Conservatory MAGAZINE

2017

Inside Oberlin's new subterranean hub

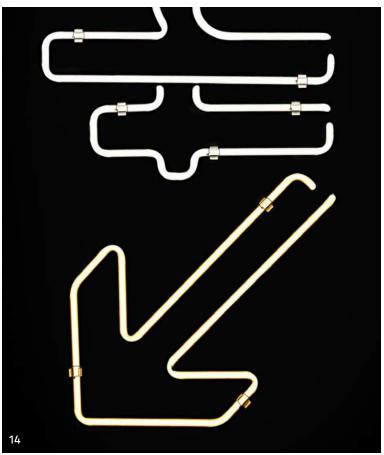
Ethnomusicology steps out of the classroom P. 26 Old instruments find new life with students

PI: Where classical, jazz, and improv meet





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Oberlin Conservatory Magazine

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Director of Conservatory Communications

CATHY PARTLOW STRAUSS '84

Associate Director of Conservatory Communications ERICH BURNETT

Art Director EMILY CRAWFORD '92

> **Designer** RYAN SPROWL

Contributing Writers

JULIE CROOKSTON-GULENKO '15 JENNIFER FRASER DONALD ROSENBERG

Director of Print and Publications
KELLY VIANCOURT

Vice President for Communications BEN JONES '96

Dean of the Conservatory
ANDREA KALYN

Email: con.news@oberlin.edu
Web: www.oberlin.edu/con
Facebook: oberlinconservatory
Twitter: @oberlincon
Instagram: @oberlincon

POSTMASTER Send address changes to:

Oberlin Conservatory
Office of Communications
39 W. College St.,
Oberlin, OH 44074-1576









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ON THE COVER:

A PI group performs at the new Birenbaum Innovation and Performance Space (see page 14). Photos by Ricky Rhodes (front) and Tanya Rosen-Jones '97 (back).

OBERLIN CONSERVATORY MAGAZINE 2017

Of Note

The stories that shaped the year at Oberlin Conservatory





Hurricane Force

Oberlin Chamber Orchestra teams up with jazz legend Terence Blanchard in an ode to Katrina's victims.

The Oberlin Chamber Orchestra experienced an early highlight of the 2016-17 concert season in October when it shared the Finney Chapel stage with the Terence Blanchard Quintet, led by the prolific jazz trumpeter and composer. Together they performed Blanchard's Grammy Award-winning 2007 composition *A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)*.

By the time it was over, the esteemed guest sounded as moved by the experience as the students who took part. "It's Oberlin, so it's a huge honor to be there—that's number one," says Blanchard, who also led a master class. "I love teaching. I love relating to young people's minds and their sense of creativity. And hopefully I got a chance to help inspire them in some way."

In his youth, Blanchard studied at the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts. By the time he entered college at Rutgers University, he also began performing in the Lionel Hampton Orchestra; soon after, he succeeded Wynton Marsalis in Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. A five-time Grammy winner, he counts among his 50 film scores almost everything made by director Spike Lee.

A Tale of God's Will grew out of a 2006 project with Lee, When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts, a four-hour HBO documentary about the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina. Blanchard himself appeared in the film along with his mother, who had lost her home in the disaster.

Chamber Orchestra conductor Raphael Jiménez hailed the opportunity for his students to replicate a professional experience like those they might encounter after Oberlin. "The performance of 'non-classical' concerts, such as pops and children's concerts, is an essential part of the season for most professional orchestras in the country," he says. "Often, the orchestra serves as support to a guest artist, and the concert is put together in a very limited amount of rehearsal time. So this is a great educational experience for us."

The performance opened with a set by the Ben Cruz Quintet, a student ensemble that played music by Thelonious Monk, Herbie Hancock, and Mulgrew Miller.

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Dusan Grubisic '20 played the protagonist in Songs from Liquid Days, director Jonathon Field's adaptation of the Philip Glass song cycle of the same name. The winter-term production was performed in Oberlin and at Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum as part of the 2017 New Opera Works Festival.

Winter Term Opera Transforms Philip Glass' *Liquid Days*

In the mid-1980s, composer Philip Glass developed a song cycle around original lyrics penned by a handful of popular musicians he admired. The project began with Talking Heads frontman David Byrne, then grew to include Paul Simon, Suzanne Vega, and Laurie Anderson. It ultimately became Glass' most popular and successful recording.

Three decades later, Oberlin Opera Theater Director Jonathon Field reenvisioned Glass' classicalpop cycle, called *Songs from Liquid Days*, as a narrative tale that chronicles a man's efforts to understand his own death as he experiences a series of "purgatories."

For Field, the story emerged when he reordered the songs in Glass' original cycle. The multimedia creation that resulted—complete with a minimalist set and costuming, dramatic action, projected images, and live music that connects Western art music with rock music of the era—was brought to the stage of Warner Concert Hall in January for four "artist concept" performances and a single presentation at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and

Museum in Cleveland, part of the New Opera Works Festival.

Working hand-in-hand with music director Daniel Michalak, Field envisioned the action of Liquid Days as a sort of mash-up of Dante's Divine Comedy and The Tibetan Book of the Dead. "What drew me to the piece was the combination of its unique words and sound," he says. "It has a kind of depth and mystery. I have always liked the minimalists. I think part of it is the pulse, part is the idea of constructing music through loops, and part of it is the 'shimmer' that the music has."

The production marks the second collaboration between

Oberlin and Cleveland Opera Theater: In January and February 2016, Field directed the critically acclaimed *Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed that Line to Freedom*, an original opera written by Nkeiru Okoye '93. Most of that show's run took place in churches across northeast Ohio, as well as Finney Chapel.

"I have been trying to rework the opera experience ever since the '80s," says Field, who has been hailed for his unconventional approaches to conventional and not so conventional repertoire. "The Rock Hall has a kind of wow factor that I think helps expand the idea of what opera can be."



Ryota Yamazaki Captures 2016 Cooper Title

Ryota Yamazaki, a 17-year-old pianist from Koriyama, Japan, earned top honors in the 2016 Thomas and Evon Cooper International Competition.

Performing with The Cleveland Orchestra at Severance Hall, Yamazaki closed the Concerto Finals with Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2 in C Minor. Fourteen-year-old Nathan Lee of Sammamish, Washington, opened with the same Rachmaninoff concerto, for which he earned third prize. Seventeen-year-old Evren Ozel of Minneapolis earned second prize for his performance of Beethoven's Concerto No. 4 in G Major.

Yamazaki's title includes a \$20,000 prize—the largest prize in Cooper Competition history. Ozel earned \$10,000 for second place, and Lee took home \$5,000 for third. By advancing to the Concerto Finals, all three earned full-tuition scholarships to attend Oberlin Conservatory, a prize valued at more than \$200,000.

Entering its eighth year in July 2017, the Cooper Competition alternates each year between piano and violin. It is supported by 1978 Oberlin College alumnus Thomas Cooper and his wife Evon.



In the spring of 2017, Oberlin-Como Fellow Allesandro Deljavan of Italy participated in an evening of Schubert that featured Oberlin voice majors in a lieder recital and the Fantasy for Violin and Piano, performed with violinist Jerry Xiong '19.

Stars Align for the Oberlin-Como Piano Academy

Oberlin completed its first full year in association with the International Piano Academy Lake Como with a series of visits by guest masters and a roster of deeply talented fellows.

Forged in 2016, the Oberlin-Como Piano Academy is a partnership between the conservatory and the International Piano Academy Lake Como, an exalted institution dedicated to advancing the education of elite student pianists. The pact makes Oberlin the exclusive U.S. home for the Italy-based program, enabling participating students to live and study at Oberlin as Oberlin-Como Fellows.

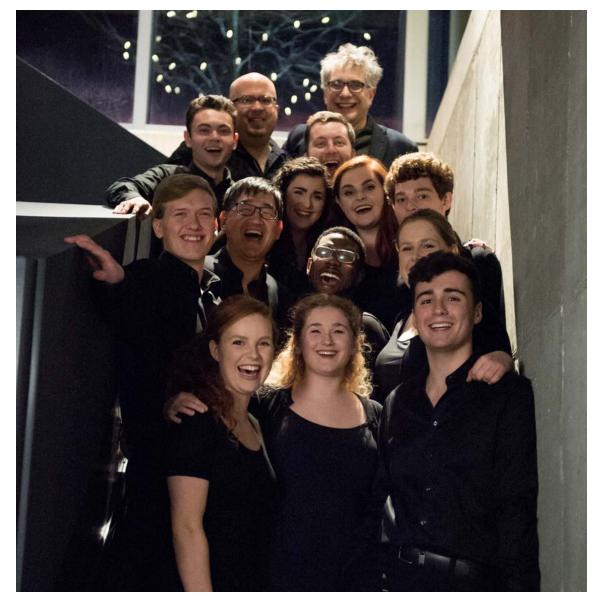
Central to the program are
Oberlin residencies held by
legendary performers and
teachers. In the past year, Como
residencies were held by Richard
Goode, Hungarian legend Tamás
Vásáry, Como Academy founder
William Naboré, Chopin
Competition champion Dang
Thai Son, and Van Cliburn
Competition winner Stanislav
Ioudenitch, who joins the Oberlin
piano faculty this summer.

In addition to playing in classroom settings, each Oberlin-Como Fellow performs solo recitals and engages in collaborative projects with Oberlin students. One such collaboration involved a winterterm project called Mostly Mayrhofer, directed by Professor of Accompanying and Coaching Philip Highfill. Five conservatory singers devoted their winter term

to intensive study of the lieder of 19th-century Austrian poet Johann Mayrhofer and composer Franz Schubert. They brought those works to the stage in a pair of February performances in Warner Concert Hall, where they were joined by Oberlin-Como Fellow Allesandro Deljavan of Italy.

Other fellows for 2016-17 included Aimi Kobayashi of Japan and Chi Ho Han of South Korea. All three will return in 2017-18, in addition to three new fellows who will live and study on campus.

"The Oberlin-Como Program is rapidly changing the culture of piano at Oberlin, giving our students an unmatchable opportunity to learn from a wide variety of masters of today and tomorrow," says Professor of Piano Robert Shannon '72. "And we are just getting started."



Conservatory singers devoted their winter term to studying character development with Joseph Mechavich (back left) and librettist Gene Scheer (back right). Their work culminated in the first performance held in the William and Helen Birenbaum Innovation and Performance Space, on the lower level of the Hotel at Oberlin.

Oberlin Singers Work with Joseph Mechavich '92 and Gene Scheer

Eleven Oberlin voice students devoted their winter term to studying character development in opera and art song through a program called Words into Sound.

Directed by conductor Joseph Mechavich, who has led performances in major opera houses across America and abroad, Words into Sound also included Gene Scheer, a composer and prominent librettist best known for his collaborations with composer Jake Heggie. In their work with Oberlin students, Mechavich and Scheer focused on the relationship between music and text in art songs and opera scenes from the repertoire of Heggie and Scheer. Oberlin vocal coach Tony Cho also played a key role, preparing the student performers in advance of their work with Mechavich and Scheer, and Jason Goldberg '16, a former student director, handled staging.

Words into Sound culminated in a January 27 performance at the Birenbaum Space, a new venue in the lower level of the Hotel at Oberlin (see page 14 to learn more).

"It's not about the notes and the beautiful sounds—which are important, and that is a given," Mechavich says of the project's focus. "It's about being true to the words on the page. Most people in the audience don't remember the notes, or if they were sharp or flat. What they do remember is if they were moved."



Conductor Robert Spano '84 Performs, Leads Discussion

Robert Spano, who has served on the Oberlin faculty since 1989 while cultivating one of the most robust conducting careers in America, returned to his alma mater for a lecture and concert in fall 2016. He performed his original composition for piano, *Sonata: 4 Elements*, which had been given its world premiere at the 2016 Aspen Music Festival, where Spano is music director.

Renowned for his innovative programming and championing of contemporary music, Spano is in his 16th season as music director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, with which he has won six Grammy Awards. His new composition—a relative rarity, in light of his frenetic schedule—is built around the theme of the four classical elements, one for each movement of the sonata: earth, air, water, and fire. He notes that these elements have fascinated great thinkers for thousands of years and are woven into countless Western traditions.

"I was inspired to capture something of the unique and complex qualities of each element, yet also to connect them, as they are dynamically related to each other," he says.

In April, Spano released his sonata on a recording by ASO Media. It includes a song cycle he wrote for soprano Jessica Rivera.



Acclaimed violinist Pamela Frank works with Asher Wulfman '20 during a session in Stull Recital Hall. Frank's spring visit was presented by Conservatory Student Wellness, which is dedicated to fostering the overal mental and physical health of all conservatory students.

New Conservatory Initiative Promotes Student Wellness

Performance-related stress is as old as music itself, but new initiatives led by the Conservatory Dean's Office are intended to help students take charge of their mental and physical health.

Conservatory Student
Wellness sponsors programming
throughout the academic year on
a variety of topics. In 2016-17,
those programs included yoga
classes, massages, and
discussions—called Conservatory
Wellness Workshops—dedicated
to healthy relationships, mindful
self-compassion, avoiding
prejudice, disability issues, and
other topics.

"Conservatory Wellness Workshops are intended to promote robust physical and mental health in the student body, as well as integrate social-justice programming into the community at large," says Associate Dean for Academic Support Chris Jenkins, who is also the conservatory's liaison to the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. "This programming focuses on maintaining a healthy community environment—socially, emotionally, and physically."

In the fall, Con Wellness sponsored an exclusive screening of a new documentary called *Composed*, in which dozens of classical musicians—many of them from major American orchestras—share their passion for music and their sometimes crippling fears of performing and auditioning. Among those interviewed in the film are Oberlin faculty members Peter Slowik (viola) and Robert Walters

(oboe and English horn), who performs with The Cleveland Orchestra. Created over a nine-month period in 2015, Composed also includes the insight of mental-health professionals including Noa Kageyama '98, who specializes in performance psychology at the Juilliard School. In February, Kageyama returned to his alma mater for a series of workshops on managing performance anxiety and related stress.

An April visit by violinist
Pamela Frank included a
master class and discussion
about movement analysis with
physiotherapist Howard Nelson.
When Frank suffered a careerthreatening injury, Nelson's
efforts—and Frank's persistence—
helped her return to the stage.
She shares her insight on injury
prevention in an exclusive Q&A at
oberlinconservatory.tumblr.com.

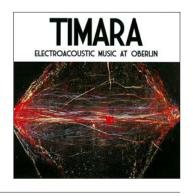
TIMARA Studios Release New Music the Old Way

Oberlin's TIMARA studios, which came into existence when vinyl records and eight-track tapes ruled the audio world, released a recording in February that showcases the work of current and former students and faculty. And of course, it was released on vinyl.

TIMARA: Electroacoustic
Music at Oberlin consists of nine
disparate-sounding tracks that
came together through various
means, from traditional
instruments to synthesizers to
field recordings. It was pressed
by Oberlin's Hanson Records.

"The combined student and faculty creative output is truly remarkable," says TIMARA faculty member Tom Lopez '89. "Every year I witness inspiring work by my colleagues and students alike."

Electroacoustic Music at Oberlin marks TIMARA's first dalliance with vinyl, following a run of five CDs and a DVD issued over a 10-year-span. Other recordings featuring TIMARA musicians have appeared in recent years on the Oberlin Music label. In 2014, Associate Professor Peter Swendsen '99 released Allusions to Seasons and Weather. The following year, pianist Thomas Rosenkranz '99 released Toward the Curve, featuring music composed by TIMARA alumni.







As students across campus counted down the days to commencement, Oberlin's Contemporary Music Ensemble hit the road to New York in May to perform works by Louis Andriessen and Michael Gordon at the 2017 Bang on a Can Marathon at the Brooklyn Museum.

The 30th annual marathon, presented by the performing arts

collective Bang on a Can, featured eight hours of innovative, rarely performed music. CME played Andriessen's *De Staat* ("The Republic")—a commentary on the debate about the relationship between music and politics—and the New York premiere of *No Anthem*, composed in 2015 by Michael Gordon, a founding

member and co-artistic director of Bang on a Can. The concert included Oberlin faculty performers Roy Poper on trumpet, Lee Allen on trombone, and Stephen Aron on guitar.

The same ensemble—under the name Oberlin Sinfonietta— previewed the pieces in Oberlin on the evening prior to departure. For

some students, including trumpeter Wyeth Aleksei '17, the Marathon performance marked an exhilarating conclusion to their ensemble experience at Oberlin.

"Being able to work with my own studio teacher—Roy Poper—in my last concert and last trip with CME has been a life-changing experience," Aleksei says.

PREVIOUS PAGES: FADI KHEIR, KOH: YEVHEN GULENKO

Oberlin Opens Selch Center for the Study of American Culture

Throughout his life, New York City publisher Frederick Selch amassed with his wife Patricia an enormous collection of unique instruments and seminal books that document the history of American music.

In 2008, the Selches donated their collection to Oberlin to enable study by scholars for generations to come. That collection will now be made readily accessible to researchers through the creation of the Frederick R. Selch Center for the Study of American Culture, the symbolic home of which is the Selch Classroom, a technologically superior learning space in Bibbins Hall.

The Selch Center's opening celebration in fall 2016 featured artifacts from the collection and a talk on late singer and activist Paul Robeson, presented by music historian Thomas Riis '73.

In addition, Oberlin has convened a panel of faculty, staff, and students from both sides of campus to support cutting-edge, interdisciplinary research. Fall 2016 also yielded the first class of Selch Fellows, four students from the College of Arts & Sciences who undertook various cultural research projects. The student researchers were Julian Cranberg, Nora Cooper, Isabelle Harari, and Sofia Pierson.

"What I love about the center is that it includes not only people from a broad category of academic disciplines, but also from all branches of Oberlin," says James O'Leary, Oberlin's Frederick R. Selch Assistant Professor of Musicology. "What brings us together is our passion for what we all study."



Jennifer Koh's spring residency included a workshop performance of the Vijay lyer concerto *Trouble*, which was written for Koh and premiered at the Ojai Music Festival in June.

Jennifer Koh '97 and Vijay Iyer Collaborate with Students for Ojai World Premiere

Violinist Jennifer Koh '97 and composer/pianist Vijay Iyer devoted a week to discussions and music-making with conservatory students in April.

The experience included a workshop performance of a new work by Iyer, which was given its world premiere in June at the Ojai Music Festival, where Iyer was this year's music director. The piece, *Trouble*, is a violin concerto that was written for Koh. It was performed in Oberlin and at the Cleveland Museum of Art by Koh and the Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble, members of which also took part in the premiere at Ojai.

Other highlights of Koh's week on campus included a discussion called Curating Encounters with the Unknown: A Literary and Musical Conversation, which touched on questions of literary and musical interpretation and featured Koh, Associate Professor of Hispanic Studies Claire Solomon '98, and Donald R. Longman Professor of English Sandy Zagarell. Another conversation focused on diversity in the arts and included insight from Koh and Iyer, both of whom also held master classes during the week.

"You have the capability as an artist to create the world that you want, and believe in and live in that world," Koh told students in one session. "I think that's something I probably learned from coming to school here—even in terms of imagining the world that I wanted to be a part of. You can't control all the elements

of the world, but you can create your community, the kind of artwork, and the kind of music you believe in. You can build the collaborators you work with in that world, so that's what I do in my artistic life."

Iyer's career has intersected with numerous Oberlin faculty and alumni, from jazz professor Billy Hart to the International Contemporary Ensemble, with which he recently collaborated in Abu Dhabi and at Ojai.

"I've found that people who come through Oberlin have a sense that the way to do it is to do it together," he told students. "And so I see them banding together in different ways and embarking on these ventures. Artists need to be community organizers, and that's what I've found to be the case with a number of folks who come through here. They see the value of strength in numbers, and they're not in it for themselves."

New on Oberlin Music

The official recording label of Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin Music showcases the artistry of the conservatory's faculty, students, and alumni. Oberlin Music titles are distributed by Naxos of America and are available through digital music channels and select retailers worldwide. Learn more at oberlin.edu/oberlinmusic.



Ginastera: One Hundred Yolanda Kondonassis, harp Gil Shaham, violin Jason Vieaux, guitar Orli Shaham, piano Oberlin Orchestra Raphael Jiménez, conductor

Marking the centennial anniversary of Alberto Ginastera's birth, Ginastera: One Hundred pays tribute to the Argentine composer and serves as a musical thankyou from internationally acclaimed harpist Yolanda Kondonassis, whose career has been powerfully influenced by Ginastera. (By her own estimation, Kondonassis has performed his Harp Concerto nearly 200 times.) Ginastera: One Hundred features the artistry of Kondonassis—an Oberlin Conservatory faculty member of almost 20 years-and three esteemed colleagues, each of them renowned for their charismatic musicianship.



Mozart Among Friends James Howsmon, piano Marilyn McDonald, violin

After performing the complete set of Mozart Sonatas for Pianoforte and Violin together, James Howsmon and Marilyn McDonald longed to relive three lesser-known gems. Perhaps smaller in scope but not in creativity, the sonatas that make up Mozart Among Friends—G Major, K. 379; F Major, K. 377; and A Major, K. 526—wonderfully reveal the full range of Mozart's genius. As the artists' notes explain, the title is a sort of double entendre: "Mozart Among Friends" refers to the custom during Mozart's time of hosting home performances for loved ones; it also honors the friendship of the two longtime faculty collaborators, as well as their late friend, painter Leslie Miller, whose artwork graces the cover.



Groove Dreams Peter Dominguez, bass

Late bassist Milt Hinton is celebrated for a stage and studio career that intersected with countless legendary musicians for an incredible seven decades. Groove Dreams honors Hinton's legacy with solo bass tunes from artists as varied as Duke Ellington, Stevie Wonder, Bill Evans, and Chick Corea. Performed on the 18th-century Italian bass Hinton played throughout his career, each song explores the nuances and deep colors of the instrument—qualities not always discernible in ensemble playing. A renowned bassist and educator in his own right, Dominguez met Hinton in 1981. More than three decades later, he was instrumental in forging a relationship between the Hinton estate and Oberlin Conservatory, where he is a professor of jazz studies and double bass.



Myth & Tradition Darrett Adkins '91, cello Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble Timothy Weiss, conductor

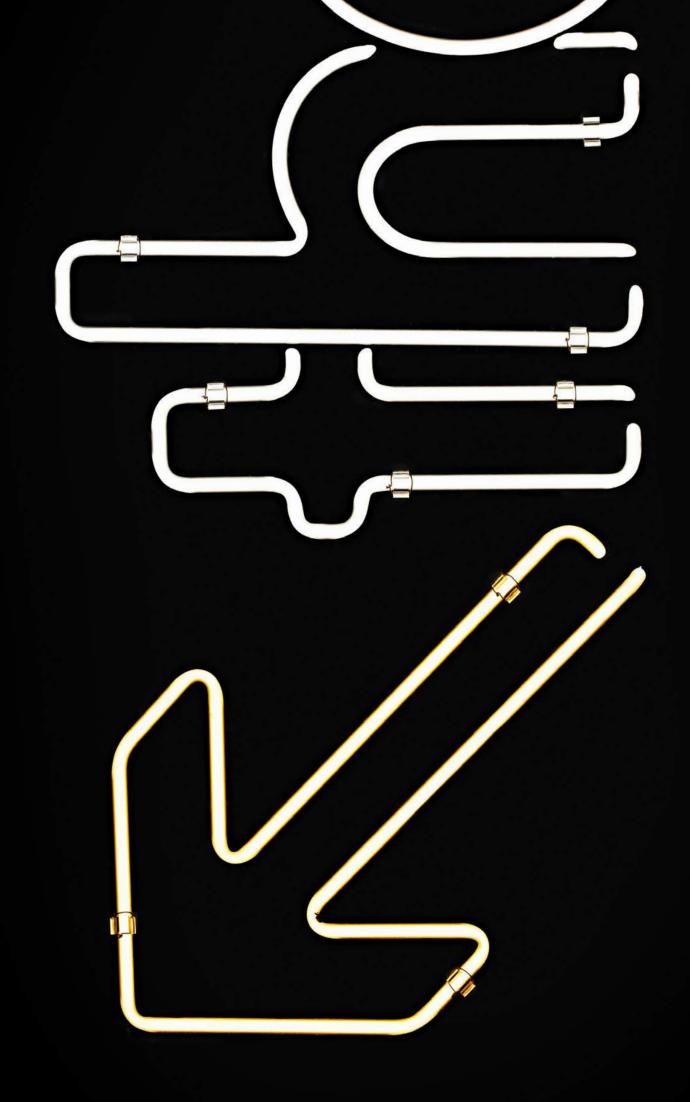
Associate Professor of Cello Darrett Adkins and the Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble deliver a trio of cello concertos that are united by their exaltation of the instrument's voice and by their compositional distinction. The recording's title is inspired in part by Su Lian Tan's Legends of Kintamani, a sweeping and cinematic concerto written for Adkins and based on the mythic Balinese birdwarrior known as the Garuda. Joining this world-premiere recording is Richard Wernick's dramatic and intense Concerto (written in 1979) and Philip Cashian's Concerto for Cello and String Orchestra, another work written for Adkins. "Like all of his music," the cellist says of Cashian's piece, "it is vivid, fleeting, imaginative, and brilliant."



Under One Sun Under One Sun, featuring Jamey Haddad, percussion

Jamey Haddad met sax player Billy Drewes when both were music students in Boston. Nearly 45 years later, the longtime friends have made their first recording together: a collection of tunes written by Drewes and performed by Under One Sun, eight musicians representing five countries and five generations. "As my musical journey led me from one continent to another, and as I experienced a planet crying out for understanding, this team of players cosmically came forward," says Haddad. Joining Haddad and Drewes are Michael Ward-Bergman (hyper accordion), Luisito Quintero (congas, timbale, and percussion), Roberto Occhipinti (acoustic bass), Leo Blanco (piano), Ali Paris (qanun and voice), and Salar Nader (tabla). Included are notes by legendary musician Paul Simon, with whom Haddad has performed for two decades.

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SOUNDS FROM THE UNDERGROUND

The striking new Birenbaum Space gives musicians—and audiences—an experience like no other on campus.

By Erich Burnett

MID OBERLIN'S STATELY CONCERT halls and intimate recital spaces, there now resides a venue designed to offer a performance experience unlike any of them.

Situated at the intersection of campus and community life, the William and Helen Birenbaum Innovation and Performance Space is a club-like, subterranean venue in the Hotel at Oberlin that promises to serve a virtually unbounded variety of purposes—and to host a similarly varied range of music.

Operated by the conservatory, the Birenbaum will serve as an entrepreneurial space for Oberlin College and Conservatory students by day and an intimate, 100-plus-capacity concert club by night, hosting everything from student recitals to conservatory ensembles to guest artists and special events.

Benefiting from its location in the heart of downtown Oberlin, the Birenbaum is intended to connect campus and community life through its programming and amenities—most notably a sleek and stylish bar that extends along the north side of the room, which will be open to the public most nights from 7 to 11 p.m. The space boasts a contemporary vibe, with polished concrete walls and floor, exposed ceilings, and flourishes of cork incorporated in the bar top and the walls and floor of its Kulas Stage.

DESIGNED TO INSPIRE

For student musicians, the Birenbaum offers a performance setting that is distinct from campus venues and closely resembles nontraditional locales many musicians are now exploring in their professional lives. After only a few weeks of availability to conservatory

students and ensembles, the club was completely booked for the spring semester.

"The Birenbaum was conceived and designed to be a place of intersection—a place of connected learning," says Dean of the Conservatory Andrea Kalyn. "In both modes, this is a space designed to inspire our students to make connections across the curriculum and to imagine—and even more critically, to practice—the ways in which their education can live beyond Oberlin in the community, the profession, and the world."

The Birenbaum is named for the parents of attorney Charles Birenbaum '79 of San Francisco, chairman of the Northern California offices of Greenberg Traurig and an Oberlin College trustee. Birenbaum's daughter, Julia Birenbaum '17, graduated in May. The venue was dedicated March 3 in a ceremony attended by three generations of Birenbaums,

including Charles' mother, Helen. Oberlin College President Marvin Krislov and Dean Kalyn spoke at the event.

Hours later, the Birenbaum played host to a performance by the Oberlin Sinfonietta, conducted by Timothy Weiss. The eclectic program included works by Beethoven, 19th-century Danish composer Emil Hartmann, and Oberlin faculty composer Jesse Jones, and featured side-by-side performances of students with faculty flutist Alexa Still, oboist Mingjia Liu '10, clarinetist Richard Hawkins, and French hornist Roland Pandolf.

FLEXIBLE AND EVOLVING

The first official performance in the Birenbaum was a winter-term project called Words into Sound, which took place January 27. Coordinated by voice professor Lorraine Manz and conductor Joseph Mechavich '92, it featured conservatory singers performing works by Jake Heggie and Gene Scheer, with Scheer in attendance.

In late February, TIMARA major Joseph Misterovich '18 performed the first student recital in the Birenbaum. He was thrilled to create music on what he calls a "blank slate," compared to Oberlin's other venerable venues, and he benefited from the room's versatile sound system and video-projection capability. "The acoustics of the space complemented the music I composed," says Misterovich, who has worked sound reinforcement for other Birenbaum events through jobs with the offices of Concert Sound and Conservatory Audio. "It's exciting to work in a space that has yet to be settled into a specific identity and is still flexible and evolving."

The Birenbaum was designed by the Cleveland firm Westlake Reed Leskosky, which led recent renovations of the Apollo Theatre and Bibbins Hall, and designed the Bertram and Judith Kohl Building, home to Oberlin's jazz program. Accessible from College Street or via the hotel lobby elevator, the Birenbaum welcomes guests in a vestibule gallery space adorned with artwork by Oberlin students.

The Birenbaum represents the ninth performance space on campus used by conservatory musicians. It is the first new space since the creation of David H. Stull Recital Hall, part of a 2013 renovation of Bibbins Hall that also was designed by Westlake Reed Leskosky.

Like the new Hotel at Oberlin, which opened in spring 2016, the Birenbaum is part of Oberlin's Green Arts District, a plan for building and renovating a 13-acre city block at the corner of East College and North Main streets to be energy self-sufficient and carbonneutral, providing a model for sustainable construction everywhere.









Housed on the lower level of the Hotel at Oberlin, the Birenbaum was dedicated in March 2017. The event was attended by numerous members of the Birenbaum family (pictured below, from left: Janet Birenbaum, Helen Birenbaum, Chuck Birenbaum, Marvin Krislov, and Julia Birenbaum). Guests to the club are welcomed by a vestibule gallery space that displays artwork by Oberlin students. The Birenbaum's stylish bar will serve guests six nights a week.











OBERLIN CONSERVATORY MAGAZINE 2017



TINKERER IN CHIEF

THERE WOULD BE NO TIMARA WITHOUT ENGINEER JOHN TALBERT, TECHNICALLY SPEAKING ANYWAY.

BY ERICH BURNETT

JOHN TALBERT WAS ASKED RECENTLY TO serve up a résumé highlighting his career. It didn't happen.

The last résumé Talbert needed was created on a typewriter in the 1970s. If he were to have one today, he's not even sure what it would say.

"I'm not a faculty person who goes around and does concerts and performs pieces and gets awards," he says in his typically understated manner. "I'm sort of the wizard behind the curtain."

Four decades into his Oberlin wizardry, Talbert retired in the spring from the only job he ever craved: electronic music engineer in the Technology in Music and Related Arts (TIMARA) department. In that capacity, he has been a pioneer in marrying analog and digital technologies. He has created a multitude of unique electronic instruments, fixed what was broken, updated what was outdated, and taught generations of students who came through the program—and he learned from those students too. Through it all, Talbert has maintained a voracious appetite for new technology.

"That's what was so cool about the job," he says through a grin: "Every year it was a *new* job. Every year things changed."

In his own student days, Talbert found himself bouncing between classes in science and music. He earned degrees from Indiana University and the University of Illinois, both of which prepared him to be something along the lines of a theoretical physicist with a jones for bleeps and blips. "I was pretty much a lost soul," he says now.

Everything changed when he learned that Oberlin's fledgling electronic music department needed help.

In those days, TIMARA consisted of nothing more than the unfinished basement of Bibbins Hall, outfitted with Buchla, Moog, ARP, and Putney synthesizers; Scully tape decks; and speakers. There they toiled in relative obscurity, sharing space with the conservatory's stash of broken-down pianos and harp cases. If outsiders knew what was going on down there, they usually weren't happy about it.

"We always had problems with the professors upstairs," Talbert remembers. "They were constantly calling me up and saying, "Turn it down!"

Talbert exits just as TIMARA prepares for the largest growth phase in its history: a summer renovation that will expand the department's footprint, including the addition of a third faculty studio and a new "maker space" for students to construct equipment. To those Talbert leaves behind, TIMARA's continued growth in itself is a tribute to him.

"Our longevity has a lot to do with our adaptability," says Associate Professor Peter Swendsen '99. "And our adaptability over the past 38 years has a lot to do with John. Even as he walks out the door, he remains a step ahead."

In March, TIMARA hosted the Talbertronic Festival, a weekend celebration attended by students and faculty past and present, as well as Talbert's family and members of the community. There were Talbertronic stickers and Talbertronic T-shirts and performances that celebrated his genius, using instruments that he created.

"The sheer amount of original work that John has influenced and helped create during his time at Oberlin is staggering," says Swendsen. "He has played an integral role in the creation of thousands of pieces of music, hundreds of concerts, and scores of completely novel software and hardware tools. Every bit of the teaching and learning that transpires each day in TIMARA is influenced by John—and will continue to be for years to come."

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THE TINKERER'S TOYS

After teaching TIMARA circuitry courses for years, John Talbert stepped away from the classroom to devote more time to creating instruments for students and faculty. The

creations springing forth from his office in recent years. "I just went crazy," he says.

Sample Talbert's instruments at timara.oberlin.edu/talbertronic.



THE ALLES MACHINE (C. 1980-83)

In 1980, Talbert and TIMARA professor Gary Lee Nelson were invited to the New Jersey headquarters of Bell Labs. There, Max Matthews—a Bell employee widely regarded as the founding father of computer music introduced them to the Alles Machine, a research device designed by H.G. Alles that was used to experiment with synthesized dial tones and human voices. Bell was finished with Alles, and it was up for grabs if Oberlin wanted it. Of course, they did. Talbert and Nelson spent a

week at Bell studying the machine and its intricate schematic diagrams. "This was state of the art, so it was exciting and scary at the same time," Talbert recalls. They toiled for three years, Nelson writing programs while Talbert painstakingly reconfigured the machine's innards. Around the same time they finished, Yamaha released its DX7 synth, which could do the same things Alles did and more. "So we dropped it after that," Talbert says matter-offactly. In 2016 Alles was revived as a giant controller to generate sounds from a Mac mini computer.



THE MAJESTIC RADIO (2017) >

When a thrift-store find by Associate Professsor Tom Lopez '89 landed in the TIMARA studios, Talbert used it to marry 20th- and 21st-century technologies: He connected a vintage synthesizer chip from a 1980s-era Commodore computer to a modern Arduino microcontroller—a powerful, lowcost device that has helped fuel the burgeoning "maker" movement. "The idea behind it is that students need to program their interactions with the sounds the chip produces," he says. The chip is connected to the Arduino, which is programmed via USB from a computer. In other words: "We're putting old chips into old boxes controlled by new microprocessors." And the result? "It's like sculpting a new type of musical instrument. It's kind of a fun process, and you get immediate feedback at each stage of creation." Talbert also added a Eurorack "Radio Music" card to the Majestic Radio, after learning about it from Drew Smith, a high school student participating in the annual TIMARA summer program. Drew will be a first-year TIMARA student this fall.





< TALBERT TELETALK (2016)

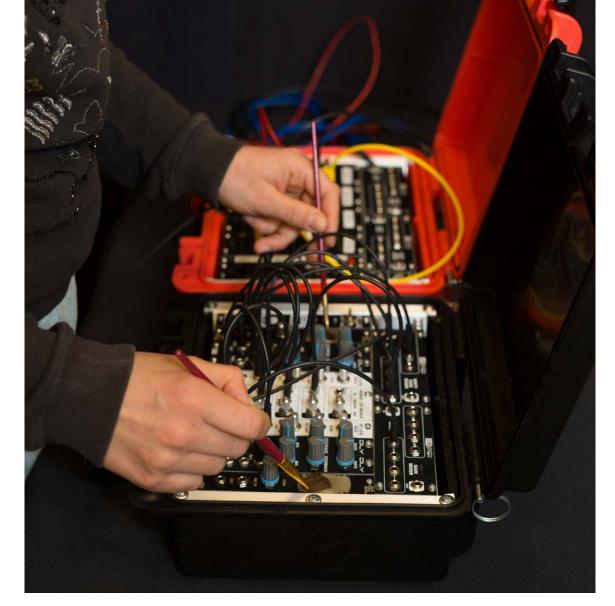
Talbert discovered an old Teletalk office intercom at a flea market 20 years ago and stashed it in a closet till inspiration struck. Last year, he installed a synth chip from an old arcade game into it and outfitted it with three slider controls and a series of knobs and buttons, all of which are wired to an Arduino, which can be programmed by a student. "The idea is that it becomes a musical instrument with a certain type of sound determined somewhat by the chip, but mostly by the program. So it's like a musical instrument that can be changed to a completely different instrument with a different program. And I'm hoping that students will be intrigued with that idea."

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TINKERER IN CHIEF

THE EURO DELAY BOX (2016) >

The computer music world's enduring love of analog synthesizers has given rise to a generation of do-it-yourselfers who create analog synths using versatile, low-cost Eurorack modules. "I've always had this undercurrent of an idea to try to move everyone away from the analog synthesizer to something more interesting," says Talbert, perplexed by those who want to use new machines to create the same sounds Moogs and Buchlas were emitting half a century ago. "When you have all of these great new modules available to you, you can create an instrument that does something special." So he chose a theme that includes delay modules with delay times that are continually shifting. In much the same way, many modern computer musicians boast collections of such "suitcases," each rig based on a different theme. The analog synth controller—the orange box—could be used with another analog or MIDI synth, or even by itself to explore the power of Arduinocontrolled synthesis. "I just packed as many devices in there as I possibly could," Talbert says.





< THEREMIN (C. 1990)

Talbert made this one with a mailorder kit. "All I did was go to Jo-Ann Fabric and find this 1920s-looking chest, and lo and behold it was a perfect fit." Played by waving hands near the two antennae without actually touching them, the theremin has long been known for its eerie sounds in TV and movie scenes. "It's a classic instrument. This one's interesting in that, besides the theremin sound, it also puts out two voltages for controlling analog synthesizers." Though this theremin is still used by beginning students, it has taken a backseat in recent years to the Theremini, a modern version manufactured by Moog.



GET YOUR TALBERT ON!

Friends of TIMARA past and present returned in March to celebrate the first Talbertronic Festival, three days of festivities in honor of the retiring engineer. "It was a bit overwhelming at first, but once we got started it was fun," a grateful Talbert said afterward, then slyly added: "I still don't know who all those people were!"





TIMARA faculty member/ belly dancer Aurie Hsu '96 performed with the Remote electroAcoustic Kinesthetic Sensing (RAKS) system, a wireless sensor interface for belly dance designed by Hsu and Steven Kemper.











TIMARA student Judy Jackson '18 proudly wears the official Talbertronic 2017 T-shirt.

The Talbertronic Open House resulted in a photo opportunity with TIMARA students and faculty past and present. Among those in attendance were former professor Gary Lee Nelson (standing, far left) and Peter Blasser (standing, far right) far right).

Open house guests interact with an installation made by Travis Johns '04 and Paulina Velázquez Solis. Called The Temporal Sounds of the VauxFlores Sound System, it involved light-activated furballs suspended from the ceiling.

A modified skull was used to perform *The Wishing Goat*, composed by former TIMARA faculty member Lyn Goeringer.





Many people become ethnomusicologists because they want to make a difference—to bring attention to diverse musical practices and the ways in which music is embedded in culture.

Our training inevitably makes us alert to power differentials and inequities, from the social and racial to the political and economic. As advocates for social justice, we think about creating avenues for dialogue and about building bridges. Increasingly, we are turning our attention to helping communities address their issues in musical ways.

Ethnomusicologists bring our life experiences to bear on our teaching. Ever since I first lived with a devout Islamic family in West Sumatra, Indonesia, in 1998, I've made it my mission to educate people about Islamic sonic and cultural practices there. By deliberately making space in my courses, I see it as a sort of intervention—an act of pedagogical activism, especially in this era of increasingly rampant Islamophobia. If I can open my students' eyes to the nuanced multidimensionality of people's engagements with Islam, then I have done something.

But there is more than this ongoing mission. In the 10 years that I've been at Oberlin, there have been many moments that have challenged me to use my training to do more.

It was in the spring of 2013, during a series of bias incidents and subsequent student unrest on campus, that I first conceived the

idea of teaching a class that bridges ethnomusicology and activism. Many of my students already had an interest in connecting research and practice to social action. So often, ethnomusicology is viewed as this thing that takes place somewhere far away. But in reality, it offers a set of tools to work with communities everywhere.

So what if we did that work in our own backyard? I combined that notion with a growing interest in *applied* ethnomusicology. It took me some time and many conversations before I launched a new course in 2015: Ethnomusicology as Activism. In it, students are challenged to discover active ways they can use music to make the world a better place. Their projects have ranged from working on arts accessibility to helping nursing home residents unlock memories. Both of these things are activism.

There are many ways we can use the music we know and love—and I mean *any* kind of music—to find that connection. The course encouraged students to think about the skills ethnomusicology offers them to do this work: Through the act of listening carefully, we develop empathy for others and learn to decenter ourselves in these equations, to value

their perspectives and alternative knowledges.

A panel on music and activism, co-hosted by my colleague Fredara Hadley and Associate Dean for Academic Support Chris Jenkins, rose out of the widespread discontent on campus and elsewhere following the 2016 U.S. presidential election. While many of us were reeling, some students were truly at a loss to find meaning in their lives; they wondered why they were studying music when there was so much other urgent business in the world. And they were asking what they could do.

In response, we created this panel on music activism, which encouraged students to talk through their experiences and devise a list of actions—musical and non-musical—in which they could take part. The one thing we wanted to emphasize is that there is no one right way to engage in musical activism—no better or worse acts, but rather a range of opportunities. Protesting in the streets is not necessarily better than educating, for example.

After the election, I was prompted to think about where I had the time and energy to make a difference. The students in my two Indonesian gong ensembles and I decided we would turn our end-of-semester concert into a fundraiser. Playing music from a Muslim-majority

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country—and coincidentally, the country with the largest population of Muslims in the world—we wanted to help counter Islamophobia. We sought the support of the Muslim Students Association and the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life, and we donated the money raised to the Cleveland chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations.

Inspired by the work of my colleague Jody Kerchner, who had started a choir in a nearby prison, I also wanted to think more intentionally about what I could do for the local community. I am in the process of setting up a musical program using gamelan for underserved middle-schoolers. I also built a project into my Introduction to the Musics of the World class in which teams of students pair with local partners—including music teacher Bronwen Fox '08, MMT '09 at Oberlin's elementary and middle schools, along with the retirement community Kendal at Oberlin—to teach a session on a topic related to class. But rather than producing an assignment that would reflect their acquired knowledge, with me as the primary audience member, what if they took that same knowledge and shared it in the schools? My students would learn as much as the children would.

These experiences describe my personal journey, but there are so many stories of the ways in which ethnomusicologists, performers, composers, and others have thought about how they can use music to effect change in the world. There are a growing number of courses in the conservatory that emphasize music as a form of community engagement and deepen the conversations around this work. The new program Pedagogy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement, or PACE, lies at the heart of this mission (see page 42).

This journey is about learning to recognize the choices we might make and the places where we might offer musical interventions. As musicians, we have all experienced firsthand what music does for us. When we experience the same sonic phenomenon with others—especially when we are actively engaged in creating those sounds—we create a powerful bond, whether it involves listening to the same awesome concert or playing and chanting during a march on Washington.

In the fall of 2015, I thought it important to talk about the racially charged events happening in Ferguson, Missouri. While my class was meeting, a related student protest was taking place outside. I gave students the choice of which action to participate in: learning and discussion in the class or boots on the ground. Only one student opted for the protest. Each of us must find our own way to contribute.

DIFFERENCE MAKERS

Oberlin students and alumni everywhere are creating cultural connections with their music. The stories that follow span the spectrum of social justice in places near and far.



A MILLION WAYS TO IMMERSE YOURSELF EMILY EDELSTEIN '18



I've always believed it is extremely important that we remember

we are human beings first and musicians second. Being musicians doesn't give us a pass on being politically engaged and aware of social injustices, nor does it make us immune to injustice or struggle ourselves.

I've tried throughout my time at Oberlin to remain involved with activist efforts in the college and to engage conservatory students by planning outreach and educational events that make our community proactive and more aware. Last year, I took Ethnomusicology as Activism,

and it was a huge inspiration to me in terms of musical projects I want to develop in the future. As part of this class, I started a series of informal concerts at a community center near Oberlin that also provides transitional housing for women and children. I brought Oberlin students to the center, and they played music from Western classical, folk, and pop genres, and talked about the content of the music and what it meant to them. I wanted community members to feel comfortable coming to Oberlin concerts, so we also spread awareness of the multitude of free concerts on campus.

This year I've been involved in community engagement through my position as secretary of the Conservatory Council of Students, which acts as a liaison between the administration and student body and plans events for the conservatory community. Led by our vice president Jude Park, we hosted a children's Halloween concert that brought the conservatory and community together and raised money for the Oberlin schools' music

program. One of our main focuses has been on trans allyship and making the conservatory a safer place for transgender and gender-nonconforming students. With help from Oberlin's Multicultural Resource Center, we hosted a trans-allyship forum aimed at giving allies language and tools to advocate for their trans peers, as well as providing a space for discussion of the challenges they face. We also hosted a followup event, Trans Voices in the Con, in which a panel of trans conservatory students shared their experiences. These events made a big impact, with students telling us how much they learned and how they were moved to become more active allies.

There's a long way to go, but it's encouraging to see small changes being made in the conservatory—I'm excited to say we now have gender pronouns next to names on the internal orchestra roster, and plans are in the works for additional gender-neutral bathrooms in conservatory buildings.

There are many ways to be active and engaged, whether by using a concert to raise money for a cause, increasing access to musical spaces, or even making conscious programmatic choices that highlight different voices. (In my junior recital, I included music made exclusively by female composers and arrangers.) I want to continue planning events that will strengthen communities and to continue using music as a tool to connect with others.

Emily Edelstein studies viola and musicology in the conservatory.

PROCEED WITH AN OPEN, CRITICAL MIND IAN COPELAND '11



Long before diving into ethnomusicology, my first trip to Malawi came as a volunteer teacher in an effort to satiate the world-changing impulse felt by many incoming Oberlin students. The experience was life-changing

for me, but returning to campus and reflecting critically on my time spent halfway around the world helped me reframe my approach to service in ways I hadn't previously considered.

We often read and speak of music as having ineffable, autonomous power all its own. While enticingly familiar to those of us with training in the Western canon, this view downplays the intentional decisions of individual actors to instrumentalize music in particular ways and to uneven ends. My experience witnessing Malawian songs and dances in the classroom reinforced for me the sense of music's ability to heal, galvanize, and communicate, thereby validating my own sense of service with little regard to the actual efficacy of the music on the ground.

In my recent research, I've spent time observing how a music school in Lilongwe trains its students with a largely illegible curriculum of classical music theory. While the explicit message may equate musical know-how with subsequent fame and fortune, the implicit message connects with a long history in Malawi, beginning with 19th-century missionaries, of Western musical standards presaging (though never quite delivering) modernization, development, and inclusion in the global order.

Of course, none of this is to say that musical strategies in international contexts are necessarily flawed or myopic. I simply advocate that the critical impulses we develop at places like Oberlin not be promptly abandoned as soon as we hum a tune or tap a foot. We generally act most responsibly—and our activism is most effective—when we take our cues from those we encounter and befriend, rather than relying on preconceived notions. Listening, as it turns out, is as crucial a skill for activists as it is for musicians.

lan Copeland earned degrees in Third World studies and clarinet performance at Oberlin. He is a PhD student in ethnomusicology at Harvard University.





THE POWER IS IN THE GROUP KHALID TAYLOR '17



Learning about and growing into my identity as a Black and Latinx

man in Brooklyn, New York, was both empowering and scary. From early childhood, I can remember my father actively and continuously affirming my Blackness. Over time, those conversations started including the injustices and oppression enacted by different institutional bodies, including the people that looked like me. As I grew older, I started to experience and recognize discrimination and prejudice in my daily life. I grew to fear police officers, who are the people apparently meant to serve and protect me. I was scared, confused, angry, and resentful. I also became aware of the political nature of my Blackness. I've always had a desire to learn about how systems worked, but that turned into activism when I started to share what I learned. lived, and experienced.

Being a part of dozens of choirs and singing groups, I have seen hundreds of my people connect and be moved beyond words through the sound we create together. I was accepted into the conservatory for vocal performance, but I recognized that I enjoyed singing with others more than I did as a solo performer. In thinking about the skills I bring to the table, I considered my love of neuroscience and how the mind works. By combining my passions, I came to realize I could facilitate mental health and wellness through music.

This year I have been a choir teaching assistant through the Oberlin Music at Grafton program under Professor Jody Kerchner. We have rehearsal every Friday, and in those 90 minutes, we work on music literacy, musical phrasing, harmonization, vocal production, and performance practices. In that time, we also laugh, share stories, and reflect on what the music means, as well as what it means to create art and why it is important to create art. While there are difficult moments in trying to navigate the penitentiary system, or coming to grips with the harsh realities of the inmates' past and current lived experiences, I leave reinvigorated, humbled, and grateful for the opportunity to create something so positive and constructive. I look forward to that time every

week to receive love, support, jokes, and kindness from the men, who enthusiastically appreciate my presence. It reminds me every time of why I specifically love singing in a choir, and it inspires me to continue doing this work.

I have also worked as a choir teaching assistant in the Lorain City Schools Arts Academy, which since its founding in January has been tremendously successful in bringing children together to participate in choir, string ensembles, visual art, and drama programs in a district where arts programming is otherwise scarce. I have seen so much growth in each student: Many kids who struggled to hold a pitch now confidently sing multiple songs from memory. I have also had kids share the struggles they go through at home and school, and express how much they enjoy coming to the program. I got many hugs and affection that warmed my heart and made the difficult moments worth it. We grew as a choir, and I have no doubt that their growth has positively affected other parts of their lives.

I know that I want to be a healer in some way, and I hope to continue using my voice, musical knowledge, and warm spirit to spread positivity, facilitate healing, raise awareness of important issues, and create beautiful art with others.

Khalid Taylor earned a degree in neuroscience from the College of Arts & Sciences in May. His thesis focused on the disconnect between institutional music therapy and communities of color, and how various informal forms of music therapy thrive in comparison.

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BANG YOUR OWN DRUM ZOE C. SHERINIAN '84



My activism began at age 10, when I first chose to play percussion. As a girl in the 1970s, playing the drums was a gender

transgression. But my desire to express myself as a percussionist outweighed my fear of gender policing. My journey found its home at Oberlin in ethnomusicology courses with Rod Knight, playing with Oberlin Steel, and in queer-feminist activism. Through a two-year Oberlin Shansi fellowship to Madurai, in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, my musical activism developed a context.

At Lady Doak College in Madurai, I nurtured my love of Indian percussion in a milieu that engaged me with (Hindu) karnatak music study, conducting an English choir, and teaching women's studies. The college also had a choir that sang Tamil Christian hymns using the classical indigenous kirttanai form, raga modes, and tala rhythmic cycles. My desire to understand the 300-year history of this music and its social meaning as an indigenous hymnody informed my dissertation topic in ethnomusicology. The Tamil Nadu Theological Seminary in Madurai became the site for my ethnographic study of the production of indigenized Tamil Christian music. However, soon after I arrived to do fieldwork, I was struck by the polyrhythmic grooves and liberation theology texts of the Tamil Christian folk compositions of Reverend Theophilus Appavoo.

My activism found its medium in Appavoo's approach to the creation of a Dalit (anti-caste) theology, which he grounded in the flexible Tamil folk music style. He advocated that, unlike the classical Christian kirttanai, this allowed oppressed villagers (primarily Dalits) to re-create the lyrics and musical elements of Appavoo's songs in order to express their sociopolitical needs at the moment of worship or as protest. This study resulted in my book Tamil Folk Music as Dalit Liberation Theology (2014) and, in the process of my fieldwork, introduced me to the parai drum of the Dalits. Studying the parai allowed me to get back to playing a drum. My next two projects were the documentary films This is a Music: Reclaiming an Untouchable Drum (2011) and Sakthi Vibrations (2017), which explored the changing status of this "polluted outcaste" instrument, its use in the Dalit Liberation Movement of Tamil Nadu, and its use at the Sakthi Folk Cultural Centre to build selfesteem in young Dalit women. Tamil activists declare, "Dalit arts are weapons of liberation." Drumming and film are my social justice weapons of choice.

Zoe Sherinian is associate professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Oklahoma. Her next film project focuses on the Oklahoma City Girls Rock and Roll Camp.





SING IT TOGETHER CHRISTIAN JAMES '14



I first learned about the social meaning and function inherent in expressive

cultural practices through Thomas Turino's Music as Social Life, the central text to Oberlin's introductory ethnomusicology course. Turino explains that participatory music in particular—that which does not sharply distinguish artist from audience—provides special resources for individuals to integrate with a social whole and express shared values. By contrast, presentational music is useful for organized articulation of more nuanced messages by smaller groups and individuals. The music I studied and made as a composition student at Oberlin did not directly serve any social or political cause, but my training in ethnomusicology gave me a strong theoretical base for understanding such applications of participatory

musical forms while working for the Jagori Rural Charitable Trust during my 2014-16 Shansi fellowship.

The organization is wideranging in its activism; in its own words, it seeks to "protect the individual and collective dignity of the most marginalized," which includes those subject to "all forms of discrimination based on gender, class, caste, religion, disability, and all other forms of social exclusion." In practice, its regular work falls into four broad categories: legal consultation and advocacy for survivors of domestic violence, health education programming, community leadership training with emphasis on gender equity, and an agriculture program that educates and incentivizes local farmers toward adopting organic methods. I soon learned through exposure to all of the Trust's activities that singing together plays a crucial role in integrating the participants in each of its programs, serving as a kind of connective fiber through which its feminist ideology can be adequately expressed.

Most often, these songs consisted of popular melodies

that were rewritten to include lyrics describing the plight of women and girls in the face of patriarchy and systemic violence. In 2011, the Trust's parent organization published a small book that included many of these songs. I learned to bring my copy to workshops, and within a few months I was able to accompany some of them on my guitar. At around that time, many of my colleagues began to request that I bring my guitar to events. Despite my having little formal training on the guitar, I was quickly becoming "the music guy."

As my familiarity with local language and culture grew, I began to sense the effects that participatory singing could have on our events. An example that sticks out in my memory involves a week-long workshop on male dominance aimed at sensitizing a group of 25 rural youths to patriarchal systems of governance in order to catalyze their involvement in the democratic process. I witnessed these young people grow willing to communicate their views and experiences simply as a result of participating in songs that articulate the need for gender equity.

When it came to writing the report for that project, I found it difficult to substantiate the claim that the songs we had sung throughout the week had

contributed to a more collaborative and productive learning environment. Our surveys had not accounted for the use of music, and any attempt to evaluate the songs as an integral component of the workshop was ultimately excluded from the project report. But I am inspired to search for methods of measuring these effects and for a fuller understanding of the potential contribution that music makes to social activism initiatives.

If I learned anything about non-governmental organizations during my Shansi fellowship, it is that ways of measuring the effects of a given project are the most essential element to establishing financial sustainability for internationally funded groups like the Trust. These strategies need to demonstrate how music and other forms of cultural expression, when engaged in a culturally sensitive and socially responsible manner, can show the impact of social transformation and create a more equitable global community.

Christian James is a fellow in the Indiana University Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, which offers a public practice concentration that emphasizes the successful application of research outcomes to community initiatives outside of academia.

Marching is not really enough right now, although it feels good to do it.

MAKE TIME FOR YOUR CAUSE DONNA KWON '93



Activism has been an important part of my life since my time as a doubledegree student at Oberlin. Just as the conservatory

challenged me to be a better musician, the college challenged me to be more socially and politically engaged. In the best of times, these worlds came together.

I remember the moment when Professor Randolph Coleman told us in a contemporary music class that we needed to actively work against the kind of training that was making us into mere "executors of the music... [long pause] and I mean that in both senses of the word." He wanted us to take an activist approach to musical interpretation in our performances. While I struggled with this in my piano practice, I did break out at times and collaborate with other women and people of color to create works that addressed the challenges of building multicultural solidarity and reckoning with and overcoming colonial oppression and systemic racism.

After college, music and activism came together most intensely for me in my work in the Asian American arts community in San Francisco, and specifically with the Korean Youth Cultural Center. Established in Oakland in 1989, the KYCC is a progressive Korean cultural organization. With them, I learned various types of Korean expressive traditions such as Korean drumming or p'ungmul, mask dance, and movement songs. We often performed these traditions in annual events that highlighted political causes relating to the Korean or Korean American community, such as the North Korean famine, Korean reunification, or

South Korean democratization struggles. In the aftermath of 9/11, our activity intensified when we organized an event to mourn the victims of the tragedy. Our goal was to cultivate solidarity during a time when Muslims and many other immigrant groups were feeling especially vulnerable.

In the ensuing years, many of us in the KYCC became active in a series of large marches in opposition to the Iraq War. Because we were already accustomed to drumming in the streets—during Korean Lunar New Year, in the San Francisco Chinatown parade, and even once in a Samba Carnaval event—drumming during a protest felt like a natural extension of these activities.

Since then, I have pursued an academic career path and have only recently become galvanized again to become more politically active since the election of President Trump. Soon after his inauguration, I was moved to protest with a fledgling group of Korean drummers in the Lexington Women's March, and I was surprised by how much attention we got for such a small group.

Since that time, I have become more organized in terms of regularly contacting my senators and representatives. There are so many causes under threat in this administration (the climate, arts. humanities, immigrant rights, refugees, women, peace on the Korean peninsula, etc.) that I feel it is important to speak up often. From here. I hope to bring my activism more into my work in the academy by organizing workshops, roundtables, and perhaps a course on the subject. Marching is not really enough right now, although it feels good to do it.

Donna Kwon is an associate professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Kentucky. She earned Oberlin degrees in ethnomusicology and women's studies.



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ON GIVING

INSTRUMENT GIFTS TO THE CONSERVATORY SUPPORT STUDENTS IN COUNTLESS WAYS.

BY ERICH BURNETT

HERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF REASONS students find themselves in need of instruments. Fortunately, there are also generous donors near and far who keep Oberlin in mind when making plans for those pianos and horns and cellos they finally can live without.

Every year, Oberlin receives numerous donated and loaned instruments. They become valued members of a collection that ranges considerably in scope, from precious relics that yield impeccable sound, to reliable stand-ins for student

instruments that may be out of commission.

On the pages that follow, we profile a series of unique instruments—all of them donated to Oberlin in recent years, and all of them changing the lives of the students who use them. In many cases, they are part of more comprehensive gifts; in every case, they are an unmistakably vital facet of support to the campus community.

If you have an instrument you would like to have considered for use at Oberlin, please contact us at 440-775-8545 or giving@oberlin.edu.





BIG HORN ON CAMPUS

SELMER TENOR SAX

As a New Jersey high school student back in 1972, classical clarinetist David Ballon '80 decided to dabble in saxophone, and so he paid \$350 to take home a Selmer Mark VI tenor model. Though he rarely played it, Ballon toted it with him to Oberlin, where from time to time it aided jazz pals whose own horns were in the shop.

One successful career in finance later, Ballon keeps his alma mater in his thoughts and in his philanthropy. Together with classmate Béla Schwartz '79, he established the Lawrence McDonald Scholarship Fund—named for their former teacher at Oberlin—to support an outstanding clarinetist.

Ballon still owned that Selmer sax, which over the years has come to be a highly prized model, its value skyrocketing in comparison to what he had paid for it. But he came to the conclusion it could better serve a student musician, so he graciously donated it to Oberlin early in 2017.

In the horn's first semester on campus, it came to the aid of numerous musicians: It helped Richard Williams '17 through a period when his own sax needed repair. And it helped alto saxman David Diongue '17 (pictured) when a friend craved tenor sax for his senior recital.

"I'm going to try to get one," Diongue says of the experience. "I probably wouldn't be able to get a Mark VI, because its reputation is so crazy that it's just so expensive. But playing this concert made me realize that I like playing tenor a lot. It's so much fun, and that horn sounds so nice. It's like the holy grail."

And Ballon, for his part, is happy to know his sax is in the hands of creative young artists.

"To be perfectly honest, as much as I was absolutely born and raised listening to classical music, if I had it to do all over again, I would give it all up to be a jazz player," he says. "I have monumental respect for the skill set of jazz players. I can't do what they do. But I like the feeling of knowing that this gets me maybe one inch closer to the jazz world I never really explored."

"THAT HORN SOUNDS SO NICE.
IT'S LIKE THE HOLY GRAIL."

RAISED THE RIGHT WAY

TONONI AND FURBER CELLOS

Susan Trackman's love of Oberlin found its roots in her own upbringing. She was raised in a musical family in North Carolina by a father who dedicated his orthopedic surgery practice to serving the local black community and by a mother who led the charge to enroll black children in newly desegregated schools.

Grounded in a life of social justice, Trackman made her way to Oberlin, where she earned a degree in music in 1969. For nearly 50 years afterward, no opportunities arose to visit campus, but she remained close to Oberlin through many years of giving to the annual fund.

It was in 2011 that
Trackman penned a letter
explaining that she had four
cellos she would like to
donate to the conservatory.
The first of them, an
outstanding example of a
Carlo Tononi instrument
(pictured right, held by
Trackman) that dates to
the early 18th century,
arrived on campus late in
2016. The second one
(below), crafted in 1841 by
John Furber, was hand-

delivered by Trackman during a visit in May 2017. Two more will be passed along as part of her estate; all four will be used by student and faculty

"It pleases me so much to be in the lucky position that I can get involved in stuff like this," she says with a glance at the instruments. "These cellos are going to thrive here, and I'm sick of having them gather dust at home!"

Cellos, however, represent only a fraction of Trackman's giving to Oberlin. In recent years, she has also emerged as a key supporter of first-generation students through the establishment of an endowment for Student Academic Services and a scholarship fund earmarked for first-in-the-family students. A highlight of Trackman's May visit was a meeting with a group of first-year, first-gen students and their peer mentors.

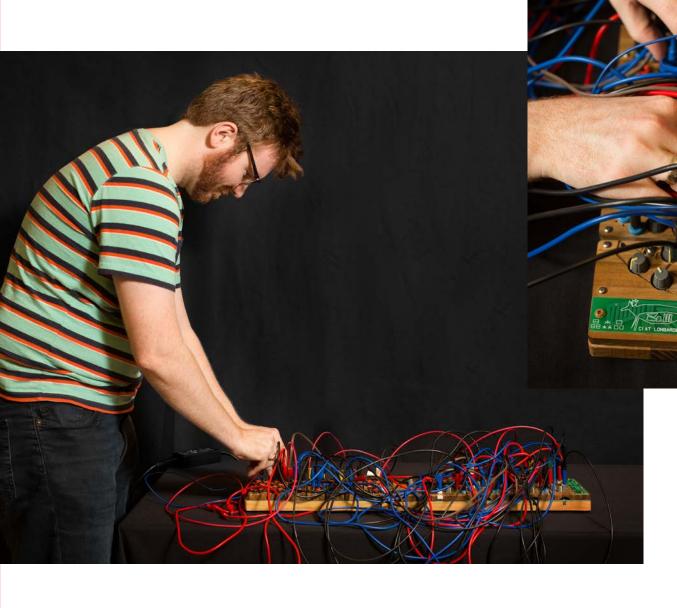
For Oberlin, Trackman's generosity has inspired similar giving from others. For Trackman, the support carries forward a legacy she inherited from Mom and Dad



"THESE CELLOS ARE GOING TO THRIVE HERE, AND I'M SICK OF HAVING THEM GATHER DUST AT HOME!"

SAXOPHONE, CELLOS, PLUMBUTTER: TANYA RSOEN-JONES '97

IN THE PAST TWO YEARS ALONE, THREE SYNTHESIZERS HAVE BEEN DONATED TO TIMARA'S ALREADY ROBUST COLLECTION.



PLUG & PLAY (& REPEAT)

PLUMBUTTER

The TIMARA department's collection of vintage and modern analog synthesizers is an amazing resource— and it's growing all the time. In the past two years, three synthesizers have been donated to TIMARA's already robust collection.

"It's an opportunity for students to have a literal hands-on experience with the history of electronic music instruments," says Hunter Brown '17 (pictured), a classical percussionist who also minored in TIMARA.

Among the newcomers is an original design by master instrument maker Peter Blasser '02. Technically referred to as a "Plumbrolzer"—a hybrid beat generator and drum machine—it was handed over to TIMARA complete with a fanciful backstory, submitted by its creator:

"MY NAME IS PLUMBUTTER. MY FACE IS A PSYCHOGEOGRAPHICAL MAP OF THE CITIES OF BALTIMORE AND
CLEVELAND. I AM A DRUM MACHINE, BUT LET ME TELL
YOU I AM MORE THAN THAT, FOR I ALSO AM A 'DRAMA
MACHINE.' THUS THERE EXISTS IN ME A DIALECTIC
BETWEEN DRUM AND DRAMA, LIKE COPS AND
GANGSTERS, MALE VERSUS FEMALE, OR RURAL VERSUS
URBAN. YOU CAN SEE MY WILD SPACES ARE
REPRESENTED BY A DEER HORN AND MY DOWNTOWN
BY A FACTORY, AND IN BETWEEN, A VAST SWATH OF
SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENTS. IT IS A GRADIENT OF THESE
THREE AREAS—URBAN, SUBURBAN, AND RURAL—THAT
INFORMS MY ELECTRONIC SYNTHESIS."

Brown performed with Plumbutter in his senior recital and in a concert in honor of retiring TIMARA engineer John Talbert—a performance attended by Blasser himself.

"It's cool knowing that this synth was crafted by someone who was trained in synthesizer design by John Talbert," Brown says. "The opportunity to meet Peter and discuss with him the details of his instrument-building process—while simultaneously preparing a performance on the instrument—was truly invaluable."



"<u>I GET</u> IT NOW!"

THIR VIOLA

Secondary viola study is required of all violin majors, and Dana Johnson '17 (pictured) waited till the last possible moment: spring semester of her senior year. After struggling with an inferior viola, she was offered one by her chamber music coach, Kirsten Docter: a Viennese instrument crafted by Johannes Georgius Thir in 1778, on loan from Elizabeth Patterson Fleeter '77.

"I was basically just tuning it, and I pulled the first note and the sound was so vastly different from what I had previously heard—so deep and rich," Johnson says. "I was like 'OK, I get it now!' And I was just playing Bach on it all night."

"As a student, you already have to buy strings and get rehairs, and then to have to rent a secondary instrument is just another way that things add up. It's so nice to not have to deal with that. It's been a really wonderful opportunity to be able to play it."



A WELCOME COMPANION

ZIERER FORTEPIANO

Oberlin boasts an extensive collection of fortepianos, though all but one are modern reproductions of vintage models. In 2014 the conservatory acquired an original Anton Zierer fortepiano dating to 1829. Initially owned by an Italian noble family, the Viennese instrument sat, virtually unplayed, in the family's summer home for an incredible 170 years. In 2012 it was purchased by Marcella Calabi of New York. She had it painstakingly restored and then shipped to the U.S....where she found it would not fit in her home.

When an offer arose to take it off Calabi's hands, Oberlin gratefully accepted. "When I first laid my hands on it, the first thing that was obvious to me is that this instrument is critical for chamber music," says David Breitman, a professor in Oberlin's historical performance department.

For her senior recital in May, cellist Heewon Lee '17 (pictured, with Breitman) leaped at the opportunity to be accompanied by Breitman on the Zierer in a performance of Beethoven's Sonata in C Major. She even performed the piece on a borrowed gut-stringed cello tuned to A427, in order to accommodate the Zierer's tuning.

"The sound of the piano was so warm, and the blend was incredible," says Lee. "As we were playing, I was very close to tearing up. Realizing I had the opportunity to do this, while being so in the moment of the music—all of it combined was just so beautiful."



"AS WE WERE PLAYING, I WAS VERY CLOSE TO TEARING UP."

GLORIOUS

PIPES

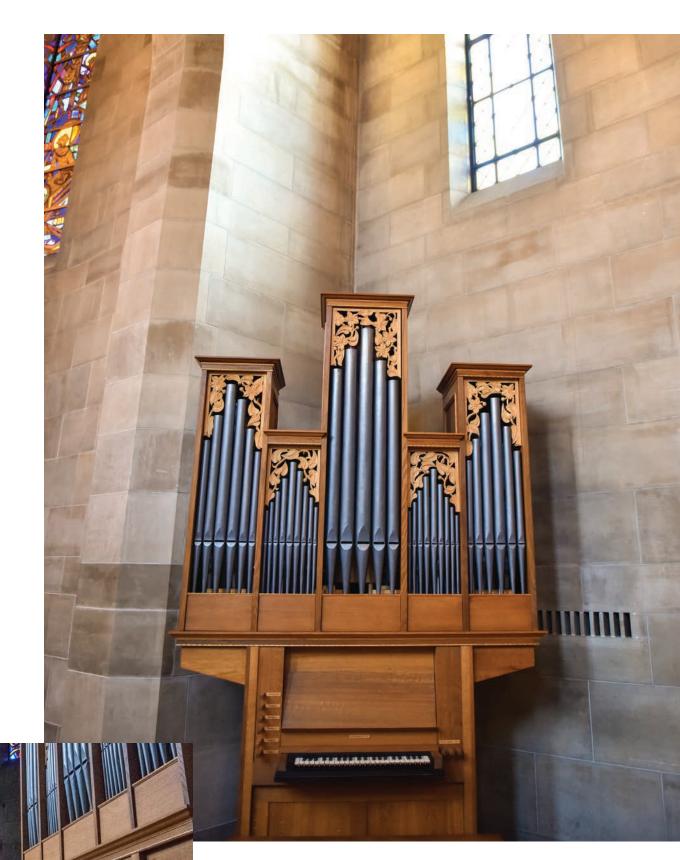
BROMBAUGH "BOE" ORGAN

A legend among Oberlin faculty and administrators, David Boe taught organ for an incredible 46 years and served for 15 years as dean of the conservatory. In 1975, he commissioned an instrument to be crafted by organ builder John Brombaugh. Two years later, the Opus 23b was installed in Boe's Oberlin home.

In December 2015, the organ was reassembled in Fairchild Chapel, where it resides today as a companion piece to the hall's gallery organ, also built by Brombaugh. It was celebrated with a dedication event in February 2016.

"David Boe's house organ was a wonderful gift to Oberlin," says organist Albert Bellefeuille '17 (pictured), who has used it numerous times for chapel services and accompanying Baroque ensembles.

"The organ is very versatile and musical, and plays wonderfully, fostering the kind of playing Professor Boe himself supported," he says. "It stands as an excellent monument to the man who did so much as professor of organ and dean."



"IT STANDS AS AN EXCELLENT MONUMENT TO THE MAN WHO DID SO MUCH AS PROFESSOR OF ORGAN AND DEAN."

HIIII

BELLEFEUILLE: JULIE CROOKSTON-GULENKO '15, ORGAN AND VIOLIN: YEVHEN GULENKO

"I HAD NOT THOUGHT ABOUT PLAYING IN THIS WAY BEFORE, AND IT OPENED UP A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT SOUND."



BRUSH WITH

GREATNESS

GAGLIANO VIOLIN

Violinist Sophie Davis '16 played many memorable performances on a Gagliano loaned to Oberlin by Marian Gale '73: from master classes with Christian Tetzlaff and Punch Brothers to a Kennedy Center engagement in which she played Saint-Saëns' Sonata No. 1 in D Minor.

"Playing on Marian's Gagliano was an incredible and humbling experience," says Davis (pictured with the Gagliano, as concertmaster of the Oberlin Chamber Orchestra), who graduated in December 2016 and earned a Fulbright Fellowship this spring. "I was fortunate to play the instrument for a year and a half, and felt myself grow with the violin as I became more familiar with it.

"I remember one particularly impacting lesson with my teacher, David Bowlin, when he told me to really *play* the violin—to try to coax out all of its nuances and colors in a way that highlights the sounds it is capable of producing. I had not thought about playing in this way before, and it

opened up a new way of thinking about sound."

As Davis' sound grew, so did her correspondence with Gale. "Getting to know Marian throughout the past two years was a true joy," she says. "She is extraordinarily kind, generous, and warm-hearted—always a supportive presence and reminder of how much I have to be grateful for. I can't thank her or Oberlin enough for giving me this opportunity."



IN THE HANDS OF OBERLIN STUDENTS, THE HARP GIVES BRACY AN ENTIRELY NEW SENSE OF JOY.

THE ROAD WARRIOR

LYON & HEALY HARP

Kathie Bracy '59 enjoyed a rich career as a harpist, having performed with the Henry Mancini Orchestra and the symphonies of Houston, Austin, Columbus, and the bucolic resort town of Lakeside, Ohio, where she was a member of the orchestra for more than 50 years.

Now retired, Bracy collected three harps over the course of her career, including a Lyon & Healy purchased in 1976. After 13 concert tours of Europe and countless other engagements, Bracy's beloved "23" was donated to Oberlin in 2016. She credits the idea to her late friend, fellow harpist Jane Cauffiel Thomson '56, who had given her own concert harps to Oberlin.

Style 23, which she

"I suddenly realized Oberlin was the perfect place to donate one of the harps, especially since I felt strongly that I owed Oberlin," Bracy says. "I knew the conservatory would take very good care of it and that it would get played on a lot."

Bracy's harp now resides in practice room 124 of

Robertson Hall, where it is used by harp students and is available for ensemble performances. It's also invaluable for students whose own harps are in need of repair.

"With an instrument this large and this rare, it's not like we can just pick up a second harp whenever we need it—and especially one of this quality," says Ina McCormack '18 (pictured), who recently lost her harp to repairs for two months.

In the hands of Oberlin students, the harp gives

Bracy an entirely new sense of joy.

"I am absolutely delighted," she says. "From what I've seen and heard of Oberlin harp students on the conservatory's live webcasts, they deserve the very best instruments to play on, and I just hope I've been able to help in that way. Those students are amazing—I hope they play it to death! And I'm glad I did it while I'm still around. Who knows, I may get to hear it played again one of these days."



GAME CHANGER

ARMSTRONG HERITAGE FLUTE

A standout student from nearby Cleveland, Karisma Palmore '20 arrived for her first year at Oberlin in 2015 with no shortage of nascent talent...but no decent instrument to call her own.

"If I took a table leg and poked some holes in it, that would be better than my flute," she jokes.

A year later, Brian Hedges '67 of Virginia stopped by campus to donate a sterling silver Armstrong Heritage flute that had been built for him by noted maker Mark Thomas. To flute professor Alexa Still, it seemed an ideal match for Palmore. The conservatory offered it to her not just for the year, but throughout her Oberlin career—an arrangement that delighted student and donor alike.

Palmore has used the flute since January, the pressure of needing her own instrument finally taking a backseat to her artistry. The gift has also led to a continuing correspondence between Palmore and Hedges, who have bonded over their shared love of Romance languages, which Palmore intends to study as one half of her double degree. "I am thrilled because

"I am thrilled because Karisma is a richly deserving kid," says Still. "All of her teachers love her, and she works so hard."

"I'm just so grateful," Palmore says. "It's the nicest thing anybody has ever done for me."





WE ARE ALL TEACHERS

TODAY'S PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS MUST BE MORE VERSATILE
THAN EVER. OBERLIN'S APPROACH TO MUSIC EDUCATION EVOLVES
TO KEEP PACE. BY ANDREA KALYN, DEAN OF THE CONSERVATORY

is a fundamental belief in the importance of music and a conviction that all children should have access to it. These tenets are reflected in myriad ways throughout our curricula. And while specific courses and degree offerings necessarily change over time, our essential commitment remains true: to prepare our graduates at the highest level for professional lives of impact. This fall, the conservatory launches a division that adds new dimension to that commitment: Pedagogy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement, or PACE.

As we prepare our students for the broadening opportunities and expectations of professional musical life in the 21st century and foster in them the artistry, vision, and passion they will need to influence the future of the field—teaching, community engagement, and advocacy are relevant skills worthy of our serious attention. Our students keenly pursue opportunities to combine their artistic development and aspirations with their deep sense of social responsibility and justice. They volunteer in Oberlin's public schools, teach in the Community Music School, intern with the Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra and other local arts organizations, and initiate winter-term performance projects that incorporate audience and educational outreach. The new division of PACE is conceived to facilitate these pursuits, but even more to prepare students to apply to those pursuits the same standard of excellence they bring to their core work. As

both part of the formal curriculum and alongside it, PACE programming presents students with newly focused and rigorous opportunities to imagine, research, and practice how their musical work will live in the world beyond Oberlin.

PACE coalesces current course offerings in music education, performance studies, and professional development that until now have lived scattered across the conservatory. The PACE framework offers new clarity around the purpose, profile, and coherence of these courses within a professional musical education, underscoring their relevance and making them more easily identified and accessed by interested students. PACE also encourages discussion around these important topics, as well as collaboration across departments and divisions. Even in recent weeks, for example, a group has gathered to design new community engagement and educational outreach programming by the Oberlin Orchestra for the coming academic year, building on outreach experiences central to the conservatory's 150th-anniversary Chicago tour in January 2016. While such initiatives have long been part of Oberlin's ethos, PACE brings new intentionality to these efforts, and lends a broader degree of faculty expertise and participation to ensure that students are prepared to take on these initiatives and to execute them well.

Teaching is the foundation of PACE, which adopts the range of pedagogy coursework already taught in the conservatory as the

Oberlin's 2016 Chicago tour included extensive outreach in area schools.

starting point for new classes and programming. Pedagogy courses will continue to be offered in piano, strings, and voice, as will courses in the principles of classroom instruction. Indeed, much of our current music education coursework provides a pedagogical anchor for PACE, but the new division adopts a broad charge, specifically to invite participation by students of every major.

We are deeply proud of the generations of teachers our music education faculty have mentored and of the profound global impact they continue to have. Yet as a conservatory made up almost entirely of performers and composers (over the past decade, they account for 99 percent of our conservatory student body), we must bring the art of teaching into greater prominence and distinction for all of our students—as both a professional skill and a social responsibility. With the creation of PACE, we extend to all students in the conservatory not just the opportunity, but the *mandate* to



develop and practice vital teaching skills, whether in the private studio or community music school, in school-based music teaching, in arts-inspired teaching of academic subjects, or in presentations to audiences.

Community engagement has been core to Oberlin's music education program from its inception, and it represents a vibrant area of commitment across our entire faculty, who model in countless ways the fundamental responsibility of musicians to share their work. The capacity to connect—not just with immediate audiences, but also with those in the community beyond the concert hall—is an area of increasing professional relevance for our student performers. The traditional manifestations of audience outreach and community arts programming that are becoming a standard part of the work of professional musicians clearly demand solid

THE EVOLUTION OF MUSIC EDUCATION AT OBERLIN CONSERVATORY

1837

Oberlin's Department of Music Education is launched by George N. Allen and maintained until the formation of Oberlin Conservatory in 1865.

1902

The conservatory's first music education course is taught by Professor of Singing William Horner.

1907

Karl Wilson Gehrkens (1905, AM 1912) becomes the first teacher of "public school music" while still working in Oberlin local schools. A member of the conservatory faculty until 1942, he coined the phrase "Music for every child—every

child for music," which became the official slogan of the Music Educators National Conference, now the National Association for Music Education.

1914

Gehrkens publishes his first book, *Music Notation & Terminology*.

1916

Gehrkens establishes a two-year program leading to certification in public school music. It expands to three years in 1917.

1917

A reference to the importance of preparing students for roles in "community music" appears in the conservatory course catalog.

1918

The first program for teachers of high school music begins, aimed at conservatory graduates and leading to a teacher's certificate. Initially two years, it expands to four years by 1921.

1919

Gehrkens publishes the seminal textbook An Introduction to School Music Teaching.

1921

Gehrkens establishes a four-year program leading to the firstknown bachelor's degree in school music; 100 students are enrolled in the program in its inaugural year.

1922

Two new undergraduate programs are launched: a double major combining school music and applied music, and a five-year program combining college and conservatory work.

1923

Oberlin College's
Department of School
Music awards the first
U.S. bachelor's degree
in school music. Three
courses of study in
school music are
offered, including a
double major with
applied study.

1926

A minor in school music is added, then dropped in 1961 and readded in 1990.

1929

A master's degree in school music is added.

1931

A bachelor's degree in school music defines three emphases of study: general, vocal, and instrumental.

1942

A double-degree program leading to a bachelor of arts and bachelor of music education is added.

1958

String professor Clifford Cook is introduced to Suzuki string pedagogy. Soon after, Oberlin becomes one of the first U.S. advocates of the method.

1959

Music education options include a minor, major, double major with applied studies, and double degree.

1964

Shinichi Suzuki visits Oberlin to instruct music teachers in his groundbreaking method.

1966

A five-year, combined-degree program is introduced, leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in music education.

1968

The Music Education Association of Oberlin student charter organization is founded.

WE MUST BRING THE ART OF TEACHING INTO GREATER PROMINENCE FOR ALL OF OUR STUDENTS—AS A PROFESSIONAL SKILL AND A SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

pedagogical skill. Equally critical to successful community engagement, however, are the entrepreneurial, organizational, and financial skills fostered in coursework and programming offered through the conservatory's Office of Professional Development and Oberlin's Creativity & Leadership program, as well as the social, cultural, and ethical sensitivities that are developed in ethnomusicology seminars and community-based learning courses, which are offered in conjunction with the Bonner Center for Service and Learning. In bringing these areas together, PACE advances the conservatory's capacity to prepare students for effective outreach while underscoring for them the full scope of professional and social responsibility inherent in developing their own community engagement projects. Furthermore, bolstering support for faculty seeking to develop community engagement programming—relevant to large ensembles

1971

A five-year combined degree-bachelor of music in performance and master of music teaching-is offered until 2008. Also offered is the bachelor plus master of music in music education, double major in performance and music education, the **Double Degree** Program, and the bachelor of music in music education.

1980

The bachelor of music in music education adds a piano teaching concentration.

1999

A music education minor in community music is added.

2002

The textbook *Prelude* to *Music Education* is published by professors Joanne Erwin, Jody Kerchner, and John Knight, with Kay Edwards.

2008-2017

The 14-month master of music teaching degree is offered.

2011

Music in America—dedicated to improving academic outcomes through music—is introduced with a summer conference.

2017

Oberlin launches Pedagogy, Advocacy, and Community Engagement (PACE). and chamber music, for example—creates new points of entry into this work for students, provides clear faculty resources for their guidance, and allows for new creative partnerships with community arts organizations. Professional development courses newly offered through PACE will serve as a pipeline of arts-administration interns for numerous organizations here in northeast Ohio and throughout the country.

Advocacy lives at the intersection between pedagogy and community engagement. In the 21st century, the capacity for artists and teachers to articulate a compelling value proposition for their work is a professional expectation. Our students will be called upon throughout their lives to advocate for music and for the broader place of the arts in society, and it is important that we create opportunities for them to practice this, alongside their artistry, even while at Oberlin. Arts-advocacy programming currently lives in co-curricular spaces in the conservatory: panel discussions and professional development talks given by guest artists, arts advocates, and other leaders and policy makers; internships at arts organizations; and student-initiated projects funded through Oberlin's entrepreneurship program. Aligning advocacy with pedagogy and community engagement underscores for our students the social responsibility of the artist-teacher, and facilitates collaborative programming around advocacy across faculty, departments, and student-support offices. Opportunities, experiences, and courses made available through PACE help students formulate their own responses to the central question of why musical engagement is essential to education broadly in the 21st century, and provides a rigorous curricular framework in which to consider the place of music in full dimension—composition and performance, social justice and impact, community engagement, advocacy, and public policy.

As we prepare our students to create the future of music, the principles of teaching, advocacy, and community engagement are core elements of our work as a conservatory. And it is through these applications of artistry that our students will have broadest impact—at Oberlin and beyond.

DISTINGUISHED MUSIC EDUCATOR AWARD WINNERS

2002 | HERBERT HENKE '53

Former Oberlin Conservatory professor of music education and leading exponent of Dalcroze eurhythmics.

2003 MARY GOETZE '65

Former professor of music at Indiana University and choral conductor.

2004 | CAROLYNN LINDEMAN '62

Former professor of music at San Francisco State University and past president of the National Association for Music Education.

2007 | TIMOTHY GERBER '69

Professor of music education at the Ohio State University School of Music.

2008 | SHARON DAVIS GRATTO '66

Professor of music at the University of Dayton and former director of music education at Gettysburg University.

2009 MARSHA KINDALL-SMITH '66

Former co-chair of music education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

2010 RICHARD '65 & GEORGIA BASSETT '63

Founders of the Association for Music in International Schools.

2011 | LYNNELLE EDIGER KORDZAIA '94

Founder and director of the Academy of Music and American Youth Harp Ensemble.

2012 | JONATHAN HANDMAN '96

Co-founder and artistic director for Stringendo Inc., orchestra director at Arlington High School in N.Y., and conductor of Woodstock Chamber Orchestra.

2013 | ELIZABETH HANKINS '89

Director of orchestras at Lakewood High School in Ohio; 2017 Grammy Award finalist for Music Educator of the Year.

2014 CONSTANCE MCKOY '78

Faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, public school music teacher, and past president of the North Carolina Music Educators Association.

2015 NITA VAN PELT '79

Former string teacher at Lakeridge and Lake Oswego schools in Oregon and principal clarinet for Oregon Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra.

2016 PENELOPE CRUZ '91

Primary and secondary music teacher and choral conductor for White Plains High School in N.Y.

2017 | PETER LUTKOSKI '99, MME '99

Principal at the American School in London and past president of the Association for Music in International Schools.



Performance & Improvisation emerges in the space between classical and jazz.

By Erich Burnett

And at Oberlin, he found that he had a kindred spirit in fellow faculty member Jamey Haddad, a professor of advanced improvisation and percussion who has collaborated with artists ranging from Yo-Yo Ma to iconic singer-songwriter Paul Simon. Together, Haddad and Ashby



devised an innovative program that calls upon their appreciation of the music of disparate cultures and their exaltation of improv.

Performance & Improvisation—PI, for short—can be thought of as a sort of bridge between the conservatory's classically trained students and its jazz students, a forum for helping both to intensively develop their listening skills and internal rhythmic awareness, and explore paths toward more innovative artistic expression. Through PI, students are invited to deepen their understanding of their own playing through immersive experiences with accomplished guest musicians who represent an exhaustive range of world music styles. Like improvisation itself, the program is ever evolving to explore new musical directions as students are exposed to them.

"Students are truly hungry for experiences that allow them to explore new aspects of music that wouldn't ordinarily be taught within the repertoire for their instrument," says Haddad. "The goal of PI is to expand a culture on campus where committed students who want to explore composition and improvisation in an ensemble situation can do so, in addition to the focus of their jazz and classical majors." As a result, Haddad and Ashby are witnesses to what Haddad calls "a new level of social interaction" between the two sides of the conservatory.

"The truth is that so many of these students have so much technical facility on their instrument that it's astounding," says Ashby, who trained in classical trombone as an undergraduate. "In their young lives, they've already spent hundreds upon hundreds of

hours developing a relationship with their instrument. We're just offering guidance and enabling a somewhat different way to apply that technical facility and develop their overall musical voice."

In this way, the program is leaving a lasting impression with the first generation of PI students sent forth to turn their passions into careers.

The World (Music) Comes to Oberlin

Ashby and Haddad have been friends in music since 1985, when Haddad recommended Ashby as an arranger for his gigging partner, Paul Simon.

"We've gotten into lots of trouble over the years in a lot of places, and we've made lots of great music," Ashby says with a smile. "What we've found is that while our jazz background

SLICES OF PI



ANA NELSON '16 CLARINET AND JAZZ SAX

"PI got me thinking about music outside the realm of what I was studying in school and encouraged me to get involved with many projects. I'm pursuing a master's degree at Indiana University, and I have projects in many different genres of music at Indiana and around the Midwest, including recording an album with Liberation Music Collective, touring with the popular girl group the Vallures, and starting a recording project of my own compositions. PI has encouraged me to not put myself in a box as a musician."



BEN ROIDL-WARD '15 BASSOON

"As a master's student at Rice University, I have been intensely engaged in the orchestral repertoire and with contemporary classical music, but I have also performed fairly extensively in the improvised music scene in Houston, including work as a founding member of the Transitory Sound and Movement Collective, which presents immersive multimedia performances. I would not have had the tools, the skills, or the confidence to put myself out there in projects like that had it not been for my experiences with PI."



CHELSEA DESOUZA '16
PIANO

"As a classical musician, getting to collaborate with our incredibly talented peers in the jazz department was fun and enriching, and it pushed and challenged me in ways that have been very useful to my classical music too:

to my classical music too:
learning to trust my
musical instincts and
listen to other people I'm
playing with, trusting them
to be there for you when
you make a mistake, and
being there for them in the
same way. There is also an
element of creativity with
writing your own music as
a band that really helped
broaden my horizons."



CAITLIN MEHRTENS '16 HARP

"I was so heavily inspired by my work in PI that I created my own independent major called 'communication through multicultural music and movement,' which allowed me to stay for another full vear. I came to Oberlin as a harp major with little knowledge of music aside from the traditional European music I had studied in high school and before. This program opened my mind to see and begin to understand so much music I had never experienced before—a lot of which has become music I deeply care about."



ASHLEY HALE '16 TRUMPET

"We were all a little out of our comfort zones, which created an accepting environment for everyone to make mistakes instead of freaking out under the pressure. I was able to develop improvisational skills through practice. While I still don't feel as comfortable as some of my colleagues who improvise for a living, being able to hold my own on a song with changes written out will help to set me apart from other trumpet players who might not have the confidence to get up and take a solo at all."



CHRIS BERRY
WORLD MUSIC
PERCUSSIONIST
(PI GUEST ARTIST 2011-12)

"What I feel is the most potent wisdom behind music is often times 'unconventional' and hard to weave into the various academic scenarios I find myself in. Being able to share in the PI format was truly revolutionary and inspiring. The PI experience created a format in which imperative musical knowledge could be shared in real time. For me, it was a perfect meeting place for academia and the mystical world behind the music I play."

informs our approach to these other forms of music, it ends up giving rise to a new, eclectic approach to improvisation. It's important to Jamey and me—and thankfully to many of our colleagues—that our students are exposed to many different forms of music and the ways that they can take advantage of it.

"PI forces you to relate to the music in different ways and on different levels," Ashby says. "It's a reflection of the way you've experienced music. If you've only experienced it where it's written for an ensemble on the page, then you need some other experiences." Likewise, PI encourages musicians to *listen* to the music in ways they may never have before. "It's that balance—that's what we're going for."

To be considered for ensemble placement in the PI program, students must first take prerequisite courses: Internalizing Rhythms I and II (APST 140 and APST 141) and Beginning Improvisation for non-jazz musicians (APST 142), which are taught by Haddad, Ashby, and Professor of Jazz Studies and Double Bass Peter Dominguez. Students are then eligible to audition for one of three small ensembles that receive coaching, participate in master classes, and collaborate in performances on and off campus.

The unique structure of Oberlin's PI program is based on its continual cycle of guest residencies. Throughout the year, musicians reflecting a broad spectrum of styles give students direct connection to sound worlds not commonly found in conservatories. PI students prepare for guest residencies by studying each artist's repertoire in advance, then they interact in master classes, coaching sessions, and performances.

In 2016-17 alone, PI residencies have included flamenco pianist Alex Conde, bassist Petros Klampanis, jazz trumpeter Dominick Farinacci, and jazz clarinetist and saxophonist Anat Cohen, each of whom worked with students in master classes and then collaborated with them onstage. The academic year began with an August performance by Under One Sun, a world music collective that features musicians hailing from five countries and five generations, many of whom led master classes the following day. The ensemble was assembled by Haddad and saxophonist Billy Drewes.

In recent years, Oberlin's American Roots Residency has brought the virtuosic bluegrass ensemble Punch Brothers to campus in conjunction with PI. Other visiting ensembles have included Harmonia, Hot Club of Detroit, and Trio Globo, in addition to dozens of individual artists.

At the heart of PI are the artist residencies coordinated by Jamey Haddad (right) and Jay Ashby (below right). In February, jazz clarinetist Anat Cohen collaborated with students in a master class and in concert at the Cat in the Cream (below).







Creating Connections

Through their experiences in PI, classical students emerge with confident improvisational skills, and jazz students boast a greater musical vocabulary. Musicians from both backgrounds take away an increased flexibility and adaptability, along with an emboldened approach to their study and music-making.

Fourth-year jazz piano and economics major Michael Orenstein has participated in PI since his sophomore year. In the fall of 2016, he became part of an ensemble that included a classically trained percussionist; a cellist who also sings and majors in composition; jazz sax, bass, piano, and drum majors; and a violinist who studies classical and jazz forms.

"The PI program is making a big difference in the way I think about—and hopefully play—music," says Orenstein, who hails from Berkeley, California. "We have artists coming in from all over the world, so we are exposed to different styles of music we probably would not play otherwise. Since I have been in the program, we have had Cuban, Brazilian,

Palestinian, Mexican, Israeli, and Venezuelan guest artists. Studying their composition and playing styles has made me a more versatile player and listener."

Carrie Frey '14, a violist in New York City, was among the first students to take part in PI.

"The PI program had a very deep influence on my playing and on many of the choices I've made since then," says Frey, who counts among her numerous ensemble projects a toy piano/toy viola duo that incorporates improvisation and original compositions alongside works written for their unusual instrumentation. "PI gave me the opportunity to view myself as a composer of sorts, the confidence to fit into any ensemble musically and rhythmically, a foundation for later improvisational study, and many important connections that have stayed with me."

Some of those Oberlin connections continue to bear fruit: As a student, Frey performed music by guest artist Petros Klampanis and shared the stage with the acclaimed bassist. Now she is a member of Klampanis' band, and she performed on his latest CD.

"When I moved to New York City, I reconnected with Petros and was able to jump in with his ensemble, largely because I already knew some of the music and had the solid rhythm I learned from Jamey, Jay, and my fellow PI-mates," she says.

Associate Professor of Conducting Raphael Jiménez sees the growth in Oberlin's orchestral musicians firsthand from his perch in Finney Chapel.

"Performance & Improvisation has an enormous impact on our students' training," he says. "By exposing them to other genres of music, by moving them away from notated music, and by giving them opportunities to improvise, our students are given a chance to reconnect with humanity's primordial relationship with music—that sense of spontaneity, freedom, and creativity. PI students bring this experience into everything they perform.

"The highly technical and rigorous academic training that our conservatory provides is perfectly balanced by a program like Performance & Improvisation, which reminds them that performing all kinds of music should always be a creative experience."



DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEX

A distinguished alumna dishes about her homeland and the campus she forever holds dear.

BY ERICH BURNETT | PHOTO BY SHAWN ROACH

"YOU HAVE TO BE AN OPTIMIST TO BE BORN out here," says Elaine Bridges '59, doing her best to explain why no sensible human being should ever want to visit her ranch in desolate west Texas.

"First off: If you're born out here, everything else looks better."

Sixty or so years ago, Oberlin looked pretty good to a young Bridges, who goes by "Tex" among those who know her well. Born and raised on a vast plot of oil-rich land on the Permian Basin, she came north to earn degrees in voice and music education. Then she led a life that showcased both disciplines, teaching music everywhere from an Oklahoma migrant farm to a Venezuelan oil camp and singing with church groups, community choirs, and even an all-female rock band.

"The thing about Oberlin that is so amazing is that when you're there, you're so sure that everywhere you go from there is also going to be great for music and that there will be classical music everywhere." She has long since discovered that's not the case—and certainly not in her corner of the world, where marching bands rule the musical landscape.

Approaching her 80th birthday this summer, Bridges still resides for half the year in the unforgiving heart of oil country, nearly bereft of phone service and 120 miles away from her own mailbox in San Angelo. The family ranch she inhabits has been designated a nature conservancy, where deer, turkey, and other indigenous creatures roam the bone-dry terrain.

A longtime battle with laryngeal dystonia prevents Bridges from saying much to most people, but the topic of her homeland—and her alma mater—gets her talking more than she probably should.

"It's hard for people to understand," she says. "This is like America 100 years ago. It is really kind of wild out here. That's why I go up to Michigan every six months—to keep my veneer of civilization."

In Traverse City, Bridges owns a palatial home that she opens each June for a garden party featuring Oberlin student musicians and young alumni. The concerts are a tradition that started in the 1990s, when Bridges would welcome conservatory delegations—including a young Mirò Quartet—to perform at her ranch and in the community, providing invaluable opportunities for students to engage with audiences outside of their usual concert-hall settings.

But the concerts are merely one way among many that Bridges fuels new generations of musicians and educators. For decades she has supported initiatives throughout Oberlin, from funding conservatory scholarships, to supporting Oberlin's entrepreneurship program, to the recent restoration of the Allen Memorial Art Museum. In addition, she has designated a generous gift to Oberlin in her estate plans, ensuring that her influence will reverberate across campus—and wherever Oberlin musicians go—for countless years to come.

"Oberlin was a wonderful experience for me," says Bridges, who was awarded the Alumni Medal in 1999 in recognition of her life of service. "I'm very grateful, and I'd like to see more and more people go there—particularly people from places like Texas, because it just opened up a different world for me.

"I love Oberlin," she continues, adding a rare pause for emphasis. "It is, to me, one of the greatest things in my life."

To learn about including Oberlin in your estate plans, please contact the Office of Gift Planning at 440-775-8599 or gift.planning@oberlin.edu.

OBERLIN CONSERVATORY MAGAZINE 2017 5:





"I'm not as good at it as he was," he says.
Fulkerson was good enough, however, to
guide nearly 125 violin students during his
35 years at Oberlin. Along with wisdom
he absorbed from Cerone, he applied
techniques gleaned from other legendary
teachers, including Ivan Galamian and
Dorothy DeLay at the Juilliard School. "You
were very dirty," Galamian told Fulkerson
in an early lesson. "You must play very clean.
Can you do that for me?" Galamian taught
Fulkerson how to teach himself. "I learned
so much more than I thought I was going to.
I learned about bowings and fingerings. We
covered a tremendous amount of repertoire."

The repertoire Fulkerson embraces has never been restricted to Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and friends. His musical curiosity also led him to explore works by 20th- and 21st-century composers, and in 1980 he won first prize at the Kennedy Center-Rockefeller Foundation International Competition for Excellence in the Performance of American Music. The triumph led to his Carnegie Hall performance of the Barber concerto with the American Symphony Orchestra in January 1982. In addition to the Wernick and Kupferman premieres, he presented the inaugural performance of

the John Becker Violin Concerto with the Chattanooga Symphony and the Roy Harris Violin Concerto with the North Carolina Symphony.

Through the years, accolades for Fulkerson have come in abundance: *The New York Times* praised his "transparent, lucid readings" and "countless interpretive shadings," and *Musical America* called his playing "insightful, heartfelt, meticulous, virtuosic, beauteous, and above all, convincing."

In a pair of Oberlin performances during his final year, he played Beethoven's Violin Concerto with the Oberlin Chamber Orchestra in December (pictured), followed by a March recital in Warner Concert Hall that included sonatas by Schubert, Ives, and Enesco. The March program featured faculty pianists Peter Takács, Robert Shannon '72, and Monique Duphil; together, the four professors boast almost 150 years of teaching experience at Oberlin.

Fulkerson is grateful to the conservatory for allowing him to pursue his playing career while serving on the faculty. He has performed more than 50 concertos with orchestras and made recordings ranging from the Bach Sonatas and Partitas for Unaccompanied Violin to the solo violin part in Philip Glass' Einstein on the Beach. The 1993 Nonesuch recording of the Glass opera followed a four-continent, 48-performance tour the previous year, when Fulkerson's absence was felt back at Oberlin. ("It was the worst for my students," he says.) His Complete Violin Sonatas of Charles Ives on Bridge Records has become the standard for that repertoire.

Fulkerson's devotion to passing on artistic knowledge and experience won't end once he leaves Oberlin. He will move to New York, where his wife is in law school and where he has been teaching violin at New York University for 10 years. In his new life, as at Oberlin, he will continue following a philosophy he shares with his friend, violinist James Buswell: "Educating the whole person is something we agree on."

DONALD ROSENBERG IS THE AUTHOR OF THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA STORY: SECOND TO NONE AND EDITOR OF EMAG, THE MAGAZINE OF EARLY MUSIC AMERICA. HE HAS TEAM-TAUGHT MUSIC CRITICISM AT OBERLIN SINCE 2011.

Cleveland Orchestra before embarking on

a diverse career that has included chamber

the occupant's achievements.

The walls are adorned

prances of performances past:

omoting the Barber Violin

o at Carnegie Hall, the world

oncerto with the Philadelphia Orchestra

der Riccardo Muti, and another world

2, in Prague, as well as a poster for the 1989

oremiere, Meyer Kupferman's Concerto No.

like those once used in hotels to summon the

bellboy. Gregory Fulkerson impishly taps

premiere of Richard Wernick's Violin

Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival.

One curious item sitting near the computer also draws attention: a call bell,

with re

one-s

Student Accolades

2017 Conservatory of Music Honors & Awards

The Walter E. Aschaffenburg Prize Awarded to a graduating senior for outstanding music composition.

Justin Weiss '17 (Composition)

The Louis and Marguerite Bloomberg Greenwood Prize

Awarded to graduating students excelling in cello, piano, violin, or voice.

Juliana Zara '16 (Voice)

The Margaret Bos Stambler '84 Professional Development Award

Awarded to outstanding voice majors of great promise to enhance career opportunities.

Amber Monroe '17 (Voice)

The Arthur Dann Senior Piano Competition

Awarded to the winner of this juried competition for excellence in piano performance.

Zheyu Jiang '19 (Piano)



The Rudolf Serkin Scholarship

Awarded to a student demonstrating excellence in piano performance.

Stephen Lee '18 (Piano)

The John Elvin Piano Prize

Awarded to a student judged by the Piano Department to be the most talented in the junior class.

Stephen Lee '18 (Piano)

The Faustina Hurlbutt Prize

Awarded to an outstanding graduating student in cello, piano, violin, or voice.

Aaron Wolff '17 (Cello & Comparative Literature)

The Piano Faculty Prize in Accompanying

Awarded to a graduating senior who has demonstrated excellence in accompanying singers and instrumentalists.

Zi Xiao Li '17 (Piano)



Flint Initiative Grants (FIG)

Awarded to innovative and motivated conservatory and double-degree students to develop imaginative artistic projects.

Jeanette Chen '17 (Harp & Politics)
David Diongue '17 (Jazz Saxophone)
Sage Jenson '17 (TIMARA &
Computer Science)
William Johnson '17 (TIMARA)
Kirk Pearson '17 (Composition,
Cinema Studies, & Geology)
Christiana Rose '17 (TIMARA)



The Thomas J. Watson Fellowship

Awarded to a graduating student nominated by one of 40 partner colleges to support one year of independent exploration outside the United States.

Kirk Pearson '17 (Composition, Cinema Studies, & Geology) Paulus Van Horne '17 (TIMARA & Environmental Studies)



The Louis and Annette Kaufman Prize in Violin

Awarded to an outstanding student of violin.

Sophie Davis '16 (Violin)
Gregory Gennaro '17 (Violin)

The Avedis Zildjian Conservatory Percussion Award

Awarded to a continuing percussion major in recognition of outstanding performance skills.

Rachel Gibson '20 (Percussion)

The Carol Nott Piano Pedagogy Prize

Awarded to an outstanding graduating senior for continued study in piano pedagogy.

Jun Hee Shin '17 (Piano)



The Pi Kappa Lambda Prize for Musicianship

Awarded to students judged to be the most outstanding of those elected to Pi Kappa Lambda.

Maurice Cohn '17 (Cello & History) Christa Cole '17 (Violin) Sophie Davis '16 (Violin)

The Wendell and Bettye Logan Prize in Jazz Studies

Awarded to a graduating student who has demonstrated excellence in performance or composition.

Daniel Spearman '16 (Jazz Piano & Africana Studies)

The Theodore Presser Undergraduate Scholarship

Awarded to an outstanding returning double-degree student for excellence in musicianship and liberal arts study.

Matthew Bickett '19 (Organ & Religion)



The Earl L. Russell Award in Historical Performance

Awarded to a worthy student majoring in Historical Performance to assist with the purchase of a musical instrument.

Natalie Talbot MM '17 (Baroque Flute)

The Selby Harlan Houston Prize

Awarded to a graduating senior whose performance in organ and music theory is of distinguished quality.

Matthew Buller '17, MM '17 (Organ and Historical Performance)



The James Stamp Award

Awarded for outstanding acheivement by a trumpet player.

Wyeth Aleksei '17 (Trumpet) Morgen Low '17 (Trumpet) Olivia Pidi '17 (Trumpet)



The Marilyn Horne Rubin Scholar

Awarded to an outstanding student of voice to support professional development.

Amber Monroe '17 (Voice)
Jessica Mashburn '18 (Voice)

The James H. Hall Prize in Musicology

Awarded to a graduating senior for excellence in work in musicology.

Olivia Pidi '17 (Trumpet)

The Ernest Hatch Wilkins Memorial Prize

Awarded to a returning student who has demonstrated academic excellence in the three preceding years.

Silvio Guitian '18 (Clarinet)



The Fulbright Scholar Program

Awarded to students for their academic merit and leadership potential with the opportunity to study internationally.

Sophie Davis '16 (Violin)
Mitchell Miller '17 (Organ &
German Studies)

The Ohio Federation of Music Clubs Agnes Fowler Collegiate Scholarship

Awarded to sophomores or juniors majoring in music and strong in instrumental or voice performance.

Aaron Wolff '17 (Cello & Comparative Literature)

The Piano Faculty Prize in Accompanying

Awarded to a graduating senior who has demonstrated excellence in accompanying singers and instrumentalists.

Felisien Felisien '17 (Piano) Shiyu Yang '17 (Piano)



The Ruth Cogan Memorial Scholarship in Vocal Performance

Awarded to an outstanding voice major who has dedicated significant time to the Otto B. Schoepfle Vocal Arts Center.

Dylan Fabas '17 (Voice)

Class Notes







1900s

In 1937, Cincinnati's May Festival gave the world premiere of the oratorio *The Ordering of Moses*, composed in 1932 by **R. Nathaniel Dett 1908**. The event was broadcast live to the nation by NBC radio. In 2016, Bridge Records released a live recording of Dett's magnum opus. It was made in 2014 at Carnegie Hall, where it was performed by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and the May Festival Chorus, conducted by James Conlon.

1960s

Sharon Davis Gratto '66 has been appointed to the Graul Chair in Arts and Languages at the University of Dayton. A champion of world choral music and the Dayton arts community, Gratto joined the faculty in 2008 as chair of the music department.

Pianist Linda Boring Laurent '69 is a professor at Central Connecticut State University, where she has taught piano and chamber music as well as music history and analysis for 25 years. Since writing her doctoral thesis on singer Jane Bathori, Laurent has published several works devoted to the singer's early career; her latest, a compilation of the 30-year correspondence between Bathori and actress Andrée Tainsy, was released by Riveneuve

Éditions of Paris in 2016. Laurent performs regularly with her husband, violinist Gerard Rosa, as the Rosa-Laurent Duo, and as the pianist of the Connecticut Trio.

1970s

Works by composer **Christopher Rouse '71** are featured on the Grammy-nominated 2016 CD by the New York Philharmonic. The recording was included in NPR's year-end list of the top 50 albums.

Raymond Harvey '73, MM '75 gave his last performance as music director of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra in May after 18 years in the post. He celebrated by opening the season with pianist Yefim Bronfman in Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 and closing with Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni*. He will shift his focus to the University of Houston, where he is an associate professor and music director of the Moores Opera Center.

In spring 2017, flutist Wendy Rolfe '74 performed as soloist with the Tri-County Symphonic Band for a program celebrating female composers. Rolfe, a professor at the Berklee College of Music, played Cécile Chaminade's Flute Concertino and Anne McGinty's Variations and Theme.

Darrell Bailey '75 is a professor of music and arts technology at

Indiana University-Purdue
University Indianapolis. His 2015
textbook *Music Listening Today*,
co-authored with Charles Hoffer, is
widely used in U.S. colleges and
universities. Bailey has served as
choral director and organist for
congregations in Indiana, Virginia,
Ohio, West Virginia, and his home
state of Alaska. His international
travels have taken him to more than
25 countries—most recently to play
historic organs in the Lutheran
churches of Norway.

Julia Bogorad-Kogan '76, principal flutist of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, was featured on the cover of the December 2016 issue of Flute Talk. The interview, conducted by one of Bogorad-Kogan's doctoral students at the University of Minnesota, discusses her philosophy on sound production, the orchestral audition process, and the importance of teaching musical language.

Pianist **Terry Eder '79**, creator of the Key Pianists recital series at Carnegie Hall, took the stage of Weill Recital Hall during the series' second season in March 2017 for a performance featuring Schubert, Schumann, and Bartók—one of Eder's most salient interests. "Bartók was first and last, and for anyone interested in the composer, it was rewarding to hear Eder's deep knowledge and musical thinking," wrote *New York Concert Review*.

Composer, musician, and author James McBride '79 was awarded the 2015 National Medal of Humanities in September 2016 for humanizing the complexities of discussing race in America. "Through writings about his own uniquely American story, and his works of fiction informed by our shared history, his moving stories of love display the character of the American family," read a White House citation in praise of McBride.

1980s

In spring 2017, Steven Isserlis '80 became the first cellist to be awarded the Wigmore Medal, which recognizes major artists with deep ties to London's Wigmore Hall. Isserlis was also presented with the Glashütte Original Music Festival Award during the 40th Dresden Music Festival, in recognition of his work in music education and support of emerging talent. In addition to performing, Isserlis devotes much of his time to composing and performing for children. He has published three children's books, most recently Robert Schumann's Advice to Young Musicians: Revisited by Steven Isserlis (2016). He was also recently appointed visiting cello professor at the Royal Academy of Music. In September 2016, Isserlis teamed up with pianist Jeremy Denk '90 and violinist Joshua Bell on the CD For the Love of Brahms (Sony Classical).







Michael Kraft '81 became president of C.B. Fisk organbuilders in September 2016. He studied organ at Oberlin with Garth Peacock and harpsichord with Lisa Goode Crawford, and has worked for Fisk since 1986 as a pipe maker, reed voicer, and later as VP of special projects.

Jazz trumpeter and composer Michael Mossman '82 returned to Oberlin for a residency and performance with the Oberlin Jazz Ensemble in March 2017. Trained in both classical and jazz, Mossman was nominated for a 2013 Grammy Award for Best Instrumental Arrangement for his Afro-Latin Ellington Suite. He also composed and arranged music for the films Bossa Nova and Chico and Rita. which was nominated for an Academy Award in 2012. He is director of jazz studies at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College.

Frederick Haas '83 was presented with the President's Award by the American Guild of Organists at the group's annual meeting in Houston in July 2016. The award honors Haas' artistry, as well as his support of the AGO. Haas has lived and performed in the Philadelphia area his entire life, and he serves as assistant grand court organist at Macy's Center City, where he performs weekly on the store's Wanamaker organ. He is the founder of the Historic Organ Trust; a board

member of the Historic Organ Restoration Committee at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City, N.J.; and he was the lead donor of the Fred J. Cooper Memorial Organ—the largest mechanical pipe organ in any U.S. concert venue—in Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts in his hometown. Haas also co-chaired the 2016 Organ Historical Society's national convention in Philadelphia. There, he was honored in part for his leading role in the donation of his family's 36-room Pennsylvania estate to the Trust.

Jonathan Sturm '83 celebrated his 25th anniversary as concertmaster of the Des Moines Symphony with a solo performance of Saint-Saëns' Havanaise. He also performs as violist with the Amara Piano Quartet, the resident chamber music ensemble at lowa State University. In August 2016, the quartet released a CD of American piano quartets that included the world premiere of George Tsontakis' Piano Quartet No. 3. Sturm serves as president of the lowa State University Faculty Senate.

More than two dozen alumni of Oberlin Conservatory and the Oberlin Baroque Performance Institute attended the annual event of the Viola da Gamba Society of America in Forest Grove, Ore., in summer 2016. Participants included Emily Walhout '83, John Moran '85, Elizabeth Reed '91, **Tina Chancey**, and **Lynn Tetenbaum AD '84**, as well as longtime Associate Professor of Viola da Gamba Catharina Meints.

1990s

Organist Andrés Mojica '92 toured throughout summer 2016, beginning with a recital at Methuen Memorial Music Hall in Massaschusetts and contining with a duo recital at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City with flutist Ana María Hernández. An organ professor and organist at the University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras campus, Mojica concluded the tour with Hernández in a duo recital at Union Church of San Juan.

Jonathan Handman '96 directed the Arlington High School String Orchestra to first place at the 2017 American String Teachers Association's National Orchestra Festival in Pittsburgh. The school, from Lagrangeville, N.Y., was one of 20 selected from across the country to participate. Handman was also recently named conductor of the Woodstock Chamber Orchestra.

New compositions by **Erik Jekabson** '95 and his arrangements of standards appear on *A Brand New Take* (OA2 Records). In demand as an arranger and sideman, Jekabson also writes jazz arrangements for the San Francisco Symphony and composes for film. He is devoted to

big band jazz as well and has been directing, composing, and performing weekly with the Electric Squeezebox Orchestra at Doc's Lab in San Francisco's North Beach. Jekabson's sextet includes fellow Oberlin alum Matt Clark '94 on piano.

Past Tuesday Musical Association scholarship winner soprano **Dina Kuznetsova '94** performed on the association's Akron recital series in November 2016. Kuznetsova shared the E.J. Thomas Hall stage with fellow awardee and Oberlin violin teacher Jinjoo Cho.

Sibbi Bernhardsson '95, a violinist well known for his role in the award-winning Pacifica Quartet, is set to join the Oberlin Conservatory string faculty this fall.

Eighth Blackbird was named 2017
Ensemble of the Year by Musical
America Worldwide, which praised
the group for its "non-doctrinal
openness to all currents of
contemporary style, as well as its
embrace of all things theatrical,
from lighting design to
choreography in its performances."
Oberlin alumni and current
members of the ensemble include
clarinetist Michael J. Maccaferri '95,
percussionist Matthew Duvall '95,
cellist Nicholas Photinos '96, and
pianist Lisa Kaplan '96.

Violinist and violist **Matt Albert '96** has been named chair of the newly formed Department of Chamber

Class Notes



Yun

Music at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance. Albert is a founding member of Eighth Blackbird and previously served as director of chamber music at the Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University.

Elizabeth Askren '97 was one of six conductors selected to participate in the second annual session of the Linda and Mitch Hart Institute for Women Conductors at the Dallas Opera. This two-week residency culminated in two public concerts with the Dallas Opera Orchestra and singers in December 2016.

2000s

Claire Chase '01 became the first flutist to receive the \$100,000 Avery Fisher Prize in spring 2017. "As someone who has committed my life's work to the cause of new and experimental music and to advocating for composers, performers, and artist collectives, I embrace this award as recognition of that cause as a whole and the tremendous work of the new music community at large," said Chase, founder of the International Contemporary Ensemble. Flute Talk interviewed Chase for its January 2017 cover story, which highlighted Density 2036, a 22-year project begun by Chase in 2014 to commission an entirely new body of repertory for solo flute each year until the 100th anniversary of

Edgard Varèse's groundbreaking 1936 flute solo *Density 21.5.*

Mezzo-soprano Laurie Rubin '01 and her wife Jenny Taira are co-founders of the new youth performing arts festival Ohana Arts in Hawaii. Together they composed and produced a new musical for the inaugural season titled *Peace on Your Wings*, which tells the story of a 12-year-old girl who battled leukemia after the Allied bombing of Hiroshima. The show had its New York debut in the Gerald W. Lynch Theater at John Jay College in September 2016.

Composer **Du Yun '01** was awarded the 2017 Pulitzer Prize in Music for her operatic work *Angel's Bone*, which premiered on January 6, 2016, at the Prototype Festival in New York City. With libretto by Royce Vavrek, the opera integrates a wide range of styles into a harrowing allegory for human trafficking in the modern world.

Les Sorciers Perdus (the Lost Wizards), the ensemble of **Mark Tipton '02**, released its debut album, *Alchemist's Dream*, in March 2017. It features original jazz compositions by Tipton and guitarist Don Pride. Les Sorciers Perdus is a contemporary chamber ensemble that blends jazz, classical, world folk, rock, and popular music. It also specializes in the live performance of Tipton's silent film scores. Since 2008, he has written original music

for 14 silent films including *The Golem, Nosferatu, Gold Rush, The General,* and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis.* In July 2017, Les Sorciers Perdus will perform Tipton's new score to F.W. Murnau's 1927 lyrical silent film masterpiece *Sunrise* at the 20th annual Maine International Film Festival.

Soprano **Alyson Cambridge '02** kicked off Sun Valley Opera's 2017 Winter Festival with a program featuring classical and jazz—a first for the festival. Cambridge performed songs from her new album, *Until Now.*

Metropolitan Opera Stage Director Eric Einhorn '02 opened the 2016-17 season of the Indianapolis Opera with the world premiere of Happy Birthday, Wanda June, composed by Richard Auldon Clark with libretto by Kurt Vonnegut. Einhorn was praised for his sure-handed direction and insights by Upstage critic Jay Harvey, who noted that the director made the characters "much more than representations of aspects of American life circa 1970."

Trumpet player **Peter Evans '03** earned praised from *The New York Times* for a captivating solo recital he gave at Pioneer Works in Brooklyn in December 2016. The concert celebrated the release of his solo album *Lifeblood* and opened with an improvisation on

piccolo trumpet. *Times* writer
Nate Chinen was as moved by
Evans' virtuosic sounds, but also
by the sight of his unusually sized
instrument: "Standing on the
concrete floor in semidarkness,
he played one long, unbroken
improvisation that defied the
conventional limitations of
the instrument, if not the laws
of physics."

Elizabeth Weisser Helgeson '03 has been named director of artistic planning and administration for the Lincoln Center Chamber Music Society. She previously served as president and violist for the Talea Ensemble.

Composer and pianist Courtney Bryan '04, recently named assistant professor of music at Tulane University, wrote an original score for The Bremen Town Band, an innovative puppet theater creation by artist Lake Simons that premiered in May 2017. The Miller Theatre at Columbia University commissioned the piece, described as an inspired spin on the classic Grimm fairy tale. Bryan led two performances featuring an all-star quintet of jazz musicians, including Kassa Overall '05 on drums. Her vocal/orchestral work Yet Unheard, with text by poet Sharan Strange, was performed at the 2017 Ojai Music Festival. The piece conjures the spirit of Sandra Bland, the Texas woman who died in police custody in 2015.







Ashley Fure '04 was recognized as a Pulitzer finalist for her work Bound to the Bow. The piece was called "the most arresting of the world premieres" at the 2016 New York Philharmonic Biennial by New Yorker critic Alex Ross. It appeared on a program by the Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra at Geffen Hall, later earning a spot on Ross' list of top 10 performances of 2016.

Zhiyi Wang '04 earned first prize at the 2016 Alfred Schnittke International Composition Competition for *Maple in Twilight*, a piece scored for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, percussion, and piano.

Songs of Struggle and Redemption, a collection of 22 songs and spirituals featuring bass-baritone **Dashon Burton '05** and pianist Nate Gumbs, was a top pick for the best classical recordings of 2016 by *New York Times* critic lames R. Oestreich.

Mezzo-soprano **Kathryn Leemhuis** '05 will join the faculty of Temple University's Boyer College of Music and Dance in fall 2017. Leemhuis has performed roles with the Dallas Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and Florentine Opera, among others.

Composer and elementary school music teacher **Michael Leibowitz '05** teamed up with the Jasper String Quartet for a project with his fourth grade students at the John H.
Taggart School in Philadelphia.

Together they wrote and performed a piece based on the book *The Real Story of the Three Little Pigs.*Leibowitz and the quartet—featuring Oberlin graduates violinist J. Freivogel '06, violist Sam Quintal '06, and cellist Rachel Henderson Freivogel '05—were funded by a Picasso Project Grant through Public Citizens for Children and Youth.

Colette Boudreaux '06 recently started the American Monarch Theatre Company, a nonprofit professional theater in Easton, Pa., that is focused on early education and community involvement.

Multigenre violinist Edwin Huizinga '06 returned from a tour of New Zealand with duo partner and guitarist William Coulter in time to perform with Apollo's Fire for its 25th anniversary in spring 2017. He'll bring pop-star energy to the Carmel Bach Festival this summer.

Conductor **Farkhad Khudyev '07** won third prize at the 8th annual Georg Solti International Competition. In the final round, Khudyev conducted the Frankfurt Radio Symphony in performance at the Alte Oper Frankfurt Grand Hall.

In the two seasons that percussionist **Jonathan Hepfer '07** has headed Los Angeles' Monday Evening Concerts, the events "have become a revelatory experiment in not underestimating his public—a

public that, like him, is open to astonishment," according to *The* Los Angeles Times. The final concert of the season was devoted to the music of Greek composer Georges Aperghis; Hepfer performed the solo percussion piece *Le Corps à* Corps—a performance deemed "a schizophrenic tour de force." Hepfer is on the faculty of CalArts; serves as artistic director of Echoi, a flexible chamber ensemble he co-founded in 2006 with Alice Teyssier '06; and is a member of the percussion ensemble red fish blue fish.

Violinist and composer Jeffrey Young '07 counts among his ventures the experimental music collective thingNY. They recently toured Mexico and Arizona and premiered their fourth collaboratively composed experimental opera, This Takes Place Close By, which ran for four shows at the Knockdown Center in Queens, N.Y. Young is also part of the trio Valerie Kuehne & the Wasps Nests, with which he released an album in 2015. In spring 2016, he spent two weeks in Stamsund, Norway, workshopping music for a puppet show by the Brooklyn-based group the Unitards. He also gave three performances in Zurich of music he had written for the theater ensemble stringsaTTached. This summer, he will perform with the World/Inferno Friendship Society on its 18-date U.S. tour.

Gwen Krosnick '08 returned to Oberlin as a visiting instructor of cello for the spring semester 2017. A sabbatical replacement for her former teacher, Darrett Adkins '91, Krosnick coordinated a master class by her father, renowned cellist loel Krosnick.

Award-winning jazz pianist **Sullivan Fortner '08** returned to campus for concerts twice during the 2016-17 academic year. He was joined in September by bassist Ameen Saleem and drummer Jeremy "Bean" Clemons; in April, he performed on the Oberlin Assemblies series with Grammy-winning jazz vocalist Cécile McLorin Salvant.

Pianist Anna Vasilyeva '08 was the featured guest in a faculty chamber music recital at the Manhattan School of Music in October 2016. Vasilyeva collaborated with bassoonist Roger Nye, flutist Robert Langevin, oboist Liang Wang of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and renowned saxophonist Paul Cohen in a program of works by Saint-Saëns, Richard Strauss, Cohen, Roesgen-Champion, and Loeffler. Vasilyeva leads a private studio in Manhattan and is a staff pianist at Mason Gross School for the Arts at Rutgers University.

Cellist **Steuart Pincombe '09, MM '10** and his wife **Michelle Micciche Pincombe '09** founded Music in
Familiar Spaces, bringing classical
music experiences to breweries,





cafes, bookstores, and homes across North America and Europe since 2015. The Pincombes spent an entire year traveling the country in a trailer, sharing programs such as Bach and Beer, an evening of J.S. Bach's Suites for Unaccompanied Cello, accompanied by beverages.

Percussionist Jennifer Torrence '09 of Oslo, Norway, returned to campus in fall 2016 for a pair of performances. She premiered What Noises Remain, her latest collaboration with TIMARA faculty member Peter Swendsen '99, a concert-length piece that combines percussion, electroacoustic sound, text, and video. She also presented a recital featuring modern solo works, including Homework by François Sarhan.

2010s

In February, Lafayette Carthon '10 was named a hometown hero by the City of Cleveland for his work as a pastor, music educator, and award-winning keyboardist. Honored at a Black History Month gospel concert at the Second Ebenezer Baptist Church, Carthon is program director of Carthon Conservatory and Senior Pastor of Faith Church of Glenville in Cleveland. In September 2016, Carthon released his Musicians Handbook, in which he shares his 25 years of experience with sacred and secular music.

The Knoxville Symphony Orchestra featured principal oboist Claire Chenette '10 in a performance of the Mozart Oboe Concerto on its April Chamber Classics series. Chenette also enjoys an active freelance career in Southern California, performing as a member of wild Up modern music collective, playing with her folk band Three Thirds, recording at Capitol Records and Warner Bros., and regularly appearing with the San Diego, Pacific, Long Beach, and New West symphonies and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

Soprano Stafford Hartman '10 performed as featured soloist in Poulenc's Stabat Mater with the Oberlin College Choir, Musical Union, the Oberlin Chamber Orchestra, and conductor Gregory Ristow '01. The program also featured Hartman in sacred text settings by Jean Langlais and Jean-Yves Daniel-Lesur.

Soprano **Summer Hassan '11** can be heard on the Los Angeles Opera's Grammy-winning 2016 recording of John Corigliano's *The Ghosts of Versailles*. She was awarded first place at the 2016 Metropolitan Opera National Competition Western Region Final. On stage, she performed as soloist in Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 with the Pasadena Symphony in April. This summer she is a Filene Young Artist with the Wolf Trap Opera, portraying Donna Fulvia in

Rossini's *La pietra del paragone*, as well as leading characters in *The Juniper Tree* by Philip Glass and Robert Moran and *Bastianello* by John Musto.

In spring 2016, **Aaron Klaus '11** presented a series of lecture-recitals throughout Baltimore and Washington, D.C., entitled Evolving Identities: Jewish Art Music for Trumpet. The program, which included music by Ernest Bloch, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (a premiere), and Paul Ben-Haim, explored how these composers and their contemporaries expressed a tangled web of Jewish and secular identities in their music.

Violist Amy Hess '12 joined the Chicago Lyric Opera Orchestra for the 2016-17 season and was awarded a section position with the Grant Park Orchestra in early 2017. She was formerly principal viola of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and a member of the Northwest Indiana Symphony Orchestra.

Pianist Moye Chen '12, a former student of Angela Cheng, will make his Decca Classics recording debut in 2018. The forthcoming CD couples a pair of composerpianists, Percy Grainger and Sergei Rachmaninoff. "As part of his prize, he was awarded the opportunity to perform with Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra in St.

Petersburg, where he played Prokofiev's Concerto No. 2 in December 2016. Chen recently was named a Kawai Artist and is pursuing a doctorate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Cellist Yin Xiong AD '12 was appointed to the cello section of the St. Louis Symphony at the start of the 2016-17 season. Xiong is enrolled in the accelerated BM/MM program at the Juilliard School, where she studies with Darrett Adkins '91 and Joel Krosnick. The chamber music advocate performed in the American debut of Toshio Hosokawa's Piano Trio.

In April, **Elaine Daiber '13** gave the premiere of Sky Macklay's *Glossolalia* for voice and piano at the Longy School of Music and at the Morgan Library in New York City. She also performed with internationally renowned soprano Dawn Upshaw and pianist **Kayo Iwama '83** on the program First Songs, with the Bard College Conservatory Graduate Vocal Arts Program. Daiber was named a 2017 Vocal Fellow for the Tanglewood Music Center.

Juliana Soltis MM '14 performed the Bach cello suites during a tour of Japan, recorded her first album on the Acis Productions label, and moved to Seattle. She was selected to open the Fringe series for emerging artists at the 2016 BRQ





Vantaa Festival in Finland. Joining her for three performances—including a special concert at the U.S. Embassy in Helsinki—was fellow Obie Justin Murphy-Mancini '13, MM '14 on harpsichord.

Violinist William Overcash '15
returned to Oberlin this spring for a performance and workshop with Benjamin Roidl-Ward as the new music duo Wolftone. They gave additional concerts throughout Texas, New York, Illinois, and northeast Ohio. Overcash completed his master's degree this spring at Rice University, where he performed in the Rice Piano Trio. He will study at the International Ensemble Modern Academy in Frankfurt, Germany, this fall.

Jeremy Reynolds '15 is press and publications manager at the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, where he works as a writer, musician, and radio host. Reynolds finished a master's degree in arts journalism in 2016 at Syracuse University. A former arts editor and staff writer at *The Oberlin Review*, he writes for ClevelandClassical and has published articles in Charleston's *Post and Courier, Syracuse New Times*, and *Symphony Magazine*, among other publications.

Daniel Nitsch '15 has been named executive director of the Bowdoin International Music Festival. Nitsch joined the staff in 2015 as director of admissions and operations, and

served as acting executive director for the 2016 summer season.

Bassoonist Benjamin Roidl-Ward '15 earned a master's degree at Rice University, where he organized the Shepherd School's contemporary music ensemble Hear and Now, was a founding member of the new music collective Loop38, and taught in the preparatory program. Roidl-Ward was one of six students selected through competitive auditions to participate in the 2017 New York Philharmonic Global Academy Fellowship Program.

Tenor Joshua Blue '16 was awarded first prize at the 2017 Lyndon Woodside Oratorio-Solo Competition, hosted annually by the Oratorio Society of New York at Carnegie Hall. Blue is pursuing a master's degree in vocal performance at the Juilliard School.

Matt DiBiase '17 and his band Frisson released a debut album early in 2017. "The major reason I do this is just because I'm inspired by the musicians around me," DiBiase says. He brought together fellow Oberlin jazz majors and alums for the project: Ashley Hale '16 on trumpet, Nathan Rice '18 on tenor sax, Russell Gelman-Sheehan '16 on guitar, Michael Orenstein '18 on piano, Eli Heath '19 on bass, Chase Kuesel '16 on drums, and Patrick Graney '17 on percussion.

Soprano Olivia Boen '17 was one of 12 students invited to perform in the annual scholarship competition of the Tuesday Musical Association, an Akron, Ohio-based arts organization. Boen won the overall grand prize of \$2,000, in addition to taking first prize among singers. Other Oberlin students honored included Prudence Poon '18 (first prize in piano), Yixuan Han '19 (third prize in piano), Mitchell Miller '17 (first prize in organ), and Vanessa Croome '17 (third prize in voice).

Violist Marlea Simpson '17 won an audition for a permanent spot in Chicago's Grant Park Music Festival and spent the summer of 2016 performing at Millennium Park. The Dallas native's first taste of life in Chicago came in the summer of 2014, when she played in Chicago Sinfonietta's Project Inclusion. While at Oberlin, Simpson earned an appointment as principal violist for the Chicago Sinfonietta, a professional orchestra dedicated to modeling and promoting diversity, inclusion, and racial and cultural equity in the arts. She managed her role there while completing her last two years in school.

Tenor **Tayte Mitchell '18** and baritone **Daewon Seo AD '18** were awarded top prizes at the 2016 S. Livingston Mather Scholarship Competition, hosted by the Singers' Club of Cleveland.

Soprano Victoria Ellington '18 won first prize at the George Shirley Vocal Competition, hosted by the University of Michigan in spring 2017. The double-degree student majoring in vocal performance and religious studies presented an excerpt from Harriet Tubman: When I Crossed that Line to Freedom, an opera by Nkeiru Okove '93. Baritone DeRon McDaniel '16 won the same award in 2016; McDaniel is now in the graduate program at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Jazz piano and economics major Michael Orenstein '18 won Outstanding Composition for Small Ensemble in *Downbeat Magazine*'s 40th Annual Student Music Awards in spring 2017. The winning piece was *Slow Coffee*, which Orenstein performed with his ensemble on the 2016 Danenberg Honors Recital and again as part of Oberlin's performance on the Kennedy Center's Conservatory Project in Washington, D.C.

Harpist **Anya Garipoli '19** was awarded first prize at the 2016 National Anne Adams Competition. The Jersey Shore native was one of 13 harpists to compete in the live competition round at DePauw University and was subsequently invited to perform on a recital featuring the prize winners at the 2016 American Harp Society Conference at Emory University.

Professor of Music Theory Arnie Cox published his book Music and Embodied Cognition: Listening, Moving, Feeling, and Thinking in September 2016. Taking a cognitive approach to musical meaning, Cox explores embodied experiences of hearing music as those that move us both consciously and unconsciously. In this pioneering study, which draws on neuroscience and music theory, phenomenology and cognitive science, Cox advances his theory of the "mimetic hypothesis," the notion that a large part of our experience and understanding of music involves an embodied imitation in the listener of bodily motions and

exertions that are involved in producing music. Cox's work stands to expand the range of phenomena that can be explained by the role of sensory, motor, and affective aspects of human experience and cognition.

Professor of Violin and Baroque Violin Marilyn McDonald performed with the Axelrod String Quartet on the Smithsonian Chamber Music Society's 40th season concert series on three occasions between November 2016 and March 2017.

Oberlin was well represented at the conference of the North American British Musical Studies Association, which convened at Syracuse University in August 2016. Musicology professors

Steven Plank and Charles McGuire
'91 presented papers, as did
Oberlin alumna Stacey Jocoy '92, who is a member of the musicology faculty at Texas Tech University. McGuire presented
"Angelica Catalani and the Speculative British Musical Festival in 1824." Plank's paper was "'See, even Night herself is here': Night, Purcell, and evocations of James II."

Kathy Abromeit, the conservatory's public services librarian, was appointed editor of the Music Library Association's Basic Manual Series. Abromeit is an author and editor of the forthcoming volume in the Basic Manual Series *Music Information Literacy: Ideas, Strategies, and Scenarios.* The Basic Manual Series is a comprehensive set of manuals designed to assist librarians in dealing with various aspects of music libraries.

Associate Professor of
Ethnomusicology and
Anthropology Jennifer Fraser also
serves as president of the
Midwest Chapter of the Society
for Ethnomusicology. She
organized the group's annual
conference at Oberlin in March.
Sessions covered themes of
community engagement, music
activism, and social justice.

Winner of the 2014 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, violin teacher Jinjoo Cho made her Carnegie Hall debut in June 2016, performing Joan Tower's String Force and works by Robert and Clara Schumann, Franz Waxman, John Corigliano, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich. New York Concert Review offered high praise: "Cho has it all—brilliant technique, musicality, passion, intelligence, flair, and an engaging stage presence."

Professor of Baroque Flute and Recorder Michael Lynn gave several presentations and performances on historical flutes during the academic year. He traveled to Portugal for the National Association for Musical Instruments, curating flute presentations for its 2016 Organological Congress. In November he went to Bucharest for a performance with II Gardalino on the Bucharest Early Music Festival and was interviewed on ClasicRadio about the history of the flute. In winter, he lectured at Florida International University on the history of the flute, accompanied by a live performance and a display of his private collection. He had articles published in the



Joanne Erwin Retires After 25 Years

The moment Joanne Erwin took up teaching music education at Oberlin in 1992, she also dove headfirst into a community outreach project.

A former student of legendary pedagogue Paul Roland at the University of Illinois, Erwin fashioned her nascent preparatory string program after the pioneering model her mentor had developed two decades earlier: Oberlin string students who took Erwin's pedagogy course would also assist in teaching the second- and third-graders who populated her string prep program. Once the

conservatory students completed the course, they could become paid teachers of string prep.

As for the youngsters bowing their first instruments? Many have gone on to perform in youth orchestras over the years, and 9 out of 10 continue to make music through high school or beyond. Erwin herself directed the Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra for 22 years. Prior to that, she led the Fort Worth Youth Orchestra for 17 years while playing cello in the Fort Worth Symphony.

Oberlin appeared on her radar when she sought relief from the big-city bustle for the sake of her

at that time, 'Is there a job in a small town with good music?" Erwin remembers thinking. And soon she discovered there was. As a professor of music education, she developed a generation of teachers. She also instilled in many a desire to use music to build bridges to other cultures; for many years, she was the driving force behind Oberlin's annual program in Panama, in which conservatory students would teach music to young people, who often went on to become members of that country's youth orchestras.

young daughter. "I asked myself

Now, after 25 years in Oberlin, Erwin plans to relocate with her husband to the East Coast, gleefully fulfilling a promise she made long ago to reunite with her daughter—and young grandchildren—upon retiring. She leaves her string prep program in the capable hands of Oberlin's Community Music School, and she takes with her fond memories of accomplished students young and not quite so young.

"This," Erwin says of her life in Oberlin, "has been absolute utopia to me." —Erich Burnett



Prizes in four international competitions—including the Chopin Competition in Warsaw—launched the career of a young Monique Duphil, who went on to perform in more than 50 countries throughout five continents. Still a formidable presence at the keyboard, Duphil stepped away from Oberlin in spring 2017 after 25 years on the piano faculty.

summer 2016 issue of *The Flutist Quarterly* and the October 2016 issue of *Flute Talk*.

The world premiere of a piece by Professor of Composition Stephen Hartke was performed by Oberlin Sinfonietta in October 2016, one of numerous works by Oberlin composition faculty to be performed on campus in the past year. Hartke's Willow Run takes its title from a dilapidated Michigan factory by the same name. At one time the largest single building in the world, it was used for the manufacture of B-24 Liberator aircraft during World War II and later became a crucial cog in the Detroit automotive industry. The premiere featured saxophonist Noah Getz '97; it was preceded by the 2016 composition Lightenings, by fellow faculty member Elizabeth Ogonek. The program was repeated the following week at the Cleveland Museum of Art. In September 2016, the Contemporary Music Ensemble performed works by

Hartke, Ogonek, and Assistant Professor Jesse Jones; a November recital by guest pianist Xak Bjerken included works by Hartke and Jones; and Hartke's 1996 piece Sons of Noah appeared on an April 2017 CME program. Also this year, the Boston Modern Orchestra Project's independent music label released Hartke's The Ascent of the Equestrian in a Balloon, which features the pieces Alvorada, A Brandenburg Autumn, Muse of the Missouri, and the title composition.

Allen Cadwallader, an American music theorist noted for his writings on tonal analysis, joined the Oberlin faculty in 1988. He earned a bachelor of arts from Western Maryland College and advanced degrees from the Eastman School of Music. His most influential theoretical work centers on the teaching of Schenkerian analysis. Cadwallader is the editor of Essays from the Fourth International Schenker Symposium, Volume 1 (2008) and

Robert Willoughby Endowed Scholarship Fund Established



There is hardly anyone alive who has done more to educate and inspire flutists than Robert Willoughby. Now an endowed flute scholarship has been created in his honor at Oberlin, where Willoughby taught for 36 years in addition to serving as assistant principal flute with The Cleveland Orchestra for nine years. After leaving Ohio in 1986, he taught for another decade at Peabody Conservatory and currently teaches at the Longy School of Music.

As a teacher, performer, mentor, and colleague, Willoughby is unsurpassed. He championed new music and the Baroque flute, and had a distinguished recording career. Even into his 90s, he remained active as a solo performer and chamber musician.

Perhaps Willoughby's greatest legacy is in the careers of his students, many of whom occupy positions in major orchestras throughout the country. Others have gone on to distinguished teaching careers in major conservatories and universities. Without a doubt, the world of flute playing would be significantly diminished without his contributions.

Willoughby recently celebrated his 95th birthday. To his delight, a large group of friends, colleagues, family members, and former students came together to establish the Robert Willoughby Endowed Scholarship Fund. The committee leading this effort includes Oberlin alumna Wendy Rolfe '74, faculty members Michael Lynn and Alexa Still, and Ohio State University professor Katherine Borst Jones. This permanent endowment will provide financial aid for flute students at Oberlin. Through it, Willoughby's incomparable legacy will live on in the artistry of future generations of flutists for many years to come. — Cathy Strauss '84

Trends in Schenkerian Research (1990). His articles have appeared in Music Theory Spectrum, Music Analysis, Intégral, Theory and Practice, and Journal of Music Theory. Cadwallader retired in spring 2017.

In April, Associate Professor of Jazz Trombone and Jazz Composition **Robin Eubanks** performed at the 2017 NEA Jazz Masters celebration at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. The concert, which can be viewed online, honored Dee Dee Bridgewater, Ira Gitler, Dave Holland, Dick Hyman, and Dr.

Lonnie Smith. Also included were performances by trumpeter Theo Croker '07 and percussionist Kassa Overall '05. The following month, Eubanks was honored with Philadelphia's University of the Arts Silver Star Outstanding Alumni Award at its 139th commencement ceremony.

The Marilyn Horne Museum and Exhibit Center opened at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford in May. Located in Horne's hometown, the 3,400-square-foot museum honors the famed mezzo-soprano's life and career. The

Faculty Notes

space is a renovated Art Deco building located in downtown Bradford's historic district. It houses a touchscreen jukebox of Horne's recordings, a short biographical film, and a theater covered in murals to appear like a miniature version of the Baroque opera house Teatro La Fenice in Venice, where Horne sang the title role of Rossini's Tancredi in 1981. Many features in the museum are interactive: One station teaches visitors about vocal music and opera; another allows them to stage an opera and email their creation to themselves or a friend. Horne, Oberlin's distinguished visiting professor of singing, has bequeathed her archives and memorabilia to the museum.

Deborah Campana, head of the conservatory library, presented the paper "Free in the Ether: Digital Scores for Music Research" at the national meeting of the American Musicological Society, held in Vancouver in November 2016.

Timothy Weiss, director of Oberlin's Division of Contemporary Music, has recently been appointed music director of the Arctic Philharmonic Sinfonietta, an ensemble that plays repertoire from the early 20th century to the present day. He will conduct the ensemble in five concert cycles each year in Bodø, Norway.

September 2016 saw the U.S. premiere of a concert-length work for percussion, electroacoustic sound, and video by TIMARA professor Peter Swendsen '99. What Noises Remain, co-created with Jennifer Torrence '09, is the result of Swendsen's researchleave work and was a major undertaking over three years. The hour-long staged work, inspired by Shakespeare's The Tempest, was supported by grants from a variety of entities in Norway and received its European premiere in Oslo in January 2016. Additional performances are being

scheduled for the 2017-2018 concert season.

Professor of Singing Lorraine Manz started and sponsors Oberlin's first student chapter of the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Ten student members joined in fall 2016.

Piano professor **Alvin Chow** performed and gave master classes in Austria in August 2016. He presented a recital with his twin brother and piano duo partner Alan Chow at the Mozarthaus in Vienna and appeared as soloist with him in Mozart's Double Piano Concerto with the Classical Music Festival Orchestra at the Esterhazy

Palace in Eisenstadt. The master classes were conducted as part of the Classical Music Festival held at the Haydn Conservatory.

Soprano and Oberlin voice faculty Kendra Colton '83 has been singing Bach cantatas in Boston on a weekly basis for more than 20 years with oboist Peggy Pearson and Emmanuel Music. Colton has now released two self-produced CDs, available on CD Baby. They are part of a long-term project to record soprano and double reed arias and duets from Bach's 200 sacred cantatas. The first CD, released in spring 2016, featured cantatas BWV 202, 84, and 32. She followed with a fall 2016

companion release of seven soprano arias.

Lisa Goode Crawford's

scholarship has resulted in the publication of an annotated critical edition of the opera Pirrhus, written by Joseph-Nicolas-Pancrace Royer in 1730. The bilingual French and English edition was published by the Centre de musique baroque de Versailles. Early Music magazine wrote: "With exceptional thoroughness and clarity, she discusses the work's history and reception, the state of the sources, matters of performance, and editorial procedure." Crawford is an emerita professor of harpsichord.

IN MEMORIAM



Martha Stacy

Martha Stacy, a longtime associate professor of piano pedagogy at Oberlin Conservatory, played a leading role in the introduction of Suzuki method training to campus over a career that spanned from 1971 to 1993.

Stacy died February 16, 2017, at age 87.

In 1972—Stacy's first full year at Oberlin—she established a children's Suzuki program for piano that was the only one of its kind in northeast Ohio, making Stacy and her colleagues destination teachers among parents throughout the region.

The Suzuki method, developed in the mid-20th century by

Japanese violinist Shinichi Suzuki, grew out of the principle that music can be learned in much the same way that native language is learned. The method was introduced to Oberlin in 1958; soon after, the conservatory became a pioneer in teaching Suzuki method for violin.

Stacy devoted a 1978
sabbatical to studying with
Suzuki and Haruko Kataoka in
Matsumoto, Japan. She became a
consultant and teacher-trainer for
the Suzuki Association of the
Americas, and for many years she
presented on the topic at
conferences of the Music
Teachers National Association
and other groups.

Joanne Erwin joined the music education faculty at Oberlin in 1992—one year before Stacy's retirement. She moved into the same neighborhood, and the two became close friends.

"She was so caring and so gracious, and she welcomed me as a new female faculty member, and that meant a lot to me," says Erwin, who retired from Oberlin this spring after a 25-year career. "Our areas of teaching were very similar, so I appreciated her

support and her guidance in learning Oberlin's background with Suzuki."

Born in Arkansas, Stacy earned bachelor of music education and master of music degrees from Louisiana State University. She taught piano in Dallas schools before transitioning to college teaching with stints at Berea College in Kentucky, the University of Kansas, and Kent State University. From an early age, "I knew I was a teacher, not a performer," she told The Oberlin Observer upon her retirement in 1993. At Oberlin, she also held various leadership roles in the honorary music society Pi Kappa Lambda.

A longtime member of First Church of Oberlin, Stacy volunteered for Meals on Wheels and the Oberlin Public Library, and she enjoyed walking, reading, and travel. Since 2002, she was a resident of Kendal at Oberlin, where she counted among her friends Howard Hatton, a former voice professor at the conservatory. Hatton, who turns 100 this year, sang The Lord's Prayer at Stacy's memorial service at First Church. —Erich Burnett













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