

# MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



Gonzaga University – Music Department

502 E Boone Ave.

Spokane, WA 99258

Dr. Timothy Westerhaus, Department Chair

Patricia Anderson, Staff Editor

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Dr. Timothy Westerhaus

## Message From The Chair

This 2017-18 year has been a rich year of beautiful and innovative music. In addition to a full calendar of outstanding student and faculty recitals, we have had a particularly noteworthy year of achievements. Our faculty continue to stay busy and productive-composing, researching, performing, and engaging in our local and regional communities out-reach. With the highly anticipated completion of the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center, we are gearing up for an exciting 2018-19!

## “Diversions” Commission

In 2017, Dr. Robert Spittal along with Idaho State University Professor Dr. Shandra Helman and Director of Bands, Patrick Brooks were commissioned to compose a new 20-minute work for clarinet soloist and wind ensemble. Fifteen universities and one high school from across the United States were involved in the commission. Those institutions involved included New England Conservatory (Boston), Arizona State University, University of Georgia, University of Iowa, University of Wisconsin, and Glacier Peak High School to name a few. Of particular note is that two of those institutions, Glacier Peak High School and New England Conservatory feature Gonzaga Alumni Tad Morris 99’ and William Drury 85’, respectively. Robert conducted the Idaho State Wind Ensemble in the premiere of the piece titled “Diversions” on February 24th.



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## Achievement In Composition

On January 27th, International Holocaust Remembrance Day, The Cleveland Opera Theatre presented Dawn Sonntag's *Verlorene Heimat* ("Lost Homeland").

Based on the true story of Christa Neuber Kuske's East Prussian refugee family and the Jewish girl they protected, the opera hits close to home for Dawn. The daughter in the opera, Christa, and the inspiration behind the composition, is Dawn's mother-in-law.

The opera centers around Christa Neuber Kuske (1937-2012) growing up in Germany during the time when Hitler rose to power, amidst promises of economic prosperity and stability. It doesn't

take Christa's father, August, a member of the Nazi party, long to realize the Nazi party's ulterior motives and he soon joins the resistance. In perhaps their greatest show of defiance, the family takes in a young Jewish-Ukrainian girl.

Through stories her mother-in-law shared plus access to an extensive library on refugees and survivors of the Holocaust, Dawn poured over history books on East Prussia in conjunction with her personal experiences and created *Verlorene Heimat*.

## 2018 Morris Undergraduate Fellowship

The Music department is proud to announce that Andrew Kelley and Annie Stanger were each awarded research fellowships for the summer of 2018. Morris Fellowships are awarded based on originality of student-led research projects to be carried out in the summer months under mentorship of a faculty member of the college. Andrew and Annie will be under the mentorship of Dr. Timothy Westerhaus as they conduct their research. The titles of their pieces are "In the Wake of Tragedy: Examining the Function of Music as a Response to Disaster" (Andrew Kelley) and "Introducing Contemporary Women Art Song Composers to Teachers and Performers" (Annie Stanger).

Congratulations!

## GU Hosts NW Guitar Festival

The 27th Annual Northwest Guitar festival, located in different cities throughout the Northwest and Canada on a rotating basis, made it's way to Gonzaga's campus for the first time since its inception in 1991. The festival, which took place April 6th-8th serves as the annual classical guitar convention for amateur players, college guitar majors, teachers, performers, luthiers, and enthusiasts. It also showcases some of the region's most talented young players in the collegiate and youth classical guitar competitions. Attendees took advantage of classes, lectures, recitals, and concerts put on by regional and international artists including Alexander Dunn, Paul Grove, Jon Yerby, The Caulkins Guitar Duo, and South Hill Guitars.



# Graduating Students

## Moving Forward

### Joseph Panchesson

**Major: Music & Environmental Studies**

**Concentration: Music Performance**

**Minor: Jazz Performance**



### Jacob McLain

**Major: Music; Concentration: Music Composition**

Jacob will be taking a year off before he attends graduate school to save money and take psychology classes at EAU. After that, he plans to pursue a master's in cognitive and emotional neuroscience. His hope is to go into research, studying how music, specifically listening to music, affects the brain and how it could be useful in music therapy.

### Mitch Davey

**Major: Music; Concentration: Music Composition**



After graduation this coming May, Mitch will be taking a year off to work, continue writing music, and explore publication and competition opportunities. After visiting graduate campuses, he decided to apply to the University of Oregon in the Fall of 2019, where he plans to get his master of music in composition and study with Robert Kyr and David Crumb. He also plans to continue his choral conducting studies at the graduate level with Sharon Paul. After finishing his master of music, Mitch plans on pursuing medical school. He is interested in exploring and expanding the role of music in medical treatment, particularly for those who have been diagnosed with neurological and psychiatric illness.

### Ian Loe

**Major: Music & Broadcast and Electronic Media; Concentration: Music Composition**

After graduation, Ian will be working for local TV broadcast station, KREM.

### Jimmy McGinley

**Major: Music; Concentration: Music Composition**

After graduation, Jimmy will journey to Zambia for a year of service.

### Haley Charlton

**Major: Music Education; Concentration: Music Choral & General**

Post-graduation, Haley is planning on moving back to Colorado to find a position as a choir director at a local high school.

### Zach White

**Major: Music ; Concentration: Music Performance**



### Molly Boca

**Major: Music; Minor English**

**Concentration: Music Performance**

After graduation, Molly will pursue a law degree in Boston, Massachusetts.



## Choirs' Performance Cultivates Awareness of Anti-Semitism & Earns SAGA Award

In collaboration with Jewish community members, Gonzaga University Choirs were awarded a \$4,000 grant by The Spokane Arts Grant Awards (SAGA) for their recent performance of Michael Tippett's "A Child of Our Time." SAGA "seek(s) to enrich artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy within our city. SAGA's goal is simple: to serve as a catalyst, fostering a robust, healthy arts community where individual artists, creative industries, and non-profit arts and culture organizations, thrive." The secular oratorio inspired by anti-Semitic events and violence during the 1939-1941 time period was performed Saturday, April 28, at the Martin Woldson Theater at the Fox.

More than 60 members of the Gonzaga student choir and an orchestral ensemble of 40 professional instrumentalists performed Tippett's composition, which uses five African American spirituals intermixed to transmit a message of hope amidst persecution and a bleak future. The dramatic performance concluded with audience members taking to their feet.

The concert will be rebroadcast on Spokane Public Radio, KPBX, 91.1 FM, on May 14 for its "Concert of the Week."

For more information, please contact Timothy Westerhaus, assistant professor of music and chair of the Gonzaga music department, at (509) 313-6737.



## Bulldog Band

The Gonzaga Bulldog Band rallied behind both the men's and women's basketball teams this season with their infectious energy. The band brought students and fans to their feet all season, ultimately culminating with the women's team advancing to the NCAA tournament and the men's basketball team advancing to the Sweet 16!

## Alumni Update

**Whitney Meininger '12 (Music Ed)** is the director of choirs at Seoul International School in South Korea.

**Douglas Starkebaum '13 (Music, Performance)** serves as the music director at St. John Neumann Church Catholic Church in Eagan, Minnesota.

**Mischa Bigos '10 (Music)** earned his Master's degree from the University of Southern California and is currently a composer and pianist in Los Angeles, California, under the Yarlung record label.

**Monica Camp formerly Freshley '12 (Music, Conducting)** earned her Teaching Certificate and Master of Music, Conducting from Central Washington University in 2014 and is currently the director of orchestras for Excel Public Charter School in Kent, Washington.

## Piano Successes

Piano students from the studios of Margee Webster and Greg Presley participated in the recent Spokane Music Teachers Collegiate Honors Piano Recital along with musicians from EWU and Whitworth.

Lucy Tibbetts, Peter Gray, and Hanna Le were selected to play in the Collegiate Honors recital and Alex Burke and Michel Somwe Kapwe received honorable mention from Visiting Artist Jovanni-Rey V. de Pedro.



Lucy Tibbetts



Peter Gray



Hanna Le

## Music Department Colloquia



Laura Schmidt, MA, LMFT

The Music Department presents a monthly colloquium for students on a variety of topics relevant to their degree progression and future employment. This semester to kick off our Colloquia, we welcomed Laura Schmidt to speak on Mindful Self Compassion. Laura is a practicing Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Spokane who is “passionate about helping others increase their insight and compassion for themselves and others, heal from past hurts and hurts and lead their lives from the mindful, loving, wise, calm source present within everyone, called the Self.” We also had the pleasure of hearing from Mitchell, Colver, a Ph.D. student from Utah State University, who presented his research titled “Getting Aesthetic chills from music: the connection between openness to experience and frisson.”



Mitchell Colver

Near the end of March, the colloquium featured information and discussion on how to make the most of your practice time. Contributors were faculty members Jason Bell, David Fague, Peter Hamlin, and Amy Porter, who shared with us some of latest in research findings as well as techniques that they have found personally helpful.

The semester-end colloquium on April 9th focused on the music business. Specific topics of discussion focused on auditioning, securing gigs, and professional contracts.



Raymond Rast, Ph.D.

Speaking to students in these areas, we were pleased to welcome Gonzaga’s Raymond Rast, Ph.D., CAS Internship Coordinator and Assistant Professor of History and Michael Gerety, MM, manager of Career Education & Experiential Engagement in Career & Professional Development. Also joining us was Tina Morrison, Bassoonist & former officer of the Professional Musicians, Local 105 of the American Federation of Musicians.



Michael Gerety, MM



Tina Morrison



## Congratulations Scholarship Winners

Joseph Panchesson and Annie Stanger have been selected by music faculty panel as the 2017-2018 Gordon Merwin Scholarship recipients. The award recognizes their academic achievement, leadership, and contributions to the Gonzaga Music department. Joseph is a double major in Music Performance and Environmental Studies who is active in Bulldog Band, Jazz Band, Men's Chorus, and Wind

Symphony. Annie is a Music Education major active in the choral program. She is a member of the Gonzaga Concert Choir and Chamber Chorus, serves as vice president of Concert Choir Council, is the soprano section leader of Concert Choir, and serves as choral ambassador. She is also the president and founder of American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) Student Chapter.

The Gordon Merwin Scholarship honors the memory of Gordon Merwin, a member of the Gonzaga Men's Glee Club and the Gonzaga Quartet from 1935-1939

## Interdisciplinary Collaboration

In January, the Theatre, Dance, Art, and Jazz Program collaborated on a project called **"Dance! The Nelken -Line"** initiated by the Pina Bausch Foundation. Pina Bausch (1940-2009) was a German modern dance choreographer who had an enormous impact on theatre and dance in the 20th century. The foundation put out a world-wide call for online submissions of unique video performances of the Nelken-Line, a series of choreographed dance moves, to Louis Armstrong's "West End Blues." That call was answered with more than 180 videos from more than 10 countries around the world. Gonzaga's film, produced by ZagLab, which features David Fague, along with seven Gonzaga students in the jazz program, is one of the only films that features an original recording along with musicians playing within the film. The goal of this project was to help bring awareness to the work of Pina Bausch by celebrating art, music, dance, and theatre at Gonzaga and by encouraging interdisciplinary projects and collaboration.



Music Credit: Luke Westermeyer-Drums, Co-Producer, Audio Engineer, David Fague-Tenor Saxophone, Co-Producer, Alex Banning-Trumpet, Luke Kenneally-Trombone, Peter Gray-Piano, Annie Stanger-Voice, Mikaela Croskrey-Acoustic Bass, Ryan Moore-Banjo.

## Faculty News:

**Mellad Abeid** has been doing his usual blend of teaching private lessons and directing ensembles here at Gonzaga and EWU. In addition, he finds himself doing a lot of gigging. This year he has been regularly playing for a local Funk act, Funky Unkle, featuring members from both GU and EWU faculty. He also regularly plays for pop/blues Singer Sara Brown and Pop country singer Christy Lee Comrie. With those three acts he finds himself playing many of the local festivals as well as many breweries, wineries and night clubs. He also continues to be the music director for Irish Tenor Michael Londra, formerly of Riverdance Broadway. With Michael he has toured all over the US, including two recording sessions and one film shoot. An exciting trip coming up this summer with Michael Londra will be a tour of South America including Brazil, Chile and Argentina. Mellad is fortunate to be able to make a living doing something that he is passionate about!

**Dr. Kevin Hekmatpanah** performed concerts at St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna last summer at the Esterhazy Palace in Austria, where Haydn primarily worked and premiered many of his works. This past season he led the Gonzaga Symphony Orchestra in four programs, which featured internationally renowned cellist Lynn Harrell, Tchaikovsky Gold Medalist Itamar Zorman, internationally celebrated pianist Pascal Roge, and double bass legend Gary Karr (who performed a world premiere double bass concerto with the Gonzaga Symphony). He also performed solo and chamber recitals in Spokane as well as the University of Idaho, Central Washington University, and the Harrington Opera House.

**Amanda Howard-Phillips** was featured in February for the second time on the national broadcast of NPR's Performance Today, performing with the Spokane String Quartet, "*Caffeine Smile*" by young American Indian composer Katie Barrick. Performance Today is America's most popular classical music radio program and reaches over 1.3 million listeners on 280 radio stations nationwide.

**Greg Presley** accompanied international opera star and Spokane native Thomas Hampson in the special 10th Anniversary Gala of the opening of the Fox in November 2017 in a short recital of American Music. He accompanied cellist Zuill Bailey, artistic director of Connoisseur Concerts, in the final performance in December of his national tour, presenting *Tales of Hemingway*, the Michael Dougherty piece for which he won a Grammy award (best Classical Performance) in 2017. He also accompanied Zuill as part of the Bach Festival in two performances at Barrister Winery in Spokane in early March playing the two Haydn Cello Concertos in honor of the release of Zuill's new CD of those two works. He adjudicated the Idaho State Music Teachers MTNA piano competition in Boise in November. He adjudicated the Snohomish chapter of Washington State Music Teachers for one week in March. Greg's piano compositions "Three Homages to Ginastera" have been recorded by University of Idaho faculty member, Jovanni Rey de Pedro on his most recent CD and have been performed by him in 10 countries and 4 continents over the past year.

**Robert Spittal** traveled to Los Angeles in November for the premiere of his setting of "Be Thou My Vision" for chorus and orchestra, performed by the Hour of Power Choir for their anniversary television broadcast, which was seen world-wide by an estimated audience of three million. In April he was invited to Whistler, British Columbia, for the two-day Cantando Music Festival, where he presented workshops for Canadian music teachers and students.

**Margee Webster** of the Piano Faculty has an active adjudicating schedule this year. It started in January with judging WMEA Solo and Ensemble in Wenatchee. During spring break she traveled to Puyallup as Visiting Artist for the Washington State Music Teachers Association Music Artist Program. Around 100 students performed 2 piano pieces and she in turn gave written and oral comments to each student and separate evaluations for teachers. In April and May she will travel to Newport, WA and back to Wenatchee to serve as judge for Guild Auditions sponsored by the National Guild of Piano Teachers, the Teacher Division of the American College of Musicians.

**Dr. Timothy Westerhaus** was elected President of the Northwest American Choral Directors Association. He conducted the Gonzaga University Concert Choir at Washington Music Educators State Conference and was a guest pianist at Chico State University's Recital Series: "Heart's Delight." He also conducted three premieres by local composers, "Spokane Mid-Winter" Cathedral Kantorei concert. He sang Monteverdi and Haydn as tenor soloist with the North Valley Chamber Chorale in California and Bach with Bitterroot Baroque for the "Montana Cantata Project." In addition, he adjudicated choral festivals at Spokane Falls; Bozeman, MT; Northeast Washington; and Oregon All-State.

# Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center

The \$30 million facility made possible by the late Myrtle Woldson who passed away in 2014 at the age of 104 is currently underway. The roughly 57,550 SF center will have the capacity to seat 750 in the performance theatre, 150 in the recital/rehearsal hall, and features two-story seating. Other distinctive features include a stage with a proscenium arch and fly loft, an orchestra pit designed to rise and descend, dressing rooms and green rooms for performers in addition to a second floor interdisciplinary arts studio. Estimated completion of the highly anticipated Performing Arts Center is April 2019.

Myrtle Woldson, the daughter of a brilliant businessman, was herself an astute businesswoman. She had a tremendous appreciation for the arts and was an avid contributor to the community. Her will included a total of a \$55 million donation to Gonzaga, \$1 million to be used to benefit the homeless in Spokane, \$1 million that went to mayor David Condon as well as numerous other donations. To date this is the largest one time donation gifted to Gonzaga and it also included one of the most interesting stipulations. Myrtle requested that along with her donation, a replica of her living room be built into the building even going so far as to donate her furniture. One thing is for sure; her incredible gift of generosity will benefit students and the university for years to come.



June 2017 PAC Rendering



Southeast View



Southern View



Music & Theatre & Dance Tour



Myrtle Woldson

**For a listing of all Music Department events and academic program info please visit our website**

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