

FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

University of Miami • Spring 2022

# SCORE

*INSIDE:*

**Music Research Leaders**

**Pathways to Success**

**Product Pitch**



## New Perspectives

World premieres and outstanding musical productions bring highest accolades to Frost students and faculty

## Message from the Dean

**Talented. Positive. Kind. Supportive.** These are the words I hear over and over again from colleagues or new acquaintances who meet a Frost musician, either currently studying on our campus, or living around the world.

While this issue of *Score* magazine is packed full of great news about our faculty, students, and alumni earning the highest awards in their fields—from Pulitzers to Emmys and Grammys, to DownBeat and Billboard polls—it is their kindness and positivity that sets them apart from those at other academic institutions and in the music profession at large. Their enthusiasm, integrity, and perseverance are an inspiration to me.



DANIEL AZOULAY

Like the trumpet student on the way to a lesson, who was stopped in the parking lot by a donor trying to find her way to the Clarke Recital Hall in the Weeks Center for Recording and Performance. The student personally walked our benefactor to the recital hall's entrance, enthusiastically talking about her positive experiences at Frost, before heading to the Patricia Louise Frost Music Studios.

Like our Ukrainian students whose passion for their country, besieged under enemy fire, inspired them to present a United for Ukraine benefit concert. They raised significant funds to help friends and family in need. Dozens of faculty and students jumped in to perform with them on short notice, despite a heavy semester-end load.

Like our newest employees on the Frost Events staff and the seasoned professionals in our Music Production office who jumped at the opportunity to promote and video record a world premiere opera, *The Leopard*, highlighting our incredible students and faculty from the Frost Opera Theater and Frost Symphony Orchestra... with upbeat smiles despite long hours and a major media blitz.

And our Development team, who go out of their way to help our donors feel welcome at concerts and special events, and who are blazing a fundraising trail that will be celebrated in style with the opening of the new Knight Center for Music Innovation.

I could go on and on for days about our highly collegial culture. But chances are, you have already experienced it. Amazingly talented faculty. Happy and efficient staff. Engaging students who support each other, both in the classroom and after they graduate. It's a positive professional network that is ever-growing, ever brighter.

I invite you to savor the good news about the Frost School of Music's many accomplishments in this issue, and encourage all alumni to please let us know about yours. It is my honor to be in your company.

Warmly,

Shelton G. "Shelly" Berg  
Dean, Patricia L. Frost Professor

**Frost School of Music**

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Creative Services  
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Editorial Contributors  
**Julia D. Berg, Logan Busacca, Nick DaCosta, M.M. '19,**  
**Kimberly Engelhardt, M.A. '12, Sheryl Feuerstein,**  
**Adrianne Gonzalez, M.S. '21, Dania Gorriz, Jordan Levin,**  
**David Menconi, Janette Neuwahl Tannen, Amanda M.**  
**Perez, Spark It Communications, Ana Veciana-Suarez**

**Front Cover**

Students Yaqi Yang and Minghau Liu in the world premiere of  
*The Leopard*, an opera by Michael Dellaira and J.D. McClatchy.  
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### 62 FROST SUPPORTERS

Thank you to Ever Brighter campaign donors  
\* Dean's Advisory Committee

### 64 MUSICAL MEMORIES



# Ambitious Fundraising Fuels Investment in Frost School of Music



Above:  
Architectural  
renderings of  
Knight Center for  
Music Innovation

Next page, center:  
Frost musicians  
help launch Ever  
Brighter campaign  
at Homecoming;  
Jon Secada  
with University  
of Miami students  
and President  
Julio Frenk

EVER BRIGHTER, the University of Miami's Campaign for Our Next Century, was publicly launched on November 5 and celebrated during a series of festive Homecoming events on the Coral Gables Campus.

The University has already raised \$1.6 billion toward a \$2.5 billion total campaign goal; the Frost School of Music has raised \$56 million of its \$100 million goal.

The Ever Brighter campaign will wrap up in May 2025, in tandem with the centennial celebration of the founding of the University of Miami.

During the traditional Hurricane Howl festivities, boat burning, and Homecoming fireworks display, a new original campaign song, "Ever Brighter," composed by Professor Rey Sanchez, B.M. '80, M.M. '82, was performed on the Lakeside Patio Stage by singer Jon Secada, B.M. '83, M.M. '86, a multi-Grammy Award-winning recording artist and double-alumnus.

Frost School of Music students joined Secada on the outdoor stage.

anticipation toward our bright future," University President Julio Frenk said at the festival. "This is our moment, as we look toward our second 100 years, to empower the University to be better, stronger, and bolder."

The celebrations included performances by Frost students from Café Con Leche: The Frost Latin Songwriters Ensemble; Sunshine State: The Frost Country Ensemble; the American Music Ensemble; and the Frost Band of the Hour in full swing with the spirit squads.

Campaign goals for the Frost School of Music are:

- ♦ Magnify the star power of our faculty
- ♦ Harness new paradigms for teaching and learning
- ♦ Widen the scope of the Frost Method®
- ♦ Expand scholarship funding
- ♦ Sharpen our focus on music entrepreneurship
- ♦ Invest in graduate fellowships for early-career musicians and composers
- ♦ Explore the unifying and healing powers of music
- ♦ Seize the moment to become the perfect incubator for what's next in music

Dean Shelly Berg says the response to the Frost School's fundraising efforts during this campaign is "galvanizing beyond measure" and "personally gratifying."

Since the last printing of *Score* magazine, over \$11 million in new principal gifts have been received, including a contribution from Alan Benaroya to fund a new Schwarz-Benaroya Endowed Chair in Conducting and Orchestral Activities; a gift from the Robert and Judi Newman Family Foundation to name the Robert and Judi Prokop Newman Plaza at the Knight Center for Music Innovation, plus other major donations to the Knight Center from the C and A Johnson Family Foundation, and several anonymous donors. In addition, a new major gift was received from Marta S. Weeks Wulf for student scholarships, and also from Martin Messinger to establish a programmatic Messinger Orchestral Activities Endowment Fund. (Please see page 62 for a full roster of Ever Brighter campaign donors.)



"Since our founding more than nine decades ago, Frost has led the way in music in higher education with its unique and pioneering teaching methodologies," Berg says. "Private philanthropy has been instrumental in helping the Frost School of Music reach its current position. What the Frost School accomplishes in its second century depends on the philanthropic spirit of donors right now. An investment in the Frost School of Music is an investment in the future of music and its transformative capacity to enrich and empower."

With the support of our generous benefactors who believe in our collective vision, the Frost School of Music will achieve its greatest ambition—to be the preeminent institution

that the music world looks to for inspiration, innovation and excellence in 2025 and far beyond."

To donate to the Ever Brighter Campaign for the Frost School of Music, please contact Dania Gorritz, [dgorritz@miami.edu](mailto:dgorritz@miami.edu) or 305-284-8252. ||

## Beaming with Joy

ELATED DONORS to the Knight Center for Music Innovation at the Frost School of Music signed a ceremonial beam to celebrate the construction of the eagerly anticipated \$36 million, 22,700-square-foot complex, forever linking their hands and hearts to the adventurous music that will pour forth from future generations of Frost musicians.

Construction paused for just one hour on March 3 for the beam-signing ceremony with benefactors from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the University of Miami.

"An ambitious project that began as a dream a decade ago is fast becoming a reality," Frost Dean Shelly Berg said at the ceremony. "I can't wait to walk in the front doors with all of our faculty, students, and staff when it opens. The University of Miami and Coral Gables communities will gather and come together like never before through the galvanizing spirit of music, thanks to the Knight Foundation and other generous supporters."

Under the supervision of architectural firm H3 and contractor Skanska USA, construction began in the summer of 2021 with the onsite pouring and raising of exterior cement walls that formed the dramatic outer shell, then progressed to the installation of a vast network of support beams and trusses, and will ultimately include fine acoustic accoutrements.

Joining the Knight Foundation as lead donors to the new center are: the Miller Family, Robert and Judi Newman Family Foundation (outdoor plaza), Thomas D. Hormel Trust (black-box innovation stage), Paul J. DiMare Foundation (first floor lobby), James M. Collins Foundation and Christian Family Fellowship Foundation (auditorium), C and A Johnson Family Foundation, H. David Garrity Trust, Rita A. Wallach Estate, Tommy and Mayumi Adams (box office), Wilbur Coolidge Keeney Estate, and Sally K. Albrecht (dressing room). ||

PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNY ABREU



Top, left to right: Frost Dean Shelly Berg, Knight Foundation's CEO Alberto Ibargüen, University of Miami President Julio Frenk Center, left to right: Jeffrey and Tina Miller with Judi and Robert Newman; Bottom: Knight's Vice President of Arts Victoria J. Rogers, and Alberto Ibargüen



## One Giant Leap for the Opera World



**Above, left to right:**  
**Professor**  
**Kim Josephson,**  
**standing, with**  
**Associate Professor**  
**Robynne Redmon,**  
**seated on right;**  
**Frost student**  
**Minghau Liu,**  
**kneeling, as**  
**Tecredi Falconeri,**  
**sings to Yaqi Yang,**  
**as Angelica**

THE THRILL OF PERFORMING in a world premiere of an opera is like no other, and having the opportunity to debut a major role while still a student is an exhilarating exponent. Then, singing shoulder-to-shoulder with professional faculty artists in a first-rate theater takes the euphoria to warp speed.

That was the heady bliss that Frost vocal students felt on March 5 and 6 when the Frost Opera Theater and Frost Symphony Orchestra performed the world premiere of the commanding grand opera *The Leopard* during their inaugural appearance at the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center in Cutler Bay, Florida.

The opera is by composer Michael Dellaira and the late librettist J.D. McClatchy, adapted from Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's internationally acclaimed novel *Il Gattopardo* and made famous with the award-winning film version starring Burt Lancaster.

Conducted by Gerard Schwarz, the Schwarz-Benaroya Endowed Chair of Orchestral Activities, with music and stage direction by Professor Alan Johnson, B.M. '82, and Assistant Professor Jeffrey Buchman,

the Frost School production featured faculty baritone Professor Kim Josephson in the title role of The Prince, sharing the stage with the opulent mezzo-soprano Associate Professor Robynne Redmon as Princess Stella, along with tenor Associate Professor Frank Ragsdale, D.M.A. '04, as Father Pirrone, plus Frost students.

Set in 1860, as Garibaldi invaded Sicily in an effort to build a unified Italy, the story focuses on Don Fabrizio Corbera, Prince of Salina, known as The Leopard because of his commanding personality. As he faces a society in upheaval, he is forced to choose between the downfall of the nobility and his family's future.

"It is thrilling to create a role like the Prince in a world premiere," Josephson says. "It

is one of the most rewarding experiences there is for a creative artist, to get to work with the composer of a new work...to be able to ask specific questions regarding the setting of text, or the intention of a musical motif or idea. I tease about my conversations with Mozart. But when I was working on my music with Alan Johnson over the winter break in New York City, and we met with the composer, we were able to do exactly that!" He says



**Left to right: Professors Alan Johnson, Gerard Schwarz, and Jeffrey Buchman, with composer Michael Dellaira, after the world premiere of *The Leopard* by Frost Opera Theater**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MITCHELL ZACHS



that the role itself is a “treasure trove of different colors” and describes the patriarch of the Corbera family as a “powerful and yet extremely wise man. The dramatic arc provided by the author and revealed in the music is brilliant—absolutely delicious to dive into. I know that’s a strange adjective to use but it best reflects my approach.”

Once on stage, Josephson was “looking every inch the aging, pragmatic aristocrat, his robust baritone and outstanding English diction vividly conveyed the protagonist’s smiling face and inner turmoil,” said Larry Budmen of the *South Florida Classical Review*.

Described as “stalwart in tone and articulate in gesture” by Logan Martell of *Opera Wire*, Josephson’s closing aria, “Sleep is What Sicilians Want,” was truly extraordinary. “It is absolutely beautiful,” Josephson says of the haunting solo. “In an odd way, the entire opera feels like the Prince’s aria.”

Students were awed by the magnitude of doing a premiere. “In this show we were the inspiration, and we were bringing these characters to life for the first time, so it kind of felt a bit scary, but exhilarating,” says Mia Flora, who played Carolina, a daughter in the Corbera family.

Students performed on a high professional level. Major roles included Concetta, the tragic love-spurned oldest daughter performed by Margarita Parsamyan; Tancredi, a nephew and soldier for the new order, performed with passionate verve by tenor Minghau Liu; and Don Cologero Sedàra, a nouveau riche mayor

portrayed by Thandolwethu Mamba “who splendidly masked the don’s ambitions with a chilling refinement in bearing and voice” (*Opera Wire*). His daughter Angelica, performed by soprano Yaqi Yang, was reviewed as “exceedingly charming” and “exuberant and soaring.”

The terrific bass baritone Kevin Short appeared as the pompous Cavaliere Chevalley di Monterzuolo; Kevin Gwinn and Nicholas Skotzko also had supporting roles.

*The Leopard* was commissioned and developed by American Opera Projects, with funding by The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation and The Paul Underwood Charitable Trust. The world premiere production was generously supported by Frayda B. Lindemann, Patricia and Phillip Frost, Alan Benaroya, the Martin Messinger Symphony Orchestra Fund, and Frost School of Music.

“It is so exciting that Frost was first to offer this music to the world,” Josephson says. “That we have been entrusted with this incredible art is a testament to the excellence of what we do here.” ||

**Top, left to right:**  
Frank Ragsdale  
as priest, Kim  
Josephson in tub;  
Kevin Short as  
the Prefecture  
secretary with  
Kim Josephson;  
Minghau Liu

**Bottom, left to right:**  
Thandolwethu  
Mamba as mayor;  
Yaqi Yang;  
Kim Josephson  
and Robynne  
Redmon; Margarita  
Parsamyan as  
Concetta

**“The composer could not have wished for a better production. This was a huge step forward for Frost Opera Theater.”**

**– South Florida Classical Review**



## Talking about Race and Racism

FROST FACULTY, administration, and staff engaged in guided conversations about Race and Racism at an all-day retreat held before the start of the fall semester, facilitated by guest speaker Shaun R. Harper, Ph.D., the founder and executive director of the USC Race and Equity Center at the University of Southern California, Clifford and Betty Allen Chair in Urban Leadership, and Provost Professor of Education and Business.

The Frost School of Music's School Culture, Equity, and Diversity (SCED) faculty committee recommended engaging Harper for the session.

With a 23-year career as a Black professor and administrator at four universities, Harper has worked with more than 400 educational institutions, companies, firms, and agencies across a range of industries to conduct workplace racial climate assessments in varied environments.

"The retreat provided oppor-

tunities for honest dialogue throughout the day, and wrapped up with a positive, actionable plan for improvement," says the Frost School's Dean Shelly Berg.

Retreat topics included Typical Race Talk at Work, Consequences of Avoidance,

Fostering and Sustaining Inclusive Classrooms and Performance Spaces for Students of Color, Supporting and Retaining Faculty of Color, and a Q & A and Synthesis session specific to the Frost School of Music.

The SCED is following up with suggested steps for further discussion and action.

Harper explained the avoidance of discussing Race and Racism is cultural on most university campuses, mostly due to personal and professional inexperience.

"White employees don't want to make mistakes, don't want to be seen as naïve, and don't want to be seen as racist. Employees of color don't feel safe, don't want to be perceived as angry, and are tired of having to always be the one to raise these issues. People are afraid these conversations will be explosive and divisive," he says.

Harper's style got high marks from faculty and staff.

"Shaun's facilitation style was very engaging," says Barbara Ham, senior business officer for finance and administration, and a member of the Frost Unity and Diversity Committee which represents the professional staff. "He shared personal experiences and also solicited the experiences of others to help add to discussion topics. The information shared and the group exercises were very thought-provoking and led to open discussion within the session. I'm hopeful that most in attendance left with a willingness to explore how implicit biases can negatively impact every aspect of our lives, including how we recruit faculty and students," Ham says.

Associate Professor of Piano Kevin Kenner adds, "I think the retreat allowed us as a school to take a step back and see where we are in terms of transforming our culture to be more racially inclusive and representative of the community at large. And we can certainly celebrate what has been accomplished in that regard lately. At the same time, I left the retreat feeling a more pressing need to do my part in proactively seeking out and recruiting new students of the BIPOC community."

"The retreat also gave me an opportunity to reflect on how I can become more aware of potential micro-aggressions in my own behavior and in the interactions among my students," Kenner adds. "I think one of the most insidious aspects of racism is how it often presents itself by stealth through our own unawareness and ignorance, and it therefore becomes even more important to take it upon ourselves to heighten our awareness of possibly harmful speech and actions, and at the same time focus on creating a more accepting environment for the students we mentor, not by ignoring their differences in terms of race, gender, ethnicity and sexuality, but by fully embracing and celebrating their various identities." ||



Shaun Harper

STEVE CORN



Barbara Ham

JENNY ABREU



## Making History at The Met

TERENCE BLANCHARD, a double Oscar- and Emmy-nominated composer, and a five-time Grammy Award-winning jazz musician who served as artistic director of the Frost School's Henry Mancini Institute from 2008 to 2015, made history this year when The Metropolitan Opera's opening night of its 2021-22 season featured The Met's first performance of an opera by a Black composer, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*.

Praised by *The New York Times* as "bold and affecting," Blanchard's adaptation of Charles M. Blow's

memoir, *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, was the latest in a series of outstanding accomplishments for the successful multifaceted artist.

In 2021, Blanchard was nominated for a second Academy Award for his film score to Spike Lee's *Da 5 Bloods*. His first Oscar nomination was for the score to the *BlacKkKlansman*.

This year, Blanchard was also nominated for two Grammy Awards for Best Jazz Instrumental Album and Best Improvised Jazz Solo on *Absence* by the Turtle Island String Quartet and the E Collective. ||



HENRY ADEGBOJOLA

## Film Scoring Faculty Carlos Rivera Wins Emmy Award

CARLOS RAFAEL RIVERA, assistant professor and director of the Media Scoring and Production Program at the Frost School of Music, received a primetime Emmy Award on September 13 in the category of Outstanding Music Composition for a Limited or Anthology Series, Movie or Special (Original Dramatic Score) for the hit Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit* ("End Game," Season 1, Episode 7), starring Ana Taylor-Joy.

He also earned a Grammy Award for *The Queen's Gambit* (see page 14) plus a Hollywood Music in Media Award, and two international Film Critics' Awards.

Rivera received his first Emmy Award in 2018 for Outstanding Original Main Title Theme Music for the Netflix series *Godless*.

He is also known for his composing on Universal Pictures' *A Walk Among the Tombstones*, starring Liam Neeson, and composed several episodes of *Just Beyond* for Disney+.

He is currently working on *La Reina del Sur 3* for Telemundo/Netflix, as well as Season 2 of the hit television show and 15-time Emmy nominee *Hacks* for HBO Max, plus an unnamed movie and mini series. ||



VERSATILE LIGHT STUDIO

## Etienne Charles Receives Career Development Grant

THE CREATIVE Capital Awards selected the Frost School's Associate Professor Etienne Charles for a highly coveted career development grant, along with 50 other top artists working in the performing arts, visual arts, film, technology, literature, and socially engaged and multidisciplinary practices.

In all, \$2.5 million was awarded. Each project will receive up to \$50,000 in direct funding, supplemented by career development and networking services to foster thriving artistic careers.

Charles' grant-funded project, *Etienne Charles, Capital Earth Tones*, is a multimedia jazz performance featuring original compositions that document and feature peoples and regions that are, and will be severely affected by climate change. The music will highlight nature-based climate change solutions such as mangrove

swamps, coral reefs, oyster beds, seagrass, sand dunes, mud volcanoes, watersheds, and forests that can protect against severe climate disaster. Featuring sounds, stories, images, short films, and musicians of at-risk coastal communities, the performance asks audiences to make necessary changes in their daily lives to help lessen the severity of climate change's effects in the future.

In addition to his role as a professor in the Frost School's Department of Studio Music and Jazz, Charles is an award-winning trumpeter, composer, bandleader, and member of the SFJazz Collective. He is also a faculty member at the summer JAS Academy in collaboration with the Frost School of Music.

Charles also received a 2022 New Works grant from Chamber Music America, and a commission by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra entitled *San Juan Hill*. ||



JENNY ABREU

# Immersive Perspectives on Pictures at an Exhibition



JODY SCHWARTZ

Gerard Schwarz leads the Frost Symphony Orchestra in Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, with a painting by celebrated artist Omar Ba projected on a large screen at the Adrienne Arsht Center.

OOHS AND AAHS were audible at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County on December 4, when the Frost Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Gerard Schwarz launched into an immersive multi-media music and visual art collaboration of Modest Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, orchestrated by Maurice Ravel.

Co-presented with the Frost School of Music, Lowe Art Museum and the Adrienne Arsht Center, the unique production took place as part of Miami Art Week and was supported in part by the Martin Messinger Orchestral Activities Fund.

"Schwarz led his student forces in a reading that would have been a credit to an orchestra at any major conservatory," said *South Florida Classical Review*.

The concert also featured *Short Piece for Orchestra* by contemporary composer Julia Perry, and a rare performance of *Jubilee Variations* by Eugene Goossens.

Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* is a musical work in 10 movements inspired by specific paintings and drawings by his close friend, architect and visual artist Viktor Hartmann, who died in 1873. Mussorgsky composed it in 1874 after attending a posthumous show of 400 works by Hartmann.

Ravel orchestrated *Pictures at an Exhibition* in 1922.



Omar Ba, *Clin d'oeil à Cheikh anta Diop-Un continent à la recherche de son histoire*, 2017. Oil, pencil, acrylic, ink, and gouache on corrugated cardboard. 129 7/8 x 282 5/8 x 15 5/8 in (329.8 x 717.8 x 39.6 cm). Courtesy the artist and Hales, London and New York. © Omar Ba.

In this dynamic presentation by the Frost Symphony Orchestra, the work's 10 movements and "promenades" were paired with more than 50 projected images created by leading contemporary artists including Doug Argue, Omar Ba, María Magdalena Campos-Pons, Claudia DeMonte, Juan Roberto Diago, Michele Oka Doner, Carlos Estévez, Karen LaMonte, Yassi Mazandi, Ed McGowin, Gladys Nilsson, Virgil Ortiz, Carlos Quintana, Alexis Rockman, Arthur Simms, and Agnieszka Traczewska, as well as key works from the Lowe's permanent collection.

"This collaboration highlights not only two of the jewels in the University of Miami's arts crown, but it is also a forceful reminder of the capacity of music and the painted image to ground us, to move us, and to bring us



**"This collaboration is a forceful reminder of the capacity of music and the painted image to ground us, to move us, and to bring us closer to ourselves and to one another."**

*– Jill Deupi, Lowe Art Museum*



Arthur Simms, *Boy*, 2007. Mixed media. 29 x 19 x 29 inches.  
Photo: Jason Mandella. © Arthur Simms.



closer to ourselves and to one another," says Jill Deupi, Beaux-Arts director and chief curator at the Lowe Art Museum at the University of Miami.

Deupi adds, "The words of the British philosopher

and writer Roger Scruton are fitting here: 'Art and music shine a light of meaning on ordinary life, and through them, we are able to confront the things that trouble us and to find consolation and peace in their presence.'" ||

**The Frost Symphony Orchestra rehearses with a projected image of Arthur Simm's *Boy* overhead**

## Gerard Schwarz Wins 8th and 9th Emmy Awards

THE MULTI-EMMY-winning All-Star Orchestra—led by its music director Gerard Schwarz, the Schwarz-Benaroya Endowed Professor of Orchestral Studies and conductor of the Frost Symphony Orchestra—received its 8th and 9th Emmy Awards in the categories Special Event–Edited, and Audio Post-production, for the program *From Italy and Hungary with Love* featuring Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony No. 4, and Kodaly's *Dances of Galanta*.

The All-Star Orchestra's program is part of a classical music series on public television featuring top musicians from across the country performing major symphonic



masterpieces from leading contemporary American composers. The series has been broadcast nationwide since September 2013 and has won Emmy awards in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2021.

"For all of us at the All-Star Orchestra, receiving these awards is confirmation of the importance of making great music accessible to all. Great music brings hope and inspiration. It builds a sense of community. We

are so grateful to all of the remarkable public television stations in our vast country for believing in classical music," Schwarz says. ||

## Digital Mapping Technology Creates Engaging Stage Scenery

WHEN MUSIC education major Emma Beers entered the Victor E. Clarke Recital Hall to see the Frost Opera Theater's fall production of "Opera Scenes," she expected to see some classmates performing pieces from several different operas with no set behind them.

Instead, aided by newly installed digital "projection mapping" technology, she and audience members were transported to a stained-glass cathedral in France, for an act from the opera *Manon*. They also spent time in a Scottish castle, complete with fireplaces and dancing digital flames, while student singers graced the stage for an excerpt of the opera *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

"I saw it as a great way to transform the way we do Opera Scenes, so we could really place the performer in a scenic world, to bring them, and the audience, into the place and time of the piece," Buchman says.

So he reached out to other technical and creative faculty on campus to "up our game by collaborating."

He began working with School of Communication interactive media lecturers Zevensuy Rodriguez and Lorena Lopez. During the course of five months, they met weekly to discuss ideas, map out the performance space in 3D, and brainstorm about how they would project images and animations across the stage to bring the Frost School's opera scenes to life.

"A lot of operas are very old, but through this project, we got the chance to provide a modernized interpretation of them, which was a really interesting experience that I found fascinating," says Rodriguez, who has worked with performance artists and filmmakers to offer more immersive experiences with technology.

Next, the lecturers gathered images that would match the content of the operas. For example, in one scene of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, there are two women discussing a letter, so Lopez and Rodriguez worked to create an animated version of the letter that was being written in the sky as the characters sang.

"The beauty of projection mapping is you can take the architecture of a space and repurpose it to become functional storytelling objects, so we decided to convert doors into fireplaces and to use speakers as chandeliers," Rodriguez explains.

Lopez, who has worked on costume and immersive set design at many professional venues, was pleased with the final product. "This could be a more cost-efficient way to enhance scenic design," she says.

Professor Alan Johnson, B.M. '84, music director of Frost Opera Theater, says "we're excited to add this mapping technology to our operatic arsenal."

The faculty hope to offer projection mapping through a class down the road. "The goal in this case was to showcase the operas, but a goal for the future could be, 'How can we create a digital space where the artist or performer could interact with the digital projection, to further embellish the story?'" Rodriguez says. ||



FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Left to right:  
Frost students  
Leah Torres,  
Thandolwethu  
Mamba, and  
Timothy Oliver  
perform a scene  
from Rossini's  
*Il Barbiere di  
Siviglia*, enveloped  
by digital projection  
mapping technology

And Beers' favorite: a performance from the opera *Pagliacci*, where two vocalists were in a massive tent as they regaled the audience about their secret love affair.

"It added so much," Beers says. "Not everyone is super familiar with these operas in different languages, so [the projections and the supertitles] really helped to convey what they are singing about and to tell the story. It gives you the feel of a fully staged opera, even in just a few minutes." In all, there were 13 different opera scenes.

Clarke Recital Hall located in the Weeks Center got a suite of new equipment, including high quality projectors that made it possible for projection mapping to enhance performances, says Jeffrey Buchman, assistant professor and stage director for Frost Opera Theater.



## Remote Lessons More Engaging with New Technology

FROST has been a leader in distance teaching through various platforms for years, but the sonic lag in live teaching sessions was distracting. Last summer, using Remote Lesson, an innovation developed by Yamaha Corporation for its Disklavier, the Department of Keyboard Performance held a week-long series of virtual piano masterclasses with ten students of the Academy of Music in Bydgoszcz, Poland that felt incredibly natural.

“The technology is of precision that the human ear could hardly notice any loss in the transfer,” says Associate Professor Kevin Kenner, who is also artistic director of the Frost Chopin Academy. “This technology offers schools who invest in this technology an exciting opportunity to eradicate geographical barriers and teach students all around the globe as if they were literally sitting next to us in our private studios.”

“At the core of the Disklavier is a high precision, high-resolution recording and playback system that means a pianist may use it locally to assess their own playing by recording, then sit in the hall as an audience member,” says Shana Kirk, education technology consultant for the Disklavier Education Network, Yamaha Corporation of America. “By one piano simply calling another you can connect two or more pianos with the capture of all the nuances of key and pedal movement live without delay,” adds French Forbes, a Yamaha institutional sales manager. “Using a platform like Zoom, a professor can see and interact with their student and see both on video and the actual keys moving right before them—mistakes and perfection.” ||



Associate Professor  
Kevin Kenner in the  
Patricia Louise Frost  
Music Studios

## Interdisciplinary Music Project Highlights New Research

THE HENRY MANCINI INSTITUTE (HMI) embarked on a distinctive interdisciplinary project this year, hosted by Artistic Director Maria Schneider.

Guided by Assistant Professor Stephen Guerra Jr., D.M.A. '16, it paired student jazz composers Carolina Calvache, Casey Dickey, Daniel Fiamengo, Gary Wang, Thomas Wenglinsky, and Kevin Zapata with researchers around the University of Miami focusing on topics such as coral reefs, tropical cyclones, Alzheimer's, and more.

The music was premiered in a multi-media Earth Day concert on April 22 with the HMI Orchestra,

hosted by Schneider and conducted by Scott Flavin. “Music can be such a wonderful conduit to express and illuminate things outside of music,” says Schneider. “It’s also wonderful for researchers working in areas outside of the arts, to discover how the arts can bring attention to their work and illuminate aspects of their work in a new and special light.... Ultimately, I would like students to know that their music can be advocacy, their music can illuminate complex ideas in a fresh light, their music can help them delve into subjects they never imagined.” ||



## Frost@Frost Unveiled at Planetarium

The Frost Science Museum and the Frost School of Music hosted Frost@Frost 001: Synesthesia in the Frost Planetarium, the first in an innovative series of events designed to explore the intersection of science and music. The program included live experiential performances by faculty and students, along with talks by Gabrielle Cornish, assistant professor of musicology at the Frost School of Music, and film composer Carlos Rivera, assistant professor and director of the Media Writing and Production Program.

Cornish, pictured right at podium, lectured on synesthesia, a neurological condition where a sense such as hearing music simultaneously activates an unrelated sense, such as sensing

sound as patterns of color. Eleven instrumentalists and conducting fellow Kyle Elgarten, B.M. '20, performed a chamber music orchestration by Dean Shelly Berg of Sibelius's *Prometheus, The Poem of Fire*, along with a light show produced by Professor Rey Sanchez B.M. '80, M.M. '82. Sibelius had indicated ideas for a “color organ” to accompany the piece in his score.

Next up was a talk by Rivera, who discussed his approach to composing music for the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*, with live performances of his show cues conducted by Elgarten in sync with television scenes projected on the planetarium walls. ||



## Doctoral Candidate Receives Dissertation Fellowship



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

MICHAEL DUDLEY, M.M. '18, a multi-talented composer, arranger, and doctoral candidate at the Frost School of Music, received the prestigious Dissertation Fellowship Award from the University of Miami Graduate School, becoming the first music student ever to receive the honor. The Dissertation Fellowship supports recipients in their final year of writing and defending their dissertations, without the obligation of teaching, research, or graduate assignment.

Dudley's topic centers on Digital Audio Workstation technology and how it can improve instrumental music study and music-making together. "Though the work on my dissertation is my own, I couldn't have reached this point without the guidance of the truly world-class Frost faculty," he says. "Because of what I've learned here, I feel I can change the world through music and scholarship, and thanks to this Graduate Dissertation Fellowship, I am all the more empowered to make that change." ||

## Bassoon Professor Wins an American Prize



JENNY ABREU

GABRIEL BEAVERS, a virtuoso bassoonist and admired associate professor in the Department of Instrumental Performance, won the 2021 American Prize Ernst Bacon Memorial Award for the Performance of American Music, in the professional division, for his performance of "Swagger" written by Composition Professor and Department Chair Charles Norman Mason, and recorded with Triton Brass.

Awarded through a comprehensive series of non-profit competitions in the musical and theater arts,

the American Prize recognizes and rewards the best performing artists, ensembles and composers in the United States based on submitted recordings.

Beavers is a renowned chamber music artist and soloist, and performs with Nu-Deco Ensemble, Florida Grand Opera, Palm Beach Symphony, and the Music in the Mountains Festival Orchestra in Durango, Colorado.

His solo albums *Gordon Jacob: Music for Bassoon* and *A Quirky Dream* can be found on the Mark Masters and Mark Records labels. ||

## AES Honors Three Frost Music Engineering Students

THE AUDIO ENGINEERING Society (AES), the premier organization for music engineers both in academia and industry, recognized three graduate students from the Frost School's Music Engineering Technology Program (MUE) at the start of the fall semester for their outstanding achievements.

Akshada Bandekar was honored with the

2021 AES Educational Foundation Emil Torick Award; Jigar Rajpopat was the recipient of the 2021 AES Educational Foundation Scholarship; and Hyunjoung Yang was awarded the 2020 AES Educational Foundation Tom Kite Scholarship.

"These three awards are unprecedented," says their faculty mentor Christopher Bennett, B.S.E.E. '05, M.S.M.E.T. '07, Ph.D. '10, assistant professor in the program.

"Our MUE program has set the NASM standards for music technology studies and this represents an acknowledgment of the high caliber of graduate student that our program attracts,"

Bennett says.

Bandekar, who began her Frost Music Engineering studies in the fall, says, "This AES award has motivated me even more, to work hard and

contribute to the values and achievements of this great school."

Graduate teaching assistant Jigar Rajpopat says, "Joining Frost has been one of the pivotal and transformative moments in my life due to the excellent quality of education provided by the faculty of the Music Engineering Technology department. The contribution of my professors and Frost to this award and eventually to my career in audio technology is truly admirable!" ||



Akshada Bandekar



Jigar Rajpopat



Hyunjoung Yang



## Pulitzer Prize for Outgoing Composer-in-Residence

TANIA LEÓN, who concluded her term as the 2021 Frost Distinguished Composer-in-Residence in December, was awarded the 2021 Pulitzer Prize for music for her orchestral composition *Stride*, a piece commissioned by the New York Philharmonic in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting women the right to vote.

"I was very inspired by the life of Susan B. Anthony, who was a leader of that movement. Listening to her voice and listening to her proclamations gave me the drive to show the resilience of somebody that has so much passion to spark change in the world," León says.

León was shocked when she learned she had won. "I had no idea this was happening...I was overwhelmed with emotion. It was an amazing feeling," she says.

The Pulitzer Prize in music is awarded to one person each year for a distinguished composition, chosen from three nominated finalists. Maria Schneider, artistic director of the Frost School's Henry Mancini Institute, was also a nominated finalist.

Composition Professor and Department Chair Charles Norman Mason, B.M. '77, says Frost students were fortunate to study with León one-on-one. "She is always kind and encouraging, challenging the students to broaden their music awareness and to reach further into their natural creative forces to realize that music has a voice, has something to say."

León looks forward to what the future may bring. "My goals are always changing. One of the things I have learned in life is to be flexible with myself, which is something that is a big challenge. I want to let life show me the way," León says.

She instills the same advice to her students. "I sincerely hope that they take chances and risks. Not only in their writing but in the progress of their life." ||



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Tania León

**"Without taking risks, sometimes we don't go into the most important thing in life, which is discovery."**

— Tania León

## Composing Operas with Social Impact

ANTHONY DAVIS joined the Frost School as the 2022 Distinguished Composer-in-Residence this spring, and will return again in the fall semester. Composition students are receiving private lessons from him both semesters, and singers and instrumentalists will perform excerpts from his latest operas.

Davis is an internationally recognized composer of operatic, symphonic, choral, and chamber works. He is also known for his virtuoso performances



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Anthony Davis

both as a solo pianist and as the leader of the ensemble Episteme. He was awarded the 2020 Pulitzer Prize for his opera *The Central Park Five*, cited by the Pulitzer jury as "a courageous operatic work, marked by powerful vocal writing and sensitive orchestration, that skillfully transforms a notorious example of contemporary injustice into something empathetic and hopeful." His first opera *X: The Life and Times of Malcolm X*, premiered at the New York City

Opera in 1986; the subsequent recording received a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Classical Composition in 1993. His later operas, *Under the Double Moon*, *Tania*, and *Amistad*, were all critically acclaimed.

Davis and his cousin, poet, and historian Thulani Davis, are currently working on an opera, *Greenwood 1921*, about the Tulsa race riots. ||

## Maria Schneider Tops DownBeat Polls

WINNING the *DownBeat*

Critics' Poll in any category

is a rare honor, so when

Maria Schneider, NEA

Jazz Master and artistic

director of the Frost School's

Henry Mancini Institute

learned that her album *Data*

*Lords* won the *DownBeat*

69th Annual Critics Poll for Album of the Year last

August, she was well pleased. Then, she learned The

Maria Schneider Jazz Orchestra was named Big Band

of the Year, and she was honored as both Composer

of the Year and Arranger of the Year.

The multi-Grammy winner's trifecta also extended to the *DownBeat* 86th Annual Readers Poll: *Data Lords* was named the winning Jazz Album, her jazz orchestra won for Big Band, and she was the winner in both Composer and Arranger categories. ||



VERSATILE LIGHT STUDIO

Maria Schneider

## Grammy Awards to Frost Musicians

TWO WORLD-RENOWNED Frost School of Music faculty were bestowed the highest honor in the music industry, receiving Grammy Awards at the 64th annual awards held on April 3 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada, televised on CBS and streamed on the Recording Academy's YouTube channel.

Carlos Rafael Rivera, assistant professor and director of Media Scoring and Production, won Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media for *The Queen's Gambit*.

Gonzalo Rubalcaba, lecturer in Studio Music and Jazz, won Best Jazz Instrumental Album for *Skyline*.

Frost musicians received 12 nominations in all:

### Faculty

#### Dafnis Prieto

Best Latin Jazz Album: *Transparency*, Dafnis Prieto Sextet

#### Carlos Rafael Rivera

🏆 Best Score Soundtrack for Visual Media: composer, *The Queen's Gambit*

#### Gonzalo Rubalcaba

🏆 Best Jazz Instrumental Album: *Skyline*, Ron Carter, Jack DeJohnette, Gonzalo Rubalcaba



Carlos Rafael Rivera

DAVID BECKER/GETTY IMAGES



Gonzalo Rubalcaba

### Alumni

#### Julio Reyes Copello, M.M. '00

Best Latin Pop Album: producer of *Vértigo*, Pablo Alborán

#### Pat Metheny, '73

Best Jazz Instrumental Album: *Side-Eye NYC* (V1.IV), Pat Metheny

#### Federico Vindver, B.M. '08

Album of the Year: producer, *Donda*, Kanye West

Best Rap Album: producer, *Donda*, Kanye West

Best Pop Duo or Group Performance: producer, "Higher Power," Coldplay

Best Latin Rock or Alternative Album: producer, *Calambre*, Nathy Peluso

Best Latin Rock or Alternative Album: producer, *El Madrileño*, C. Tangana

Best Engineered Album: engineer, *El Madrileño*, C. Tangana

Best Latin Pop Album: engineer, *Vértigo*, Pablo Alborán

MATT WINKELMEYER/GETTY IMAGES



Dafnis Prieto

OSMANI TELLEZ



Carlos Rafael Rivera



Gonzalo Rubalcaba



Julio Reyes Copello



Pat Metheny



Federico Vindver

JOSH TELLES



## Great Showing at Latin Grammys for Frost Alumni and Faculty

NATALIA RAMIRÉZ, M.A. '17, won her fourth Latin Grammy Award as the vocal engineer for the Best Pop Vocal Album, *Mis Manos*, by Camilo.

"Winning is a recognition for the entire team—artistic and technical—and their effort as a unit, which is something I learned while I was a student at Frost," Ramírez says. "To me, a win only serves as motivation to keep working hard towards the best possible sound I can accomplish with my vocals."

The Annual Latin Grammy Awards is the preeminent international honor celebrating excellence in Latin music. The 22nd Annual Latin Grammy Awards telecast aired live on November 18 on Univision and at the pre-telecast Latin Grammy Premiere Ceremony, where winners in most categories were announced at the Michelob ULTRA Arena at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.

A host of other Frost alumni received a total of 17 nominations, once again led by seven-time Latin Grammy winner Julio Reyes Copello, M.M. '00 with five nominations, and three-time Latin Grammy winner Federico Vindver, B.M. '08 with four.

The nominations represent a broad spectrum of categories including record, album, and song of the year.

For example, Copello was nominated as a record producer along with Natalia Schlesinger, M.M. '21, as recording engineer in the categories of Record of the Year and Album of the Year.

Jon Secada, B.M. '83, M.M. '86, and Frost faculty member Gonzalo Rubalcaba, were nominated for Best Tropical Album.

New Frost lecturer, singer Roxana Amed, was nominated for Best Jazz Album.

These collaborations also represent the spirit, respect, and success a Frost School of Music education can achieve. ||

### Natalia Ramírez, M.A. '17

🏆 Album of the Year: recording engineer, *Mis Manos*, Camilo

### Roxana Amed, faculty

Jazz Album of the Year: *Ontology*, Roxana Amed

### Julio Reyes Copello, M.M. '00

Record of the Year: producer, "Si Hubieras Querido," Pablo Alborán

Record of the Year: producer and recording engineer, "Un Amor Eterno" (Version Balada), Marc Anthony

Album of the Year: producer *Vértigo*, Pablo Alborán

Album of the Year: producer, *Mis Amores*, Paula Arenas

Song of the Year: songwriter, "Si Hubieras Querido," Pablo Alborán

### Orlando Jacinto Garcia, M.M. '82, D.M.A. '85

Best Classical Contemporary Composition: composer, "Cuatro," *Orlando Jacinto Garcia, featuring Amernet String Quartet*

### Kendall Moore, M.M. '10, D.M.A. '16

Best Arrangement: arranger, "Blue in Green," *Ontology*, Roxana Amed

### Jon Secada, B.M. '83, M.M. '86 and Gonzalo Rubalcaba, faculty

Best Traditional Tropical Album: *Solos*, Jon Secada & Gonzalo Rubalcaba

### Natalia Schlesinger, M.M. '21

Record of the Year: recording engineer, "Si Hubieras Querido," Pablo Alborán

Album of the Year: recording engineer, *Vértigo*, Pablo Alborán

### Federico Vindver, B.M. '08

Record of the Year: producer, "Te Olvidaste," C.Tangana

Best Alternative Song: songwriter, "Te Olvidaste," C.Tangana

Best Rap/Hip Hop Song: songwriter, "Sana Sana," Nathy Peluso

Best Engineered Album: engineer, *El Madrileño*, C.Tangana

### Dan Warner, '92

Producer of the Year: producer, "Blanco," Ricardo Arjona



Roxana Amed



Natalia Ramirez



Orlando Jacinto Garcia



Kendall Moore



Jon Secada



Natalia Schlesinger



Dan Warner

NORA LEZANO

## Change-Agents for Chamber Music

INSTRUMENTAL performance majors were fortunate to interface with an outstanding roster of chamber music artists-in-residence this year, whose careers embody many Frost curricular Through Lines including entrepreneurship, marketing, and stage presence skills.

**Titus Underwood**, principal oboe for the Nashville Symphony, and associate professor at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, served as a chamber music artist-in-residence during the fall semester, and also taught in the oboe studio of Robert Weiner.

**Judy Christy**, principal oboe for the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra, and **Bruce Weinstein**, principal oboe for the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, also served as visiting oboe studio artists-in-residence.

“Chamber music is an essential part of our growth as musicians,” says Underwood. “In an orchestra, the group is led by the conductor, but in chamber music, all voices have to contribute ideas to make the piece come alive. It helps build solid intonation, communication skills, and better ensemble skills. It is impossible to become a great musician without learning to collaborate on smaller scales,” he says.

Underwood believes chamber music and smaller collaborations will be the future for many organizations. “It is a more flexible and leaner model, and it is easier to translate smaller ensemble works for online platforms. The Internet is a new stage that isn’t fully explored in our field. It is still in the horse and wagon days,” he says.

Changing mindsets is a first step. “Many musicians in our field have been trained to be plugs looking for outlets, or diamonds looking for brokers. If we as diamonds do not learn to create our own outlets or brokerage, we will just be another rock,” he says. “Yes, the excellence of playing the instrument is the key that opens the doors; however, we are required to have more skills to meet the demand our society is placing on us as artists.”

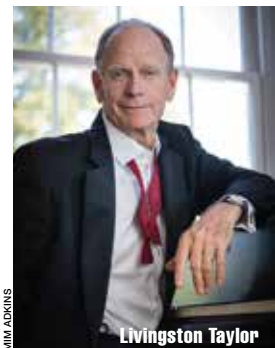
**Seth Parker Woods**, recipient of the Chamber Music America 2022 Michael Jaffee Visionary Award, and hailed by the *Guardian* as a cellist who possesses “mature artistry and willingness to go to the brink,” served as chamber music artist-in-residence this spring semester, culminating in an innovative evening-length



Titus Underwood



Seth Parker Woods



Livingston Taylor

project, *Liquid Room: Coming Together* involving multi-stage performances with quadraphonic sound, mixing old and new works, and sonic art under the same roof.

Woods orchestrated a way of experiencing the event as though at a rock festival or an electronic improvisation night. The public came and went, chose to stand or sit, the music went on without a break, and the bar stayed open, in and out. It conjoined the worlds of Anton Webern, Florence Price, Tania León, Steve Reich, Frederic Rzewski, Georges Aperghis and more. Students straddled genres in their performances.

“I enjoyed diving deep into these brilliant chamber works, some known to the students of Frost, and some brand new,” Woods says. “My overall goal was to continue the Frost School’s great lineage of exploration in musical and performative expression...and present another lens for the saying, ‘chamber music in any chamber.’”

**Livingston Taylor**, singer-songwriter, and professor emeritus of Berklee College of Music, was a chamber music artist-in-residence for both semesters. He worked with students on stage presence and career development.

In a woodwind masterclass he suggested eliminating pat phrases such as ‘Now we’re going to perform...’ from introductions. “They have zero impact on audiences,” he explained. Instead, he suggested, “start right away with interesting information about a composer or a piece. Make me smart, make me at ease...give me a tale, tell me a good story.” To illustrate, he asked a quintet to describe their approach to Samuel Barber’s *Summer Music*. The students noted the composer had indicated “slow and indolent” for the first movement, and shared they were imagining the feeling of sitting on a hot summer porch. “Let the audience in on the inspiration for a piece, or your interpretation,” Taylor said. “Help an audience feel comfortable and enthusiastic, made at ease by you.” ||



## A Journey of the Soul

JENNIFER GRIM, associate professor of flute and artistic coordinator for the Frost School of Music at Festival Napa Valley, presented a fabulous faculty debut concert for Frost Music Live on December 7 in Gusman Hall. The program featured a stunning array of works for flute and piano by Black musicians including *Alma* by composer-in-residence Tania León, *An evolving romance* by Jeffrey Mumford, *Klatka Still* by David Sanford, *Homeland* by Allison Loggins-Hull, *Argorú III* by Alvin Singleton, *WISH Sonatine* by Valerie Coleman, and *Suite* by William Grant Still.

Hailed as “a deft, smooth flute soloist” by *The New York Times*, Grim’s depth and breadth as a performer of solo and chamber repertoire has gained broad national acclaim. She has performed with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and St. Luke’s Chamber Ensemble and is the flutist of the award-winning Zephyros Winds and the New York Chamber Soloists.

Grim served previously on the faculty of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas for 12 years, and has been in residence at the Juilliard School, Eastman School of

Music, and many others. She is on the board of Chamber Music America, and served as program chair for the 2021 National Flute Association Annual Convention.

In November, Grim also presented a Frost flute studio concert that included a new flute quartet composition, *Passacaglia*, by Jessie Montgomery, the current composer-in-residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It was performed by Frost students

Cierra Hall, A.J. Meyer, Rafael Isidro Mendez Rubel, and Brendon Wilkins, pictured above.

The concert concluded with the world premiere of *Oxygen* by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Julia Wolfe performed by the full Frost Flute Ensemble, conducted by graduate student Jack Hontz. ||



## Shifting Thinking Through Research-Based Frameworks

RACE AND REPRESENTATION in Baroque Opera and in Music History Class was the subject for the Dr. Robert Kelley Memorial Distinguished Lecture Series at the Frost School of Music. It was presented on February 25 by Ayana Smith, associate professor of music in musicology at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, and specialist in Italian baroque opera.

Her scholarship helps to communicate how baroque opera “represents affinities with ancient Greek and Roman culture and philosophy to create distinctions between ‘civilized’ and ‘barbarous’ identities.”

In the lecture she discussed how the Egyptian queen, Cleopatra, was characterized and “othered” in Handel’s opera *Giulio Cesare* using European classical symbolism that conflated her with Venus, a symbol of Roman fertility and beauty. “Understanding opera from this perspective gives us the capability of reading it as a social map representing race, identity, culture, and society.”



“Scholars and institutions are questioning how our work can better serve the needs of our society,” Smith continued in the lecture. “Scholarship, curriculum, and pedagogy are three academic mechanisms that can support diversity and inclusivity in the classroom. While we have broadened [our course offerings] we still lack comprehensive tools for discussing race and representation in the classroom.”

To that end she is authoring the book *Inclusive Music Histories* “to open our eyes and ears to new combinations of musical materials.” She has also established a research laboratory at Indiana University named Creating Real Change to develop “research-based frameworks that help shift our thinking about how we teach music either by or about underrepresented minorities; collaborating on research and publication; and offering workshop opportunities for instructors to try out new ideas with trusted colleagues before introducing them in classroom settings.” ||

## Christian McBride Shares Artistry and Wisdom

THE DYNAMIC BASSIST, bandleader, composer, and festival headliner Christian McBride kicked off the fall semester in the Department of Studio Music and

Jazz with a two-day visit culminating in a concert on September 15 with the Frost Concert Jazz Band (CJB) directed by Associate Professor John Daversa, and the Frost Studio Jazz Band (SJB) directed by Associate Professor Etienne Charles.

Both bands are renowned for their outstanding musicianship, inspired performances, talented soloists, and well-crafted arrangements.

An eight-time Grammy Award-winning artist, McBride performs with deep fire, and teaches with great passion. He is also the artistic director of the JAS Academy in collaboration with the Frost School of Music in Aspen, Colorado.



FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Bassist Christian McBride takes a solo during a live performance

“Mr. McBride generously and joyfully shared his gifts with Frost CJB and Frost SJB for a soundcheck and a concert for an enthralled audience. The music and spirit lifted all in attendance—to a better place, a meaningful place—where it’s about life and music,” Daversa says.

The concert featured some of McBride’s originals such as “Gettin’ to It” and “Youthful Bliss” and his arrangements of Wes Montgomery’s “Road Song” and “Full House.”

It also featured several originals by Daversa including “Most of All” and “You Think You’re Funny.”

McBride’s classes and Q&A sessions with students addressed navigating a life in music.

“The students asked such thoughtful questions and bathed in the field of wisdom that Mr. McBride brought to our community,” Daversa says. “High vibes!”

Charles was also enthusiastic about McBride. “He was his usual giving, virtuosic, joyous self with nuggets of wisdom that I’m sure we’ll all remember forever.” ||

## Jazz Vocalist Brings Radiant Joy

ACCLAIMED SINGER Cyrille Aimée served as artist-in-residence for the Jazz Vocal program at the Frost School this fall and spring. She has appeared as a guest artist in the past for Frost Music Live and other concert series.

For this year’s residency, Aimée was on campus four different weeks to meet with students for one-on-one lessons, conduct masterclasses, and coach jazz vocal ensembles. She also mentored a composition/songwriting project, culminating in a video recording that was also presented at an April 5 concert, where she performed a live set with student vocalists and instrumentalists.

“There is so much freedom in the way Cyrille creates and makes music, and she brings that intention and energy to our students in her teaching and performing,” says Kate Reid, M.M. ’96, D.M.A. ’03, associate professor and director of the Jazz Vocal program. “She is so present in the moment when she opens her mouth to make a sound. She encourages our jazz vocal students to

lose any inhibitions in the musical setting and just sing!”

Improvisation is a way of life for Aimée, an adventurous Grammy-nominated artist. She went from singing on street corners in Europe to dazzling audiences in the world’s most prestigious jazz festivals, and from sneaking out to sing in gypsy encampments in her native France to being tagged a “rising star in the galaxy of jazz singers” by *The New York Times*.

Among countless accolades, Aimée won the Montreux Jazz Festival Vocal Competition and the Sarah Vaughan International Jazz Vocal Competition early in her career.

“Cyrille has been an absolute joy,” says Department Chair and Associate Professor John Daversa. “She is radiant, fearless, and gently challenges all around her to join her in that freedom of life and music. She is showing our Studio Music and Jazz community the boundless potential we all hold inside.” ||



Cyrille Aimée

ANNA WEBER



## Peerless Duo is Beyond Sublime

A POWERFUL PERFORMANCE by singer Cécile McLorin Salvant and pianist Sullivan Fortner graced the stage in Maurice Gusman Concert Hall on October 12, providing a striking example of the kind of exponential magic that occurs when two musicians at the top of their abilities combine their rarified gifts. Salvant and Fortner won a 2018 Grammy Award for Best Jazz Vocal Album for *The Window* (Mack Avenue) and were completely in their element throughout this live performance.

"Their concert was beyond sublime. A complete distraction from reality! They went all over the world in song," says Associate Professor Etienne Charles, who has collaborated with the duo on many occasions.

The evening began with Frost Vocal Jazz ensembles singing Brazilian selections by Antonio Carlos Jobim and others, then featured Salvant and Fortner in an engaging set of lyric-rich songs such as "Because of You"

by Brazilian songwriter Djavan, "Nobody," by Bert Williams, "Lush Life" by Billy Strayhorn, "Together, Wherever We Go" from *Gypsy* by Jule Styne and Stephen Sondheim, "Fable" from *Light in the Piazza* by Adam Guettel, and "Left Over," an exquisite original by Salvant.

"Cecile has many big fans in the vocal jazz program and having the chance to hear and see her perform live with Sullivan Fortner is as good as it gets when it comes to the art of communication and complete freedom in music," says Kate Reid, M.M. '96, D.M.A. '03, associate professor and jazz vocal program director. "These two incredible storytellers were incredibly generous with their time and teaching in a masterclass." ||



FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**Cécile McLorin Salvant** sings in Gusman Concert Hall with pianist Sullivan Fortner. While growing up in Pinecrest, Florida, she played classical piano recitals on the same stage.

## A Gateway into the Human Experience

BRAZILIAN MUSIC was flowing freely on April 8 when renowned singer Luciana Souza and composer/arranger Vince Mendoza headlined the season closer for Jazz Roots at the Adrienne Arsht Center in downtown Miami with the Frost Concert Jazz Band. The concert featured selections from the Souza-Mendoza collaboration, *Storytellers*, recorded with WDR Big Band Cologne.

Considered one of the most important singers of her generation, Souza brought her deeply personal approach to songs by Antonio Carlos Jobim, Chico Pinheiro, Edu Lobo, Chico Buarque, Guinga, Djavan, Ivan Lins, and Gilberto Gil.

"Songs have always been a mysterious gateway into the human experience and into the cultures from which they spring," Souza says in the album's liner notes.

A renowned arranger for a multitude of award-winning projects, Mendoza conducted his transcendent orchestrations with depth and finesse. The music, he says, "is essential and truthful, where joy and sorrow, loss and love are stories articulated in ways that reach incomparable beauty."



LUCIANA SOUZA KIM FOX

John Daversa, chair of the Department of Studio Music and Jazz, is the director of the Frost Concert Jazz Band.

The John Daversa Quintet opened the concert with selections from his *Cuarentena: With Family at Home* album, featuring music through the lens of the bolero, with Daversa on trumpet, Tal Cohen, M.M. '15 (piano), Carlo De Rosa (bass), Assistant Professor of Practice Dafnis Prieto (drums), and Sammy Figueroa (percussion). ||

## Carrington Motivates

**D**rummer, producer, and educator Terri Lyne Carrington joined the Frost Concert Jazz Band on March 3 for a concert of her music, including three arrangements by Frost jazz students Carolina Calvache, Kate Hamann, and Casey Dickey.

Carrington is a multi-Grammy-winner, NEA Jazz Master, Doris Duke grant recipient, and artistic director for the Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice. She has toured and recorded with countless luminaries including Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, and Dianne Reeves. In 2013, she made history as the first woman to win a Grammy for Best Jazz Instrumental Album. ||



JOHN WATSON

## Unabashed and Dramatic Concert Ranks Top 10 for the Year



Left to right: Charles Castleman, guest soloist with Frost Symphony Orchestra; Conducting fellow Kyle Elgarten introduces a competition-winner; Gerard Schwarz cues an entrance during Mahler's 6th Symphony

CHARLES CASTLEMAN, Frost professor of violin, international soloist and string pedagogue, performed Dvořák's Violin Concerto with the Frost Symphony Orchestra in Gusman Concert Hall on October 30.

Filled with Czech melody and dance rhythms, the concerto was a great showpiece for Castleman. "Unlike the cooler, more objective style of many contemporary violinists, Castleman's approach is unabashedly romantic and interpretive," said Larry Budmen of the *South Florida Classical Review*. "He is unafraid to bend a phrase or vary vibrato in order to enhance a score's impact...with his technique still strong and intact, the difficult passages in the instrument's highest reaches emerged clean and exact...[and] he infused the concluding Allegro giocoso with gypsy spirit."

The concert opened with *Four Textures* for orchestra by Gregory J. Watson, D.M.A. '21, winner of the 2019 Frost composition competition, conducted by master's student Kyle Elgarten, B.M. '20.

The program concluded with Mahler's Symphony No. 6, earning the Frost Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Gerard Schwarz a place in *South Florida Classical Review's* list of Top 10 Performances of 2021: "The symphony's massive forces, length and complex structure presents an especially daunting task...Schwarz's well-rehearsed, highly charged reading captured the score's drama and tragedy...assertive brass and a huge string sonority highlighted a disciplined and incisive corporate effort. In the epic finale, the momentum was inexorable through the final hammer blows." ||

## Commanding Percussion

The prodigious talents of The Percussion Collective, a progressive ensemble of top professionals from around the world, including Frost Associate Professor Svet Stoyanov, presented a concert on October 3 with jaw-dropping performances of *Seaborn: Above* by Garth Neustadter, *Stress & Flow* by Alejandro Viñao, and adaptations for percussion ensemble of major works by Ravel and Piazzolla. The collective also worked with percussion students one-on-one, and participated in an online masterclass for the Frost School of Music UM YouTube channel. ||



COLBERT ARTISTS MANAGEMENT

## Joshua Bell in Side-by-Side Rehearsal

A SIDE-BY-SIDE orchestral workshop with famed violinist-conductor Joshua Bell and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields Orchestra was a semester highlight this spring. Co-hosted by the Miami Chamber Music Society and the Frost School of Music, 30 instrumental students rehearsed Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony No. 3, sitting side-by-side and receiving sage advice from the top pros who were touring for several months.

With his Stradivarius violin a constant companion, Bell cued with his bow and demonstrated subtle passages. For an oboe solo near the end of the symphony, he suggested, "this is a memory looking back, a reflection of what has come before. The sforzando is not angular, it's a crying sort, a loving one."

Orchestra members returned a second day to conduct masterclasses. ||



JOÃO FELIPE DA FRAGA



## Mason Bates Revs Up with a World Premiere by Frost Wind Ensemble

*BOOTLEGGERS BREAK* by celebrated composer Mason Bates received its world premiere on March 11 by the Frost Wind Ensemble, dynamically conducted by Professor Robert Carnochan, who also serves as the chair of the Department of Instrumental Performance. Bates was on campus for rehearsals and the premiere.

Described as a “quicksilver opener,” with exciting big-band riffs and bluesy nods, the inspiration for the work was championship stock car racer Lee Petty, who, it is rumored, had been a Prohibition-era bootleg runner.

“It’s not often I get to write for many saxophones and horns, with a half-dozen percussionists backing them up,” Bates said in his introduction. “The ‘break’ of the title refers both to escapes, and drum-breaks.”

“Bringing new music to life is an exhilarating experience,” Carnochan says. “It’s the creation of a new piece of art that no one has ever experienced before, and no one will ever experience for the first time, ever again.”

Having Mason here made the experience richer and

the premiere much more special, especially in terms of tempi, dynamics, balances—and energy!”

The Frost Wind Ensemble plans to reprise the new work at the 2023 CBDNA Conference in Atlanta, Georgia.

Also on the program was Bates’s highly challenging *Sea Blue Circuitry*, guest conducted by Professor Emeritus Gary Green, who premiered it with the Frost Wind Ensemble in 2011.

Bates composed the Grammy-winning opera, *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, and is also known for incorporating electronic sounds into his symphonic music. ||



Robert Carnochan conducts the Frost Wind Ensemble

## Vocal Quartet Empowers and Explores

QUINCE ENSEMBLE, guest artists on April 26, are known for pushing the boundaries of vocal ensemble literature. The singers Liz Pearce, Kayleigh Butcher, Amanda DeBoer Bartlett, and Carrie Henneman Shaw, premiered five works written specifically for them by Frost faculty composers Shawn Crouch, D.M.A. '16; Dorothy Hindman, B.M. '88, D.M.A. '94; Juraj Kojs, Lansing McLoskey, and Department Chair Charles Norman Mason, B.M. '77.

When Quince Ensemble formed a decade ago, there wasn’t much contemporary music for a four-woman ensemble. They quickly built their own repertoire from the ground up, simultaneously providing wider exposure for the music of living composers. “After hearing their extraordinary performances of music by composers such as David Lang, Kaija Saariaho, and Giacinto Scelsi, we jumped at the chance to write for them,” says Mason. “Those three composers are vastly different in their sound, and so is the music of the Frost faculty composers, so we knew they would be able to do whatever we threw at them!”

Poetry was a common thread for the new compositions: Crouch’s, *The Way We Departed*, uses touching poems about love and loss by Ilyse Kusnetz; Mason’s new work uses a text from Edgar Lee Masters’ poem, *Silence*; and Hindman’s, *The Fault of Love*, is inspired by a quote by composer Georges Aperghis about the relationship between a composer and the performers. ||



KARJANA STUDIOS

## Rocketing to New Realms

Heralded by *The New York Times* as “our leading new-music foursome” and by the *Boston Globe* as “superheroes of the new-music world,” the JACK Quartet is dedicated to the performance, commissioning, and appreciation of new string quartet music.

Comprising violinists Christopher Otto and Austin Wulliman, violist John Pickford Richards, and cellist Jay Campbell, the JACK Quartet were special guest artists at the Frost School on February 19, offering mentoring to undergraduate and graduate chamber music and composition students, and presenting a thrilling evening concert to an appreciative audience of all ages in Gusman Concert Hall.

Known internationally for their impeccable musicianship, intellectual ferocity, and a “take-no-prisoners sense of commitment,” they are the recipients of an Avery Fisher Career Grant, and have earned hundreds of accolades and awards for their recordings and performances. ||



BEOWULF SHEEHAN

## Fellowship with the L.A. Phil Expands Conductor's Experience

CAMILO TÉLLEZ always knew he would pursue a career in music. Born into a musical family, he started playing the violin, then the piano. However, it wasn't until he watched an orchestra rehearsal as a teenager in Bogotá, Colombia that he recognized his true calling.

"I saw how all of those combinations of sound were possible," he recalls. "It was like a huge dopamine hit to the brain. I knew this was where I belonged."

Téllez first earned a Master's Degree in Orchestral Conducting at Indiana University and then, in 2019, landed one of four coveted spots that led to an Artist Diploma in Conducting from the Frost School of Music, where he is now pursuing a doctoral degree. Téllez had applied because the program is led by Gerard Schwarz, music director of the Frost Symphony Orchestra and Schwarz-Benaroya Professor of Orchestral Activities, who is "very well-known and very well-respected."

The Frost program was a career-changer.

"Just watching Maestro Schwarz, just hearing him tell me, 'Do this, do that,' was invaluable," Téllez says. "I got quite a lot of chances to conduct and that pace of experience is very rare in other places."

The Frost program also provided opportunities to work

with Grammy-winning composers and performers.

Schwarz was instrumental in those connections, too.

"He's very generous with his contacts and his network," Téllez adds. "To make a career you need exposure. You need contacts, and I certainly made those."

The experience soon led to a Dudamel Fellowship at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, a program that provides an opportunity for young conductors to develop their craft. He is one of three fellows working with music director Gustavo Dudamel and the orchestra musicians.

Schwarz believes his former student's success is to be expected. "Camilo showed great music qualities from the moment I saw him conduct. He has a lovely lyrical quality to his conducting that was very attractive. His work ethic is a great attribute as a cover conductor, as his ability to digest complicated scores quickly."

Téllez's responsibilities during the year-long fellowship require both conducting and participation in various outreach programs, including assisting in the education and mentorship of young musicians in the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA).

He believes music has the power to transform young people's lives, having seen it firsthand. From 2017 through 2018, he was the music director of 40 Horas, an outreach program that fosters musical talent in underprivileged areas of Bogotá, patterned after El Sistema, a music-education program founded in Venezuela in 1975 that brings free classical music training to impoverished children. "I started in the program thinking I'm going to help these kids," he recalls. "In the end they helped me more. They made me a better human being."

Along with his YOLA and Dudamel fellowship duties, Téllez also serves as assistant conductor of the Frost Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Schwarz, spending half his time in Miami and the other half in Los Angeles.

He also has guest conducted in places both near and far from home, including Germany, Finland Netherlands, Italy, Brazil, Colombia and, within the United States.

He doesn't see himself settling in one city—at least for now. "I want to continue guest conducting," he says. "I want to learn more. I want to grow musically, and this is certainly one way to accomplish that." ||



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST



## Carnegie Hall Recital Debut with Rare Guarneri Violin

TIANXU LIU, a second-year Doctor of Musical Arts student violinist at the Frost School of Music, made her debut at the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall in New York on April 14, performing on the rare 300-year-old Sue Miller Guarneri Violin.

The 1714 Giuseppe Guarneri 'filius Andreae' violin was purchased by the Frost School through a major donation from the Miami-based Miller family in honor of their matriarch, Sue Miller, an avid music lover. The instrument is loaned to a talented Frost violin student upon the recommendation of the string faculty.

"Performing on a violin of the caliber of the Sue Miller Guarneri is a very special opportunity" says Bettina Mussumeli, lecturer of Violin Performance, Pedagogy and Chamber Music, and Liu's teacher. "It offers Tianxu millions of different nuances to experiment with in color and sound. It allows her to stretch her own limits, pushing the boundaries of her musical imagination while learning how to let the violin itself speak. Tianxu has excellent technique and wonderful innate musicality. More importantly, she possesses that most elusive quality: her own unique musical voice. It is that special something that one immediately recognizes when one listens to her play."

Liu's recital program synthesized her intimate relationship with diverse communities and cultures and framed two premieres. "When I started to think about

my repertoire, I wanted to do something that no one else had done," she says. "I contacted composer Delong Wang, he was very kind and supportive and later sent me the piece "Drinking Alone With The Moon," which was influenced by one of the greatest Chinese poets, Li Bai, who inspired me throughout my childhood."

She was also honored to perform the world premiere of "Silencing the Sirens" composed for her by Frost Professor Charles Mason, plus works by Kreisler, Fauré, and Beethoven.

As a Mancini fellow in the Frost School's Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra and a violinist in the Frost Symphony Orchestra, she is enjoying her doctoral years.

"The school has a great reputation, supportive peers, outstanding facilities and lots of performance opportunities. It provides a fantastic education and creates a great transition path from being a student to a professional soloist, chamber musician and artist." ||



## Doctoral Candidate Receives Prominent Prizes

Composer and doctoral candidate Kevin Day is no stranger to awards. But when the 25-year-old learned he was honored with a 2022 Julia Perry Memorial Award and fellowship from the Alba Music Festival in Italy, he was "amazed and honored."

Professor Robert Carnochan, chair of the Department of Instrumental Performance and director of the Frost Wind Ensemble, "wasn't surprised at all." Day is already a household name in the wind ensemble world, with hundreds of published works.

Professor and Composition Chair Charles Norman Mason says, "Kevin is one of those unique individuals who is extremely gifted and accomplished and yet is humble and has an eagerness to learn. His compositions have already received performances by the Detroit Symphony and the Boston Symphony Orchestra!"

Day's music often intersects between the worlds of jazz, minimalism, Latin music, fusion, and contemporary classical idioms. It is "characterized by propulsive, syncopated rhythms, colorful orchestration, and instrumental virtuosity" (Robert Kirzinger, Boston Symphony Orchestra).

Day was selected by the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Cone Composition Institute as one of four emerging composers of 2021. Soon after arriving at Frost, the prodigious composer landed the Dean's Fellowship and Teaching Assistantship Award for the 2021-2022 academic year, one of the most prestigious awards offered by the University of Miami's Graduate School. ||



## Accomplished Guitarist Composes for Feature Film

ANDREA GONZÁLEZ CABALLERO, a second year doctoral candidate in guitar performance at the Frost School of Music, is credited for co-writing and performing on four tracks featured in the feature film,



Andrea González Caballero

*No Man's Land*, released in selected theaters and streaming on Amazon Prime Video.

She credits the innovative experiences at Frost for helping her “expand my musical vision and improve as an artist.”

Hailing from Spain, Caballero is described by *OperaWorld Magazine* as “the female voice of the Spanish guitar” and by *BBC Music*

*Magazine* as “one of today’s young rising stars of the classical guitar.” She was the youngest guitarist to receive First Prize at the XII Alhambra International Guitar

Competition (Valencia), and is a laureate of multiple international competitions.

“Andrea is without a doubt one of the best guitarists of her generation. I am very fortunate to have her in my studio,” says Frost faculty artist Rafael Padrón.

The multi-talented guitarist is focused on expanding her composing, and collaborating with other accomplished musicians at Frost who are pursuing advanced degrees. For example, she recorded and premiered five pieces by doctoral conducting candidate and multi-Latin Grammy winner Carlos Fernando Lopez, B.M. ’12, M.M. ’20, on an album titled *Euskaraz*; one of the selections was co-composed by Caballero. “It is a journey through a variety of sonorities with the classical guitar as a common thread. We recorded with the City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra,” she shares.

In addition, Caballero is a co-founder of *Identidade*, a project that involves 11 women who are commissioning, recording, and filming new works for flute and guitar. ||

## Tuba Students Once Again Win Major Competitions

EIGHT STUDENTS from Associate Professor Aaron Tindall’s tuba/euphonium studio achieved great heights in recent auditions including winning coveted positions in prestigious professional orchestras and bands.

“In the Frost Tuba/Euphonium Studio, students have embraced a culture of working out any performance deficiencies by becoming efficient with their daily fundamentals,” Tindall says. “This focus allows us to be musically free to choose how we convey our ideas as artists to our listeners. This hard work has paid off for each of these students, along with their individual perseverance, mindfulness, fearless approach, and a precision and confidence that comes through the fact that they have truly built themselves here at the Frost School of Music.”

Mason Soria, a second-year master’s student and teaching assistant, won the principal tuba position with the Richmond Symphony, a professional orchestra. “Frost gave me the perfect landscape to really hone in on my craft and take the final steps in preparing me for a job

like this. Dr. Tindall has been extremely helpful sharing his knowledge of the tuba’s fundamentals inside and out, as well as the orchestral approach. And, the studio is a wonderful environment.”



Mason Soria

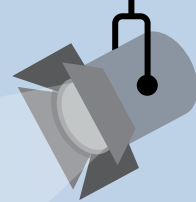
Natalie Colegrove was the winner of the United States Army Band Pershing’s Own 2022 Solo Euphonium Competition, and will perform with them this year. “I thought my chances of winning were pretty low since I was the youngest of the three finalists,” says Colegrove, a first-year student who competed against doctoral and master’s students.

In 2021, Justin Gruber, a second-year student, won the Principal Tuba audition with the New Mexico Philharmonic, and master’s student John Mangonon won the United States Navy Band Tuba Audition and the United States Air Force Band of Mid America Tuba Audition. Master’s student Lucas Davey won the U.S. Air Force Ceremonial Band-DC Tuba Audition.

Kendra Luedke, Jason Donnelly, and Kevin Flanagan also won major competitions and awards. ||



# DOWNBEAT 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL STUDENT MUSIC AWARDS



FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC CONGRATULATES  
ITS 2022 DOWNBEAT STUDENT AWARDEES, FACULTY DIRECTORS AND MENTORS.

## Undergraduate College Winners

**June Cavlan**, Vocal Jazz Soloist

Kate Reid, faculty mentor

**The Frost Vocal Quintet**

Small Vocal Jazz Group

Kate Reid, director

**Janelle Finton**, "I Love You"

Jazz Arrangement

Kate Reid, faculty mentor

## Graduate College Winners

**Mikailo Kasha**, Jazz Soloist (Upright Bass)

Chuck Bergeron, faculty mentor

**Frost Extensions**, Large Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Kate Reid, director

Outstanding Soloist: Daniel Fiamengo  
on "Round Midnight"

**Gary (Kaiji) Wang**, "Pearls"

Jazz Arrangement, Studio Orchestra

Stephen Guerra, faculty mentor

## Undergraduate Outstanding Performances

**Emma Hedrick**, Vocal Jazz Soloist

Kate Reid, faculty mentor

**Will Ryan III**, Vocal Jazz Soloist

Kate Reid, faculty mentor

**Frost Jazz Vocal II**

Large Vocal Jazz Ensemble

Kate Reid, director

Outstanding Soloist: Jameson Falconer  
on "The Kicker"

**Joey Curreri** (Trumpet)

Joey Curreri Quintet

Outstanding Soloist, Small Jazz Combo

Brian Lynch, faculty mentor

**The American Music Ensemble**, Blues/  
Pop/Rock Group

Daniel Strange, director

## Graduate Outstanding Performances

**Bailey Hinkley Grogan**, Vocal Jazz Soloist

Kate Reid, faculty mentor

**Katie Oberholtzer**, Vocal Jazz Soloist

Kate Reid, faculty mentor

**Frost Jazz Vocal I**, Small Vocal Jazz Group

Kate Reid, director

**Mikailo Kasha Trio**, Small Jazz Trio

Chuck Bergeron, faculty mentor

**Jason Arkins** (Alto Saxophone)

The Frost Septet

Outstanding Soloist, Small Jazz Combo

Chuck Bergeron, director

**Tim Watson**, (Guitar)

The Frost Septet

Outstanding Soloist, Small Jazz Trio

Chuck Bergeron, director

**Casey Dickey**, "I've Never Been in Love Before"

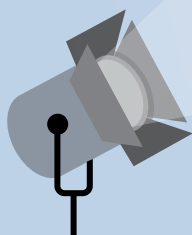
Outstanding Jazz Arrangement, Studio Orchestra

Stephen Guerra, faculty mentor

**Connor Rohrer**, "Too Soon To Tell"

Outstanding Original Composition, Small Ensemble

Chuck Bergeron, faculty mentor



## Meet the Newest Stamps Jazz Quintet

THE STAMPS Jazz Quintet, class of 2025, debuted at the Frost School of Music this fall. Five Studio Music and Jazz undergraduates will perform in a working jazz group for the length of their tenure at Frost, as well as participate in other Frost ensembles.

They are: Joshua Polion, trumpet, from Louisville, Kentucky; Adam Lord, saxophone, from West Palm Beach, Florida; Devin Shaw, piano, from Chicago, Illinois; Jacob Smith, drums, from Hermon, Massachusetts; and Aidan McCarthy, bass, from Oakland, California.

Through the Stamps Scholars Program, funded by the Stamps Family Charitable Foundation, exceptional young artists of the highest caliber are selected every four years for prestigious music scholarships at Frost that include tuition, room and board, and special experiences.

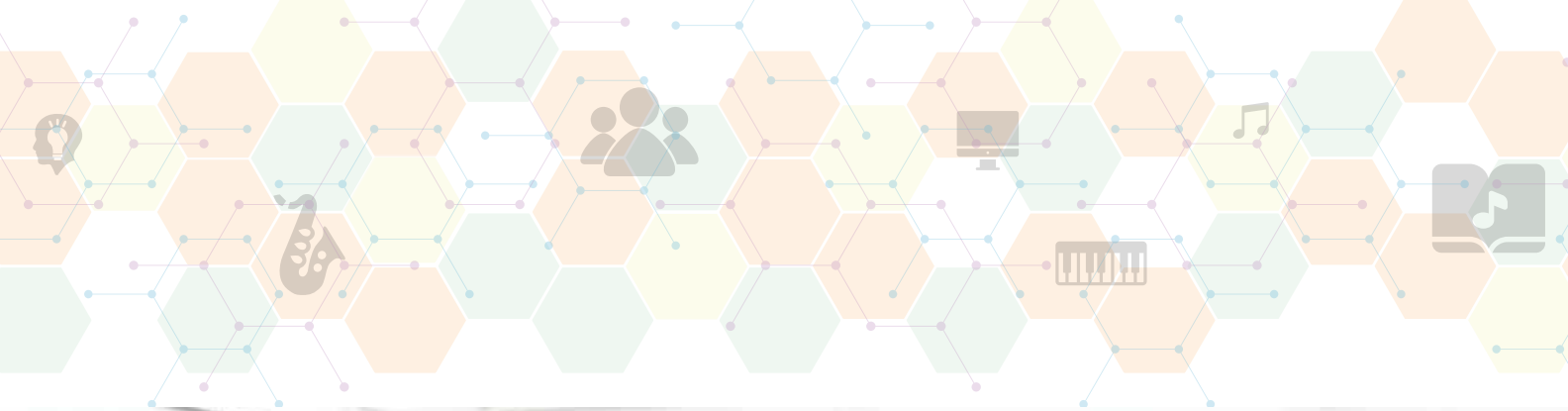
For example, the Stamps Jazz Quintet traveled to New York this spring break to perform on March 21 at Dizzy's Club, in Lincoln Center. "Playing at Dizzy's was a cathartic experience of joy, excitement, and serenity, says McCarthy. "It was killin,'" adds Shaw. The Frost Jazz Sextet,

Professor of Professional Practice Chuck Bergeron, and Associate Professor Etienne Charles were also featured.

There are three other Stamps ensembles at Frost: the Stamps Brass Quintet, Stamps String Quartet, and Stamps Woodwind Quintet. ||



MICHAEL GUTIERREZ



Doctoral candidate Guilia Ripini teaches students at a school served by the Donna E. Shalala MusicReach Program at the Frost School of Music.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VERSATILE LIGHT STUDIO, FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI



# MUSIC RESEARCH LEADERS ADDRESS COMPLEX CHALLENGES OF SOCIETY

MUSIC SCHOLAR CARLOS ABRIL knows all too well the power of education and the lasting influence of teachers who encourage exploration. Growing up in the Little Havana neighborhood of Miami, he was able to pursue his love of music and the French horn at a time when his parents couldn't afford to buy him an instrument or pay for private lessons.

That same opportunity-for-all mindset eased his way into a love of performance in community and all-state ensembles and, eventually, into undergraduate, master's and doctoral studies in music performance and education.

"I saw personally how music and the arts can transform lives because it transformed mine," says Abril, B.M. '93, now a professor of Music Education and associate dean of research at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music, his undergraduate alma mater. "I wouldn't be here if not for a public school system that opened doors for me. I wouldn't be here if not for a music district supervisor who believed everyone deserved an opportunity to learn music, no matter where they came from and whether they could afford to play."

That personal experience and an abiding sense of gratitude have informed his research. He seeks to identify—and eliminate—the "visible and invisible barriers to the study of music in schools." His work is published in research journals, books and anthologies. "Through my research I seek to find more effective ways to reach underserved and underrepresented groups in schools through music."

Abril's work is an example of how research conducted by Frost faculty and graduate students aims to address the challenges of society by investigating topics that ultimately lead to actionable solutions. In other words, data and conclusions are the means to an end, ushering awareness, change, and results. "A body of research should, over time, inform action," he adds.

At Frost, that research is spread among programs and departments, and also across disciplines, in collaboration with other University of Miami schools as well as experts around the world. As associate dean of research, Abril supports his colleagues' research agenda while serving as a liaison between Frost faculty and the university community at large.

Abril is particularly proud of the school's "incredibly diverse" areas of research. For instance, musicologist David Ake, B.M. '83, chair of the Department of Musicology, has published groundbreaking books on the identities and communities formed by different jazz cultures. His colleague Melvin L. Butler, an ethnomusicologist and associate professor, has received critical acclaim for his published work on the music of the African diaspora in the U.S., Haiti, and Jamaica.



BY ANA VECIANA-SUAREZ

Music therapy Professor Shannon de l'Etoile's studies explore how mothers' singing supports infant development and Professor Teresa Lesiuk's work has shed light on how music can affect cognitive performance in groups, from air traffic controllers to breast cancer patients and people with Parkinson's disease.

Student graduate research is equally multidisciplinary and wide-ranging. Doctoral candidate Hilary Yip, who is pursuing a Ph.D. degree in music education with a music therapy emphasis, combined her two great passions—martial arts and music therapy—to design individualized rhythm and martial arts sessions that improved gross

motor skills in boys with autism. Music Education Ph.D. candidate Giulia Ripani's studies led her to co-found a project that weds educational pedagogy development with community outreach.

Violinist Rafael Torralvo, M.M. '18, whose master's thesis explores how music, literature, and politics come together to inform

national identity in Brazil, says the variety of Frost faculty's scholarship was instrumental in developing his own academic interests. And Marcus Grant, M.M. '21, who completed two master's programs at the Frost School, is considered an expert in hip-hop and Black protest music. He credits a Frost professor for serving as a role model. Both he and Torralvo are now pursuing doctoral degrees at other prestigious institutions.

This medley of topics is no coincidence. Frost attracts students from around the world and the university itself sits at the crossroads of two hemispheres, in a city known for the fusing of cultures. In the case of Abril's research, his lifelong body of work speaks directly to the importance of attracting and responding to young musicians from diverse backgrounds.

His most recent study, done in conjunction with Kenneth Elpus of the University of Maryland, used data from U.S. graduating high school classes to create a demographic profile of high school music ensemble students. They found that African-American and Latino students were "significantly under-represented" in instrumental music classes. Also, in comparison to their higher socioeconomic status peers, fewer lower socioeconomic students registered for these classes. On the other hand, choir—the most popular high school music course—was more representative of the general student body.

## Visible and Invisible Barriers

These numbers, Abril explains, raise several questions: Are certain groups of people not registering for these programs because they're not interested? What can be done to make the study of music more relevant to all? How do successful teachers work with students? What is music education doing wrong? What can it do better?

"We have to make our music education programs more culturally responsive to changing demographics," he adds. "And we have to look at the [demographic] makeup of the teachers in those programs, too. Currently, the teaching force is predominantly white. The profession needs to work harder to recruit Black and Latinx music educators."

In many ways, that commitment to diversify is already underway. Abril's research is used by organizations intent on widening community access to music education. He also serves on the advisory board of Save Our Music, a national non-profit that gives grants to public schools to support music education. In 2017, after participating in the Yale School of Music's Symposium on Music in Schools, he was among those credited for contributing to "The Declaration on Equity in Music for City Students." The paper seeks to provide a policy framework that will encourage a national discussion on the inequities that persist in music education.

Change is here, he adds optimistically: "We weren't having these kinds of discussion 20 years ago, but now there's a certain awareness that we must do better in serving our underrepresented communities through music."



Associate Dean and Professor Carlos Abril, right, meets with doctoral candidate Giulia Ripani, center, and Melissa Ryan, Ph.D. '20





## Music Affects the Body and Brain

In the Music Therapy program, mission-driven research is equally important, and professors are using music to create change. Shannon de l'Etoile, who grew up in a family of musicians, had always been interested in music and helping people. She found that Neurologic Music Therapy (NMT) combines those two areas well. (The NMT model is based on a scientific understanding of how the brain processes and produces music. This knowledge is then used to help patients who need to either develop or regain skills in the areas of movement, speech and language, and cognition.)

De l'Etoile, who also serves as associate dean of graduate studies at Frost, focuses on how a mother's singing can help strengthen her relationship with her baby. "The goal is to use music to help interactions [between mom and infant] but also to promote infants' development, especially those in challenging circumstances," she says.

Examples of mothers singing to their infants' can be found in all societies and time periods. This infant-directed musical connection transcends language, race and religion, history and geography. "In all known cultures, mothers sing to their infants and they modify their pitch and tempo depending on how the infant is behaving," she explains.

But not all mothers recognize their infants' behavioral cues or respond in an appropriate way, which is where de l'Etoile's research proves helpful. Using what she has learned in her studies, she is currently developing a training program in collaboration with UM's Linda Ray Intervention Center, an agency that fosters the development of at-risk children in the community. The initiative will "empower the mothers to feel more confident and competent in responding to their infants through singing" she adds, "while also helping infants practice self-regulation, which is critical to their development."

Teresa Lesiuk, the program director for Music Therapy, has zeroed in on how music therapy can improve cognitive function in different populations.

Lesiuk's first study at the University of Miami was a collaboration with Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center staff. They put together a four-week mindfulness-based music program for breast cancer patients receiving adjuvant chemotherapy.

The 15 participants received individual one-hour-per-week music therapy sessions that consisted of varied music activities, including mental strategies to enhance moment-to-moment awareness. The women were also given homework to complete.

Researchers measured mood and attention using various performance and profile tests. By the fifth week, the team found that such distress symptoms as anxiety, depression and tension had decreased. Music therapy also reduced the effects of "chemo brain," a brain fog that affects patients receiving treatment.

"We found the greatest improvement in fatigue," adds Lesiuk.

Encouraged by the results, Lesiuk joined with the Movement Disorder program at the Miller School of Medicine to investigate how music therapy affects cognition in people diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. In a music camp setting, she used an intensive group piano-training program to see how it impacted executive functions. Again, she discovered that intensive piano training significantly enhanced cognitive performance.

Lesiuk's studies are an integral part of a growing body of research that explores not only how music affects the body and brain but also how it can be harnessed to improve our lives. To observe positive changes in study participants is highly rewarding, she says. So is knowing that her research "continues to generate other research [in the field], and it also serves as a catalyst" in the delivery of care.

## Expanding How Music History is Taught

The thread from research to policy and action can take different forms. Such is the case with the groundbreaking studies by Frost music historian



**Top: Associate Professor and Program Director**

**Teresa Lesiuk lectures in a music therapy classroom;**

**Bottom: Associate Dean and Professor Shannon de l'Etoile presents a 'CaneTalk YouTube lecture on singing and infant development**

David Ake and ethnomusicologist Melvin L. Butler. Their individual research has promoted meaningful cultural exchange and broadened the traditional focus on Western European music by American music schools.

Ake, a jazz pianist and composer, has authored several books, published numerous articles and delivered many papers that challenge the way we understand jazz and its place in the pantheon of musical genres.

Historically, music schools in the United States have taken a relatively narrow view of what genres were deemed worthy of study.

"Certain genres were what was offered, and what was studied," Ake says. "There was this assumption that only these were 'real music.' Everything else was fluff."

Until fairly recently, even jazz was dismissed as "not important enough," Ake recalls. The Frost School, however, has long been at the forefront of a movement to teach students

**Their individual research has promoted meaningful cultural exchange and broadened the traditional focus on Western European music by American music schools.**

more diverse genres of music and music history. Faculty and students are encouraged to explore outside the traditional boundaries of Western classical music.

Ake points to a first-year class, "Experiencing Music," required of all

Frost undergraduate students. The course introduces them to global musical traditions. "It makes students aware that there's a whole world out there with a deep history of music worth exploring," he says. "It's a way to show them the possibilities."

In addition, all undergraduates take at least four Musicianship classes and four Skills Ensembles through the Frost School's core Experiential Music Curriculum that incorporate hands-on training across multiple genres, including improvisation and composition.

Boosting awareness, in turn, helps students become both good musical citizens and better performers as they incorporate what they've learned into their playing. Butler, an associate musicology professor and professional saxophonist, says these courses may be the only time students get the opportunity to learn about other musical cultures and their luminaries. He remembers giving a lecture on African-American song traditions in which he spoke about gospel singer Sister Rosetta Tharpe, whose music was a unique mixture of spiritual lyrics and electric guitar. "A student [in the class] raised his hand and asked, 'Why am I just learning about this woman?'" says Butler. "He was struck by the fact that he had gone all these years without hearing anything about her." Musical scholars now consider Tharpe an early and powerful influence in rock and roll.

The impact of Ake's published research on jazz and Butler's scholarly writing on music, identity, and religion in the Caribbean and the U.S. are felt beyond research journals. Marcus Grant, who earned two masters' degrees from the Frost School (one

in jazz performance and one in musicology last year), says the diversity of Frost's faculty served as a motivational boost for him.

Butler joined the University of Miami while Grant was working on his first graduate degree. The hire was eye-opening to Grant.

"He was a performer and a scholar," Grant says, "and I saw that was possible for me," a Black man in a field where they are few and far between.

Rafael Torralvo agrees that Frost faculty's wide-ranging research—and dedication to promoting individual interests—was a big attraction for him when he decided to pursue a master's degree in musicology. "Some institutions are more traditional," he explains. "At Frost, the approach [to musicology] is much broader than studying just the music. The faculty encourage you to look at music through the lens of several disciplines."

He evokes the names of several professors who guided him in his research into the music of his native country: David Ake, Melvin Butler, Marysol Quevedo, Deborah Schwartz-Kates (now retired). Each is well-known for specific areas of study, from jazz to post-Castro Cuban music. "They're stellar



**Top: Department Chair and Associate Professor of Musicology David Ake with Frost students;**  
**Bottom: Associate Professor Melvin Butler lectures in the Weeks Library**



scholars who pushed me to broaden the scope of my own scholarship,” he adds. “More than that, they truly believe in mentorship. They work very closely with students to help them develop their own individual voices.”

Perhaps the most lasting effect of Frost’s faculty research may be measured in its sway on new scholars. Music education doctoral student Giulia Ripani has devoted her time to exploring how music connects immigrant children to a new culture.

“In the space of the playground, singing games help children learn a new language,” she explains. “Songs can help children learn what is accepted and valued in a new cultural environment. Musical experiences can also foster immigrant children’s sense of belonging while helping them create social bonds.”

Then, funded by an internal university grant, she and fellow student researcher Rob Saunders, Ph.D. ’20, taught a class of Miami third-graders to learn strings through stories, with each character explaining a different technical concept. For example, to explain the concept of bow hold, the Frost doctoral students used the story of an owl that likes sitting on a high branch. “The owl’s sitting position and actions in the story help children better understand how to grab their bows,” Ripani explains.

She and Saunders co-founded the Music String Institute to support classical string instruction in settings that might not traditionally offer such instruction. It aims to coordinate string education programs at five different Miami-Dade schools where as many as 90 percent of students are on free or reduced lunch.

Ripani was also graduate mentor for the Frost School’s Donna E. Shalala MusicReach Program, a community outreach program that provides free music lessons and mentoring to 1,500 underserved children and teens in Miami-Dade County, and in turn provides scholarships to undergraduate and graduate Frost students to teach in the program.

Saunders is continuing his research as an assistant professor of music education at Augusta University in Atlanta, Georgia.

With the help of a new grant, Ripani and alumna Livia de Moraes, Ph.D. ’20, are currently putting together a series of webinars to address similar educational inequities. She hopes her research “can

change the way we teach children. I believe it’s our responsibility to publish, yes, but to also create projects that inform and influence music educators.”

## Receptive to Fresh Ideas

Hilary Yip, M.M. ’19, a doctoral candidate in Music Therapy, also believes in the relevance and impactful power of research. Her own graduate work in music therapy involves using the rhythmic cueing of martial arts movements to improve the gross motor skills of children with autism. She drafted individualized programs for boys with autism, using bongos, snare drums, and bells to prompt the timing, direction and intensity of movements. Ten boys, ages 7 to 12, were taught kicks, punches and blocks during half-hour classes. She found that the boys improved their coordination on both sides of their bodies as well as their balance.

Her efforts were so successful that she plans to expand this exploratory pilot study. Parents have even asked her to open a studio that incorporates the use of martial arts and music therapy. She credits “the team effort” from members of the student Karate Club, the physical therapy department, and the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities at the University of Miami.

“I really have to thank Frost for being so open to the idea,” Yip says. “My music therapy professors said my study was unusual [for a thesis topic], but they told me, ‘Go for it!’ They’ve been supportive and encouraging every step of the way.”

This receptiveness to fresh ideas, she adds, guarantees research that creates innovative solutions to societal challenges. “I’m hoping that my research is implemented with several kids together in a class. It provides another avenue, another form of intervention to address motor skills in children with autism.”

Music researchers at Frost are not only leading the way in their own fields of study, they are exemplars for the international education community in using problem-based inquiry and interdisciplinary research to address complex challenges of society.

In doing so, their mission-driven research is cultivating new ways of teaching and learning and building bridges around the world. ||



Ph.D. candidate Hilary Yip teaches guitar to music therapy undergraduates, and practices martial arts

# PATHWAYS



VERSATILE LIGHT STUDIO (STUDENTS)

## How a Music Industry Degree from the Frost School of Music Opens Doors and Inspires Careers

# TO SUCCESS

**T**he attention in the music world often goes to the artists—the musicians, singers, and composers. But just as crucial are those who work in countless roles behind the scenes, from concert production to publishing to digital marketing and so much more.

A growing cohort of these essential music professionals are graduating from the Frost School's Music Industry program, which offers a Bachelor of Music in Music Industry, a Master of Arts in Music Industry, and a Master of Arts in Live Entertainment Management.

We talked to six young alumni about how their Frost music industry degrees have been crucial to their careers. We discovered that the more intangible benefits of attending Frost were also highly important: the personal mentorship of music professors who go far beyond teaching; the hands-on experience with the likes of student-run 'Cane Records and music publisher Cat5; the many industry internships and networking opportunities; Frost's superb reputation; the sense of camaraderie with equally ambitious and passionate peers. And the can-do, seize-every-opportunity attitude at the heart of the Frost School of Music's philosophy.

**Janette Becerra**, M.M. '18, who got her music industry master's degree in 2018 and grew up singing in church choirs, initially wanted to be a singer. "But I fell in love with the business," says the daughter of a Cuban dad and a Colombian mom, raised in Broward County, Florida. "You can't have the creative side without the business side."

Becerra first got a B.A. in Business Administration from the University of Miami, but knew she'd need much more specific expertise for a career in music. Accepted at four graduate music programs, she chose Frost, in part to stay close to the Recording Academy's Florida chapter, where she was interning, and to connect with Miami's thriving Latin music industry. Becerra also chose Frost for its many links to the music industry—such as Professor and Associate Dean for Administration Serona Elton, M.M. '95, an attorney who served as director of the Music Industry Program and is an alum. Elton's extensive resume encompasses work in licensing, royalties, and music rights at several major labels, and she had also mentored Jessie Allen, B.M. '10, Becerra's boss at the Academy.

"She taught me a lot, in and outside of classes," Becerra says of Elton, whom other alumni also singled out as an inspiration. Rey Sanchez, B.M. '80, M.M. '82, her music business professor, who is also on the leadership team as associate dean for strategic innovation, helped Becerra get her first job after graduation.

At Frost, Becerra was a Grammy U representative—a

BY JORDAN LEVIN



parttime job as liaison for the Recording Academy — when she helped develop a national student-professional mentorship program, and immersed herself in the many Frost events that brought in professionals sharing their expertise, and were scouting talent.

“It was great, because we had all this one-on-one time with all these people in the industry,” Becerra says. She interned with Latin music star Marc Anthony’s Magnus Talent Agency, and also with Jorge Mejia, B.M. ’96, president and CEO for Sony Music Publishing Latin America & US Latin, who recommended her for a job at the Academy, where she is now membership manager for Latin music, music video, and visual media. “Without UM I don’t think I would have had all these opportunities,” Becerra says. “It’s all about the school you go to.”

Allentown native **Taylor Aretz**, M.A. ’18, also dreamed of being a musician—a classical pianist. But in college she decided she had other ambitions. She fell in love with country music during a gap year job at the ArtsQuest music festival, but didn’t know how to start. “I knew grad school would be key,” she says. While Miami was alluring to the West Pennsylvanian, Frost’s reputation was even more seductive. “An alum told me how hard it was to get in, and I thought ‘I have to go there,’” she says.

Aretz most values the inspiration, hands-on training, and connections she found at Frost. She kept her copy of the inspirational book *True North*, from a class with Live Entertainment Management program director, Assistant Professor of Professional Practice Gary Wood. She got to flex her leadership and organizational skills as co-president of Cat5 music publishing, where faculty advisor and Assistant Professor of Practice John Redmond was a mentor. “I loved him; he was so knowledgeable and fun to work with,” she says. “It was like being in real life, in school.”

Elton, for whom Aretz was a teaching assistant, also inspired her. “Her work ethic is insane in a good way,” Aretz says. Elton helped Aretz get her first job, as a receptionist at Warner Music in Nashville, the capital of country music. True to her Frost training, Aretz turned her position into a learning and networking opportunity. She’s now an artist development manager at Warner Music, overseeing everything from music release schedules to marketing strategy for half a dozen acts.

For **René Mark**, M.A. ’16, who earned a master’s in Live Entertainment Management, the Frost School opened doors to a career she likely would not have been able to pursue otherwise. Another Broward County native, Mark, a middle and high school “band kid,” always wanted to work in the music industry. She got a B.S. in

Event Planning from the University of Florida in 2012, but “I had no idea how to break into the L.A. or New York music scene,” she says. She also needed to work fulltime. A job as an event planner at the Frost School of Music allowed her to do both, since the University’s tuition remission program enabled Mark to attend the Live Entertainment Management program. As one of a three-person team, she did everything from handling contracts to managing concert production. Her sympathetic boss, former Festival Miami events director Marianne Mijares, helped Mark with the daunting task of juggling her workload and course load.

Mark’s favorite class was with Wood, where she and other students collaborated with University and outside groups to produce music events on and off campus. “He was fundamental to my experience and growth,” Mark says. She eagerly took advantage of networking opportunities, attending Recording Academy campus events that led to her joining Grammy U, helping public school music students like herself. “It’s very important for me to give back,” says Mark, who has just finished overseeing a fundraiser.

A student trip to the Music Biz Association conference in Nashville led to an internship at CAA, the giant talent agency based in Los Angeles. Once in L.A., an agent that Mark met at Frost helped her get her first job there, as a touring assistant with the APA Agency.

Mark has been at Geffen/Interscope Records since 2019. The covid pandemic forced her to switch from the touring department to marketing, where she’s a digital and commerce coordinator. But she hopes to get back to working with live events, and is thrilled to be working



Janette Becerra



Brandon Phillips



Taylor Aretz



Michelle Ben-Reuven Jacobs



René Mark



Emma Marzen

in the music industry. “I didn’t plan any of this,” she says. “But all those experiences at Frost led me here.”

Brooklyn native **Brandon Phillips**, M.A. ’21, got his Live Entertainment Management master’s degree last year virtually through Frost Online, while working full time at Warner Music Group in New York, as a consultant to the Vice President of International A&R, and as executive assistant to Warner-Electra-Atlantic’s president. Despite fiercely demanding jobs that encompass everything from analyzing global data trends on digital music platforms to studio bookings, Phillips (who also got his B.A. while working full time) was determined to expand his skills. “It is not ok for me to say this is all I know,” says Phillips. “I wanted to further my experience, my knowledge. That pushed me to get my master’s.”

Two colleagues who attended Frost persuaded him that it was the right place to do that. Though he’s worked mostly in digital marketing in his six years in the business, Phillips dreams of working directly with artists on

music and live events. He was inspired by Professor Wood’s Arts Presenting class, where students create detailed plans for original arts projects. The frenzied combina-

tion of work and school forced Phillips to put that goal temporarily on hold last spring. But he’s confident the knowledge and connections he gained at Frost will lead him to a new, more creative career path. “Now that I have my master’s degree, this is the first time I’ve had a chance to take everything I’ve learned and apply it to what I can create,” he says.

Although **Michelle Ben-Reuven Jacobs**, B.S.C. ’15, M.M. ’18, got two record label internships while earning a bachelor’s degree in communications at the University of Miami, that only made her realize how much more she needed to succeed in the music industry. “There were all these things I didn’t know,” Jacobs says.

She found them at the Music Industry program, from discovering her passion for digital marketing, the camaraderie and ambition she shared with fellow students, the deeply specific courses, and the mentorship of her

instructors. “The professors played a huge role with providing their experience and giving us tips for pursuing what we want to do,” she says. Jacobs particularly praised Redmond, whose publishing class was like an instruction manual for a job she got at a licensing company.

At ‘Cane Records, where Jacobs handled marketing and social media, Redmond “always had an open door for any questions on the music business,” she says. “He helped me immensely when I was applying to jobs.”

Jacobs has worked continuously since graduating in 2017, primarily for Sony Music Latin in Miami, where she’s currently an influencer marketing manager. “Being a graduate of Frost opened many doors for me,” she says.

**Emma Marzen**, B.A. ’16, who earned her Music Industry bachelor’s degree from Frost in 2016, was lured to the school by the late Director of Choral Studies Karen Kennedy, whom she met while singing in choirs growing up in Maryland and who became a role model and mentor. But the music industry program was an equal lure. “I loved singing, but I realized I was not going to be one of those who could make a living at it,” Marzen says. The Music Industry program at Frost transformed her goals—and gave her the tools to pursue them.

Marzen worked as a manager at Gusman Concert Hall throughout her time at Frost, and was president of ‘Cane Records in her senior year. Those experiences prepared her for her current position as executive director of the Santa Fe Desert Chorale. “Gusman gave me the best hands-on life and job experience, especially for what I do now, leading productions and putting on concerts and leading a team,” she says.

The faculty were also hugely influential, from Kennedy, who passed away from cancer and whom Marzen calls a “major force” in her life; to Redmond, her publishing and copyright professor and ‘Cane Records advisor who “showed me how to be a leader.”

Also crucial was Professor Wood, whose non-profit arts class opened her eyes to a new career path. “He gave me a sense of what was exciting about the non-profit world,” she says. “He inspired me to see what’s out there.”

Kennedy’s recommendation and other Frost School connections led to Marzen getting her first job, as box office manager at the Santa Fe Chorale.

Now she leads the successful, 40-year-old non-profit, whose 24-member ensemble performs an extensive repertoire in two local seasons and national tours.

“I get to do exactly what I love for an organization with a beautiful mission and a world class ensemble,” says Marzen. “It’s a dream and a gift, and very much thanks to Frost and everything I learned there.” ||



**Rapper-songwriter Wyclef Jean, left, in a Q&A session moderated by Associate Dean and Professor Serona Elton**



# Product Pitch

FROST MUSIC ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY SENIORS  
PRESENT THEIR FINAL PROJECTS AND INVENTIONS  
TO PROMINENT INDUSTRY PANELISTS.

BY DAVID MENCONI

**H**ow to prepare students for life beyond graduation is a higher-education challenge everywhere, and it's one that capstone classes before graduation are often designed to address.

Capstone classes have been part of the Frost School of Music's innovative undergraduate curriculum at the University of Miami for nearly a decade, falling in the spring semester of the senior year.

For music engineering students, their Capstone Project culminates in a bachelor's degree in Music Engineering Technology, with a course goal of designing and creating a practical invention. But in recent years, the class has added a wrinkle. Instead of presenting their inventions to classmates at the end of the semester, students make pitches to a panel of industry experts.

"Thinking about marketing, putting together a pitch and presenting it, receiving feedback, that's all a newer element to assess students on," says Music Engineering Technology (MUE) program director, Assistant Professor Christopher Bennett, B.S.E.E. '05, M.S.M.E.T. '07, Ph.D. '10. "Those are skills we want them to learn.

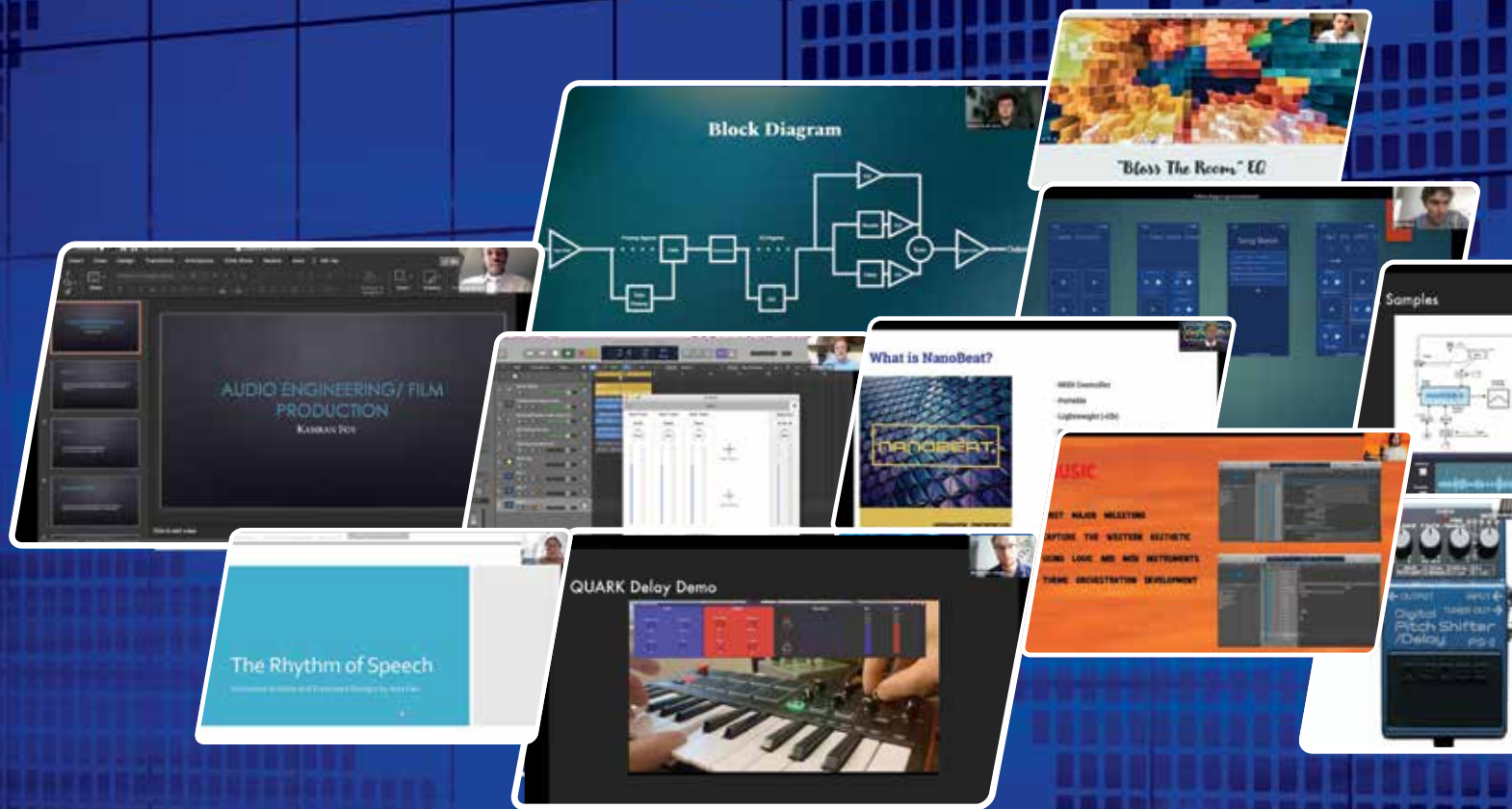
An engineer can have all the training in the world, but if you can't clearly communicate an idea, you are hindering yourself. It's a pretty practical thing. I tell students, 'Hey, come make this thing you'll want to have on your phone and webpage, and show off at your job interview.'"

Eleven graduating MUE seniors took the capstone course last spring, presenting their projects to a panel of five experts via Zoom. It was a panel of definite experts, too, all of them heavy hitters at the highest

levels of the field: Dolby Labs chairman Peter Gotcher, Grammy-winning producer Gregg Field, venture-capital investor Michael Lazarus, composer, producer and peermusic executive Julio Bague, B.B.A. '90, M.M. '93, and entrepreneur-in-residence Bob Williamson from the University of Miami's Office of Technology.

As for the panelists' thoughts about the students' work, all were impressed. Their feedback was both theoretical and practical, from Gotcher's suggestions for specific design tweaks to Williamson's counseling students to begin their pitches with a "first minute for dummies" to make sure everyone understands the concept. Lazarus agreed. "Start by defining the problem you are trying to solve. Because you have to be very clear, 'here's how big this problem is, and here's how I'm going to fix it.' That shows



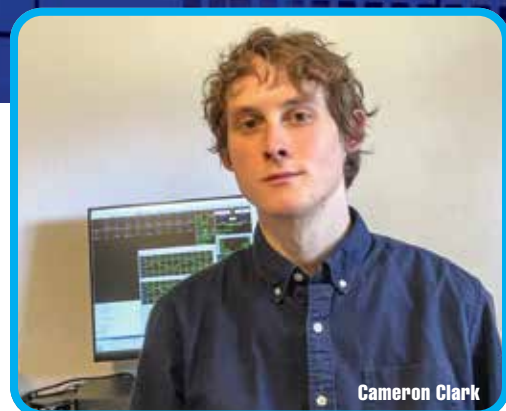


## “THE FEEDBACK WAS VERY VALIDATING, AND IT HELPED MOTIVATE ME TO GET INTO PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AS A CAREER.”

people like me what the opportunity is.”

“I thought it was really good,” says Bague, a Latin Grammy-winning Frost alumnus. “It was interesting to see the creative ideas different students had, and there were a couple of things they pitched that I thought were really good. I was talking to my engineers about it afterward, and we agreed they were pitching some things we could see using in the studio. But I think the most important thing about this concept is getting students to work their brains to come up with stuff. Whether or not it’s viable, going through the process is a great and worthwhile thing to do.”

The capstone projects presented by the seniors (see sidebar next page), spanned a wide range of products and applications, including hardware and software for recording, a western-themed treasure-hunt computer game, and even a multi-media collaboration on an acoustic art installation. Some of the product presentations started with an idea as simple as students making something they themselves wanted to have, like Cameron Clark’s “Digital Model Boss PS-2.” Clark’s creation is a digital effects plug-in that mimics the effect of a vintage electric-guitar effects pedal that had a brief vogue in the



late 1980s and early 1990s. “It’s kind of a rare gear-collector’s item now, for people into the electronic end of shoegaze music,” says Clark, who is now working as an audio-software freelancer in the Orlando area. “The band Slowdive used this pedal and it’s desirable because the first run of it had an engineering flaw that creates a self-oscillation effect. They’re super-hard to find and the price keeps going up. I did end up buying one for myself, but it was expensive and I thought it should be more accessible.”





Assistant Professor Christopher Bennett at a mixing console in the L. Austin Weeks Recording Studio at the Frost School of Music.

Panelist Peter Gotcher singled out Clark's project for praise and complimented him for a "nice job of capturing the vibe" of a vintage sound. That was gratifying for Clark, who put in a lot of time and energy.

"All four years attending Frost, you see seniors making end-of-year presentations and think, 'Oh my God, how am I

**"AN ENGINEER CAN HAVE ALL THE TRAINING IN THE WORLD, BUT IF YOU CAN'T CLEARLY COMMUNICATE AN IDEA, YOU ARE HINDERING YOURSELF."**

going to come up with something this good myself?!" Then you're a senior and have to do it, so I was quite nervous. But the professors gave us good guidance while allowing us to figure things out on our own. The feedback was very validating, and it helped motivate me to get into product development as a career."

One of the more abstract capstone presentations was the work of Arta Fan, "The Rhythm of Speech: Acoustical Analysis and Treatment Designs." It was a collaboration with sculptor Juan Ledesma on a sound installation to record different language dialects as a sound source.

"The Rhythm of Speech" was based on a famous 1969 work by experimental composer Alvin Lucier, "I Am Sitting in a Room," in which he re-recorded his own voice over and over until the only audible sounds on the tape were room tones at the rhythm of his voice. Ledesma and Fan recreated that experiment for an installation at Locust Projects.



## MUE Capstone Projects

### BEN BETTS, B.S. '21

"Making Headphone Mix Management Simpler with SimpleMix" - a software solution to the annoyances of managing headphone mixes

### CAMERON CLARK, B.S. '21

"A Digital Model of the Boss PS-2" - a digital model/audio effects plug-in based on the rare Boss PS-2 Digital Pitch Shifter/Delay pedal, in C++

### ISAAC DISKIN, B.S. '21

"Tonal Control" - a FET-based analog signal processor to add subtle coloration and warmth to guitar tones in recording environments

### ARTA FAN, B.S. '21

"Rhythm of Speech" - acoustic consultant for video art installation by artist Juan Ledesma exploring different dialects of language as a sound source

### KAMRAN FOY, B.S. '21

"Aerials" composition - a collaboration of visual and auditory art, with post-audio editing and effects to expand the concept of traditional 'music videos'

### SAM GARRY, B.S. '21

"Song Sketch" - a mobile recorder app for building songs through musical ideas captured anywhere and at any time

### PATRICK LACEY, B.S. '21

"P1 Channel Strip" - a channel strip plug-in with easy access for beginners and technical manipulation for expert use

### MICHAEL MARTINAITIS, B.S. '21

"Quark" - Creative Tools for Electronic Music Production, software plug-ins

### ADAM NELLES, B.S. '21

"Bless The Room" EQ - a parametric EQ plugin to automatically balance resonant frequencies at exact listening position within your room.

### ZOE PRESCOD, B.S. '21

"NanoBeat" - Creating a portable MIDI Controller

### JEREMY ZACUTO, B.S. '21

"Django High Noon" - A western-themed treasure hunt game, using Unity.

MUE graduating class of 2021: Top, left to right: Cameron Clark, Sam Garry, Ben Betts, Patrick Lacey, Arta Fan, Isaac Diskin, Zoe Prescod  
Bottom, left to right: Max Bienert, Michael Martinaitis, Adam Nelles, and Jeremy Zacuto. Not pictured: Kamran Foy





"My role as acoustic consultant was to recreate the sound of the room from the original recording," says Fan, who went to work for Live Nation Entertainment in Virginia after graduation. "We didn't know its size, so I had to work backward from the audio to figure out dimensions of the room, and then recreate it using acoustic paneling and audio reflections. It was quite a challenge because the idea was so abstract."

Benjamin Betts, who is now an IOS developer with the Bose Mobile Apps and Interfaces Team, presented a software package he dubbed "SimpleMix" that started out with a problem to solve.

After years of trying to make musicians happy with monitor mixes during recording, he came up with "SimpleMix" as a way for each musician to control the mix they're hearing on their headphones, through their own smart phones.

His presentation elicited the magic words from eight-time Grammy winning producer and engineer, panelist Gregg Field: "I'll buy one."

"That was really good to hear and convinced me this was a good idea," Betts says. "I feel like it's a good solution to the problem. One of my roommates was an education major who is really good at presentations, and he gave me good advice. We agreed that the most important part to explain was not 'what,' but 'why.' So, I ran through all the problems you can have in the studio with having to do all this extra setup time, explained why that's a pain, and then, 'Here's what you can do to solve that.'"

Betts says he would actually be willing to give his "SimpleMix" idea away to someone else to implement because he's too busy to pursue it himself. He then jokes,

"Although if somebody came to me with \$1 million and said 'Do this,' well maybe," he says with a laugh.

But his classmate Isaac Diskin is in the process of trying to turn his capstone invention into something he can sell. It's called "Tonal Control," a signal processor that adds subtle coloration and warmth to recorded guitar tones.

"A lot of people, myself included, record electric guitar by plugging directly into an audio interface," says Diskin, who now works at Miami's famed recording studio Criteria. "But that often does not have quite the same magic as when it's recorded loud through a real amplifier. So, this helps make that kind of recording sound more like a real amp. You can make the

guitar tone dirtier, crunchier, cleaner, whatever."

After building a rough prototype for his capstone presentation, Diskin is in the process of assembling a more professional-looking version

that can be fabricated, replicated, and sold. Tentative plans call for a crowd-funding campaign to raise capital to make a limited run of devices to sell, and see how it goes.

"The first step is making it sound good and the second step is making it look good," Diskin says. "The Music Engineering Technology program at Frost was a great experience, and a big part of it was projects like this where you get really hands-on



**"THE ENGINEERING PROGRAM AT FROST WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE, AND A BIG PART OF IT WAS PROJECTS LIKE THIS WHERE YOU GET REALLY HANDS-ON WITH YOUR OWN IDEA."**

with your own idea. They let you try stuff to create something as experimental or conservative as you want. It's easy to dream up ideas, but you might not see them as worthwhile if you have to [carve out] the time to pursue them. It was nice to have a class with professional guidance, time and a reason to do it. Even if it doesn't directly get you a job, it helps prepare you for how to figure things out on your own, and see an idea through from first thought to something that works," Diskin says.

It's all by design for the Music Engineering Technology capstone class.

"There are a lot of electives you can take," Bennett says. "But this one really ties in with one of the slogans at Frost: Build Yourself. It's choosing your own path."

He adds there are a lot of exciting times for faculty throughout each academic year.

"One is auditions, seeing who the new students are. Another is Capstone, with students we've been mentoring for eight semesters. When they share their accomplishments, it engenders a lot of pride." ||



## Welcoming New Faculty

**THE FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC IS PLEASED TO INTRODUCE ITS NEWEST FACULTY MEMBERS WHOSE OUTSTANDING ARTISTRY, RESEARCH, AND BUSINESS ACUMEN BRING A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE AND OFFER FRESH CONTEMPORARY INSIGHTS TO TOP FROST PROGRAMS. STEEPED IN DECADES OF TEACHING AND PERFORMANCE, THESE SEASONED PROFESSIONALS ARE AWARD-WINNERS IN STUDIO MUSIC AND JAZZ, INSTRUMENTAL PERFORMANCE, CONTEMPORARY VOICE, MUSIC INDUSTRY, FILM SCORING, AND MUSIC THERAPY.**



**Marcus Strickland**, saxophone, associate professor of professional practice in the Department of Studio Music and Jazz, received a 2019 Grammy nomination for his work on *Christian McBride's New Jawn*. Voted Best New Artist in the *JazzTimes* Readers' Poll (2007), followed in quick succession votes for Rising Star, Soprano Saxophone (2008) and Rising Star, Tenor Saxophone (2010) in *DownBeat* International Critics Polls, Strickland is renowned for his creativity and virtuosity. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the School of Jazz and Contempo-

rary Music at the New School University in New York City, then quickly began working with top recording artists Roy Haynes, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Dave Douglass, Nicholas Payton, Robert Glasper, and Tom Harrell, while also touring with his own bands. Recent albums *Twilife*, *Open Reel Deck*, and *People of the Sun* display his adventurous compositional skills through funk, hip-hop, Afro-beat, rock, ska, and more. His latest project *Exchange Village* is hailed as a "holistic approach to Black Music with pure freedom and creativity in an all-inclusive cross-media exchange."



**Crispin Campbell**, visiting assistant professor in the Department of Instrumental Performance, is teaching cello at the Frost School while Professor Ross Harbaugh is on sabbatical. Campbell's musical style defies categories; in a typical performance he makes seamless transitions from Bach to Zappa to Django. After teaching at Interlochen Arts Academy for 38 years where he followed a path of exploring the relationship of a relaxed physical approach to the cello and an inquisitive musical imagi-

nation, he now tours to pursue his diverse musical interests more fully. He recently recorded two new albums, *The River Under the River* with poet Michael Delp, and *About Time* for cello and jazz trio. In the summers he teaches at the Interlochen Cello Institute, and appears at the CLAZZ Music Festival in Arcidosso, Italy. Campbell has performed with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra, and as a guest artist for the Fundación Nacional Batuta, a national music program based in Bogotá, Colombia.



**Cheryl Jones**, visiting assistant professor of practice in the Department of Music Education and Music Therapy, is a music therapist and registered psychotherapist whose work and teaching focuses on individuals who have sustained an acquired brain injury or who are living with a neurodegenerative disorder. Based on her research and years of clinical experience in Canada, she developed a music therapy model that uses the process of learning to play an instrument, specifically the piano, to address cognitive rehabilitation goals and/or psychosocial health. Jones

earned a Ph.D. in Music and Health Sciences at the University of Toronto where she was also a member of the Collaborative Program in Neuroscience. She holds a Master of Music Therapy from Wilfrid Laurier University, serves on the advisory council for the Academy of Neurologic Music Therapy, and taught at Wilfrid Laurier University and Concordia University. She is a regular guest lecturer at conferences and universities. Her clinical work has been featured in two CBC radio documentaries and in the book, *Allison's Brain*.



# New Lecturers

**Pablo Ahogado**, M.M. '14, lecturer in the Department of Music Media & Industry, is also the director of A&R for Concord Music Publishing where he is starting a new Latin division, building an international roster of writers, producers, and artists. After earning a Master of Music in Music Business and Entertainment Industries from the Frost School of Music, Ahogado worked in various sides of the music industry as music supervisor for

Fashion One Television and vice president of music publishing for the legacy label Fania Records. Earlier in his career he worked as a licensing specialist II for ASCAP Latino, creative services director for Bluewater Music in Nashville, and a Latin radio analyst for BMI. With over 15 years of experience in international music publishing, he also earned a B.S. in recording industry management and audio production from Middle Tennessee State University.



**Roxana Amed**, lecturer of contemporary voice at the Frost School of Music, is an Argentine-American singer, songwriter, and producer whose music blends South American folk traditions with sophisticated rock and post-bop jazz. A Sony Music artist, her most recent release *Ontology* was nominated for a 2021 Latin Grammy in the Best Latin Jazz/Jazz Album category, and AllMusic named the album among the 100 Best of 2021. She was

awarded a New Jazz Works grant by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation through Chamber Music America, and while in Argentina received the Carlos Gardel Award for Argentine Music and the Martin Fierro Award for best song in a television production. Amed holds a master's in vocal jazz from Florida International University. She led a vocal workshop for 10 years at the Buenos Aires International Jazz Festival with prominent guest artists.



**David L. Anderson II**, M.M. '20, lecturer in the Department of Studio Music and Jazz, directs the Gospel Ensemble and more. A producer and founder of R.E.A.L. Music Entertainment, he has arranged vocals and curated musicians for television including the Super Bowl, Univision award shows, BET's *SOS-Saving Our Selves: Help for Haiti* benefit concert, and the Historic Hampton House Concert Series. He is the exclusive provider of performers

for the Sunday gospel brunch at Red Rooster Overtown. Anderson works with the Grammy-winning production group The Runners and has produced and/or written songs on albums by John Legend, Chris Brown, Kelly Rowland, Tamia, Luke James, and Bishop Paul S. Morton. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from the University of Florida, and a Master of Music in Music Business and Entertainment Industries from Frost.



**Patrick Bartley, Jr.**, lecturer in the Department of Studio Music and Jazz, is a Grammy-nominated saxophonist, multi-instrumentalist, and bandleader who is known for his boundless versatility, virtuosic technique, and expressive vocal-like sound. Originally from Hollywood, Florida, Bartley studied at the Manhattan School of Music in New York and was soon performing and recording with Wynton Marsalis, Jon Batiste, Steve Miller,

Herbie Hancock, Louis Hayes, Carole King, The Coasters, Marquis Hill, Bobby Sanabria, Marcus Printup, and more. His critically acclaimed projects as a leader include the J-MUSIC Ensemble, a band dedicated to examining the world of modern Japanese music through the lens of jazz, garnering millions of views and hundreds of thousands of fans worldwide, and helping to expose the vast artistic avenues that Japanese culture has to offer.



**Jonathan Dadurka**, B.M. '02, M.M. '05, D.M.A. '21, lecturer in the Musicianship, Artistry Development, and Entrepreneurship program, is an experienced music educator with over 13 years of collegiate teaching experience at Broward College and Miami Dade College. He is a triple alumnus of the Frost School of Music,

earning a B.M. in jazz studies, M.M. in jazz pedagogy, and a D.M.A. in jazz performance. A bassist, Dadurka performs and records with the Kairos Septet, Silvano Monasterios Trio, Dafnis Prieto, Sofia Kraevska, Scott Routenberg, M.M. '03, M.M. '05, D.M.A. '08, Troy Roberts, M.M. '07, and many others.





## New Lecturers



**Stephen Gleason**, lecturer in the Musicianship, Artistry Development, and Entrepreneurship program, is an accomplished guitarist and vocalist with heavy roots in both jazz and popular music. With over 20 years of collegiate teaching experience, he directs the Frost Contemporary Vocal Ensemble and other groups. Gleason has conducted lectures, clinics, and masterclasses world-wide, published articles in *Hot House* and *Jazz Insider*, and has

performed on television including *The Rachael Ray Show* and *The Food Network*. His vocal arrangements are modern and vibrant interpretations of classic jazz and the Great American Songbook, garnering attention from the renowned vocal quartets Manhattan Transfer and Singers Unlimited. A member of the vocal jazz group Quintet, Gleason earned an award from the Contemporary A cappella Society for their debut album *Quintet, Volume 1*.



**Ray DoHyoungh Kim**, M.M. '20, lecturer in the Media Writing and Scoring Program, is a Korean-American composer of music for film, games, and other media. He teaches the classes Film Score Foundation and Film Score Extensions, focusing on how to score to film, games and other forms of media. He received a bachelor's degree from Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and a Master of Music in Media Writing and

Production from the Frost School of Music. His compositions can be heard in multiple film scores showcased at Big Ten, the Lotus Festival, Austin Film Festival, as well as in AMC and Arclight theaters. With additional film score and video game music ready to publish, he currently works as assistant composer to Associate Professor Carlos Rafael Rivera on such projects as the HBO's *Hacks* Season 1 and Disney's *Just Beyond*.



**Ioannis "Yianni" Iliadis**, D.M.A. '21, lecturer, pianist, accompanies musical theatre classes in the Frost School of Music. He is also on the faculty at Killington Music Festival in Vermont. While a doctoral candidate he researched and devised new group piano teaching materials, and was an group and private piano instructor for the Frost Preparatory program. Iliadis enjoys solo recitals and international concerto performances and frequently

collaborates on recitals, chamber music concerts, competitions, and at conferences including the Liszt Festival of the Liszt American Society and the Kaleidoscope MusArt series. He earned a Master of Music from the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music at California State University, Long Beach, as well as a Bachelor of Music from the University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece, and a Piano Diploma from the State Conservatory of Thessaloniki.



**Laurah Merisier**, B.M. '14, lecturer in the Musicianship, Artistry Development, and Entrepreneurship program, is founder and artistic director of Miami Sound Space, and serves as the early childhood music and community engagement director at The Children's Voice. Merisier earned a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from the Frost School of Music, and a Master of Music in Music Education from Florida International University.

Earlier in her career she was director of choirs and assistant director of musical theatre at Bridgeprep Academy of Arts & Minds, a public charter school in Coconut Grove, Florida, and taught general music at Mater Academy of International Studies in Allapattah. While attending Frost, she was an instructor for the Little Canes early music education program, the Donna E. Shalala MusicReach program, and Guitars Over Guns.



**Nicole Schommer**, lecturer in the Musicianship, Artistry Development, and Entrepreneurship program, teaches Experiential Musicianship I and II for contemporary students. She is a musician of wide-ranging interests and educational backgrounds, with bachelor's degrees in vocal performance and Spanish from St. Norbert College in Wisconsin, as well as a Master of Music in Ethnomusicology from Florida State University (FSU). As an

ethnomusicologist, Schommer is passionate about advocating for the musical and cultural practices of diverse peoples. As a vocalist and music educator, she thrives when she can instill a sense of excitement about music in her students, especially when it is music to which they've never been exposed. She also runs a private voice and piano studio in Miami and is a doctoral candidate working to complete her Ph.D. in Musicology from FSU.

**Rick Urban**, M.M. '19, lecturer in the Frost Media Scoring and Production program, is a film composer, music producer, and performer. He composed the score for the feature film *Groupers*, which won the grand jury prize for Best Feature Film at Film Invasion L.A. Additional music by Urban can be heard on Amazon Prime in the films *Dusk* and *Jacob's Paradox*, the trailer for the Netflix film *The Titan*, and National Geographic's *Weird But True*

streaming on Disney+. Television placements on FOX, NBC, MTV, Fox Sports, and NBC Sports include the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, *Back with the Ex*, *My Kitchen Rules*, and *The Voice*. Urban holds master's degrees from the Frost School of Music, Columbia College Chicago, and New England Conservatory. He is also co-host of the *Hooked-on Score* podcast featuring interviews with film composers and music supervisors.



**Brenton Williams**, M.M. '12, lecturer in the Musician-ship, Artistry Development, and Entrepreneurship program, is a singer, songwriter, and entrepreneur. His music is described as "Pop-R&B fusion with a contemp influence." Born and raised in Miami, Florida he discovered his love for performing and entertaining when his middle school choir performed at Carnegie Hall for a crowd of 2,000. He self-released an album while still in

high school which piqued his interest in the indie music world. He earned a bachelor's degree in computer science from Florida Memorial University; then returned to music marketing and concert management. He founded Golden City Entertainment, LLC after graduating with a Master of Music in Music Business and Entertainment Industries from the Frost School of Music. He also records original audio and video content as Brent Love.



## Jazz Vocal Professor Honored with Phillip Frost Award

KATE REID, M.M. '96, D.M.A. '03, associate professor of jazz voice and director of jazz vocal performance in the Department of Studio Music and Jazz, was awarded the prestigious 2021 Phillip Frost Award for Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship at the Frost School of Music. The faculty nominate candidates and vote each year to award the coveted prize.

Apart from overseeing all aspects of the Jazz Vocal Performance program, Reid directs two of Frost's three jazz vocal ensembles: Frost Extensions and Frost Jazz Vocal I. She teaches jazz improvisation, sight-singing, and music theory, and also maintains a full jazz voice studio of undergraduate and graduate students.

Reid enjoys a multi-faceted career as an educator, recording and performing artist. She has appeared regularly with her own quartet, and performed with renowned artists John Clayton, Robin Eubanks, Jon Hendricks, Grady Tate, Mercer Ellington, Don Shelton, Mark Murphy, the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Liza Minelli, Rosemary Clooney, Diane Schuur, and Billy Taylor. Her voice can be heard on several network television series, commercial spots for Ace Hardware, T-Mobile, and Suntory Whiskey, and on recordings by such artists as MUSE, X Japan, and Josh Groban.

She often appears as guest artist, conductor, clinician, and adjudicator at all-state jazz and choral

festivals throughout the United States and Canada.

"I am truly humbled by the recognition my colleagues and peers have bestowed upon me with this honor. To be acknowledged for the delicate balance of education, performance, and scholarship that makes up my position means such a great deal to me. The true privilege, however, is the amazingly talented students and exceptional colleagues I get to work with every day at the Frost School of Music," Reid says. ||



# Faculty Updates

**Carlos Abril**, B.M. '93, professor and associate dean for research, is serving a two-year term as Chair of the National



Association for Music Education Society for Research. He co-published an article in the *Music Educators Journal* on music teachers as change agents, and his co-

authored book, *Teaching General Music: Approaches Issues and Viewpoints* (Oxford Univ. Press), was translated into Korean. Last year, he served as a visiting scholar at Columbia University, Case Western Reserve University, and University of Georgia, and gave a keynote address on issues of equity and social justice in music teacher education at the American Orff Schulwerk National Conference.

**Jeffrey Marc Buchman**, assistant professor and stage director for the Frost Opera Theater, directed the



world premiere of *The Leopard* (see page 4). Other engagements include staging Verdi's *Il Trovatore* for Toledo Opera, directing Puccini's *La Bohème*

for Philadelphia's Academy of Vocal Arts, and Andre Previn's *A Streetcar Named Desire* for Florida Grand Opera (FGO). Celebrating his 29th year with FGO, his production of Daron Hagen's *New York Stories* was named a Top 10 Performance of 2021 by *South Florida Classical Review*.

**Don D. Coffman**, professor and department chair for Music education and music therapy, co-authored a book



chapter: Time to face the music? Possibilities for community music with older adults in *Community Music at the Boundaries* (Wilfred Laurier

University Press). He presented research findings at a national conference: *New Horizons Band assistants' perception and experiences* by Rohwer, D., Coffman, D., & Dabback, W. (25 February 2021), and a paper at a virtual NAFME Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference, Bringing the Future into Focus.

**Shawn Crouch**, D.M.A. '16, assistant professor of professional practice in music theory and composition, earned Third



Place in the American Prize Vocal Chamber Music Division, 2021, and just released *Chaos Theory—The Chamber Music of Shawn Crouch* (Acis) that

includes performances by Ensemble Ibis, BLT Trio, Yesaoun' Duo, cellist Craig Hultgren, Switch~Ensemble, and the Plexure Percussion Trio.

**Serona Elton**, M.M. '95, professor and associate dean for administration, is co-authoring the 13th edition of the *Music*



*Business Handbook and Career Guide*, a textbook widely used by university music business programs. She is the head of education

partnerships for the Mechanical Licensing Collective leading their effort to engage future members of the industry. A lawyer, Elton's operational experience dealing with music royalties, mechanical licensing, and data standards was also tapped for the Yamaha Master Educator Collective, a group of 30 distinguished academics, clinicians, consultants, and authors who are recognized as the most highly regarded experts in their fields.



**John Hart**, jazz guitar lecturer, studio music and jazz, released a new album this year, *Euphoria*, on the Steeplechase Records label, his 16th album as a leader.

**Dorothy Hindman**, B.M. '88, D.M.A. '94, associate professor, composition, premiered a number of new works this



year including the multimedia *Questions We Don't Dare Ask Ourselves*, a Here and Now commission from the Miami Light Project featuring

Associate Professor of Flute Jennifer Grim and Associate Professor of Percussion Svet Stoyanov.

Her *13 for 3 Through 5* was performed at the Festival Expresiones Contemporáneas in Mexico City, and her commissioned solo piano work *To Spill Oneself Away* was premiered in Minneapolis. She is one of three winners of a Contemporary Art Music Project commission for the CAMPGround22 International Music Festival.

**Juraj Kojs**, assistant professor of professional practice, music theory and composition, was awarded a Knight New



Work grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation for his multi-music composition for voices instruments and laptops, "Where Home Is," exploring

the theme of immigration and citizenship from the perspective of a recently naturalized U.S. citizen.

**Jodi Levitz**, professor, viola, and solo and chamber music artist, toured the Veneto region of Italy this winter break



with violinist and faculty member Bettina Mussumeli, curating visuals and researching music and poetry for a new chamber orchestra experience "I Solisti

di Miami" showcasing the beauty of Italian baroque for American and international audiences. Levitz served as a core faculty member at the summer Festival Napa Valley 2021, and will return again in 2022. She was the guest of honor for Viola Day at University of Florida at Gainesville where she gave a recital and masterclasses, and judged the composition competition for the Northern California Viola Society.

**Brian Lynch**, professor, jazz trumpet, was also selected for a Knight New Work grant for his project "7 for 7 by 7: A Jazz



Work Exploring Distance, Interaction and Chance." The work features seven performances for seven minutes by seven musicians totaling 343 new

pieces for a jazz septet exploring the nature of interaction at a distance.



## Acclaimed Soprano Finds Deep Fulfillment Through Teaching

JEANETTE THOMPSON'S first experience with the power of music came at age 12, while growing up in small-town Central Florida in 1971. As part of the first wave of school integration, she found herself in an auditorium full of unruly classmates one day and thought, "There's gonna be a riot. I must do something." So, she went to the piano on the auditorium stage, sat down and started playing The Beatles' "Hey Jude"—and had the whole auditorium singing along.

"When the teachers heard what was going on, they rushed in; one of them was the music teacher," Thompson says. "'Wow,' she said, 'you've got a lot of talent.' She made it her goal to see that I got the education I had not been exposed to. They raised money to send me to music camp that summer, and that's what started my love of opera."

While Thompson started out thinking she'd be a concert pianist, she eventually became a renowned opera singer, one who has toured all over the world and earned plaudits for her work onstage as well as in classrooms. She authoritatively speaks Italian, French, German, and Turkish as well as English. She has worked with many of the contemporary giants in the field, David Winkler and Craig Bohmler among them, and recorded three albums.

But it is in the classroom where Thompson has excelled the most, especially since coming to the Frost School of Music in 2018 to teach vocal performance.

It turned out she'd already been doing the work of teaching all along, as her peers came to for advice, when

they had problems to solve. "Even though I never saw myself as a teacher, I was already doing it," she says. "All my life, I thought I was destined for greatness on the stage and only on the stage. Then when I finally got the call to teach, I realized I'd already been out there paying dues, getting accolades and highs and lows, so many things. It was really okay to put the focus on students. Then I discovered I'm actually a good teacher because I've had so many issues myself and I know how to fix them."

As a person of color in a field where that remains a rarity, those struggles have not been abstract, or easy to overcome. But the positive side of it all is that she has a wealth of experience to draw from. As it happens, teaching really isn't all that different from performing—both are best when they come from the same place.

"I spent four-and-a-half decades doing this, studying with all kinds of people. So, when I tell students something, I didn't just read about it. I know this to be true. I think my calling is to know what I know, and help as many others as I can, in teaching and performing. If you perform from an honest place in your soul, it draws people in and they leave knowing what a great experience music can be. I try to teach my students that having a pretty voice is not enough. You have to have something to say, too. If you don't, then nobody cares." ||



Jeanette Thompson

## Professor Pirkle Pursues New Professional Ventures

Ramping up the next phase of his audio research career, Associate Professor **Will Pirkle**, B.M. '86, M.S. '91, who has been serving as program director in the Department of Music Engineering Technology (MUE) at the Frost School of Music, retired from full-time teaching in December to assume a role as principal software engineer at Audio Media Research, Inc. He was on the music faculty for 13 years and will be missed!

With over 20 years of experience in the audio industry and as a digital and analog audio technology educator, he is the author of the best-selling *Designing Audio Effects Plugins in C++* (1st and 2nd Editions) and *Designing Software Synthesizers in C++*.

Highly expert in analog audio circuit design, he is also a consultant, legal expert witness, and the sole author/developer of the ASPIK plugin framework for cross-platform, fully professional audio FX and synthesizer plugin development.

Pirkle also designed and updates the RackAFX7 Rapid-Plugin-Development (RPD) tool, designed the Korg 1212 I/O PCI audio interface, and has consulted on numerous audio algorithms for digital signal processing, as well as front and back-end analog audio circuits for commercial products. ||



Will Pirkle

# Faculty Updates

**Charles Norman Mason**, B.M.

'77, professor and chair, music theory and composition, had a number of



premieres this year including *The Silent Choir Sings* by the Percussion Collective, *Frida's Macaw* and *Last Call* by Ex-Sentia Ensemble, and

*Flash Dance* by Illlll, to name a few. More recent works and premieres include *Silencing the Sirens* for violin, *Is There Anyone There* for video and electronics, and *Only the Butterflies are Free* commissioned by the South Florida Chamber Ensemble.

**Bettina Mussumeli**, lecturer, violin, was a core faculty member at Festival Napa Valley in summer 2021, where



she also played principal violin in the festival orchestra, and performed in chamber music concerts; she will return again in 2022. She also performed

in two sold out concerts with violist Jodi Levitz at the Valley of the Moon Festival in

Sonoma, California. As a member of the new chamber music ensemble "I Solisti di Miami" she is curating and performing concerts featuring Italian baroque music.

**Corin Overland**, associate professor of professional practice for vocal music education and choral conducting, serves



as chair and academic editor for the *Music Educators Journal*, and is a professional member of the Grammy Recording Academy. He was an invited headline

lecturer for Tennessee Arts Academy Summer Workshop 2021, and guest conductor for several honor choirs.

**Svet Stoyanov**, associate professor and program director, percussion, will premiere Jennifer Higdon's Double



Concerto for Percussion (along with percussionist Matt Strauss) with the Houston Symphony Orchestra this May. He maintains a busy

itinerary as a featured solo artist worldwide.

**Nicole Yarling**, violinist, singer, and lecturer for the Contemporary Music program, was named one of *Legacy South Florida's* Top Black Educators of 2021. She



served as a panelist for Arts for Action—Black Voices for the Broward Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and was awarded community grants to produce

a series called "Groovin' on a Sunday Afternoon." An adjudicator for YoungArts, she continues her work as the curator of Gold Coast Jazz Society's First Friday Jazz Jam, and is developing pedagogy for string players to learn to play and teach alternative contemporary music styles.

## NEWLY TENURED FACULTY

Three music faculty were awarded tenure by the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami this year:

**Etienne Charles** (associate professor, studio music and jazz);

**Kim Josephson** (professor, vocal performance); and

**Kevin Kenner** (associate professor, keyboard performance).

For full faculty biographies and updates, please visit [frost.miami.edu/faculty](http://frost.miami.edu/faculty)

## Sensational Music Faculty Earn Provost's Research Awards

Six prominent professors of the Frost School of Music were granted University of Miami Provost's Research Awards for 2022. The internal grants will provide supplemental salary and direct research support to the awardees during the next academic year while they are simultaneously teaching at the University. The faculty awardees are:

**Carlos Abril**

Professor, Music Education

Tuning In: Marginalized Voices in Music Education

**Brian Lynch**

Professor, Studio Music & Jazz

An Integrated Method for Jazz Trumpet Instruction with Immersive and Interactive Capabilities

**Steven Zdzinski**

Professor, Music Education and Music Therapy

Creation of a Research Procedures Textbook, *Research Procedures in Music*

**Brian Powell**

Associate Professor, Instrumental Performance

The Pulcinella Project: A Double Bass Album Featuring Stravinsky's Sources and Works Associated with the Music of "Pulcinella"

**Marysol Quevedo**

Associate Professor, Musicology

Cuban Music Counterpoints:

Classical Music Networks

Before and During the Cold War

**Aaron Tindall**

Associate Professor, Instrumental

Performance

"At the Ballet": A Premiere Recording of the Orchestral Tuba

These distinguished music colleagues are leading researchers, published authors, award-winning performance artists, and thought leaders in the world of higher music education. ||





## The Road to Excellence and Success

GIVEN THE CAREER he's had, Associate Professor Richard Todd is not the easiest musician to impress. A French horn player nonpareil in both jazz and classical, he has played the world's most prestigious venues from Carnegie Hall to the Sydney Opera House and recorded with some of the biggest names in the field—Elton John, Kanye West, and Michael Jackson among them. He has also played on 2,000 film and television scores, for composers including Danny Elfman, John Williams, and Hans Zimmer.



But what makes him rave is remembering his visit to the Frost School of Music when Dean Shelly Berg and the instrumental performance faculty were seeking a new horn professor.

"I walked away after 72 hours going, 'That's the most amazing music school I've ever seen,'" Todd says. "It's like a conservatory on steroids, way ahead of other music schools in terms of preparing people for the profession and direction of music. This place blew me away. The vision of what happens here is what drew me. I'm not going anywhere. This is my last job."

Todd grew up in Southern California, the son of a piano-playing mother (who is still actively performing at age 89). He began with piano lessons himself at age 4, then wanted to try a different instrument after a few years. So, his parents gave him three choices—strings, double reeds, or horn—and he sheepishly admits he chose horn because it was the most "manly man" instrument of the three. "I was the quintessential chubby, dumpy nerd kid with glasses and a bad '60s haircut," he says. "Carrying a violin case around would have made me a magnet for after-school beat-downs. So, horn it was."

Todd progressed quickly and went to the University of Southern California (USC) for college, studying under maestros Vincent DeRosa and Waldemar Linder,

then Music Academy of the West. He went on to play with professional symphonies in Utah, New Orleans and Los Angeles while teaching at UCLA, USC, and Indiana University before Frost lured him to Miami in 2009.

Through it all, his ability to play in a range of styles has come in handy for freelance session work.

One formative experience was recording "Here's to Life" with jazz singer Shirley Horn and arranger Johnny Mandel, on which he played a featured solo. "That probably made me more money over the years

than anything, just because of the notoriety I got from it," he says.

"It was early on, and my phone started ringing after people heard that." It really hasn't stopped since.

Todd has a deep passion for teaching, too, preaching "The Four Rs of Success"

(Research, Repetition, Retention, Result) in pushing students to their best. To that end, he made a 16-part video series, *The Art of Practicing: How to be an Analogue Thinker in a Digital World*.

He also finds time for the occasional gig with the Palm Beach Symphony, where he is surrounded by his current and former students.

"Nowadays, students' instruments are probably the largest piece of analogue-thinking they have left," Todd says. "The way everyone thinks and processes information has really evolved, which is both a blessing and a curse. I'm always saying, 'If you think you've got it right, you've got more work to do.' Keep working on it another five or 10 times, until you know you've really got it. That's the difference between ownership, and renting." ||

**"TO STUDY MUSIC IS TO  
STUDY ONE'S SELF—MAKING  
MUSIC IS ONE OF THE GREATEST  
GIFTS TO BE GIVEN, AND ALSO  
TO BE SHARED."**

## 1970s

**Curtis J. McKonly**, B.M. '76, pianist, composer, and orchestrator released two original songs, "I'm a Stone Harbor Girl" and "She's a Stone Harbor Girl." Future projects include production for an animated television show *Will Santa Come This Year?*

**Laurie Hannan-Anton**, B.M. '79, is an attorney at law in Naples, Florida. Last year, she argued an appeal at the Second District Court of Appeals in Florida. A singer, she also has original recordings on iTunes, Amazon, and Spotify.

## 1980s

**Kenneth Nigro**, M.M. '80, is a Yamaha Performing Artist and AMT Microphone Artist who recently moved to Austin, Texas. He is a visiting lecturer at Southern Connecticut State University where he teaches clarinet and saxophone. He played 1st tenor sax and is a soloist on Jens Wendelboe's big band CD *Against All Odds* released October 2021. He performed with national touring shows including *Book of Mormon*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Newsies*, and *Chicago* and with Manhattan Transfer, Chris Botti, the Temptations, and more.

**Daniel Adams**, M.M. '81, professor of composition at Texas Southern University, presented "Non-western Music at the 1901 Pan-American Exposition: Cultural Inclusion or Patronizing Exploitation?" at the 2021 National Conference of the College Music Society, and "Four Drums, One Player: The Artistic and Pedagogical Merits of the Unaccompanied Concert Tom-Tom Solo" at the 2021 National Association of College Wind and Percussion Instructors.

**Michael Diliberto**, B.M. '81, J.D. '87, attorney, mediator and arbitrator, performed as a principal actor and script consultant for a SAG-AFTRA



legal drama television series *The Trial*. His article "Lawyers and Judges in Harmony" was published in *Los Angeles Lawyer* magazine, highlighting lawyers and judges who play music on a professional level in orchestras and big bands.

**Orlando Garcia**, M.M. '82, D.M.A. '85, Distinguished University Professor and Composer-in-Residence at Florida International University, premiered new works, released his ninth solo album, and earned his fifth Latin Grammy nomination in the contemporary classical composition category for his String Quartet No. 2 "Cuatro." The New Music Miami Festival he founded is celebrating its 25th year.

**Dawnn Lewis**, B.M. '82, received an honorary doctorate in 2019. She returned to Broadway in *TINA: The Tina Turner Musical* and was Inducted into the Women Songwriters Hall Of Fame. Winner of the 2021 Women's Image Award for Outstanding Voice Actor, and nominated for the NAACP Image Award in the same category, she has appeared recently in television shows *Grey's Anatomy*, *911*, *The Boys*, *The Rich & The Ruthless*, and on film in *Writing Round The Christmas Tree*, and *A Black Jack Christmas*.

**Jim Taylor**, M.M. '82, is associate professor of music and director of fine arts at LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas. He is scheduled to conduct his *Cambridge Songs Suite No. 4* for choir and orchestra at L'église de la Madeleine in Paris in June 2022 with MidAmerica Productions International.

**Joseph Koykkar**, D.M.A. '83, composition and theory, retired from the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he taught courses



in Sound Design and served as the music director for the Dance Department. In addition, he was the founder of the innovative InterArts & Technology Program. His compositions continue to be performed nationally and internationally. He has been the artistic director of the Madison New Music Ensemble since 2019.

**William Easterling**, B.M. '83, took an early retirement from public broadcasting in South Carolina, where he performed a variety of



technical functions in studio and remote settings, post production, design, and installation for live broadcast. He now enjoys working on special projects, touring in his Airstream trailer, and playing keyboards.

**Peter DeMarco**, M.M. '84, co-wrote "Three Responsorial Psalms" with Rob Galea, published with GIA Publications, Inc. They are: "Be Merciful, O Lord, for We Have Sinned," "The Lord is Kind and Merciful," and "The Lord is My Light and My Salvation."

**JB Dyas**, M.M. '85, vice president for education and curriculum development at the Herbie Hancock Institute of Jazz, recently presented a national webinar for hundreds of students, teachers, principals, superintendents, and school boards across the country, highlighting the importance of music education in public schools. Since first streaming, the webinar has received over 500,000 views on YouTube.



## Choral Movement Trailblazer Still Exploring New Career Challenges

SALLY ALBRECHT, M.A. '77, M.M. '79, recipient of the Frost School of Music's 2021 Distinguished Alumna Award, recalls the panicked early-morning Saturday call she received as a choral teaching assistant that put her career in motion: could she come right away to campus to accompany at an all-day choral event involving middle school and high school singers and their directors?

"The directors were assembled to sing through new music from a major music publisher, Shawnee Press, but no accompanist had been procured," she says.

Albrecht rushed over, and was soon sight-reading dozens of choral works.

"It was a turning point in my life," says the effervescent choral conductor, composer, and clinician who earned two master's degrees from the University of Miami, in musical theater, and in accompanying.

"During the lunch break that day, Pete Kiefer from Shawnee Press invited me to be the accompanist for the Fred Waring Summer Music Workshop and, honestly, I've been working ever since," says Albrecht.

Her music career culminated in serving for three decades as school choral music editor and composer for Alfred Music Publishing, and as a conductor and clinician for

hundreds of honor choirs and workshops worldwide. "Conducting honor choirs absolutely still gives me goosebumps and emotional chills, if I've done my work right! Putting together singers who have come from a variety of schools and traditions to form a never-before-seen-or-heard choir in a day or two is my

absolute favorite challenge and joy. All of us have to think alike, sing vowels alike, attack and cut off alike, stretch our voices like we've never stretched before, bond with fellow choir members we've never met, and become as one voice, one sound, one magnificent and thrilling vocal ensemble. It's an honor and a privilege to make music with those who are dedicated to be the best that they can be."

One of her first occasions to feel deep emotional chills was as an accompanist for conductor Fred Waring at his summer music workshop. "We were rehearsing a Roy Ringwald arrangement of Jerome Kern's 'Long Ago and Far Away.' It was a huge piano part, and we had tons of exceptional singers, plus Mr. Waring's 'Pennsylvanians' in the choir. When the arrangement built up to the lyric, 'Chills run up and down my spine,' Mr. Waring would look over at me at the piano and ask, 'Chills?' If I shook my head, 'No,' he would agree and ask for more from the singers. During our final performance, we absolutely nailed that spot. Mr. Waring looked over, raising his eyebrows, as I nodded 'YES!!' He wasn't an easy musician to please, but we bonded over that 'chilling' musical moment," Albrecht shares.

After teaching at the collegiate level for two years, Shawnee Press recruited her as a sales representative, and then director of school choral music. She also met her husband, composer/arranger Jay Althouse there.

Her training in musical theater and choreography at the University also led her to become a frontrunner for incorporating choral movement into concerts. "I approached choral movement from a singer's standpoint: needing to look effective but still be able to breath and produce wonderful vocal sounds; primarily, movement from the waist up, mainly on choral risers," she says.

Albrecht has written two books and produced 20 DVDs on the subject. "The addition of visual effects can certainly lift the choral experience to a higher emotional level, for both the performer and the audience, she says.

The Frost School honored the double alumna's achievements at a choral concert on campus in April, conducted by Associate Professor Amanda Quist, director of choral activities.

Albrecht says she is grateful to her alma mater, and proudly donates annually to the "two departments that gave me so much and believed in me....the experiences I had at the U of M made me a stronger performer and pushed me to accomplish and reach for new goals. I'm sure other students are anxious to receive sustaining scholarship/assistantship dollars as much as I appreciated them way back then!" ||



**"Putting together singers from a variety of schools and traditions to form a new choir in a day or two is my absolute favorite challenge and joy."**

# Class Notes

**Lori (Peatrowsky) Murphy**, B.M. '85, studio singer and recording artist, released a remake of Jimmy Webb's "Up, Up & Away," produced and arranged by **Graham Hawthorne**, B.M. '84, who also played drums on the track. Other alumni on the recording include trumpeter **Walter White**, '86, and guitarist **Teddy Kumpel**, '86. Murphy also released "A Sign of the Times," with producer Joey Auch.

**Nancy Pettersen Strelau**, M.M. '85, associate director and orchestra director at Nazareth College School of Music in Rochester, New York, welcomed **David Davies**, M.M. '04, D.M.A. '07, as the new director of the School of Music in fall 2020. In November 2021, the Nazareth College Symphony Strings premiered Davies' piece, *Ars Longa*, along with the premiere of *End of Nature* by **Steven Danyew**, B.M. '06. The same month, the Genesee Symphony Orchestra premiered *A Simple, Beautiful Idea*, composed by Strelau to commemorate the orchestra's 75th anniversary.

**Monica Courtney**, B.M. '86, a.k.a. Monica Ciudad-Real, was the piano accompanist for the 2022 Florida All-State Elementary Chorus in Tampa, Florida. She was also recognized with an award at the FMEA Conference for her 27 years of teaching music in Florida schools, most recently at Pine Crest School in Boca Raton for 18 years.



**Janet Duguay Kirsten**, B.M. '87, M.B.A.



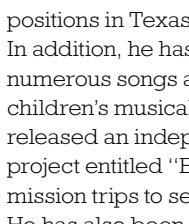
'89, M.M. '92, Ph.D. '07, is the Music Magnet Director at South Miami K-8 Center for Expressive Arts where she has expanded the elementary string and vocal program to include instruction on band instruments; she was awarded four grants for the program. As a quadruple alumna, she was also selected to present her thoughts on merging music with business during a Miami Herbert Business School lecture series.

**Laura Berlowe Grossman**, B.M. '88, J.D. '97, has been practicing law



in South Florida for 25 years, and is a marriage and family lawyer with Cabanas Law Firm. She recently became a Florida Supreme Court Certified Family Mediator.

**Charlie (Rick) Futch**, B.M. '89, is Associate Pastor (Students and Worship) at Mt. Tabor Baptist Church, Lakeland, Florida. He served previously in similar



positions in Texas and Tennessee. In addition, he has composed numerous songs and written two children's musicals for churches, released an independent worship project entitled "EPIC" and has led mission trips to several countries. He has also been a freelance writer for LifeWay Christian Resources.

**Lee Levin**, B.M. '89, performed drums/percussion as the co-musical director for the House Band of the 2021 Latin Grammys, broadcast live on Univision from the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. In addition to co-writing this year's theme music, the band performed with Christina Aguilera, Bad Bunny, Gloria Estefan, Camilo, Gente de Zona, and Myke Towers.

**Elaine Rinaldi**, B.M. '89, artistic director of Orchestra Miami, celebrated its 15th anniversary season with a free New Year's



Eve performance of Beethoven's 9th Symphony on Miami Beach. She also appeared as a guest conductor for the New York City Opera's holiday concert, and for Opera in the Ozarks.

## 1990s

**Roberta Rust**, D.M.A. '91, released *Mozart Matures: 1780s Piano Works*, on Parma's Navona Records. She continues teaching at Lynn University Conservatory of Music and will join the summer faculty at the Adamant Music School in Vermont this year.

**Julio Bagué**, B.B.A. '90, M.M. '93, is vice president U.S. Latin and Puerto Rico for peermusic. He is a Latin Grammy-winning producer,



nominated for both Grammy and Latin Grammy awards over 10 times in his career. He produced the soundtrack for the motion picture *Rebellion* about Colombian Salsa artist, Joe Arroyo.



**Marko Marcinko**, B.M. '93, director of jazz studies at Penn State University in Pennsylvania, is also artistic director of the Scranton Jazz Festival,



The Montco Jazz Festival, PA Jazz Institute, and PA Jazz Alliance Inc. In 2021, he directed the Scranton Jazz Festival Big Band in the *Swingin' Jazz Nutcracker Suite* for PBS. He is also a guest artist lecturer at the University of Richmond in Virginia, and SUNY East Orange College in New York.

**Jorge M. Saade**, B.M. '93, violinist, performed as a guest soloist with the Rome Symphony Orchestra for its 100th Anniversary Concert



Celebration. Last September, he was appointed Violin, Viola, and Chamber Music Professor at the University of the Arts of Ecuador, UArtes. For 2022, he will be performing the world premiere of Ecuadorian composer Gerardo Guevara's Violin Concerto, dedicated to him. Guevara is the most important nationalistic

composer of Ecuador and this year celebrates his 92nd birthday; this is Guevara's latest work.

**David Cutler**, B.M. '94, published the illustrated and designed visual book, *The GAME of Innovation* (McGraw-Hill, 2022). Packed with actionable



strategies, its methodology helps amplify team performance, and deliver a "WOW!!!" Cutler serves as Distinguished Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in the School of Music at the University of South Carolina.

## Collaborative Composer Commissioned by Metropolitan Museum of Art

**M**atthew Evan Taylor, M.M. '11, D.M.A. '15, did not let the COVID 19 pandemic slow his commitment to creating music that challenges listeners while also trying to make sense of the world.

At the beginning of 2020, a month after his 39th birthday, the saxophonist/composer made a promise that he would improvise every day for a minimum of 39 seconds...which more often became 10 or 15 minutes. "It turned into a year of self-discovery," he says. "It changed how I thought of myself as a musician, a composer, an improviser."

These improv sessions resulted in *The Unheard Mixtapes*, a five-part series that explores the creative possibilities of the mixtape as its own musical genre.

That introspective experience proved especially helpful when he was commissioned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art for a unique year-long project: *Postcards to the Met*, a 12-part video series that gave Taylor an opportunity to collaborate with musicians from Metropolis Ensemble and the South Asian jazz collective RAJAS. Each month, he launched the process by drafting a first layer of composition, which then would be elaborated on by the others—all working remotely.

Separately and together, the installments provide a peek into the real-time process of a composer and his partners as they explore African-American, Western European and South Indian musical traditions. He then used elements of *Postcards* for "Life Returns," a concert-length piece that premiered live at the Met in March 2022.

His work with the Met has turned into a pivotal career experience, too. "It provided a heightened visibility for my work. I haven't had these many eyeballs before." The installments are on The Met's Instagram account.

No one who knows Taylor is surprised by this acclaim. He has been dubbed "a promising new voice" and a "risk taker," and his compositions have been called "insistent and defiant...envelopingly hypnotic."

Dorothy Hindman, B.M. '88, D.M.A. '94, associate professor of composition at the Frost School of Music, has been following Taylor's career since he was an undergraduate. "Matthew is brilliant and thoroughly dedicated to music at the highest level," she says. "He combines all of his passions—jazz, classical, experimental, multimedia, and improvisational styles—to create a totally unique language that appeals to people immediately."

That unique language is part of Taylor's effort to frame today's social justice issues through a new lens. For instance, his opera *The Warrior's Wives* is a retelling of Chinewa Achebe's novel *Things Fall Apart* from the female perspective. More recently, his album *Say Their Names* is his answer to oppressive policing practices in minority neighborhoods, with sales proceeds supporting Black Lives Matter and Campaign Zero.

Taylor, who also plays flute, clarinet, and the East Asian instrument hulusi, toured for several years with the indie rock band Moses Mayfield before pursuing his graduate studies. At Frost, he discovered "an incredible energy on campus that really promoted a lot of creativity and collaboration." While at Frost, he even penned his first ballet, which had six performances.

"The faculty were genuinely interested in what I was writing, what I would do next," he says. "I learned very quickly, because it was strongly encouraged, that it was great to play on campus but you also needed to share your art beyond that." Which he certainly has. ||



MICHELLE LEFTHRIS

# Class Notes

**Michael Babcock**, B.M. '96, recently completed sound design and re-recording mixing work on Nia Dacosta and Jordan Peele's



*Candyman*, and Aaron Sorkin's *Being the Ricardos*. In 2021, he also was a re-recording mixer on the films *The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It*, and *Reminiscence*, along with the hybrid album/feature Imax and Dolby Atmos mix of Halsey's studio album *If I Can't Have Love, I Want Power* for Halsey, Atticus Ross, and Trent Reznor. He recently finished mixing work on Dreamworks Animation's *The Bad Guys*, along with a complete Dolby Atmos remix of *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.

**Julio Garcia**, B.M. '96, is teaching music as a virtual instructor for Laurel Springs School in Ojai, California. He also holds a Master of Science in Leadership from Grand Canyon University, and a Master of Music in Education from University of Montana. For 27 years he has been an educator, researcher, professional musician, conductor, and composer and has taught at the K-12, community college, and university levels. As a performer he has performed internationally and self-released three albums of original music.

**Jennifer Hughes-Beshore**, B.M. '96, is an award-winning professional actor, private voice teacher, and drama program creator. She finished her Master's in Theatre Arts from Regent University in August 2021 and now teaches students in her studio, Broadway Notes, in Central Pennsylvania. She also serves as a guest artist musical theatre teacher for CASA, a Harrisburg area arts magnet school.



**Sandra Lopez Neill**, B.M. '96, M.M. '17, soprano, made her house debut this season with Opera de Tenerife, Spain in the title role of Daniel



Catan's *Florencia En el Amazonas* in March 2022. In October 2021, she made her role debut as Elle in Poulenc's *La Voix* with Opera Atelier at the Miracle Theater in Coral Gables, Florida. She has appeared in recitals throughout the season, and continues to teach voice on the faculty of the Frost School of Music.

**Keith Chambers**, BM '97, MM '99, is founder, artistic director, and principal conductor of New Amsterdam Opera in New York



City. He recently conducted for The Dallas Opera (*The Elixir of Love*), Indianapolis Opera (*Don Giovanni*, and *South Pacific*), and Vienna Kammeroper (*Suor Angelica* and *Gianni Schicchi*). Upcoming engagements include Vienna Summer Music Festival (*Le nozze di Figaro*), and Opera Orlando (*Un giorno di regno*), to name a few.

**Dawn McConkie**, B.M. '96, M.M. '98, D.M.A. '05, is a professor of music at Emporia State University where she serves as coordinator of woodwinds, teaches applied clarinet and saxophone, and is the recipient of a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award. She also directs the Emporia State University Clarinet Choir, Saxophone Quartets, and other woodwind chamber groups. She is the Kansas State Board Chair of the International Clarinet Association, and performs in professional orchestras and chamber music ensembles.

**Rell Lafargue**, M.M. '97, is the president and chief operating officer of Reservoir, the first independent music company to be publicly



traded on a U.S. stock exchange; they have earned several publisher-of-the-year awards with *Music Week* and *Music Business Worldwide*. Lafargue serves on the boards of the Mechanical Licensing Collective, Association of Independent Music Publishers, and Music Publishers Canada, working to promote the interests of songwriters. His recent deals include Joni Mitchell, Travis Tritt, Snarky Puppy, and Tommy Boy Records.

**Brian Russell**, B.M. '97, M.M. '07, Ph.D. '10, a contemporary guitar lecturer at the Frost School, was the banjo chair for the world premiere of *A Wonderful World - A New Musical* through Miami New Drama.



**Kendra Preston Leonard**, M.M. '98, musicologist, theorist, lyricist and librettist, is currently serving as the manager for the Julia Perry Working Group on Humanities Commons. Her operas *Par for the Course* and *Now Available*, written with composer Lisa Neher, were performed by New Opera West and the Women Composers Festival of Hartford in March 2022, and their work for low voices, "Gilgamesh Weeps," was premiered by singers at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.





# 2000s

**Keith Washo**, M.M. '00, songwriter, pianist, and producer, published a new book, *Good Things Come From Hard Times*, and released a new song "Follow" in a music video produced by Emmy Award-winning videographer Nick Zelano.

**Peter Fielding**, M.M. '02, is a music theory teacher with the Dr. Bobbie Bailey School of Music and serves as Associate Dean for Kennesaw State University's College of the Arts, in Georgia.

**Nicholas Perna**, B.M. '03, D. M. A. '08, associate professor of voice and voice pedagogy at Mississippi College, and research associate at the University of Mississippi Medical Center, was elected Vice President for Outreach for the National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) for the 2022-2024 term. He is host of the *VocalFri* podcast



and his research will be presented at the NATS National Conference and the International Congress of Voice Teachers. His performances as Giacomo Puccini in *Letters to Puccini* debuted at Opera Mississippi in February.

**Jeremy Levy**, M.M. '04, was the lead orchestrator for Carlos Rafael Rivera's score to the Netflix series, *The Queen's Gambit*. Other recent orchestration projects include three television mini-series: *WandaVision*, *Hawkeye*, and *Maya and the Three*.



**Melissa Lesniak**, Ph.D. '05, is director of foundation relations for the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County. She served formerly as director of outreach for Shalala MusicReach at the Frost School. Lesniak continues to teach as an adjunct lecturer for the Live Entertainment Management program at Frost.

**Armen Shaomian**, M.M. '05, D.M.A.



'08, is associate professor and principal of Preston Residential College at the University of South Carolina. He gave the keynote address at the 2021 annual conference for the Music Focused Interdisciplinary Research & Analysis Center at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, Sweden. He is currently president of the Music and Entertainment Industry Educators Association.

**Cara Scherker**, B.A. '06, joined with global entertainment agency Elan Artists as a bandleader, singer and emcee for Highline, a luxury wedding and event band with NYC roots.



## A Powerful Singing Actress

**Elizabeth Caballero**, B.M. '99, soprano and recipient of the Frost School of Music 2013 Distinguished Alumna award, began the New Year in dramatic fashion as the tragic Blanche DuBois in André Previn's opera *Streetcar Named Desire*, based on the book by Tennessee Williams. It was presented by Florida Grand Opera and directed by Jeffrey Buchman, an assistant professor at the Frost School of Music, stage director of Frost Opera Theater, and an in-demand professional stage director.

The story reunites an aging beauty, Blanche, with her sister Stella and husband Stanley living in New Orleans. When Stanley discovers Blanche has lost the family home, her job, and is hiding personal secrets, he confronts her. Her mental condition spirals downward; the opera ends with her heading to an insane asylum.

"The character of Blanche is such a beautifully complex character and I completely fell in love with her. I wanted to save her as I learned the piece," Caballero says. "Eventually, I decided that I would give it my all to give a real and sincere portrayal."

Her "silvery high range" and devastating performance "brought off Blanche's mood swings with sympathy and pathos" and "brought her to a new level as a powerful singing actress," said *South Florida Classical Review*.

Much of Previn's score is through-composed with long recitative passages, quite a challenge for singers.

Caballero discovered its inner beauty. "It's a lovely combination of American jazz enveloped in a Viennese style orchestration. My favorite aria was "I Can Smell the Sea Air." In the play, the sea monologue is a personal moment for Tennessee Williams. I loved the setting of his text in that aria. It felt like I was singing an art song."

Caballero is looking forward to several nice projects coming up next season, most notably debuting as Amelia in Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera* ("A Masked Ball") at Klagenfurt, Austria and reprising the role of Mimi in Puccini's *La bohème* in a tour of Japan. ||



# Class Notes

**Chad Bernstein**, B.M. '06, M.M. '08, D.M.A. '12, founder and CEO of the Miami-based Guitars Over Guns, expanded the outreach program's reach to Los Angeles.

**Stephen Danyew**, B.M. '06, instructor of arts leadership at Eastman School of Music, composed a fanfare, *Festival Music*, that was written



in celebration of Eastman's 100th anniversary and opened the fall 2021 school convocation. He was also the composer-in-residence at the 2021 University of Wisconsin La Crosse New Music Festival where his piece *Elegy for the End of Nature* was premiered.

**Sara Pachter Freudenberger**, B.M. '06, received ordination as a Cantor, Jewish clergy specializing in music, in January 2022 after studying through the ALEPH Ordination Program, and also began a new position as Cantor at Shirat Hayam in Swampscott, Massachusetts. She is married to **Peter Freudenberger**, B.M. '08.



**Bruce Kiesling**, D.M.A. '06, continues as music director of the Sequoia Symphony in California, and the Adrian Symphony in Michigan.



In December 2021, Bruce made his debut conducting the San Francisco Symphony with Emmy Award-winning actor and singer Darren Criss. He conducted the world premiere recording of the orchestral version of Florence Price's *Suite of Dances*, as part of the Sequoia Symphony's Musical UpLink series on YouTube, which has passed 70,000 views.

**Raina Murnak**, D.M.A. '06, assistant professor at the Frost School, is working on a book for Routledge Taylor & Francis Group entitled *Positive*



*Psychology for Music Professionals: Character Strengths* with research partner and psychologist Nancy Kirsner. Her chapter on staging popular music was published in the book *Action-Based Approaches in Popular Music Education*. She is also collaborating with Golden Globe- and Emmy-nominated actress Janine Turner on an upcoming musical.

**Kelly Parkes**, Ph.D. '06, was promoted to full professor at Teachers College, Columbia University in 2021. She is also the chair of the Department of Arts and Humanities, the largest department at Teachers College, Columbia University serving 10 programs.

**Joanne Kampiziones-Ying**, D.M.A. '07,



professor of music at Broward College for 13 years, was awarded the Cleveland Clinic

Endowed Teaching Chair Award by the Broward College Foundation, honoring her professional and academic contributions to the institution. A pianist, she stays active as a performer.

**Kat Reinhart**, M.M. '07, Ph.D. '18, immediate past president of the Association for Popular Music Education, released an album of original music,



*Dead Reckoning*, and was a semi-finalist in the 2022 International Songwriting Competition for "Accidentally" from the album. She also co-authored an online course *Songwriting for Music Educators*.

**Genevieve Burgess**, B.A. '08, M.M. '11, is currently working as the publishing processing manager at Sound-Exchange in Washington,



D.C., helping to develop new applications and workflows related to processing music publishing royalties.

**Katrina Mena**, B.A. '08, celebrated her 10 year anniversary as a Walt Disney World cast member, and made her debut as a creative producer for the Walt Disney World 50th Anniversary Celebration. Mena led a team of dozens of digital artists, animators, and technicians to create the custom video projection content on icons at each theme park. She is the first Latinx creative producer in her department, is a Diversity & Inclusion leader and activist, and an official spokesperson for Disney Live Entertainment.

**Parker Smith**, B.M. '09, released a new album *Underground* in 2021 and toured the southeast with fellow UM classmates **Taylor Byrd**, B.M. '08, **Brian Lange**, B.M. '08, and **Brandon Kunka**, M.M. '07. Smith is the founder of Guitar Shed, a music school in Atlanta, Georgia, with two locations and over 20 teachers.



**Vicente Chavarría**, B.A. '09, M.M. '11, is principal conductor of Manchester Chamber Choir and music director of The Handful Chamber Choir in Bath, United Kingdom. He is a choral scholar at St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, and works as a freelance conductor and performer. He is also the founder and director of the early music ensemble Lillium Convallium. Recent engagements include Lavenham Sinfonia, Colne Philharmonic, and Croydon Youth Orchestra, and assistant conductor with English Touring Opera.



## UM Distinguished Alumni Award Goes to Disney Exec

JAMIE CONVISER, B.M. '01, music producer for Disney Live Entertainment, and Frost School alumna, was honored in the fall with the 2021 University of Miami Distinguished Alumni Award. She also participated in a webinar with other illustrious alumni industry panelists titled *Changing the Tune: Reinventing the Music Industry* hosted by the Miami Alumni Association.

"We shared our perspectives on the transformation of the industry and what the future holds," Conviser says, and added it was a great privilege to participate in the UM-hosted webinar.

Music alumna Dawnn Lewis, B.M. '82, singer, actress, and president and chief executive officer for Morning Jewel, Inc. and A New Day Foundation, was also a webinar participant; Lewis was honored as the Frost School's distinguished alumna in 1994.

From age 6, Conviser studied classical piano starting with the late Rosalina Sackstein, piano professor emeritus at the Frost School of Music. Conviser won numerous state piano competitions for the Florida State Federation of Music for Piano Solo, Piano Duo/Duet and Senior Piano Concerto, was nominated as a finalist for the Irene Muir Piano Competition and performed annually at Maurice Gusman Concert Hall.

In addition to the piano, Conviser became interested in electronic music, synthesizers, video games, and sound design. "I loved to tinker with electronics growing up, and wanted to learn everything I could about the art

of not only music, but any mechanical object I could get my hands on. At the University of Miami, I studied piano performance at the Frost School of Music, as well as digital art, and cinematic studies. Upon graduating, I immediately started working for Disney Live Entertainment where I began my career as Musical Director for global live shows," she says.

In her current role at Disney, she is responsible for taking an original creative show concept and building global music teams to final show production. This includes providing musical direction for live orchestra and vocal recording sessions, Disney Character Voice/Voice-Over recordings, studio post-production, venue audio mixes, and show installation.

Conviser has 20 years of experience as a producer, music supervisor, sound designer, and musical director for Walt Disney Imagineering Research and Development, Walt Disney Animation Studios, and Disney Live Entertainment. She has served as music producer for over 500+ Disney shows for global Disney theme parks, Disney Cruise Line, and international special events.

"I grew up surrounded by a musical family, and was so fortunate to work with extraordinary musicians and artists from such a young age at the University of Miami. I hope to continue to inspire others to pursue their dreams as I did, and leave a bit of a mark along the way." ||



## 2010s

**Steven Brickman**, B.M. '10, composer musician, and producer based in Los Angeles, is currently on a headline tour with the artist Clairo, playing saxophone, flute, clarinet, guitars, keyboard, and autoharp



**Jennifer Denk**, B.M. '10, M.M. '20, is assistant professor and coordinator of Music Therapy at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. Under Denk's direction, its music therapy program was approved by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) in February 2021. She presented a research poster at the 2021 AMTA National Conference on her master's thesis research which examined the impact of a music therapy support group on perceived stress, anxiety, and depression in long-term caregivers.

**Mary Elisabeth Gibbs**, D.M.A. '10, is associate professor and director of choral studies at Florida Southern College in Lakeland,



Florida. She was selected as a Fulbright Senior Scholar, and is living in Bilbao, Spain for the spring semester of 2022. She is teaching at Musikene in San Sebastián, and working with choirs throughout the Basque Country.

# Class Notes

**Dion Kerr**, B.M. '10, bassist and engineer, is co-founder of the band The Smoogies. Their debut album *Planet Smoogies* was recorded



with trumpeter Nicholas Payton. Kerr was also the engineer and producer of Seafoam Walls' record *XVI*, released on Ecstatic Peace Library. He has also scored music for film shown at Orleans, SXSW, and Miami festivals.

**Daniel Susnjar**, M.M. '10, D.M.A. '13, is active in the Australian music community, drumming with top-level artists and with the Daniel



Susnjar Afro-Peruvian Jazz Group. In 2021, he was honored with West Australian Music's WAM Awards Best Jazz Act and WAM Jazz Song of the Year. New ventures include a jazz choir collaboration Peruano Canta and a high-tech solo drum project, Drumhacker. He is also involved in *Koolbardi wer Wardong*, Australia's first indigenous opera.

**Cody Parrott**, M.M. '11, is conductor of the University Treble Chorus at the University of Texas at Austin, where he is pursuing a D.M.A. in choral conducting.



Choirs under his direction have received numerous prestigious awards, and he has been a presenter at Texas Choral Directors Association conferences and a clinician for All-Region Choirs and festivals.

**Eric Spiegel**, B.M. '11, is chief operating officer and director of program development for MidAmerica Productions, presenting 14 concerts at Carnegie Hall in spring 2022 with the New England Symphonic Ensemble, featuring choirs from all over the United States. Spiegel continues his work conducting the Brooklyn, New York chapter of HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir.

**Emmet Cohen**, B.M. '12, topped the 2021 *JazzTimes* Readers' Poll in three categories: Artist of the Year, Pianist, and Acoustic Small Group/Artist with Emmet Cohen Trio.

**Jenna Rubai**, B.M. '12, is performing the role of Mary Magdelene in the national tour of the musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*. **Omar Lopez-Cepero**, B.M. '04,

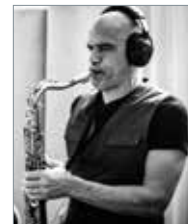


also just joined the cast in the role of Judas.

**Trent Saunders**, B.M. '12, is performing in the Broadway production of *Hadestown*.

**Zach Presswood**, M.M. '13, is currently the Director of Innovation at Rokt, a technology company focused on optimizing the transaction moment for ecommerce with brands like TicketMaster/LiveNation, StubHub, and more. He lives and works in New York City.

**Pablo Gil**, D.M.A. '13, is music director at Univision Studios in Doral, Florida. Alongside Grammy-winning percussionist



Tony Succar, Gil is founder and co-director of Raices Jazz Orchestra an extended big band that explores Hispanic musical heritage. The group was recently featured on *Great Performances: Roots of Latin Jazz* that premiered on PBS in July 2021. He is currently music director and woodwinds performer on the Unimás hit show *Enamorandonos* broadcast on Univision's network in prime time in the United States, Puerto Rico and Mexico.

**Alyssa Wilkins**, B.M. '14, expanded her private music therapy practice, Dynamic Lynks by acquiring RhythmWorks. She now has one of the largest music therapy teams in the Chicago area. In addition, Wilkins is pursuing a Master's of Music Therapy at Colorado State University. She continues to present across the U.S. on using music therapy techniques to support child development. She is also the creator and co-host of *Coffee and TheraTEA*, a therapy podcast.

## New Director for Donna E. Shalala MusicReach

**Joseph Burleson**, B.M. '15, is the newly appointed director of outreach for the award-winning Donna E. Shalala MusicReach program at the Frost School of Music. Its mission is to enrich the music education programming of economically disadvantaged youth in Miami-Dade County while providing top-notch educational opportunities for Frost students to develop their teaching and community engagement skills.

Burleson was formerly senior development manager at Miami Music Project. An accomplished trumpet player, he performs throughout South Florida and has participated in notable music festivals.



A primary goal of MusicReach is to encourage the youth to stay in school and pursue a college degree. In recent years, 100% of MusicReach participants have graduated from high school and have been accepted to universities across the nation.

Over 1,500 underprivileged elementary, middle, and high school participants benefit from the program every year.

According to a recent survey, parents and site administrators stated overwhelmingly that the program has helped students develop important life skills such as motivation, confidence, leadership, and creativity. For more information: [musicreach.frost.miami.edu](http://musicreach.frost.miami.edu) ||



**Taylor Rambo**, B.M. '14, M.A. '17, was named executive director of the Georgia Symphony Orchestra in summer 2021. He previously served as major gifts and campaign manager with Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater in Washington, D.C.

**Mary Claire Curran**, M.M. '14, was a grant winner of the City Artist Corps Grants program, presented by The New York Foundation for the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, with support from the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment as well as Queens Theatre. She was recognized for her cabaret show "Opposites Attract" produced by Muse Media Services featuring a crossover of opera and musical theatre repertoire.

**Mateja Kalajian**, B.M. '15, resides in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and frequently performs with Symphony of the Americas, Orchestra Delray, and South Florida Symphony. She performed two concerts with The Who in April 2022.

**Eric J. McConnell**, B.M. '15, bass-baritone, finished up his second year as an Emerging Artist with Virginia Opera, performing as Sam (*Trouble in Tahiti*), Donner (*Das Rheingold*), Colline (*La bohème*), and Bartolo (*Le nozze di Figaro*). Upcoming work includes contracts with Opera on the James in Virginia, and Opera Saratoga in New York.

**Matt Wigler**, B.A. '15, M.B.A. '18, is the founder and chief executive officer of MHW Live, an entertainment buyer and manager for hotels and resorts in the United States in partnership with other Frost alumni **Lowell Ringel**, B.M. '16, M.M. '18, **Eric Eakes**, M.M. '17, A.D. '18, D.M.A. '21; **Andrew Peal**, M.M. '18, D.M.A. '21; and **Benjamin Whitman**, M.M. '18, D.M.A. '21.

MISHA PHOTOGRAPHY



## Perfecting the Practice

AFTER A FINAL live concert audition with The Philadelphia Orchestra at Carnegie Hall on February 8, featuring two thrilling world premieres, noted percussionist and Frost School of Music alumnus Pedro Fernandez, M.M. '12, heard the words he was hoping to hear: "Pedro, welcome to the family."

Fernandez was one of two finalists competing for the highly coveted position of Associate Principal Percussion; the other was a friend. There had been three prior screened ("blind") audition rounds with multiple candidates, and a fourth sectional audition with three semifinalists.

After the concert, the orchestra audition committee plus conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin announced their final choice: Fernandez was offered the full-time position beginning with their 2022-23 season. It will start with a probationary year, typical in the world of professional orchestras. He will join a section of four: one timpanist and three percussionists.

"I had a mix of good emotions. I'm grateful to so many people who have helped me on this journey. I have such a feeling of thankfulness," Fernandez says, who has been a full-time musician with the Indianapolis Symphony for the past six seasons and played summer seasons with Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra. Prior to Indianapolis, he held a one-year position with Cincinnati Symphony, and performed with Houston Ballet Orchestra for three seasons.

Fernandez was born and raised in Panama City, Panama, where he studied music from age 8 in elementary school, moved quickly to a pre-college program at the National Institute of Music in Panama (National Conservatory), then performed with the National Symphony of Panama as an extra musician and also as a soloist.

Fast forward, he earned a Master of Music in Percussion Performance from the Frost School of Music, where he played in the Frost Symphony Orchestra and was also a Mancini Fellow in the Henry Mancini Institute (HMI) which performs a range of musical genres.

"The HMI Orchestra was a great complement to my training for a full time orchestra. In the orchestras I currently play in, we do a lot of Pops, movie music, and cross-over concerts from jazz to hip hop to R&B. The reality is, it's a big part of the season, so having experience in those areas is important," he says.

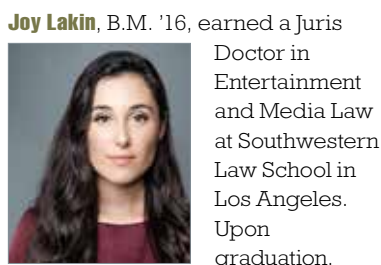
His percussion studio teachers at Frost were Bulgarian-born Associate Professor Svet Stoyanov and lecturer Matthew Strauss, now with Houston Symphony.

"Svet has a lot of patience, with everyone. When you are a student, you have a lot going on, and you find out who you really are. He's demanding, but he knows how to push in a way that you won't be overwhelmed. As foreigners, it was easy for us to relate to each other, in that we both came to the U.S. with one thing in mind: to be the best we can be," Fernandez says. "An early lesson from him, besides attention to detail, was that one of the main goals during school is to learn how to become your own teacher."

As he heads into a new musical adventure with The Philadelphia Orchestra, one thing is for sure: percussionist Pedro Fernandez will be highly prepared for what lies ahead, and appreciative of the opportunities. ||



VISIT INDY



**Joy Lakin**, B.M. '16, earned a Juris Doctor in Entertainment and Media Law at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles. Upon graduation, she was selected as the National Anthem singer for her law school commencement ceremony, which was held at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California. Currently, Lakin works as an Intellectual Property (IP) Professional and Business Advisor to Herizon Music Foundation, empowering woman in the music industry.



**Steven Eckert**, M.M. '15, D.M.A. '19, composer, lecturer at the Frost School, performs with The Boca Symphonia, Orchestra Miami, and Southwest Florida Symphony Orchestra. He premiered new arrangements with Four Play Clarinet, KHAOS Wind Quintet, and Frost Trombone Choir.



**Nerissa Manela**, B.M. '15, won Rookie Teacher of the Year for all of Miami-Dade County Schools in 2021. She teaches general music and serves as a Curriculum Support Specialist for new music teachers. Manela also works with the Greater Miami Youth Symphony, runs Miami Jam Sessions, and volunteers as Chair of Practicing Musician's Professional Development Roundtable.



**Ben Morris**, B.M. '15, scored the award-winning documentary film, *American River*, which premiered at the Montclair Film Festival. He was commissioned by the Washington National Opera's American Opera Initiative Program to write a new 20-minute opera. Other awards include Washington National Opera American Opera Initiative Commission (2021), and a Beverly Sears Grant (2021).

**Veronica Swift**, B.M. '16, released a critically acclaimed new album *This Bitter Earth*, rated as a Best Album of 2021 by *DownBeat*.



**Ksenija Komljenović**, D.M.A. '17, A.D. '18, assistant professor of percussion at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, received their Faculty Creative Excellence Recognition. She serves as a producer on the *@Percussion Podcast*, and toured Russia and Poland with former Frost colleagues **Mitya Nilov**, B.M. '16, **Peter White**, M.M. '16, and current undergraduate student Antek Olesik. Alongside **Liana Pailodze Harron**, B.M. '06, M.M. '08, D.M.A. '13, Komljenović premiered and recorded her arrangement of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* for marimba and piano.



**Priscilla Navarro**, M.M. '17, A.D. '18, D.M.A. '21, pianist, released her first commercial album with the MSR classics label,

## Alumni United for Ukraine

When the news that Russian forces had invaded Ukraine this spring, alumni flutist **Dmytro Gnativ**, A.D. '20, faculty pianist **Oleksii Ivanchenko**, D.M.A. '15, and famed pianist **Marina Radiushina**, M.M. '04, D.M.A. '09 were devastated. Feeling hopeless to help family members still living there, they focused their emotions on organizing a United for Ukraine benefit concert at the Frost School on April 1, featuring students, faculty, and alumni. The event raised over \$13,000 to support relief efforts, coordinated by the Frost School of Music and nonprofit Nova Ukraine.

Gnativ, currently a doctoral candidate in flute performance at Frost and the benefit's primary organizer, earned a bachelor's degree at the Lviv National Music Academy, was a member of the

Khmelnitsky Philharmonic Orchestra, and earned a M.M. at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. At the concert, he performed *Melody* by Ukrainian composer Myroslav Skoryk, accompanied by Ivanchenko, pictured right.

Radiushina, who also performed a Ukrainian work, is artistic director of Mainly Mozart Miami and the Miami Chamber Music Society, and was instrumental in helping to secure a side-by-side rehearsal at Frost with Joshua Bell and the Academy of St Martin in the Fields.

The concert began with a choir singing the *National Anthem of Ukraine* and *Prayer for Ukraine* conducted by Associate Professor of Practice Corin Overland. Also performing a variety of heart-felt works were Dean Shelly Berg; faculty Charles



Bergeron, Crispin Campbell, Alan O. Johnson, Kim Josephson, Jodi Levitz, Raina Murnak, Bettina Mussumeli, John Redmond, Steve Rucker, Reynaldo Sanchez, Svetoslav Stoyanov, and Naoko Takao; alumni Redi Llupa, D.M.A. '16, Inesa Gegprifti, D.M.A. '17; students Molly Bergman, William Brown, Andrea DeVito, Cory Fica, Noel Holloway, Blake Kimmel, Andrew Lauer, Minghao Liu, Anya McDonald, Katie Oberholtzer, Antek Olesik, Nickolas Skotzko, Ethan Trueba, and Shih Man Weng.

and presented a Carnegie Hall premiere recital in March. She is the artistic director of the Parnassus Music Society and organized the first International Parnassus Competition to help promote young Latin American pianists. Navarro's touring included concerts in England that were broadcast on BBC public radio and Medici TV, as well as a Netherlands debut.

**Ben Hon**, B.M. '18, a.k.a. bennytheghost, is on tour as guitarist/singer with artist Jelani Aryeh. He has 2.9 million Spotify streams on his original music.

**Caroline Lazar**, B.M. '18, is the founder of Bungalow Music School, an online and in-person education company serving Nashville and New York City.

**Nick DaCosta**, M.M. '19, singer/songwriter, dancer, and actor, joined YoungArts as Strategic Communications Coordinator in December 2021.

**Isabella Englert**, B.M. '19, a.k.a. Sabel, is the lead singer/guitarist for Kid Sistr, in the band with bassist

**Sara Kaden**, B.M. '19. They recently signed to management and publishing company Best Friends, toured with artist K.Flay.

**Carissa Sweet**, M.A. '19, works as a digital marketing associate for social media for the University of Miami's Development and Alumni Relations team. Sweet is also the marketing manager at Orchestra Miami and serves on the Advisory Board for Miami Jam Sessions, a music therapy socialization group for teens and adults with special needs.

**Maxwell Braunstein**, M.M. '19, is playing drums on the Broadway National Tour of *Hairspray*. Upon graduating from the Frost School, he



played drums and percussion on the National Tour of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

## Ashley Pezzotti Shines in the Spotlight

**JAZZ VOCALIST** Ashley Pezzotti, B.M. '18, is rapidly rising in the jazz world with recent performances and recordings with Wynton Marsalis and the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra, and headlining on her own at prominent venues and festivals. Her distinctive song interpretations, scat singing, and vocalese have earned an avid social media following, plus new project opportunities.

The effervescent singer describes working with Marsalis as "an unbelievable life-changing experience." She particularly likes how he "emphasizes the emotional side of things" and "really focuses on the intent behind what he's playing which allows him to convey the story in such a genuine way." She says he's also very specific about what emotions he wants to invoke in his writing, and it's something they worked on together while recording his large work *The Ever Fonky Lowdown*.

Being in the spotlight wasn't natural at first for Pezzotti, which may surprise those who enjoy her virtuosic vocal transcriptions of classic bebop jazz solos on YouTube and Instagram.

Another surprise: it took a challenge from a martial arts instructor for her to begin posting videos regularly on social media.

She has practiced martial arts since the sixth grade. After graduation from the Frost School of Music, she enrolled in a vigorous 3-month fight camp which focused on other aspects of life, aside from the physical training.

Her personal camp trainer noticed she had never posted anything on social media. "He was almost appalled, saying, 'You're a singer and you never post anything? We need to change that!' He then assigned me to post something on Instagram three times a week, and if I didn't complete the assignment, I would receive a 'strike.' (With three strikes, you're kicked out of the program.)" "I was really resistant at first because the idea of posting often horrified me, but I started sharing my transcriptions. To my surprise people really liked the videos!"

It typically takes Pezzotti three to five days to transcribe and learn a blazing jazz solo like the one featured on trumpeter Nicholas Payton's "One Finger Snap."

Her approach begins by playing a recording over and over, on repeat, in the background for a few days. "I'll have that song—and only that song—playing. I like to refer to that as passive listening."

She then spends about 30 minutes a day transcribing/singing along to the instrumentalist's improvised recorded solo. "I learn these transcriptions by ear because I've noticed that when I read a sheet music transcription, I become too reliant on it, which totally defeats the purpose of transcribing. My goal is to internalize the solo to the best of my ability and try to emulate the artist I am studying," she says.

Next up for the vocal phenom: recording a new album featuring all brand new originals; a summer tour including the Blue Note in New York City and the Sligo Jazz Festival in Ireland.

"I also have a few more things that I'm not allowed to announce yet that I'm thrilled to be a part of, so keep an eye out!" ||



JCA PHOTOGRAPHY



# 2020s

**Denby Dung Cabaldon**, M.M. '20, earned her Music Therapy Board Certification (MT-BC) in the United States, and Full Registration



as a Music Therapist in New Zealand (NZ RMTh). Cabaldon has been hired as a music therapist at the Raukauri Music Therapy Centre in New Zealand where she is combining her love of music and research to create music interventions which systematically address her clients' cognitive, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs to move together towards healing and wellness.

**Tina DiMeglio**, D.M.A. '20, won the Premio Frederick Fennell International Conducting Competition in Sicily, Italy in November



2021. She studied conducting with Professor Robert Carnochan and is currently assistant director of bands at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

**Marcello Carelli**, B.M. '21,



drummer and composer, was a Stamps Distinguished Scholar and member of the Stamps Jazz Quintet while enrolled at the Frost School of Music. He released his debut album *The Era* in February 2022. He is currently a master's student at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music.

## Noted on LinkedIn:

**Amber Dean**, M.M. '21, is principal French horn in the Palm Beach Symphony, and also performs with the Florida Grand Opera orchestra.

**Talya Feldman**, M.M. '21, is a A&R assistant at Sony Music Entertainment.

**Taylor Mandel**, M.M. '21, is a project manager at Mood The Agency.

**Michael Martinaitis**, B.S., '21, began a new position as software engineer for Fender Musical Instruments.

**Marina McLerran**, M.M. '21, completed the first semester of a Ph.D. in Music Education at the Frost School of Music. She currently serves as a graduate teaching assistant for the Music Education department.

**Vivian Venero**, M.M. '21, is a social media specialist at Rich Music Ltd.

## Frost alumnus sees STARZ!

**A**lumnus Nicolas Repetto, B.M. '03, has been enjoying a string of current successes composing for film, television and multi-media.

Repetto's latest original score is for the feature documentary *The Sound of Identity*, on STARZ television. The documentary chronicles the life of the first transgender opera singer, Lucia Lucas, and has been featured in *The New York Times* as well as being named the winner of the Programmers Award of Excellence at the OUTshine Film Festival.

"This wonderful education has served me well living in Los Angeles," he states. "It provided me with a wonderful setting to help me explore my creativity, my music, and gave me the foundation to pursue what I always wanted to do: make and create music with amazingly talented musicians and collaborators around the world."

Repetto's other recent credits include the score of Phil Harding's feature drama, *The Reunion*, and the Slamdance Film Festival premiere of the



COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

episodic/pilot *Tijuana* directed by Mary-Lyn Chambers. He is also composing original music for *The American Question* by director James Kicklighter, the fantasy feature *Empire Queen: The Golden Age of Magic* by director Chris Dane Owens (based on his YouTube video which garnered over a million views), and the indie horror feature, *Spider* by director Desmon Heck (*NCIS*, *Criminal Minds*).

Past projects include the Hollywood Music In Media Award-nominated score to *Ode In Blood* and *The Plural of Blood, Debris (Escobros)* which premiered at the Los Angeles Film Festival/Film Independent, and the American Pavilion at the Cannes Film Festival.

Repetto also played the violin on the Oscar-winning score to the major documentary, *O.J.: Made In America* and in the orchestra for the Deadmau5 album *Live at the Wiltern*.

In addition, the talented composer has placed music on TLC, HBO, and in various advertising campaigns. ||

# In Memoriam

**Evelyn Johnson Delk**, B.M. '44, of Avon Park, Florida, passed away on December 26, 2021. She was 97. After graduating from the University of Miami, she earned a master's degree at Columbia University, then taught music at Miami Jackson High School and Cushman School, as well as private piano lessons. She also served as choir director for several churches.

**John M. Munroe**, B.M. '53 M.M. '58 Ph.D. '70, of Dunnellon, Florida, age 90, died on Nov 4, 2021. A triple music alumnus of the University of Miami, Munroe was an educator for the School District of Palm Beach County for 39 years. He was also a choir director for prominent churches.

**Sharon Joan Tallant Short**, B.M. '53, passed away on June 7, 2021. She was organist and music director at Reformation Lutheran Church of Orlando, Florida, for over 20 years. She was a member of Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI) International Music Fraternity for women. She met her husband Alfred L.W. Short, USAF Ret., B.M. '53, at UM where both were band members.

**Col. Anton "Tony" D. Brees**, USAF Ret., B.M. '58, of Hawthorn Woods, Illinois, passed away on August 22, 2021. He was 85. Brees trained musically as a carillonneur, then joined the USAF ROTC program at the University of Miami to become a pilot. He served active duty in the United States Air Force for 24 years, retiring in 1982 with the Legion of Merit Award. He was then director of the F-15 Program at Northrop Defense Systems Division.

**John "Ragtime" A. Alexander**, B.M. '61, M.M. '66, died on January 20, 2022 at the age of 86. He spent two years in the U.S. Army Band, then graduated from UM with degrees in Music Education. A trombonist, he performed with nationally famous bands, including the Tommy Dorsey Orchestra. He taught music at Miami Dade College for 35 years, retiring in 2006.

**Michael R. Carubia**, M.M. '71, of Palm Coast, Florida, passed away on January 22, 2021. He was 76. An athlete, educator, veteran, and musician, he pitched in the Minor Leagues and served in the U.S. Army. After earning a master's degree from the University of Miami, he taught music at all levels. A jazz trumpeter, he performed in bands with Tony Bennett, Sammy Davis Jr., Bob Hope, and others, and was a substitute on Broadway for over 25 shows. He owned several companies including Smart Chart Music.

**George W. Sistrunk Jr.**, D.M.A. '72, passed away on April 30, 2021 in Charlotte, North Carolina, at the age of 91. After earning a Doctorate of Musical Arts in Conducting and Voice from the University of Miami, he dedicated his life to classical music. He conducted the Ft. Lauderdale Symphony Chorus for 21 years; served as head of the music department at Newberry College in South Carolina; and was director of music at multiple churches.

**Bennie Napier**, B.M. '75, of Miami, Florida, died on July 23, 2021 at the age of 71. After graduation, Napier served in the United States Army for six years. He enjoyed playing the piano and had a strong passion for music. He was employed over the years as a teacher, security officer, and more.

**Alfred A. Pinkston**, Ph.D. '75, passed away January 23, 2021. He was 82. After earning a Ph.D. in music education from the University of Miami, he began his career as a band director at Blanche Ely High School in Pompano Beach, Florida, and a professor and administrator at Miami-Dade College. He then became supervisor of music for the Broward County Florida School District, and director of music at Florida Memorial University. He was also organist, choir director, and dean at Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Ft. Lauderdale, and on the board of South Florida Center for Theological Studies.

**James Earl Madaris Jr.**, B.M. '78, died on Nov 25, 2021 at the age of 64. A trombonist, he played professionally in orchestras, studio ensembles, and house bands. He was commissioned in the U.S. Navy in 1984 and served with honor as a naval aviator and aircraft maintenance officer until 2005. He then enjoyed a career as a commercial airline pilot with United Airlines.

**JoAnn "Jody" S. Atwood**, M.M. '80 M.B.A. '82, age 88, passed away on December 7, 2021. A cellist, she was a member of the national board for American String Teachers Association (ASTA) and was editor of the ASTA magazine. She also served two terms as president of the Florida ASTA Chapter. She was the first board president and cellist for the Alhambra Orchestra in South Florida. Atwood also had a career in music publishing culminating as advertising director for Columbia Pictures Publishing/Warner Brothers Music.

**Alice E. Gollan**, A.B. '69, B.M. '81, songwriter, comedian, musician, and music educator, passed away on April 30, 2021, at the age of 78. She played cello, piano, harpsichord, pipe organ, electric keyboard and drums. She performed in the University of Miami Civic Chorale and the Miami Lyric Opera chorus. She moved to Boston, Massachusetts and developed the Family Music Makers program, then spearheaded an improvisation and comedy class for people with Parkinson's in partnership Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

**Timothy J. Goodwin**, B.M. '81, M.M. '84, passed away on Sep 10, 2021 at age 66. A jazz bassist, he was professor emeritus at University of Memphis, and received the 2002 Premier Bassist Award from the NARAS Memphis Chapter. He had served as adjunct faculty at University of Miami, Miami Dade College, and toured with the Kennedy Center's Jazz Ambassadors.

**Jeffrey L. Lawson**, B.M. '10, educator at Brevard Public Schools, former drum major of the Frost Band of the Hour, died on April 6, 2022. He was 34.

**Vincent L. Maggio**, B.C.S. '82 M.M. '84, faculty emeritus, died on August 27, 2021 at the age of 83. A jazz pianist, he began his career touring with his own trio. He earned two degrees, taught for 36 years at the Frost School of Music, and received Miami Jazz Co-op's Lifetime Achievement Award.

**Virginia "Ginny" Mancini**, former big-band singer, widow of composer Henry Mancini, and donor to the Henry Mancini Institute at the Frost School of Music, passed away on October 25, 2021 at the age of 97. She received the Frost Legacy Award for support of the performing arts and young musicians.

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FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Four band members of the contemporary American Music Ensemble perform their final concert of the year in Clarke Recital Hall. Pictured foreground, Kendall Gallo; with fellow singers, left to right: Jasmine Ortiz, Nyla Smith, and Sofia Rebull. Produced by Assistant Professor Daniel Strange, director of the Modern Artist Development and Entrepreneurship (M.A.D.E.) program.

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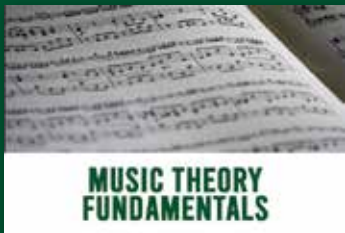


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