Summer 2018

Pro Musica Newsletter, Summer 2018

BGSU College of Musical Arts

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Join us in welcoming Dr. Brittany Lasch and Dr. Richard Schnipke—the most recent additions to the College of Musical Arts esteemed faculty.

Dr. Brittany Lasch was originally selected to fill the one-year trombone position. After a national search this past year, she was the overwhelming choice of the committee and in April, was officially named professor of trombone instruction at BGSU.

Although Lasch has a highly successful career as a trombonist, her earliest musical experience came from the guitar. When she was only five-years old her uncle, a professional guitarist, presented her with her first musical instrument. He helped develop her beginning musical skills. In 4th grade she began violin lessons, but once she selected the trombone in 5th grade, her fate was sealed.

While receiving degrees from Manhattan School of Music, Yale and Boston universities, Lasch maintained an active performance schedule. She has won several national competitions and has soloed with the U.S. Army Band, the Queens Symphony and the National Repertory Orchestra among others. Additionally, she has performed with numerous orchestras throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Most recently, she was a winner of the prestigious Astral Artist’s 2017 National Auditions resulting in a series of solo recitals in and around Philadelphia. She is also the new principal trombonist for Michigan Opera Theatre in Detroit.

In addition to Lasch’s active performance schedule, she is deeply committed to education. Before coming to BGSU she maintained a fulltime private studio in Massachusetts. She was especially fond of her experience with beginners. Lasch commented, “Learning how to not only succinctly explain music and the trombone to beginners but also keep them engaged, is something that I still work on at all levels.” She also enjoys the fact that some of her former students are now her colleagues and she has had the opportunity to perform with them. In addition to her private teaching, she has presented master classes at Louisiana State University, Towson University and the Boston University’s Tanglewood Institute.

After a year at BGSU, Lasch is very excited about the opportunity of working long term with her students. Among other projects, she will be leading the BGSU Trombone Ensemble at the Midwest Trombone Euphonium and Tuba conference in November.

This past year has been so full for Lasch that she has not had much time to explore the area beyond BGSU. However, an avid runner, she was happy to complete her first full marathon in Toledo’s Glass City Marathon.

Pro Musica supports the College of Musical Arts by inviting the participation of alumni, friends, parents and the Bowling Green community in a wide variety of musical events and by providing financial support for music students.
Dr. Richard Schnipke is no stranger to the CMA as he initially entered the college as a freshman saxophone major.

At the suggestion of his resident advisor, he tried out for the University Men’s Chorus directed by then longtime choral director and faculty emeritus, Richard D. Mathey. Through this experience, he discovered a new passion changing his major to vocal education. He returns full circle as director of the chorus, which so greatly impacted his musical life.

After completing his bachelor's degree at BGSU, Schnipke had a very successful career teaching in Ohio public schools. He continued his studies at Ohio State University receiving both his master’s and a doctorate from the institution. Through his work at OSU, he was later invited to apply for a position in the choral department and spent the next four years directing the Women's Glee Club, teaching choral methods, vocal pedagogy and supervising student teachers. Schnipke would go on to become the director of choral activities at Xavier University. While at XU, his Edgecliff Vocal Ensemble performed at the American Musicological Society’s International Conference in Vancouver. In addition, Schnipke has also presented at conferences of the National Association for Music Education, the American Choral Directors Association and the Ohio Music Education Association on the incorporation of Dalcroze Eurhythmics in the choral rehearsal.

When Schnipke learned of the opening in the choral department at the college, it seemed like fate. Winning the position has indeed brought him “full circle.” BGSU is where he began his passion for singing in choirs and he is thrilled to return to those roots—educating and inspiring future vocalists.

The Pro Musica Board said good bye to the following board members at the 2018 Spring meeting: Dr. Christopher Dietz (vice president), Thomas Headley, Paul Hoverman, Dr. Thomas Rosenkranz and Karol Spencer (former vice president and president).

Dietz will be on leave next year and Rosenkranz has accepted a position as chair of the piano department at the University of Kansas City. We wish him well in his new journey.

Longtime members Headley and Hoverman will be enjoying time with their families and retirement.

Karol Spencer was honored for her long-time service to Pro Musica and as an inspiration to the many CMA students she has influenced during her time on the board. Her 18 years of service to Pro Music includes: 10 years as president, 3 years as an executive committee member and vice president and 4 years on the board! Her steadfast love and passion for Pro Musica, and of the students in the college, is legendary. It will be difficult to replace any of these individuals, but Karol’s smiling face and infectious joy of life will be sorely missed by all the board.

The many "faces" of Karol Spencer

We Will Miss You!

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Student Essays

Yimin Wu

Match Making Concert 2018
Emerging Composers X Emerging Performers
Radio Television Hong Kong
Hong Kong
April 4 and 6, 2018

Nine composers participated in the program this year, with each of them composing for a certain combination of instruments, including the option for Chinese instruments. My composition performed on the concert was written for tenor and piano, *The Peaceful Stars*. Composers are required to take part in two rehearsals and were interviewed during the concert. This was my first time being interviewed for a radio program. The two MCs asked some intriguing questions, such as “why I chose a male voice for a female poet in the piece?” I later learned that the MC was also a composer herself.

It was a nice process to work with talented musicians and I was excited to meet some of the established composers from Hong Kong. During the rehearsals, two composers from the Hong Kong Composers’ Guild (HKCG) assisted young composers, which allowed me to build new connections. There were difficulties in the rehearsal process as some of the performers were not use to the notation in one of the songs I presented. The composers from HKCG patiently guided the performers and gave me some suggestions in using more effective communications with performers during rehearsals.

Michelle Tamburo

ACDA Regional Conference
Chicago
February 14-17, 2018

Each year the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) holds a conference to provide a professional development opportunity to choral directors nationwide. This year the Central and North Central divisions combined their conferences and held it in Chicago. The location of this conference was between the Fairfield Suites and the Swissötel, with performances being held at the Harris Theater near Millennium Park.

The conference provided different informational sessions in teaching different techniques, reading sessions to sing new music suggested by other choir directors and featured concert sessions.

There were two different sessions I perceive to have been the most valuable to my career. The first one focused on how to recruit new members into your choir. Anywhere from simply learning your student’s friend’s names as they pass you in the hallway or reaching out to study halls during your class time and talking to the students about joining. My favorite method was from a teacher who bought pizzas, took them into the cafeteria and told the non-choral students if they could match pitch they got a free piece. I plan to apply most, if not all of these methods when I have my own choir. Another session I found to be helpful was called “Game of Tones.” Dr. Zachary Durlam, from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, taught multiple strategies and warms-up/exercises to achieve a particular tone color you are looking for from students in your own choral program. He focused on breath support, focusing the tone, resonance, individual vowel shapes and exploring different weights and colors.
2018 Douglas Wayland Chamber Music Competition

The 11th annual Douglas Wayland Chamber Music Competition was held on March 24–25 in Bryan Recital Hall. Thirteen undergraduate and graduation chamber ensembles performed in this year’s competition.

Winner of the graduate division was the trio Landlocked Percussion, with Autumn Trio winning the undergraduate division. Landlocked is comprised of percussionists Emanuel Bowman, Jerry Emmons and Nicholas Fox. Members of the Autumn Trio are Gretchen Hill, clarinet; Ling Na Kao, violin, and Varissara Vatcharanukul piano.

Second place was awarded to the following ensembles. Undergraduate Division—The Fifth Circle Reed Quintet with Ava Wirth, oboe; Kendra Sachs, clarinet; Jennifer Bouck, bass clarinet; Nicole Grimone, bassoon, and Andrew Hosler, saxophone.

Graduate Division – Segetem Quartet with Soren Hamm, soprano saxophone; Claire Salli, alto saxophone; Jonathan Kierspe, tenor saxophone, and Piyaphon Asawakarnjanakit, baritone saxophone.

1. Landlocked Percussion — Emanuel Bowman, Jerry Emmons and Nicholas Fox
2. Autumn Trio – Ling Na Kao, Gretchen Hill and Varissara Vatcharanukul
3. Fifth Circle Reed Quintet – Ava Wirth, Kendra Sachs, Andrew Hosler, Jennifer Bouck and Nicole Grimone
4. Segetem Quartet – Soren Hamm, Claire Salli, Jonathan Kierspe and Piyaphon Asawakarnjanakit

Photos provided by David Dupont, founder of BG Independent News. His frequent writing on the arts can be read at bgindependentmedia.org.
With a better understanding of how the muscles around my mouth support reed vibrations, I have more stability in my tone production and can also share this information about shape, musculature and muscle activation with my students and classmates. I discovered that problems in sound stability and quality I had previously assigned to air flow might actually be caused by a variable and unstable embouchure. The information about my embouchure also included adjusting my breathing to opening my jaw downward rather than lifting my top lip. This provides more stability to the onset of sound and matches the natural way we normally breathe.

I also received detailed instruction on orchestral excerpts and auditions from Dallas Symphony principle, Gregory Raden. He addressed audition materials from standard works of Mendelssohn, Stravinsky, Beethoven and Ravel, including guidelines on articulation, dynamics, phrasing, tempo and more. Instruction covered B-flat and E-flat clarinet parts and practice and audition strategies for principle and second clarinet positions.

Chesky, from the Texas Center for Performing Arts Wellness, shared research from the center—particularly research on the benefits of playing with a neckstrap. We discussed how the note referred to as “open G” is the most stressful on our hands due to how our grip on other notes helps support the strain on our thumb. This news surprised many clarinetists (myself included) because it is one of the easiest notes to remember and one of the first notes clarinetists learn. He also discussed the difficulties of sharing well-being findings and implementing changes to create healthier performers. The classical music world can be rather traditional and sometimes researchers find it difficult to convince judges, instructors or performers to adapt to healthier equipment or strategies when they do not match norms in the field. After hearing him explain the divide between research and dissemination of findings, I found that my own research interests align much more with epidemiology and policy enacting than I previously realized.

I also met several of the graduate student clarinet players during this visit. In addition to simply gaining new clarinet friends, we discussed teaching materials and strategies, audition strategies and experiences, clarinet equipment and which clarinet studios and instructors around the country I might benefit from working with. One of the clarinetists gave my name to a small chamber music festival for which she is unavailable so I have the potential to be hired over the summer.

In addition, my trip overlapped with several concerts. I saw performances by the Wind Symphony and Symphonic Band during their tribute concerts to retiring Professors Scott, Brian Bowman, and Scharnberg. Pieces included an arrangement of clarinet standard, Molly on the Shore and an arranged version of a Mozart aria for clarinet, horn and euphonium. I also attended the Denton Arts and Jazz Festival, seeing multiple jazz performances across two days.

This trip was a wonderful opportunity and I am so excited to apply everything I have learned over my summer practice and to share all this information with the Bowling Green community.