of commonalities in our processes or in the way that we look at things.”



Hye-Won Hwang performs at a First Friday event at the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts on March 5.



Hye-Won Hwang

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF PRACTICE IN DANCE

Currently teaching: Intermediate and Advanced Modern Dance; Introduction to Dance History; Dance, Culture and Politics.

Hwang is an Assistant Professor of Practice in Dance at Nebraska. She earned her Ph.D. in critical dance studies from the University of California, Riverside. Hwang holds her M.A.s in dance studies from Laban Center in London and in dance education from New York University.

WHY DO YOU DANCE?

I love to dance because it motivates me to make meaning through embodied experience and helps me be in the present moment. I love to dance because it gives me the opportunity to express my feelings, emotions and creativity. I love to dance because it stimulates me to investigate my own body as a site of inquiry to understand the self and my surroundings. I love to dance because it offers me a language to communicate with people from different backgrounds without using words.

MEET THE FACULTY

"It's inspirational. I'm really passionate about what I do, and they're passionate about what they do," Starkey said. "And so just to be able to create something bigger than just our individual departments was great. They're just really open to new and interesting and innovative ideas, as are we. It just opens up students' eyes about what's even possible."

In 2018–2019, Hwang collaborated with Professor of Cello Karen Becker on a project to promote peace and respect in the Lincoln community among people of diverse backgrounds. "Rhythm of Peace—Movement for Change" premiered in October 2018 at Sheldon Museum of Art.

Hwang and Becker were joined by Taiji practitioner Roz Hussin, visual artist Geraldine Dobos and UNL cello and dance students for the performance.

In the summer of 2019, Becker and Hwang traveled with a piano student and two dance students to perform it in South Korea, thanks to the support of a Glenn Korff School of Music Student Interdisciplinary Creative Activity Grant.

"We wanted to continue to do this kind of interdisciplinary collaboration, while including our dance and music students in a professional performing arts concert," Hwang said. "Working with people from different disciplines is all exciting and meaningful to learn

These collaborations show that there are few limits in dance.

the unique approach that each person can bring to our collaborative creation."

Earlier, Ourada collaborated with UNL Professor of Entomology Eileen Hebets and composer Garrett Hope to create the piece *Schizocosa*. The piece premiered at the Kansas Dance Festival in 2010 and was later performed as part of Hebets' "Eight-Legged Encounters" event and exhibition at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in 2014, at a recent TEDx event and elsewhere.

These collaborations show that there are few limits in dance.

"Students don't have to feel like they're only successful if they're dancing on a stage," Ourada said. "The act of creating or presenting work in unusual places for maybe nonstandard audiences is actually an incredibly successful act in itself."

UNL dancers perform at Sheldon Museum of Art. Courtesy photo.

THE FUTURE

The future remains bright for the UNL dance program. The faculty and students were eager to return to in-person instruction this fall as the pandemic ends and resume their First Friday performances.

Ourada is looking ahead to what else might happen for dance in the future.

"I think one of our dreams with having the downtown studio space is possibly being able to offer some sort of community dance classes," she said.

Ourada is excited about the future of the dance program.

"As we expand what we offer and make changes to our curriculum to provide more elective opportunities for our students, then our degree really embraces the idea of being a Bachelor of Arts so more and more students will want to come join us to study dance in a deep and varied way and use this knowledge as the basis of their next step, whether it's in dance or whether it's in something completely different," she said.

"This is a really loving community of very open-minded people here," Hwang said. ■



Lynne Nevin teaches ballet class.

Lynne Nevin

LECTURER IN DANCE

Currently teaching: Ballet I and Ballet II

Nevin has been a ballet instructor and adjunct faculty in the Dance Division at UNL for 29 years. She also teaches at the Omaha Academy of Ballet, Omaha's oldest professional ballet school, and the Jewish Community Center of Omaha.

She graduated from Nebraska with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She earned her Associate Diploma in teaching and her Advanced I degree in performance from the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dance (ITSD). This international form of dance pedagogy and examination board is based in London. She is also a registered member of the Royal Academy of Dance in London.

Nevin danced professionally with the Omaha Ballet. She has also performed with UNL, UNO, Creighton University, Omaha Modern Dance Collective and Dalienne Majors and Dancers. She has served as adjunct faculty for Creighton University for 20 years.

WHY DO YOU DANCE?

Dancing, for me, has always been a spiritual experience. Dance fills my heart and feeds my soul.

MEET OUR STUDENTS

Cody Hartshorn

OMAHA, NEBRASKA

When did you start dancing?

I started dancing at the age of 12. I had been watching my sister, and I was like that seems kind of cool. I wanted to take part in that. And that's when my journey began.

What are some of the highlights of studying dance?

The first highlight is the family aspect of the dance program. I have never been able to feel so much love and care these last four years. After my last show, I was bawling my eyes out because I'm just going to miss these people so much. Another highlight for me was getting to perform at the Sheldon Museum of Art and at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

"Having the giant stage to showcase our love of our art was really cool."

Cody Hartshorn performs in the 2019 Student Dance Project. Photo by Justin Mohling.

Dance program faculty and students on stage at the Lied Center for Performing Arts for Evening of Dance in April.



What was it like performing Evening of Dance at the Lied Center this year?

It had been maybe a year since we had actually performed in person, so having the opportunity to do so was something really special for us. From a dancer's perspective, the audience's energy really carries the show. Also, having the giant stage to showcase our love of our art was really cool.

What's next for you?

There's a dance company coming to Omaha called Vöx Dance Collective. The artistic director is Vivian Kim, who is an alum from UNL, and I've been able to work with her this semester in her hip-hop class. So I will be auditioning for that.

We're such a tight-knit family.

Isabella Starkey Meier

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA

What do you love about dance?

I think for a lot of us in the program, it's just a release and kind of like a place that is therapeutic. It definitely has always been a place I can get my mind off things for sure.

What has your experience been like studying dance at Nebraska?

I wasn't even really planning on studying dance in college. I went into the art history field and sociology my freshman year. But I took a dance class and was converted. This program and the focus on modern dance and community really felt right and really comfortable, but also exciting. I had a modern class that I really liked with Susan Ourada, and she encouraged me to take some more. And the rest is history. We're such a tight-knit family.

What do you love the most about the new facility in the Carson Center?

I think one of the biggest things that is attractive about it is that it's in a really good location. Mabel Lee was kind of just tucked away. But now we're in an environment that is more downtown, and we are more around art. It's definitely been exciting for collaborations.

Isabella Starkey Meier performs in Evening of Dance on April 28. Photo by Jordan Opp for the Nebraska Alumni Association.



Courtesy photos.



Vivian Kim

LECTURER IN DANCE

Currently teaching: Special Topics in Hip-Hop

Kim is a choreographer, performer and dance educator currently based in Colorado. She received her B.A. in Dance from Nebraska in 2010 and her M.F.A. in Dance with a secondary emphasis in the Alexander Technique from University of Colorado Boulder in 2017. In addition to teaching at UNL, Kim also teaches for a variety of dance institutions in the Denver Metro area: Red Rocks Community College, Denver School of the Arts, and Block 1750, to name a few.

In addition to teaching, she performs and trains with Rennie Harris's Denver-based street dance company, Grassroots Projects, where she's been training in House and Hip-Hop for five years; and she also trains in Popping with Dassy Lee (*Femme Fatale* and *So You Think You Can Dance* Season 10). Kim also runs and directs two dance companies: VisKosity Dance Collective (Colorado) and Vöx Dance Collective (Omaha).

WHY DO YOU DANCE?

I dance, because it's everything to me. It's expression, communication, storytelling, vulnerability, spirituality, connection.

MEET THE FACULTY

Thao Duong

HO CHI MINH CITY, VIETNAM

What do you love about dance?

The year that made me a lot more committed to dance was after high school. I took a gap year to work before college. There were a lot of turning points in my life at that point. I was invited to work

for a dance group, which is now a dance company, in Vietnam. The leaders of the group were people I really looked up to. It was like a dream that I did not even dare to dream. But I just felt like dance was the only stable thing in my life that I could hold onto because there were so many other things changing and happening, and it really affected my mental health. That is one big reason why I love dance. At the same time, I think that the knowledge in dance is so interchangeable to other fields. I had two majors and a minor, and I really enjoy applying the knowledge across other fields.

“I think that the knowledge in dance is so interchangeable to other fields.”

What are some of the highlights for you?

The three highlights I can think of are the residency of Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company, our trip to American College Dance Association, and how things were before the pandemic hit. With the residency, it was very exciting to get that opportunity to be on the same stage and the same show as Bill T. Jones. It was a life-changing week for us because it opened up our perspective so much.

Thao Duong performs “my body is a system of memories,” which she choreographed, in Evening of Dance on April 28.



THE MUSIC MAN

Since Learned has served as the staff accompanist for dance for 31 years.

His love of dance has informed a long career directing, music directing, performing and even creating choreography for theatre productions. Learned also teaches Music for Dance.

“He is just completely dedicated,” said Associate Professor and Head of the Dance Program Susan Ourada. “He loves teaching the music for dance course, and it really brings something to our program that a lot of dance



programs don't have, which is a dedicated to music in the service of dance course. He's amazing.”

Learned received his B.F.A. in musical theatre from Nebraska in 2010.

“Soon after completing the dance component of the degree, everyone agreed it was safer to put me behind the drums and piano to get me off the dance floor,” he said.

Having first been a dancer, Learned said he has developed an understanding and appreciation for what a dancer experiences in class.

“I believe the best accompanists will put whoever they are ‘playing for’ first,” Learned said. “My job is to go along with and support the dancers and movement, not necessarily play flawlessly. It is much more important to be in the moment, set a mood and ‘carry’ the dancers across the floor with the right feels, tempos, styles, dynamics and grooves.”

He loves his job because it allows him to create and improvise daily.

“I get to walk around the campus every day surrounded by students who want to learn and grow in their love of the form,” Learned said. “For me there is such great joy in helping a class focus in on and achieve their various goals and objectives. From

supporting the techniques to simply experiencing the sheer delight of moving, being in class affords me the chance to play an important role in

“...it really brings something to our program that a lot of dance programs don't have...”

educating our students. The variety of guest artists and master classes we have each year continues to expose me to the big and beautiful world of movement. My amazingly talented and dedicated colleagues make each class a true joy.”

Learned said while some people work for a living, he gets to make joyful and supportive “noise.”

“Indeed I have a front row seat to watch and collaborate with so many amazing teachers and students,” he said. “What a charmed career I've had at UNL!” ■

MEET THE FACULTY



Gary Yuen

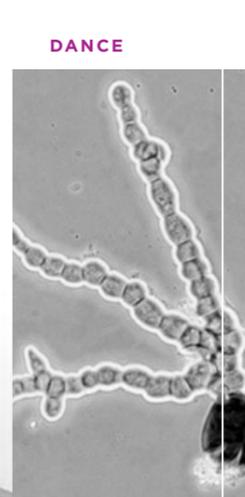
PROFESSOR OF PLANT PATHOLOGY AND LECTURER IN DANCE

Currently teaching: Tai Chi

After coming to the U.S. as a toddler, Yuen grew up in the San Francisco area during the “hippie” 1960s. Because he always had a fascination with living things, especially plants, it was natural for him to have an academic career in a plant field. While in college, he developed a love of social dance (salsa, swing and waltz). He also grew up with a passion for all types of martial arts. His martial arts practice continues to today in his late 60s primarily with Tai Chi. He has been practicing Tai Chi for 40 years and teaching it for more than 25 years.

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT TAI CHI?

I enjoy teaching Tai Chi to people of different backgrounds in respects to experience in martial arts and awareness of Chinese culture. Teaching Tai Chi as a class for dancers will allow me to introduce the martial arts-based cultural elements of Tai Chi to learners who are already adept at moving.



Cropped figure published in a plant pathology paper co-authored by Yuen. DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

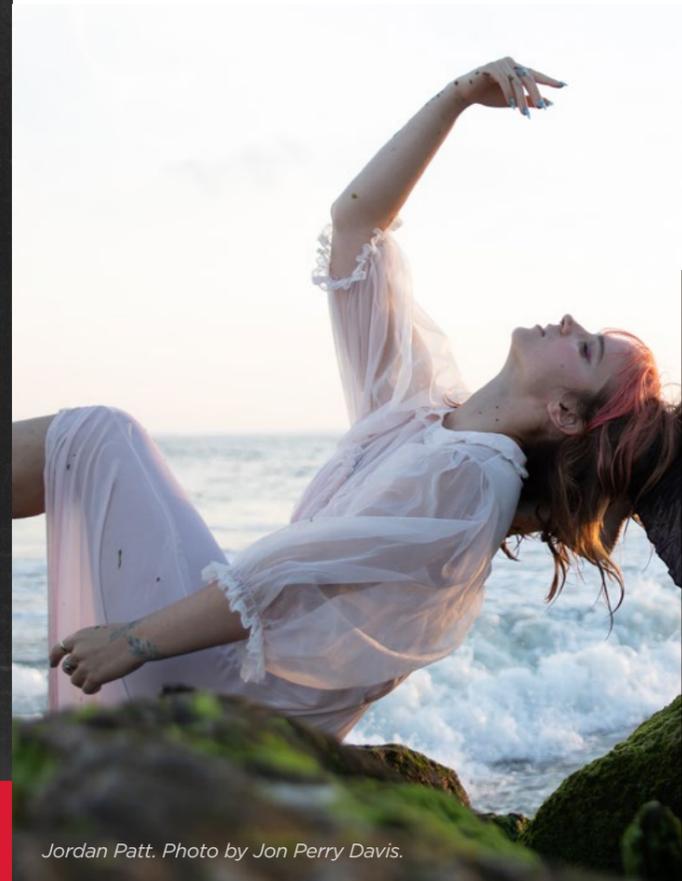
MEET OUR ALUMNI MEET OUR ALUMNI MEET OUR



Mark Jarecke dancing during a return visit to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1995. Courtesy photo.

MARK JARECKE'S (B.F.A. 1992) journey from studying dance at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to dancing with one of New York City's most prestigious dance companies seemingly happened overnight—thanks to a bit of news he heard on the radio.

“Shortly after graduation, I was driving around Lincoln, and I heard a segment on NPR about the death of John Cage, the composer and artist who also was the life-long partner to dancer and choreographer



Jordan Patt. Photo by Jon Perry Davis.

Merce Cunningham. I had studied and admired Cunningham's work while I was at UNL, and I thought to myself, 'I should go to New York and study with him,'" Jarecke said.

Practically on a whim, Jarecke packed a futon in the back of his Geo Metro and drove straight from Lincoln to New York City. When he arrived, he stayed with a former UNL guest artist who lived in Queens, while he prepared to audition at the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in Manhattan. Following several auditions

and callbacks, Jarecke was not only accepted into Cunningham's dance training program, he also received a scholarship to attend.

“Suddenly, I was this kid from Nebraska at John Cage's memorial, along with the legendary Merce Cunningham and his entire company of dancers,” Jarecke said. “It was surreal.”

Jarecke spent several years studying with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and was only one of three students (and the only male dancer) not formally in the company who was allowed to study with Cunningham himself—a testament to Jarecke's talents.

Later, he continued his dance theory training at the Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies and subsequently formed his own dance company, Mark Jarecke Dance. Based in New York City, Jarecke's work was performed throughout the United States as well as in Canada, Europe, and Asia. Jarecke collaborated with fellow UNL dance alum Cary Twomey, who danced in most of Jarecke's pieces.

While Jarecke pursued his passion for art and dance in the evenings, he paid the bills by working a day job in design and agency work.

As his professional creative portfolio grew, he started to draw the attention of business recruiters, and one from Condé Nast—the venerable New York publishing company—reached out with an offer he couldn't refuse.

“I ended up taking a design job at Condé Nast,” Jarecke said, “Then I worked my way to becoming the

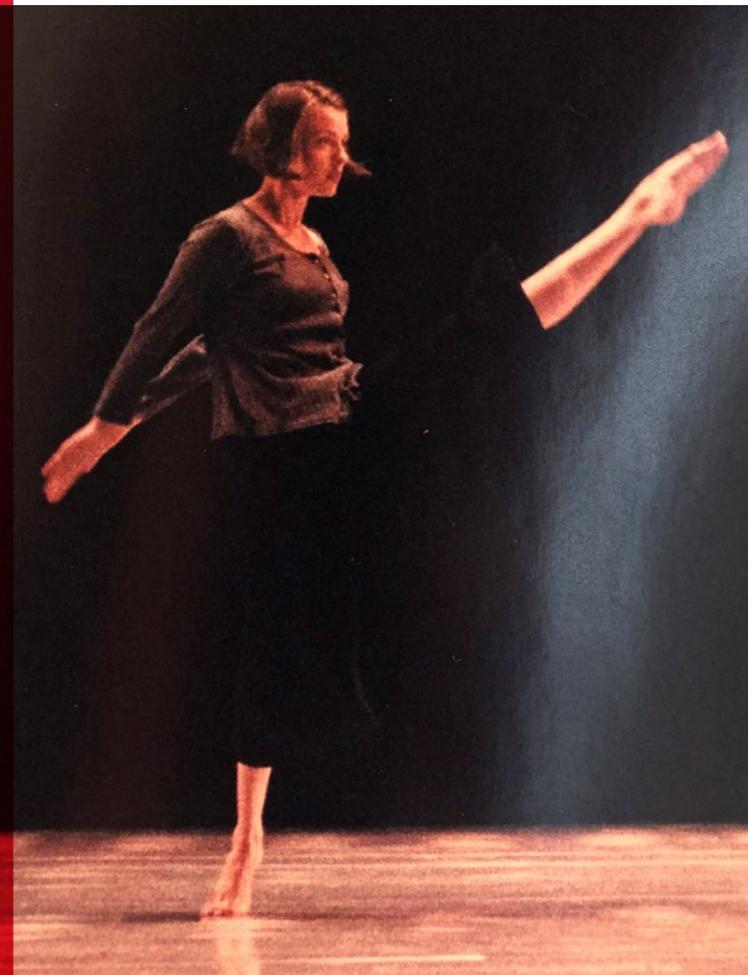
Creative Director for Condé Nast Digital.”

He stayed at Condé Nast for eight years, overseeing the award-winning art department that created landmark digital brands such as Style.com and Epicurious. Jarecke credits his stint at Condé Nast for establishing his professional bona fides, but also pulling him away from his dance and choreography.

“It's tricky to balance artistic and professional pursuits, but having a strong foundation in the arts definitely informed my work in the corporate world—it still does,” he said.

Subsequently, Jarecke founded his own agency, FOUR32C, which developed digital products for creative clients such as Vera Wang, Maroon 5, Bon Appétit, and CBS Sports. He sold that agency and now serves as Managing Director of AREA 17, a brand and product company with studios in New York and Paris.

It's tricky to balance artistic and professional pursuits, but having a strong foundation in the arts definitely informed my work in the corporate world—it still does.



Cary Twomey dancing in the Howell Theatre. Courtesy photo.



Mark Jarecke. Courtesy photo.

Jarecke's lasting memory of the UNL Dance Program is that it was joyful.

"When we created the alumni endowment for dance this year (unldancealumni.org), we all said how much we had gotten out of the program in different ways," Jarecke said. "It was rigorous, joyful and amazing."



Jordan Patt. Courtesy Photo.

"We are super lucky at UNL to have that guest artist program. Those guest artists are top artists in the dance industry here. They are so valuable to learn from."

JORDAN PATT (B.A. 2018) moved to New York in 2019, where she is both a dancer and a photographer. She has now officially been in New York longer in pandemic times than normal times.

"That's been a journey," she said. "It's almost hard to remember the short period of time in New York before the pandemic."

She has interned at Gibney Company Community Center, a dance company, performing arts hub and social action incubator in New York City, as well as

dancing and performing for choreographers and creating her own work.

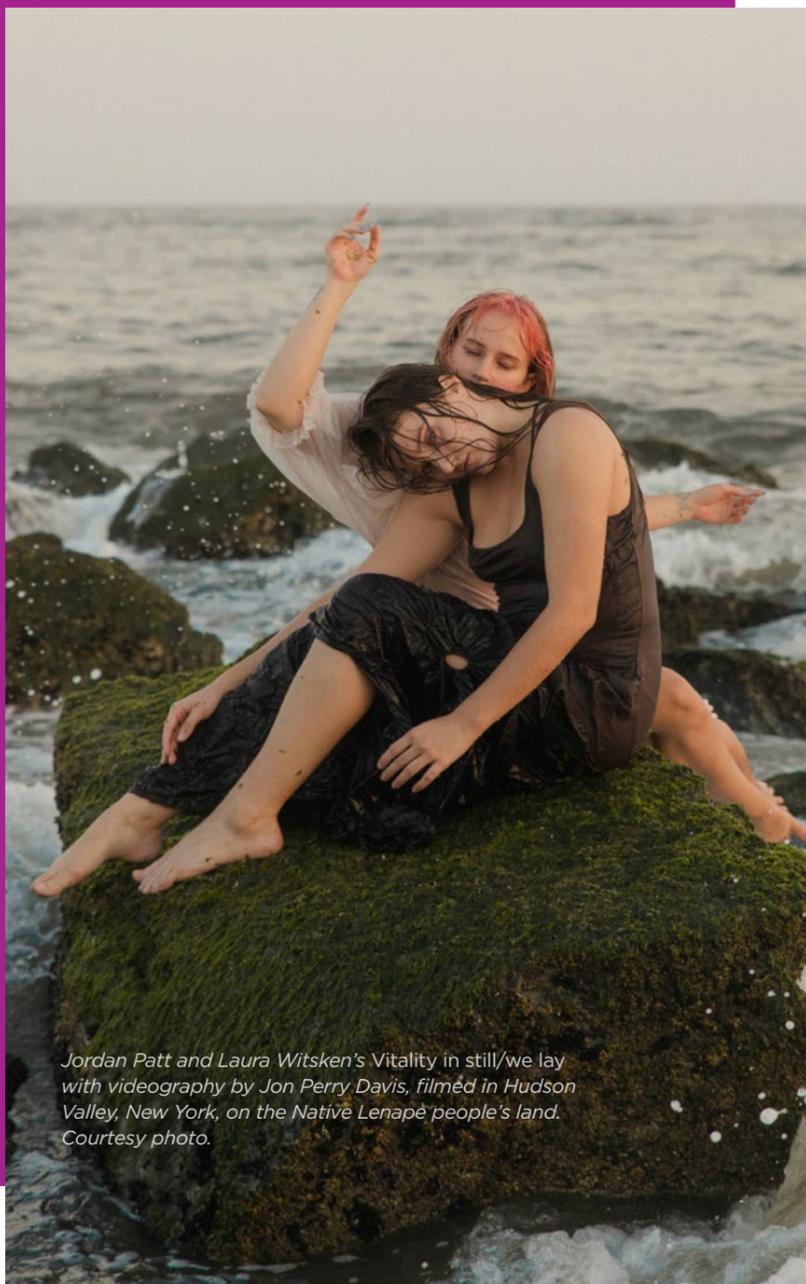
Since the pandemic, she has worked on and recently premiered a dance film titled *Vitality in still/we lay* with her collaborator Laura Witsken.

"We've been working together since before the pandemic, but then the quarantine allowed us to work in a different way," Patt said. "We would meet outside and in parks and in different places over the city and developed our work in that way. It transformed what we would make in the studio into this outdoor performance."

Patt, who is originally from Firth, Nebraska, was inspired to move to New

York after working with many of the guest artists in the UNL Dance Program.

"A lot of our guest artists at UNL were from New York, and a lot of the masterclasses at the Lied Center were companies based in New York.



Jordan Patt and Laura Witsken's *Vitality in still/we lay* with videography by Jon Perry Davis, filmed in Hudson Valley, New York, on the Native Lenape people's land. Courtesy photo.

I was just really drawn to coming here because of all the different types of makers and all the diversity of art in the access," she said.

She is grateful for the guest artist program in the dance program.

"We are super lucky at UNL to have that guest artist program. Those guest artists are top artists in the dance industry here. They are so valuable to learn from," Patt said.

Patt took a modern dance class for fun in college, fell in love with it and decided to make that her major.

"I had no idea modern dance existed, and now it is my greatest love and passion," she said. "In addition, the professors and students were so welcoming and encouraging and created such a truly safe space to explore ourselves."

CARY TWOMEY (B.F.A. 1992) moved to New York City with her husband Lee Willet, a theatre alumnus, a year after graduating from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she began taking classes and exploring the New York City dance world. Not long after arriving, she picked up where she left off at UNL, working with her former classmate Mark Jarecke.

"I had entered a much bigger world in New York City. It was eclectic and full of culture that I hadn't experienced growing up in Nebraska. I was inspired and could feel that my life had taken a big turn. I immediately started exploring everything. Mark and I joined with two talented women and formed the Mark Jarecke Dance Company," she said. "It was a truly incredible time, creative and challenging in all the best ways. Our company grew, and

we also had the opportunity to teach and tour in Denmark for a month."

Upon arriving in New York, Twomey started teaching fitness in a gym.

"I was dancing a lot and earning my living teaching at a funky fitness gym in downtown," she said. "Someone recommended that I take Pilates lessons to help with some of the aches and pains I was having. I started taking lessons weekly, and that took my physicality to another level. A few years later, I was invited to start training and teaching Pilates with my teacher, Deborah Lesson. That was over 25 years ago."

A few years later, Twomey and fellow dancer Stephen Williams opened their own Pilates Studio in downtown Manhattan, called NoHo Pilates Studio, which continues to thrive today.

"During those years, I was drawn to study different kinds of movement modalities," she said. "I spent many years studying anatomy and physical rehab with neuromuscular educator/anatomist Irene Dowd and worked in a physical therapy clinic doing rehabilitative movement with Pilates for the patients."

She was also a founding faculty member of the Joffrey Ballet/New School Bachelor of Fine Arts program, where she taught anatomy, kinesiology, Pilates and therapeutic movement for professional ballet dancers.

"Teaching in the first BFA program formed for professional ballet dancers was an incredible opportunity," Twomey said. "Here I was, a dancer from Nebraska, now teaching professional ballet dancers in a New York university. I began to see all the years of hard work bearing fruit. It was deeply

rewarding teaching those talented dancers."

In 2002, she and her husband returned to Lincoln, where they opened the Haymarket Pilates and Yoga Center, and Twomey taught in the Dance Program at UNL. She continued her studies of Ayurveda and Jungian Psychology, which she had begun while living in New York.

In 2019, Twomey and Willet moved their studio and created a non-profit, 501(c)3 called Midwest Dharma Wheel, Contemplative & Healing Arts, where they provide counseling,



Cary Twomey. Courtesy photo.

"...that's how important my dance experience was. I can't imagine a life or even a day without it."

yoga, Pilates, Ayurveda, movement, meditation and wellness.

"We found a beautiful space that holds everything we do," she said.

Twomey said her life expanded when she studied in the UNL Dance Program.

"When I came into it, there was a whole world that was just waiting to come to life in me," she said. "That world was impossible to express verbally, it needed movement. And that's how important my dance experience was. I can't imagine a life or even a day without it." ■

Students take watercolor course during three-week session

Assistant Professor of Practice in Studio Art and Foundations Coordinator Byron Anway taught Beginning Watercolor I during the January three-week session. It is a course taught infrequently in the School of Art, Art History & Design, so it was popular with 40 students enrolling.

"I decided to take this course because it was really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said Joselyn Andreasen, a studio art major from Kennard, Nebraska. "As well as watercolor being a mystery to me, and many others, it seems like a good tool to put in my skill set."

Cicely Pickel, a studio art major from Davey, Nebraska, took the course to count toward her studio art credit.

"It seemed like a less stressful option than taking it during the normal semester length," she said. "I am also trying to see if I can graduate early, and this seemed like a great opportunity to get that done."

Anway said he was initially hesitant to teach the class online.

"I was worried students wouldn't be able to have the communal experience and that it wouldn't meet this idea in my mind of what it was supposed to be," he said. "I decided to change. Instead of worrying that it won't be what it was, I would design the whole class with assignments and

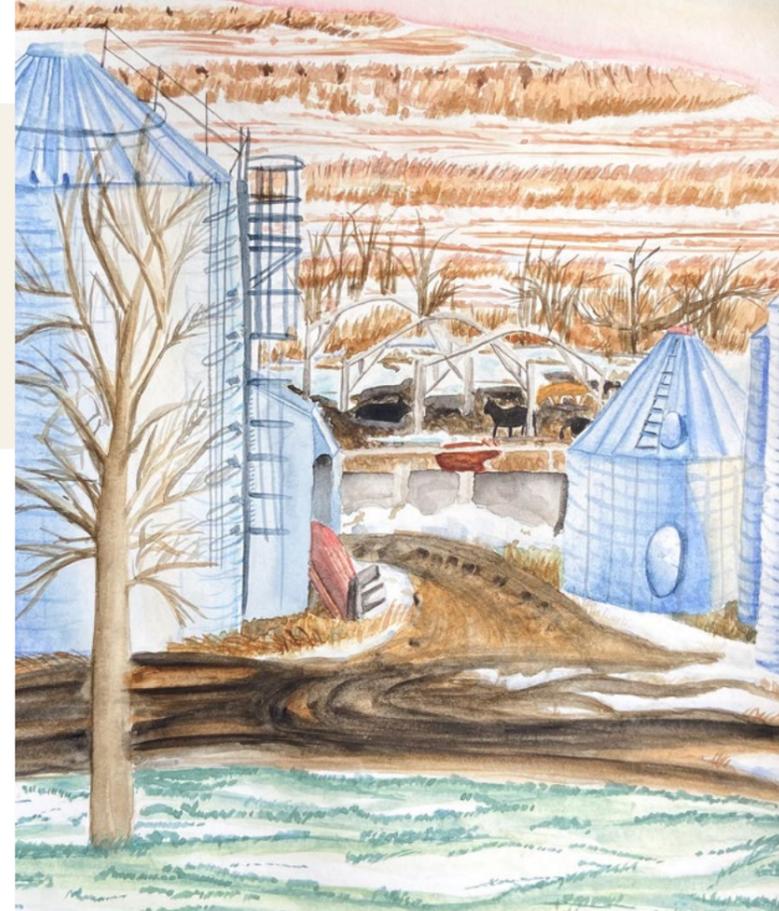
activities that were specifically designed to succeed in this remote situation."

Pickel said she likes how watercolor takes patience, but not necessarily a lot of time.

"I like that it requires a lot of planning before you start painting because watercolor is not as forgiving as oil paint," she said. "The benefits of taking this in a three-week class are that I was able to apply what I already knew and add so much more information about art history, composition, and what makes a really good painting. Byron was very good at teaching all this important information in a non-stressful, encouraging way."

Anway hopes to offer the course again.

"This January watercolor course gives students the opportunity to take something that's not normally offered," he said. "These three-week courses help students graduate on time, and it's an opportunity for students outside of art to engage with our department and our curriculum and have an art experience. Everything about it feels kind of like a gift." ■



Top: Joselyn Andreasen's View from her Studio Window assignment.

Left and Bottom Right: Cropped details from Ryan Bromm's watercolor assignment.



Theatre student designs mobile app to control lighting

Adam Zastrow, who graduated in May, designed a mobile app called maRemote, as part of his final Research Studio capstone project for the Jeffrey S. Raikes School of Computer Science and Management.

The app gives remote access to the grandMA2 lighting console, which is the industry-standard console for concerts and entertainment.

"There's the physical console, and that's what is still physically controlling the lights," Zastrow said. "This app basically gives you remote access to it so that rather than having to physically sit at the console and be punching numbers and controlling the lights, you can just do that directly from your phone anywhere within a Wi-Fi signal."

Zastrow said there are many useful situations for the app.

"I was thinking about the designer themselves and a use case where they're the only person working on a project, so they don't want to be running all over back and forth to the console," Zastrow said. "It's just really useful for anything where you want to be able to control lights without being stuck at a single location."

Zastrow was an Interdisciplinary Studies major, who studied both theatre (lighting design) in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, and computer science in the Raikes School.

"Within the Raikes School, we have our capstone project, Design Studio, and that's working with a company on a computer science project,"

Zastrow said. "I approached the faculty with the idea of doing a research project instead, and that turned into something they're developing called Research Studio. It started out as we just wanted to make something with computer science that was able to work within the lighting world. It evolved into the app that I ended up building."

His faculty advisors for the project were Assistant Professor of Practice Stephanie Valentine from the Raikes School and Associate Professor of Theatre Laurel Shoemaker in the Carson School.

"I really don't think that the project would have been possible without either of them," Zastrow said.

Shoemaker said Zastrow's app will be useful to industry professionals.

"The remote that Adam has created will not only make creating lighting 'looks' more versatile for lighting designers, but also for the electricians and programmers who support the lighting design," Shoemaker said. "We will no longer be attached to the computer to control the lights. We will be able to control them from the phone we carry in our pocket. One could say it has the opportunity to revolutionize the way lighting is implemented in all of the entertainment disciplines."

Zastrow demonstrated the app during the Carson School's Open House in Design/Tech on May 4



Adam Zastrow demonstrates his maRemote app during the Carson School's Design/Tech open house on May 4. Photo by Laurel Shoemaker.

(The presentation is viewable at go.unl.edu/go8y. It begins around 9:55 in the timecode.)

"I remember during my presentation, the first time that I took the lights and sort of panned them all up, just everybody sort of having a collective, 'Ooooh!' That little reaction, as my Dad put it, that's when I knew that you had sold them on it."

Zastrow is still working through the end goals of his app.

"There are a couple of different ideas of the end goal that I'm still working through and I'm not ready to share all of those details yet," he said. "But it is something that I want to be able to put on the App Store and turn into either a full-time career

of having this app or at least as a side project that I'm able to sell and make money off while still being able to improve other lighting designer's efficiencies." ■



Adam Zastrow with his phone app maRemote, which gives remote access to the grandMA2 lighting console.

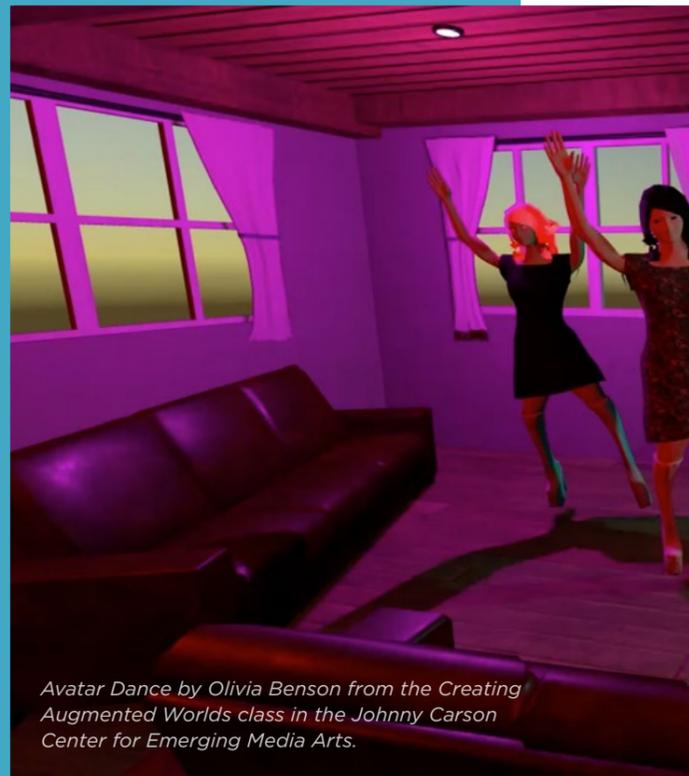
Carson Center course explores virtual and social worlds

Assistant Professor of Practice in Emerging Media Arts Anna Henson taught a special topics course in the spring titled “Creating Augmented Worlds” to explore virtual and mixed reality to explore how people can be together, even if they’re far apart.

“Virtual reality has been asking that question for a while, and there are many tools,” Henson said. “Telepresence [such as a Zoom meeting] is one method for being together. But Zoom class can sometimes lack the embodied connection, the feeling of being in the same space together. This presented a really great opportunity to see how being together in a virtual space actually contributed to our learning experiences. And for the students themselves who may end up being designers or creators or technologists in

this area to try to unpack from their own actual experience what virtual reality might be in the future and how they might want to design or participate in that.”

The course offered a “big picture” introduction to the possibilities offered by virtual reality and immersive 3D experiences and discussed the broader universe of augmented and mixed reality. Students began with individual prototyping assignments and worldbuilding in Unity, a game engine. Students also explored group activities in social VR, such as VRChat, Rec Room and Mozilla Hubs. The class culminated with final group projects, splitting into three groups of three students each, to create a world and an avatar for VRChat.



Avatar Dance by Olivia Benson from the Creating Augmented Worlds class in the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

“I’m really wanting to expose the students to a wide variety of these platforms so they can start to analyze them themselves and experience their avatar or their embodiment across different platforms to start to unpack the design strategies, the technical limitations and the possibilities that are there,” Henson said.

Henson said the voices of her students matter in this growing community and industry of virtual and augmented reality.

“By having my students record their thoughts and processes through experience diaries and by engaging in lots of discussion (in class and with visiting artists and interdisciplinary colleagues), I am hoping to grow their confidence to voice their ideas, as well as develop their own personal values regarding VR,” she said.

The nine students enrolled in the class were each provided with an HP Reverb G1 VR headset, provided to the Carson Center through their designation as an HP/Educause Campus of the Future.

“Being your average college student, I don’t have \$500+ to spend on a new VR headset,” said Film and New Media senior Gabe Eubanks, who took the course. “It’s been my first extended experience with VR, and I have loved every minute of it. The class is a nice mix of concepts of VR and technical skills of implementation.

Some classes we discuss the history, news and technologies around VR, while others we go about creating our own VR experiences through Unity.”

Henson said all Carson Center students have also received a laptop computer, as well, thanks to a generous gift from the Johnny Carson Foundation.

“This headset doesn’t just run on any computer,” Henson said. “You have to have a powerful computer for this.”

As part of the class, the students participated in the virtual New Frontier exhibition as part of the 2021 Sundance Film Festival, which showcases emerging media storytelling, multimedia installations, performances and films.

Emerging Media Arts junior Olivia Benson said it was an “interesting” experience.

“The projects were neat,” she said. “I ran into some tech issues with

some of them. The glitching on experimental works was a little disorienting, but the concepts themselves were interesting.”

The students also participated in a virtual workshop with new media artist and creative technologist LaJuné McMillian titled “Understanding, Transforming and Preserving Movement in Digital Spaces,” which explored issues of cultural representation, erasure and exploitation in these technologies.

In the workshop, students created 3D avatars and attached their own movements to these characters using the open source tools MakeHuman and Blender, as well as commercial tools such as DeepMotion Animate 3D and Unity.

“The LaJuné McMillian experience was really interesting,” said

Emerging Media Arts junior Kayla LaPoure.

“She brought in so many aspects of avatars and technological issues that I never even knew existed. Being a witness over a spokesperson for someone was an aspect of the workshop that I found incredibly moving.”

Two additional visiting artists participated in the

class: Immersive and VR UX (user experience) designer Zach Deocadiz (deocadiz.com), who talked about user experience in social VR; and VRChat Worldbuilder Vaughn Schmidt (vowgan.artstation.com), who talked about the VRChat platform.

LaPoure said the class has been engaging.

“I have learned technical skills on creating augmented experiences and have been made aware of accessibility issues surrounding technologies in the industry,” she said. “It has made me think about how I can reach the widest amount of people with XR [AR and VR] experiences.”

Henson hopes her students see the vast potential to create meaningful experiences using this technology.

“I hope that they start to engage their own critical thinking around the incredible power that we have to create engaging, persuasive, powerful experiences,” she said. “I hope they also start to see the landscape of what is happening in the industry and bring that industry dialogue into direct contact with academic and artistic discussion.” ■

[LAJUNÉ MCMILLIAN] BROUGHT IN SO MANY ASPECTS OF AVATARS AND TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES THAT I NEVER EVEN KNEW EXISTED.”

“BY HAVING MY STUDENTS RECORD THEIR THOUGHTS AND PROCESSES THROUGH EXPERIENCE DIARIES AND BY ENGAGING IN LOTS OF DISCUSSION (IN CLASS AND WITH VISITING ARTISTS AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLEAGUES), I AM HOPING TO GROW THEIR CONFIDENCE TO VOICE THEIR IDEAS, AS WELL AS DEVELOP THEIR OWN PERSONAL VALUES REGARDING VR.”

Horn studio hosts Zoom masterclasses

It's Tuesday, March 16. Around a dozen UNL horn students, faculty and alumni are gathered on a Zoom call to hear from Jeff Nelsen, horn player of the Canadian Brass and a professor of music at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. He is talking about what life is like on the road touring with the Canadian Brass, prioritizing his time and the expectations for his abilities, among other topics.

"It's a dream," Nelsen said. "I can only be in one place at any time, so that simplifies being busy. I'll do whatever I can wherever I am. I'm still trying to find balance."

It's one of several studios in the Glenn Korff School of Music taking advantage of

professional musicians having downtime during the COVID-19 pandemic and being available via Zoom for masterclasses.

"The common rhetoric surrounding the past 14 months has been that the pandemic created extremely negative impacts throughout the entire School of Music. The acute interaction with each of our students was lost. The ability to perform alongside our students was lost. The collaboration with other musicians and artists was lost," said Associate Professor of Horn Alan Mattingly. "Despite all this, there were certain aspects of teaching and learning that truly thrived this past year that never would have been possible during a 'normal' year. One of the best in the Husker Horn Studio was using

Zoom to bring in guest artists during our weekly studio class."

Some of the artists who participated in the Husker Horn Studio Zoom classes, in addition to Nelsen, included Tod Bowermaster, third horn with the St. Louis Symphony; Brett Hodge, principal horn with the Omaha Symphony Orchestra; Sfc. Shawn Hagen, horn in the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own;" Skip Snead, horn professor and Director of the School of Music at the University of Alabama; and Thomas Jöstlein, associate principal horn with the St. Louis Symphony.

"During the summer of 2020, I reached out to several of my

colleagues across the country to ask if they would be willing to spend an hour sharing and teaching to the UNL horn community," Mattingly said. "Because we were all in the same boat of isolation and unable to perform publicly, most were thrilled to have an avenue to engage with our students."

Holding weekly studio classes via Zoom gave students the opportunity to engage with more world-famous pedagogues and performers than they ever have in any other semester.

"The guest artists we brought in are leading experts in the horn world," Mattingly said. "They led topics on pedagogy, preparing for auditions, practice techniques, dealing with performance anxiety, various horn-related research, and more."

Mattingly was happy to find positives during a time that was less than positive.

"There was so much interruption caused by the pandemic, and it felt really great to find ways to utilize technology at our disposal and create some very positive engagements for our students in the Glenn Korff School of Music." ■

"There was so much interruption caused by the pandemic, and it felt really great to find ways to utilize technology at our disposal and create some very positive engagements for our students in the Glenn Korff School of Music."

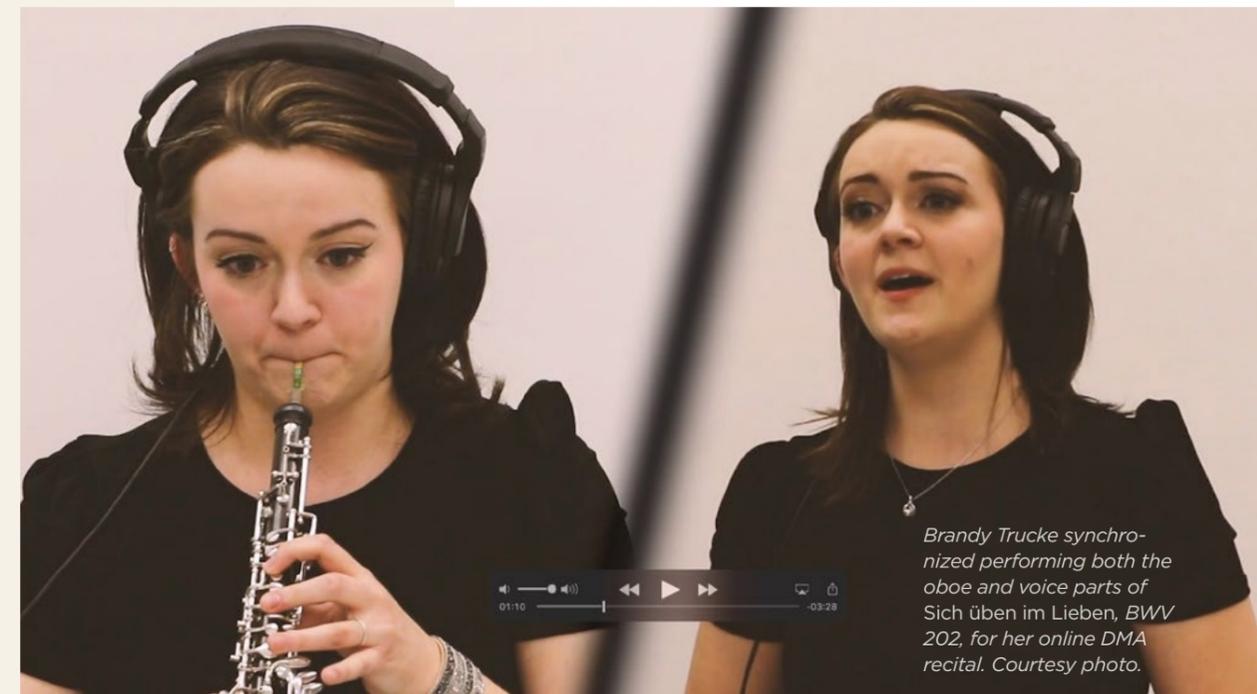


Canadian Brass horn player Jeff Nelsen meets with students, faculty and alumni during the weekly Husker Horn Studio Zoom class on March 16. Courtesy photo.

Oboe student adapts to online DMA recital

BY BRANDY TRUCKE

Editor's Note: During the pandemic, our students continued to find innovative ways to stay creative and perform work. Brandy Trucke, who is pursuing a DMA in oboe performance in the Glenn Korff School of Music, shares with us, in her own words, the story of the work she did putting together her first DMA recital online this spring.



Brandy Trucke synchronized performing both the oboe and voice parts of *Sich üben im Lieben, BWV 202*, for her online DMA recital. Courtesy photo.

Due to the restrictions placed upon wind players in accordance with Covid-19 protocols, such as using masks and bell covers when others are present in the space, being allowed only 30 minutes of playing time in a room when more than one individual is present, and leaving 30 minutes of buffer time before and after room use to allow for air clarification, my professor, Dr. William McMullen, and I arranged a recorded recital project for this semester that could be viewed online. Given the difficulty in rehearsing with a collaborative pianist, I decided to try something new by making my own accompaniments for several of the pieces on my program.

I accomplished this by manually inputting each note into a musical notation software and then importing the files into a digital audio workstation (DAW), where I could adjust the tempos. To create the videos for my program, I separately recorded audio and video then used a video editing software to synchronize the individual files. The difficulty of this was amplified with the piece *Sich üben im Lieben, BWV 202*, which requires harpsichord, soprano and oboe. Although I am a D.M.A. oboe student, I have always had a strong secondary study of voice and created a video of myself performing both soprano and oboe parts side by side.

This was a very challenging, yet rewarding, project for me this semester as most of the technology used was new to me. The note input for the accompaniments took about 10 hours, each video required at least one hour of editing, as well as countless hours learning the software functions, and of course—all the time spent in the practice room learning the music.

The pandemic has greatly impacted the way I view the future in a music career. Many of my peers and I have been concerned and curious if in-person performances have become a thing of the past. Even as the pandemic comes to a close, many in our society have been accustomed to "going to concerts" from home and have enjoyed the convenience of hearing music from anywhere in the world right in their own living room. From a practical standpoint, I wanted to begin developing the skills to market myself in this environment. My passion for music, however, still lies with the beauty of live performance. I cannot wait until the day comes when I can perform without a mask, flash a smile for a crowded auditorium, and shake any and every hand that comes my way. I am grateful for the support of my professors in how I chose to adapt this semester and hope to see audiences again in the Fall of 2021. ■

LOOKING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD:

Nebraska Rep continues partnership with St. Louis Black Rep



Ron Himes on the set of the Nebraska Rep's *Dutchman* in 2019. Photo by Jordan Opp for the Daily Nebraskan.

“The Nebraska Rep looked at itself and decided that they wanted to change their programming, how they looked, who they served,” said Ron Himes, producing director of the St. Louis Black Rep of the partnership created with the Nebraska Repertory Theatre. “We came together to share our resources, our experiences and our programming to help address those issues.”

Last fall the Nebraska Repertory Theatre and the St. Louis Black Repertory Company launched a multi-year partnership to bring about positive social change at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and beyond.

Founded in 1976 by Himes, the Black Rep is one of the largest, not-for-profit professional African-American theatre companies in the country. Its mission is to provide platforms for theatre, dance and other creative expressions from the African-American

perspective that heighten the social and cultural awareness of its audiences.

“Working with Ron Himes and the St. Louis Black Rep has been revealing and also very inspiring,” said Andy Park, artistic director of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre.

This season, Himes will return to Lincoln to direct *Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea*, which opens Nov. 10. He previously directed *Dutchman* for the Nebraska Rep in February 2019.

“I have not directed *Dontrell* before, so this will be a maiden voyage for me, as it will be for the audience,” Himes said. “I enjoyed my previous visit to Lincoln working with The Rep and with the students, and I do look forward to returning and deepening our relationship.”

Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea, by Nathan Alan Davis, is a poignant and powerful statement about the fundamental nature of what it means to be a black man in America.

“This is a really beautiful show,” Park said. “And it’s perfect for a college campus to produce, as well, because it has to do with a young man who is about to go to college, and he’s reconciling with his past and looking ahead to his future.”

A special alumni event is planned on Saturday, Nov. 13. Alumni of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film will be invited to attend the performance and a social gathering prior to the opening and during intermission on Nov. 13, as well as a talk-back following the performance.

“*Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea*, is about looking forward and looking back. I think as an alumni community, we’re doing the same,” said Christina Kirk, the director of the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film and the executive director of the Nebraska Repertory Theatre. “We are excited about establishing a pattern of bringing alumni back. That’s really important to us.”

The Nebraska Repertory Theatre presents Dontrell, Who Kissed the Sea, which opens Nov. 12. The production will be directed by Ron Himes, producing director of the St. Louis Black Rep. Artwork by Lindsey Young.

Park said he hopes audiences will be inspired by the production.

“They’re going to see one of the best regional theatre directors guide a production. Having Ron here as the guest artist is amazing,” he said.

The Nebraska Rep’s season this year also includes *A Midsummer’s Night Dream*, directed by Kirk. A gala performance on Dec. 13 called *Twilight at the Rococo* at the Rococo Theatre will include the debut of the new score from *Our Town*. The spring productions include *The Way to the Way*, a large-scale puppetry reimaging of *Tao Te Ching*; a devised theatre piece that is a collage of poetry, prose, music and dance titled *Traveling Shoes* that Ron Himes will create with our students; and the full production of *Our Town*.

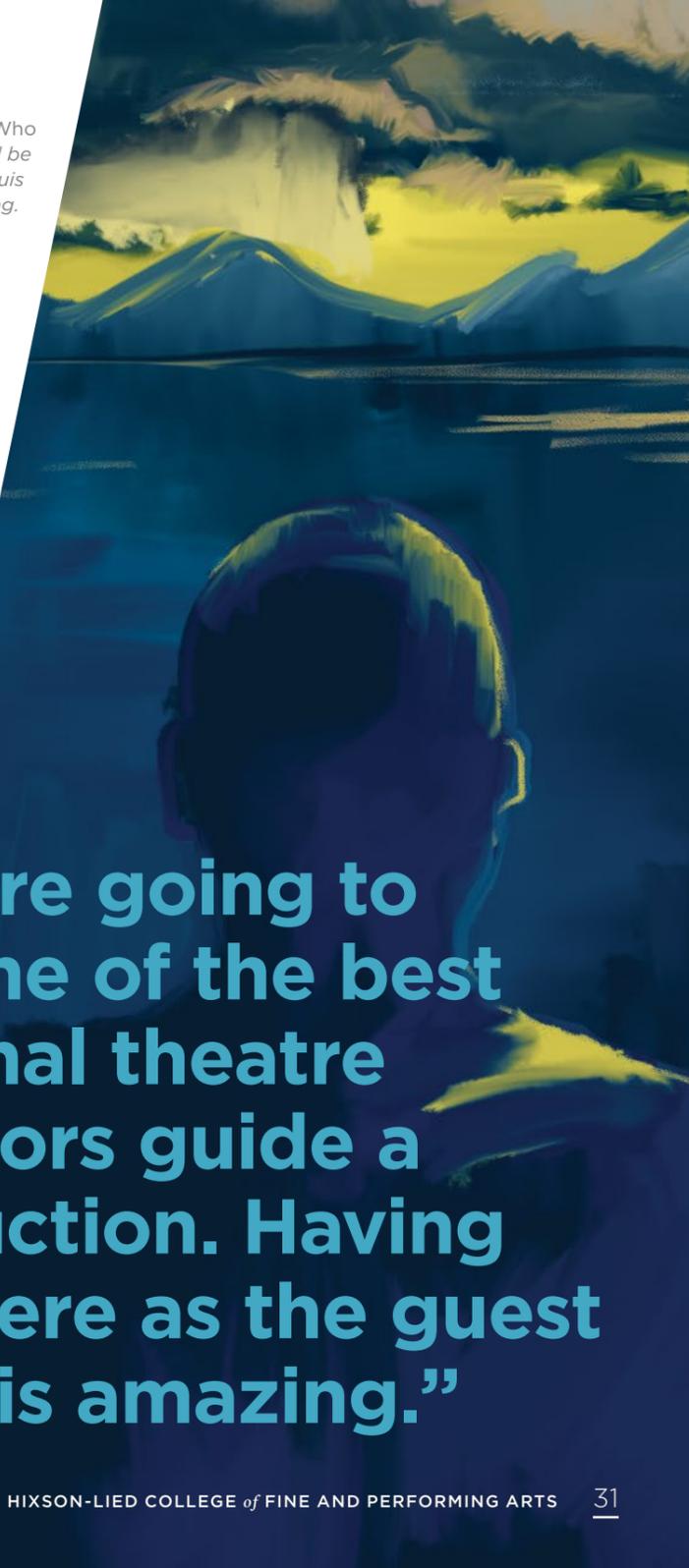
The Rep is also launching a new annual project called *ShakesFear* in October.

“What we’re doing is a haunted attraction that will take place in a building that is basically haunted as it is—Temple Building,” Park said. “It’s going to be a huge spectacle. It’s using emerging technology and animatronics.”

ShakesFear is part performance and part haunted house attraction.

“Basically, the audience goes on a search for one of Shakespeare’s lost

“They’re going to see one of the best regional theatre directors guide a production. Having Ron here as the guest artist is amazing.”



plays,” Park said. “But the reason that one of the plays has been lost is because all of his other characters from his other plays are jealous of it. The audience is in pursuit and just when they’re about to hear the first text from this play, one of the witches from *Macbeth* shows up, grabs it and enters a secret bookcase. Then the audience has to enter with her and go after her to try to get the play.”

Following the Black Lives Matter movement and current national conversation about systemic racism, the Nebraska Rep sought this partnership with the St. Louis Black Rep to answer the call for action. Himes is serving as consultant for the collaboration.

“Real change is more than a hashtag,” Himes said. “It is hard work. It is laying a foundation to support institutional change. I think we have put some programming in place, and we have had some tough conversations to begin the work that is ongoing.”

“I have a great deal of gratitude for having the expertise and leadership of somebody like Ron working so closely with us,” Kirk said. “He poses the kind of questions we need to be asking ourselves and brings a knowledge, a history and a perspective that is unparalleled. We are very grateful to have that experience and expertise to draw upon.”

Park said while the year has been challenging, he also sees hope. “The year has been an incredible challenge. But there’s an old saying that simple light may rise out of the complicated darkness,” Park said. “This has been a dark period, in many ways. But there has also been a lot of hope and light that has come out of it. It was extremely inspiring

“Real change is more than a hashtag...”

and exciting when we figured out a way that not only helped us to produce during the pandemic, but to also address the gap between who we want to be and who we are, and to look for a way to make the change.”

The partnership is about much more than just a series of events.

“The lasting change that I spend my life working for is a change that levels the playing field, that makes room at the table for everyone and where every

voice at the table is heard and valued,” Himes said. “Then ‘#realchange’ will be no more than the hashtag that ignited the fuse that changed the Nebraska Rep and helped it to change how it serves its community.” ■



On Nov. 6, 2020, the Nebraska Rep and St. Louis Black Rep collaborated for the event “#realchange Baldwin and the American Theatre.” Panelists included Michael Dinwiddie, associate professor of dramatic writing at New York University; Nkenge Friday, assistant vice chancellor for strategic initiatives at UNL; Woodie King, Jr., founder/producing director of New Federal Theatre; and Jeffrey Q. McCune, Jr., associate professor of African & African American Studies and women, gender, and sexuality studies at Washington University in St. Louis.



Making a bloody connection

The Nebraska Repertory Theatre closed its season last May with Steven Dietz’s *Dracula: Mina’s Quest*.

The Rep’s Apprentice Company took the stage with a frightening and provocative new adaptation of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, directed by Associate Professor of Theatre David Long. The new adaptation followed Mina, the brave heroine, as she dared to defy the ruler of the night.

It wouldn’t be *Dracula* without some blood, however. For this production, the Carson School had a unique partnership with the Food Innovation Center at Nebraska Innovation Campus to create the special blood used in the production.

“There’s a ton of blood. You can’t have *Dracula* without blood,” Long said.

But they needed special blood for this production.

“There’s a multitude of ways that the blood has to be used as an effect in the show,” said Associate Professor of Theatre Jamie Bullins. “If it’s an effect that was used, like it just gets on things, there are laundry issues you have to deal with. I’m used to that. That was the first concern because it’s a period piece. So it’s not like you can just throw some t-shirts and jeans in the laundry.”

But in some scenes, the blood also gets in people’s mouths.

“It’s *Dracula*, and they’re biting people,” Bullins said. “That also means they had to be able to swallow it.”

That led to the blood needing some special dietary considerations for some of the actors, including being gluten-free.

“We want to make sure that student safety is the top priority,” Bullins said.

After doing a lot of research, Bullins turned to the Food Innovation Center to see if they would help. He was connected to Julie Reiling, a senior consultant FPC at the Food Processing Center.

“I took Jamie’s initial call about creating an edible, gluten-free, sugar-free, non-staining blood for a vampire production that the theater department was going to do,” Reiling said. “We often get some interesting requests for assistance with some unique food items, but I can honestly say that this has been the most bizarre request we have ever received.”

Both teams from the Carson School and the Food Innovation Center worked to get everything just right.

“It’s been fun,” Bullins said. “One of the great things about working on a college campus is that there are all these fantastic people who have specialties.” ■

Left to right: Bethany Jackson, Zoe Kraus, Camille Lerner, Nathan Alexander, Jamie Bullins and Julie Reiling work on the perfect formula for the blood used in *Dracula: Mina’s Quest* at the Food Innovation Center.

Student research leads to bike share program graphics



BOULDER  *cycle*

Students in Associate Professor of Art Stacy Asher's advanced Graphic Design III course last spring designed graphics for a Boulder, Colorado, bike sharing program.

Bike sharing, provided by Boulder B-cycle, entails a large fleet of ready to ride bicycles located at stations across Boulder. The bicycles are publicly available for shared use for a short period of time for a fee. Boulder's fleet includes pedal-assisted electric ebikes. It is similar to Lincoln's BikeLNK bike sharing program.

"I have some people that I've been working with doing some commission design work and consulting on communication strategies and visual systems," Asher said. "So when they were talking

about their needs, they have so many stories to tell about the new bikes coming out. They want to promote that, but also the bike sharing system to find solutions to alleviate the heavy problems they have with parking and traffic congestion. They're really trying to push micro mobility. They wanted to promote this, but didn't have a budget to hire graphic designers. I thought our graphic design students could do a really good job at making some graphics that could promote the electric bikes and also bike sharing in general."

Their assignment included a large-scale, two-sided poster; decals for the kiosk to explain the bike sharing process; and social media posts and headers for Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

"The goal of the project was to increase awareness of transportation needs in small cities like Omaha, Lincoln and Boulder, Colorado," said Connor Bruggeman, a senior graphic design major. "And to visually communicate effectively the need to reduce carbon emissions, ease urban stress from parking and traffic, and provide enjoyment for commutes using electric bicycles." Asher said students also learned valuable research skills.

"This is a really great research project," Asher said. "I think they learned a lot more than just how to make a poster. And they came up with really great solutions, and they're all so unique. That's what I love about it."

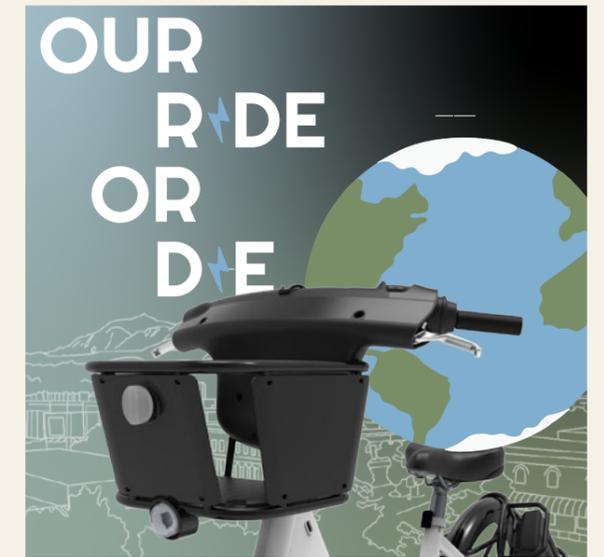
Halley Geist, a senior majoring in both graphic design and advertising and public relations, began by researching what Boulder B-Cycle was about.

"I looked at their website, social media and blog for that information," she said. "I then dove deeper into the community of Boulder, Colorado, to see what their lifestyle looked like. After that, I researched the environmental impact cars have on our planet, as well as the benefits of cycling for both the environment and overall health. Stacy provided us with some really insightful articles to help kickstart the research process."

The goal of the project was to increase awareness of transportation needs in small cities like Omaha, Lincoln and Boulder, Colorado."



Halley Geist's social media designs. "It is so important that we stay knowledgeable on the differences that we can make within our community that will have a bigger impact on the world around us," she said.



Bruggeman said this assignment was a great way for students to get real-world experience.

"Stacy gave us an incredible opportunity," he said. "As a designer, this project gave me more experience with launching a new item and the

different things we designed had to have a cohesive narrative or foundation that could be used beyond what we created. For example, the character I made as part of my design was this bear on a bicycle, and it was designed with the intent of them being able to use that bear for other social media posts, if they were inclined to do so."

Geist said working with a real-world client is different from designing for a class project.

"Not only are you designing something that is aesthetically pleasing to you, but also to the client you're working for," she said. "Being able to look at what kind of style a company already has in place and then expanding on that is a valuable skill to have going into the workforce." ■

...I researched the environmental impact cars have on our planet, as well as the benefits of cycling for both the environment and overall health."

Painting strokes build ‘The Human Connection’

University of Nebraska–Lincoln students added their painting strokes to a canvas on April 26 to build “The Human Connection.”

The event was organized by Alex Cathcart, a junior mathematics major focusing in finance and statistics; Taylor Hoskinson, a sophomore advertising and public relations major; and Jack Dobson, a freshman psychology major. It was sponsored by the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Undergraduate Student Advisory Board.

They set up a canvas on the Meiers Commons, the green space just north of the Nebraska Union and asked passersby to contribute a single paint stroke to the canvas.

“With each person’s addition, the painting will grow until the entire canvas is filled,” Cathcart said.

Hannah Mason, a junior theatre performance major and member of the Hixson-Lied Undergraduate Student Advisory Board, said they were eager to support the project.

“Quite honestly, there was no reason not to sponsor the event,” she said. “As arts students in all areas, we all understand the neglect that the arts community has faced this past year due to the pandemic and how we have often been pushed aside, so we were eager for the opportunity to create again and reinforce the idea that art is still very much alive.”

Cathcart hoped it was a chance for people to reconnect with their community during tough times.

“I hope this project will serve as a lasting reminder that, even though it may not always feel like it, we are all connected,” he said. “Each of our unique temperaments, talents and convictions adds to our community, and because of those differences, our campus (in this case, the painting) becomes more beautiful.”

The final painting will be installed in the offices of Big Red Resiliency & Well-Being in the University Health Center at 550 N. 19th St. ■



Left to right: Big Red Resiliency & Well Being Assistant Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life Kenji Madison, Jack Dobson, Taylor Hoskinson, Alex Cathcart (on the phone) and Big Red Resiliency & Well Being Director of Student Resiliency Constance Boehm with the final painting. Photo by Jenna Brende.

The American LOVE Project launches

School of Art, Art History & Design alumna Karen Blessen’s 29 Pieces organization is launching The American LOVE Project.

Blessen (B.F.A. 1973) is the executive artistic director and founder of 29 Pieces, which was established in 2005 to develop and deliver arts programs to the Dallas-area community. It uses art to awaken, uplift and give voice to the creative human spirit to make genuine, positive social change.

The organization created the Dallas LOVE Project in 2013. They partnered with more than 120 community partners and 20,000 artists from ages 5 to 86 to create 10,000 pieces of unconditional love art that was displayed throughout the city of Dallas in tribute to John F. Kennedy’s legacy to mark the 50th anniversary of his assassination.

Now, 29 Pieces plans to take the project nationally. The American LOVE Project aims to engage schools, organizations and artists nationwide as a positive grassroots response to the divisions in our country, dramatically exemplified by the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the United States Capitol.

“The American LOVE Project cultivates the healing of one bruised and forgotten heart at a

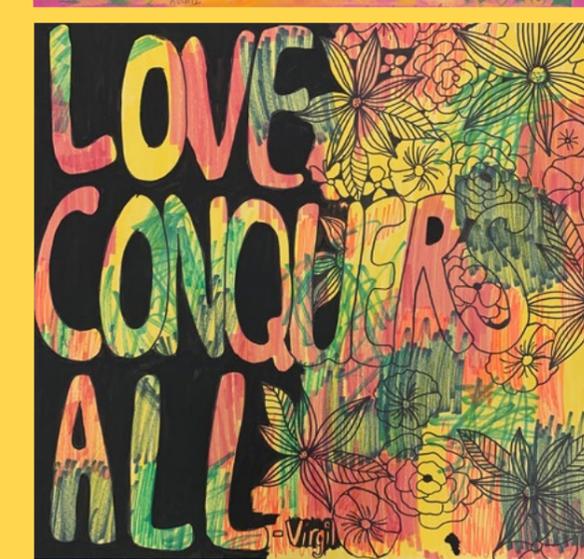
time,” Blessen said. “Art becomes the medicine. We believe it takes a project of this magnitude to showcase the power of love and art to give hope on a nationwide level.”

Judy Stone-Nunneley (M.F.A. 2002), the artist-in-residence and director of visual arts for the Grand Prairie ISD in Texas, is serving as art educator outreach coordinator for the project.

Artwork from students, teachers and artists of all ages will be featured on The American LOVE Project website online gallery with art searchable by state, city and name.

In addition to The American LOVE Project online gallery, 29 Pieces will produce a physical installation of artwork in Dallas and is working to arrange for a national exhibit of student art from each state at the Capitol in Washington, D.C., to be displayed Jan. 6–Feb. 14, 2022, on the National Mall at the U.S. Capitol.

To participate in The American LOVE Project, visit www.theamericanloveproject.org. ■



Top: “Let the Beauty of What You Love Be What You Do,” created by Judy Stone-Nunneley for the American LOVE Project. Middle: “Love Conquers All,” created by Bridgett King, a teacher in the Grand Prairie ISD in Texas, during a prototype session for the American LOVE Project. Bottom: “Love’s Greatest Gift,” created by Annette Trammel, a teacher in the Grand Prairie ISD in Texas, during a prototype session for the American LOVE Project.



Garrett's research helps elevate the work of black choral composers

For Assistant Professor of Music in Choral Activities Marques L.A. Garrett, singing has always been part of his life.

"I tell everybody the little joke is that I came out of the womb singing instead of crying because I have been singing my whole life," he said. "I just felt like it was what I was born to do."

At Nebraska, Garrett conducts the Chamber Singers and University Chorale and teaches graduate choral literature. He is also an avid composer of choral and solo-vocal music. His compositions have been performed to acclaim by high school all-state, collegiate and professional choirs.

His work as a researcher is also catching attention. One of the focal points of his research is the non-idiomatic choral music of black composers. Non-idiomatic, as it relates to black composers, refers to the original concert music that is not part of the traditional idiomatic canon associated with black musicians that includes spirituals, gospel, jazz, hip-hop and rap, among others.

Originally from Richmond, Virginia, Garrett later lived in Hampton, Virginia, and did his undergraduate work in music education at Hampton University, one of the nation's historically black colleges and universities (HBCU). Hampton's choral music faculty throughout its history included R. Nathaniel Dett, Roland Carter,

Royzell Dillard, Carl G. Harris, Jr., and others.

It was at Hampton that Garrett learned about and performed works by these black composers and others. "I asked Roland Carter about why did the HBCU choirs do this music more than anybody else?" Garrett said. "And he told me: 'We had the composers at our schools. They were the choir directors. They were the teachers or whatever they may be. And so, of course, we do it. We all knew each other, so it was like, hey, Noel Da Costa just wrote this piece for us. You should try that.' They would talk to each other about the repertoire before it got published. They would just send copies of scores to each other, but the music just kind of stayed in that circle. I went to UNC Greensboro thinking that everybody learned this kind of stuff."

Garrett completed his Master of Music at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and soon learned that his peers there were not as familiar with these black composers as he was.

"There were two defining moments for me. One was where I had a score, and I was talking about it with a fellow grad student, and he was excited because I was excited," Garrett said. "He wanted to do it. And then we get to the back of the score, and you see a picture of a black man. He was like, oh, I don't know how to sing gospel, so I can't do this. I was like, I never said this was a gospel piece. Where did that come from?"

The second defining moment came when he was in the library downloading articles.

"An undergraduate student asked what I was doing," he said. "I said I'm looking for anything that's black



***Nathaniel Dett** (1882–1943) was a black composer, educator, conductor, pianist, essayist and poet. Hampton University's music program flourished under the direction of Dett from 1913 to 1932, and his choirs earned international acclaim with performances in London, Berlin and Paris, among others.*

Photo courtesy of Hampton University.

classical music, vocal music or other black composer art songs. He was like, 'I didn't realize black composers wrote art songs. I thought they only did spirituals.' Then, it dawned on me that was how we were viewed in the choral world, for the most part. Yes, there were exceptions, all over the place, but primarily people saw black composers as the ones who arranged spirituals or the black conductors are the ones that you can go to if you need help with gospel music, but not if you need help with Bach or Poulenc. When I got to choose pieces or chose things to talk about in classes, I most frequently would talk about black composers and their music, because no one else was doing it."

Garrett completed his Ph.D. in music education and choral conducting at Florida State. He completed his dissertation on the short choral works of Dett.

"He was four choral directors before my choral director at Hampton," Garrett said. "Even to this day, Hampton keeps the music of R. Nathaniel Dett in the choir's repertoire."

He liked everything he kept hearing of his music. "I was drawn to [his work]," Garrett said. "I love how singable his music is. All of the vocal lines make sense. There is still an earthy, folksy quality to a lot of it because he did use folk music, but he did it differently than his contemporaries. Most were doing just spiritual arrangements, whereas he wanted to not necessarily elevate the spiritual, but he just knew there were new ways to do it, similar to the way that some composers in Europe used folk music, or I say the way Bach used Lutheran chorales. They can do it and create anthems, oratorios, cantatas, symphonies and string quartets, so we can do it with our music, too."

Those earlier conversations with classmates and his desire to have more people know about these black composers led Garrett to start his database

titled "Non-Idiomatic Choral Music of Black Composers."

He began talking about it at conference presentations, where he had a five-page handout that he gave to attendees. When he came to Lincoln in 2018, he still had the handout.

Then, in January 2020, the project grew.

"I had previously put a note to remind myself in January to 'tell everybody,'" Garrett said. "So I made a Facebook post that said, 'As you're preparing your Black History Month concerts for next year, don't forget that black composers have done more. And if you're looking for choral music and you need a place to start, I've got a five-page handout.'"

The post drew 200 comments and was shared several hundred times. He began making connections via e-mail, which eventually led to him creating his website, where he includes the database. The site went live just before the pandemic hit and the university moved to remote learning.

"I don't know who found it, but just one person shared it, and then it went viral," Garrett said. "I was getting so many requests, it was blowing my mind."

He's grateful when he learns that the work that he's doing is helping people discover these black composers.

"It is definitely nice to know that the work I've been doing is helping people out," he said. "But I also let them know I wasn't the first to discover this. This music has existed and was published. People have performed it. People have been talking about it. It's just that social media wasn't around yet, and I just happened to be the one to talk about it in some way. Social media helped, and now it's associated with me."

Garrett said representation matters.

"For far too long, we held to this idea that it was only white men, with a couple of exceptional white women, and that was really it. We didn't talk about anybody else," he said.

"The research shows that representation does matter. If you don't see people who look like you or identify the way that you do, whether it's racial, cultural, gender, sexuality, ability—all of those kinds of things. If you don't see it, it doesn't seem like it's as attainable for you. And so we

never know the number of composers of African descent who could have been doing this, but they just never saw somebody like them doing it. It's about intentional choices."

Next year, the Glenn Korff School of Music is planning a George Walker Festival. Walker was the first black composer to win the Pulitzer Prize in music and would have turned 100 years old next year. The University Singers and Chamber Singers are also hoping to complete a trip to France in 2022, which had been postponed due to the pandemic.

"We all know that traveling abroad opens your eyes to so much else, and you start thinking about people and things differently, even from one trip," Garrett said. "We want to give that experience to them."

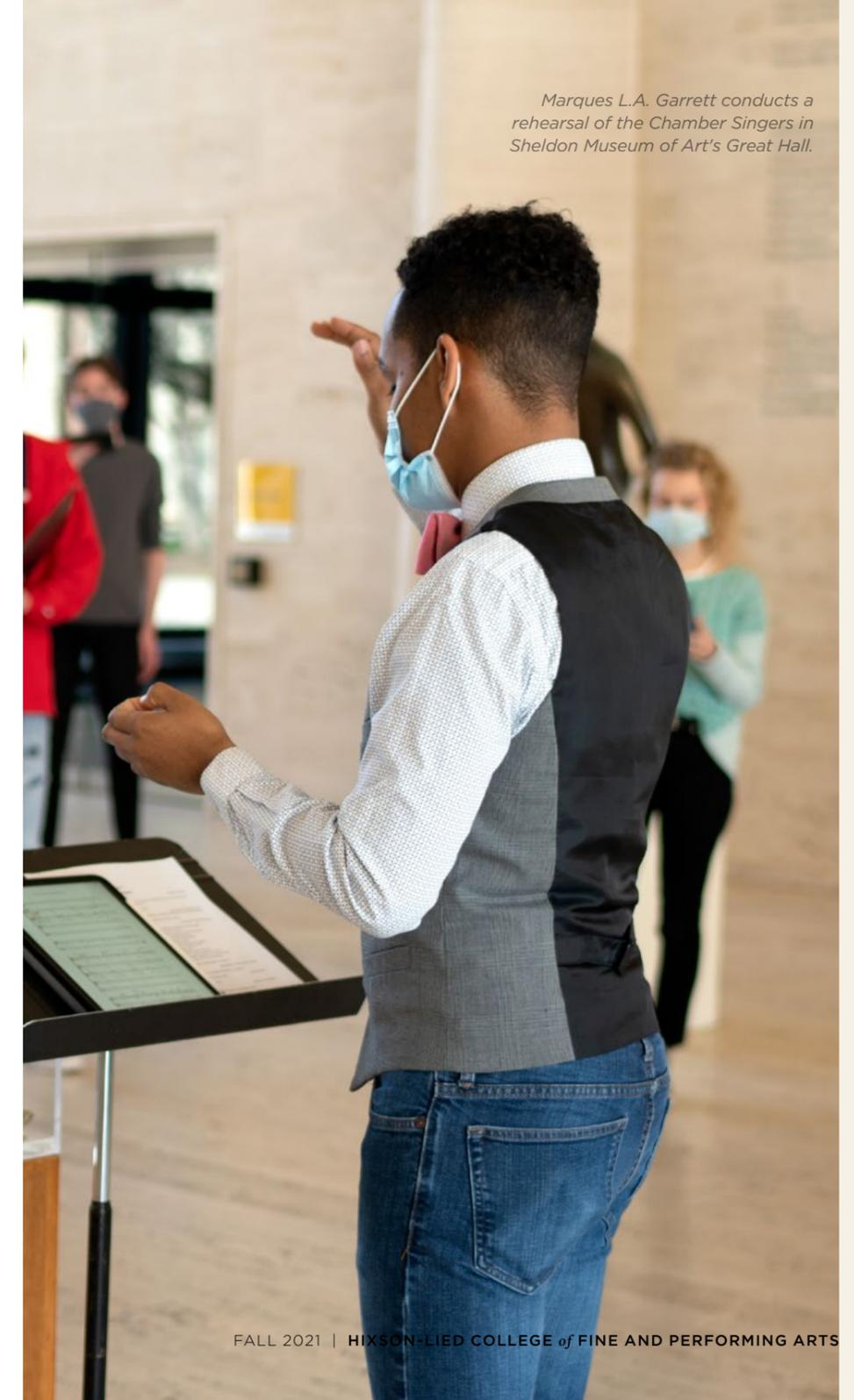
Garrett may include Dett's setting of "Ave Maria" in the Chamber Singers' repertoire for their tour of France. Garrett tells the story of Dett's "Ave Maria," which Dett's choir performed during a tour of Austria.

"The tour guide said let's go to this cathedral. And somebody asked, 'Who are you?' Because, I mean, you had this group of like 30 or 40 black people that just walk into this Austrian cathedral," he said. "They explain they are a choir, and they ask them to sing. They performed 'Ave Maria.' And afterwards, somebody asked whose setting it was because it was so beautiful, and they didn't know it, wondering if it was Brahms or Beethoven. And because he knew it was a church and reverent and not trying to cause a scene, he just said quietly, 'It's mine.'"

"That's definitely one piece that we'll be doing in France just for that reason," Garrett said. ■

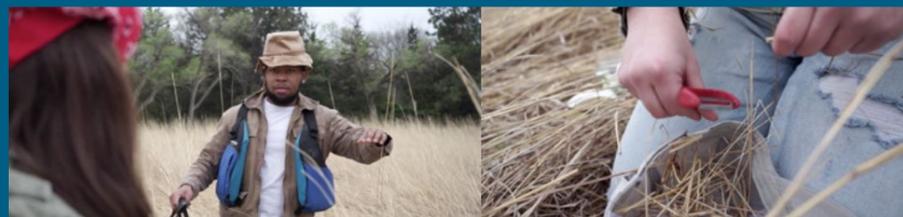
—To access Garrett's database on *The Non-Idiomatic Choral Music of Black Composers*, visit go.unl.edu/garrett.

Marques L.A. Garrett conducts a rehearsal of the Chamber Singers in Sheldon Museum of Art's Great Hall.

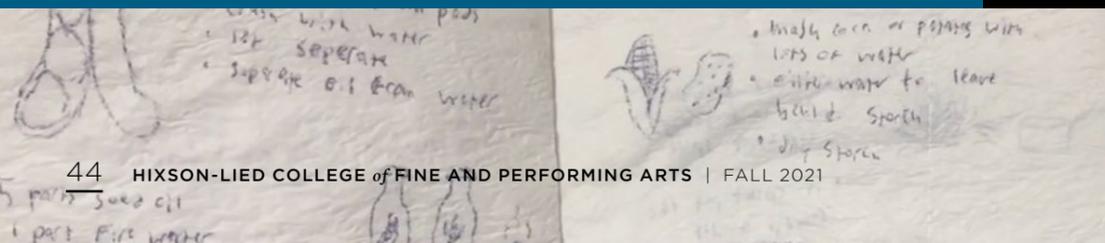




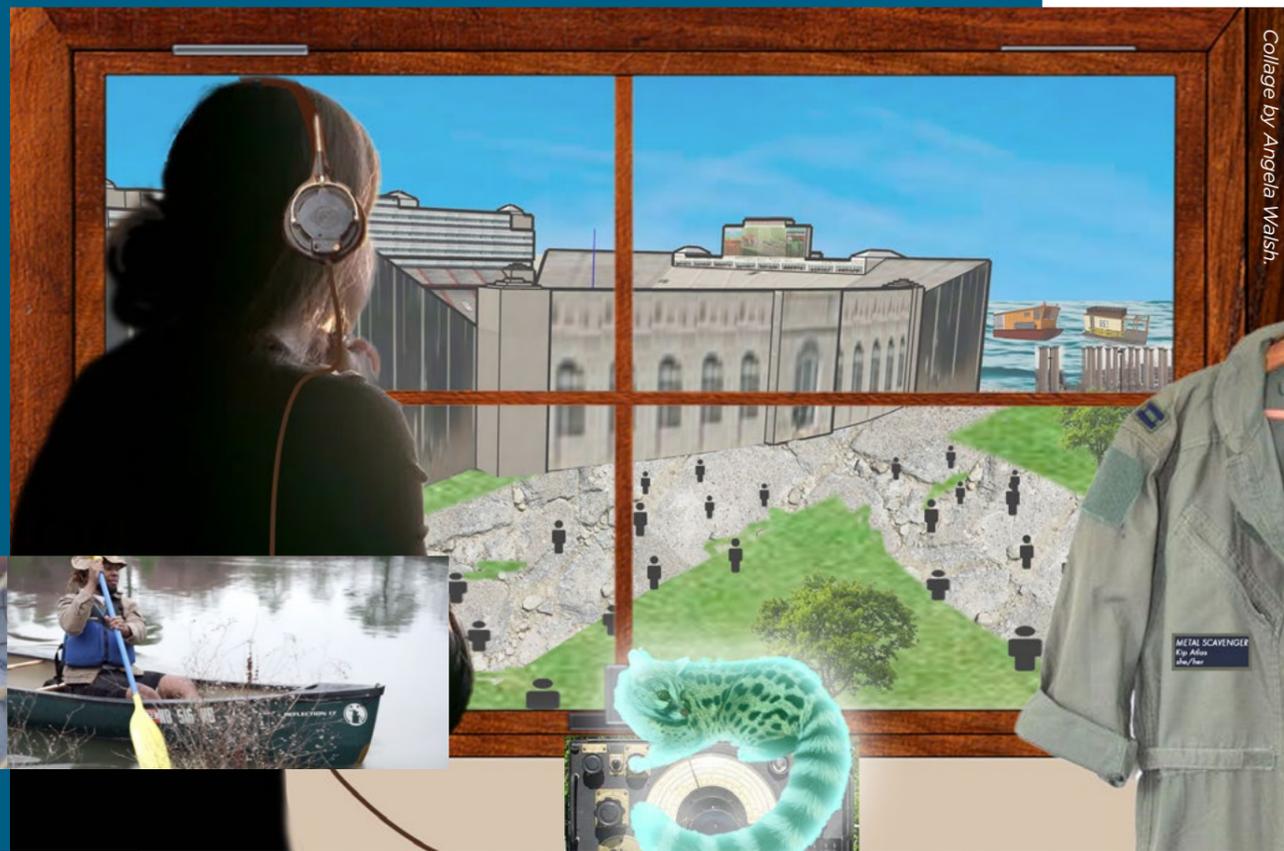
Emerging Media Arts student Olivia Jenkins created *The Book of Maladiis* to consider the ailments found on Planet JUNK, including "iitch-iitch," which are small bumps that appear on areas that come into contact with covering material.



Stills from a film by Hannah Pedersen and Paige Christensen.



Process sketches by Hunter Rausch.



Collage by Angela Walsh.

The course was also supported by Associate Professor of Art Stacy Asher, who attended the classes.

"She's really interested in learning the process and how to think about using it in her own design courses and future projects," Smith said.

In *Planet JUNK*, students began with this premise: What if there was a planet made of junk? Imagine a future world that is built on the detritus of our current civilization.

The starting point was a planet 15-20 generations from the present day called *JUNK*. It exists on the detritus of a civilization that had self-destructed in the early 2050s. The *JUNK* world evolved from this ruined civilization, and its population has adapted through

generations with few, if any, of the resources familiar to us today.

The Carson Center students called their segment *Neobrara*, and they imagined a location near the present-day Memorial Stadium. Salt Creek is now a river running alongside the former stadium location.

"It's a bit like *Swiss Family Robinson*, but instead of a deserted island, it's Lincoln in 300 years," said Hunter Rausch, a mechanical engineering student who was in the course. "The resources to rebuild with are the junk we leave behind today."

Rausch, who was recently accepted into the U.S. Space Force in developmental engineering, said collaboration evolved throughout the process.

"It was amazing working with students from so many other disciplines. Each of us had a different frame of reference to view the world through and different skills to build the world with," he said. "I think for a world-build to be compelling and immersive, it has to be robust when viewed from any angle. A story told by an emerging media arts student about a farmer on a collection of farm islands was backed up by engineer input on how fluid dynamics and erosion works. My own project of a book written by a junk-era

inventor was given depth by getting input on typography from a graphic design student."

Samantha Bendix, a graphic design student in the course, found the process of world-building to be completely different from what she is used to in graphic design.

"I'm used to working independently on projects so jumping into an extremely collaboration-heavy project was a bit of a shock to me," she said. "We alternated between working in small and big groups, which allowed us to work with a multitude of people and bounce ideas between groups. I met a few other students through the industry professional talks that were held through USC. It was interesting to hear

what other schools were working on, but on the flip side, it was also hard because you don't want their ideas to influence you and your own world-build."

Smith said the students created a rich, complex world. Other projects explored health and medicine, economics and currency, and culture, among many other topics.

"We could create media content from this for years and years," she said. "Hopefully students realize that they have this now as a kind of generative tool. Not only were they part of creating the largest world-build ever across multiple campuses, but they will always be able to come back and take from this and to think about how these ideas might spur future projects."

Nacho Trossero is a Professor at Universidad Austral in Buenos Aires. He wanted his students to participate in *Planet JUNK* to get a more holistic perspective.

"I think world-building will make them more complete persons," Trossero said. "Planet Junk is an immersive experience that makes us think about the future and our present. Our students will build the world, and they will get inside of it. I want my students to work together and to create together and also remember Alex McDowell's words: 'Anything we can imagine, we can create.'"

The multi-school development of the world will continue to evolve, with ongoing student participation by individual choice.

"The cool thing is the project will continue,"

"Not only were they part of creating the largest world-build ever across multiple campuses, but they will always be able to come back and take from this and to think about how these ideas might spur future projects."

Smith said. "And if students want to keep being part of it, it will keep expanding is the idea. So we will continue to grow." ■



3D rendering by Sophia Stueven.



May commencement held in person

New Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts graduates Alissa Clarke (left) and Destiney Chitrodom turn their tassels at the end of the commencement on May 8 in Memorial Stadium. The ceremonies were the university's first in-person graduation celebrations since December 2019—before the start of the pandemic. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.

Carson Center dedication events win CASE award

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts multi-day dedication events in November 2019 received a CASE District VI Gold Award.

CASE is the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Each year their awards recognize the best practices in advancement.

The Carson Center Dedication won in the Special Events-Multi-Day category. The event was organized by the University of Nebraska Foundation, Chancellor's Office, Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

The judges noted that it was "a very personalized event for the donor experience."

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts was officially dedicated on Sunday, November 17, 2019, at 1 p.m. with a public ceremony following a weekend of events to celebrate its opening and beginning of its inaugural year. The series of events were designed to recognize

and honor the \$20 million gift from the Johnny Carson Foundation to create the physical center and establish the Emerging Media Arts (EMA) academic program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. ■



Carson Center students launch confetti from the stairs of the new facility during the Nov. 17 grand opening celebration. Photo by Justin Mohling.



LEGGENT AWARDED 2ND PLACE IN YOUNG PAINTERS COMPETITION

Julia Leggent, a third-year Master of Fine Arts graduate student in the School of Art, Art History & Design, was awarded 2nd place in the 2021 Young Painters Competition by the Miami University (Ohio) College of Creative Arts and the Department of Art.

Founded in 1999, the Miami University Young Painters Competition features U.S. artists aged 25-35 who demonstrate excellence.

Honors Day AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The nomination form for our 2022 Alumni Board Awards is available at go.unl.edu/p927. Nominations for the Alumni Achievement Awards, Award of Merit and Student Leadership Award are due Friday, Dec. 3, 2021. See the website for full details or e-mail unlarts@unl.edu to have a nomination form e-mailed to you.

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts announced its 2021 recipients of the Honors Day awards. Due to the pandemic, we were unable to gather in person for the annual Honors Day Dinner.

THIS YEAR'S RECIPIENTS INCLUDED:

Alumni Achievement Award in Art: Maurice M. Dixon, Jr. (B.F.A. 1970; M.F.A. 1973). Currently living in New Mexico, Dixon is a rancher, businessman, entrepreneur, developer, curator, designer, painter, master tinsmith and scholar. He has authored the books *New Mexican Tinwork 1840-1940* (co-authored with Lane Coulter) and *The Artistic Legacy of Higinio V. Gonzales: A Tinsmith and Poet in Territorial New Mexico*.

Alumni Achievement Award in Music: Robert Krueger (B.M.E. 1984; M.M. 1994). Krueger retired in the summer of 2020 after 35 years with the Lincoln Public Schools, where he was most recently Director of Instrumental Music at Lincoln Southeast High School.

Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre and Film: Kara Thomson (M.F.A. 1998). Thomson is faculty and head of the Theatrical Design, Technical and Management program at Mesa Community College's Department of Theatre and Film Arts. She is also a freelance designer, who has designed for theatre and television. She received an Emmy for her work on *Days of Our Lives* and an Emmy nomination for her work on *General Hospital*.

Left: Maurice M. Dixon, Jr. Middle: Robert Krueger Right: Kara Thomson. Courtesy photos.



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

Award of Merit: Johnny Carson Foundation. The Johnny Carson Foundation Board, which includes Allan Alexander, Larry Witzer, Jeff Sotzing, Lawrence Heller and Steve Sotzing, have transformed not only the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, but the entire University of Nebraska-Lincoln, with their philanthropy, including a \$20 million gift to create the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

Student Leadership Award: Rebecca Nederhiser, Glenn Korff School of Music.



THE FOLLOWING HIXSON-LIED FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS WERE ANNOUNCED:

Senior Faculty Research and Creative Activity Award: Wendy Katz, School of Art, Art History & Design.

Junior Faculty Research and Creative Activity Award: Ash Eliza Smith, School of Art, Art History & Design and Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

Outreach, Engagement or Service Award: Stacy Asher, School of Art, Art History & Design.

Academic Advising Award: Ann Marie Pollard, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

Curriculum Development Award: Dana Fritz and Walker Pickering, School of Art, Art History & Design

Junior Faculty Teaching Awards: Katie Anania, School of Art, Art History & Design; and **Marques L.A. Garrett,** Glenn Korff School of Music.

Outstanding Lecturer Award: Perry Obee, School of Art, Art History & Design.

Outstanding Staff Award: Jeff O'Brien, Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

Staff Award for Exemplary Service: Dayana Corredor, Glenn Korff School of Music.

Staff M.V.P. Award: David Bagby, Dean's Office.

In addition, the following staff were recognized with Special Staff Service Awards for going above and beyond this year in preparing the college to teach, work and operate under the challenging circumstances of the pandemic:

Brad Buffum, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

Todd Cuddy, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film.

Drew Davis, School of Art, Art History & Design.

Andrea Gruber, School of Art, Art History & Design.

Leslie Harms, Glenn Korff School of Music.

Joseph Holmes, School of Art, Art History & Design.

Megan McMasters, Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

Joe Morris, Dean's Office.

Cameron Shoemaker, Glenn Korff School of Music.

For a full listing of this year's winners and more information on our recipients, visit go.unl.edu/honorsday2021.



Associate Dean Christopher Marks interviews Assistant Professor of Emerging Media Arts Jesse Fleming for an episode of the ArtsCast Nebraska podcast.

ArtsCast Nebraska podcast launches

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts has launched the monthly ArtsCast Nebraska podcast. Episodes are available at arts.unl.edu/podcasts or can be downloaded on Apple Podcasts and Stitcher.

Hosted by Associate Dean Christopher Marks, the podcast is about the creative activities and research of the faculty and alumni of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts.

“These are interesting stories about the arts and the people who create and study the arts,” Marks said. “While they get into details about specific disciplines and projects, they are also very accessible to general audiences. People can learn something about the arts and how they connect to the world, while also listening to interesting and enjoyable conversations.”

Previous episodes have included conversations with Sandra Williams, Marques L.A. Garrett, Hye-Won Hwang and Dana Fritz. New episodes are posted around the first of each month.

Marks said the podcast is a good way to let people get to know our faculty and alumni and the work they are doing.

“First of all, I just enjoy talking to our faculty about their work and learning more about what colleagues in other disciplines are doing,” Marks said. “I also wanted a way that we could share more stories with each other in the college as well as to the campus and community, and these conversations offer a completely different way to understand what people are doing than a written news story or a formal research presentation. I enjoy listening to some podcasts where people are interviewed and feel like it’s a great way to get a sense both of people’s personalities and their work, in a way that other mediums don’t quite achieve.”

Marks said the work of our faculty and alumni have an impact on the world.

“Our faculty do creative work and research that has real impact on the world and often connects with broader societal issues like diversity or the environment,” he said. “It’s important to recognize the ongoing work of our faculty in this way, because it’s not always easy to tell these stories with data and dollar amounts. We can also learn so much from each other about the creative process and what makes us curious about the world and the arts, through hearing personal stories about the work our faculty are doing.” ■

“It’s important to recognize the ongoing work of our faculty in this way.”



Williams takes ‘Stay Wild’ community art project to Alliance

Students from the Alliance Recreation Center create spray chalk animals as part of the Stay Wild community arts project, led by Associate Professor of Art Sandra Williams. Courtesy photos.

School of Art, Art History & Design Associate Professor of Art Sandra Williams spent a week in Alliance, Nebraska, in June to collaborate on her community art project titled “Stay Wild” with the Carnegie Arts Center and the Alliance Recreation Center.

“Community-based arts have always been, and always will be, part of my creative agenda,” Williams said. “Instead of a ‘top-down’ lecture, I prefer that the community explore the role arts play in creative placemaking, have the tactile experience of handling cut paper in the form of stencils, and engage with animals in a creative manner.”

It reunited her with School of Art, Art History & Design alumna Kyren (Conley) Gibson (B.F.A. 2011), who is the executive director of the Carnegie Arts Center in Alliance. While an undergraduate student at Nebraska, Gibson was her UCARE (Undergraduate Creative and Research Experiences) assistant, as well as her teaching assistant for her Art in the Community course.

“Professor Williams pushed beyond the usual mentorship role and tailored my experience towards my post-graduate goals, which were to move home and become an arts educator and advocate for arts in my rural hometown of Alliance, Nebraska,” Gibson said. “Professor Williams mentored me on the importance of arts in generating thriving communities. Now, as the director of the Carnegie Arts Center in Alliance, I am putting the skills she taught me to use and more.”

She was eager to collaborate with Williams on the “Stay Wild” project.

“When Professor Williams reached out about collaborating on her project ‘Stay Wild’ sidewalk safari, I jumped at the opportunity to work with

Williams was assisted by two School of Art, Art History & Design students, who were part of the Husker Afterschool Learning Opportunities (HALO) program to work with the Alliance Recreation Center’s students. HALO gives students the opportunity to assist with youth programming at local community sites over the course of the summer by leading clubs.

“Professor Williams has continued to use her dedication to enriching the educational opportunities of her mentees by bringing along two UNL students, Gannen Ingalls and Cicely Pickel,” Gibson said.

Gibson said both Williams and the Carnegie Arts Center believe in the importance of meaningful arts experiences for underserved populations, so they worked with the Alliance Recreation Center on the project. Their afterschool program and summer camp serve an average

40% low-income youth annually.

“Art programs allow our students to express themselves in a healthy, positive way,” said Courtney Hardin, the program director for the Alliance

Recreation Center. “The excitement our kiddos had at being allowed to use spray chalk stands out to me. The messier the project, the more

excited our kids get. They aren’t always given those types of experiences at school or home.”

Williams designed seven stencil sets of endangered animals, including a tiger, tree frog, axolotl, black-footed ferret, panda bear, big horn sheep and rock hopper penguin. Each stencil set included three layers with different levels of detail to create depth and contrast in the images. Six sets were created for each animal.

The 60 students from the Alliance Recreation Center were broken into classes of 15. Students worked in teams and took turns selecting their colors and spray chalking the stencil layer while their teammates helped hold down the stencils.

“Each finished stencil set was a collaborative masterpiece,” Gibson said. “It was essential to Professor Williams’ process that the children were able to take ownership in the process by selecting the animals they wanted and the color combinations. The results were unexpected and stunning.”

After two days of spray chalking and stenciling, the students were given fact sheets about the different endangered species. The older youth created haikus about the animals, and younger students created drawings of the animals and recited facts they had learned.

Mara Anderson, the executive director of the Alliance Recreation Center, was thankful for the collaboration.

“Watching the kids have fun is always rewarding, but seeing the magic Carnegie Arts Center and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln staff and students shared with our summer camp was truly something spectacular,” Anderson said. “The kids had a great time, and they were so excited every day that week for all the art projects.” ■



Kyren Gibson (left) assists a student with his spray-chalk panda bear. Courtesy photo.

“When Professor Williams reached out about collaborating on her project ‘Stay Wild’ sidewalk safari, I jumped at the opportunity to work with my mentor once again.”

my mentor once again,” Gibson said. “I think it is incredible that we have a UNL art professor that is willing to travel six hours across state to contribute not only to the beautification of our community, but to the educational development of youth in a rural community.”

In Memory of Jack Rokahr (1922–2021)

BY JOAN BARNES, UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

On March 5, Ernest “Jack” Rokahr (B.S. 1948) a charming man of fascinating stories, passionate collector of opera scores, World War II veteran, and proud Husker passed away at the age of 98. He left an incredible legacy, which included the Rokahr Family Archive, a collection of opera scores, published books about opera, posters, and recordings which he donated to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 2002.

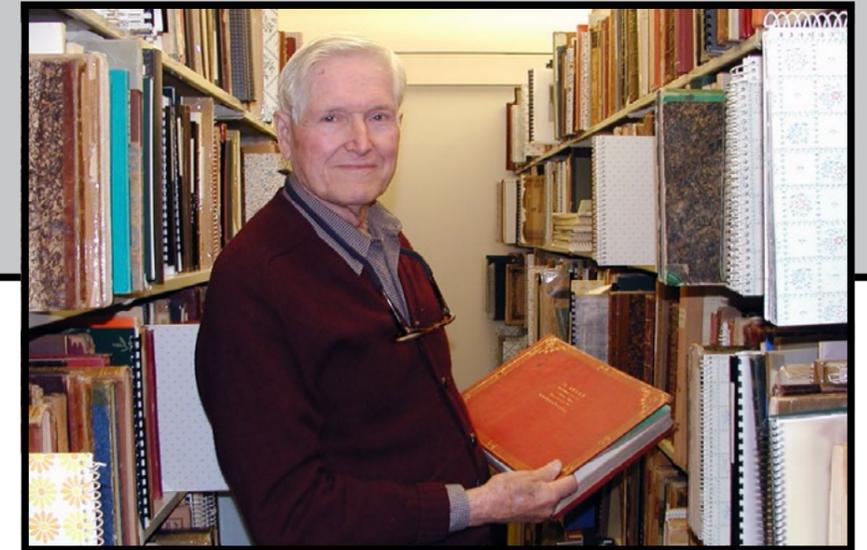
“We are extremely sad to learn of the passing of Mr. Jack Rokahr,” said Sergio H. Ruiz, professor and director of the Glenn Korff School of Music. “We remain grateful for the generosity of Mr. Rokahr to donate his vast opera score collection to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Music Library. Mr. Rokahr once said, ‘A life without culture is no life.’ The Rokahr Family Archive remains a valuable resource for music education and research at Nebraska. Jack’s own love of opera showed in this amazing collection. He will be missed.”

Throughout his life Rokahr collected opera scores, from his first score, Bizet’s *Carmen*, bought from Walt’s Music Store when he was a teenager in Lincoln, Nebraska, to incredible discoveries and purchases in Europe during and after World War II.

“One of Jack’s best stories was about how he tracked down the music publisher Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig right after the war, only to find their building had been destroyed by bombs,” explained Anita Breckbill, music librarian “He was directed to a small storefront next door, asked for opera scores, and after a phone call by the proprietor, a representative from the publisher Peters rode up on a bike with opera scores for Jack.”

In another favorite post-war story, related in Rokahr’s private autobiography, he played piano in Nice for a party given by Edward, then the Duke of Windsor, and Wallis Simpson. He found a score for their favorite musical, *Oklahoma*, and accompanied them while they belted out the songs. Rokahr even described the clothes they were wearing, down to Edward’s very proper opera shoes with bows.

Breckbill fondly remembers Rokahr packing and transferring the collection materials with “military precision” for its transfer to the Music Library where



Jack Rokahr

it has made its home. Rokahr’s hope was that his collection would “ignite” student’s desire to learn more about opera and put Nebraska on the “operatic map.”

“Jack loved his collection, was so optimistic, full of stories, and he was interested in how the Archive would be used to support research,” explained Breckbill.

Since 2002, Rokahr continued to collect and grow the Archive, and he also started a fund at the University of Nebraska Foundation to help the Music Library purchase more scores, books and recordings in the future. He wrote his own article (go.unl.edu/846a) about the Archive which was published in *The Opera Quarterly* in 2003.

Rokahr’s dream that the Archive would inspire research did come true. A doctoral student, Hannah Jo Smith, published her dissertation using the French operettas that were the “Diamonds in the Rokahr” (go.unl.edu/y6cn) and two articles that Breckbill published after taking Faculty Development Fellowships to work on the research. One project (go.unl.edu/Oxo6) was inspired by the 23 scores in the Archive that were labeled as part of circulating libraries for music in France.

Some of the scores from the Archives have been digitized (go.unl.edu/ig7u) in the Libraries Images and Multimedia databases, and some items have been included in the international database *IMSLP – International Music Score Library Project*.

“While it is sad to lose Jack, we are so grateful that he shared his passion with us and that his collection can continue supporting research and performance for our students and faculty and is being opened up, through digitization, for opera aficionados across the world,” said Breckbill. “He would love that.” ■



Leta Powell Drake

Leta Powell Drake, 83, died Sept. 15. She was a member of the Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Board.

Born in Duluth, Minnesota, Powell Drake received her bachelor's degree in speech and English from the University of Minnesota and a master's degree in theatre arts from UNL. She won the Best Actress award five times at the University of Nebraska Theatre, with the award being renamed the Leta Powell Drake Acting Award. She acted in more than 100 plays and two movies.

In her 60-year TV career, she hosted and produced more than 10,000 TV shows, including KOLN-TV's *The Morning Show*, among others. She is remembered as "Kalamity Kate" on KOLN-TV's long-running children's show *Cartoon Corral*. She also worked at Nebraska Public Television, serving as assistant network programming director for 13 years.

Most recently, Powell Drake received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the

Leta Powell Drake received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters during the university's undergraduate commencement ceremony on Aug. 14. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln at the August 2021 commencement.

In addition to our Alumni Board, Powell Drake served on the boards of the UNL Alumni Association, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Lincoln Advertising Federation, Lincoln Community Playhouse, YMCA, the Salvation Army, Nebraskans for Public Television, Nebraskans for Public Radio, among others. She also worked extensively with UNL's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute.



David Routon

David F. Routon, 88, of Lincoln, professor emeritus of art, died Oct. 26, 2020.

Routon was born Dec. 6, 1931, in Jackson, Tennessee. He served as a U.S. Marine in the Korean War before going on to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts in studio art at Mexico City College and a Master of

Fine Arts in art practice at the University of Iowa with emphases in painting and printmaking.

During his career as an artist and art instructor, Routon taught at several institutions, including Michigan State University, State University College at Plattsburgh, University of Minnesota and the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. He served for 23 years at Nebraska, starting on Aug. 23, 1976, and retiring as an emeritus professor in 1999.

Routon is well known for his pictorial artworks, including a number of portrait commissions. His works were primarily completed by drawing and painting.

Robert Spence

Dr. James Robert "Bob" Spence, 95, passed away March 31, 2021. He was born on Aug. 20, 1925. He was Professor Emeritus of Art History and a former chair of the School of Art, Art History & Design (1970–1974).

Spence began teaching at Nebraska in 1966. He retired in 1998 after a 32-year career. He had previously taught at the University of Pittsburgh and Mount Mercy College in Pittsburgh.

He received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Maryland and his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin.



Frank Tirro

Frank P. Tirro passed away March 28, 2021, after a long illness. Tirro was the dean of the Yale School of Music from 1980 to 1989 and a former member of the Hixson-Lied Advisory Board.

Tirro is remembered for his pathbreaking writings on music, education and racism in America; his landmark contributions to our understanding of the history of jazz; his studies of late medieval and renaissance music; and his considerable administrative accomplishments.

Tirro was also an ASCAP award-winning composer and highly respected professional clarinetist and saxophone player.

Born in Omaha, Nebraska, Tirro received his Bachelor of Music from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 1960. He earned his M.M. from Northwestern University, and his Ph.D. in musicology from the University of Chicago in 1974. Tirro received the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Achievement Award in Music in 2006.



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Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts

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The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts invites alumni and friends dedicated to enhancing the programmatic resources in each of our three academic units to join the Art Patron's Circle in the School of Art, Art History & Design, the Carson Circle in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, and the Encore Circle in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

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

We are also acknowledging gifts to our new funds to support the UNL Dance Program, the UNL Dance Program Fund and the UNL Dance Alumni Endowment Fund.

If you are interested in making a gift, visit go.unl.edu/givefpa.

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We are pleased to thank the following contributors, who accepted our invitation to join the Art Patron's Circle, the Carson Circle, the Encore Circle and the UNL Dance Program from June 1, 2020, to May 31, 2021.

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Laurel Shoemaker focused on students

“I just thought now is a good time to be solely a lighting designer instead of an instructor,” said Laurel Shoemaker on her decision to retire from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln last spring. “That’s my passion, and I thought this would be a good time to focus on that.”

Shoemaker has been working as a lighting designer and theatre artist for 30 years.

When she came to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln as an undergraduate, she thought she might want to teach high school theatre, but eventually gravitated toward lighting design.

“As a young design/tech major, I really wanted to be a scene designer, but I can’t draw,” she said. “At the time, when I was being encouraged to be a costume designer, I was also told that to be a scene designer, you have to be able to draw a sketch of what the set would look like, and I

thought that would be so frustrating. But since then, I’ve figured out that I am happy to build a model, and I can show you how it looks because I can think spatially in my head, but my hand is not interested. I still wanted to be in the theatre, so I thought I’ll try this lighting thing. And you

know, it’s been great. I love lighting. I love to tell a story through the subtlety of lighting. Since then, I’ve designed both scenery and lights. I just switched the communication tool from sketching to a building a scale model.”

Shoemaker liked lighting design.

“I tell my students that in lighting we have all the power, but we’re nice about it,” Shoemaker said. “If the lights are off, you can’t see anything. And then if the lights are on, you can see what I want you to see and how I want you to see it.”

In addition to her teaching duties at Nebraska, Shoemaker has worked as a freelance lighting designer. Her credits include productions with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Hubbard Street 2, the Chicago Dancing Festival and corporate work for Microsoft with Yeager Design.

While at Nebraska, Shoemaker upgraded the lighting area with state-of-the-art equipment and technology. She also created a lighting lab in Temple Rm. 301, which allows students to use actual-sized lighting equipment and real control to learn the basics of lighting.

“When I came here [to teach], we had the same lighting equipment we had when I left here in 1980,” Shoemaker said. “There had been some improvements from my predecessors, but a lot of our gear was the same. We were lucky to be able to upgrade through both the Carson and Hixson-Lied Endowments. We’ve made this a house that can attract new students, new grad students and attract faculty. They know they’re supported with equipment and resources, and I don’t see this stopping.”

Matt Miller (B.F.A. and B.A. 2008) met Shoemaker during his senior year.

“When I first met Laurel, she was an adjunct faculty member trying to convince me—a fifth-year senior with a double major—to take her Lighting III class,” he said. “Then, she was asking me to assist for an opera at the School of Music so I could work with a Chicago-based lighting designer named Todd Clark, whom I still work with to this day. Then, she was a guest lighting designer for my first gig at

Hubbard Street, and was teaching me how to focus a dance plot. Then, we were working together at the Pritzker Pavilion on the Chicago Dancing Festival, and then... and then... and then... the list goes on.”

Aja Jackson (B.F.A. 2013) is a freelance lighting designer based in Boston. She said Shoemaker’s devotion to her students went beyond teaching them lighting design.

“Her dedication to our education and training ran miles beyond teaching the craft of design,” she said. “She gave, and still gives, the most honest advice—the kind you need to hear. We, Laurel’s students, could fill novels with how she affected our lives and careers. For my part, I would not be where I am today without her. I’m certain of that.”

For now, Shoemaker plans to keep working even after retiring from teaching.

“My goal when I set this retirement into motion was to travel. And my other goal was to do more freelance lighting at the professional level,” Shoemaker said. “Now here we are in today’s almost post-Covid world where none of that is happening right now, so I have to say I don’t know what’s next. I can easily keep occupied learning and challenging myself until the country opens back up.”

She is grateful for her time at Nebraska.

“It has been 10 years of really good friends, good productions, good experiences and great students. And this isn’t the end.”

Laurel Shoemaker with graduate student Grace Trudeau in the Studio Theatre.

“There’s no one great memory of my tenure here,” she said. “It has been 10 years of really good friends, good productions, good experiences and great students. And this isn’t the end. Just because I’m going to move my desk chair home doesn’t mean I will never come back here. There are still things to do.” ■

College welcomes new faculty

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts welcomes the following new faculty. For more on our new faculty, visit go.unl.edu/xqze.



BRYCE ALLEN

Assistant Professor of Theatre in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film

Allen joined the faculty as technical director/production manager. He comes to us from Weber State University where he was technical director/production

manager since 2014. Allen worked as technical director, carpenter or designer at Utah Festival Opera, Insight Theatre, Stages St. Louis and The Black Rep, among others.

He received his M.F.A. in theatre from Southern Illinois University/Carbondale, with an emphasis in technical direction and a second emphasis in sound design. Allen received a B.F.A. in theatre arts from Utah State University with emphases in stage management and theatre technology.



JEN LUKAS-LANDIS

Assistant Professor of Practice in Graphic Design in the School of Art, Art History & Design

Originally from Omaha, Lukas-Landis is the creative director/owner of Pincurl Girls, a company whose mission is to inspire girls to believe in and love themselves. She most recently was Vice President/Executive Creative Director of KidGlov, a branding, advertising and marketing agency in Lincoln and Omaha.

She has more than 20 years of experience in marketing and advertising. Landis received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in graphic design and her Master of Fine Arts in digital art and new media from the University of Nebraska—Lincoln.



SUNA GUNTHER

Assistant Professor of Music in Voice in the Glenn Korff School of Music

Gunther previously served as assistant professor and coordinator of voice at the College of Saint Rose in Albany, New York. Gunther received her Bachelor's degree from Northwestern University as a double major in voice and opera performance and instrumental music education with an emphasis in alto saxophone. She received her Master's and Doctoral degrees from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music in vocal performance, with minors in music history and literature.

Gunther has spent the past decade as a "cultural ambassador" of the U.S. State Department. On the behalf of embassies and consulates, she has performed concerts representing the past century of American music and given workshops to local musicians.

PAULA CLARE HARPER

Assistant Professor of Musicology in the Glenn Korff School of Music

Harper was formerly a postdoctoral teaching fellow at Washington University in St. Louis. She will teach courses in music history, ethnomusicology and popular music, as well as special topics courses. Harper completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and music from the University of Chicago in 2010, followed by a Master of Arts in music history from the University of Washington. In 2019, she completed her Ph.D. at Columbia University.



Harper has produced scholarship on pop stars Beyoncé and Taylor Swift, the video platform TikTok and various internet musical genres. She recently co-organized the 2021 virtual Taylor Swift Study Day.

FACULTY NOTES

Katie Anania, assistant professor of art history, was named as Special Personnel on a four-year, NSF-funded grant of \$6 million, which will study harmful algal blooms, nitrate-contaminated water and "dead zones" in oceans and lakes. For this project she will lead a workshop series called "Art, Data and Environment/s" that uses feminist art to visualize water contamination. She organized a related exhibition, *The Nature of Waste: Material Pathways, Discarded Worlds*, which opened in August at the Sheldon Museum of Art, and delivered a public talk about her research on June 8 at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C.

Scott Anderson, professor of trombone, and **Bo Atlas**, lecturer in tuba/euphonium, performed with the Des Moines Symphony on April 15. The concert took place at the Temple for the Arts in Des Moines and was livestreamed.

Carolyn Barber

Ron and Carol Cope Professor of Music and Director of Bands, brought the ground-



breaking work of the Ensemble Performance Lab to a national constituency as guest lecturer for a three-week seminar in innovative rehearsal techniques through VanderCook College of Music (Chicago). She was also highlighted in Tau Beta Sigma's *Women in Music* series, speaking at the 2021 Midwest District Convention.

Paul Barnes, Marguerite Scribante Professor of Piano, performed in April in New York City as part of the Cutting Edge Concerts New Music Festival. His program included Ron Warren's *Distances Between 2*, the New York premiere of his solo transcription of Philip Glass's Piano Quintet *Annunciation*, the New York premiere of Glenn Korff School of Music Lecturer **David von Kampen's** *Trisagion*, and three works by Victoria Bond. The performance is available to view on YouTube at go.unl.edu/barnesconcert. In addition, Barnes was recently named the artistic director for the Lied Center for Performing Arts Piano Academy.

Diane Barger, professor of clarinet, was invited to present a video performance for the online International Clarinet Association's ClarinetFest® in July as a member of the Amicitia Duo (along with Professor of Piano **Mark Clinton**) and gave 10 guest artist master class presentations on "The Life and Legacy of Robert Marcellus" during the spring semester via Zoom to university clarinet studios across the country in California, Massachusetts, Texas, Florida, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado and Illinois.

Tony Bushard, associate professor of music history, and **Brian Moore**, professor of music education and technology, presented "Music as Art, Discipline, and Profession: A Case Study for Collaborative Research, Teaching, and Performance" at the American Musicological Society Pedagogy Study Group's annual Teaching



Katie Anania

ANANIA NAMED A TYSON SCHOLAR IN AMERICAN ART

Katie Anania, assistant professor of art history in the School of Art, Art History & Design, has been named a Tyson Scholar in American Art for the spring 2022 semester at the Crystal Bridges Museum of Art in Bentonville, Arkansas.

"I was delighted to hear that I'd been named a Tyson Scholar," Anania said. "The fellowships in American Art at Crystal Bridges are an unparalleled opportunity to work on a project in the company of like-minded thinkers. Living and working so close to a museum collection, too, makes the research and writing feel more urgent and exciting."

Established in 2012, the Tyson Scholars Program supports scholarship that seeks to expand boundaries and traditional categories of investigation into American art and visual culture. Since its inception, it has supported the work of 46 scholars.

Anania will be spending the 15-week residential fellowship doing research for her second book project, *Devour Everything: Art and Hunger in the Age of Commodity Agriculture*.



Peter Pinnell

PINNELL RECEIVES WINDGATE FOUNDATION GRANT FOR NEW ELECTRIC KILNS

Professor of Art Peter Pinnell has received a \$44,000 grant from the Windgate Foundation to replace electric kilns in the School of Art, Art History & Design's ceramics program.

The grant will be used to replace eight of the school's 14 electric kilns, along with kiln shelves and some additional spare parts.

"Ceramics have always been very well supported at Nebraska, and visitors are envious of our facilities," said Pinnell, who also currently serves as president of the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts.

“Still a number of our kilns were reaching the end of their lifetimes, and it costs a lot to simply replace kilns, while upgrading to better models can be cost-prohibitive. That is why the grant from Windgate will be so transformative.”

Music History Conference, which met virtually in June 2020.

Megan Elliott, director of the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, is currently serving as AR/VR coordinator for the Worlds of Connections project (worldsofconnections.com) led by Dr. Julia McQuillan and funded by NIH SEPA (Science Education Partnership Award). This project is developing dynamic learning activities and building partnerships between middle school youth, NIH-funded network scientists, learning research and educators to increase awareness of and interest in network science for health. Elliott began a three-year term in August 2021 as a member of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Office of Research and Economic Development's (ORED) Research Advisory Board.



Ben Evjen's Heteronym poster was selected to be featured in the international C-IDEA Design Awards.

During the spring 2021 semester, Assistant Professor of Practice in Design **Ben Evjen's** special topics course worked with design educators and students from the Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design & Technology in Bangalore, India, and the American University of Kuwait in Kuwait City, Kuwait. Students worked virtually with international partners to create several collaborative graphic design works. His Heteronym poster was selected to be featured

in the international C-IDEA Design Awards. This annual competition was held at the Doosung Paper Gallery in Seoul, South Korea, in July and the Poznan Design Festival in Poland in September.

Gretchen Foley, associate professor of music theory, was elected to a four-year term as Secretary of the Society for Music Theory, the premier association for music theory in North America. She has been an active member of SMT since 1999, presenting her research and serving in a variety of capacities.

Dana Fritz, Hixson-Lied Professor of Art, has been awarded an Arts & Humanities Research Enhancement Fund grant for 2021–22 from the Office of Research and Economic Development for her project, *Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape* book and exhibition. *Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape* makes visible the forces that shaped the Nebraska National Forest at Halsey, once the world's largest hand-planted forest. Fritz produced a small edition artist book, *[Pocket] Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape* that was included in two exhibitions this summer: *Reclamation: Artist Books about the Environment* in San Francisco and *UNBOUND 10* at Candela Gallery in Richmond, Virginia.



Dana Fritz, "Fire Tower View," from *Field Guide to a Hybrid Landscape*.

Marques L.A. Garrett, assistant professor of music in choral activities, conducted two virtual honor choirs in Michigan and Virginia. He also gave approximately 40 virtual lectures for various colleges, universities and organizations. Garrett has also had one peer-reviewed article accepted for a national publication and had four songs accepted for peer-reviewed publication.



Danni Gilbert, associate professor of practice in music education, was awarded the 2020 Outstanding Music Educator of the Year award from the Nebraska Music Educators Association in November of 2020. She also completed a project, "Action research for pre-service music educators in field experiences," that was accepted for presentation at the Virginia Music Educators Association Conference (November 2020) and the South Carolina Music Educators Association Conference (April 2021). Her research on anxiety and depression among music majors was published in June in the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* (Vol. 30, issue 3, pgs. 69–83). Her research project "An Exploration of the Use

and the Attitudes Toward Technology Among Fourth and Fifth Grade Band and Orchestra Teachers, Students and Their Parents" was published this summer in *Research & Issues in Music Education*.



Tom Larson, associate professor of composition, emerging media and digital arts, made the presenta-

tion "Integrating eBooks into Learning Management Systems" at the College Music Society's virtual national conference in October. In December, his piece *Omnisphere* was premiered by the Jazz Big Band of Sichuan Conservatory of Music in Sichuan, China.

William McMullen, professor of oboe and music theory, was invited to teach four oboe masterclasses this year using Zoom at the University of Iowa in October, University of Kansas in November, Miami University in March and Ohio University in April. In addition he arranged to have nine masterclasses for his studio with oboists from around the world, including Courtney Miller (University of Iowa), Trevor Mowry (principal oboe in the U.S. Marine Corps Band in Washington, D.C.) and Billy Short (principal bassoon of the Met Opera Orchestra in New York City), among others.



William McMullen (center) with two students from the oboe studio of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, in March.

Clark Potter, professor of viola, presented a faculty lecture-recital on Feb. 18 on Johann Sebastian Bach's *6th Cello Suite on Viola*. He



Clark Potter rehearses Johann Sebastian Bach's 6th Cello Suite on Viola on a five-string viola.

performed his own edition of this suite on a five-string viola provided to the university thanks to a gift from the Constance Miriam Syford and Ethel Corrine Syford Memorial Fund, which supports faculty research. The performance was the first time the instrument was heard in public. Learn more about the project at go.unl.edu/4sb6.

Jamie Reimer Seaman, associate professor of voice, won the inaugural programming award from the International Alliance for Women in Music (IAWM). Reimer Seaman received a special Judges' Citation from The American Prize for championing the music of Robert Owens. She was a national finalist for The American Prize in two categories: Women in Art Song/Oratorio and Chamber Music (with the Robert Owens Ensemble, which includes Stacie Haneline, piano; **Clark Potter**, viola; and **Karen Becker**, cello).

Greg Simon, assistant professor of composition, was the Second Prize winner in the Moscow Conservatory 2020 New Classics Competition, Popular Modern Classics



Greg Simon

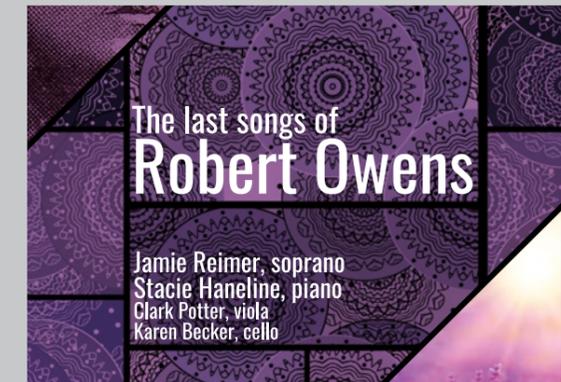
performed at the International Online Bass Summit and the Virtual Kansas City Bass Workshop during the summer of 2020. As President-Elect of the International Society of Bassists, he hosted the 2021 Virtual ISB Biennial Convention in June 2021. Sponsored in part by the Hixson Lied College and Glenn Korff School of Music, the ISB Convention attracted more than 2,000 bassists from 40 countries.



Hans Sturm, Hixson Lied Professor of Double Bass and Jazz Studies, taught and performed at the

International Online Bass Summit and the Virtual Kansas City Bass Workshop during the summer of 2020. As President-Elect of the International Society of Bassists, he hosted the 2021 Virtual ISB Biennial Convention in June 2021. Sponsored in part by the Hixson Lied College and Glenn Korff School of Music, the ISB Convention attracted more than 2,000 bassists from 40 countries.

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



REIMER CD FEATURES 'THE LAST SONGS OF ROBERT OWENS'

Associate Professor of Voice Jamie Reimer Seaman's CD *The Last Songs of Robert Owens* was recently released by Centaur Records.

"This CD is a culmination of the songs for voice and piano and the chamber music for voice and strings (viola, cello and piano) that Robert Owens wrote at the end of his life," Reimer Seaman said.

Reimer Seaman is joined on the CD by Stacie Haneline, piano; Clark Potter, viola; and Karen Becker, cello. Assistant Professor of Composition, Emerging Media and Digital Arts Tom Larson engineered the recording.

Reimer Seaman has been researching and performing Owens' works since 2007. In August 2015, Reimer Seaman and the Glenn Korff School of Music presented the North American premiere of Owens' opera titled *Culture! Culture!* He wrote the opera in Hamburg, Germany, in 1961 and premiered it in Ulm, Germany, in 1970. He died on Jan. 5, 2017.

For more on the CD, visit go.unl.edu/ycm7.

Associate Professor of Voice Jamie Reimer Seaman's CD *The Last Songs of Robert Owens*.

Korff School alum's music heard on multi-platinum recording artist albums



Orrin Wilson (left) and Anthony Barfield in the studio as the production duo "velocitymadeit."

Orrin Wilson graduated from the Glenn Korff School of Music in 2011 with a DMA in trumpet performance. Today, he's part of the music production duo called "velocitymadeit," whose music can be heard on multi-platinum recording artist albums from Chris Brown, Young M.A., Lil Wayne, and more.

"It's quite shocking to hear music that you sit alone in your room in front of a computer for hours trying to get the right ideas, or you're in a studio with an artist, trying to come up with something that never existed before. And then to hear it on the radio or to hear it being streamed so many times or see people dancing to it on TikTok," Wilson said.

Orrin Wilson (left) and Anthony Barfield (right) with artist Young M.A. in 2019.

Wilson formed velocitymadeit with Anthony Barfield, his roommate at the Manhattan School of Music, where he attended after UNL. In 2015 they caught the attention of Amadeus (Antwan Thompson), a multi-platinum music producer and music director for Trey Songz. In 2016, Amadeus told them to look at something posted on singer and rapper Chris Brown's social media pages.

"When I looked on Instagram, here was Chris Brown singing to one of the songs that we produced for him," Wilson said. "And I was like, okay, now it is about to change."

Brown went on to record seven of their songs, three of which were on his album "Cuffing Season: 12 Days of Christmas," which went four times platinum, two times in the U.S. (RIAA), platinum in Canada and New Zealand,

and gold in Australia and in the U.K.

That led to working with more artists, including Young M.A., Toni Romiti, Melii, Trippie Reed, Lil Wayne, and getting music into commercials and video games, too.

"Knowing that we're the person who made the music is always a very humbling experience because it's like I created something that could change how people feel," he said. "I think it's an amazing, amazing thing, to say the least."

Read more about Wilson at go.unl.edu/owilson. ■

CERAMICS ALUMNA WILLERS IS NCECA president-elect

School of Art, Art History & Design alumna Rhonda Willers (M.F.A. 2007) is the president-elect of the board of directors for NCECA (National Council on the Education for the Ceramic Arts).

NCECA is the largest ceramics organization in the world and one of the largest visual arts organizations in the U.S. with around 6,000 members attending the national conference each year.

Willers became president-elect in March 2021 and will begin serving a two-year term as president in March 2022. She will succeed Professor of Art Peter Pinnell, who is currently serving as president.

Willers previously served as a special advisor from 2020–2021 and steward of the board from 2018–2020. From 2009–2012, she served as director at large on the NCECA board.

"After much thought and discussion with my family, I was more than happy to say yes to

this opportunity," Willers said. Pinnell said Willers is an excellent choice for this leadership post at NCECA.

"Rhonda is one of the most wise, competent and hard-working people I've known," he said. "That's why boards have asked her to serve. This year has been difficult for NCECA as we had to cancel our national conference last March and have spent the year transitioning from holding a large, in-person conference to holding a large virtual conference. Rhonda has played a key role in this enormous task, and the current board was unanimous in asking Rhonda to become the president to follow me."

Willers is a full-time studio artist and writer at her home in rural Wisconsin. She recently authored the book, *Terra Sigillata: Contemporary Techniques*, which was published by The American Ceramics Society in February 2019.

"It's still hard to believe a book about this topic hadn't been published until 2019 with its deep roots in ceramics history and contemporary practice," she said. "I have particularly enjoyed connecting with readers and users of the book on social media. The responses are coming from around the globe, and it truly is a joy to know this resource is serving our global ceramics community." ■



Top: Rhonda Willers decorates a double-joined vessel with terra sigillata layers. Photo by April Bodenburg.

Right: Rhonda Willers' book, *Terra Sigillata: Contemporary Techniques*. Photo courtesy of The American Ceramic Society.

Husker alumna Meier honored as Jerome Hill Artist Fellow



Catherine Meier, "August 29, 2014, 9:02 p.m., Standing Witness, site: Sage Creek."

School of Art, Art History & Design alumna Catherine Meier (B.F.A. 2005) has been honored as a Jerome Hill Artist Fellow. The Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship awards 60 artist fellowships to early career artists in Minnesota and New York City annually.

Meier is one of 10 who received the fellowships in visual arts. Fellows receive \$50,000 over

two consecutive years to support self-determined activities for creation of new work, artistic development and/or professional artistic career development.

Meier said it's a "game changer" for her career as an artist.

"It is made even more so by the fact that it is coupled with my recent McKnight Fellowship, so between the two, I have three continuous years of funding," Meier said. "But it isn't about the financial benefit. The Jerome Foundation is known for its supportive approach to artists. Its core values are diversity, innovation and risk, and humility. I am being given a space and time that nurtures my growth as an artist through this lens, which are core values that I share as well."

Alumni Notes

1967

Bob Hall (B.F.A. Theatre; M.A. 1969; M.F.A. Art 2017) created the World of Viruses weekly comic book page for kids on the coronavirus with Professor Judy Diamond. They received a National Science Foundation grant for the project. It consists of three parts: the first dealing with the nature of the virus, the second on the virus and bats, and the third about Native Americans and COVID-19. Hall co-authored the stories with Diamond, Professor Elizabeth Van Wormer and Judi M. Galashkibos, Director of the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs. View the work at worldofviruses.unl.edu.



Bob Hall created the World of Viruses weekly comic book page for kids on the coronavirus with Professor Judy Diamond.

1971

Paula Tiegeler Baack (B.S.E.; M.M. 1973) completed 46 years as a choral director in 2017. In 2018, Baack initiated a new role as an educational consultant, which included writing about her career as a teacher in Nebraska (which included directing the UNL Scarlet & Cream Singers from 1995–97), Arizona and Colorado. In 2019, Baack published her memoir, *Rescue the Teacher, Save the Child!* (go.unl.edu/2wks). When Baack is not advocating for teachers, she operates a voice studio in Colorado (Peak Performance Voice Studio), which has received state, regional and national recognition.

1978

Douglas Anderson (M.F.A. Theatre) spent 17 years teaching (Illinois, Amherst and Middlebury) before a stint as a head writer on the CBS daytime drama *The Guiding Light*. In 1997 he happened to walk into a decaying 1884 building in Middlebury, Vermont, and on discovering that it was originally a theater, he led a \$5 million restoration, completed in 2008. Town Hall Theater is now a thriving performing arts center. Anderson also created Opera Company of Middlebury, now in its 17th season, which has been celebrated in Opera News and the Huffington Post. In 2019 he was given a lifetime achievement award for his contribution to the arts in the State of Vermont.

1983

Lynn-Steven Johanson (M.F.A. Theatre) had his second mystery novel, *Havana Brown*, published by Level Best Books in May. *Havana Brown* is a prequel to his first novel, *Rose's Thorn*, which was recognized in the mystery category as a distinguished favorite in the Independent Press Awards. In addition to writing novels, Johanson is an award-winning playwright whose plays have been produced in the U.S., U.K., Denmark, Australia, New Zealand, India and the Kingdom of Bahrain.

1998

Greg Tavares (M.F.A. Theatre) released an audiobook of his solo show titled *I Am the Horrible Thing: A True Life Story of How I Almost Got Myself Killed... on Vacation on Audible and Amazon* (go.unl.edu/4shq). Tavares relives his near-death experience on vacation in Costa Rica so deeply, you won't know if he gets out alive until the very end.

1999

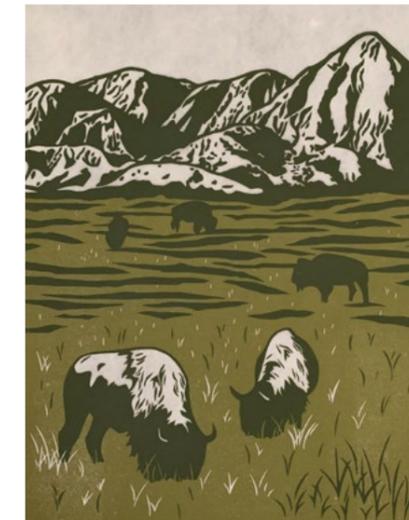
Michael Strand (M.F.A. Art) was part of the *Crafting America* exhibition at Crystal Bridges Museum in Arkansas (go.unl.edu/vt03). The exhibition celebrates the skill and individuality of craft within the broad context of American art. Strand has also taken a new position as Director of the new School of Design, Architecture and Art at North Dakota State University.

2007

Candace Frank (B.F.A. Theatre-Film and New Media) started a non-profit of more than 800 volunteers that have made and donated more than 100,000 cloth masks in the state of Washington (www.craftersagainstcovid19.org).

2014

Danielle Dewees (B.F.A. Art) has a print, "Where the Bison Roam," that was selected for the 2021 Nebraska Artist Biennial this past



Danielle Dewees, "Where the Bison Roam," which was selected for the 2021 Nebraska Artist Biennial.

summer at Gallery 1516 in Omaha. The biennial was a juried exhibition open to all artists who are affiliated with Nebraska. Out of 1,000 submissions for this year's exhibition, 100 artists were selected. Dewees' *Mosaic* design was also chosen for Nebraska's first Support the Arts license plate.

2015

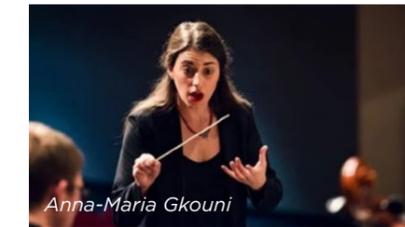
Scott Rieker (M.M.), Department of Music at Frostburg State University, was principal author of "COVID and the Choral Director: Preparedness, Perceptions, Attitudes, and a Way Forward," which was published in *The Choral Journal's* February 2021 issue. This quantitative study details the impact of COVID-19 on choral music educators, particularly demonstrating that choral teachers felt unprepared for pandemic-impacted teaching, but that they rose to the occasion by independently seeking out new training and skills in great numbers. Rieker also had his composition *Famous' Last Words* (for SATB choir, reader and piano) selected as one of the three winners for the Missoula Community Chorus' "The Way Through, Composition Contest in the time of Covid-19." The award comes with a cash prize and a premiere of the winning works by the Missoula Community Chorus in the fall of 2021.

2016

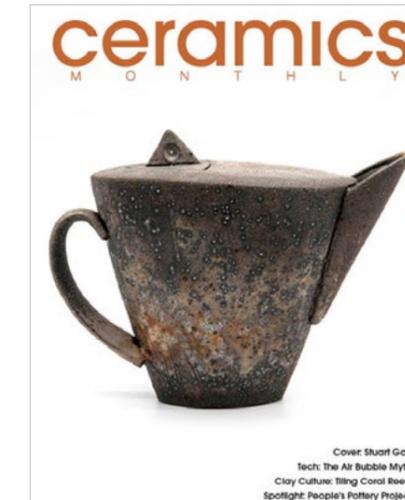
Qwist Joseph (M.F.A. Art) and **Iren Tete** (M.F.A. Art 2019) were among the 45 finalists for the Officine Saffri Award for ceramic artists. They were selected from among 600 entries by an international panel of experts. Their work was exhibited in Milan, Italy, in September.

2017

Anna-Maria Gkouni (M.M.) is the first female conductor and music director of the Conroe Symphony Orchestra in Texas. She is currently pursuing her Doctor of Musical Arts in orchestral conducting at the University of Houston.



Stuart Gair (M.F.A. Art) was featured in the cover story titled "A Thoughtful Soda Approach" in the April *Ceramics Monthly*.



Stuart Gair (M.F.A. 2017) is featured on the cover of the April 2021 issue of *Ceramics Monthly*.

2018

Zora Murff (M.F.A. Art) was recently named as a 2021 Emerging Scholar by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*. Murff is one of 15 scholars named and celebrated for their achievements, as well as the difference they are making in higher education. The publication has recognized an interdisciplinary group of minority scholars who represent the very best of the United States academy for 20 years. Murff is assistant professor and co-head of the photography area at the University of Arkansas School of Art.

2019

Austin Coudriet (B.F.A. Art) is an artist-in-resident at The Clay Studio in Missoula, Montana. He started in September.

2020

Alfonzo Cooper, Jr. (D.M.A.; M.M. 2015) is the new C.T. Vivian Diversity Teaching Scholar in vocal performance for the 2021-2022 academic year at Western Illinois University in Macomb, Illinois.

2021

Rebecca Nederhiser (D.M.A.) is a visiting assistant professor of music at Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. She is directing their Community Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra (Kammerstreicher) and teaching music theory/double reeds.

MUSIC ALUMNA
TAYLOR NAMED ONE OF

Billboard's Top Music Lawyers for 2021



Stephanie Taylor

Stephanie Taylor (B.M.E. 1999; J.D. 2002) was honored recently as one of *Billboard* magazine's Top Music Lawyers for 2021.

The leading music attorneys chosen for this list are nominated by their firms and peers and chosen by *Billboard* magazine editors (see the article at go.unl.edu/izct).

With more than 20 years of experience in the entertainment business, including as a professional violin and fiddle player, Taylor has specialized her law practice as an entertainment and music industry attorney in Nashville. Her firm, Taylor Guttman, PLLC, is a full-service law firm focusing on entertainment, media, business and intellectual property matters.

She is happy to be part of a more diverse recognition of the industry's lawyers.

"The *Billboard* list used to be ranked," Taylor said. "I would scroll through the list to see when the first woman would show up. So they've really shifted to focus on diversity and knowing that diverse attorneys also serve the diverse music industry. It was really nice just to be acknowledged as fitting a different space and serving a different purpose in the industry."

It's been a busy year for music industry lawyers, tested by negotiations and new

business models from livestreaming and other challenges of the pandemic, in addition to other social justice issues.

Taylor's clients were no exception.

"I've had some clients really shift focus and learn how to thrive in spite of everything. [...] I think that's the other thing that made me a person of interest is that I've helped my artist clients and my venue clients figure out how to

move forward creatively in spite of an industry that was fundamentally shut down."

Taylor said the pandemic has made her appreciate the experience of live music even more.

"Is there any feeling as good as being at a live show when there's magic?" she asked. "You can't recreate that. You can watch streaming music or live music on television any day, and you never get that feeling—just the goosebumps moment when something really amazing happens. And I guess that's why I'm in this business for those moments of magic. I really do miss it." ■

Endowment celebrates 20th anniversary



Left to right: Terry Fairfield, CEO of the University of Nebraska Foundation; Giacomo Oliva, dean of the College of Fine and Performing Arts; Regent Charles Wilson; Christina M. Hixson; and Regent Randolph Ferlic cut the ribbon on the Hixson-Lied Endowment monument in the Lied Plaza in 2002.

"Endowment support has benefited every faculty member and student over the last 20 years, including travel support, scholarships, study abroad, guest artist programs, special projects, and much more."

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Hixson-Lied Endowment.

In January 2000, Christina M. Hixson and the Lied Foundation Trust announced a gift of \$18 million to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's College of Fine and Performing Arts. The Hixson-Lied Endowment benefits all areas of the college.

The college was renamed the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts following the gift and was formally rededicated on April 7, 2002.

To date, the endowment has distributed more than \$10 million in grants with a total impact of nearly \$20 million.

"We are so grateful to Christina M. Hixson and her remarkable generosity to the arts at Nebraska," said Chuck O'Connor, endowed dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. "Endowment support has benefited every faculty member and student over the last 20 years, including travel support, scholarships, study abroad, guest artist programs, special projects, and much more. The impact her endowment has had on this college is enormous."

Watch for celebration activities coming next spring. ■

FALL 2021
HIXSON-LIED COLLEGE of FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS



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