

HIXSON-LIED

COLLEGE OF FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS

FALL 2024



**From Lincoln to Venice: Souto is first Nebraska artist
to exhibit at Venice Biennale**

ALSO INSIDE: Global Arts Academy prepares students to be global artists



Dean's Letter



It's an exciting era of change at the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts!

We are getting closer to the opening of the new music building tentatively scheduled for this May. Faculty and staff have had opportunities to tour the construction site this summer, so anticipation for the new space is growing. A new immersive performance space and recording studio will revolutionize our music production and educational

opportunities. Read more about it in this issue of the magazine.

The Hixson-Lied College has completed our strategic planning under the guidance of Anne Barrett and the Barrett Collective. After extensive interviews and discussion with college leadership and staff, we have identified three key strategic priorities: 1) Interdisciplinarity, 2) Enrollment, recruiting and accessibility, and 3) Operational efficiency to support the first two priorities. Learn much more about these priorities in this issue of the magazine.

This year we welcomed several alumni guest artists. We are profiling four of them in this issue of the magazine. In early April, we welcomed Emma Nishimura back to campus as our Alumni Master for Masters Week. And in late April, we welcomed Adrian Armstrong, Lt. Col. Cristina Moore Urrutia and Katie Williams back to campus for Honors Day Weekend. All of them had the opportunity to interact with students and faculty during their visits, and their careers are inspiring for our students.

Two interdisciplinary projects are also highlighted in this issue: Last October, the Glenn Korff School of Music's opera program took Tyler Goodrich White's "O Pioneers!" opera on the road across Nebraska to McCook, Red

Cloud and Scottsbluff, as part of the Lied Center for Performing Arts' Arts Across Nebraska program. They also had a performance at the Lied Center in November.

This past spring, the Nebraska Repertory Theatre, in partnership with UNL Opera, presented the musical "Big Fish." The production featured projections designed by the emerging media arts program.

Finally, I want to highlight the mural that students created in Beatrice this summer as part of Associate Professor of Art Sandra Williams' class Street Art II: Mural Masters. The mural is featured on the inside back cover of the magazine, and there's a web link to see more photos from this exceptional educational opportunity for students to learn about public art making and their experience connecting to the community of Beatrice.

Read about these stories and much more in this issue of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts magazine. As always, I thank you for your support.

Andrew W. Belser
Hixson-Lied Dean

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COLLEGE OF FINE
AND PERFORMING ARTS

Fall 2024

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

Hixson-Lied Dean

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Cover image: Francisco Souto, "Fragility of being," 2023, colored pencil and acrylic on paper, 25 1/4" x 7 1/4" x 2 1/2". Collection of Karen and Robert Duncan.

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From Lincoln to Venice

Souto is first Nebraska artist to exhibit at Venice Biennale

By L. Kent Wolgamott



Francisco Souto was thrilled when he saw his exquisitely crafted colored pencil drawings in a Venice, Italy, palazzo for the curators of the European Cultural Centre’s biennial contemporary art exhibition had hung his show exactly as he had envisioned.

After he was selected for the exhibition, Souto had to negotiate for a space in the Palazzo Mora—a 16th century building on the crowded Strada Nuova that brings tens of thousands into the Center’s exhibitions during the Venice Biennale.

“There are some small spaces on the second floor and the third floor, and they wanted me to put it there, because my work is very intimate and so on,” Souto said. “But I said ‘I don’t want it there, I want it to have more traffic.’ And I wanted them to kind of contextualize my work with other artists in a bigger room.”

So Souto was given a premier wall in a first-floor room, guaranteeing that the vast majority of visitors would see his work. But the curators wouldn’t design his portion of the exhibition.

“They said, ‘Francisco, this is your wall. This is the height and the width, let us know how you want it to look.’ I said, ‘You guys can figure it out.’ They said, ‘No, Francisco, you tell us where it needs to be,’” he said. “So I had to send everything in centimeters, down to where the label is going to be.”

“When I got there, it was unbelievable.

I had that vision in mind, and it was exactly right, with natural light coming through. It was spectacular.”

Robert Duncan, who with his wife Karen, was among 14 Nebraskans who traveled to Venice for the exhibition’s late April opening, concurred with Souto’s evaluation of his show.

“It is in a beautiful room, a beautiful building,” said the Lincoln collector. “I thought it really stood out compared to the rest of the work we saw there. There’s some great work at the Biennale, and we didn’t see all of it. But, obviously, we’ve loved his work for a long time and purchased his work for a long time. So it certainly stood out in our minds and our eyes.”

With that opening, Souto became the first Nebraska artist to show at the Venice Biennale, the world’s largest and most prestigious art exhibition that’s held every two years in the city of canals.

The Willa Cather Professor of Art and Director of the School of Art, Art History & Design, Souto is a rising star in the international art world, who won the 2019 Lorenzo il Magnifico Award for works on paper at the Florence Biennale.

Souto’s work is part of the Cultural Centre’s exhibition “Personal Structures,” which has brought together a wide range of work from more than 200 artists, photographers and sculptors from 51 countries.

Here is how Souto’s work is described in the exhibition catalog:

Within the compelling narrative of his new body of work titled: On beauty and displacement II, Francisco Souto unveils a masterful display of his craft, where his photo-real, colored-pencil drawings transcend artistic boundaries, collectively resonating with the profound struggles and perseverance inherent to the human experience, offering an artistry that transcends the ordinary and elevates beyond mere representation....

The deliberate and time-consuming creative process progressively embeds content into each drawing, establishing a symbiotic correlation between creation and the intimate act of looking. Through this material presence, Souto extends an invitation for viewers to experience art as a profound means of thinking through images—a testimony of lives lived.

On beauty and displacement II serves as a powerful reflection on the human condition, capturing the resilience of the human spirit in the face of adversity while fostering contemplation, empathy, and a profound connection to the shared narratives of our collective existence.

To put together “On beauty and displacement II” in the four months between his selection for the show and the time the work had to be sent to Italy, Souto borrowed seven pieces from “On beauty and displacement,” his sold-out October 2023 Kiechel Fine Arts exhibition from collectors and created six new drawings and a pair of

triptychs, working on them until midnight on the February night before they were to be packed up and shipped to Venice.

“The last two drawings, we needed to leave a little space between the varnish and the padding so it dried while traveling,” Souto said. “Otherwise, they would have been completely stuck down in the crate. It was down to the wire.”

Getting the drawings to Venice was a complication-filled effort that started with the wooden shipping crate itself.

“I needed to order it from Chicago because it needed to have this particular stamp to clear customs, and we could not find any wood in Nebraska that had a certified stamp for export,” Souto said. “The crate was shipped empty from Chicago to Lincoln.

“These things are so expensive to ship, because what happens? I have to get a U.S. company that

will take it from here to JFK (Airport in New York City), then all the way through a port in Italy. Then an Italian company will take it from the port in Italy all the way to Venice, unpack it, keep the crate in storage for seven months, then pack it back up and ship it all the way back. It’s just wild.”

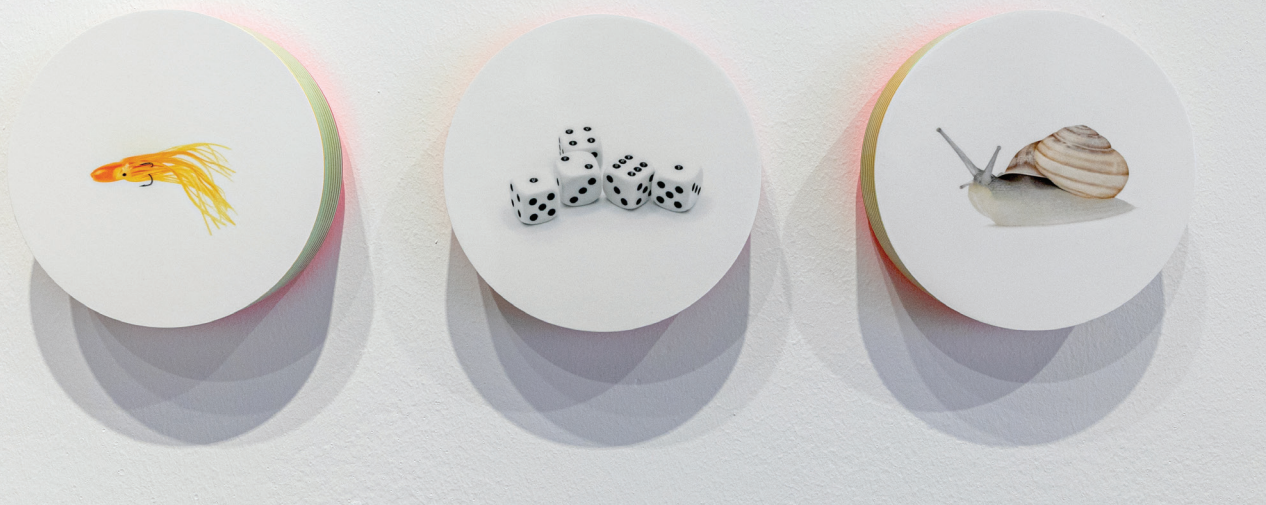
It took 2 ½ months for Souto’s drawings to make it from Lincoln to Venice, in part because work from artists across the country was collected at JFK over a number of weeks so it could be shipped together to Italy.

Once in Venice, Souto faced something of a challenge – getting the Nebraskans into the opening reception.

“She (the opening organizer) said, ‘You know, Francisco, we would like for you to limit the number of guests to six.’ And I said, ‘Okay, Lucia, I understand, but what about 14?’” he said. “At first, there were only 13 of us. Then, Robert said his granddaughter Mae is coming, do you think



Francisco Souto (right) views his work in the Palazzo Mora at the Venice Biennale with Robert Duncan. Photo by ReportArch/Andrea Ferro Photography (www.andreaferrophoto.com).



Francisco Souto, “(A)lure of the north,” 2023, colored pencil and acrylic on paper, triptych, each drawing 8” diameter x 2” deep. Collection of Karen and Robert Duncan. Courtesy photo.

she can get in? So I said, ‘Lucia, I need one more.’ She said, ‘OK, Francisco, that’s 14, and that’s it.’”

Getting the Nebraskans into the opening was, Duncan and Souto said, well worth the effort.

“The opening was unbelievable,” Souto said. “It was like going to the Met Gala. There were bouncers at the door, you had to give your name to get in. Then, it was really spectacular.”

“On beauty and displacement” grows out of “A Memory in Peril,” a 2016 suite of meticulous graphite drawings depicting the plight of the people of Venezuela during the political struggle and economic collapse that forced thousands to flee the country.

Those drawings were primarily figurative and, save for stripes of color along the bottom of the images, in black and white. In his two subsequent exhibitions, the figures were gradually reduced, replaced by symbols, and the drawings moved

from black and white to color.

“It seems to me like I needed to get that (figurative, narrative Venezuelan drawings) out of my system as a way to free myself to say, ‘I’m talking about not just Venezuelan diaspora, but diaspora across the world,’” Souto said. “That allowed me to kind of think of the world more globally. That, to me, is the exciting part of this.

“When I’m making the work, I get surprised where the work is taking me. The work surprises me every single time. I never thought in a million years I would be doing the kind of imagery I am creating now. But the work takes on a life of its own, and I’m just a servant to it.”

“On beauty and displacement” also marked the appearance of Souto’s first triptych, which was purchased by the Duncans and is in the Venice show, as the artist added an additional layer of depth and meaning to the drawings.

“If you have one single narrative, either the viewer gets it or doesn’t get it,” Souto said. “When you have a triptych, there are multiple permutations that the viewer can say, ‘Well, what

about this? And why does this relate to that?’ So it’s more engaging, and I’m asking more out of the viewer because I’m sending different ways in which you can actually start communicating with it.”

In 2022, some 578,000 people saw the Centre’s exhibition, a number expected to be met or exceeded by the Biennale’s November conclusion. That total will be greater than the number of people who have ever seen Souto’s work.

That, obviously, is one of the major benefits of being in the exhibition. But Souto is taking another sort of inspiration away from Venice.

“It was an incredible experience, of course,” he said. “It gives me an extra level of pressure to continue making the work even stronger than before. Billie Jean King says, ‘Pressure is a privilege.’ That’s how it feels. Now the pressure is on. But I don’t feel diminished by it. I feel like, ‘Oh, man, bring it on.’”

In his Richards Hall studio, that pressure is

Left to right: Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Dean Andy and Virginia Belser, Dayana Corredor and Francisco Souto, and Karen and Robert Duncan. Photo by ReportArch/Andrea Ferro Photography (www.andreaferrophoto.com).



Francisco Souto, “Bolivarian revolution (After Chavez),” 2024, colored pencil and acrylic on paper, triptych, each piece 10” diameter x 2” deep. Courtesy photo.



Francisco Souto, “Diaspora VIII,” 2023, colored pencil and acrylic on paper, 13 1/4” x 13 1/4” x 1 3/4”. Private collection. Courtesy photo.

translating to some variations in his next series of works that could number up to 40 drawings.

“What I’m trying to do is work with different kinds of varnishes to get even more depth,” he said, displaying a drawing with layered glazes that make it look like it is under glass. “I’m getting a little bigger sizes, and I’m using a stronger magnifying glass for some sections that need to have a little bit more punch.

“The symbol is getting more sophisticated, from ‘Memory in Peril’ until now. It’s grown more sophisticated in the vocabulary. I think that’s the precedent, with the pressure and challenges – can I keep improving? Can I keep educating myself to get a stronger message across?”

On a practical level, Souto’s Venice exhibition landed him a Denver dealer, who will handle his work in the Rocky Mountain states and Arizona and will present a show of the new works in late 2025.

And, it might lead to exhibiting at another international exhibition.

“I was there, and one lady came to me and said, ‘I’m very interested in your work,’ and we got to talking. We didn’t trade cards or anything, but it was a conversation,” Souto said. “She said, ‘I wanted you to know that I am part of a curatorial team of a well-known Biennial, and we might get in touch with you.’”

“I meant to ask the curators about how I was selected for this show, but my sense is after getting that award in the Florence Biennial, this is happening. Then, from here, maybe another international exhibition. Who knows? But it’s very, very exciting,” he said.

Duncan, who travels the world looking at and collecting art, had a different takeaway from Venice, one that, appropriately, puts Souto in an international context.

“He’s a top-notch, world-class artist,” Duncan said. “This exhibition at the Venice Biennale proves that.”

--L. Kent Wolgamott is an art and entertainment reporter for the *Lincoln Journal-Star*. Portions of this story appeared in the *Lincoln Journal-Star*. ■

Francisco Souto and his wife, Dayana Corredor, at the opening of “Personal Structures” at the Venice Biennale. Photo by ReportArch/Andrea Ferro Photography (www.andreaferrophoto.com).



Global Arts Academy prepares students to be global artists



Andy Belser (left) and Hank Stratton present to students at the American Center in New Delhi, India. Photo by Muskan Yadav.

The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts welcomed the first cohort of students to the Global Arts Academy this fall.

The Global Arts Academy aims to recruit world-class students through a curated four-year program that will immerse a cohort of both international and domestic students in transformative academic and co-curricular experiences. These partnerships will also provide opportunities for faculty exchanges, joint research and other collaborative efforts.

“The Global Arts Academy is important for two reasons,” said Emily Griffin Overocker, the senior director of student success. “Primarily to globalize our college so that we can have an expansive perspective embedded throughout our student population so we can be thinking globally, and we can prepare our students to be global artists. The second part is about tapping into untapped recruiting markets.”

The three international students in the first cohort come from India, Nepal and Vietnam and are studying graphic design, emerging media arts and acting. They will be joined by four domestic students from Colorado, Nevada and Nebraska, who are studying dance, music and theatre.

Griffin Overocker said the exchange between international and domestic students in a single cohort is the key to the program.

“It’s about the exchange back and forth so that we can learn from each other. We are not trying to impart our culture on others,” she said.

This fall, the members of the Global Arts Academy will take a special version of an in-person Start Smart course, which is a class that all freshman at the university normally take online as an orientation course.

“Their section will be modified to be an in-person class that embeds both welcome to college and college success with the global perspectives and starting to understand each other,” Griffin Overocker said. “One of the visions is that we create an interdisciplinary program with these students that will go from zero to a finished product of a cultural exchange program, something like a film festival, where they could all use their different majors to collaborate and put this event together. In her role in fostering interdisciplinarity across the college, Associate Professor of Dance Susan Ourada is working on pulling together some faculty to mentor these students through this project.”

The college made two important recruiting trips this past year to launch the Global Arts Academy. Dean Andy Belser traveled to Nepal and was then joined in India by Johnny Carson

School of Theatre and Film Director Hank Stratton, Johnny Carson Endowed Director in Emerging Media Arts Megan Elliott and Visual Communications Specialist Muskan Yadav in February. The four met with students, teachers and counselors, while also presenting masterclasses and meeting with partner institutions to explore new collaborations.

During the trip, Elliott secured paid internships for current emerging media arts students this summer at Infosys in Bangalore, India. The seven students selected made documentaries and short-form videos.

Belser and Glenn Korff School of Music Director Felix Olschofka also traveled to China and Vietnam in March.

“The visits to both China and Vietnam were



Dean Andy Belser meets with art students at Reigate Grammar School in Hanoi, Vietnam. Courtesy photo.

highly successful,” Olschofka said. “I have visited both countries multiple times over the past decade, forming strong relationships with faculty and administrators. This visit was focused on further strengthening those connections. The ongoing collaboration continues to enhance our ties and mutual understanding in the arts education sector. Our visit aimed not only to recruit future students but also to pave the way for internship opportunities, faculty exchanges, and creative and research collaborations. The prospect of students learning from each other’s diverse cultures while pursuing a degree at UNL generated significant interest.”

Strengthening these ties will continue this fall.

“We are planning a return trip to Vietnam in October with the aim of conducting masterclasses and giving presentations at the leading music conservatories and several selected high schools,” Olschofka said. “Additionally, we plan to perform a series of chamber music concerts featuring a diverse program of solo, duo, trio and quartet repertoire. Furthermore, we intend to showcase our degree offerings in the Glenn Korff School of Music, including our upcoming B.A. options, which are not currently available in most of the music conservatories in China or Vietnam. We are fortunate to have a private donor generously funding the trip to Vietnam, providing us with a wonderful opportunity to engage with students, faculty, administrators and audience members.”

Belser returned to Nepal and India this fall and was joined by Stratton and faculty members Ann Marie Pollard, Jen Landis and Tom Larson.

As a former international student himself,



Felix Olschofka and Andy Belser with students and faculty after a violin masterclass at the Xinghai Music Conservatory in China. Courtesy photo.

Olschofka appreciates the Global Arts Academy.

“I wish such an institution had existed when I first arrived in the U.S. to study,” he said. “We are uniquely positioned to provide students from Nebraska and around the world with an enriching experience, allowing them to broaden their horizons and thrive in a creative, inclusive, interdisciplinary and safe environment.” ■



Left to right: Andy Belser, Arjun Madhavan, Megan Elliott, Muskan Yadav, consultant Lisa Gray, and Hank Stratton at Assemblage animation company in Mumbai, India. Courtesy photo.

Big Fish

provides big opportunities for collaboration

The Nebraska Repertory Theatre, in partnership with UNL Opera in the Glenn Korff School of Music, presented “Big Fish,” with music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa and book by John August, last spring.

The musical presented both schools with the opportunity to collaborate on the fantastical musical that revolves around the extraordinary life of Edward Bloom, a charismatic storyteller with a penchant for embellishment.

The production was directed by Assistant Professor of Practice in Theatre Ann Marie Pollard with musical direction by Assistant Professor of Voice Suna Gunther.

The production also featured projections designed by former Assistant Professor of Practice in Emerging Media Arts Anna Henson.

“Theatre is inherently collaborative—musical theatre even more so,” Pollard said. “The real spirit of collaboration with this production, however, stems from the fact that we’re training both undergraduate and graduate students in the process.”

The production phase included the

usual collaborators—Pollard as director and choreographer, Gunther as musical director, along with the full design team, technician team, stage management team, and musicians in the pit.

“But nearly every role also has an assistant,” Pollard said. “Doctoral candidate Kate Mathews is serving as assistant musical director and will conduct several performances. Gracie Valero-Garsow is serving as our undergraduate assistant director, and Joshua Pitt is supporting the production as part of his teaching assistantship. Syrin Weeks and Atlas Martin are being mentored in stage management by Brad Buffum to coordinate all the moving parts. In the cast we have internal understudies for the lead roles and external swings for the ensemble. There’s a real atmosphere of learning through the experience of being in the room.”

Take a look back at the production, from the earliest rehearsals to the final dress rehearsal with these photos by Brian Garbrecht, Kyle Andersen and Taryn Hamill. ■

Right: Assistant Professor of Practice in Emerging Media Arts Anna Henson presents her projection design concepts during the first rehearsal.

Below: Technical Direction MFA Candidate Ashley Faulkner and Assistant Professor of Practice in Technical Theatre Bryce Allen hang a projection screen.



Above: The technical crew marks the placement of stage furniture.

Bottom left: Glenn Korff School of Music student Benjamin Jacobsen plays the violin in the Big Fish orchestra.

Bottom right: Assistant Professor of Practice in Theatre Ann Marie Pollard directed Big Fish.





Top left: The witches (Alura Long, Faith Polivanov, Alex Plascencia and Karnie Gottschalk) foresee the future in Big Fish.

Top right: Technology played a key role in the production of Big Fish.

Bottom right: Robbie Extrom as Karl the Giant appears larger than life in a scene with Nate Petsche. The scene featured the use of live video and projection technology.



Schicke earns national ADDY award

Ava Schicke, who graduated in December 2023 with a Bachelor of Arts in graphic design, received a National American Advertising Award (ADDY) for her senior capstone project, “Scrolling is the New Smoking.”



Ava Schicke with her National American Advertising Award. Courtesy photo.

She also received Gold and Silver ADDY Awards at the Nebraska American Advertising Awards. She was surprised by her awards.

“I am super proud of my senior capstone, but never expected for it to receive this much recognition,” she said. “The whole thing feels a little surreal, but it’s such a fulfilling feeling to have something I put so much work and effort into to be appreciated by well-established designers. I also feel incredibly grateful for all the support and help I had from my professors. Jen Landis pushed me all semester to create even better work and is the reason my work was entered into the ADDY Awards in the first place. The ADDY Awards are just a great way to recognize the young designers in the industry.”

Schicke’s project, “Scrolling is the New Smoking,” is about the adverse effects that being on our phones has on our health, both physically and mentally.

Four additional graphic design students in the School of Art, Art History & Design won ADDY Awards in the Nebraska American Advertising Awards (name, project, award):

- Keegan Towey, Cock Fight: Men vs.

Masculinity, Gold ADDY Award (Towey won a District 9 Award and competed in the national ADDYs.)

- Joe Warren, Why We Need LIVE Music, Silver ADDY Award and Judges Choice Award

- Shaydan Bayless, Designing a Better Dollhouse, Gold ADDY Award

- Fatima Al-Jayashi, Alebrije Happy Meal, Gold ADDY Award



School of Art, Art History & Design ADDY winners (left to right): Keegan Towey, Shaydan Bayless, Fatima Al-Jayashi, Joe Warren and Ava Schicke. Courtesy photo.

“The Nebraska American Advertising Awards are a fantastic opportunity for our UNL graphic design students to get noticed not just locally, but across the region and country,” said Assistant Professor of Practice in Graphic Design Jen Landis. “Winning a gold or silver ADDY puts our students a step above in the design world—it’s a significant achievement.” ■

College identifies 3 strategic priorities

- **Interdisciplinarity**
- **Recruitment and retention**
- **Operational efficiency, systems and modernization**

In the last year, the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts, with the help of consultant Anne Barrett and the Barrett Collective, identified three key strategic priorities. The strategic assessment was supported with a grant from the Hixson-Lied Endowment.



Anne Barrett

The three priorities identified are:

- Interdisciplinarity
- Recruitment and retention
- Operational efficiency, systems and modernization

Barrett interviewed Dean Andrew Belser, his administrative team and dean's office staff.

"Anne Barrett's work was pivotal for the next era of the college," Belser said. "She led us through a strategic assessment of the college by working with college leadership and staff."

The integration of interdisciplinarity throughout the college's fine and performing arts curriculum emerged as the top priority. The college aims to provide offerings that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries to attract and retain students and prepare them for a rapidly changing world.

"The importance of interdisciplinarity is a constant message that we hear from professionals across arts industries," Belser said. "We believe it's ethically imperative to prepare students to have careers in a world that will continue to change, and increasingly, this means preparing them to think, create and collaborate across disciplines."

For example, a student interested in music composition should be prepared with the fundamentals of music composition.

"But that student must also understand where and how music composers can use technology to work across media platforms that might include gaming, live and immersive soundscapes, and filmmaking," Belser said. "And then, the student should be equipped with world-ready entrepreneurial and business skills that will offer access to the changing economies of the arts. The same applies to theatre performers and designers, studio artists, graphic designers and emerging media artists."

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts was identified as a hub of interdisciplinarity.

"In 2015 the Carson Foundation had the vision to see that emerging media will continue to change the career possibilities for students in arts and design fields," Belser said. "Their visionary gift that initiated EMA changed the college through recognizing that media and arts industries are fundamentally intertwined across disciplines and increasingly through global networks. The Carson gift also set in motion an expansive interdisciplinary vision to extend the reach and impact of the past Carson support to contemporize theatre and film training and facilities within the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, to provide cross-disciplinary opportunities for all Hixson-Lied College students to formulate their imaginations and careers as interdisciplinary artists who start in music, or painting, or business, or stage management, or sculpture and understand how to use emerging media to consider themselves as contemporary multi-disciplinary artists, designers, and teachers who are ready to work

in global settings. Our vision is to now to build on the incredible success of EMA by expanding access to emerging media learning across disciplines."

The college recently appointed Associate Professor of Dance Susan Ourada to work with the college's academic units to explore innovations in our programs that will allow expanded study across disciplines within and outside the arts.

"It's ethically imperative to prepare students to have careers in a world that will continue to change... this means preparing them to think, create and collaborate across disciplines." – Dean Andrew Belser

"Susan Ourada with Associate Dean Anthony Bushard and others are working to expand interdisciplinary access for all students across the college, which requires addressing details such as aligning course and rehearsal schedules across units, increasing cross-listed courses and how those credits can count in any given major, and increasing the seats in courses that will serve interdisciplinary needs across the college," Belser said. "This work is complex and will require working with the faculty and staff across the college to recognize and support

the benefits of interdisciplinary learning and practical experiences for all students."

A second priority is improving recruiting, enrollment and retention across the college. Strategies will include curricular innovation, marketing, national outreach and integration with global initiatives.

"Leadership across the college has put together a four-year plan to grow our total enrollment by at least 25 percent," Belser said. "We have taken a lot of time to make program-by-program enrollment growth predictions that will help each unit reach growth targets. Our recruiting plans are carefully conceived to layer domestic with international recruiting growth. In addition to being part of a multi-faceted recruiting strategy, the Global Arts Academy is the start of a long-term plan to expand the global experiences for all students in the college. We want all of our students to learn and have experiences that prepare them to enter the global world they will be entering in their careers and lives."

Finally, the college aims to increase operational efficiency, systems and modernization. This includes better processes for scholarship administration, financial forecasting and reporting, graduate teaching assistant apportionment, and communication enhancements.

"The college is entering a wonderful and expansive new era," Belser said. "We are so excited to be innovating our spaces and programs in ways that will attract many more students, We will be looking to work with our many cherished college benefactors to help support our new vision for expansive enrollment and educational opportunities." ■

Nishimura returns for Alumni Masters Week

By Grace Fitzgibbon, *Nebraska Quarterly*

Emma Nishimura (M.F.A. 2013) was one of nine alumni named to the 2024 class of Alumni Masters by the Nebraska Alumni Association. She was on campus April 4-5.

Family photographs printed onto handmade paper. Paper folded into a little container, a traditional Japanese wrapping called furoshiki. Inside each one, parts of the photos hidden, parts revealed. Some wrappings with no image at all. Toronto-based printmaking, photography, sculpture and installation artist Emma Nishimura's collection parallels memories passed down through generations. Just as these sculptures can never be undone to see the whole picture, some memories are forever lost to time.

"Navigating the challenges of memory, that's been part of the joy of making art," Nishimura said. "Through this project, I really want to think about 'How do we make this a tangible piece? How do we explore that weight and burden of memory, but how do we acknowledge everything that's been lost?'"

For the last 15 years, Nishimura's work has been about her Japanese Canadian family, from a personal angle as well as including the wider community. Through recording oral histories, she pieces together recollected experiences of internment and forced relocation during the second World War, including the implications and reverberations it has had

on subsequent generations. Her art, consisting of text, transcriptions and family photographs, acts as visual prompts for people to tell their own stories, and acknowledges the stories that haven't and will never be shared.

"Within the Japanese Canadian community, there's a lot of silence associated with the history of internment," Nishimura said. "My grandparents didn't speak about it very much. My aunt says that when my grandfather would pull out photo albums, he would just say, 'That's where I worked.' He would never give any context. There's a lot of shame associated with that time in history. I'm dealing with those memories, but also the huge amount of silence that has gone along with those."

Her training and how she approaches art is printmaking-based, though she doesn't feel restrained by that. Nishimura does a lot of etching into copper, printing onto paper, cutting up and reassembling into something else.

"I need to get into the work," Nishimura said. "I remember printing an image, and it was this flat photograph. It just wasn't enough. I wasn't able to tell all the stories that I wanted to through that piece. It wasn't until I started cutting things up and breaking the image apart, before I could build it back up again, that I felt like I could start to tell the story."



Emma Nishimura. Photo by Peter Phoa.

"Navigating the challenges of memory, that's been part of the joy of making art," Nishimura said. "Through this project, I really want to think about 'How do we make this a tangible piece? How do we explore that weight and burden of memory, but how do we acknowledge everything that's been lost?'"

Because this is a larger narrative explored through multiple pieces, Nishimura revisits as she learns more. A thesis show series she started as a university graduate student was a map of British Columbia that charted areas important to her family history: where her grandmother was interned, where her dad was born right after the war, and where her grandfather was sent to work, plus historical context. Over the years, as she's shown the piece and talked to people with family who were interned elsewhere, different etchings have been added.

"It's been about starting from what I know, and then trying to build it and grow it larger in a really deeply meaningful way to be more reflective of that larger experience," Nishimura said.

Nishimura has only further nurtured her project since then, winning the 2018 Queen Sonja Print Award — the largest international printmaking award — granting her international exposure and opportunities for exhibitions and speaking about her work. Also, a weeklong residency at a print studio in Sweden, where she made a series of large photo etchings. A couple small sculptures have since evolved into roughly

450 furoshiki. The next steps are community engagement and collecting more photographs to grow the archives — hopefully rising to the heights of furoshiki by the thousands. And now as the chair of photography, printmaking and publications at the Ontario College of Art and Design, she is inspiring the next generation of artists while renewing her interest in her own work.

"I love teaching," Nishimura said. "I love being around young students and emerging artists and seeing that enthusiasm for learning something new and those moments of excitement when something works."

For any artist, it's enlightening hearing others discuss their work. For Nishimura, it's truly moving. She's preserving lifetimes in material form.

"Inevitably folks share their stories and their experiences," Nishimura said. "That's the most meaningful thing for me when that work can resonate so deeply that it's getting people to think about their own family histories or their friends' families' histories and what we're all collectively navigating." ■

An Archive of Rememory - Detail 1
Photogravure and photo-etching on flax and abaca, sculptures are 2.5" x 2.5" x 3", 2016 - ongoing.



'O Pioneers!' opera travels the state

The Glenn Korff School of Music's opera program took its opera, "O Pioneers!" on the road last fall to three cities in Nebraska as part of the Lied Center for Performing Arts' Arts Across Nebraska program and with generous support from the James C. and Rhonda Seacrest Tour Nebraska Opera Fund.

The opera, composed by Professor of Composition and Conducting and Director of Orchestras Tyler Goodrich White, originally premiered in 1999 and was again performed in 2012. It is based on Willa Cather's 1913 novel—her first masterpiece and one of the most compelling tales of the Great Plains.

Directed by William Shomos, the Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music and Director of Opera, the opera was performed in Scottsbluff, McCook and Cather's hometown of Red Cloud. It also had a performance in Lincoln in November at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

"I think the experience and the excitement of getting to do a show in a different space and having to adapt to different settings is really good for the cast and crew," Shomos said. "And it's a lot of fun. We connect with the communities. The University of Nebraska belongs to the entire state. It's so important that we share the work that we do here with as many people as we have the resources to do." ■

All photos by Meredith Gamet, a senior in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications.



Top left: Anders Woehrer, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film student lighting designer for the O Pioneers! tour, checks the balance of color with the projections in McCook.

Bottom left: The cast, orchestra and crew of the production at the Fox Theatre in McCook.

Bottom right: Cast members play UNO in the green room backstage at the Midwest Theater in Scottsbluff before curtain.





Top left: Director William Shomos gives instructions to the cast prior to the performance at the Fox Theater in McCook.



Top right: William Shomos (left) and Tyler Goodrich White outside the Red Cloud Opera House. The banner celebrates the 2023 Cather Sesquicentennial.

Bottom left: The Bergson family considers their future on the Nebraska Divide. Left to right: Bryson Cole, Alexandra LaVake, Annika Burds and Samuel Kennedy with Gavin Berry.



Bottom right: Alumnus Trey Meyer performs the role of the ill-fated Emil Bergson at the Red Cloud Opera House.



The Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts recognized alumni, faculty, staff and student achievement at its annual Honors Day dinner on April 26.

The award recipients included the following alumni board award recipients:

- **Alumni Achievement Award in Art: Adrian Armstrong** (B.F.A. 2014). Armstrong’s multidisciplinary practice encompasses drawing, painting, installation, sound and other mixed media elements and documents the contemporary Black experiences in the United States.
- **Alumni Achievement Award in Music: Lt. Col. Cristina Moore Urrutia** (B.M. 1995; M.M. 1998). Moore Urrutia serves as Commander and Conductor of the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West at Travis Air Force Base in California. The 60-member unit, composed of 10 musical ensembles, performs more than 350 missions annually throughout a five-state area of responsibility as an ambassador of the Air Force and Air Mobility Command.
- **Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre and Film: Katie Williams** (B.F.A. 2012). Williams works in the visual effects industry as a digital paint supervisor at Industrial Light & Magic’s Vancouver studio. Since joining ILM in 2019, Williams has contributed to over 35 film and television productions including “Star Wars: Episode IX,” “Black Widow,” “The Irishman,” and “The Mandalorian.”
- **Award of Merit: Dr. Patrick Grim and Dr. L. Theresa Watkins.** Grim and Watkins created two annual funds in the School of Art, Art History & Design to encourage young artists—the Elgas Promise Award and the Elgas Project Grants.
- **Student Leadership Awards: Ebben Blake**, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film (Emerging Media Arts), and **Jewelya Coffey**, School of Art, Art History & Design.

For a full listing of this year’s award recipients, including the Hixson-Lied Faculty and Staff Awards, visit go.unl.edu/72rn.

Achievement recognized at HONORS DAY

Right: (Left to right) Adrian Armstrong, Dean Andy Belser, Lt. Col. Cristina Moore Urrutia and Katie Williams.



Below: Hixson-Lied Faculty and Staff Award winners. Top row, left to right: Byron Anway, Katie Anania, Dean Andy Belser, Sandra Williams and Rafael Untalan. Bottom row, left to right: Megan McMasters, Benjamin Sobel, Rhonda Fuelberth and Jackie Mattingly. Not pictured: Suna Gunther and Cameron Shoemaker.



Nominations open for 2025 alumni board awards

The nomination form for our 2025 Alumni Board Awards is available now at go.unl.edu/fpaawards. Nominations are due Friday, Dec. 13, 2024. See the website for full details or e-mail unlarts@unl.edu to have a nomination form e-mailed to you.



Adrian Armstrong. Courtesy photo.

Armstrong's

multidisciplinary work documents contemporary Black experiences

in 2014 and since then has managed an ever-expanding and vibrant exhibition schedule. His multidisciplinary practice, which encompasses drawing, painting, printmaking, installation, sound, and other mixed-media elements, documents contemporary Black experiences in the United States. He is deeply interested in questions of

how Black experiences intersect with the history of photography, portraiture and collage.

"I've always been creative. I've always drawn," he said. "I was taking art classes in high school, but I didn't really know that you could be an artist until I was shown a video of Art Basel. That was the first time I had seen living, active artists making and selling work, and I was just blown away because I was like oh, this is a job. You can do this. And so from that moment on, I was like, 'I want to do that.'"

His current work has evolved from the work he did at Nebraska.

"I think my senior year is when I started kind of playing around with the technique that I'm using now, and over the past 10 years, that's just really developed," he said. "I've incorporated other materials and other methods into the work. The basis is the pen in that technique."

His interest in doing portraits came from the accessibility of people.

"I just naturally found myself doing more and more portraits and doing more and more figurative work," Armstrong said. "And as time has gone on, I realized that I am just interested in people and their stories and experiences. It was a natural progression."

Armstrong earned a semi-finalist position in the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery's Outwin Boochever Triennial Portrait competition. Ten of his pieces were featured in Art Basel Miami's Chateau CIROC, an experiential platform to celebrate and empower Black Excellence. His work has also been acquired by the Library of Congress.

Sometimes we take for granted those moments. Because at the end of the day, I was like I'm in school, I have to study... But now looking back, that was like the best years of my life."

"It's been a wild ride, so far, with a lot of varied experiences," he said.

Armstrong enjoyed being back at Nebraska for Honors Day weekend and getting to spend time with the students in the School of Art, Art History & Design.

"I like watching all the undergrads and even the grad students interact with each other," he said. "And just thinking about how it was with my cohort. We spent a lot of time in both Richards and Woods just making work, trying to make deadlines for the next day, just bouncing ideas off of each other. Sometimes we take for granted those moments. Because at the end of the day, I was like I'm in school, I have to study, I have to do this. But now looking back, that was like the best years of my life. Just having the time to take things slow and concentrate. It's nice to be able to slow down and create or experiment and try things out. I really won't take those moments for granted again."

Armstrong completed a 10-month NXTHVN residency in New Haven, Connecticut, in July. The program, founded by Titus Kaphar, Jason Price and Jonathan Brand, accelerates the careers of the next generation of artists.

"I describe it as a very fast-paced graduate program," Armstrong said. "There are a lot of seminars on the business side of art, studio visits, we go to museums and tour behind-the-scenes, and they teach us how to talk about our work and talk with collectors. Literally anything and everything to set us up for the art world, on top of being able to create work. There are seven studio artists and two curators, and we're in collaboration the entire time. It's been incredibly beneficial for my career."

Following the residency, Armstrong plans to return to Los Angeles.

"I have some shows lined up in various spots in New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and

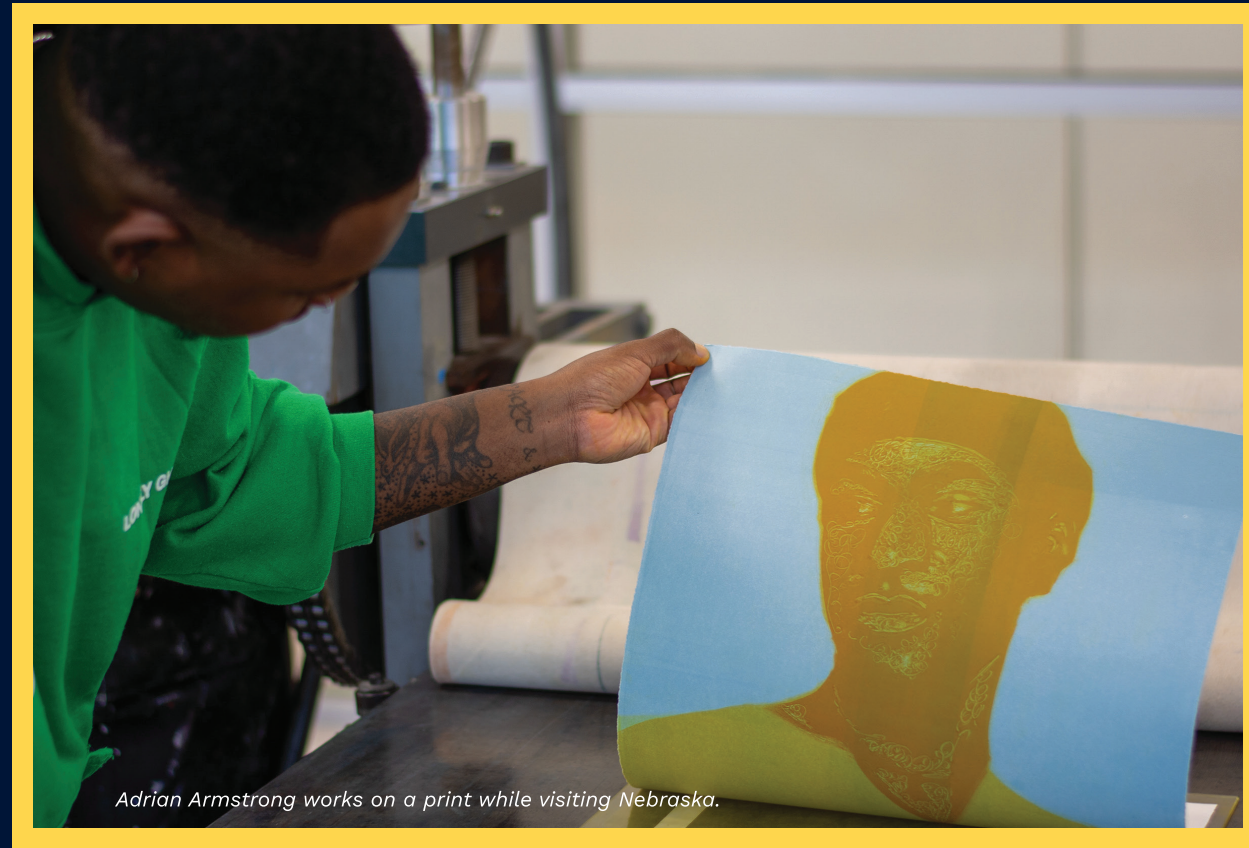
working with some international things," he said. "And just making work."

But he also stays open to other opportunities.

"I might have some goals, and then something comes around that I didn't even think about," he said. "And I'll be like that's incredible, I have to do that."

His advice to students is to be patient.

"It's easy to think that things will happen overnight, especially now you see people blowing up pretty fast," Armstrong said. "There are going to be a lot of noes, but there are also going to be a lot of yeses. Stay true to your ideas and what you believe in and stand firm in that." ■



Adrian Armstrong works on a print while visiting Nebraska.

Moore Urrutia

serves our country through music



Lt. Col. Cristina Moore Urrutia conducts the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West. Courtesy photo.

Lt. Col. Cristina Moore Urrutia (B.M. 1995, M.M. 1998) has had a number of awe-inspiring experiences as commander and conductor of the United States Air Force Band of the Golden West at Travis Air Force Base in California. But returning to Nebraska to receive the Alumni Achievement Award in Music left her speechless.

“It’s hard to put into words, honestly,” she said. “I was very humbled by Barb Schmit’s nomination and just incredibly grateful to have an opportunity to come back to UNL and spend time on campus and see people that really made a difference in my life and helped me to be who I am today. Just being part of this event and the dinner is a nice thing. But working with the students and getting a chance to meet with the faculty and friends, to me that’s a lot more impactful so I’m really grateful for it.”

The Air Force Band of the Golden West is a 60-member unit, composed of 10 musical ensembles and performs more than 350 missions annually throughout a five-state area of responsibility as an ambassador of the Air Force and Air Mobility Command.

Originally from Kimball, Nebraska, Moore

Urrutia started her military band career as a sophomore at Nebraska.

“While I was getting my undergraduate degree in horn, Allen French encouraged me to consider the National Guard band in town, the 43rd Army Band. He had two of his students who were horn players in that band, and they were moving on to grad school and going elsewhere. So they had a couple of openings, and I needed a job,” she said. “I started as a sophomore in college, went to Army basic training and thought, for sure, I had made the biggest mistake of my life while I was in it, but boy, was it the best thing. It was my entrance into the military



Lt. Col. Cristina Moore Urrutia receives the Alumni Achievement Award in Music from Dean Andy Belser at Honors Day.

band world and just getting a chance to see how you can use your music with purpose. There was a little seed of that in that time, but it wasn’t until I joined the Air Force that I really started to understand the difference between music for music’s sake and using music for a particular purpose.”

Moore Urrutia has led ensembles before U.S. Presidents, foreign Heads of State and many other senior civilian and military leaders at such prestigious locations as the White House and Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C., the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, Nippon Budokan in Tokyo, and Maidan Square in Kyiv, Ukraine, among many others. But it was Sept. 11, 2001, that changed everything.

“I had been in the military for just a handful of months at that time, and I suddenly realized this is not just a job, so that was very formative,” she said. “The commander of the band at that time, Scott Guidry, put together a program and after that event, we had a performance for several military leaders that were coming into the Boston area for an event. It was a week maybe after Sept. 11, and the music that he chose just transformed the room. Seeing that firsthand and seeing the power of music to heal, to describe our pain, to bring people together in solidarity— that was very important.”

Moore Urrutia described music in the military as a “hidden gem,” and it’s one of the largest employers of professional musicians. She encourages students to explore the

opportunities available.

“If people are concerned about joining the military band because of what that might mean to them as being part of the military war machine, that’s understandable,” she said. “But what we do, we’re about peace. We’re about making peace so that we don’t have to go to war. We are about building relationships and using music to build bridges across cultures. Doing music to serve your country is a wonderful opportunity that I think people should at least look into and consider.”

Moore Urrutia credited French with encouraging her to pursue conducting.

“He was the one that really encouraged me to continue pursuing conducting,” she said. “He really believed in me as a musician and as a horn player. I had some physical boundaries that I was kind of struggling to get over, and I had always wanted to be a conductor since seventh grade. But he was the one that really pushed me to get a second degree and to make myself, in his words, as marketable as possible, and I really appreciated that.”

She also credits Dr. Tyler Goodrich White, who encouraged her to read Willa Cather’s “The Song of the Lark.”

“It’s a story about this pioneer young woman and pianist. Her piano teacher encouraged her to take voice lessons and suddenly there was this discovery of where her real gift was came to light, and that’s kind of my journey,” she said. “I feel much more comfortable on the podium than I do maybe behind the horn. Conducting is where my heart is, and Dr. White really pushed me and encouraged me along that path, and I wouldn’t be here if it weren’t for him.” ■

Williams' foundation in film began at Nebraska



Katie Williams. Courtesy photo.

Katie Williams (B.F.A. and B.S. 2012), a digital paint supervisor at Industrial Light & Magic's (ILM) Vancouver studio, received the Alumni Achievement Award in Theatre and Film.

"It means quite a lot," she said of the award. "It's super nice to be back at the university. I love visiting and seeing what's happened to the program. The Carson Center is really great. It's a great honor, and I'm really humbled."

ILM has been a mainstay in visual effects for the last 49 years, receiving numerous Academy Awards, Emmys, BAFTAs, VES Awards, and Academy Sci-Tech Awards. Since joining ILM in 2019, Williams has contributed to more than 35 film and television productions including "Star Wars: Episode IX," "Black Widow," "The Irishman," and "The Mandalorian." Williams advanced to a lead artist role in 2021 and later became a department supervisor in 2022. As a digital paint supervisor, she manages a team of artists across film, television and commercial projects.

Williams said her time in the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film gave her a strong foundation for her career.

"It gave me a great foundation in learning film

language," she said. "What I do now, which is in visual effects, having a strong foundation in understanding cameras and lenses, it's invaluable to what we do. It gives us an understanding of what we're working with and what we need to match to. I always tell people on my team or anyone that I work with that having a stronger film base is going to just help you immensely."

She appreciated the relationships she built with her classmates.

"I remember those relationships really well, all the films we made together, all those projects, all the struggles," she said. "I remember my capstone a lot as well. I did an animated project, and that's why I worked really closely with Steve [Kolbe]. Yeah, I spent many hours in the classroom sleeping there on a pillow. So long hours, but really good creative time and time well spent."

Williams pursued dual degrees.

"I was pre-med here. I also did a degree in biochemistry and English because I was interested in those things. That's where I started," she said. "But I joined the film program. Film is something that I always really loved, but I didn't know that I could really pursue it as a career because I'm super rooted in academia. But this was something that

I really wanted to pursue because I love film. I enjoy science, and I love literature, but I love film. I'm deeply rooted in it."

Williams describes ILM as a "really cool place to work."

"I think the coolest aspect of ILM is that it is so rooted in visual effects history," she said. "There's always something to do and lots to work on. Of course, you get to work on things like 'Star Wars,' which in visual effects is pretty cool. Contributing to something that actually started the industry is really nice as well."

She encourages students to do as much as they can while they are students.

"I think absorbing as much knowledge as you can now and trying out a bunch of different stuff is going to be hugely beneficial," she said. "I changed my mind several times and figured

"I had a great education here. I got to do so many things, and having a film school in the middle of the plains is insane. But it's such a great experience."



Katie Williams' visual effects credits include "Black Widow" (2021), starring Scarlett Johansson. Photo © Walt Disney Co./Everett Collection.

out what could be better. I had an idea I wanted to be an animator and maybe that's what I wanted to do because that's what I knew of visual effects. But there's so many different components of visual effects that you should try them all and make yourself aware of the different options now so you can experiment, play, and learn. I think being a student is such an advantage because you're enthusiastic, excited, and you're fearless. Try to figure out the right path for yourself, and then everything will be fine."

Williams is thankful for her time at Nebraska.

"I grew up here, and I always had the mindset

of escaping and like, oh, it's the plains, but I want mountains and I want water," she said. "But I really, really appreciated my time here. I think this was a really good choice for me. I had a great education here. I got to do so many things, and having a film school in the middle of the plains is insane. But it's such a great experience and is such an accessible film school. My class was like 12 students, so it was small. You got to touch everything, and you had to help each other. I loved all my professors, but Steve Kolbe went above and beyond any professor. He always had the best interest of his students, and you don't find teachers like him anywhere. Coming back, it just makes me appreciate the foundation that I had." ■

New music building scheduled to open in 2025

Excitement is building for the Glenn Korff School of Music as the new music building under construction at 10th and Q streets is nearing completion.

The new building is scheduled to be completed in December, with the Glenn Korff School of Music moving into the new building at the end of the spring 2025 semester. Then, work will begin to renovate the south side of Westbrook Music Building and demolish the north side of the building to make way for green space in the arts quadrangle.

Faculty and staff had the opportunity to tour the construction site this summer.

“Having recently toured the new music building site with faculty and staff, I can confidently say that the excitement is

palpable,” said Felix Olschofka, director of the Glenn Korff School of Music. “Experiencing the physical space firsthand has amplified the enthusiasm that was previously sparked by renderings and floorplans. Walking through the new building for the first time was an eye-opening experience for many of us. The construction is progressing smoothly and remains on schedule.”

Olschofka said the state-of-the-art recording studio and immersive performance hall are the two focal points of the new building.

“The performance hall will offer an immersive experience enhanced by spatial sound and design capabilities,” he said. “Key features include fully retractable seating for 185 people, technology for unparalleled audio immersion and high-definition video conferencing and advanced streaming technology for remote

lectures, masterclasses, workshops, performances and real-time music collaboration. The newest optical fiber technology guarantees excellent streaming connectivity with the outside world. This will enable us to virtually invite others into our performance hall or to seamlessly integrate with their performance and lecture spaces, fostering collaborative and interdisciplinary opportunities with organizations across the globe.”

The recording studio will redefine music production and education in the Glenn Korff School of Music.

“It will be equipped with cutting-edge audio and video technology, offering high-fidelity recording equipment, real-time mixing and mastering, and integration with virtual reality tools,” Olschofka said. “The latest network technology will allow the studio to livestream to and from rehearsal spaces and the performance



A rendering of the new immersive performance space. Photo courtesy of Sinclair Hille Architects and BNIM.



Construction continues on the new music building at 10th and Q streets. This photo is dated Sept. 20, 2024. Photo by Kathe Andersen.

hall, ensuring seamless recording and broadcasting of rehearsals and concerts by students, faculty and guest artists. The interconnectivity between the recording studio, larger rehearsal spaces and the performance hall is a truly unique and exciting feature. We are also in the process of extending our Bachelor of Arts program with a new option in music technology and music production. The recording studio will play a key role in supporting and executing these new curricular opportunities, solidifying our commitment to innovation and excellence in music education.”

Kimball Recital Hall is also currently undergoing renovations and is expected to re-open in the summer of 2025.

“The first noticeable improvement for visitors to Kimball Recital Hall will be the exterior—a new façade featuring large glass windows,” Olschofka said. “The main entrance will be transformed into a striking focal point benefitting the hall’s significance. Once the renovation is complete, the entrance lobby will be twice its current size. Inside, everything will be modernized with new fixed seating, updated flooring, advanced audio and video capabilities, a new lighting system, an advanced hearing loop system and redesigned green rooms in the basement.”

Kimball Hall will be fully accessible.

“The hall will not only meet full ADA compliance, but it will also be more

accessible overall, with new ramps on the sides leading from the audience level to the stage,” Olschofka said. “Special acoustical treatments will enhance the sound experience for our audience members. The renovations will also include improved wheelchair accessibility for auditorium seating and access to the orchestra pit, which has been lowered to provide better sightlines.”

With these new facilities, the Glenn Korff School of Music is poised for a promising future for the next generation of students.

“The new facility heralds a transformative era in music education and performance, offering the infrastructure and space needed for creative content makers, critical thinkers and innovators in 21st century music education,” Olschofka said. “The Glenn Korff School of Music community is excited to welcome guests and patrons into its new home, continuing the tradition of providing the best music education in the state of Nebraska.” ■



A rendering of the new recording studio in the new music building. Photo courtesy of Sinclair Hille Architects and BNIM.

Alumni Notes

2005

Richard Fountain (M.M.; D.M.A. 2008) was named a 2024 MTNA (Music Teachers National Association) Fellow by the Texas Music Teachers Association.

2007

Nicholas A. Kenney (M.M.; D.M.A. 2010) was named chair of the Department of Music at Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO). He has been on faculty at SEMO since 2014, was named professor and interim chair in 2023, and permanent chair in February 2024. He will continue teaching the horn studio while assuming the role of chair.



Nicholas Kenney. Courtesy photo.

2009

Kara Davidson (B.A.) was appointed director of new works and associate artistic producer of Paramount Theatre in Aurora, Illinois. Davidson has more than 15 years of experience in various disciplines, including

playwriting, directing, acting, arts administration, teaching and theater management. She was previously a company member at The House Theatre of Chicago.

Danni Gilbert (M.M.; Ph.D. Music Education 2015), assistant professor of instrumental music education at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, was one of three UNL alumnae of the Ph.D. in music education that co-authored a research project “Women’s Perceptions of Advancement Opportunities in Higher Education Music Settings: A Mixed Methods Study” that was recently published in the “College Music Symposium: Journal of the College Music Society.” Co-authoring with Gilbert were **Briana Nannen** (Ph.D. 2017) of Marshall University and **Susan**

Cogdill Vollbrecht (Ph.D. 2013) of the Fremont County School District.

2010

Brad Flick (B.F.A.) is the design director for Evening Star’s “Penny’s Big Breakaway” video game, which was published for consoles and PC in 2024. Read more about it at <https://go.unl.edu/r28x>.

2011

Bailey Barnard (M.A. Art History) recently received her Ph.D. in art history and archaeology from Columbia University and is assistant professor of art history at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

Kimberly Minor (M.A. Art History) recently received her Ph.D. in art history from the University of Oklahoma and is a full-time lecturer in Native American art history at UNO.

2014

Sadé Ayorinde (M.A. Art History), had an exhibition, “Unnamed Figures: Black Presence and Absence in the Early American North” at The American Folk Art Museum in New York City and is

co-editor of the accompanying catalog. Her essay in that catalog on caricatures of African Americans during Reconstruction stems from research she did at UNL on illustrations in popular periodicals, as well as from her thesis on contemporary Black artists. Ayorinde is an American art fellow at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

2015

Karissa Van Liew (B.M.E.) recently published a book titled “The Heart Rhythms, Songs and Dances of Korea,” co-authored with Dong-Won Kim, which was released in September as part of the World Music Initiative series by GIA Publications. For more information on the book, visit <https://go.unl.edu/na9d>.

Joshua Zink (D.M.A.) is assistant professor of voice and opera at the Dr. Bobbie Bailey School of Music at Kennesaw State University. He previously served as associate professor of voice at Carson-Newman University.

2017

Larry Buller (M.F.A. Art; M.E. 2006) recently earned a McKnight

Artist Fellowship and was named a Ceramics Monthly Emerging Artist for 2024. For more on Buller, visit <https://go.unl.edu/0xrb>.

2022

Allison Arkush (M.F.A.) was one of three artists in the exhibition “A Tender Limb” at the Contemporary Gallery in Los Angeles. Arkush exhibited with Ibuki Kuramochi and Marley White. The show was on display from Jan. 27 to Feb. 24. To see Arkush's work, visit her website at allisonarkush.com.



Allison Arkush. Courtesy photo.

Abby Hall (B.F.A.) and **Ally Hall** (B.F.A.) and their Mauve Decade studio won the Emerging Designer Golden Shears Award at Omaha Fashion Week in August 2023. As an emerging fashion house, Mauve Decade explores the relationship between the physical and the

digital—using technologies of 3D printing, laser cutting, digital 3D modeling, and digital sewing. For more on Mauve Decade, visit mauvedecade.my.canva.site.

Sapphire Skye Toth (B.A. Music) was given a full-ride scholarship to attend this year’s Theater Communications Group conference in Chicago. She also attended the Del Mar International Composers Symposium in August to record and premiere two new pieces. She also has a low-fi album coming out this fall and released an audio book podcast in July.

2023

Gabriel Forero Villamizar (D.M.A.) was the first-place winner of the 2023 David Dalton Viola Research Competition. The award includes a prize of \$1,000, as well as the publication of his article, “The Mystery (Rosary) Sonatas by H.I.F. Biber,” in a future issue of “Journal of the American Viola Society.” This competition was open to all viola professors, teachers and performers.

Cobb earns 2024-2025 Fulbright

Laura Cobb, who earned a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in



Laura Cobb. Courtesy photo.

May 2023, has received a 2024-25 Fulbright U.S. Student Program award to work on a photography project in Germany.

In her work, Cobb combines various narratives as she explores humanity’s connections to one another and the land. Her Fulbright photography project, “Traces: An Investigation of Heritage, Time and Memory as the Child of Donor Conception,” will be conducted under the mentorship of Professor Heidi Specker at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig, Germany.

“Throughout history, storytelling has played a strong role in sharing language, culture and heritage,” Cobb said. “As a donor-conceived person, I grew up without the familial tales of my biological father. For my Fulbright fellowship, I hope to explore my paternal heritage as a German Ashkenazi Jew whose family fled pre-World War II persecution.”

While in Germany, Cobb plans to participate in art events and festivals and attend gallery openings.

For more on Cobb, visit: <https://go.unl.edu/tv97>.

Korff School violist performs with Michael Bublé

Glenn Korff School of Music student Andrea Alvarado Troncoso, a DMA student in viola performance, crossed an item off her bucket list when she performed with Michael Bublé in Mexico City last October.

Troncoso was invited to perform with the four-time Grammy Award winner for a set of three concerts in Mexico City, Mexico, Oct. 12-14 that concluded his “Higher Tour,” which has been ongoing since the spring of 2022.

Bublé’s tour orchestra includes female string players who change in every country, along with his regular tour band. Troncoso was the principal violist of the 12-string ensemble in Mexico City,



Andrea Alvarado Troncoso (2nd row from top, far right) on stage with Michael Bublé at his concerts in Mexico City in October. Courtesy photo.

which included four first violins, four second violins, two violas and two cellos.

“It was exciting and fulfilling and full of energy,” Troncoso said. “I was feeding off the level of the show, the musicians. It was tough, and that was amazing to experience and participate.”

It had also been a dream of hers to play with Bublé.

“This is a dream that I have just playing specifically with Michael Bublé,” she said. “I wasn’t sure it would happen. It was so specific, and it was because my Mom said one day, I want you to play with Michael Bublé. And I said, yes, I will do it, as if it were that easy. It was there in my heart. And then when I got this message, I was very excited.”

Troncoso learned a lot from the experience.

“So much joy, to start with,” she said. “But also the experience of participating and observing how it is done at a top world show. I just admire every musician there and every engineer and how they worked together. It’s the highest quality I’ve ever seen. And I got to meet new people and make connections and new friends around the world.”

Professor of Viola Clark Potter said this was a great experience for Troncoso.

“It was quite an honor for Andrea to be asked to play with Michael Bublé, which is a testament of how hard she has worked to attain that level of expertise. She had a fabulous time, of course,” he said.

Music education program’s inclusivity featured in international journal

The inclusive practices of the Glenn Korff School of Music’s music education program were featured in the “International Journal of Music Education” in an article written by music education professors Rhonda Fuelberth and Robert Woody. The article is available online at go.unl.edu/musicedjournal and in the publication.

“The article stemmed from trying to define what makes our music education program unique at Nebraska, and inclusive practices, in all its forms, is really what makes our program unique,” said Fuelberth, associate professor of music education and associate director of graduate studies in the Glenn Korff School of Music. “Inclusion of all people as deserving of a music education, of all music as being valid, and inclusion of all types of musical engagement, whether that is creating or performing or responding to music.”

The article focused on three examples of their inclusivity. First is how music education affirms composition as a primary form of musicianship and as an alternative to performance. The second example is a



The i2Choir performs at the International Quilt Museum. The inclusive and intergenerational choir is one of three examples highlighted in an international journal article about the inclusive practices of the Glenn Korff School of Music’s music education program. Courtesy photo.

vernacular music-making experience in which music education students learn to play “rock band” instruments, engage in songwriting and explore being expressive in the styles of music personally favored by themselves and their future students. Third, music education students can work with an intergenerational choir called i2Choir, which is inclusive of individuals with special needs.

A key to all of these programs, Woody said, is a focus on learner-centered education.

“Education talks about being learner-centered, but too often, I think teachers or directors swoop in and say, well, I know what’s best for the learners so we’re going to do what I think because that’s what is best for them,” Woody said. “We try to put our money where our mouths are on that. It can be a little scary sometimes.”

“And it can be a little disconcerting for our students, too. It takes a little adjustment,” Fuelberth said. “But it can also be liberating and exciting for them to see people come from the community and just want to be there for no other reason than they enjoy singing and enjoy each other.”

Fuelberth and Woody are encouraged by how UNL music education alumni are now bringing these types of programs, like inclusive choirs, to their own schools now.

“It’s exciting to see that becoming a model,” Fuelberth said. “That was our intention. People don’t come to i2Choir because they just want to socialize. They come because they get better, and they learn, and they produce something that they’re proud of and want to work hard.”

For more on the article, visit: <https://go.unl.edu/fc8b>. ■

Korff School to host Robert Owens Centenary Festival in 2025

The Glenn Korff School of Music will be hosting the Robert Owens Centenary Festival on Sept. 17-19, 2025, in the new music building.

Owens was an African-American composer who was born in the U.S. in 1925 and grew up in California. He moved to Germany, where he was a composer, pianist and stage actor. Jamie Reimer, the Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music (Voice) began researching and performing Owens’ works in 2007. In August 2015, Reimer and the Glenn Korff School of Music presented the North American premiere of Owens’ opera, “Culture! Culture!”

He died on Jan. 5, 2017. His collection of published works, unpublished manuscripts, concert programs and reviews, photographs and other memorabilia was donated by Reimer to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Libraries.

The Festival will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Owens’ birth and will feature some of the most prominent African American scholar-performers in the United States.

“I am honored to celebrate Robert Owens’ centenary and his music at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln,” Reimer said. “UNL was close to Robert’s heart, and the opportunity to gather friends and colleagues who knew and loved his music promises to be a very special event.” ■



Jamie Reimer with Robert Owens. Courtesy photo.

NEW FACULTY

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



Mark Adams

Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music Education

He comes to Nebraska from the University of Delaware, where he taught undergraduate and graduate courses in music education, research methods and songwriting. He also brings more than 10 years of experience teaching music in public schools.

Adams' research explores vernacular musicianship, informal teaching and learning, and the nature of classroom community in creative classrooms.

Adams received his Ph.D. in music education from Michigan State University, where he also served as a graduate fellow at the Residential College in the Arts and Humanities. He holds a Master of Music and Bachelor of Music in Education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Marci Malone DeAmbrose

Assistant Professor of Practice in Vocal/Choral Music Education

Her research focuses on inclusive choral ensembles, culturally responsive teaching strategies in elementary music education and the adolescent changing voice. DeAmbrose has presented her work at several esteemed conferences, including ISME, MISTEC, VRME, NAFME, NMEA and KMEA and serves as a MISTEC commissioner. Choirs under her direction have performed at local, national and international venues.

Recently recognized as a 2024 Grammy Music Educator semi-finalist, she is committed to advancing the field of music education through inclusive practices and promoting music-making opportunities for all.

She earned a Bachelor of Music Education from Baker University, her Master of Music in vocal performance and an artist diploma in opera performance from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, and her Ph.D. in music education from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Emily Salgado

Assistant Professor of Percussion

She comes to Nebraska from Eastern New Mexico University, where she was assistant professor of percussion and music technology.

She is active as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician, clinician and adjudicator. Her current project, "Well Behaved Women Seldom Make History," highlights solos written by female composers, honoring pioneering female percussionists.

In January 2023, Salgado formed Twin Lakes Duo with her colleague Jimmy Stagnitti. The duo will tour and perform around the U.S.

Along with percussion, Salgado marched with Carolina Crown drum corps where she was a drum major for the 2015 and 2016 seasons. In addition to her position at Nebraska, she serves on the Diversity Alliance through the Percussive Arts Society and is endorsed by Malletech, Inc., and Black Swamp Percussion.



Lauren Shepherd

Assistant Professor of Music Theory

She received her Ph.D. this summer from Columbia University. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in music and psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a Master of Music in music theory from the University of Arkansas. She also holds Master of Philosophy and Master of Arts degrees from Columbia University.

Shepherd's research interests include popular music, new techniques for atonal analysis, music cognition and music theory pedagogy. She has taught core theory classes and courses for non-majors at Columbia University and the University of Arkansas.

Carson Center offers game-changing research

By Leslie Reed, University Communication and Marketing



Megan Elliott speaks at the launch of Edgeworks in March. Courtesy photo.

Edgeworks, a new research core and service facility launched by the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, is collaborating with scientists, inventors and entrepreneurs to transform cutting-edge ideas into game-changing reality.

Edgeworks is redefining the core research facility model long used in the hard sciences to provide access to talent, technology and expert consultation. Edgeworks' multi-disciplinary team of artists, technologists, world-builders, storytellers and data-scientists provide industry partners and University of Nebraska faculty, researchers and scientists with sophisticated consulting, research and research collaborations, as well as and technology, content and experience development and production services.

Artificial intelligence, virtual reality, game de-

velopment, augmented reality, data visualization, physical immersive installations, world building, and robotics are used to elevate scientific research and outreach, to produce out-of-the-ordinary content with emerging forms of storytelling and to contribute to industry-sponsored research and development.

"We are building an ecosystem at the intersection of media arts and science that will enable new pathways to fuel economic growth in Nebraska," said Ryan Schmaltz, Edgeworks interim director. "Edgeworks is attracting projects with opportunities that prepare, attract and retain talent within the state."

Created with \$625,000 from the university's Nebraska Research Initiative, Edgeworks is the only arts-based core research facility in the state and is among the first of its kind worldwide. Principal Investigator is Megan Elliott, Johnny Carson Endowed Director for Emerging Media Arts at the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts, and co-principal investigators are Assistant Professors of Emerging Media Arts Ash Eliza Smith and Jesse Fleming, and Robert Twomey of the University of California, San Diego.

Several partnerships with university faculty are already underway, such as working with Dr. Tomas Helikar, Susan J. Rosowski Professor of Biochemistry, who created the Digital Twin Innovation Hub to assemble a digital twin of the human immune system; collaborating with Dr. Kees Uiterwaal, associate professor of physics and astronomy, to build virtual replicas depicting quantum physics; and partnering with the university's Rural Drug

Addiction Research Center to build an interactive world-building platform aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of rural towns in Nebraska.

Elliott said Edgeworks will leverage emerging media arts and technologies to strengthen and broaden the university's already high educational standards, cultivate interdisciplinary research opportunities and engage with Nebraska's startup communities.

"Our faculty are already engaged in national and international research, and this core research facility only amplifies, diversifies and expands our research and innovation abilities and impact," she said. "This is a very big deal for the state and for our industry."



Project Manager Lindsey Clausen (left) and Megan Elliott spotlighted Edgeworks at the SWSX Conference in Austin, Texas. Courtesy photo.



A gift to the Fine and Performing Arts Fund through the N Fund directly supports the hopes and dreams of Nebraska's performing arts students.

By making your gift today, you provide University of Nebraska–Lincoln students opportunities to pursue their dreams in the arts — no matter the medium.

To make a donation, visit nufoundation.org/NFundFPA or scan the QR code below:



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

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Faculty Notes

John Bailey, Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music (flute), conducted the International Flute Orchestra on tour in June 2023 in France with concerts in Nice, Aix-en-Provence, Lyon and Chamonix. This summer, the group toured Scandinavia. Bailey also presented masterclasses, recitals and lectures at Bradley University, Central Michigan University and the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley.

Carolyn Barber, Ron and Carol Cope Professor of Music and Director of Bands, had an unusually busy year of travel for guest conducting featuring a residency at Cleveland State University including performances with the Cleveland Symphonic Winds and the OMEA Districts 4/8 Honors Festival, and

performances with the Wisconsin Concert Band Association Intercollegiate Band, the Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville Honor Band, the St. Louis Suburban Honor Band, the Tri-State Honors Band at University of Wisconsin-Platteville and the South Dakota All-State Band. Additional travel included serving as an adjudicator for the Chicagoland Invitational Concert Band Festival, two featured clinics at the College Band Directors National Association North-Central Division Conference at The Ohio State University, and a residency at the International Music Camp at the International Peace Garden between Boissevian, Manitoba, Canada, and Dunseith, North Dakota.

Diane Barger, Ron and Carol Cope Professor of Music (Clarinet),

performed as E-flat clarinetist in the Professor's Choir and in a lecture presentation titled "Embracing the Fire Within and Passing on the Flame" at the International Clarinet Association's (ICA) ClarinetFest® in Dublin, Ireland, in July and August, where she also served as president of the ICA (a position she held through August 2024). She was the guest artist clinician at Millikin University's annual Clarinet Day in February and performed with the Amicitia Duo in March as featured

artists at the Alabama Clarinet Symposium.

Alisa Belflower, emeritus senior lecturer, has been elected to serve a second term as National Vice President for Auditions of the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS).

Ian Borden, associate professor of theatre, has two recent publications: "The Entremés for Performance: Translations of Short Spanish

Golden Age Plays" book with Kerry Wilks (Oxford University Press: Aris and Phillips Hispanic Classics, Liverpool UP, 2024) and the chapter "Calderón Onstage in Spanish Florida: Context, Text, and Reconstruction," Translation Lab co-authors, in "The Comedia Between Worlds/La Comedia entre mundos" (Casa-Museo de Menéndez Pelayo: Santander, Spain, 2024. 213-37). Borden also has an international fight director credit on "You Can Lead a Horse to Water" by Shakespeare in Paradise (Nassau, Bahamas) in September 2023. He also presented a plenary paper "Waist not, Want Not: Shakespeare has a Waif Problem" with Sarah Imes Borden at the 11th Blackfriars Conference at the American Shakespeare Center in October 2023.

Tony Bushard, professor of music history and associate dean, published a book chapter on "Film" in "Leonard Bernstein in Context" (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2024).

Robert Derr, professor of art, had his video "Tangled" (2018) in a traveling group exhibition titled "Dear2050: Entangled Forests" at Kornhausforum Bern in Bern, Switzerland. More information on the exhibition is available at dear2050.org. Derr was re-elected to

the board of directors of New Media Caucus for another three-year term. He also continues his work with the National Association of Schools of Art and Design, where he chaired two site visits.

Peter Eklund, professor of music and director of choral activities, was selected as a 2024 recipient of the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Citation Award. He conducted UNL's flagship choral ensemble University Singers in February at Omaha's Holland Center for a 10-state gathering of the American Choral Directors Association. On May 7, Eklund became president of the UNL Faculty Senate. In July, he conducted in Paris in the famous La Madeleine Church, conducted a sung mass at the top of Mont Saint-Michel, conducted a choral concert in the Bordeaux Cathedral, provided music for the International Mass in the Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, conducted a choral concert in the Prince's Cathedral in Monaco and a concert in the Abbey Church of Hildgard von Bingen.

Suna Gunther, assistant professor of voice, performed and co-directed the world premieres of four newly commissioned works at UNL this March as a member of the SALT Quintet, comprised of faculty from Skidmore College, Concordia

Pinnell earns NCECA Fellow of the Council Award

Pete Pinnell, professor of art in the School of Art, Art History & Design, received the 2024 NCECA Fellow of the Council Award.

The NCECA Fellow of the Council Award recognizes individuals who have made an outstanding contribution through service to the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA).

As was noted in the awards program, "Pinnell's contributions to the ceramics field at large will be long-lasting, and NCECA has been a beneficiary of his generous spirit and belief in sharing what one learns with others."

Pinnell served as president of NCECA from 2019-2023. The four-year commitment included one year as president-elect, two years as president and one year as past president.

For more on the award, visit go.unl.edu/az4v.



Pete Pinnell

Paul Barnes, Marguerite Scribante Professor of Piano, performed a special program of composer Philip Glass's works inside the sculpture of Richard Serra titled "Greenpoint" on the UNL city campus on May 1. For more on the performance and to see video highlights, visit go.unl.edu/hgo4.



Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communication and Marketing.

University and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. The performances, collectively titled "A Mosaic of Mothers," included micro operas by Kansas composer Forrest Pierce and New York City-based composer/librettist team Rachel and Kevin Fogarty, along with works by New Jersey-based composer Jeeyoung Kim and quartets by

Minnesota-based Emily Feld. The quintet later performed these works in a residency at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York.

The Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film presented Professor of Theatre **Christina Kirk's** new play, "A House Divided" in November 2023 in a

world premiere staged reading that included professional actors faculty and students and employed professional dramaturg Kia Corthron. The reading was followed by a panel discussion with celebrated playwright and novelist Corthron, award-winning Lincoln scholar and Sorensen Professor of American History Kenneth J. Winkle and award-winning screenwriter and Professor of Film **Rick Endacott**. The play had its world premiere at the Lied Center for Performing Arts in September.

Stanley Kleppinger, associate professor of music theory and associate director for undergraduate

studies in the Glenn Korff School of Music, made a presentation to the joint meeting of the Society for Music Theory and the American Musicological Society in November 2023 in Denver. The paper was titled “An Experiential Model for Pitch Centricity.” Kleppinger also delivered a plenary session, “Making a Mess of Aural Skills,” alongside colleagues from Utah State University and the University of Texas–San Antonio, at the annual conference of the Texas Society for Music Theory in February 2024.

Tom Larson, Steinhart Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music (composition) and area head

William McMullen, professor of oboe, was invited to coach a student chamber music group working on the “Poulenc Sextet” for wind quintet and piano at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City on Jan. 9. The group consisted of undergraduate music majors under the coaching of Laura Grantier, the assistant professor of clarinet at the University of Utah.



William McMullen (third from right) coaches students from a chamber music group at the University of Utah. Courtesy photo.

for jazz studies, wrote his latest textbook, “History and Tradition of Country Music,” in 2023, which will be published by Kendall Hunt Publishing in time for the fall 2024 semester. He was also selected to present his piece, “Forbearance” at the 2024 International Society of Jazz Arrangers and Composers Symposium in Nashville.

Alan Mattingly, Glenn Korff Chair of Music and professor of horn, presented “The Do’s and Don’ts for Beginning College Professors” at the 55th International Horn Symposium in Montreal, Canada, in July 2023. Mattingly was also a guest clinician and conductor at

O’Gorman High School in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, in September 2023. In April, he collaborated with Charles Snead of the University of Alabama to present “Practicing and Preparing for Success: How to Be Efficient, Effective and Avoid Common Pitfalls” at the Northwest Horn Symposium at Washington State University. The following week Mattingly traveled to Saskatoon, Canada, to present and teach at the University of Saskatchewan.

Ann Marie Pollard, assistant professor of practice in theatre, hosted a panel on supporting bilingual and multilingual students in La Paz, Mexico, for the Voice and

Speech Trainers Association for which she is a member of the Board of Directors. This spring, Pollard performed Jennifer Blackmer’s one-person play, “I Carry Your Heart with Me” for Angels Theatre Company. She also directed the collaborative production of “Big Fish” for the Nebraska Repertory Theatre with Assistant Professor of Music in Voice **Suna Gunther** as music director. In August, she directed Flatwater Shakespeare Company’s production of “Hamlet.”

Jamie Reimer, Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music (Voice) and area head, was the winner at the International Alliance for Women in Music Concert in Antwerp, Belgium, in November 2023. She also performed the world premiere of B.E. Boykin’s “Fields of Wonder” at the SHE Festival in

Arkansas and the Music by Women conference in Mississippi. The commissions and performances were made possible by Hixson-Lied funding. All three performances were with pianist Stacie Haneline. This summer, she won the Gold Prize in the 2024 Virtuoso Awards for Professional Classical Voice.

Matthew Sontheimer, associate professor of art, was recognized as the February 2024 Professor of the Month for his contributions to scholarship, leadership and service to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln community by The Black Masque Chapter of Mortar Board.

David von Kampen, lecturer in music, had his book “The Modern Musician’s Guide to Music Theory and Composition” released by GIA Publications in the summer of 2023.

It is widely available, including on Amazon.com. Von Kampen’s jazz-influenced SATB arrangement of the Fred Rogers song “It’s You I Like” was recorded and released by BYU Singers (Andrew Crane, conductor) on video and streaming in March. This arrangement was originally commissioned by the Aeolians of Oakwood University (Jeremy Savoy Jordan, conductor).

Robert Woody, Steinhart Foundation Distinguished Professor of Music (Music Education), did a guest residency in Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music in October 2023, where he delivered sessions on topics in music education and music psychology. In March, he had a new book released, “Music Learning and Development: A Guide to Educational Psychology for Music Teachers,” which was published by the National

Association for Music Education through their publishing partner Rowman & Littlefield.

Brenda Wristen, professor of piano and piano pedagogy, presented a peer-reviewed paper titled “Teaching the Skill and Artistry of Piano Fingering” at the annual meeting of the Music Teachers National Association in March. She presented a peer-reviewed paper, “Stacking Engagement Layers to Enhance Group Piano Instruction” at the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy in July 2023. Wristen received the 2023 Outstanding Service Recognition Award from the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy and is currently serving as president of the Nebraska Music Teachers Association.

Dan Novy, assistant professor of emerging media arts, will advise on the technical design and development of Ocean Discovery League’s next-generation deep ocean sensor system Deep Ocean Research and Imaging System (DORIS) as part of a \$1.2 million ocean technology transition grant from NOAA and the Integrated Ocean Observing System. The award is one of the largest single investments, to date, in easy-to-use, low-cost technology specifically targeting the deep sea.



Dan Novy. Courtesy photo.

William Shomos, Richard H. Larson Distinguished Professor of Music (Voice) and director of UNL Opera, and alumnus **Jared Hiscock** (D.M.A. 2020) co-developed and performed in a new musical adaptation of Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself.” Out of Whitman’s 1,350 lines of poetry, Hiscock and Shomos conceptualized and forged a libretto of just under 200 lines. The text was set to music by composer-artist Philip Daniel. Scored for three baritones (Shomos, Hiscock and Brandon Bell) with acoustic and synthesized keyboards, the style merged classical elements, minimalist soundscapes and cinematic qualities. The 45-minute work’s world premiere was launched May 25 as the closing performance of the 2024 Salt Creek Song Festival in Ashland, Nebraska.



Left to right: Philip Daniel, Jared Hiscock and William Shomos perform the musical adaptation of Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself” at the 2024 Salt Creek Song Festival. Courtesy photo.

Andrea Bolland

Andrea Bolland retired from the School of Art, Art History & Design. She began teaching art history in 1994. Her areas of research have included Italian Renaissance Art, Italian Baroque Art and Early modern literature on the arts.

Bolland received her Ph.D. and M.A. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her B.A. from the University of Washington.

“Andrea is the rare breed of teacher-scholar who inspires her colleagues daily,” said art history faculty members Wendy Katz, Katie Anania and Michael Hoff in a joint statement. “She raised the department’s profile, publishing on the sculptor Bernini in art history’s most prestigious journal, the ‘Art Bulletin,’ an article that, like her other research, is cited internationally and on syllabi throughout the country. The precision and intelligence of her scholarship on Renaissance theories of language and the senses is equally evident in courses on Florence, Rome, Caravaggio and Michelangelo. Her custom-designed course websites and animations are the envy of her peers. Her multiple teaching awards barely convey her success in instilling love of art history in thousands and thousands of students. We will miss her profoundly.”



Andrea Bolland receives a plaque from Dean Andy Belser at Honors Day in honor of her retirement.

Anita Breckbill

Anita Breckbill retired from the Glenn Korff School of Music and University Libraries. She joined the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1989 and was the head of the Music Library.

She received her Master’s in Library and Information Science from the University of California at Berkeley. She also holds a D.M.A. and M.F.A. in flute performance from the University of Iowa and a B.A. in music from Goshen College in Indiana.

“Dr. Anita Breckbill has been Professor of Libraries and head of the UNL Music Library for some 30 years,” said Professor Emeritus of Music History Peter Lefferts. “Over all of that time, she has worked to make the library relevant, accessible and student friendly. Her varied contributions to our community call for our admiration and heartfelt thanks.”



Anita Breckbill holds one of the largest scores in the collection, Karlheinz Stockhausen’s Nr. 7, Klavierstück XI. Breckbill oversaw the Music Library in Westbrook Music Building. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communications and Marketing.

Eddie Dominguez

Professor of Art Eddie Dominguez retired from the School of Art, Art History & Design. He began teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1998.

Born in New Mexico, Dominguez is one of the leaders of American contemporary ceramic art and mixed media.

He received his M.F.A. from New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University and his B.F.A. from the Cleveland Institute of Art.

“Eddie is an unusually talented artist with a unique voice and distinctive approach to art-making,” said Professor of Art Peter Pinnell. “He has worked primarily in ceramics but is facile with other materials and will readily switch to a medium that best fits the idea he’s currently exploring. As a faculty member, he brought that same flexibility and unique artistic voice to his teaching, encouraging and inspiring his students to take risks and push themselves to be more creative. As a result, Eddie has always been an exciting and inspiring teacher. During his time at UNL, the ceramics program developed into one of the top ranked in the country, and the quality of Eddie’s teaching, combined with his Eddie’s stature as an artist, played an important role in our development.”



Eddie Dominguez (left) works with Kinga Aletto in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. Aletto’s UCARE research project included making a life-size Javan Blue-banded kingfisher out of clay. Photo by Craig Chandler, University Communications and Marketing.

Flaherty brings interactive ‘The Dial’ to Carson Center



Community members had the opportunity to interact with Peter Flaherty’s “The Dial” last fall at the Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts.

The Johnny Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and Nebraska Repertory Theatre hosted Peter Flaherty’s interactive piece, “The Dial” last fall.

Flaherty, a director and interactive artist whose work has shown in more than 100 international venues, including theaters, galleries and museums, visited with students in theatre and emerging media arts during an IGNITE presentation on Oct. 27, 2023. He is a professor in the Interactive Media for Performance program at CalArts.

“I was excited to bring ‘The Dial’ to the Carson Center for Emerging Media Arts and to engage with such an advanced group of student creators, the faculty and the local audience,” Flaherty said. “The goal for this project was to make an exciting, accessible project that gives audiences an opportunity to engage with rhizomatic, interactive storytelling in an intuitive way.”

“The Dial,” which originally premiered at Sundance New Frontier in 2019, is a new form of storytelling with an interactive narrative combining augmented reality and projection mapping. To see a video trailer for “The Dial,” visit go.unl.edu/thedial.

Johnny Carson Endowed Director Megan Elliott said students and the community benefitted from seeing Flaherty and his work.

“Peter’s work and career exemplifies the crossover between emerging media arts, live performance and theatre,” she said. ■

In Memoriam

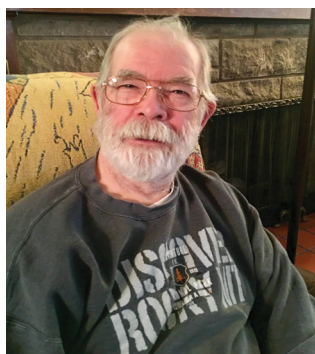
Quentin Faulkner

Quentin Faulkner, aged 80, died Dec. 30, 2023. He was Larson Professor of Organ and Music Theory/History (emeritus) in the Glenn Korff School of Music. He served on the faculty at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln for 32 years.



Stephen Gaines

Stephen Gaines, aged 87, died Nov. 23, 2023. He received his Bachelor of Physical Education and a Master of Fine Arts in Theater from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. He taught in the Hastings and Ashland Public Schools from 1967-1970 followed by a 20+-year tenure as scenic designer, producer and artist-in-residence with Nebraska Educational Television Network. Gaines also previously served on the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts Alumni Board.



MarySue Hormel Harris

MarySue Hormel Harris, aged 82, died Feb. 15. A gifted concert pianist and music teacher, she was also the political partner of her husband, Bill Harris, who served as both a Nebraska State Senator and Mayor of Lincoln. Harris received the college's Award of Merit in 2017.



She created both the MarySue Hormel Harris Piano Scholarship Fund and the MarySue Harris School of Music Fund in the Glenn Korff School of Music. Her giving spanned more than 30 years and influenced countless students in our piano program.

Dan and Barbara Howard

Barbara Howard, aged 92, died June 20. Dan Howard, aged 93, died Sept. 11. Dan Howard was chair of the art department at Nebraska between 1974-1983 and taught here for 22 years before his retirement in 1996.



The Howards' generosity shaped the School of Art, Art History & Design. They generously supported the school's art gallery, which is named the Eisentrager-Howard Gallery. They also created the Dan and Barbara Howard Creative Achievement Awards and Award for Best Art Historical Writing that have contributed to the improvement of student work.

The Howards received the college's Award of Merit in 2022.

Joan Reist

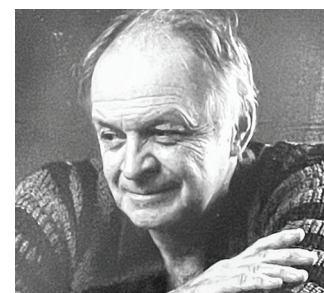
Joan Reist, aged 88, died Nov. 4, 2023. She had a long and distinguished career in music education both locally and at the national level.



In 1973, she joined the School of Music, where she created and coordinated an academy for all freshman music majors, designed piano proficiency and musicianship programs and supervised graduate assistants. She retired as assistant professor in 2000.

Douglas Ross

Douglas Ross, aged 86, died July 27, 2023. He began his career at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln in 1966 as an instructor of drawing and sculpture in the School of Art and Art History. He retired in 1998.



Nebraska students design, paint mural at Beatrice business

By Kristina Jackson, University Communication and Marketing

Students enrolled in a Fine and Performing Arts course have added a new roadside view along U.S. Highway 77 in Beatrice.

The group — part of a Street Art II: Mural Masters class led by Sandra Williams, associate professor of art — spent more than a week painting a mural at Premier Chevrolet Buick GMC in Beatrice in June. Williams said the project offers students valuable experience while connecting them to Nebraska communities. It also offers students a creative experience that cannot be replicated in a classroom.

"I'm a fan of pairing real-world skills with academic objectives, that one should reflect the other," she said. "The most significant learning experiences I had as a student were when I was working with

other people. That is the real foundation of education that was valuable to me, so I always look for ways to provide that opportunity for students."

Williams has worked on public art projects in Alliance, Nebraska, for the last few years, and said they were listening to what communities wanted and what the people in communities like these wanted when it came to public art.

The answer? Murals.

"Nebraska towns are a blank canvas waiting for renewal," Williams said. "Murals can revitalize spaces. They can catalyze broader community ideas into renewal initiatives. There are educational, social and economic benefits to having widespread cultural access."

To learn more about the project and see more images, visit go.unl.edu/murals. ■

All photos by Craig Chandler, University Communication and Marketing.

Left: Local students paint a flower along the bottom of the mural.



Above: Lea Bushey, a senior in graphic design, paints stems of grass on the mural.

Below: Sandra Williams (left) and Maddie Vanderbur, a senior in graphic design and the mural's designer, look over a printout of the mural.





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FALL 2024