

Winter 2017

Pro Musica Newsletter, Winter 2017-2018

Bowling Green State University. College of Musical Arts

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The Pro Musician

Winter 2017-2018

Promoting Musical Excellence

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.

Charles Saenz 2017 Pro Musica Faculty/Staff Award for Exceptional Service to Students



Photo by Michiko Saiki.
Courtesy of Beauport Classical.

Reading the letters nominating **Charles Saenz** for Pro Musica's Outstanding Faculty Award, you can hear echoes of what the professor of trumpet learned from his father.

Saenz' father, Ralph, started his son on trumpet in fourth grade, a year earlier than usual. "What I remember from him was we focused a lot on fundamentals of trumpet playing," Professor Saenz said recently.

Graduate student Edmund Gunther wrote in his letter of nomination: "Professor Saenz has started a Trumpet Warm-Up and Fundamentals class every morning at 8 a.m. This class, which is led by either Saenz or a teaching assistant, is in my opinion the most important hour of the day for the trumpet studio. Whether I am leading the class or in attendance, I learn something new every time and it makes me a better musician."

Saenz studied with his father all the way through high school. While such an arrangement is often a recipe for failure, in this instance it worked. "He was very good at giving me space and trying to bring in a variety of learning experiences," Saenz said.

From a young age, Ralph Saenz encouraged his son to be flexible. Saenz started working as a professional in Tex Mex and dance bands when he was 12. He joined his father in an area big band, playing fourth trumpet and learning the swing band repertoire. If his father played lead in the pit for a musical, his son was playing third.

As a result, Saenz says he's comfortable playing a recital or in a jazz quartet, or with a trumpet section in a symphony, an opera orchestra or a big band, whether lead or solo.

Students in the trumpet studio are called on to fill roles in the Falcon Marching Band, the Bowling Green Philharmonia, the wind ensembles, chamber ensembles including the Graduate Brass Quintet, and jazz bands, large and small.

"I learned from a very young age to be flexible," he said. "I tell my student the modern day trumpet player has to be flexible." Players have their own strengths and specialties "but it's very valuable to be willing to stretch more than most musicians are. Those are things I try to instill in my students if they want to forge a career in music."

Student Enrico Solito said Saenz gives each student personal attention, and helps them land jobs and auditions. Saenz knows Solito is interested in military bands, so he makes sure he's aware whenever an audition notice is posted.

Saenz actually planned to follow his father's footsteps and become a band director. Then in 1994 when he was a junior at New Mexico State University, Saenz played Charles Chaynes' *Concerto for*

Trumpet in the International Trumpet Guild Solo Competition. He came away with first prize and a dream.

Saenz' winning performance in the college competition set the trajectory for his career. After winning, he realized he wanted to be a performer and college professor. That meant putting "blinders on," and concentrating on performance and committing to getting a graduate degree. "You start seeing little benchmarks along the way. It kind of propelled my career in a direction that led here."

Saenz has been a professor of trumpet at Bowling Green State University for 16 years. During that time he's remained an active performer. He's played with the Toledo Jazz Orchestra, the Toledo Symphony and Michigan Opera Theater. For the past six years, he's been a member of the Tower Brass Quintet, an ensemble that draws on his mastery of multiple styles.

But he still comes back to the Chaynes' *Concerto*. It serves as the centerpiece for his first CD, *Eloquentia*, which was released in December 2015, by Beauport Classical. The concerto, Saenz said, has been "a signature piece" that he has been studying and performing for more than 20 years. "I'll put it away for a few years and then bring it back and perform it when I'm at a different point in my playing." He'll find some things easier, and other aspects just as difficult. "It really challenges, in different ways, my physical abilities on the instrument," he said. "But along with that it's very challenging harmonically. His language is one that takes time to understand."

In recording the CD he kept his students in mind. Whether planning a recital or a CD "I play pieces that students may want to perform in the next semester or so," he said. "I would hope some of my students who have listened to the CD might say 'I'm really interested in those pieces.'"

The recording of the Chaynes *Concerto* with piano, played by his frequent collaborator and BGSU colleague Dr. Solungga Liu, serves a pedagogical purpose as well as an artistic one. Students, Saenz said, study and perform the piece with piano, not full orchestra. They will ask Saenz if a recording exists with that instrumentation. Now he can direct them to *Eloquentia*.

Enscorced at BGSU, Saenz is seeing his career come full circle. In fall 2015, one of his graduate students, Marcus Flores, won the International Trumpet Guild Solo Competition. Jonathan Britt was a finalist in 2016 and Bryn Powell was a finalist in 2017.

Saenz recalls that competition "was very important for me because it exposed me to a larger community within the trumpet world. I felt it was very important helping shape my career."

Bernice Schwartz, a fellow member of the Tower Brass and an adjunct instructor in music education, said, having one student perform so well at that level, is notable. To have such sustained success is a tribute to Saenz' dedication as a teacher.

In her nomination she wrote: "During his time here, I have watched as the trumpet studio has grown in quantity and quality. Each year, more and more trumpet students, both undergraduate and graduate level are drawn to BGSU because of the reputation Charles has achieved.

He is extremely attentive to every student. He truly believes that every student can succeed and he works hard to find the strength of each student and then build on that strength so the student becomes more confident. As a result, when one sees his students perform, they are all about the music making, with nerves of steel."

— David Dupont

(David Dupont is a founder of *BG Independent News*. His frequent writing on the arts at BGSU and beyond can be read at bgindependentmedia.org)

Student Essays



Hannah Greer in the stands between performances at Lucas Oil Stadium. You can see in the background the students of Broken Arrow High School preparing to take the field.

Hannah Greer

Bands of America National Championship Competition
Indianapolis
November 11, 2017

The Bands of America Grand National Championship was held in Lucas Oil Stadium, which is the stadium that also hosts the Drum Corps International Competition and is the only stadium in the world that was built with acoustics in mind. It is a huge venue, probably the finest stadium any of the performing high schools had ever been in, and the audience was so large that Lucas Oil Stadium was half-filled!

While attending this competition I got to briefly talk to Greg Bimm, the band director at Marian Catholic High School from Chicago. Marian Catholic was one of the competing bands and Bimm is one of my idols in the profession. It was valuable for me to talk to him about his students and the progress they've made this year not only because I got to hear new pedagogical approaches but also because it was so cool to see that even Greg Bimm, one of the best educators in the country, is just a normal teacher trying to educate his kids. It made me feel like the level of greatness he has achieved in his career isn't so inaccessible for me.

Marian Catholic's show was centered around the theme of "Nature vs. Machine" and so their song selection featured *The Great Locomotive Chase* by Robert W Smith and a piece called *Liminal* by John Mackey. Both pieces were originally written for symphonic band, but were specifically arranged for this ensemble. Union High School in Oklahoma had a show centered around anger with the "Dies Irae" from the Verdi *Requiem* as one of its prominently featured arrangements. There were 10 other high schools performing and it was great to see the type of repertoire each band program picked (often from large orchestral works or operas) and how these pieces were connected to separate storylines.

BOA Grand Nationals is such a wonderful event for career connections and professional development because you literally have the best band programs and educators in the country all in one place, performing at such a high level and pushing each other to reach the next level. The audience is made up of other educators and musicians as well, so it was a wonderful way for me to meet and connect with music educators who have the same interests, passions and goals as I do. Not only did I get to engage in discussion that opened my scope of what is possible for a high school marching band, but I also got to experience via the performances of these bands just how advanced our students can be if we can equip them with the right instruction and information. I can say without a doubt that this was a life-changing experience for me and I am so thankful to Pro Musica for sponsoring my trip to this competition.

Other News

Douglas Wayland Chamber Music Competition

The 11th annual **Douglas Wayland Chamber Music Competition** on March 24–25, 2018 in Bryan Recital Hall.

Pro Musica provided the event's reception in the Kennedy Green Room following the finals. The competition honors Wayland's love of chamber music and his contribution to the college.

Each year, the competition costs approximately \$5,000. An endowment has been established for the annual event.

If interested in contributing to this cause, please contact Kristina Devine at (419) 372-9213 or kmdevin@bgsu.edu.

Student Performances at the Way and the Wood County Public Libraries

Watch for information on the spring chamber

music concerts at both the Wood County Public Library in Bowling Green and the Way Library in Perrysburg.

Each concert will feature CMA students who received Pro Musica Travel Grants this past year.

Student Grant Recipients Caleb Burkhardt and Christopher Murphy attend the Fifth Jean-Marie Londeix International Saxophone Competition in Thailand



Christopher Murphy at the College of Music, at Mahidol University in Salaya, Thailand

Christopher Murphy

The Fifth Jean-Marie Londeix International Saxophone Competition
Mahidol University
Salaya, Thailand
July 9-22, 2017

This past summer I attended the Fifth International Jean-Marie Londeix Saxophone Competition with the support of Pro Musica. The competition was held at Mahidol University, which is located near central Bangkok. It is difficult to describe all the benefits from attending this event, but I will do my best.

There were easily 60 international saxophonists that I was surrounded by for 2.5 weeks of my stay in Thailand. This was one of the most beneficial aspects of the competition, as I consider many of these people my personal friends. We shared ideas about saxophone, music, politics and life through our adventures around Bangkok and constant immersion in a new culture. I was fortunate to be able to participate in Buddhist rituals at many different temples and observe what it is like to live a typical life in Thailand. The culture in Thailand was incredible. Besides the food, which was unbelievable, the architecture, music and art that I was exposed to certainly

changed my life. The people in Thailand were very kind to all of the competitors, and were excited to share what their life experience was like. Another important aspect of this competition was meeting the saxophone professors on the jury. After the first round of the competition, all of the competitors were invited to speak to the jury about their performance and get constructive feedback. It is a rare opportunity to be able to play for some of the U.S. and Europe's greatest saxophone teachers. Meeting Jean-Marie Londeix was unforgettable, and it would be difficult to have another opportunity to do so.



From left to right: Caleb Burkhardt and Jean-Marie Londeix after the final concert of the Fifth JMLICS in Salaya, Thailand.

Caleb Burkhardt

The Fifth Jean-Marie Londeix International Saxophone Competition
Mahidol University
Salaya, Thailand
July 9-22, 2017

Thanks to Pro Musica, I had the wonderful opportunity of spending nearly a month in Thailand competing in the Fifth Jean-Marie Londeix International Saxophone Competition.

In the competition I performed two etudes by Sigfrid Karg-Elert and a piece titled *Jungle* by Christian Lauba. I was able to receive excellent feedback from the panel of international judges. Nearly 70

saxophonists from around the world competed, and I was able to make many new connections with some of the world's best young saxophonists.

Unexpectedly, upon finishing the competition, I formed a trio with two other saxophonists, Nitchan Pitayathorn and Sergio Eslava, and was able to perform a concert at the Yamaha showroom in downtown Bangkok.

This was a very special experience, since Nitchan is from Thailand, Sergio is from Spain and I am from the United States. We performed a program titled "United: A Gathering of Musicians from Europe, Asia, and America" in which we performed the music of Piazzolla, Singlee and Nagao.

Outside of musical activities, I had lots of time to take in the culture of Thailand. We visited the market, which was bustling with local shoppers and tourists taking in the sights and smells of Thailand. I tasted so many interesting dishes from "The World's Best Pad Thai" in a sit down restaurant to a deep fried scorpion from a street vendor.

I had a great experience and learned about the world and about the saxophone. I am deeply grateful for the support of Pro Musica in helping me attend this event.

Estate Gifts to Pro Musica

Pro Musica is an organization dedicated to supporting travel grants/awards to help students experience musical growth opportunities outside of the traditional classroom.

Every dollar of your membership fee goes to support student grants. Please consider learning more about making an estate gift to Pro Musica

Contact Kristina Devine, director of development, BGSU Foundation, at 419-372-9213 for a confidential conversation about how easy it is to continue your support of future students through Pro Musica.

Francesca Leo

National Flute Association
Convention Internship
Minneapolis
August 8-14, 2017

This past May, I applied for an internship position with the National Flute Association at the 2017 Convention in Minneapolis.

The National Flute Association is the world's largest flute organization, and I have been a student member for four years. I have always admired everything the NFA does for flutists and how it is cultivating a community of flutists around the world. It hosts annual conventions, which feature a variety of performances, master classes, competitions, workshops, lectures and a full exhibition hall featuring every flute manufacturing company as well as many music publishing companies.

Two years ago, the NFA started an internship program that seeks out collegiate interns to work for its annual conventions. The application process required a resume, a personal

statement of the applicant's interest in this internship and why the internship would benefit them professionally, a letter of recommendation from my private teacher (Dr. Conor Nelson) and a skype interview providing their application had passed the first round of reviews. The NFA selects a total of 12 equipment interns each year to work directly with the NFA equipment manager, Kim Goodman, and I knew that it would be an incredible experience if I were to receive this internship position. I have held an internship at Muramatsu America (a flute manufacturing and repair company) the past two summers, but do not usually attend the NFA conventions to exhibit with them. This year, my boss at Muramatsu (Ervin Monroe, president of Muramatsu America and former principal flutist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra) was being honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Gala Awards Dinner at the convention. I wanted desperately to be there to see him accept this award, and many of my all-time favorite flutists were also scheduled to perform at this convention. I knew I could not miss it, so I was determined to find a way to attend. When I received the email in late June

that I had been accepted as one of 12 interns for the 2017 NFA Convention, I was beyond excited!

My internship at the 2017 National Flute Association Convention provided an endless amount of networking opportunities for me. I met so many student flutists, professional flutists, flute professors and board members of the National Flute Association that I wish to strengthen my relationships with in the future. I had the opportunity to stage manage for flute superstars such as Ian Clarke, Susan Milan, William Bennett, Denis Bouriakov, Ervin Monroe, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra flute section and BGSU's very own Joel Tse who performed in the William Bennett birthday celebration concert on Saturday, August 12!



A group shot of the equipment interns during the 2017 National Flute Association Convention on a meet-and-greet tour with exhibitors. In this photo, our group stopped to speak with Robert Johnson from Flute Specialists, Inc. to find out what it takes to manage a flute business. From left to right: Hayden Stephenson, Tiffany Piper, Kim Goodman, Robert Johnson, Maria Vizcarra, Kelli Bower, Francesca Leo, Miah Bloom and Travis Mercado.

I was also able to attend many workshops when I was not scheduled to work, and I had the opportunity to attend a baroque flute master class by Jed Wentz, who is one of the leading baroque flutists in this era. I have been a very big fan of his for many years, and being able to meet him and hear him play and teach in person was an amazing experience for me. It also helped me to better understand some of the musical concepts I had heard while listening to his recordings!



Zachary Green
Percussive Arts Society
International Convention
Indianapolis
November 9-12, 2017

The Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) is an event that is set often in Indianapolis, but also occasionally in Texas. Luckily enough for me the event this year was in Indianapolis at the Indianapolis Convention Center. I knew this in advance, however the location was nothing like I imagined in my head. The convention center was much larger, and more grandiose than I had previously imagined. PASIC however did not use the whole convention center it was split with the Bands of America Grand National Championships. This was an event I was very familiar with as I have participated in it four times during high school.

I was quickly overwhelmed by the number of events, and often had a hard time choosing between one event or another. Four events really stood out to me. These events were: Sound Off!, The Eastman Percussion Ensemble, So Percussion and the expo hall.

"Sound off!" was a presentation by Daniel Glass. In this presentation Daniel Glass and a small ensemble of percussionists performed recreations of silent era film music. In addition to the performance Daniel Glass explained the history of these pieces, and explained and dem-

I was also able to meet Denis Bouriakov, one of my favorite flutists in the world. He is currently an international soloist and the principal flutist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, so it was such an honor to be able to hear him perform live! In addition, I took a private lesson with Dr. Charlotte Daniel during the convention. Daniel is a former student of Dr. Nelson's and is currently the professor at Baylor University, which happens to be one of my prospective grad school options.

Another reason I wanted to apply for this internship was to meet board members of the National Flute Association in hopes of someday becoming a board member myself. I am currently a board member of the Southeast Michigan Flute Association, and I absolutely love the kind of work we do. Becoming more involved with the National Flute Association in the future is something I am very interested in, and through my internship I was able to meet and work directly with NFA board members. I intend to apply for this internship again next year, and continue to build these connections with members of the board.

This experience also gave me the opportunity to develop many new friendships that will last my entire life. I became very close with a number of my fellow interns. I met flutists I have been following

onstrated the instruments. I was aware of this tradition however I've never seen a live demonstration, and am glad I received the opportunity. Eastman is arguably the most important college percussion ensemble, and their director Michael Burritt is also very well respected in the field. Programs were gone very quickly so I did not get a chance to see one, however, there were several brand new or fairly new pieces for percussion ensemble. I valued this performance because as a percussionist in a percussion ensemble it gave me some reference on what I should be aiming for.

So Percussion is a very well known percussion quartet. It has premiered many pieces for percussion ensemble from many recognizable composers such as Steve Reich and Steven Mackey. It performed Steve Reich's *Mallet Quartet*, which was beyond words. SP also performed a collection of pieces called *Amid The Noise*. This was very lengthy but it featured community participation, and featured a work called *Extremes*, which I am very fond of.

The final event was the expo hall—a large room in which several percussion vendors were selling and demonstrating their latest equipment. I saw several state of the art things including Mallet Techs new Omega Vibe and Pearls Mallet Station.

In addition to the event at PASIC, I also got to see Bowling Green State University's Falcon Marching Band perform its show at the Bands of America Grand National Championships. The FMB was not competing as the competition is for high schools, but it was performing in exhibition which means it was a featured performance of the evening. I have seen these performances in the past, but it was a different kind of experience to watch a group that I have strong feelings towards, and are part of an institution I consider part of my identity.

on Instagram for many years in person at this convention and we were able to talk about things such as professional development via social media and our own professional plans once we graduate from school. In addition, I was able to catch up with many old friends I have met at various summer festivals and flute events who also happened to be attending. I even ran into BGSU flute students and graduates who were in attendance, including Tierney McClure, Bryana Riedlinger, Paul Mizzi, Taylor Francis, Chappy Gibb, Rachel Woolfe, Kim Lewis and Laura Pillman!

I had an amazing time interning at the 2017 National Flute Association Convention, and it was truly an experience that I will never forget. I am looking forward to furthering my involvement with the National Flute Association in the future, and I want to thank Pro Musica so much for helping to fund my travels to this convention!

Pro Musica is truly a wonderful organization and has helped me to attend so many music festivals and competitions in the past that I may not have been able to afford otherwise. I truly appreciate their contributions and am really looking forward to being more involved with this organization as a student co-chair member this school year!

The events that I experienced in Indianapolis were of particular significance, not only for what I learned, but also seeing what it means to be a percussionist in the world today. I look forward to going to this event in the future and also events such as the Ohio Music Education Association Profession Development Conference. I believe these events will help me in the future as both a percussionist and a music educator.

Thank you Pro Musica for making it possible for me to attend this very special music event.

PRO MUSICA

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