

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair and bangs, singing into a microphone. She is wearing a red, fringed, sequined dress. The background is dark, and the lighting is focused on her.

SUMMER 2023

FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC

SCORE

VERONICA SWIFT

*Jazz Singer, Songwriter, and
Recording Artist on the Rise*

WOMEN IN MUSIC

A Collection of Frost-Built Stories
Spotlighting the Students, Alumni,
and Faculty Leading Today's Music
Industry and Communities

Inside: Inspiring Interview with Dean Shelly Berg

University of Miami

Message from the Dean



PHOTO BY GABRIELA GABRIELAA

“I am proud to be the dean of this incredible Frost School, and congratulate all who are striving to make it the very best.”

— SHELTON G. BERG

This year marks a time of immense pride at the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music. The constant striving by our students, faculty, professional staff, associate deans, department chairs, and alumni is making a huge ripple around the world, putting the Frost School at the very top of ranking charts that matter most, and putting FROST foremost in the music industry and in higher education.

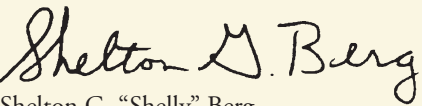
Of particular celebration in this issue of *Score* is the rise of women alumni and faculty from Frost that are excelling in the global music world today, along with the accomplishments of our talented students whose creative achievements are setting the bar for the industry’s future.

As we put a spotlight on just a few of our women achievers, we also reflect on the strength and perseverance of Dr. Bertha Foster, who joined the University of Miami as its very first music dean in 1926 at the age of 45. She was previously the owner and operator of a nationally renowned music conservatory, a decade before women even had the right to vote in the United States. Her musical and administrative brilliance shone strong as she voiced a vision for an outstanding music institution that has been a beacon for excellence for all who have followed.

Our faculty are exemplars of excellence as well, with recent

hires of cellist Jeffrey Zeigler and clarinetist Mark Nuccio expanding our chamber music and orchestral training offerings, flute professor Jennifer Grim serving concurrently as board president for both Chamber Music America and the National Flute Association and also as artistic advisor for the Frost School of Music at Festival Napa Valley, and internationally acclaimed trumpeter Etienne Charles commissioned to write a work to open David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center. Professor Charles Norman Mason earned the distinction of Composer of the Year from the Music Teachers National Association and choral director Amanda Quist was named the chorus director for The Philadelphia Orchestra. What amazing colleagues!

Please share our good news, and spread the great reputation of the Frost School of Music at every opportunity. Your referrals for top student applicants are greatly appreciated, and your sharing of our accomplishments with international music influencers makes an incredible impact on our reputation, fundraising, and future. I am proud to be the dean of this incredible Frost School, and congratulate all who are striving to make it the very best.

Warmly,

Shelton G. “Shelly” Berg
Dean, Patricia L. Frost Professor

FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

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FRONT COVER
Veronica Swift, B.M. '16
COVER PHOTO BY AMY PASQUANTONIO

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SCORE
Summer 2023

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Billboard Features Frost School of Music's Innovative Music Industry Program • Frost Chorale European Tour • Violinist Kostia Lukyniuk • Cellist Jeffrey Zeigler Joins Frost Faculty • Clarinetist Mark Nuccio Joins Frost Studio • Los Angeles Philharmonic Hires Mason Soria • Ana Kahan Raises Awareness for Cancer Research • Frost's Silvio Plata Performs National Anthem at Miami Dolphins Game • Celebrating Black History at Frost • Max Fink: Building a Composition of Hope and Healing • Frost-Built Students Talk About the Impact of Campus Life • Winter Wonderful • Stamps String Quartet Class of 2026 • Julio Reyes Copello Wins Producer of the Year at the Latin Grammy Awards • Knight Center for Music Innovation • Frost Band of the Hour Pep Band Sets Musical Tone

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Women continue to envision their power and, more importantly, how the world views them inside the music industry and their communities.



Once Again, *Billboard* Features Frost School of Music’s Innovative Music Industry Program in Their List Of ‘2022 Top Music Business Schools’

» *Billboard* magazine, a renowned trade publication for the music industry, published its 2022 report on top music business schools, once again honoring the Music Industry program at the Frost School of Music. Programs were chosen based on industry recommendations, alumni information provided by honorees from multiple power lists, and information requested from each school.

PHOTO BY VERSATILE LIGHT STUDIO

THOSE WITH PLANS to pursue a career in the music industry “may well choose from among the colleges and universities profiled here,” according to the latest *Billboard* top music business school report. “An expansive and geographically diverse list, it includes both private and public institutions.” While online, skills-focused music education programs have increased during the pandemic, *Billboard* chose primarily campus-based programs for this report, offering a broader, more profound education and bestowing a bachelor’s or associate degree, the publication said.

According to the *Billboard* article, “Those enrolled in Frost’s Music Industry program benefit from its small size (approximately 100 students) within the larger music school and university. Students have access to extracurricular offerings, including several student-run enterprises: ‘Cane Records, Cat 5 Music,

Frost Sounds, a campus radio station, a concert production organization, numerous concert halls, and a music industry student association—not to mention the diverse music industry community in Miami itself.”

“It is an honor to be included in *Billboard*’s list again,” says Serona Elton, professor and director of the Music Industry program at the Frost School of Music. “Although we have been included on their list every time they have published one, we realize we must continually demonstrate excellence through alumni successes, faculty accomplishments, relevant courses, and student activities to remain at the forefront of music industry education.” Program alumni work in all areas of the music industry, including the recording business, music publishing, artist management, digital music services, talent agencies, concert venues, and promotion. 🎧

Frost Chorale Makes Music on Spectacular European Tour

» *Frost-built students enjoyed a magical summer performance tour across England and France.*

FORTY-SIX Frost Chorale students experienced a once-in-a-lifetime European Tour last summer, visiting various sacred spaces, and performing with renowned choirs and guest musicians.

“Performance tours can be galvanizing for an ensemble, and our summer tour to England and France provided the Frost Chorale many opportunities to grow and thrive as a group,” says associate professor Amanda Quist, director of choral activities at the Frost School of Music. She supervised the tour, which began at St. Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury, England and concluded at Notre-Dame de Chartres Cathedral in Chartres, France.

Frost Chorale also sang at London’s St. Bartholomew the Great, and Gabriel Fauré’s church, La Madeleine. “The ancient spaces in which we sang serve as a reminder of the importance of music and art in the world and our shared humanity,” says Quist. “These are memories we will cherish forever.”

In addition, the chorale participated in master classes and workshops. A special highlight occurred in London, where they attended a workshop with the vocal ensemble VOCES8. The two groups collaborated in a live-streamed concert, performing in one of the world’s most sacred chorale spaces, King’s College Cambridge.

“Going to London and Paris as a member of the Frost Chorale was my first time out of the country and truly an eye-opening experience as a musician and as a human,” says Zanaiah Niara Williams Billups. “I have learned more about myself, the deep roots of choral music, and created magical bonds with my friends in the choir.” 🎶



(top) Amanda Quist and the Frost Chorale performing at L’Église de La Madeleine in Paris.

(bottom) The group headed to Canterbury Cathedral.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMANDA QUIST

“The ancient spaces in which we sang serve as a reminder of the importance of music and art in the world and our shared humanity.”

– AMANDA QUIST



PHOTO BY SKYLAR MARKS

“I want to cultivate and revolutionize the violin as an instrument. It’s a great instrument but has yet to go through a major revolution.”

— KOSTIA LUKYNIUK

Violinist Kostia Lukyniuk: How a Frost School of Music Acceptance Letter Helped Rewrite His Story

THE WAR he never saw coming was around the bend. Even his sleepy hometown of Chernivtsi, Ukraine, was no longer a haven. Worst of all, his United States visa expired as the war broke out. Violinist Kostia Lukyniuk thought the odds were against him until he received an acceptance letter from the Frost School of Music. And just like that, his life story got rewritten.

Lukyniuk recalls to that fateful day almost a year ago when the fear of the unknown overcame him, which quickly followed by a magical case of serendipity and a swirling of creativity that’s happened since that day.

“I was pursuing my undergraduate degree at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, when the war broke out between Russia and Ukraine. But my student visa ran out, so I had to return home,” Lukyniuk says.

The Ukrainian military wanted him. As he walked down the streets, the 20-something was approached by military personnel and the police. They told him, “Let’s go, you’re coming with us,” and dragged him into the recruitment center. They didn’t ask if he wanted to enlist. Lukyniuk used his connections to bail him out the first two times it happened. But the third time things happened so fast he didn’t get a chance to call anyone. And so, he was taken to a recruitment center and served papers that said he would undergo a medical examination and start training the next day.

Something happened the next day that changed his story forever. “That day, I received my acceptance letter from the Frost School of Music into the Strings Instrumental Performance graduate

program—the only thing the army would accept for me to leave the country. The paperwork didn’t end there, but after a series of documents, permissions, and signatures, on June 11, I left Ukraine and went to Europe to work on my visa.”

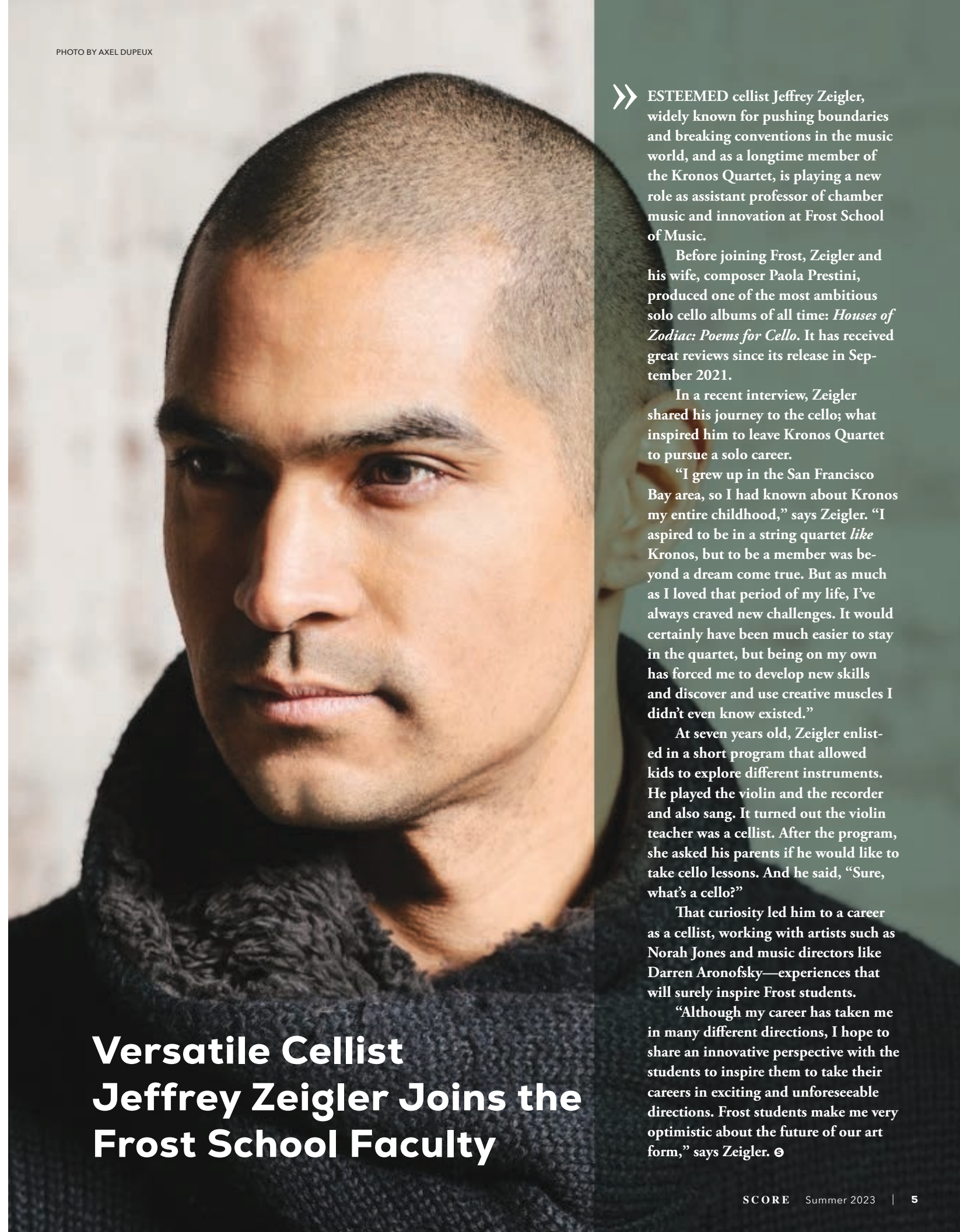
To this date, Lukyniuk thinks about how different his life would have been back home. “Not a day goes by that I don’t think of how badly my story could have ended in the war zone. I know about some fellow musicians, even violinists, who were recruited just like me. They spent only seven days in training and five on the front lines, where their stories ended. As for me, Frost has given me a different life.”

With that new life came many opportunities and new inspirations. Rather than just following the sheet music, “I want to cultivate and revolutionize the violin as an instrument,” he says. “It’s a great instrument but has yet to go through a major revolution. The violin has had minimal popularity, unlike the guitar, piano, saxophone, or trumpet. I aim to popularize the violin and show its tremendous qualities and unique possibilities.”

As a crossover violinist trained in classical music but influenced by such artists as David Garrett, a German classical crossover violinist and recording artist, Lukyniuk has become fascinated with jazz improvisation. He listens to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins, who took improvisation in new directions.

“I’m different from many violinists. I’m more like an entrepreneur, a violinist with my own brand. That’s what attracted me to Frost, and that’s what I am learning—how to define and sell it.” ☺

PHOTO BY AXEL DUPEUX



Versatile Cellist Jeffrey Zeigler Joins the Frost School Faculty

» ESTEEMED cellist Jeffrey Zeigler, widely known for pushing boundaries and breaking conventions in the music world, and as a longtime member of the Kronos Quartet, is playing a new role as assistant professor of chamber music and innovation at Frost School of Music.

Before joining Frost, Zeigler and his wife, composer Paola Prestini, produced one of the most ambitious solo cello albums of all time: *Houses of Zodiac: Poems for Cello*. It has received great reviews since its release in September 2021.

In a recent interview, Zeigler shared his journey to the cello; what inspired him to leave Kronos Quartet to pursue a solo career.

“I grew up in the San Francisco Bay area, so I had known about Kronos my entire childhood,” says Zeigler. “I aspired to be in a string quartet *like* Kronos, but to be a member was beyond a dream come true. But as much as I loved that period of my life, I’ve always craved new challenges. It would certainly have been much easier to stay in the quartet, but being on my own has forced me to develop new skills and discover and use creative muscles I didn’t even know existed.”

At seven years old, Zeigler enlisted in a short program that allowed kids to explore different instruments. He played the violin and the recorder and also sang. It turned out the violin teacher was a cellist. After the program, she asked his parents if he would like to take cello lessons. And he said, “Sure, what’s a cello?”

That curiosity led him to a career as a cellist, working with artists such as Norah Jones and music directors like Darren Aronofsky—experiences that will surely inspire Frost students.

“Although my career has taken me in many different directions, I hope to share an innovative perspective with the students to inspire them to take their careers in exciting and unforeseeable directions. Frost students make me very optimistic about the future of our art form,” says Zeigler. ☺



PHOTO BY DAVID FINLAYSON

Notable Clarinetist Mark Nuccio Joins Frost Studio

» Mark Nuccio, principal clarinetist with the Houston Symphony and former co-principal clarinetist with the New York Philharmonic, joins the renowned faculty of the Frost School of Music as an artist-in-residence.

MARGARET DONAGHUE, professor of clarinet at Frost School of Music, was delighted to hear the news of Mark Nuccio joining as an artist in residence. Donaghue and Nuccio had previously worked together at Festival Napa Valley, where they both performed and taught at the Frost School of Music at Festival Napa Valley's collegiate summer academy. Donaghue highly recommended Nuccio's residency to the Instrumental Performance faculty.

In addition to his stellar orchestral career, Nuccio is well known for his solo and chamber appearances as a performer "full of mystery and insight." He is a virtuoso clarinetist who captures the clarinet's exquisite lyrical beauty to breathtaking effect and "shapes his phrases beautifully with a rich, expressive tone."

In 2016, Nuccio joined the Houston Symphony after 17 years with the New York Philharmonic as an associate principal clarinetist. Throughout his impressive career, he's worked with distinguished conductors such as Gustavo Dudamel, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Lorin Maazel, Kurt Masur, Mariss Jansons, and Riccardo Muti, to name a few. He has been a soloist in other orchestras, performing challenging works such as Aaron Copland's Clarinet Concerto, which according to the Houston Chronicle, "quickly became one of the most popular

modern pieces in the clarinet repertory." It also makes an excellent teaching tool, Nuccio shares.

Aside from his work with the illustrious Houston Symphony and New York Philharmonic, Nuccio has recorded with a series of orchestras and performed with the Philharmonic on the award-winning series, *Live from Lincoln Center*, broadcast on PBS.

"Mark Nuccio's orchestral experience is of the highest level," says Donaghue. "Having him join the Frost School of Music to work with our students, preparing them, particularly in that area, is a wonderful benefit for us. He has a fantastic orchestral background. I've known him for a long time, and I'm just thrilled he'll be working with our students to provide coaching, private lessons, and master classes."

Nuccio is equally excited to start a new chapter of his teaching career at the Frost School of Music and to work with Donaghue as a teaching partner. "With the first-rate music faculty, as well as the conducting staff, headed by Gerard Schwarz and Robert Carnochan, I think this will be a wonderful place for students to get a well-rounded education in preparing them for a life in music," says Nuccio. 🎵

Los Angeles Philharmonic Hires Mason Soria

TUBA PLAYER Mason Soria, M.M. '22, checked all the boxes on his dream wish list as he secured a full-time tuba position with the prestigious Los Angeles Philharmonic, better known as the LA Phil, with world-renowned conductor Gustavo Dudamel. The great news came just a few months after becoming an associate member of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago and winning a Principal Tuba position with the Richmond Symphony.

Looking back, he says, "What started with a dream became a reality." Soria, who graduated from the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami in May 2022, officially started with the LA Phil in the fall. With this new position, he returned to Los Angeles, where he was born in Burbank and spent the first five years of his life before moving to Frisco, Texas.

During his junior year in high school, when he played for the Greater Dallas Youth Orchestra, his dream of playing tuba

in a "top 5" major symphony orchestra in America began to rise to the top of his list.

Frost caught up with Soria while playing at the summer Aspen Music Festival, and he stated that "lots and lots of practice" helped him land his dream gig. "It has taken a lot of time to perfect my craft to get to where I am today. I had extremely great teachers and took as many opportunities as possible."

Associate professor of tuba and euphonium, Aaron Tindall, remembers Soria as a model student who always adopted a "pro mindset" to playing the tuba. "One thing I admire about Mason is that he is one of those rare people who truly had a "get it done and whatever it takes, I will do it" attitude. Since his time at Frost, he had been a tireless hard worker both academically and musically. Deeply impactful was the level of excitement, freshness, and total commitment to his art, which he embraced daily, un-

wavering on his commitment to pursuing excellence," Tindall says.

"This coveted position with the Los Angeles Philharmonic is perhaps the largest scale job that has opened for our instrument in the last 15 years," explains Tindall. "It's no surprise that he won the audition, let alone being the winner of two orchestra auditions in five months. We're all excited to watch his career unfold!"

Soria's road to success has been challenging. "For starters, the tuba is a hard instrument to control, and the audition process is riddled with obstacles, so there's the added pressure to be constantly flawless in your playing," he says.

Looking ahead eagerly, Soria hopes his accomplishments inspire other Frost students to work hard on their craft and stick to their goals. "I was a student not too long ago," he says. "I'm just a fairly normal guy with a big dream, that's all." 🎵

“I think this will be a wonderful place for students to get a well-rounded education in preparing them for a life in music.”

— MARK NUCCIO

“I was a student not too long ago... I'm just a fairly normal guy with a big dream, that's all.”

— MASON SORIA



PHOTO COURTESY OF MASON SORIA

Ana Kahan Overcomes Health Challenges to Raise Awareness for Cancer Research

“It’s been so rewarding using my passion for music to stand up for a cause that means so much to me and has affected my life along with so many others.”

— ANA KAHAN

FOR ANA KAHAN, the last four years of her life reads like an unlikely tale. And yet her story is non-fiction. For a young singer who has been using her voice to speak up about pediatric cancer research through the organization Chords2Cure since she was 15, she found herself fighting a huge cancer battle of her own during her undergraduate years at Frost.

After enduring multiple surgeries and rebuilding her strength—and her voice—she celebrated by performing the National Anthem at a nationally televised Miami Marlins vs. New York Mets baseball game, showcasing her perseverance and resilience.

This is how her story unfolded.

She graduated high school in May 2019 and left her hometown of Los Angeles to pursue her college career in Modern Artist Development and Entrepreneurship (M.A.D.E.) at

the Frost School of Music, and ever since, her life has been what she calls “nonlinear.”

During her first week of classes in fall 2019, she had a dramatic entrance to the M.A.D.E program when her singing professor told her she had a polyp on her vocal cords. Kahan underwent vocal surgery and spent two weeks on complete vocal rest and in vocal therapy for the remainder of that semester. Then the Covid-19 pandemic happened in March 2020, and like all University of Miami students, she returned home to complete the semester remotely.

In her sophomore year, Kahan returned to campus to continue her studies. When she went home for Thanksgiving break, she began to experience pain in her chest. A CT scan revealed she had an 8cm x 8cm tumor in her chest. The news forced her to stay home through the entire second semester of her sophomore year. She endured a ten-hour surgery, followed by seven weeks of radiation treatments. During the surgery, Kahan’s vocal cords were damaged and paralyzed, and doctors were unsure how her voice would heal or if she could sing or speak the same again.

The following year came with another curveball. Her cancer had recurred, so she underwent a second grueling surgery and continued her studies remotely.

Her ability to sing happily did eventually return, and she was reunited with friends and faculty on campus for her senior year, which led to her performance at the Marlins/Mets game.

As she looks back, Kahan credits her friends and family for lifting her throughout her journey, and her teachers for keeping her on track with her college career. She especially credits Assistant Professor Raina Murnak, who is also the director of the Frost Summer Institute of Contemporary Songwriting, with providing the flexibility and encouragement she needed.

“Then and now,” is how Kahan describes the last four years of her life, with a spark of light in her eyes. “I haven’t had the opportunity to be here on campus

that much,” she says. “For the first time since my freshman year, I’ve been able to experience a full year on campus, before graduating in May! It’s been kind of crazy with all the opportunities that have come my way this year, like, performing the National Anthem at the Miami Marlins vs. New York Mets game!”

A few months ago, a friend from her sorority who had already graduated contacted Kahan via social media to discuss a non-profit organization close to Ana’s heart: Chords2Cure.

Kahan explained she had been very involved with Chords2Cure as a teenager, years before her cancer diagnosis. The organization raises money for pediatric cancer and research at Mattel Children’s Hospital at UCLA-Pediatrics, where Kahan was in turn hospitalized for her recent cancer treatments.

To continue supporting the organization, which is now closer to her heart than ever, Kahan actively uses her passion for music to help raise funds. For example, all the tickets Kahan sold via Instagram to the Marlins vs. Mets game were donated to Chords2Cure.

“It’s cool for me to have my two passions go hand in hand,” says Kahan. “It’s been so rewarding using my passion for music to stand up for a cause that means so much to me and has affected my life along with so many others.”

Kahan also uses her voice on social media to speak out about what she went through, normalizing it for those dealing with something similar.

“I’m a 22-year-old girl, I go to college, and I like to go out and have fun. I’ve dealt with this illness for so long, and speaking out will make things less scary for someone going through their health journey or struggles. I have always looked up to the musicians I love and have found comfort in relating to their journeys. Social media has connected me to so many sick young kids, and I hope to be someone else’s role model, like my favorite musicians are for me.”

First Year Student Performs the National Anthem at a Miami Dolphins vs. Pittsburgh Steelers Game

HUNDREDS OF Miami Dolphins fans cheered as he walked onto the football field. Eighteen-year-old Silvio Plata threw a nervous smile over his shoulder but kept walking. “Being nervous is perfectly normal for a musician before a performance. It’s part of a performer’s respect for his audience,” said Plata during an NBC 6 interview held days before at Frost School of Music.

The Miami native marvels at the journey that brought him here. “I never imagined I would be walking on the Frost School of Music campus, my dream school, but here I am,” he says. “I’ve sung the National Anthem at a Miami Marlins baseball game, but this was a national football event. I was super excited because it’s such a great opportunity to showcase myself as an artist, and I thank God and my family for how far I’ve been able to come despite my disability.”

Plata lost his sight to cancer as a baby. Today, he is a skilled pianist and singer who can also play the ukulele and drums. With the support of his family, teachers, and mentors at The Children’s Trust, Plata showed the world that a disability is not a hindrance to success.

“Being nervous is perfectly normal for a musician before a performance. It’s part of a performer’s respect for his audience.”

— SILVIO PLATA

Looking back, Plata doesn’t remember when he fell in love with music, but he cannot imagine his life without it. As a teenager, he enjoyed listening to different artists from different genres, but Italian tenors Andrea Bocelli and Luciano Pavarotti influenced him the most. “Pavarotti was among the truly great opera stars of the 20th century. He could switch from one genre to another with ease. I want to develop into that type of artist someday,” concludes Plata.



Celebrating Black History at Frost by Exploring the American Tapestry

» February is Black History Month. At Frost, we recognize and celebrate it in meaningful ways.

“What I found is that in really profound ways, music is tied to a cultural identity that sometimes transcends national boundaries.”

— MELVIN BUTLER

FOR SOME, celebrating Black History Month for just the month of February is “a bit of a paradox,” says Melvin Butler, associate professor in the Department of Musicology at the Frost School of Music. “On the one hand, we sort of single out African American or African diasporic experiences, but what’s important to me is that people understand that Black history is American history,” he says.

Butler is an award-winning ethnomusicologist, published author, and respected saxophonist who taught previously at the University of Chicago. At Frost, one of the classes he teaches is called African American Song Traditions, which examines a mix of the musical traditions

of Africa, Europe, and Native American cultures and religion, along with other influences from around the world. Students learn about the quintessential Black experience crossing all domains of culture including music, dance, art, food, clothing, language, and sports.

Butler finds the experience interesting as he sees himself mainly as an ethnographer—studying the history of people and customs. His passion for Black history started 23 years ago with his research studies in Haiti and Jamaica, which became an integral part of the curriculum in his classes, and the subject of many of his published books and articles.

“Back then, I was curious about how people were using music to distinguish themselves from others while at the same time expressing a kind of common, shared humanity,” explains Butler. “What I found is that in really profound ways, music is tied to a cultural identity that sometimes transcends national boundaries.”

Every February, there is an uptick in the number of events that recognize and celebrate the contributions of African Americans, providing the visibility they deserve. “The experiences of African Americans are inextricable to the fabric of our country, to what made the United States what it is,” Butler says. 📍

Melvin Butler, associate professor in the Department of Musicology at the Frost School of Music.

Max Fink: Taking a Tragedy and Building a Composition of Hope and Healing

» Frost student creates a symphonic tribute for his Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School classmates and teachers who died in the traumatic mass shooting.

FOR MAX FINK, a Frost School of Music B.M. Music Media Scoring and Production major and a former Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School graduate, the trauma that happened on February 14, 2018, when he was just a junior at the school, and the overwhelming sadness that followed, will always be a part of him.

The experience of surviving the mass shooting that killed 17 people, including two of his bandmates, Alex Schachter and Gina Montalto, inspired the composer to write a symphonic orchestra piece called *Forever and Always: A Reflection*.

“I think this piece summarizes and puts into music what everyone’s emotions and feelings were up to this five-year mark,” Fink says. “I hope the music becomes an emotional outlet that shines a light at the end of the tunnel for other people and a big step forward for their recovery.”

Divided into three movements, *Forever and Always: A Reflection* depicts the emotions of that day. The music starts light and upbeat in the first movement, called “Normalcy.” After all, it was Valentine’s Day on a sunny, bright day in South Florida. Suddenly, you’re hit with the second movement, called “Devastation.” Everything turns dark, mirroring the mass shooting tragedy. Then, there’s the third movement, called “Triumph,” showcasing a release of energy and emotion all at once, emphasizing that although everyone’s grieving, they’re also elevating one another as a community, hoping to move forward and find a brighter future.

At various parts of the piece, there are symbolic references to the 17 victims. At one point, you hear 17 chimes and, in another, 17 snare drums. What perhaps many have not been able to express into



words, Fink has captured in this touching composition—an ode to his lost friends at Stoneman Douglas.

The heartfelt piece was performed on February 19, just a few days after Valentine’s Day, by the Florida Youth Orchestra, as a dedication to every life lost during the tragedy.

“I was actually in the band room the day it happened, which is kind of crazy because I feel like music has had a profound connection with my life in many ways, but particularly with this piece,” says Fink. “Seeing it performed live by the Florida Youth Orchestra at Plantation Heritage Park was a real treat. There was a great audience, and many people from my school showed up, so that was very special.”

PHOTO BY ALEX FINK

Fink graduated this May, and he says this piece would not exist had it not been for the education he’s received at Frost. “With *Forever and Always: A Reflection*, Max has eloquently expressed in music what can never be put into words,” says his mentor Carlos Rafael Rivera, Emmy Award-winning composer, associate professor, and director of the Media Writing and Production Program at the Frost School of Music. 📍

Frost-Built Students Talk About the Impact of Campus Life

LOOK CLOSELY and you will see how the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami is more than just a place of study but a space of exploration, inspiration, connection, and innovation. Its modern campus and innovative curricula attract aspiring musical artists who graduate with impactful degrees ranging from music business, music engineering technology, and instrumental and vocal performance in multiple genres, to music therapy, composition, and music scoring and production. They go on to become highly successful alumni who are leaders in their professional endeavors.

Since the University of Miami first received its charter in 1925, more than 220,821 students from 174 countries have passed through its doors. Campus life is vibrant at its renowned Frost School with beautifully designed new buildings, outdoor spaces, and numerous gathering points that encourage collaborative opportunities across majors. We share some comments from nine current students about how the music campus is helping transform them personally, artistically, and professionally during their years at Frost. 🎵



⤴️ **Nolan Slate**
Sophomore, Studio Music and Jazz

“Frost is a great community. Everyone takes care of each other—the players and the atmosphere. Everyone is skilled in what they do and has something unique about them. Their personality comes across as great when they’re playing. Frost keeps me on my toes. It keeps me always curious, as there is something new to learn. There are always people to learn from and new perspectives to lean on. I visited Frost’s college fair and saw that the campus was nice—it makes you feel at home. The Miami scene is happening. There are a lot of cool people here. I liked the idea of experiencing something new far from home.”



⤴️ **Kevin King**
Master’s Candidate, Music Education

“I love being here at Frost, where I can perform and learn to teach—in my opinion, everybody needs to teach music. I play woodwind and saxophone, flute, oboe, and bassoon. It’s great being around such cool musicians. Walking through the campus and seeing students playing inspires you to be a great musician.”



⤴️ **Noah Booz**
Freshman, Music Education

“I love the energy of this place and the intentionality of everyone practicing out on the lawn or at various corners around our campus. I’m working to be on the marching band, and it’s been a lot of hard work, but I love our directors and professors like Jay Reese and Professor Douglas McCullough. They’re excellent. They remind us that we matter, that every note we play matters. They teach us to trust and work hard for each other. As a music student, knowing that purpose is cool. My dream job is to teach music at the college level one day, and I hope that happens to be here.”



⤴️ **Florence Hughes**
Junior, Media Scoring and Production

“I started playing trombone in 6th grade, and when it came time to decide what to do for college, I couldn’t imagine doing anything but music. Frost has given me the perfect opportunity to do lots of different things. Here, it’s not just about performance or composition. You can do both! Your professors encourage that. I love being on a college campus where I can take classical and jazz lessons and take other classes related to other interests. Frost has awesome resources, and the same goes for the entire university. This was my first year living off campus, but I met many people while I lived in the dorms. The campus is just right—not too big, not too small. Love the U.”



⤴️ **Joel Nawell**
Freshman, Studio Music and Jazz

“Frost has impacted my life in a good way. For one thing, the bright walls and the scene outside helps me wake up in the morning! This place inspires me—it fulfills the vibe of, like, we’re all in this together. We’re all trying to be the best version of ourselves.”

⤴️ **Savannah Methner**
Freshman, Studio Music and Jazz

“I love that every practice room has a piano and windows! When I visited other schools, their practice rooms were in a basement. So, it’s very nice to have natural lighting so you can play and still see what’s going on outside. The Frost community is very inspiring. Honestly, I’m not bold enough to practice outside. I’m not ready to put myself out there yet, but it’s nice to see that other students are doing it and don’t mind.”



⤴️ **Izzi Guzman**
Junior, Music Education

“I’ve met many people at Frost through my classes and formed closer connections with people in my major. Frost is a campus within a campus. Even though I’m a music education major, I like bumping into friends from music therapy or performance. And since this is a university and not just a music school, I can also be in clubs and organizations that have people outside of Frost, which helps me be a more well-rounded individual than if I had attended a conservatory. After I finish my bachelor’s, I hope to get my master’s and teach elementary music—from kindergarten to five years old. Eventually, I want to open my music program to serve underprivileged communities.”

Janelle Finton ⤵️
Senior, Studio Music and Jazz

“I love seeing my peers working on projects. What they’re doing inspires me to incorporate what they’re doing into my work. I like collaborating with people within my department and other departments and with people from different backgrounds. I also sing and compose, so that’s been a highlight. At Frost, I can focus on the tradition of jazz with strong peers and professors who are present and help students grow. Students are playing something somewhere all the time. There’s always something going on. I’m not sure what I will do after graduation, but whatever I do or wherever I go, I hope to share my joy, my story, and people’s stories through my music.”



Winter Wonderful: A Magical Event That Changes Kids’ Lives in South Florida Through the Transformative Power of Music

PHOTOS BY EDIN CHAVEZ



HOSTED BY the Frost School of Music at the JW Marriott Marquis, this year’s Winter Wonderful gala honored arts philanthropists Judi Prokop Newman, a University of Miami Trustee, and her husband Robert C. Newman, Ph.D.

Proceeds benefited the Donna E. Shalala MusicReach Program, which brings the vast resources of the Frost School to youth from communities with untapped potential.

Dean Shelton G. Berg opened the celebration by saying, “Winter Wonderful is a magical event for all who attend, but the real magic is the life-changing experiences this gala empowers for 1,500 underserved but deserving youth in South Florida.”

The evening included a cocktail reception, a delicious holiday dinner, and stunning performances by Frost students.

Amanda Quist, associate professor and program director of Choral Studies, conducted the Frost Chorale, the Symphonic Choir, Bella Voce, and the Winter Wonderful Orchestra.

From top to bottom:
The Frost Chorale gets everyone in a holiday spirit as they perform “Santa Clause is Coming to Town.”
President Julio Frenk, 2022 Frost Legacy Award Honorees Judi and Robert Prokop Newman, and Dean Shelton G. Berg.

More than 160 students performed holiday favorites, including a riveting rendition of “O Holy Night,” arranged by Frost alumnus Gary Fry, who was in attendance, performed by the Frost Chorale. Young students from the Shalala Music Reach program also performed.

Among the guests were dozens of familiar faces and sponsors including Lynda Gordon of the Gordon Alliance; Allan Herbert; the Miller Family, including Jeffrey Miller, Stuart Miller, and Leslie Miller Saiontz; Robert and Judi Prokop Newman; The Sherman Foundation; Frank Longo of Skanska USA; former Governor of Florida John “Jeb” E. Bush; Ambassadors Charles and Sue Cobb; Jon and Karen Fryd; Cesar and Cristina Alvarez of Greenberg Traurig; Barbara Havenick; Tracey Berkowitz; Dorothy and Henry Norton; Lee Osiason and Iris Alvarez; Dr. Pabalan and Dr. Grace Wang; Hazel Rosen; Nancy and Jon Batchelor; The Goldsmith Family Foundation; Remi and Oti Roberts; Dr. Donna E. Shalala; The Tonkinson Foundation; Jacqueline Simkin.

Other notables in attendance included President Julio Frenk and Dr. Felicia Knaul, and many deans and senior leaders at the University. ☺

Frost School of Music Welcomes Stamps String Quartet Class of 2026

THE FROST SCHOOL OF MUSIC welcomed four new Stamps Distinguished Scholars this academic year, who formed the Stamps String Quartet Class of 2026. The prestigious scholarship is awarded via competitive auditions, and leadership potential, academic merit, outstanding talent, and exceptional character.

- Erika Liu (Denver, CO): Violin
- Misha Grossman (Manhattan, NY): Violin
- Dylan Hutcheson (Arlington, TX): Viola
- Natalie Van Winkle (St. Louis, Missouri): Violoncello

These four exceptional instrumentalists were chosen based on their leadership potential, academic merit, outstanding talent, and exceptional character.

Through the generous contributions of Roe Stamps, a University of Miami Trustee, the Stamps Family Charitable Foundation offers exceptional students the opportunity to become impactful leaders in society with invaluable scholarship funding and support.

In addition to the Stamps String Quartet, other Stamps Distinguished Ensembles include Stamps Jazz Quintet, Stamps Woodwind Quintet, and Stamps Brass Quintet.



Stamps Ensemble Scholarships at the Frost School of Music are equal to the total cost for tuition and fees, on-campus double room, and a 20-meal per week board plan extended for each academic year. In addition, the scholarships include assistance with expenses when they are invited to perform at summer festivals and unique residencies. ☺

PHOTO BY GONZALO MEJIA

Julio Reyes Copello Wins Producer of the Year at the Latin Grammy Awards 2022

THE 23RD annual Latin Grammy Awards ceremony was a huge hit, celebrating the present and embracing Latin music’s future by paying tribute to today’s most influential, hottest, and iconic artists. Known as one of the biggest nights in the Latin music industry, the awards show aired live from the Michelob ULTRA Arena at Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino in Las Vegas.

Colombian music producer and Frost School of Music alumnus Julio Reyes Copello won Producer of the Year, his first win after being nominated five times in this prestigious category. This win represents a tremendous honor as it is presented to a producer with outstanding contributions to the industry. He accepted the award with humility and emotion.

“I’ve been working in the music industry for over 25 years, so winning Producer of the Year, which makes my 14th Grammy, is particularly very special to me,” says Reyes Copello. “It gives me great joy and satisfaction to be relevant in the music industry after many years. But, most especially because it pushes me to keep doing what I’ve loved so much since I was four years old, playing the piano and using its keys to play music.”

Reyes Copello is widely known as a prominent figure in the global music industry who not only excels in his craft but also inspires aspiring artists, paving the way for new talent.

“Artists are messengers of beauty,” he says. “We have been gifted with an important mission: to capture our version of beauty. Success comes when we capture it. My pursuit of beauty is what gets me out of bed every day. And I try not to let the realities of life change my love and respect for music.”

The Latin Grammys was hosted by Luis Fonsi, Thalía, Anitta, and Laura Pausini. Fans were treated to performances by Christina Aguilera, Marc Anthony, Sebastian Yatra, John Legend, Karol G, and Bad Bunny, who took home the most Grammys with a Perfect 10. Edgar Barrera followed with nine, while Rauw Alejandro and Rosalía received eight each.



At Frost, we also celebrated Reyes Copello’s Latin Grammy win for Best Salsa Album as a producer of Marc Anthony’s *Palla Voy*, as well as the outstanding achievements of four other alumni for their Latin Grammy Awards as producers and artists:

- Carlitos López, D.M.A. ’23, won Best Christian Album [Spanish language]
- José Valentino, M.M. ’12, won Best Latin Children’s Album
- Federico Vindver, B.M. ’08, won Best Alternative Song, Best Singer-Songwriter, and Best Traditional Pop Vocal Album
- Gonzalo Rubalcaba won Best Traditional Tropical Album

“I still can’t believe I won my 14th Latin Grammy!” says Reyes Copello. “But you know, for all of our successes, we, as artists, always need to keep the purity of music alive and our creative curiosity intact and not allow life’s defined reality to change our respect and love for music.” ☺



From Top Clockwise:
Julio Reyes Copello
Carlitos López
José Valentino
Federico Vindver
Gonzalo Rubalcaba

The Knight Center for Music Innovation: A Window Into The Future

MUSIC can transform lives with a single note. It is a universal language evoking deep feelings and reaching into our evolutionary past. The practice of performance and the spaces in which we gather to experience this transformation are valuable to the sanctity of our culture.

The Knight Center for Music Education, the latest addition to the Frost campus, includes a 200-seat, acoustically refined Robert and Judi Prokop Newman Recital Hall overlooking Lake Osceola, as well as a cutting-edge Thomas D. Hormel Innovation Stage, which offers a thrilling laboratory for artistic and career enhancement to transform music education in the 21st century.

“The Knight Center for Music Innovation has had a long gestation,” says Dean Shelton G. Berg. “The

Knight Foundation’s exciting naming gift accelerated the project, and many other dedicated philanthropists joined the effort on behalf of the Frost School of Music. I am very grateful for these exceedingly-generous friends.”

The Frost School of Music will benefit greatly from a center with advanced technological capabilities. “Our plans call for investments in emerging technologies, such as surround audio, volumetric video, and video mapping, to name a few,” explains Dean Berg. “These new paradigms will be important creative tools for our graduates in the future.”

The Knight Center will also showcase “Window Casts,” broadcasting events from the Newman Recital Hall or the Hormel Innovation Stage to a large outdoor plaza via high-quality AV projections

for outdoor concertgoers to enjoy. The Knight Center will also host lectures and social events as a gathering point for the community.

“The Knight Center for Music Innovation is an exquisite expression of the Knight Foundation’s enduring impact on the University of Miami and our South Florida community,” says the University of Miami’s President Julio Frenk. “Thanks to their generosity, this spectacular new complex will match the extraordinary talent of our students, faculty, and alumni and reflect the innovation that has been a hallmark of the Frost School of Music since its founding nearly 100 years ago.”

Scheduled to open this summer, the Knight Center for Music Innovation’s programming will be fully in place by the fall of 2023. 🎵

PHOTO RENDERINGS COURTESY OF H3 / ARQUITECTONICA

A rendering of the Weaver Auditorium, within the Newman Recital Hall at the Knight Center for Music Innovation, provides a stunning view to the future.



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For More Information, Contact:

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As March Madness swept the nation, the Frost Band of the Hour Pep Band Also Set the Musical Tone for Miami Hurricanes Basketball

BY WENDY REES

AT THE START of the Miami Hurricanes men's basketball season, head coach Jim Larrañaga brought his team players together with the Frost Band of the Hour Pep Band for a special pizza dinner at the Watsco Center. Later, he commented on how much he appreciates the band and their enthusiastic game-day energy, likening the group to "our sixth man on the bench."

As March Madness swept the nation, the men's basketball team embarked on a historic back-to-back appearance at the NCAA Sweet 16 making it into the "Final Four," while the women's team made their first Sweet 16 appearance since 1992. Traveling alongside the two teams was the Pep Band, a talented group of musicians selected from football's fall marching band, the Frost Band of the Hour, dressed in signature orange and white striped rugby shirts embroidered with the U, the pep band set the tone for gameday, cheering, and performing complex musical arrangements and legendary school spirit songs.

Band director and professor Jay C. Rees shared that he is often approached at high-profile athletic events by organizers and network television producers who proclaim that the Frost Band of the Hour is one of the best NCAA bands they've ever heard.

Chris Ricardo, a senior jazz performance major, had been a Canes fan before he started playing trumpet at age nine. Chris is passionate about the band and plans to pursue an M.M. in Music Education this fall while working as teaching assistant with athletic bands. "My favorite part about playing in the band is blending music and sports, two of my favorite things," he says. "I get to make great connections with many different people, perform many styles of music, and the audience enjoys what we do." He knows that the basketball team

also benefits from the band's presence. "They wave to us, acknowledge us, and they all know we're here for them."

Junior Shelby Devore, who serves as drum major for the marching band, plays mellophone in the pep band. She studies music education towards a career as a band director. She says, "Playing in the band gives me a direct experience and shows me what my future can someday look like." Since there can be a lot of pressure performing in an environment with thousands of spectators, it helps when she imagines that the crowd is listening only to the band. She believes that the band's energy also makes a difference for the team. "If we concentrate on playing our songs together, on sounding great, maybe it will help the athletes play great together too."

The Pep Band supports both the men's and women's basketball programs equally, performing at all home games with travel to ACC and NCAA tournament sites. "We've had two full pep bands traveling with both teams in different cities," says Rees. "It's a complex dance of time and logistics since the band comprises students from all disciplines across UM's diverse campus."

Students in today's Frost Band of the Hour know "it's all about the U." Their unofficial sign-off is 'LYGC' which stands for 'Love You, Go Canes.' It's an expression of endearment and mutual respect but also of support for their alma mater and, of course, their Miami Hurricanes. 📍



A Love Affair With Music

BY PAMELA EDWARD

Patti and Allan Herbert met and fell in love at the University of Miami nearly seven decades ago. Now, Allan Herbert is continuing their lifelong love affair with a challenge gift to the Frost School of Music that will help propel music performance and education forward through state-of-the-art technology.

During their 66 years together, Allan Herbert says his late wife Patti always prefaced her philanthropic endeavors with a simple statement: "I've got an idea."

"For Patti, everything was possible," says Shelton G. Berg, dean of the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music. "She would get that sparkle in her eyes [as if to say] 'okay, we're going to do something.'"

Berg cites Winter Wonderful, Frost School's holiday concert and dinner as an example of Patti's vision. "Early in my tenure, Patti said to me, 'we could do better with the dinner—let's rebrand it, let's rethink it.'" Fifteen years later, Winter Wonderful raised considerable funds for Frost School's choral program and the Donna A. Shalala MusicReach Program. Allan Herbert says fondly, "Patti created Winter Wonderful."

Now, more than two years after Patti's death at age 84, it's Allan Herbert with the idea that is helping to cement their legacy at the Frost School. He has pledged \$1 million as a matching gift challenge to encourage other donors to support the construction of the Knight Center for Music Innovation, the state-of-the-art performance and technology center scheduled for completion this Summer.

"This challenge from Allan will get us over the fundraising goal line for this remarkable project," Berg says. "And all of us at the Frost School are deeply grateful for Allan and Patti's unwavering support, and further touched that Patti's legacy will be intertwined with this wonderful facility."

Under the challenge, Herbert will match all cash gifts received from other donors toward the building fund until the \$1 million mark is reached. The

second-floor lobby of the Knight Center will be named the Patti and Allan Herbert Promenade.

"Patti believed strongly in leveraging funds to encourage other donors to give," explains Herbert. "The Knight Center is truly a memorable addition to the Frost School, with very impressive technology, [including] the wall that will be used to bring the music from inside the concert hall to the outdoors. I think Patti would be proud of this new gift."

"We have loved the music of Shelly Berg and the Frost School for many years. We are thrilled with everything they've accomplished and the programs that Shelly has created that excel in producing superb instrumental musicians and vocalists."

Among the latter is the Summer in Salzburg program. As Berg recalls, "[The Herberts] saw the wonderful opera training program that we have, and the opportunities it provides that students never get unless they go to a place like Salzburg in the summer. They stepped up with an endowed gift to name the program and fund more student scholarships."

The Herberts have generously supported many areas of their alma mater, where they met as undergraduates in 1954. In 2019, a landmark donation brought their lifetime giving to the University to more than \$100 million. In their honor, the University of Miami's School of Business was named the University of Miami Patti and Allan Herbert Business School.

"Patti and Allan's magnificent generosity has transformed the Frost School, the Miami Herbert Business School, and nearly every corner of the University," says Josh Friedman, senior vice president for development and alumni relations. "From the Patti and Allan Herbert Wellness Center to their support of the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Lowe Art Museum, student affairs, alumni relations, and much more, their impact will be felt for future students." 📍

Dean Shelton G. Berg, Patti and Allan Herbert, and Julia Berg at the 2015 Winter Wonderful gala.

PHOTO BY JENNY ABREU



Inside the Recording Studio

with Gloria Estefan and Shelly Berg

BY MARITZA COSANO



» Cuban American recording artist, actress, and businesswoman Gloria Estefan is busier than ever. The University of Miami alumna teamed up again with Shelly Berg, pianist, composer, co-producer, and dean of Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, on a Sony production: the newly released *Estefan Family Christmas* album now digitally available.

“Shelly is a beast!” says Latin Pop megastar, University of Miami alumna Gloria Estefan as she watched Frost School of Music’s dean, Shelly Berg, make even the most familiar piece seem freshly composed in the moment. Estefan and the Steinway piano artist and critically acclaimed recording artist, composer, arranger, and orchestrator came together to create another beautiful album that dropped last Christmas.

The setting was Criteria Recording Studios in North Miami, where Estefan and Berg collaborated on her new album, *Estefan Family Christmas*. The studio was bustling at the seams with artists, staff, recording engineers, and media people—all a big family invited to partake in this extraordinary production.

Estefan elaborated on Berg’s producing style, adding, “Shelly has a treasure trove of talent at the Frost School of Music. We incorporated musicians from the Henry Mancini Orchestra, amazing background singers with a magical vibe, and the Miami Children’s Choir. He’s doing phenomenal work.” In addition, Frost faculty member David Anderson brought members of his gospel choir to sing on several selections, and Berg played piano on all tracks with a professional rhythm section. “As usual, I knew we would be in great hands with Shelly on board as orchestrator and conductor, but to have him contribute his masterful piano musicianship is the icing on the cake,” Estefan says.



Estefan beamed with pride and emotion as she settled into a luxurious vocal booth. She observed that the songs, the place, the people, and the time were all in sync. Her husband Emilio Estefan stood by their daughter Emily’s side as she prepped with the recording engineers at the mixing board. Their grandson Sasha rehearsed Berg’s arrangement of “The Chipmunks Christmas Song” on a nearby couch, and time seemed to stand still like a Hallmark moment.

The inspiration for this album came two years ago at the Estefan’s traditional Thanksgiving dinner. When Sasha was eight, Gloria, Emily, and Sasha put together a little show for the family and performed it after dinner. “We should write a little original chorus about the holidays,” Estefan says. “We could sing and pass the microphone around so our family could each say what they were thankful for.” Two years later, they did it again, but Estefan noticed something interesting: Sasha’s little child voice was changing. “I felt a pang of nostalgia knowing that soon he would be a teenager and on to different things,” she says.

Estefan proposed the idea of doing a family Christmas album before Sasha’s voice changed to capture this special and unique time. In March 2022, the family got together and finished writing the song, “Thankful,” which inspired the album.

Estefan and Berg already had a history of working together on *Gloria Estefan: The Standards* album (Sony

Masterworks), for which Berg garnered a GRAMMY nomination in the Best Arrangement Accompanying a Vocalist category for “What a Wonderful World.”

Berg got a call from Estefan last spring. “Okay, I have an idea for a Christmas album,” Estefan says, and they got to work.

Estefan described the dynamic between the four musicians saying they felt safe to push back against one another to try to make the best version of whatever they were doing. Gloria, Emily, and Sasha chose the songs they wanted to sing and decided on a “vibe” for the record. They scheduled a Zoom call with Berg, and the four began working on the *Estefan Family Christmas* album.

As spectators on a live recording show, those in the studio listened, marveling at the familiar banter between the two artists—showing the bond, pleasure, and joy of an old friendship. Estefan described Berg as the “voice of reason” in the recording studio. She explained that the two of them often got lost in conversation about the minutia of a track but got right back in sync as they asserted that the musical partnership between them is what took their sound to the next level.

Berg and Estefan subsequently produced a second session with a European professional orchestra that performed Berg’s arrangements for a number of expanded selections such as “Wonderful Christmas Time” and “My Favorite Things.”

“Working with Gloria Estefan is an absolute dream come true,” said Berg. “Her musical instincts are incredible, and the way the entire Estefan family treats its colleagues is a joy. That love and respect comes through all of their music; it engenders great performances all around.”

Left: Gloria Estefan seated with grandson Sasha, in Criteria Recording Studios with Shelly Berg (back row, center) and session musicians, recording engineers, and other team members.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ESTEFAN ENTERPRISES.

SALT LICK INCUBATOR: A MEGAPHONE AMPLIFYING FROST ALUMNI VOICES

BY MARITZA COSANO

» **With a megaphone quality, a new non-profit organization called Salt Lick Incubator is helping young musicians and bands like Kid Sistr—a trio that includes two Frost School of Music alumni Sara Keden and Isabella Englert—get amplified.**

WHERE WAS the Salt Lick Incubator in the '80s and '90s? Bands that were almost famous or broke up for one reason or another would want to know. For many, their bands didn't call it quits because of personality clashes, as we saw with mainstream bands such as Mötley Crüe, Led Zeppelin, The Jam, Minutemen, The Police, and many more. Perhaps the young artists didn't have the proper representation. Maybe something or someone didn't allow them to transition from being talented to have sustainable careers.

"Many talented musicians are held back by industry greed and financial struggles, leading them to give up on their dreams. Unfortunately, so many don't receive the recognition they deserve," says businessman, philanthropist, former President of Berklee College of Music, and Salt Lick Incubator Founder Roger Brown.

Salt Lick Incubator is an effort to change that paradigm. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit artist development organization, its mission is to support aspiring musicians by easing the burden of that treacherous part of an artist's early journey—ensuring that those with enormous writing and musical talent capacity get heard.

Last year, Brown and his colleague, Liza Levy, started the Incubator, a place "where fans converge, and musicians emerge." They're building an ecosystem of trusted partners—professional songwriters, producers, agents, managers, lawyers, publicists, session musicians, and others with excellent track records in the industry. These partners are passionate about helping emerging artists navigate their careers and avoid the common pitfalls in the music industry.

The Incubator also offers project grants that can be game changers for artists seeking to record or promote their bands and further their careers. Through workshops, songwriting retreats, interviews, in-studio or on-location showcases, and a YouTube channel with a show called Salt Lick Sessions, people are getting "up close and personal" with up-and-coming artists, such as Kid Sistr, one of their best bands.

The all-women band was formed at Frost School of Music. Bassist Sara Keden and guitarist Isabella Englert (who goes by Sabel) are both alumni. Drummer Rebecca Webster, who attends the University of Southern California, completes the pop-rock trio. According to fans, they're bursting with "the palatable peculiarity of the '80s new wave."

Englert, B.M. '19, and Keden, B.M. '19, met at Frost in a songwriting class, where their teacher randomly selected them to work on

a song together, and the rest was history. "Every time we were paired, we enjoyed the process," says Englert. "With co-writing, you don't know who you will be meshed with, but it was really fun when we were paired up together. One day we were like, maybe we should get together and see if we can exercise this co-writing."

Englert and Keden ended up writing their first song called "Little Sister" about ... their little sisters! "We just kept meeting in our dorms and be like, do you want to write today? And that just evolved," says Sabel, who recalls how one song turned into two songs and then four.

It was only a short time before the young artists booked a hometown show in New York over a winter break. They needed a drummer, and Keden knew Webster from back home. She connected them and said, "Let's make a trio!" And suddenly, Kid Sistr was born.

When Brown first heard them, he was speechless. "They knocked me out! They're fantastic musicians," he says. "To pull off a trio, you got to have musicianship. The name of the band is great. The photography is great. Everything about them is so good. Sometimes people with that punk ethos are interesting and edgy but need to play better. But these young women can play. I love their songwriting. The song they did for us, "T-Shirt," was very well written and orchestrated."

Kid Sistr's songs "T-Shirt," "La La La," and "Please Dump Him" are smart and feature thought-provoking lyrics that

"highlight the common experiences of woman and all types of individuals that are left unspoken," according to a recent interview in *Clear* magazine.

As Brown tells it, Salt Lick Incubator wants to be part of Kid Sistr's journey, propelling them into a successful future. Last month, they produced their "T-Shirt" video, giving the band direction on how to keep drum bleed out of the vocals, perform for a music video, etc.

"Salt Lick Incubator has a smart thing going," says Keden. "They're helping artists like us create content that is high quality. Over the past couple of years, the whole industry has become content-focused. So having that product for us is super, super helpful. And it's inspiring to work with skilled and experienced people in such a high-class studio."

Salt Lick Incubator shot Kid Sistr's video on the soundstages of the Los

Angeles Center Studio, where *Dream Girls* and many other films have been filmed. "They gave us this gift of content, and we were blown away by it," says Keden. "We were so happy to capture these live videos, which we couldn't afford."

The video shoot is just one part of Salt Lick Incubator's many initiatives to help young artists get their voices heard. "Our job is to try to get that [video] out to the world and to help them develop their audience," concludes Brown. "But we're just a little part of their journey. They're doing all the work—we're here just trying to give them a megaphone to allow more people to hear their music." 📢

Left to right: Guitarist Isabella (Sabel) Englert, drummer Rebecca Webster, bassist Sara Keden, with a Salt Lick Incubator studio rep.



BY MARITZA COSANO

Last fall, when we caught up with Frost School of Music alumnus Omar Lopez-Cepero, B.M. '04, he was in Chicago playing the role of James Morrison in the world-premiere play adaptation of the award-winning film, *The Notebook*. That was a long road from his hometown in Puerto Rico, where he grew up as an athlete, loving music, and theater, never thinking it would be a realistic career. After all, his dad was a doctor,

for a lifetime. We got to do a show celebrating our Latin culture, family, and a union between a man and his wife."

In January 2022, after several years of being on the New York Broadway scene, Lopez-Cepero was called to audition for the part of Judas in the Broadway musical *Jesus Christ Superstar* and got the job. He reunited with fellow Frost alum Jenna Rubali, B.M. '12, who played a new interpretation of Mary Magdalene in this iconic 1970 rock opera

involvement in Frost Chorale and all the different musical elements and classes, was a nice combination of the two things I love," she says. "I've always wanted to do music and theater, which was important to my education. And then, right out of school, I was fortunate enough to book the international and national tour of *Green Day: American Idiot*, which, ironically, Omar did on Broadway." ☺

PHOTOS BY EVAN ZIMMERMAN/MURPHY MADE PHOTOGRAPHY



On the Road to Broadway: Alumni in Hit Musicals



PHOTO BY JUSTIN PATTERSON



PHOTO BY COREY RIVES

and he always thought he'd follow in his footsteps one day.

Lopez-Cepero got the theater bug in his senior year in high school. He started auditioning for school plays, and when the time came to investigate different college options, Miami made sense. Swayed by his Latin roots, he auditioned at Frost and got in as a classical vocal performance major. And then, his career took off.

"My career shifted towards musical theater, as that's where I was most happy," says Lopez-Cepero. He was part of the original cast of the *Green Day: American Idiot* and other great plays like *The Phantom of the Opera* and *On Your Feet: The Story of Emilio and Gloria Estefan*, where he first played Warren, a record producer, and later Emilio Estefan—opposite to his wife, Arianna Rosario, who played Gloria Estefan on the show in New York and as a standby on tour.

"After this long hiatus from live theater because of the pandemic, we performed *On Your Feet* at The Muny in St. Louis, the oldest and largest outdoor musical theatre in the United States, before 11,000 people. Not having done theater for months and stepping out onto the stage before such a large crowd, it was unbelievable. And to share that opposite with my wife is something we will cherish

with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyrics by Tim Rice.

Rubali joined the cast of *Jesus Christ Superstar* in 2019 when the tour began. But the pandemic put a hold on that for 18 months. "Omar joined us when we came back, so it was really exciting for us to work together again. We knew each other from being in New York City's Broadway community, but it was amazing to work with him—and we're dear friends now. We will always have that CANE connection, even though we didn't know each other from school as we were there at different times."

In June of 2022, the Frost alumni returned to Miami on a month tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. "We went to campus together and had fun returning to the old stomping grounds and checking out the Frost School of Music, the Theater Department, and the Ring Theater. It's even better now! When I first toured UM, I remember thinking, **"This is not a college; it's a resort!"**, Rubali says.

Rubali attributes her successful path to Broadway to the training she received at Frost. Her bachelor degree of Music in Musical Theater prepared her for her musical theater journey.

"My acting, movement, piano, and sight singing classes, along with my

"I've always wanted to do music and theater, so that was really important to me in my education." — JENNA RUBALI



Above (l to r):
Omar Lopez-Cepero '04
Jenna Rubali '12

Opposite page top:
Omar Lopez Cepero in
his role of Judas Iscariot
in the Broadway musical
Jesus Christ Superstar.

Opposite page bottom:
Omar Lopez Cepero
and Jenna Rubali
playing opposite each
other as Judas and
Mary Magdalene.

A Maestro's Music Collection

Finds a Permanent Home at Frost BY PAMELA EDWARD

» During his nearly five-decade conducting career, Gerard Schwarz has amassed an extensive, artistically significant collection of printed music, all bearing his performance notations. Now, he has given the collection to the Frost School of Music to benefit future generations of music students and scholars.

Conductor and professor Gerard Schwarz at his studio in Frost School of Music at the University of Miami.

PHOTOS BY JENNY ABREU FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

In his studio in the south wing of the Patricia Louise Frost Music Studios, Gerard Schwarz—internationally acclaimed conductor, distinguished professor of music, conducting, and orchestral studies at the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music, and music director of the Frost Symphony Orchestra—opened the score for a violin part from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro."

He pointed out the penciled-in markings. "For example, it says *pianissimo*, and there's a V. That means you start up-bow [bowing upward]," he said. "Then there's another V, which means you continue up-bow, then there's what looks like an upside-down U with corners, a down-bow sign. That's the bowing."

Marking orchestra parts—to indicate bowing direction, or changes in tempo or dynamics, for example—has long been standard practice among composers, conductors, and musicians. Schwarz explained how conductors convey their artistic vision and interpretation of the music to the ensembles they lead and the students they teach. When students, music scholars, and musicians can compare and analyze different conductors' notes on other parts, they gain greater insight into contrasting interpretations.

After nearly 50 years of collecting scores and putting his artistic imprint on them, Schwarz donated his entire collection to the Frost School of Music. Comprising more than 1,200 performance sets and parts valued at over \$1.24 million, the Schwarz Collection encompasses the

pantheon of 18th and 19th-century European composers.

Highlights include complete performance sets for all nine symphonies by Ludwig van Beethoven, as well as numerous works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frideric Handel, Joseph Haydn, Johannes Brahms, Hector Berlioz, Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Schubert, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Antonio Vivaldi, Richard Wagner, and countless others.

Schwarz's gift is part of the University of Miami's Ever Brighter: The Campaign for Our Next Century. The most ambitious in the University's history, the \$2.5 billion campaign is set to conclude in 2025, when the University will celebrate its centennial.

Shelton G. "Shelly" Berg, dean of the Frost School of Music, said that the Schwarz Collection would accrue considerable benefits to the Frost School for many decades. "Gerard Schwarz's library is filled with priceless annotation for study and performance and is a huge repository of great symphonic music, from standard repertoire to new works commissioned for Maestro Schwarz," Berg said. "The annotations include thousands of bowing instructions and other elements of style and interpretation marked by renowned orchestral musicians into the individual parts, as well as adding thousands of markings in the scores by Maestro Schwarz to prepare and guide his musical interpretations."

Born in New Jersey to Viennese parents, Schwarz began studying piano at five and soon focused on the trumpet. He joined the New York Philharmonic in 1972 as co-principal trumpet, a position he held until 1977. During this time, he began seriously to study parts used by different conductors.

"I spent a lot of time in the New York Philharmonic library, looking at parts that different conductors used and what markings they put in, and why," he recalled. "Then, when I started conducting, I thought, 'I should probably get my parts and make sure they are marked appropriately, that everything coincides with my interpretive ideas.' And I did it from that day on, with every piece I conducted."

Schwarz pointed out that earlier composers' works left the most scope for conductors to interpret the music. "We call it editing the music, and the earlier



the music, the more you need to edit," he said. "So, with Bach, Handel, Vivaldi [all 18th century], you have to edit dynamics, how loud, how soft, where it should be long, where it should be short, where it should be slurred. Every time you do the G minor symphony of Mozart [for example], you edit it. But it's better to do it once and have it and change as needed."

It certainly saves rehearsal time. "When everything is marked, you're immediately beginning on a much higher artistic level," Schwarz said. "Instead of saying to the orchestra, 'oh, could you try this and try that,' it's all there. All you have to do is convince the orchestra that these artistic ideas are good ones and that they can buy into the interpretations. That's the hard thing about conducting orchestras."

Hard or not, Schwarz has built a glittering career "behind the baton" to borrow the title of his memoir. He led the Seattle Symphony for 26 years, championing American composers and elevating the orchestra to national prominence. He has worked with orchestras in Europe, Asia, and the United States.

He joined the Frost School faculty in 2019, attracted by Dean Berg's vision for the school. He became the inaugural holder of the Schwarz-Benaroya Endowed Chair in Conducting and Orchestral Activities in 2021. Under his tutelage, the Frost Symphony Orchestra has grown immensely in stature in the four years he has been its music director.

At the fall 2021 commencement, Schwarz received the President's Medal from President Julio Frenk, in recognition of, in Frenk's words, "a lifetime of bringing extraordinary music to the world."

In addition to his work at the Frost School, Schwarz serves as music director of the All-Star Orchestra, Eastern Music Festival, Palm Beach Symphony, and Mozart Orchestra of New York, is conductor emeritus of the Mostly Mozart Festival and conductor laureate of the Seattle Symphony. His discography spans more than 350 recordings. He has received numerous awards and accolades, including Emmy® Awards, GRAMMY® nominations, American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) Awards, and the Ditson Conductor's Award. He was the first American named Conductor of the Year by Musical America magazine and has received numerous honorary doctorates.

For his part, Schwarz is thrilled that his collection—a central element of his life's work—will find a home at the University of Miami. "I've fallen in love with the Frost School and the University of Miami. And I thought, wouldn't it be nice to have [the collection] here, where anyone can study it? It's a great educational tool now and will be 50 years from now when I'm not here. I discussed it with my kids and wife, and we decided we would like to make a home for it here." ●

"I've fallen in love with the Frost School and the University of Miami. And I thought, wouldn't it be nice to have [the collection] here, where anyone can study it?"

— GERARD SCHWARZ

Lee Levin, Miami's Most In-Demand

Drummer,
is a

Rhythmic Powerhouse

BY MARITZA COSANO

Renowned as “Miami’s most in-demand drummer,” alumnus Lee Levin, B.M. ’89, says he always wanted to be a studio session musician. He has built a successful career doing exactly that, making the recording scene his playground. Based out of his home base, Miami, it’s no surprise to hear Levin’s beats full of Latin flavor infused with furious technical clarity and unparalleled precision. Those in the music industry know Levin as someone who’s not too showy or tight but just right. He sits in a song with his feel—a thing that defines him as a rhythmic powerhouse.

In 1989, Levin graduated from the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, and his performances didn’t go unnoticed. His first recording session was with Chayanne, one of the best-selling Latin music artists who has sold over 50 million records worldwide. Since then, Levin has played on more than 1000 recordings for a variety of artists, including Gloria Estefan, Ricky Martin, Barbra Streisand, Madonna, Backstreet Boys, The Bee Gees, Kelly Clarkson, P!NK, Nelly Furtado, Clay Aiken, Christopher Cross, Christina Aguilera, Michael Bolton, Sarah Silverman, Meat Loaf, Luis Fonsi, Calle 13, Ricardo Arjona, Alejandro Sanz, Juan Luis Guerra, Enrique Iglesias, Julio Iglesias, Jon Secada, Eros Ramazzotti, Shakira, and many others.

His drumming can also be heard on award-winning TV favorites like NBC’s

Friends, *Saturday Night Live*, *Dateline*, *America’s Next Top Model*, *ESPN*, and *NBC Sports* show, to name a few. As a writer, Levin has worked on many educational books, videos, and CDs for Alfred Publications, including one he wrote for the Ultimate Beginner Tech Start Series entitled *Drum Programming Basics*.

Last year, he toured with today’s most prominent reggaeton artist, Bad Bunny, as his musical director. Last summer, he also recorded with Gloria Estefan and Frost School of Music’s Dean Shelly Berg. Many drummers may recognize this as pure luck. Still, this GRAMMY award winner is just that good, even though he admits feeling a shot of adrenaline when he entered the Criteria Studios in North Miami to play with fellow musicians Berg (piano/keyboards), Carlitos del Puerto (bass), and Dean Parks (guitar).

When asked why he decided to stay in Miami after graduation while the music industry exploded in LA in the 90s, Levin smiled and nodded. “Me and a couple more people from Frost auditioned simultaneously for the Chayanne tour in LA. I got that gig, toured with Chayanne for over a year, and then returned to Miami. I was preparing to move to LA when I got a call to do a recording session. Then, I got called for another session. And it just kept coming. Okay, instead of moving right now, let me get some experience. So, when I do move, I’m not just some kid that shows up in LA to get a “gig.” I was doing what I wanted—studio session work—and it didn’t matter what language it was. Most of it was Latin, Spanish, and music from all over, but that didn’t bother me. I loved the music. The sound was contagious.”

He first met Emilio and Gloria Estefan at their studio on Bird Road in Miami.

Emilio started calling him for sessions with artists like Shakira, Ricky Martin, and Jon Secada. And just last summer, Levin had a fantastic experience recording the *Estefan Family Christmas* album.

“Shelly Berg wasn’t the dean when I went to Frost School of Music. He came after, but I knew his name since he would call me for a gig here and there, things he was working on. When he called me for this, the timing was perfect. I had already finished my tour with Bad Bunny, so I was available.” As the musical director in Bad Bunny’s *El Último Tour del Mundo*, Levin got to work with his friend, Puerto Rican artist Tommy Torres on a three-month tour.

When Berg called and told him who the other musicians on the Estefan project were, Levin was ecstatic! “I was like, ‘Oh, man! I’m happy to be at that level.’ Dean is just a legend. I’ve recorded albums with him, but this is the first time we’ve ever played together in the same room. And then Carlitos became famous in the jazz and recording world. We’ve known each other for about ten years and are very good friends.”

For Levin, the recording studio is his happy place. “It’s so rare nowadays to get to do an album where four musicians are playing simultaneously and feeding off each other, which is how it used to be when I first started recording. So, having that experience was so special. When you’re working with musicians who are that good and with an artist [Gloria] who is also that good, there are no egos . . . everyone is just there to make good music and have a good time.”



For powerhouse drummer Lee Levin, the studio is his home away from home.

Soul Sisters Unite in a Fortunate Stroke of Serendipity Fueled by Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*

BY MARITZA COSANO



Frost School of Music alumni
Ksenija Komljenović and
Liana Pailodze Harron.

Igor Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* ballet score experimented with tonality, rhythm, stress, and dissonance in the 20th century. The ballet revolves around a pagan story of the return of spring and the earth's renewal through the sacrifice of a virgin chosen to dance herself to death. This theme shook the world after its Paris premiere in 1913.

Now, one hundred years later, the Russian's masterful orchestral work has been reimagined by two Frost School of Music alumnae in a dramatic full-version pairing for marimba/piano duo.

Ksenija Komljenović (D.M.A. '17, A.D. '18, percussion instrumental performance) and Liana Pailodze Harron (D.M.A. '13, keyboard performance), are giving the work a whole new perspective. They created a group called Vesna Duo, whose recent marimba/piano recording of their adaptation of *The Rite of Spring* was hailed as "smashingly effective" by The Wall Street Journal.

Suppose someone had posted a digital ad to connect a pianist, percussionist, and recording and production engineer to arrange *The Rite of Spring* for such a duo. In that case, it may not have seen the light of day, even in the age of social media.

But the serendipity phenomenon does exist. In an interview last year, Komljenović and Harron talked about their incredible journey through the deep study of a beloved piece of music and a crazy idea to make something good out of the bad and ugly worldwide Covid-19 pandemic. As they tell it, their plan was simple: do what they never had time to do—rewrite the "Rite" anew.

Before the women formed their duo, their paths had never crossed at the University of Miami. Harron graduated from Frost School of Music with a Doctorate in Piano Performance in 2013, then moved to New York to perform and teach at the 92nd Street Y, before Komljenović began her studies at Frost, receiving a Doctorate in Percussion Performance in 2017 and Artist Diploma in 2018. After a year in Hong Kong,

Komljenović moved to Texas, where she is currently assistant professor of percussion at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi.

"Liana and I met through a mutual percussionist friend—another Frosty—Mitya Nilov, our playing partner in other duos. I played percussion with him, and Liana played piano with him. I kept hearing wonderful things about Liliana through him and everyone else, and that's how we connected," Komljenović says. In 2020, a group was expecting to meet to rehearse in preparation for a performance at Carnegie Hall with Nilov, who won the Concert Artist Guild in New York City. However, that did not happen. Covid hit, and they suddenly felt like their entire future was erased. Liliana recalls, "I called Ksenija and said two things: First, we must be friends. And second, let's do something we never have time to do normally."

Even though Komljenović was in Texas and Harron was in New York, distance did not stop them from creating something spectacular.

Komljenović suggested she had always wanted to do an arrangement of *The Rite of Spring*—the only piece that had made her cry while playing it on stage. Soon after she started arranging, she discovered that Liana is one of those pianists who can be told, "Okay, you must grow an extra limb to do this. Could you please play a million notes simultaneously while I play four?" And Liana would say, "Sure, no problem. Just throw them at me!"

When they finally met in October 2020 and looked at their parts, for a moment, they got confused. Their scores were marked in the same way. They remember looking at each other, thinking, "Where have you been all my life? Why didn't we collaborate until this moment?"

"I discovered I had a soul sister, says Komljenović. "Working with Liliana is easy and makes chamber music magical." Harron adds, "Ksenija's arrangement is something a composer typically takes about nine months to a year to create, but she handed in the score in three weeks. It was incredible!"

After their world premiere performance at Texas A&M University in Corpus Christi, the duo began getting attention, so they decided an album was the next logical thing.

"Everyone who worked on this album has at some point been associated with Frost," says Komljenović. "Besides Liana and me, the fantastic Antek Olesik, a current member of the Frost Percussion Studio, was in charge of our video/design/promotional images. Justin Chervony, who worked at Frost as a Studio Production Engineer, was our fabulous recording engineer who also did mixing/mastering. The album was an effort between the four of us with the unwavering support of Liana's wonderful husband, Tommy Harron, also a Frost alum!"

"When we premiered this, we were not an official duo," adds Harron. "We were just two friends collaborating on a project. When we were invited to participate at The Chamber Music America Conference, they needed us to have an official name, which made us think in that direction."

Vesna Duo was born.

The name came about as Komljenović spent time looking at Stravinsky's music. The old pagan ritual intrigued her, so she read about Slavic mythology and found a goddess called Vesna. In Russian, it means springtime. Vesna represents the goddess of spring, resurrection, and rebirth.

After their first concert, Vesna Duo got a call from Jonathan DePeri, founder and artistic director of Gotham Arts and one of the major philanthropists in New York City, who offered to host their album release, which occurred in May 2021 at Salon 58 overlooking Central Park, where Vesna Duo also performed the work live.

Since then, Vesna Duo performed *The Rite of Spring* at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) in Indianapolis, and toured in the United States. They look forward to continuing their duo collaboration, and other chamber music projects in the future. ☺

WOMEN IN MUSIC

A Collection of Frost Stories

BY MARITZA COSANO

Shattering glass ceilings, securing seats at the table, and using music to raise their voice, women continue to envision their power and, more importantly, how the world envisions them inside the music industry and their communities. A force to be reckoned with, our women in music are paving pathways to success and showcasing grit, talent, and strength backed up by constant evolution, representing the Frost School of Music in stellar ways.

A conversation is flowing about female leads rising to the top, changing the business, and opening doors for the next generation of women. While this is not a new movement, it has become more influential and, therefore, more inspiring. Since the dawn of music, women have played significant roles in the industry, not only as performing artists but also as those professionals behind the scenes, such as songwriters, producers, engineers, record label executives, lawyers, conductors, educators, and more.

To cite a few examples, engineers like Susan Rogers, Peggy McCreary, and Sylvia Massy, who worked with Prince during his peak years in the 1980s and early

90s. Miriam Bienstock, co-founder of Atlantic Records, in 1947 with Ahmet Ertegun. Motown Records' iron woman, Suzanne de Passe, was pivotal to developing the Jackson 5, Lionel Richie, and Rick James, among many other acts. Sylvia Robinson, the co-founder of Sugar Hill Records, helped introduce hip-hop to the world when she released The Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight," reportedly the first modern rap single in 1979, followed by The Furious Five's "The Message," widely known as the first socially conscious hip-hop song.

In 1990, Sylvia Rhone made headlines as the first woman—and first Black woman—to be named CEO of a major label, Warner

Music's East West Records. That role led her to become Elektra Records' chief executive and Universal Motown's CEO. Since 2018, Rhone has been chairman-CEO of Sony Music's Epic Records.

For women in music, leveling the playing field and giving other young women an equal shot is the ultimate goal. That combination of commitment and empowerment has led to something extraordinary happening. Despite being historically overlooked, women have persisted and are spreading hope in their communities through their empowering journeys. This short collection features Frost-built women in music who are disrupting the industry for a more promising future.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VERONICA SWIFT

Veronica Swift

Jazz Singer • Songwriter • Recording Artist

"You don't have to give up who you are to be successful just because you're different."

— GLORIA ESTEFAN

Gloria Estefan

International Star | Singer | Songwriter | Actress | Businesswoman

With record sales that exceed 75 million worldwide, Gloria Estefan is one of the most successful Latin women in the world and the second best-selling female Latin artist in history. This June, she will be inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame (SHF)—the first Latin female artist to accomplish this milestone in the history of SHF.

In 1978, she graduated from the University of Miami with a bachelor's degree in communications and psychology.

Inspired by her Cuban heritage, Estefan single-handedly popularized Latin rhythms with pop and dance beats, charting over thirty number-one hits throughout her forty-plus-year music career. She became a seven-time Grammy Award winner and has been named one of the top 100 greatest artists of all time by both VH1 and Billboard. In 1993, the Frost School of Music awarded an honorary doctorate in music to Estefan, honoring her legacy of bringing Latin music to the American mainstream.

Her film credit sheet is not long but still impressive. The most notable roles include appearances in *Mambo King*, *Music of the Heart*, *For Love or Country: The Arturo Sandoval Story*, and guest starring with Andy Garcia in *Father of the Bride*.

In 2011, Estefan hosted Gloria Estefan's Latin Beat, a seven-part series for BBC Radio 2 in the United Kingdom that explored the history of Latin music. In 2017, she was among the five artists honored by the Kennedy Center for enriching the cultural fabric of America. The University of Miami alumna does not show any signs of slowing down. Last October, she released the *Estefan Family Christmas* album, arranged by the Frost School of Music's Dean Shelly Berg.

Estefan was honored with her own Barbie Doll this past year. In a release to the media, she said, "If, when I was a little girl playing with my Barbies, anyone had told me that one day there would be a Barbie Doll made in my image and likeness, I would have told them that they were CRAZY! So, imagine how I felt when I got the call telling me that Mattel wanted to do just that. It's a privilege to be celebrated in this way and particularly for Hispanic Heritage Month, because Barbie is one of the most iconic creations in American culture and, being reflected in her is a statement of the opportunities that this great nation has afforded immigrants that contribute to the fabric of this wonderful country. Hopefully, it will inspire young Hispanic girls to reach for the stars!"

PHOTO COURTESY OF ESTEFAN ENTERPRISES

“

I grew up in jazz clubs, but it wasn't until one day when the light bulb sort of went off and that's when I knew what I wanted to do in life."

— VERONICA SWIFT

Veronica Swift

Jazz Singer | Songwriter | Recording Artist

Veronica Swift, B.M. '16, has jazz coursing through her veins. The jazz singer, songwriter, and recording artist has been a rising star since she placed second in the 2015 Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition, where she captured the attention of American trumpeter and jazz icon Chris Botti.

Swift recalls when Botti walked into the little jazz club, a historic venue in New York City called Birdland, where she performed with fellow Frost alum, pianist, songwriter, and composer Emmett Cohen, B.M. '12. Following that gig, Swift began to tour with Botti and Wynton Marsalis, another iconic American trumpeter. After that stint, she toured extensively with her band.

Botti was mesmerized by Swift's unique retro sound and style—a throwback to Anita O'Day and Billie Holiday, the first divas of jazz, which are widely admired for their sense of rhythm and jazz vocal styles. But that's not surprising considering that Swift grew up on the road with her parents, jazz pianist Hod O'Brien and vocalist Stephanie Nakasian, who played with the legendary American singer, guitarist, and songwriter Jimi Hendrix.

By age nine, Swift had already started her performing and recording career, headlining at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Dizzy's Club and appearing at major US festivals like the Telluride Jazz Festival. "I grew up in jazz clubs," she admits.

PHOTO COURTESY OF VERONICA SWIFT

"But it wasn't until one day, when the light bulb went off, that I knew what I wanted to do in life." In 2011, that thought led her to pursue a jazz vocal performance program at Frost School of Music. "At the time, not many schools offered a jazz vocal performance program, and Frost has always been extremely progressive when pairing up—putting vocalists and instrumentalists together—which is what I wanted from a program."

Swift is a Mack Avenue recording artist. Her album *Confessions*, released in 2019, followed by *This Bitter Earth* in 2021, earned her a five-star review in *DownBeat* magazine and two front covers. She also received a l'Académie du Jazz Best Vocal Album award in 2021.

This leading international jazz vocalist has expanded her style. Her third album *TransGenre* (2023) mixes jazz and classical with rock, soul, and funk—paying homage to greats like Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Duke Ellington, and David Bowie.

"In the old world, vocalists would have a team behind them and, if you're lucky, you can maybe have that nowadays in the pop world," Swift says. "But as a jazz vocalist, as a classical musician, and anything non-mainstream, man, you're not going to have a team of arrangers and managers. You have to build it yourself. You have to have a product that's unique and authentic. That's how you survive in this business."

Jennifer Grim

President of the Board of Directors of Chamber Music America |
Flutist | Associate Professor at the Frost School of Music

Last summer, the Board of Directors of Chamber Music America (CMA) announced its leadership changes for the 2022-23 fiscal year. Jennifer Grim, associate professor of Flute at the Frost School of Music, assumed the role of President, becoming the first Black woman to fill this position in the organization's 45-year history.

Hailed as “a deft, smooth flute soloist” by the New York Times, Grim is also a member of Zephyros Winds, an active member of the National Flute Association's board of directors and is the artistic advisor to the Frost School of Music at Festival Napa Valley, a summer music academy for advanced collegiate musicians. She joined the CMA board in 2017 and has served as one of its vice presidents since 2021. She succeeded composer Billy Childs, who completed his tenure on June 30, 2022.

“

Chamber music has been a focus of my performance career, and I look forward to working with the community in serving the needs of small ensembles and organizations.”

— JENNIFER GRIM

“I am excited to serve the chamber music community as President of the Board of Directors of Chamber Music America,” said Grim in a press release. “Chamber music has been a focus of my performance career, and I look forward to working with the community in serving the needs of small ensembles and organizations.”

On becoming CMA's first Black woman president, she said, “Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the mission of Chamber Music America.” She continued, “The membership of the Board of Directors reflects this commitment. Currently, over 50% of the members of the board identify as ALAANA (African, Latinx, Asian, Arab, and Native American). I hope that more arts organizations recruit more leaders of color to broaden the perspectives represented.”

Bassoonist Melanie Ferrabone trusts that where she is today matters for where she will be tomorrow. The Frost School of Music doctorate candidate graduated in May, and not a day goes by that she does not think about how the last five years have changed her life.

From the moment she wakes up in the morning, she realizes she is choosing her perspective. She has learned the humdrum of daily repetition can make it easy to slip into a lull of autopilot, but her willingness to give herself a gentle shake has given her the resolve to accomplish much more. “Nothing is impossible,” she says, and Frost has taught her that.

Albeit all the goodness hiding in plain sight, last fall took Ferrabone on a rollercoaster ride. On the first weekend of November 2022, she visited the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. She was invited to perform as a guest artist with faculty members bassoonist Nicolasa Kuster and percussionist Jonathan Latta.

The following Monday, she took an overnight flight and arrived in Miami at nine in the morning, just an hour before she was to rehearse for the 2022 Frost Concerto Competition, which she won. She rested for a few days, then prepared to be one of the opening soloist acts for the two-time Grammy Award-winning soprano, songwriter, and actress Hila Plitmann, who performed her “Song and Dance” concert with the Frost Wind Ensemble at the Maurice Gusman Concert Hall.

The Panamanian bassoonist's schedule did not slow down during her last semester either, as she arrived in Miami from a trip to Tucson, Arizona, where she performed at The Meg Quigley Vivaldi Competition and Bassoon Symposium.

The multi-day event was jam-packed with concerts, master classes, workshops, live competition rounds, and other events. The symposium, she explains, is meant to be an inclusive and pleasant atmosphere of learning and inspiration built around a world-class competition. They prioritize providing a balanced representation of identities, including gender, race, culture, age, and career trajectory, in selecting performers, presenters, and judges.

To date, Ferrabone says the symposium has been one of the biggest highlights of her life. The talks, the women in music supporting one another while making a name for themselves—all this added meaning to her moment of self-reflection. “I learned a lot from this experience,” says Ferrabone. “Mainly, how we, as women, can make a difference in the industry by changing the conversations and building community—helping each other level up in the industry instead of trying to climb over each other.

From her time at Frost, she has also learned that “all musicians need to be multi-faceted. Many schools only focus on performance, preparing the students to play, but I've learned something different at Frost, and that's what I teach my students. You need to understand your craft as well as the business of the craft—from marketing, sales, and management. And though those skills don't have anything to do with the bassoon, they've helped me become the brand I've become.”

“

We, as women, can make a difference in the industry by changing the conversations and building community...”

— MELANIE FERRABONE

Melanie Ferrabone

Henry Mancini Institute Fellow | Bassoonist |
Music Educator

Amanda Quist

Conductor | Director of Choral Activities
at the Frost School of Music

Frost School of Music's director of Choral Activities, Amanda Quist, recently made her grand conductor debut at New York City's Carnegie Hall. This was part of the OCTAVO SERIES, a festival chorus performance featuring Miami, San Francisco, Maryland, and Long Island, New York choirs.

"It's hard to say exactly when the first time I stood in front of a choir and actually conducted was," says Amanda Quist. The conductor and director of Choral Activities at the Frost School of Music recalls being 19 years old when she conducted her first piece called "Mata del Anima Sola" by Antonio Estévez. "I do remember that it felt magical."

Looking back, she feels lucky to have found wonderful mentors and a supportive community during her years as a student and teacher, leading her to her debut at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Last year, Manhattan Concert Productions (MCP) approached Quist to serve as one of the

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"I realize that at the professional level the numbers of female leaders make up a small percentage—and it's amazing to be a part of that group."

— AMANDA QUIST

guest conductors invited to participate in the OCTAVO SERIES, featuring exciting repertoire including various pieces designed to create a beautiful mosaic of choral gems.

While she is debuting at Carnegie Hall's podium as a conductor, Quist has prepared choirs, such as Philadelphia Symphonic Choir with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Westminster Symphonic Choir with the Berlin Philharmonic to perform at this legendary hall before, which has lent its platform to bring the transformative power of music to the broadest possible audience.

In 2004, as a high school teacher, Quist also brought her high school program to Carnegie Hall from Michigan to perform with Manhattan Concert Productions. So, this upcoming performance was a full-circle moment. "I've never thought of myself as a 'female' conductor, but just a conductor. However, I realize that at the professional level, the numbers of female leaders make up a small percentage, and I'm honored to be a part of that group," says Quist.

A

akshada Bandekar, M.S. '23, is taking inspiration from fellow recording engineers like Lindsay Alvarez. This bright young woman is not lacking in talent or resolve. Most recently, Bandekar won the 2022 Arup x AES Diversity in Audio Scholarship and the 2021 AES Educational Foundation Emil Torick Award.

By the time she was four years old, she was singing on stage, winning several prizes and acquiring a sense of professionalism in music. But this was only the beginning for this musical prodigy from Goa, India, who, very early on, decided to help society through the positive use of her talent. Bandekar founded UniHERse, an initiative encouraging others to stand for gender equality and ensure equal opportunities for women. Thanks to this community-focused endeavor, she received an award from the President of India recognizing her individual contribution to society through her music.

"I've always been a fan of music and technology. My entire childhood was full of music. Singing was my passion. In my academics, as time went on, I became interested in engineering and technology. When I was in high school, I found out that I could merge those two things, so that was a rejuvenating movement for me," says Bandekar.

This decision led her to Frost, where she began to take a closer look at people in the music industry in the United States. This gave her an idea: "If you want to be somewhere, you've got to make a move." That notion was quickly put into motion as Bandekar grew to be a woman in music changing the face of audio engineering.

In the fall of '21, Bandekar landed a part-time co-op with the audio team at Motorola Solutions, Inc., allowing her to bring her music engineering training to the field. After experiencing an exciting summer internship at Motorola last year, she accepted a full-time position with the same company. Bandekar says, "I am thrilled to graduate and eager for the audio and musical journey ahead."

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"I've always been fortunate to use music to shine light to the causes I care deeply about."

— AKSHADA BANDEKAR

PHOTOS BY ADDIEL PERERA PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY



Akshada Bandekar

Music Engineer | Singer | Community Advocate



“

It's been wonderful having my foot in the two worlds that I love—music and dance.”

— JESSICA PEREZ

Jessica Perez

Businesswoman | Operations Manager at the Miami City Ballet

When Jessica Perez, M.A. '17, heard of Frost School of Music, she knew that was where she wanted to go for her graduate studies.

“I wanted to get my hands into the live entertainment space and work with arts organizations, so my major in Arts Presenting and Live Entertainment Management was what spoke to me,” she says.

Perez graduated in 2017 and has been on a journey since then. Most recently, she accepted the distinguished position of Operations Manager at the Miami City Ballet. When she first transitioned from music licensing to the ballet world, she was curious if that experience would translate into her career plans. And to her surprise, it has.

“It's been a wonderful opportunity and a blessing,” she says. “Some of the things I'm doing, like music licensing for the ballet, align with my music background.” In addition to that, she is heavily involved with the live orchestra that performs for all the ballet performances. In her day-to-day job responsibilities, she gets to work with the musicians, planning the logistics, and working with the dancers. “It's been wonderful having my foot in the two worlds that I love—music and dance,” she says. “Being able to watch live music and to see the interpretation through the dancers' eyes rather than just through the eyes of musicians has been amazing.”

As someone primarily working in the classical music space, Perez has seen more women stepping up into leading roles, like herself. “Strangely enough, music has always been kind of a male-dominated world, even though there are so many successful women in music,” she says. “In the past few organizations I worked for, I've seen quite a lot of women in those spaces, and I see that growing.”

According to Perez, in the dancing world, there are many women on staff other than the dancers. “The Miami City Ballet has an artistic director who's also a female. Regarding choreographers, that part of it is still a bit male-heavy, but that's also starting to open up to more women.”

“This is the book that educators use when they teach students about the entire music industry ecosystem.”

— SERONA ELTON

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Serona Elton

Professor | Director of the Music Industry Program | Associate Dean of Administration at the Frost School of Music

Serona Elton, M.M. '95, is the quintessential music industry expert. As an experienced music industry executive and lawyer, she aims to transform the business landscape by overseeing successful projects and key teams with some of the industry's most complex initiatives involving music royalties, licensing, and data standards.

As a professor, director of the Music Industry Program, and associate dean of Administration at Frost School of Music, Elton is a true leader with extensive experience in public speaking, writing for publication, teaching, and administration. But her greatest passion is teaching—helping to shape the future leaders of the music industry “as they find innovative ways to expand upon the connection between the musician, the music, and the listener while ensuring the cultural and commercial value of music is preserved,” she says.

Recently, Elton co-authored the 13th edition of the Music Business Handbook and Career Guide, one of the first-ever books about the music business authored by David Baskerville. Since 1970, when the book was first released, it has been used by most educators to teach music business in the industry. During a Women in Music event at Frost School of Music in January, Elton spoke about the book released later in the week.

“This book was written not long after the US Copyright Act had been massively changed,” explains Elton. “The first music business programs were forming in universities and colleges. So, this book became the go-to book, especially for college classes that needed to teach students about all different aspects of the business.”

As the industry evolved, a new book edition became available. After Baskerville passed away, his son, Tim Baskerville, kept it going. Elton had worked with him in many music industry activities related to the industry educator space, and then in April of 2021, he approached her.

“He told me he was retiring but wanted me to take over this book, keeping it alive. So, I came on board and dove deeply into this book,” says Elton. The 13th edition lists both their names; the 14th edition will be authored by Elton alone.

“This is a big honor for me because I was a music business student in the early 1990s, and I used it when it was the fifth or sixth edition,” says Elton. “This is the book that educators use when they teach students about the entire music industry ecosystem. So what makes it so unique and particularly perfect for what we do in colleges is that before students are ready to dive deeply into any one segment of the music industry, they are ready to dive into classes specifically about music publishing or the record business, taking a class that introduces them to the entire industry.”

There's a loud chatter about the state of women helming symphony orchestras, and the name of Sophie Mok is rising. Mok won the 2nd prize at the International Conductor's Competition at the 2019 Deutsches Musikfest. She was also a finalist chosen among 300 candidates in Maestro Riccardo Muti's Italian Opera Academy with the Orchestra Giovanile Luigi Cherubini. And last year, she was selected to participate in Le Domaine Forget de Charlevoix Conducting Academy to work with Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin. Originally from Hong Kong, Mok arrived in the U.S. in 2020. She had earned a bachelor's degree in music from Hong Kong Baptist University and wanted to pursue her master's degree in Oboe Performance at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Then, something magical happened in the summer of 2021. She met Frost School of Music's Maestro Gerard Schwarz at the Eastern Music Festival in North Carolina.

After the end of the five-week festival that consisted of an intense repertoire, there was no question that Mok wanted to continue learning from the celebrated conductor. So, a year later, she packed her bags and journeyed down to Miami to pursue her Artist Diploma in Instrumental Conducting under the tutelage of Gerard Schwarz at the Frost School of Music.

"Maestro Schwarz has taught me about what a conductor brings into the picture—helping to unify ideas and listening to what the musicians bring into the piece, too," she says. "It's a give-and-take thing. As Maestro Schwarz says, you can study a score for many hours but learn so much more by standing there on the podium. Even in a dress rehearsal, you gain a lot by listening to musicians do their thing—and they, in turn, learn from you."

Mok's portfolio is quite impressive. She has conducted the Orchestre Métropolitain, the Orchestre symphonique de Québec, the Berlin Sinfonietta, the Orquesta de Cámara del Municipal de Santiago, the Eastern Festival Orchestra, the New Symphony Orchestra, and the Romanian Youth Orchestra, among others.

A staggering 25,000 musicians aged 17 to 27 auditioned for the Asia Youth Orchestra, a 100-plus orchestra representing musicians from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Mok was selected through a strict audition process. After a rehearsal camp in Italy, she will assist Maestro Joseph Bastian, the principal conductor at AYO, in rehearsals and concerts in Italy, Germany, Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan, and Japan.

Mok says, "My plan is to find a job as a conductor in an orchestra. I like to travel, so I can go anywhere the best job leads me."

Shannon de l'Etoile joined the faculty of the University of Miami's School of Music in the fall of 2001 before it was named the Frost School of Music. She was hired as an assistant professor and director for the Music Therapy program and admits she had no idea what that meant exactly. And while she didn't know much about the school, she had compelling reasons for coming.

"I knew the University of Miami's School of Music had a strong reputation for generating talented musicians. I also knew it had a medical campus. To me, that was the perfect marriage," explains de l'Etoile: strong musicianship, world-class medical facilities, and access to patients for clinical training and research. The potential was enormous, she thought, and she was right.

She recalls 13 students in the entire Music Therapy program on her first day of class. "Now, we have more faculty, nearly 50 undergraduate majors, and ten graduate students, including masters and doctoral candidates. We've gotten to the point where we need to be selective about who we admit, as we only want the best of the best," she says.

She ran the Music Therapy program until 2012 and then moved into her current associate dean of Graduate Studies role. "We offer three degrees in music therapy," she explains, "but like all other music majors, music therapy students must have a strong foundation as a musician. Music therapists don't simply come to see a client and plunk in a CD. They use live music to adapt to the client's needs. They typically sing or play multiple instruments, not at a performance level, but at a clinical level."

In line with the University's research focus, de l'Etoile commits time and energy to examine the therapeutic benefits of music. For many years, her focus has been exploring how infants respond to music, especially their mother's singing. Known as "infant-directed singing," this unique musical interaction is considered a universal caregiving behavior. "It serves a specific function," she explains. "It's a way for mothers to teach the infant about self-regulation so the infant can move from being distressed to being calm to perhaps even falling asleep if that's the goal." Self-regulation is critical to emotional functioning across the lifespan and must begin during infancy as part of school readiness.

In 2022, de l'Etoile was awarded a grant by the GRAMMY Museum Grants Program to support research conducted in partnership with the Linda Ray Intervention Center, a UM Department of Psychology division. This project provides a coaching intervention for mothers and their infants who faced prenatal drug exposure. Through the intervention, mothers learn how to use singing to match or modify the infant's state, supporting their self-regulation.

From every setting—clinic, classroom, or dean's office—de l'Etoile creates a quality environment for Frost students, so they have streamlined processes and can devote their time to creative activities.

Shannon de l'Etoile

Professor | Associate Dean of Graduate Studies at the Frost School of Music

"Music therapy students must have a strong foundation as a musician. Music therapists don't simply come to see a client and plunk in a CD. They use live music to adapt to the client's needs. They typically sing or play multiple instruments, not at a performance level, but at a clinical level."

— SHANNON de l'ETOILE

"...you gain a lot by listening to musicians do their thing—and they, in turn, learn from you."

— SOPHIE MOK

Sophie Mok

Artist Diploma in Instrumental Conducting | Assistant Conductor of the Frost Symphony Orchestra

Julia Paine

Bassoonist | Educator | Entrepreneur

Some call it grit; others call it a brick wall you must climb. Bassoonist Julia Paine calls it a journey filled with curiosity—where she has gained depth, color, and a connection with her musical voice.

On her way to St. Louis in the spring of 2021, Frost School of Music alumna Julia Paine, B.M. '17, hovered over her Rachmaninoff score on the plane. The Stamps Scholar did not have much time to waste as she replayed that morning's phone call in her head.

"We need a bassoon player to go on our Midwest tour. Are you available tomorrow?" a rep with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra called to ask as she was finishing playing a week with the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra. "Just give me five minutes to pack," Paine replied breathlessly. The following 24 hours were intense as she flew to St. Louis, Missouri. Throughout the journey, she listened to several recordings of the pieces she would play as the second bassoonist on their Midwest tour.

Her life up until that moment—since graduating from the University of Miami with two bachelor's degrees in music and marine science and then completing her master's in bassoon performance at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in May 2020, just as the COVID-19

"Every year, I was able to find more depth, color, and a connection with my voice..."

— JULIA PAINE

pandemic hit—had been unpredictable. There were very few gigs during the pandemic. So, like most musicians, she took advantage of the downtime and practiced day and night, playing here and there, and subbing for The New World Symphony and Nu Deco Ensemble in Florida while taking a remote side job with a vaccine clinic based in Atlanta, which helped pay the bills.

In 2021, she had several sub-jobs with the Charlotte Symphony Orchestra in North Carolina, the North Carolina Symphony, and The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra. And this spring, she worked with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra.

While on the St. Louis Symphony's Midwest tour, she prepared for preliminary second bassoon audition rounds with the orchestra. Paine practiced orchestral excerpts in her spare time, and she advanced to the semi-final round amidst the tour. A month later, she made it to finals.

During the final round, as she waited in the lounge while the panel deliberated, the orchestra manager said, "Julia, can I speak to you?" Julia looked up. It was three o'clock in the afternoon, she recalls. She was hungry and tired and thought they wanted her to play something else. The orchestra manager brought her to the stage and said, "Julia, congratulations, you won the position! The panel would like to congratulate you."

Suddenly, a wave of applause came from the panel as Paine stood on stage, crying tears of joy. The morning after, Paine called her mentor, Gabriel Beavers, associate professor of Bassoon at the Frost School of Music. "I won! I start in September!"

Throughout her journey—from Miami to Paris, Raleigh to St. Louis, and other cities—she has gained depth, color, and a connection with her musical voice. "Every year, I was able to find more depth, color, and a connection with my voice," she says. "It has been this ongoing battle of wanting my bassoon to be an extension of my voice, and for so long, I wasn't technically capable of doing that yet. There was a space—an obstacle between what I wanted to produce and what I could technically do on the bassoon. I have been bridging that gap very slowly but surely. That has been the most satisfying part of getting closer to what I want to produce with my horn."

PHOTO BY ADDIEL PERERA PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

In the summer of 2005, a few weeks after graduating from Frost School of Music with a B.S. in Music Engineering, Lindsey Alvarez received an e-mail from the same program with a list of open positions in the industry. Her eyes opened wide when she saw an assistant sound mixer role available in Los Angeles. At the time, Alvarez was in her hometown of Houston, Texas, but she locked down an interview, flew out to LA, and landed the job. "Alright! I'm moving to LA!"

Seventeen years later, Alvarez is posing for pictures on the red carpet at the Emmy Awards, holding an Emmy for Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Comedy or Drama Series (Half-Hour) and Animation for her work on *Only Murders in the Building*, "The Boy From 6B" episode, a Hulu original comedy-drama starring Steve Martin, Martin Short, and Selena Gomez.

"I always wanted to get into TV or film production, so right from the start, I kept in touch with other MuEs [music engineers], which is what we called ourselves when we attended Frost together," says Alvarez. She took her inspiration from Frost's Friday Forums at nine in the morning. She remembers the guest graduates who came

to speak at the forums and whose portfolios are impossible to exhaust in one paragraph.

Networking. Building relationships. Those words stood out to Alvarez, who took the cue and stayed in touch with many of her peers. She branched out and built her community with sound engineers like Jessica Park, who works for Sony and other iconic figures at Dolby, Warner Brothers, Fox, Apple, Microsoft, Disney, and a long list of production companies all around the globe, but mainly in Los Angeles and New York.

From Lime Studios, where she began on her path to today's film and TV dub or mix stages, Alvarez invests in encouraging other women to join her profession and pave their path as women working in the studio.

"For that episode, the main character is deaf. So, there was no dialogue in the entire episode. You would think that would have been easy street for me, but it was even harder because there was nothing to hide behind. It was nice to know that our peers, who voted for us, understood that it is hard to also mix quietly when it is needed."

— LINDSEY ALVAREZ

PHOTO COURTESY OF LINDSEY ALVAREZ

Lindsey Alvarez

Emmy-Award Winning Sound Engineer | Re-Recording Mixer

Masterclass about Story and Song with ‘Hamilton’ Music Director Alex Lacamoire

» Alex Lacamoire, music director and orchestrator of *Hamilton*, arguably the most popular show on Broadway, visited Frost School of Music to talk about the business of story and song—and the power of musical theater.



THERE IS SO MUCH ADO about the American musical phenomenon, the theater sensation of the decade—*Hamilton*. Rarely has a musical transformed theater the way this show has since its debut on Broadway in 2015. Reportedly, *Hamilton*, Lin-Manuel Miranda’s Broadway dynamo, broke new ground, scoring 16 Tony nominations, the most in Broadway history. It also made Miranda one of the few musical theater writers to be honored with a MacArthur Foundation Award, and his music director and orchestrator, Alex Lacamoire, the recipient of Tony and Grammy Awards.

At the Frost School of Music’s Maurice Gusman Concert Hall, Alex Lacamoire shared valuable insights with a captivated audience of students. He encouraged them to break free from traditional musical theater conventions and dare to tap into originality, such as applying experimental approaches similar to creating hip-hop musicals. As the music director of the much-buzzed *Hamilton*, *In the Heights*, and *Tick, Tick . . . Boom!* as well as *Wicked*, *Annie*, and *Dear Evan Hansen*, Lacamoire came to share what music directors do, their inspirations, and how they do it.

In his masterclass, he also talked about his passion for music and the gig that changed his life forever. Always in the pit orchestra, with his eyes on the action all around and above him, helping actors to sing material a certain way, this music director and orchestrator likes to play an integral part in the show you see and hear. And, for the past decade, he has had a vantage point of the stage—his favorite place.

Since he landed in the New York scene as a substitute keyboardist in the pit of *The Lion King*, he embarked on a love affair with musical theater. He loves how all the

departments work in sync—spreading their magic with the music, lights, stage sets, and choreography—creating sensational stories audiences will love, too.

“I’ve always had this curiosity about instrumentation, like how an electric guitar, bass guitar, or drums function in a group,” said Lacamoire about his interest in the performing aspect of music. “I was very aware of those sounds coming together early on. When I played *The Beatles*, for example, I found myself listening to one of their pop songs and tuning in to a French horn or a trumpet trio in the song.”

That curiosity made him aware of how pop music can be orchestrated. “I didn’t know it then, but I was training for my career path throughout my life simply by the things I was interested in. That, along with my ability to catch on quickly and build knowledge as the years went on,” he said.

Lacamoire shared his lessons learned, from seeing the power of story and song, with Frost-built students. Musical theater, considered by some to be lightweight entertainment, can open minds through storytelling. “If you are an artist by nature and are passionate about your art, then all you care about is your art,” he shared.

He took math, English, and science in school because he had to, but he really cared about getting to the piano again. *When can I listen to that song again? When can I perform again?* That’s what mattered to him. He was fortunate to have attended a magnet arts junior high school in Miami, where the arts and the pursuit of knowledge were valued, and other like-minded artists surrounded him.

“I got to attend classes with my best friend, associate professor Martin Bejerano, who now works at the Frost School of

Music. He was my bud. So, we would sit together and play jazz and rock duets. We went to concerts together and talked about girls. We hung around with other singers and musicians—singers, clarinetists, and pianists. We all got together and influenced each other in a way that wouldn’t be the same if you weren’t in this collective of artists doing life together. So, that was very key to my life.”

While Lacamoire’s career has been

“**Do what you love and love what you do. Make sure that you give your passion to what it is that you’re doing. Music is a beautiful field. But you need to love it to do it.**”

— ALEX LACAMOIRE

extraordinary, the one project that feels the most singular is *Hamilton* for many reasons. “It’s very rare for a Broadway show to be the phenomenon *Hamilton* is and what it is for some people. And the hype around it and the attention around it, that’s very uncommon. To know that I had a part of that is special,” he said. “That’s also something I did on my own.”

Most of my other shows I orchestrated with someone else. *Hamilton* was my first

Broadway credit as a sole orchestrator, and that meant a lot to me to know that I made every [musical direction] decision—every choice and how I thought that through.”

As Lacamoire addressed questions from Frost-built students and looked at a packed hall, he said, “Do what you love and love what you do. Make sure that you give your passion to what it is that you’re doing. Music is a beautiful field. But you need to love it to do it.”



Bottom: Alex Lacamoire, center, with faculty panelists Raina Murnak and Daniel Strange, left, and Laura Sherman and Jeffrey Buchman, right.

PHOTOS BY JENNY ABREU

Jazz Icon Regina Carter Brings the ‘Swing’ to the Frost Stage

BY MICHAEL R. MALONE

WHEN A MUSICIAN FRIEND from Italy heard her play and suggested that Regina Carter borrow the famed Paganini Guarnerius violin to play a concert in Genoa, the virtuoso violinist thought the idea a bit “pazzo,” yet exciting enough to try. The paperwork was arranged, “The Canon” secured, and a concert set.

Yet ticket sales were slow as the date came near—partly due to the bias against a Black American jazz violinist playing the classical instrument considered an Italian national treasure. So, Carter called for a press function. Headlines the next day coined her the “Queen of Scandal,” yet the coverage spurred attention.

“It was a packed house, and by the intermission, we could tell the audience was very happy,” Carter remembers. “Sometimes people have this idea of what

they think they want and, if something is different, instead of trying to educate themselves, they just become derogatory or resistant.” Carter’s program that evening in 2002, and her “impeccable and soulful” virtuosity, won over the audience.

The famed violinist was the guest artist in February 2023 for the “Regina Carter & Frost Concert Jazz Band Concert,” that also included a special tribute to David Roitstein, the 2022 Frost Distinguished Alumnus who also performed an original selection with his daughter.

For Carter’s performance, students guided by director John Daversa, chair of Studio Music and Jazz, performed pieces from *Swing States: Harmony in the Battleground*, Carter’s album arranged by Daversa released in 2020, amidst the pan-

demie. “I was so happy to do these songs again with the band,” she says. “We never could tour that record, so this was my first time playing them since we recorded.”

Music and education were a standard duet of Carter’s childhood in Detroit, Michigan. She was four when, while listening to her brother’s piano lesson, she heard him bumble a few notes. She wandered over to the piano and played the piece flawlessly. The piano teacher—and her mother—were astounded. “We didn’t even know she could play,” they laughed.

Carter soon took Suzuki Method violin lessons, learning to play by ear. Before long, she played in church functions alongside her grandmother, who earned a piano pedagogy degree in 1915 from Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia.

She attended Cass Technical High School, a Detroit high school for high-achieving students. With violin as her principal instrument, she took up the viola as a required second-string instrument. She chose the oboe as a wind instrument and added harp, choir, vocals, and playing in the jazz band.

Her jazz band friends would often get together on weekends to listen to jazz records, transcribe the tunes, and write their own. One day, a friend gave her recordings of three innovative violinists.

“Those albums turned my world around,” Carter says. “I had never heard the violinist as the lead instrument until I heard Jean-Luc Ponty and Stéphane Grappelli on those records.”

From high school, Carter headed to the New England Conservatory of Music (NEC) in Boston. Her mother was insistent that her daughter plays in an orchestra. “I decided to switch to jazz after my first year but didn’t tell my mom. Then when my grades got mailed to my house, she saw ‘African American Music,’ and she knew,” Carter laughs.

She left NEC the following year to return to Detroit, where jazz was heating up, and enrolled at Oakland University. “It was just what I wanted and needed. The scene in Detroit was thriving, and musicians would come up from the city and give master classes, and many of the alums would return,” she says.

Carter’s musicianship spans various musical genres—jazz, Latin, classical, world, and even Appalachian. “I grew up hearing a wide mix of music on the radio, and it wasn’t until I moved to New York that I started hearing stations playing only certain music. It’s a disservice because there’s so much beautiful music out there that people won’t necessarily hear unless exposed to it.”

When reflecting upon her performance with the Frost Jazz band, she says, “A lot happens when you’re there, getting to know the students and hearing how they phrase and match that. It’s not so much about fitting in—it’s about how we can come together.” 🎻

“Those albums turned my world around...I had never heard the violinist as the lead instrument until I heard Jean-Luc Ponty and Stéphane Grappelli on those records.”

— REGINA CARTER

”



Right (top to bottom):

Frost Distinguished Alumnus (L-R)
David Roitstein, Regina Carter,
John Daversa

Regina Carter with Janelle Finton
Frost Concert Jazz Band



PHOTO COURTESY OF REGINA CARTER

‘Duo Duel:’ Composer Jennifer Higdon’s Double Percussion Concerto Rocked Like Crazy!

JENNIFER HIGDON, American composer of contemporary classical music, admits to having an unorthodox story for starting in music. Yet, her works have been played by and commissioned for major orchestras worldwide.

In 2010, she won a Pulitzer Prize for Music for her Violin Concerto, and also won three Grammys for Best Contemporary Classical Composition. Most recently, Higdon’s *Percussion Concerto* recording was inducted into the Library of Congress National Recording Registry.

This season, Higdon attended the East Coast premiere of her *Double Percussion Concerto* by the Frost Symphony Orchestra and Maestro Gerard Schwarz,

along with associate professor Svet Stoyanov and guest soloist Matthew Strauss as percussion soloists at the Maurice Gusman Concert Hall on October 2022.

In high school, Higdon listened to rock and folk music from the 1960s—it’s also when she began her primarily self-taught flute and percussion journey. “The flute happened accidentally because we had one sitting in the attic. I got it out and started learning from some basic technique books,” she recalls.

In 1994, Higdon became a professor of composition at the Curtis Institute of Music, where she held the Milton L. Rock Chair in Compositional Studies until 2021. When asked what inspired

her teachings, she says, “I found that my students were the most emotional aspect of my teaching. I loved sharing knowledge and experience with them and, in turn, learning from their questions.”

That sentiment still holds today. “My big hope with my music is that it intrigues, challenges, and rocks enough to inspire students. I always compose with the desire that my writing will touch them while allowing them to express things they feel deeply,” says Higdon. 🎧



PHOTO BY ANDY STAPLES

“**My big hope with my music is that it intrigues, challenges, and rocks enough to inspire students. I always compose with the desire that my writing will touch them while allowing them to express things they feel deeply.**” — JENNIFER HIGDON



PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNIFER HIGDON

British A Cappella Sensation VOCES8 Comes to the 305, Inspiring Frost Chorale to Make Beautiful Music for All

LAST YEAR, as she planned a European tour for the Frost Chorale, Amanda Quist, conductor and director of Choral Activities at the Frost School, went the extra mile to bring her students to England to sing with British vocal ensemble sensation VOCES8. Quist knew that collaborating with the professional choir would bring her students a rich set of artistic experiences (see page 3).

Before the trip, Quist talked with Paul Smith, co-founder of the group. “My goal is for our students to have the opportunity to sing with VOCES8,” she told him. “When Paul looked at his calendar, it just so happened the only free day in their entire calendar was during the week that we were going to be in London!”

So, the Frost Chorale sang with the group at the VOCES8 Centre in London

for the first time. And then, a year later, they reciprocated the favor and brought VOCES8 to their area code—the 305. While in Miami, VOCES8 explored the Frost School of Music and also teamed up with Frost Chorale at Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Miami to present music spanning more than 500 years. They sang repertoire from Europe and other parts of the world.

“These singers showed how the human voice can sing different styles—and that’s what we teach at Frost,” adds Quist. As for what Quist hopes her students took from the experience, “I hope they will fall more in love with singing together and that they see and understand that choral singing can exist at a very, very high professional level and that it’s a choice for performance—and really, how to be an artist.” 🎧

“**These singers showed how the human voice can sing different styles—and that’s what we teach at Frost.**” — AMANDA QUIST

In Conversation with Hila Plitmann: Her Boundaryless Approach to Artmaking

“ONE of the wonderful things about this era of technology, if we can use it as a tool, is that it enhances our lives,” says Hila Plitmann, who shared her vocal talents several times this year with the Frost Wind Ensemble. The double Grammy Award-winning soprano, songwriter, and actress enjoys listening to and singing a mixed genre of music. Though she grew up in her hometown of Jerusalem, Israel, listening to the beautiful sound of Israeli folk music—that touched and moved her heart—for her, the attraction to music lies in the connection rather than in a particular sound, regardless of country or style.

While touring with the Frost Wind Ensemble, conducted by professor Robert Carnochan, she expresses her admiration for the students with loving deference.

“Their concerts are extraordinary,” she says. “Robert Carnochan is one of those teachers, conductors, and leaders who shows care and sensitivity, and can listen and lead by listening to all the elements. That creates a very special experience. These are students in name, but they play at a

level of a professional group. And then, there’s their enthusiasm, which is so prevalent. That’s always an example of whoever is leading.”

Together, they performed Plitmann’s *In This Circle* and Michael Daugherty’s *Songs from a Silent Land*, a new work she has added to her stellar professional artistic portfolio, which started at the age of 14, in the role of Flora in Benjamin Britten’s *The Turn of the Screw* at the Israeli Opera.

“That exceptional experience unfolded into my life,” she says. “Benjamin Britten writes with so much psychology in his music. In a way, it sounds funny, but he writes the music supporting the characters, the drama, and the intent underneath. I learned so much about the underlying current of music and communication, of expressiveness and storytelling, through that experience at such a young age. This was my first big professional gig, and he taught me to pay attention to music.”

Plitmann then performed with companies across the United States, including notable roles as Mrs. Clayton in Stephen

Schwartz’s *Séance on a Wet Afternoon*, Yan in Mark Adamo’s *Becoming Santa Claus*, Cecily in Gerald Barry’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and an alien in Yuval Sharon and Annie Gosfield’s *War of the Worlds*.

In 1998, only one year after she graduated from Juilliard, she gave her first world premiere with the New York Philharmonic in Pulitzer Prize-winner David Del Tredici’s *The Spider and the Fly*. Critics call her “a composer’s dream,” and she is widely recognized as one of today’s foremost interpreters of contemporary music.

Today, Plitmann enjoys sharing her passion for music and collaborating with younger musicians. Her performance with the Frost Wind Ensemble last fall at Maurice Gusman Concert Hall and then at the College Band Directors National Association Conference in Athens, Georgia brought her great joy, she says. It also reminded her of all the people who have shaped her life and music career, and she hopes to do the same for others.

“David Del Tredici has a big name in the contemporary music scene in New York. He’s a close friend and a unique, fascinating man who’s taught me a lot. One of the things that I discovered from him was the idea of a boundaryless approach to his artmaking. That fascinates me. Whatever speaks to him is what he fearlessly writes about. And sometimes, it doesn’t suit the social norm, or it’s not so much in the vein of what’s popular or mainstream.

“He is one of those composers with a great mind and creator of classical music in our time. His orchestrations, approach to thematic ideas, and the clarity and complexity that live together in his music is a lifelong lesson. And I’m still learning.”

Hila Plitmann on stage with Frost Wind Ensemble, conducted by Robert Carnochan

PHOTO BY GONZALO MEJIA

Legendary Cuban Trumpet Player Arturo Sandoval Tells His Story, Live in Concert with the Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra

» *For Love or Country: The Arturo Sandoval Story Live in Concert presented by Angel Velez and Adrienne Arsht Center courtesy of HBO is a love story that tugs at your heartstrings. The film, starring Andy Garcia, Gloria Estefan, Mía Maestro, and Charles S. Dutton, played on a mega screen as Arturo Sandoval performed live in concert with Frost School of Music students at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts.*



ARTURO SANDOVAL didn’t have freedom in his life. So, he played his way out of Cuba and into the heart of America. The legendary Cuban trumpet player brought his story to the stage at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts in October 2022, where we celebrated and recognized his many contributions and influence on his adopted country’s culture, history, and achievements.

The concert lined up with Hispanic Heritage Month [September 15 – October 15]. So, who better than Sandoval to represent Miami’s Hispanic history and heritage presence? The Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra performed live-to-picture with Sandoval as soloist, to his film *For Love or Country: The Arturo Sandoval Story*.

“It all started in Cuba,” says Sandoval. “I came from a very poor family, but my passion for music was always strong. I was ten when I started playing music, but I was told I would never be good at it. Well, that is all I needed to hear. I joined a marching band and picked up the trumpet.”

His admiration for the trumpet was simple. He liked its peculiar sound. “You can whisper or play extremely soft or hard. I can make a sound like a bell and place it softly in your ear. The trumpet doesn’t give you any limitations in terms of expression. You can say whatever you want in the way you want, and that’s what fascinates me about the sound of the trumpet.”

Sandoval recalls the first time he was introduced to the sound of jazz music. He

got a scholarship to attend the National School of Arts in Cuba for classical training. He was in his third year when a journalist friend who played the saxophone and knew a lot about jazz asked him one day, “Hey, ever heard of jazz music?” Sandoval said, “No, what is that?” His friend said, “Come with me.”

“He played an album of Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker, which turned my head upside down! That compilation was made in 1946, so those musicians were ahead of their time. They created a new style of music,” Sandoval says. As it played out, Dizzy Gillespie came into Sandoval’s life totally by chance and then went on to become his hero, mentor, and dear friend.

“That day was like a gift from God,” he says. “We met in 1967 at a nightclub in Cuba, where he played. I offered to be his driver. Later that night, I went onstage to perform with my band. I didn’t tell him I was a musician, and, of course, he was shocked to see his driver on stage playing the trumpet! We ended up playing together that night, which was an unforgettable moment. We played together from 1978 until he passed away in January 1993.”

In the film, *For Love or Country*, their friendship is well portrayed, particularly in that dramatic scene when Gillespie helps Sandoval and his family defect from Cuba to have the freedom to pursue his passion. “Leaving Cuba was difficult, as any Cuban immigrant knows well. I was traveling everywhere, but my family was back

home suffering. Castro’s Cuba was not the country I knew anymore. I, our people, had no freedom. During mandatory military service, I was imprisoned for listening to American jazz on the radio! Dizzy and I were playing for the United Nations, and during one of the trips, he helped me and my family defect from Cuba through the American Embassy in London. After that, I discovered a new world I didn’t know existed. He gave me so many incredible opportunities. He trained me and encouraged me to continue to play and practice.”

Part of that training included his newly found approach to jazz improvisation, which he finds is synonymous with freedom of speech. Something you create at the moment, and you cannot repeat. Something a musician uses to express his feelings through his instrument in terms of that specific tune they are playing and sharing with their audience. His ideas or inspiration do not come from only one thing. “It’s a bunch of different things that converge in your brain. It’s memories of things you compile over the years. That’s what Clark Terry, one of America’s best swing and bebop trumpeters, did. He pioneered the flugelhorn in jazz, mentoring Quincy Jones, Miles Davis, and Herbie Hancock. He was one of the most recorded jazz musicians, whose career in jazz spanned more than 70 years! He always said, ‘Imitate, emulate, and create.’”

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARTURO SANDOVAL

1970s



Alfred Monaro
B.M. '72, US Navy Musician with 26 years of service. Performed many Broadway Shows through the years, including National Tour of “Annie Get Your Gun”; Performed with many famous dance bands, most memorable “Guy Lombardo & his Royal Canadians”; Original ballet “Butterflies For Christopher” produced Honolulu, Hi; Played TAPS at Lafayette’s gravesite, Paris, France.



Kristian Truelsen
B.M. '76, is working from home – composing and song-writing – during the ongoing pandemic.

Samuel Ruttenberg
B.M. '78 did a recent drum clinic with drumming legend Bernard

Purdie in February and presented his drum clinic in Valencia Spain as well.

Sally K. Albrecht
M.M. '79, and her husband, composer Jay Althouse, were invited to compose the grand finale for Wake County NC’s “Pieces of Gold” event. Held at the Martin Marietta Center for the Performing Arts, over 900 students premiered “When Words Are Not Enough” to a sold-out and appreciate audience.

1980s

Nancy Strelau
M.M. '85, after 46 years on the podium and in the classroom, Nancy Strelau will retire from Nazareth College but continue to conduct the Greater Rochester Women’s Philharmonic and support her music colleagues in Upstate New York.



Lynne Gackle
M.M. '84, Ph.D. '87, Director of Choral Activities and Chair, Ensemble Division at Baylor University, National Past-President of the American Choral Directors Association, awarded the Macpherson Prize, recognizing excellence in choral conducting by the San Antonio Chamber Choir, conductor of the Florida All-State Mixed Chorus.

1990s



Paul Trust
B.M. '90 in Music Engineering, highly versatile, RIAA Platinum-certified songwriter, producer, and multi-instrumentalist who is notably known for discovering, co-writing with, and developing country superstar Morgan Wallen. Paul also writes for and works extensively with platinum rock artist Starset.



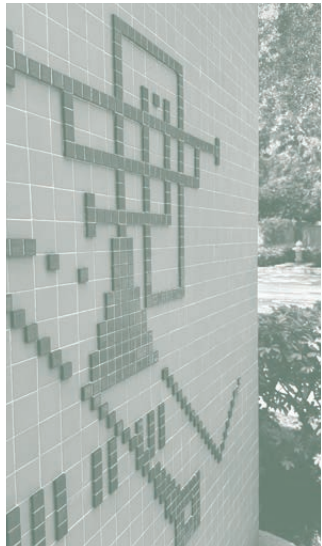
Corbin Abernathy
B.M. '93, presented a Singing Actor workshop at the NATS national conference in Chicago this past summer and performed his cabaret “Born To Clog!” this past October. Corbin currently serves as the VP of Greater Philadelphia NATS.

Marko Marcinko
B.M. '93, drummer, pianist, composer, arranger recently was hired as Director of Music Performance and artist-in-residence at Misericordia University, Dallas, Pa. Marcinko has toured and recorded with Maynard Ferguson, Dave Liebman, Phil Woods, Clark Terry, Randy Brecker, Kurt Elling, Tierney Sutton, Mike Stern, Will Lee, The Scranton Jazz Festival Big Band, The Organik Vibe Trio and more. He endorses Yamaha Drums, Zildjian Cymbals, Vic Firth Sticks and Aquarian Heads.

Angel Marchese
B.M. '96, Choral Director in Miami. His ensemble was featured at the 2022 Florida ACDA Conference.

Cheri Rose Katz
B.M. '96, international Opera Singer Cheri Rose Katz, has performed all over the world. She is known for her beautiful, dark, deep gorgeous dramatic mezzo sounds.

Kendra Preston Leonard
M.M. '98, won the Virgil Thomson Fellowship (Society for American Music) and, as the librettist, had two operas premiered.



2000s

Millie Dee
With a B.M. in Music Theater from '00, Millie is a jazz and soul recording artist and a musical theatre actress. She has performed all over the United States in various plays and musicals. In addition to this, she is a singer-songwriter with three jazz and soul records under her belt. Millie’s music can be found on every social media platform.

Lisa Abel Marino
B.M. '03 in Music Education, currently the band director at Simsbury High School (CT), and was selected as the 2023 Kathleen Magowan Simsbury Teacher of the Year. After completing the state process, she was honored as a finalist for the 2023 Connecticut Teacher of the Year. Lisa is also an adjunct professor at the University of Hartford and a UCONN Early College Experience teacher.



Kier Lehman
B.M. '03, music supervisor for film & TV recently won the Guild of Music Supervisors Award for Best Music Supervision for TV Comedy or Musical at the 2023 Guild of Music Supervisor Awards for his work on Season 5 of The HBO show INSECURE.



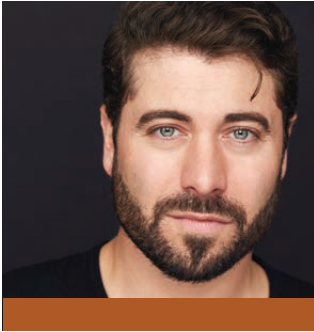
Beau Silver
After graduating Miami in '03, Beau worked as a software engineer on digital mixing consoles for both Euphinx and Avid. After 7 years at Universal Audio, working

on projects like LUNA recording system and OX amp top box, he most recently accepted a position at QSC as a staff software engineer working on Q-SYS.



Sydney Guillaume
B.M. '04, has been working full time as a composer and conductor. His recent activities as conductor include the 2022 Georgia All-State Senior Treble Choir, the 2019 Florida All-State Middle School Treble Chorus, the 34th annual Idaho State University Choral Invitational Festival, the 2018 Maine All-State High School Mixed Chorus, and concerts with the Imbroglia Sextet at Carnegie Hall and at the 2018 ISME World Conference in Azerbaijan.

Jaclyn Lisenby Brown
B.M. '04, vocalist, songwriter, and entrepreneur, is working as Executive Director of The American Caroling Company, an entertainment group providing carolers, instrumentalists, and other holiday entertainment for seasonal events. Her company operates in ten cities across the US, and employs quite a few UM Frost alums.



Omar Lopez-Cepero
B.M. '04 Broadway Actor seen recently as Judas in the 50th Anniversary Tour of Jesus Christ Superstar, Che in Evita National Tour, original Bway casts of American Idiot and On Your Feet & most recently originating the role of Lon in the new Broadway bound musical The Notebook.

James K. Bass
D.M.A. '05, conductor and singer, received the Grammy for “Best Choral Performance” in 2020 and has been nominated four times in total. He has appeared as soloist or conductor with some of the most important ensembles in the U.S. including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Cleveland Orchestra. He currently serves as the Director of Choral Studies at UCLA, associate conductor of Seraphic Fire, and Director of the Long Beach Camerata Singers.

Michael Feinberg
B.M. '05, bassist and composer released his 9th studio album and debut for Criss Cross Records. He is headlining his first international tour with stops in Japan, Thailand, USA, UK, Spain, Germany and Czech Republic. His latest release has earned a 4-star review from Downbeat Magazine.



Christopher Ragsdale
D.M.A '06, named Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Athens State University. In this role he oversees the Social, Behavioral, Health, Mathematical, Natural, and Computer Sciences as well as the Visual and Performing Arts at the Alabama Center for the Arts. Prior to this appointment, he served sixteen years on the faculty at the University of Alabama in Huntsville as Professor and Chair of Music and Theatre.

Katherine Stimson
M.M. '07, currently a Staffing Manager at Production Glue, working on live entertainment production staffing for projects in the U.S. and Middle East. She’s also an Adjunct Instructor in Event Management at Dallas College.

Andrew Dahan
M.M. '08, is in his second year as the Director of Choirs at Niles North High School (Skokie, IL), where he oversees the Choral Program and a robust extracurricular vocal jazz program. He has served as a clinician at various vocal jazz festivals in the mid-west, as well as a guest director for regional honors choirs and vocal jazz ensembles. Most recently, he contributed a chapter to the book “Rehearsing the Vocal Jazz Ensemble,” which was released in January 2023.

Katrina Mena Rick
B.A. '08, has over 25 years of diverse experience working in the entertainment industry, having been a professional vocalist, vocal coach, songwriter, casting director, stage manager, production manager, and now Creative Producer for Disney Live Entertainment.

Tobin Sparfeld
D.M.A. '09, baritone, conductor, professor, is currently the director of choirs and voice at Glendale Community College in Glendale, CA. He remains active as a soloist, clinician, and presenter.

Shawn Vondran
D.M.A. '09, wind band conductor and music educator. He is currently the Associate Director of Bands at Northwestern University where he conducts the Symphonic Band and teaches courses in conducting, orchestral and wind band repertoire, and other courses in the music performance and education curricula.





Alumni **Spotlight:**
Mitchel Berger
B.M. '93

Berger credits the Music Industry program at the Frost School of Music from 1989-1993 for setting him on his career path. “At the time, it was a newish program,” he added. “It was this great opportunity to satisfy the musician part of me and learn many good core business things that would help me in my career.”

Now, as senior vice president of global commerce for Crunchyroll, Berger does what he loves best: using his deep understanding of what it means to be a fan to serve the worldwide community of anime fans.

A subsidiary of Sony, Crunchyroll is the ultimate destination for anime fans. It is anchored by a streaming subscription service that drives other parts of its anime business, including theatrical distribution, games, licensing and merchandising, events, and collectibles. The company has distributed ten of the 20 highest-grossing anime films in U.S. box office history—Berger managed the distribution efforts—and has a constantly expanding library of films and series, subtitled and dubbed in more than ten languages. Berger oversees consumer products and merchandise, content sales, and theatrical businesses.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MITCHEL BERGER

2010s



Diosan Borrego
B.M. '10 in Media Writing and Production. Currently a video editor for Q Link Wireless and Director/ Producer for Seaglass Consulting Group. I do motion graphics in addition to all production work.

Simón Gallego
B.M. '08, M.M. '10, currently very active both playing and teaching, being a member of the Chicago Philharmonic, Illinois Philharmonic, and South Bend Symphony Orchestras, this season he has played as guest Principal Timpanist with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestras, and the Mainly Mozart All Stars Orchestra.

Jessica Punchatz
B.M. '10, singer, pianist, music teacher. She is the current elementary school music teacher at Riverside School in Greenwich CT.

Alyssa Grey
B.M. '11, Berry College Wind Ensemble invited me to perform at the Georgia Music Educators Association State Conference in January 2023.

Eric Spiegel
B.M. '11, is now COO for MidAmerica Productions, recently named the most prolific presenter of choral concerts in the history of Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall. Spiegel also continues his work conducting the Brooklyn, NY chapter of HaZamir: the International Jewish Teen Choir.



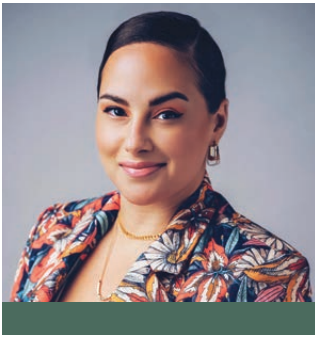
Zoe Zeniodi
D.M.A. '10, A.D. '11, conductor, has been a member of the Hart Institute of Women Conductors at the Dallas Opera, a Taki Alsop Conducting Fellowship Mentee, and a member of “La Maestra” Academy. She has been working at places like the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Santa Fe Opera, and Orchestre de Paris.

Sara Cowley
B.M. '09, M.M. '12, educator and conductor, taught middle and high school band for eight years in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. She now serves as the Assistant Director of the South Florida Pride Wind Ensemble, a community organization dedicated to providing a safe and educational environment for LGBTQ+ musicians.

Shenita Hunt-Brown
B.M. '90 M.A. '12, singer, songwriter, pianist, arranger, producer, sound recorder, retired chorus director and piano instructor, private vocal coach, music business consultant, and band leader.



Geoffrey Loff
B.M. '10, M.M. '12, conductor, pianist, is currently a Korrepetitor at Staatsoper Berlin, and was guest cover conductor at San Francisco Opera.



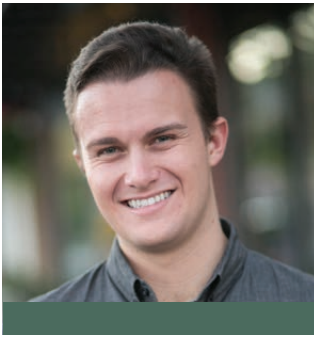
Rosana Ochoa
M.M. '13, for almost 10 yrs now, she has managed digital release planning for Sony Music Latin.



David Lukens
B.M. '13, Keyboardist/vocalist/producer/songwriter/music director- received the Hornsby CAM scholarship at UM. Since living in Nashville, he has written and produced records for artists, played on countless records, played on TV shows such as Nashville and Monarch, and has toured with the likes of Dustin Lynch, Jo Dee Messina, Drake Milligan, Jake Wesley Rogers and many more.



Paul Piazza
B.M. '13, Classical Trumpet Performance, performed in the Los Angeles area as a freelance professional trumpeter, vocalist, and conductor, taught music at all age levels, worked in various arts administration roles, and served as Music Director & Principal Conductor of the Westlake Village Symphony and Assistant Conductor of the Riverside Philharmonic.



Everett Ford
B.M. '14. Upon receiving his Music Business & Entertainment Industries degree, is one of the youngest choristers with Florida Grand Opera, presently singing in his eighth season with the company. He also sings at Trinity Cathedral, Temple Beth Shalom, and other locations across South Florida as a freelance professional baritone.

Cecilia Huerta-Lauf
D.M.A. '14, cellist, has been serving as an interim cellist for the Louisville Orchestra this '22-'23 Season. Her ensemble, NouLou Chamber Players, for which she is Co-Director & Founder, is recording their debut album this spring.

Cinnamon Murray
B.M. '14, songwriter, vocalist, bassoonist, and producer, is the songwriter of the national song of the fastest-growing multicultural sorority in the world, Sigma Lambda Gamma, Inc. and has produced over 10 top charting (Apple Podcasts) podcasts. She is an Adjunct Faculty at The Art Institute of Austin in the Audio Production department.

Catleya Sornmayura
B.M. '14, currently the GRAMMY U Project Manager at the Recording Academy. Since graduating, Cat has worked with students at Miami Music Project and handled catering and production at various New World Symphony events.



Karlyn Viña
D.M.A. '14, percussionist and educator, was appointed Assistant Professor of Percussion

at Shenandoah Conservatory in 2021 following a national search, and also serves on the faculty at the Interlochen Arts Camp in Interlochen, MI, during the summers.

Ashley Wright
M.M. '14, currently teaches general music and band at George Seitz Elementary School, part of the United States Army Garrison on Kwajalein Atoll, in the Republic of the Marshall Islands. She received the ISME World Conference Sponsored Delegate Award in 2016 for her work in music education advocacy in the local Marshallese community.

Joseph Burleson
B.M. '15, trumpet player and arts administrator, was appointed to advisory boards for Miami Jam Sessions and the Arthur and Polly Mays Conservatory. He is currently the Director of Outreach for the Frost School of Music.

Joseph Franco
B.M. '15, teacher, composer, pianist, is the Director of Orchestras and Choirs at Edgewood Jr./Sr. High School in Merritt Island, FL. Was recently recognized as one of Marquis Who's Who Top Educators.



Derek Ganong
D.M.A. '15, Jazz and Classical Trumpeter, received the Yamaha “40 under 40” music educator award. He is in his seventh year as trumpet professor/director of Jazz at BSU. He is the director of the Gene Harris Jazz Festival and is principal trumpet of the Boise baroque orchestra.

Jared Hall
D.M.A. '15, trumpeter, composer, and educator. The Piano Grip System: An Approach to Learning Jazz Harmony, a book co-published by Hall and Whit Sidener, has been welcomed as an essential guide to learning jazz harmony for non-pianists. In 2022, Hall was appointed Director of Jazz Studies in Whitworth University.



Mateja Kalajian
B.M. '15, graduate of the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami with a Bachelors in violin performance, and also earned a Masters in violin performance from Florida International University. Mateja frequently performs with orchestras such as Orchestra Delray, Symphony of the Americas, and the South Florida Symphony. She also performed in two concerts with The Who.

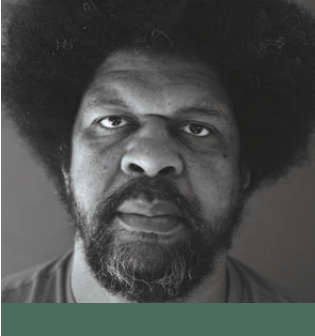
Eric J. McConnell
B.M. '15, made several house and role debuts in the 22-23 season, including the D'Ysquith Family in A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder with Opera Saratoga, Leporello in Don Giovanni and Jago in Ernani with Sarasota Opera, Carl-Magnus in A Little Night Music and Father in Ragtime with Union Avenue Opera, Bob Wallace in White Christmas with the Suncoast Broadway Theatre, and Blitch in Susannah with Opera Fort Collins.



Ben Morris
B.M. '15, is an assistant professor of music composition at Stephen F. Austin State University. This past year, he received commissions from Glimmerglass Opera, Boulder Opera, the ATLAS Institute at CU Boulder, and Washington National Opera. He was also recently awarded an American Prize, a Dairy Arts Center 30 Under 30 Award, and an American-Scandinavian Foundation Grant to research the influence of folk music on Norwegian jazz.

Spencer Robelen

B.M. '15 in Theory in Composition, Spencer was commissioned by Periaopsis Music and Dance to design a super-creepy soundscape for their latest dance piece entitled "The Subject." It premiered in 2022 at Mark Morris Dance Center in NYC. Spencer is currently developing a musical about Hector Berlioz and Harriet Smithson.



Matthew Evan Taylor

Composer, improviser, and winds specialist Matthew Evan Taylor, D.M.A. '15, recently premiered his evening-length work "Life Returns" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The live performance occurred in March of 2022 and was streamed February 14, 2023 via YouTube. The footage is now a permanent part of the Met's collection. Matthew, M.M. '15, is Assistant Professor of Music at Middlebury College in Vermont.

Shawn Crouch

D.M.A. '16, composer and conductor recently two albums of his music; Chaos Theory and other Chamber Works, and The Tracery of Lights, both on the Acis record label and include performances by Seraphic Fire, Volti, Essential Voices USA, Ensemble Ibis, the BLT Trio and many others. Dr. Crouch is currently Professor of Professional Practice in the Music Theory and Composition Department at the Frost School of Music.



Kim Ganong

D.M.A. '16, recently won the position of principal oboe in the Boise Baroque Orchestra.



Ariele Macadangdang

M.M. '16, multi-genre violinist, has performed at Ultra Music Festival and Palm Tree Music Festival with KYGO, Premios Juventud with Kali Uchis and appears on Rich Music Sessions with Sech. Ariele taught violin lessons for several years at Miami Music Project and Community Arts Program in Coral Gables. She also served as Violin and General Music Faculty at St. Philip's Episcopal School.

René Mark

M.A. '16 in Arts Presenting & Live Entertainment Management is the current digital marketing lead for the world's biggest kpop artists, including GRAMMY-nominated BTS, SEVENTEEN, NewJeans, and LE SSERAFIM. She has led the digital marketing strategy for several chart-topping albums and singles that continue to break records worldwide.

Max A. Moreno

D.M.A. '16, concluded his tenure this year at DaVinci Academy of Science and the Arts in Ogden, Utah as the Director of Choirs and Co-Director of Musical Theatre to begin his new position as Music Department Chair for Icon Arts Academy in Iowa City, Iowa. Since his time at Frost, he performed for five years with the Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square and taught at Utah State University and Weber State University.

Matthew Nichols

M.M. '16 in Percussion Performance has been serving Palm Beach County as an in-demand performer and educator while in his tenure as the Instructor of Percussion at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton.



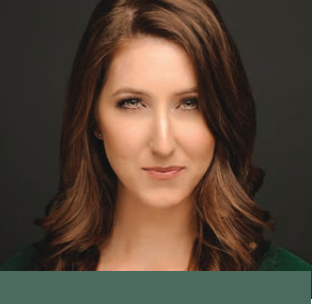
Daniel Velasco

D.M.A. '16 is currently the Associate Professor of Flute at the University of Kansas. He released his first solo album "Flauta Andina" in collaboration with pianist Ellen Sommer on the NAXOS Label in 2022 and was a featured cover story for Flute Talk magazine. He regularly performs with the Kansas City Symphony and the Miami-based NuDeco Ensemble.



Danielle Wertz

B.M. '16, vocalist, composer, arranger, and bandleader, released her debut album, Intertwined, in 2017. After Intertwined ranked #4 on Capital Bop's "Best DC Jazz Albums of 2017" list, Danielle placed 3rd in the Mid-Atlantic Jazz Vocal Competition and 2nd in the Ella Fitzgerald Jazz Vocal Competition.



Elizabeth DiFronzo

M.M. '17, mezzo-soprano, is based in New York City. In addition to her opera and choral engagements, she maintains a full private studio of voice and piano students. Recent opera credits include Alisa in Lucia di Lammermoor, Mercédès in Carmen, Flora Bervoix in La traviata, and La Maestra delle Novizie in Suor Angelica.

Dylan Findley

M.M. '17, composer and clarinetist, rooted Greek piano trio Galán Trio as they toured with his Ánimo throughout their 2022 Midwest Kinesis Tour. He awaits the fifth performance of his hour-long clarinet and film collaboration with refugee advocacy organization Their Story is Our Story called The Story of Our Journey in Ohio and the premiere of Cosmic Cliffs for the New Arts Collaboration in California.

Masafumi Nakatani

D.M.A. '17 had performances in NHK-FM (Japan National Radio), Phoenix Evolution Series, Kinokuni Music Festival, and had several professional engagements with orchestras such as Japan Century Symphony Orchestra and Kansai Philharmonic Orchestra. He received the Wakayama City Cultural Prize in 2019, the Wakayama Prefecture Cultural Prize in 2020, and the Okuwa Cultural Encouragement Prize in 2021.

Gustavo Padrino

B.M. '15, M.A. '17 is the Community Engagement Manager at the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, where he develops lasting partnerships and collaborations with non-profit organizations, businesses, cultural organizations, and key community stakeholders to bring inclusive and educational arts programs that deliver a meaningful impact to the community.

Jessica Perez

M.A. '17 arts manager, spent six years in Washington, DC following graduation, working for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Center, the American Pops Orchestra, Classical Movements and Washington Bach Consort. She now returns to Miami as the Company Manager



Natalia Ramirez

M.A. '17, currently manages multiple artists' careers and businesses in the Music Industry, including all the brands for Art House Society in Miami (Art House Studio,

Abbey Road Institute Miami, and Art House Academy). On top of being a manager, Natalia is also a vocal engineer. Mostly known as Natituner for her skills in tuning vocals, she's been awarded several Grammys and Latin Grammys.



Theodore Schaper

M.A. '17, currently owns and talents buys for a music venue in Ithaca NY called Deep Dive in addition to managing 4 nationally touring bands, producing the Ithaca Night Bazaar, and touring internationally as a trombonist & bass player.

Zachary Bartholomew

D.M.A. '18, received Artist Performance on Tour grants in 2021 & 2022 from the Florida Division of Arts & Culture for his "Jazz Access Tour,". He currently serves as a full-time faculty member at Florida Memorial University and is the pianist for the Gulf Coast Symphony's Jazz Collective.

Donna Hewitt

Ph.D. '18, currently serves as Chair of the Music Department at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. She has co-authored articles on popular music in higher education in journals such as Visions of Research in Music Education and the Journal of Popular Music Education. She has an upcoming chapter on social justice and popular music education in The Modern Band Handbook: Practical Perspectives and Lessons for Music Educators.



Ksenija Komljenović

D.M.A. '17, A.D. '18, is the new Assistant Professor of Percussion at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, having taught for four years at Texas A&M Uni-

versity-Corpus Christi. In 2022, she directed the Tierras Percussion Competition and co-organized the SoundWaves Festival.

Adam Claussen

B.M. '19, composer, performer, and teacher with a BA in jazz performance and MA in film music. During his undergraduate studies in jazz saxophone. His short film, Joan's Theme, won 2022 Keep an Eye Filmscore Award during the week of its premiere at the 2022 Keep an Eye Filmacademie Festival.

Rachel Ginebra

B.M. '15, M.M. '18, A.D. '19, classical guitarist. Currently a third year DMA student at the Eastman School of Music under Dr.Nicholas Goluses's guitar studio. She also serves as his TA.

Jessica Hawthorne-Mata

M.M. '16, D.M.A. '19 is a trombonist, educator, and arranger. She has played with the Las Vegas Philharmonic, as well as with production shows "The Rat Pack is Back!" at the Tuscany, "Vegas! The Show" and "Zombie Burlesque" at Planet Hollywood, and plays traditional German and Baravian music on trombone and alphorn as part of the Biermeister Band at Hofbrauhaus Las Vegas.

Yotsawan Meethongkum

B.M. '19, received a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from the Frost School of Music. He received a master's degree in choral music from the University of Southern California. Currently, he is a part-time choral director at Mahidol University and a choir-master for the Symphonic Anime 2023 and Beauty and the Beast in Concert with Thailand Philharmonic Orchestra.



Alissa Musto

M.M. '19, pianist, vocalist, songwriter, was one of the winners on Season 1 of USA Network's "Snake in the Grass" filmed in Costa Rica. Her upcoming 2023 performances include residencies in Florida, Georgia, California, Wisconsin, Germany and Sint Maarten.

Andrew Towsey-Grishaw

M.M. '19, violist, conductor, and music educator currently serves as the Visiting Director of Strings Studies at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA. He conducts the University String Symphony, teaches viola, chamber music, theory, and more.



Joseph Wenda

D.M.A. '19, oboist, educator, and reedmaker. Principal oboist of the Rogue Valley Symphony and owner/operator of "The Reed Whisperer" webstore servicing hundreds of clients nationwide. Former Assistant Professor of Oboe at Oklahoma City University.



2020s

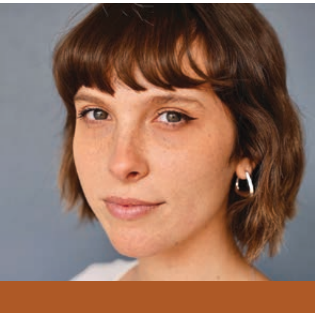


Cameron Daly

B.M. '20, trombonist and administrator, has held several positions with organizations in the classical music industry since graduating from Frost. After taking on a leadership role at the Heifetz International Music Institute (Staunton, VA), he now works as a Music Operations Associate for San Francisco Opera in his native SF Bay Area.

Jennifer Denk Stull

B.M. '10, M.M. '20, joined the faculty of the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia as an Assistant Professor of Music Therapy in Fall of 2022. A manuscript of her graduate thesis work was published as a journal article in Music Therapy Perspectives in 2023.



Katie Duerr

B.A. '20, nominated for a prestigious Carbonell Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Lead Female Role, Musical for the Area Stage production of Beauty and the Beast. This award recognizes excellent theater in the South Florida region.

Evan Eggers

M.A. '20 is an Events Planner at the University of Miami's Division of Development and Alumni Relations, and handles projects such as donor suites at UM home football games and the Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series.



Alumni **Spotlight:**

Jillian Dawn

B.M. '21

American Songwriter magazine highlights alumna Jillian Dawn in their recent March/April 2023 issue. Jillian discusses her journey thus far, kickstarting a new chapter when moving to Nashville after graduation, her outlook on songwriting as therapeutic, and finding her unique sound.

Having majored in Musicianship, Artistry Development, and Entrepreneurship (M.A.D.E), she is a shining example of how to successfully evolve your career as an indie pop singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist.

After dropping her follow-up EP, *How Simple This All Started*, Dawn continues to pursue her dream in the Music City, working alongside some of the city's brightest talents and paying homage to her theatrical beginnings as a cast member of *She Believed She Could*, an all-female musical revue that honors the women of country music.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JILLIAN DAWN

Dominic Grande

B.M. '20, won the Principal Percussion and Timpani audition for the Reno Chamber Orchestra.



Robert C. Saunders

Ph.D. '20, educator, cellist, and folk musician, is an Assistant Professor of Music Education and Orchestra Director at Augusta University in Augusta, GA. He is also a cello section member of the Augusta Symphony and leads the multi-generational folk band the Sand Hills String Band.

Connor Towns

M.M. '20, was recently appointed as Director of Instrumental Music for the North East School of the Arts in San Antonio, TX. Productions this year have included Bizet's "L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2", Disney's "The Little Mermaid," and "Funny Girl," as well original student compositions.



Ben Freedman

B.M. '21 in Viola Performance is currently completing his master's degree at the Peabody Conservatory. Since graduating from Frost, Ben has gone on to participate in Eastern Music Festival as a prestigious string fellow, playing 10 concerts in five weeks with the Eastern Festival Faculty Orchestra.

Jami Lercher

D.M.A. '20 is loving her choral music education role at Baldwin Wallace Conservatory. She has been an invited guest conductor and presenter for state, national, and international events and has published two editions of

historical works by Aleotti. Her greatest joy is seeing her music education students thriving in their classrooms!



Nicholas Ian Coffman

M.M. '16, Ph.D. '21, music educator, technologist, and bassist currently living and teaching in Quito, Ecuador. He is following up his dissertation work studying laptop-based music performance with students learning Ableton Live. Recently, Nicolas was appointed to the commission for the International Society for Music Education Community Music Activity.

Mitso Floor

M.M. '21, violist Mitso Floor has joined Friction Quartet, an ensemble dedicated to expanding and modernizing the string quartet repertoire. He is also an active orchestral musician, playing Assistant Principal Viola in Santa Rosa and Vallejo Symphonies, section viola in California and Berkeley Symphonies, and substituting with the San Francisco Symphony.



Taylor Mandel

M.M. '21 has worked at SPIN Magazine and kelleemack pr where she worked with names including Jimmy Eat World & the ASCAP Awards. She now runs the operations at Farrynheight, a marketing and branding agency and works with artists on an advisory level in her spare time.

Andrew Peal

D.M.A. '21, trombonist, educator. He currently teaches jazz and music

theory at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in south Georgia.

Stephen Pitters

B.M. '21, countertenor, recently sang the leading role of the Refugee in Flight by Jonathan Dove with USC Thornton Opera and became a 2023 Prima Voce Emerging Artist with Boston Court Pasadena. Additionally, he was featured on the historic 20th season of American Idol on ABC. Pitters operates a thriving private voice studio in Los Angeles, California; his students are working film, television, theatrical, and operatic professionals.



Viviana Venero

M.M. '21, graduated with her master's in Music Business & Entertainment Industries. Part of the advisory board of Miami Jam Sessions and Vice Chair of Social Media in the Women in Music Miami Chapter, Viviana currently works as the Social Media & Communications Specialist at the Frost School of Music.



Mack Wood

D.M.A. '21, is currently the Associate Director of Bands at Illinois State University, a position he's held since the Summer of 2020. During his time at ISU, the Athletic Bands and campus University Band have seen a huge uptick in participation.

Yun-Chen Wu

Known as Tina Wu, M.M. '21 in Music Business and Entertainment Industries currently works as a Product Planner at Wind Music, focusing on kids' pop music.



Mía Flora

B.M. '22, opera Singer, Soprano. Sigma Alpha Iota Member '22. Intern at Opera Columbus Summer '22. She is a current graduate student at University of New Mexico and was a chorus member at Santa Fe Opera's World Premiere of "This Little Light of Mine."



John Mangonon

M.M. '22, just finished his first full year serving in the U.S. Navy Band (Washington, D.C.) as a Tuba Instrumentalist. Highlights from his first year include performing at the White House, the Pentagon, the Army Band Tuba & Euphonium Workshop, and the Navy Band's 2023 National Tour.



Kelsey Hawkins

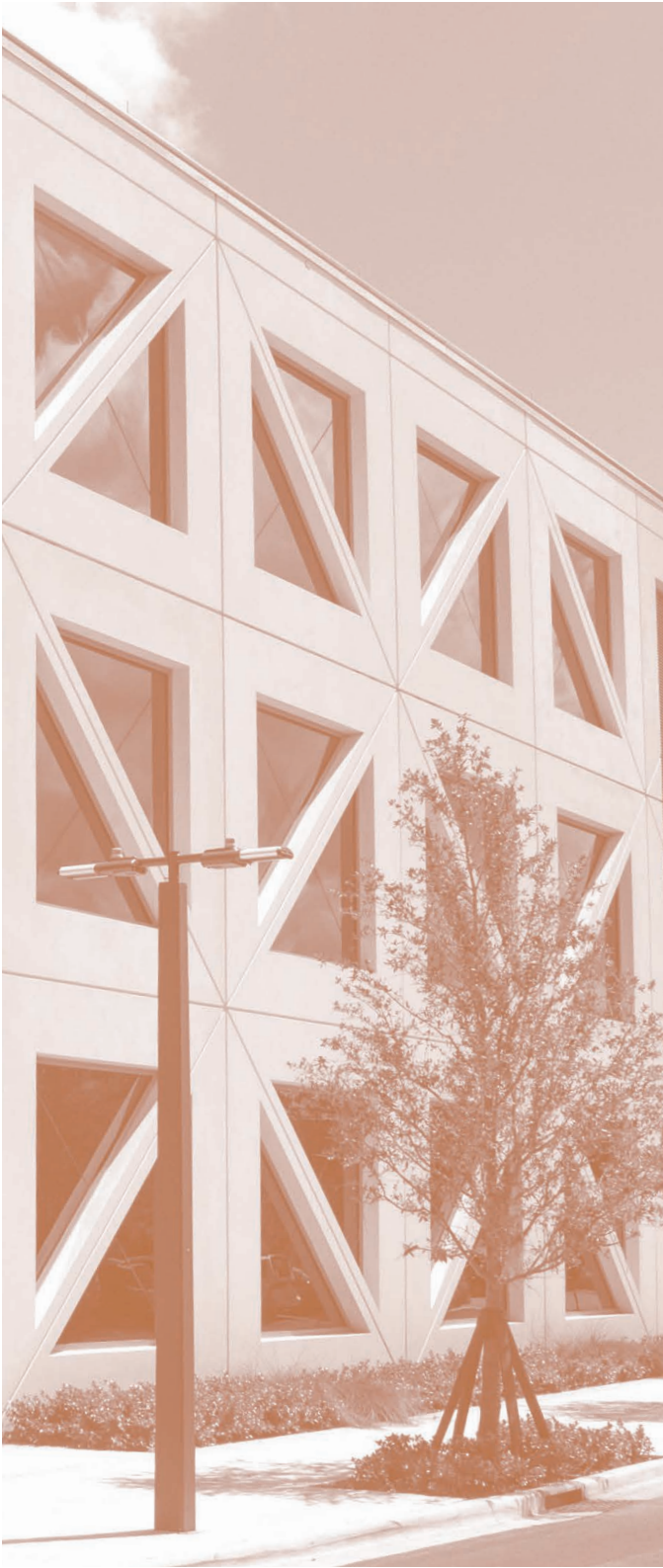
M.A. '22, is a professional artistic project manager with a passion for multidisciplinary programming and a decade of delivering high quality audience experiences in live music and film. As the Artistic Coordinator at the Colorado Symphony, she manages all aspects of visiting artists and conductors.

Mason Soria

M.M. '22, began his first season as the new Principal Tuba for the Los Angeles Philharmonic in September 2022. Since then, he has already performed over 50 concerts as well as toured to Boston, New York, and Mexico with them so far this season.

Abbey Jo

M.M. '22, served as the VP of A&R for Cane Records, the Social Media Manager for Frost Sounds, & worked at a local Miami recording studio. She currently works in the A&R department at Sony Music in New York at Columbia Records.



The Man Behind the Music, A Sit-Down with Dean Shelly Berg

BY MARITZA COSANO

Who is Shelly Berg? To answer that question, one may turn to the people who know him best—his family, colleagues, and students. But for the Dean of the Frost School of Music, music defines him best. Fascinated by the mystery of how he perceives that music moves souls and rearranges the molecules in a room, Shelly Berg sees it as an essential and healing force in our world.

“Music is the mortar of humanity, binding us together regardless of socioeconomic status, religion, ethnicity, or political views,” shares Berg. “Musicians must always remember how vital we are to society’s well-being.”

Known as a maverick in the music industry with a global presence, Berg enjoys Miami’s increasingly musical and cultural landscape. He finds the Magic City more than just a picturesque backdrop to the Frost School of Music, where he has served as Dean for 15 years, but a vibrant musical melting pot which naturally became his second home.

“Miami has a spirit of innovation, design, and courage which are also attributes reflected in our school,” he says. “Miami is a city where everyone wants to know you, and no one is intimidated by cutting-edge ideas. It is the perfect incubator.”

“Because of Frost’s innovations, we are aspirational among our excellent peers,” he adds. “Prospective students are attracted to a music school by faculty mentors and the school itself. Our faculty are world-class, and the distinctiveness of our school is a competitive advantage for those students who understand why they should attend Frost. We don’t have trouble balancing performance with music industry, music education, and so on, because the skills beyond performance are embedded into everyone’s curriculum.”

He states that Frost’s “Build Yourself” slogan means that students can access the breadth of areas of study and genres that are unique to the school. “We are the school for the classical oboe player who

wants to be a songwriter, the jazz guitarist who wants to be a music engineer . . . the skills we foster in our students will serve them well in their lives and careers.”

Berg developed many ideas brought to Frost about how music schools should evolve using his 45 years of experience in higher education. In 2000, the *Los Angeles Times* Magazine named him one of three “Educators for the Millennium.” His comments in that feature article foretold much of what he has done at Frost for the past decade and a half.

Since he has been at the helm, Frost’s reputation has grown among the great music schools in the country. He conceived and implemented the Frost Method™ and reimagined the Henry Mancini Institute as a year-round experience. In addition to the Frost Herbert Salzburg Summer Opera Program, he added the Frost School at Festival Napa Valley and a summer Jazz Academy in Aspen. The quality of music-making has never been higher.

“My job as Dean is never about the past,” says Berg. “Nothing stays the same in this world. Everything is either growing or dying, and the Frost School of Music has grown constantly, thanks to an award-winning faculty. I am as excited about projects happening now and into the future as ever.”

As of late, his own professional projects include a music production collaboration with Emilio Estefan during the pandemic for a broadcast in tribute to nurse heroes. During that project, Frost students were paid to record with Gloria Estefan, Celine Dion, Stevie Wonder, Josh Groban, Andrea Bocelli, David Foster, and Carole King.

He also co-produced, arranged, orchestrated, and performed on the *Estefan Family Christmas* album, released in fall 2022. He was honored to perform at the White House Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony with The Estefans. He is currently working on a large-scale project with a rock superstar.

“I am as fortunate as a person can get,” he says. “I have a beautiful and loving family. I have developed my abilities in teaching, music administration, performing, and composing with cherished mentors all along the way. I have worked with musical artists I idolize across various genres. And, for the past 16 years, I’ve walked into an environment of music’s future with the students at the Frost School who inspire and reinvigorate me constantly.” ☺



In Conversation with Charles Mason, Named Composer of the Year

» The Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) chose Charles Mason, professor of composition and chair of the Department of Theory and Composition at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, as its “2022-2023 Composer of the Year.”

LAST MAY, Professor Charles Mason, an alumnus of the Frost School of Music, class of ’77, was commissioned by the Florida State Music Teachers Association (FSMTA) as its 2022 Composer of the Year for his composition *Bridging the Gap for Flute and Fixed Media* [electronics]. The work was subsequently selected as the Music Teacher’s National Association (MTNA) composition winner from 23 works submitted anonymously by state MTAs, and Mason was named MTNA Composer of the Year for 2022-2023. The new work was performed by associate professor of Flute Jennifer Grim at the FSMTA convention in October 2022, and again at the MTNA National Convention in January 2023.

The last music faculty member to receive this MTNA honor was the late Dennis Kam, in 1985, who also served as the chair of the Department of Music Theory and Composition.

“In composition, the people that are commissioning you are commissioning you because they like the sound of your music,” says Mason, who was named the Frost Distinguished Alumnus in 2009, is the winner of the Rome Prize and a National Endowment of the Arts Individual Artist Award, and has been commissioned by many notable organizations.

“The commission was open-ended, meaning I could choose whatever instruments I wanted to write for. But immediately after I won the commission, I thought, “Man! I want to write this for Jennifer Grim. I first met her when her new music ensemble performed my piece *Hradcanska* at the Aspen Summer Music Festival. Jennifer is the most incredible flutist I have ever heard.”

In a recent conversation with Frost News, he also spoke about his favorite subject—helping Frost composition students discover their uniqueness. Every semester, on the first day of class, he tells them, “You have a completely different background than anybody else. I want to help you draw on your own experiences and create music that is uniquely yours.”

“Coincidentally, I was Dennis Kam’s first composition student. I admired him greatly, and it was an honor for me to follow in his footsteps and take on the duties of department chair. [Our] department has graduated many great composers, and is made up of faculty that have an impressive record of accomplishment— but all are dedicated to teaching, and believe in the same philosophy I have of approaching the composition student as an individual, and drawing out of them that uniqueness.”

Acclaimed Conductor Gerard Schwarz’s Passion for Music

WITNESSING the live performance of the acclaimed American conductor Gerard Schwarz is an exceptional and unforgettable experience. His delight and passion for music are palpable. The Frost Symphony Orchestra’s distinguished professor and music director at the Frost School of Music has earned an international reputation as a virtuoso. And at Frost, while some students call him Jerry or Gerry, they often call him Maestro Schwarz in honor and reverence for his masterly fashion and remarkable musicianship.

Schwarz’s discography reads like a Best Seller. Aside from his post here at Frost, he is the Artistic and Music Director of the Palm Beach Symphony, Music Director for the All-Star Orchestra, Music Director for the Eastern Music Festival, and Conductor Laureate for the Seattle Symphony.

Over the last fifty years, as a respected classical musician and conductor, Schwarz has received nine Emmy Awards, 14 GRAMMY nominations, 8 ASCAP

Awards, and countless Stereo Review and Ovation Awards for his innovative programming and extensive catalog of recordings.

“Jennifer Higdon wrote a piece that was co-commissioned by the Houston Symphony and us,” explained Schwarz. “She is one of the most distinguished living American composers, and after its world premiere in Houston, it was an honor to do its second performance here. The piece is full of rhythmic vitality and energy; her music is known for that.” It’s also poignant but full of beauty and passion, he noted, with its rhythmic sophistication and complexity. The kind of music that sparks his attention.

“We can sometimes spend all our time isolated in what we do,” he said. “The beauty at the Frost School of Music is interacting with students across various disciplines, not just those focused on classical music. Last year, when I got to do an opera, I spent lots of time with the opera students, which was a wonderful experience. I now have



two choral students and other conducting students working with me, which I love. I get to do what our school does better than any other music school: integrate the different departments. We all identify with the music’s passion and depth.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLES MASON



All Eyes on Etienne Charles

THE ARTIST’S NAME buzzed all around Manhattan when his epic new composition premiered at the anticipated reopening of the new David Geffen Hall. The concert featured a mix-media collaboration between the New York Philharmonic and Etienne Charles & Creole Soul, immersing the audience in Manhattan’s culturally rich San Juan Hill neighborhood.

The Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts commissioned Charles for the New York Philharmonic, an immense honor he accepted. His newest composition, *San Juan Hill: A New York Story*, paid tribute to the city’s history of Indigenous and immigrant communities that lived on the land where Lincoln Center now stands. Performed by Charles and Creole Soul alongside the New York Philharmonic, the score featured five orchestral movements innovatively incorporating mix-media to support remarkable storytelling. Through his music, Charles successfully

presented important narratives that captured the essence of New York.

“It was about the sounds that made New York move, the sounds that New Yorkers danced to,” says Charles. “It was significant that this piece opened the hall because it shined a light on what was here before, who was here before, and what was played.”

Charles, 39, is described by *DownBeat* as “a flamboyant stylist with radical instincts.” The magazine calls his new piece an “intoxicating mix of sonic pleasures and seldom-heard social truths.”

“Playing this for the people of New York and those who came from all over to see it... was a high point for me,” says Charles. “I didn’t really give a lot of background on this piece to the people I interviewed, and so when they saw the piece all put together and come alive on stage, they were amazed as they heard their voices and saw how their stories told the San Juan Hill story so accurately and beautifully.”



PHOTO BY MARIA NUÑEZ

Kate Reid



Associate professor of Jazz Voice in the Studio Music and Jazz Department at the Frost School of Music, included a chapter in a one-of-a-kind book, *Rehearsing the Vocal Jazz Ensemble*, that encompasses a range of topics by esteemed educators ranging from lesson planning to auditions that will be collectively shared with readers.

Carlos R. Abril



Professor of Music Education and associate dean of Research at the Frost School of Music, Carlos R. Abril, strives to expand students’ thinking about music beyond the classroom. His work has been published in numerous research and professional journals. This time, co-editing the *General Music: Dimensions of Practice*, he serves as a guide for music teachers by inspiring comprehensive music programs, including the four dimensions of music practice: performing, connecting, creating, and responding.

Jeanette Thompson



Lecturer in Vocal Performance at the Frost School of Music, Jeanette Thompson, spent eight years living and teaching in Turkey at the State Conservatory of Izmir. During her time, she recognized the immense talent of singers by founding The National Young Soloist Competition, both in the University Division and the Young Professional Division. The competition has helped provide opportunities and has placed many young singers in operas throughout different countries, and this year is the competition’s 15th anniversary. While this event

has been affected due to the earthquakes and its unfortunate tragedies, the organization put together a short video in gratitude for Jeannette’s contributions.

Richard Todd



Professor of Horn at the Frost School of Music, Richard Todd, alongside performers Joel Smirnoff, violin, and Christopher O’Riley, piano, thoughtfully executed a new album featuring a version of the Horn Trio from the viewpoint of Johannes Brahms, based on long-standing traditions and performance practices. Produced by Gunther Schuller, each member rises above previous notions of the work to re-discover its soul. Also included on the CD are individual songs, with Richard Todd performing Messiaen’s “Appel Interstellaire,” the sixth movement from *Des canyons aux étoiles*.

Marysol Quevedo



Assistant professor of Musicology Marysol Quevedo’s first book, *Cuban Music Counterpoints: Vanguardia Musical in Global Networks*, will be published by Oxford University Press in July 2023. It maps the intellectual and artistic networks that Cuban composers forged between 1940 and 1991 by exploring moments—that shed light on how they negotiated aesthetic and political agendas at local and international levels. She received two University of Miami Provost Research Awards and one Provost Arts and Humanities Faculty Fellowship to support her research for the book. Before joining the Frost faculty she was working on the project at UM’s Cuban Heritage Collection as a Goizueta Dissertation Fellow. This academic year, Quevedo

began a three-year term as Director-at-Large of the Board of the American Musicological Society, and joined the Editorial Board of the journal *American Music*. She was also awarded a second Provost Arts and Humanities Faculty Fellowship to begin work on a second book project, *Sounds of the ICAIC: Music and Sound in Cuban Revolutionary Cinema*.

Jodi Levitz



Professor of Viola, Jodi Levitz, returns to the Zephyr International Chamber Music Festival in Italy, featuring distinguished alumnae from 20 years of festivals and faculty from Italy and the United States. It provides outstanding young musicians and local audiences with an intense and genuine professional chamber music experience. In addition, Levitz will return to Festival Napa Valley as part of the core Frost School of Music faculty for her second consecutive year, leading in the festival’s pre-professional educational, chamber music, and orchestral music programming.

Corin Overland



As a Frost Research Grant recipient, Corin Overland, Ph.D., associate professor of Professional Practice for Music Education, will assume the duties of Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies in fall 2023. He partnered with the University of Miami’s Michael S. Gordon Center for Simulation and Innovation in Medical Education to pilot a new model of pre-service teacher education. This pilot program brought live actors from the Gordon Center who had been specially trained to portray ailing patients to the Frost campus. While at Frost, these actors used their skills to show the parents of students with pre-service music

educators, giving undergraduates wanting to become teachers an opportunity to practice foundational interview skills and develop academic action plans.

Robert Carnochan



Highlights this year for professor Robert Carnochan, conductor of the Frost Wind Ensemble and director of Wind Ensemble Activities at the Frost School, included guest conducting the US Army Field Band, participating in several national wind conducting workshops, and guest conducting the *Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of the Arts* Wind Ensemble at the Midwest Clinic, a renowned music education conference with more than 18,000 attendees from all 50 states and more than 40 countries in attendance. He also conducted the Frost Wind Ensemble at the 2023 CBDNA National Conference for collegiate band directors.

Stephen Guerra Jr.



The 2023 New Hampshire All-State Honors Band included Stephen Guerra Jr., assistant professor in the Department of Jazz and Studio Music, as their conductor with students of high school and middle school levels.

Teresa Lesiuk



Frost School of Music received a \$2.6 million federal grant to study how mindfulness and music therapy can alleviate stress, anxiety, and depression, reduce treatment-related symptoms, and improve cancer patients’ and survivors’ quality of life. One of the project’s two principal researchers, supported by a five-year grant from the National Cancer Institute and

other agencies, is Teresa L. Lesiuk, Ph. D., MT-BC, director and associate professor of music therapy at the Frost School of Music.

Aaron Tindall



In addition to teaching at the Frost School of Music, Aaron Tindall, associate professor of Tuba and Euphonium, will join the faculty at The Colburn School in Los Angeles, California beginning in the fall semester.

Donald D. Coffman
Receives Phillip Frost
Award for Excellence in
Teaching and Scholarship



Donald D. Coffman honored to have received the distinguished faculty award.

DONALD D. COFFMAN, professor of Music Education and chair of the Department of Music Education and Music Therapy at the Frost School of Music, was this academic year’s recipient of the Phillip Frost Award for Excellence in Teaching and Scholarship. “I am grateful for the privilege of teaching and honored to be recognized by colleagues with this award,” says Coffman, who teaches courses in instrumental conducting, methods of teaching instrumental school music, and community music programs. With over 40 years of teaching elementary, junior high, high school, university, and community band settings, his greatest passion is making music with “chronologically gifted” adults in wind bands. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Kansas, a M.M.E. from Wichita State University, and a B.M.E. from the University of Kansas.

2022-2023 Frost School of Music Faculty

Aural Skills

Nicholas Rosen
William Wulfeck

Bachelor of Arts in Music

Brent Swanson

Band of the Hour

Doug McCullough
Jay Rees
Charles L. Damon
Amy McCullough

Bassoon

Gabriel Beavers

Bruce Hornsby Creative

American Music /

Contemporary

Roxana Amed

David L. Anderson II

Craig Carothers

Cassandra Claude

Stephen Gleason

Laura Merisier

Raina Murnak

Carlos Rafael Rivera

Stephen Rucker

Brian Russell

Reynaldo Sanchez

Nicole Schommer

Daniel Strange

Brenton Williams

Choral Studies

Anita Castiglione
Amanda Quist

Clarinet

Margaret Donaghue

Conducting

Robert Carnochan

Doug McCullough

Steven Moore

Amanda Quist

Jay Rees

Gerard Schwarz

Dance

Rosanna deGuzman

Keiko Fernandez

Carol Kaminsky

Petagay Letren

Christina Leyva

Jorge Mojeron

Nicole Perry

Double Bass

Brian Powell

Flute

Jennifer Grim

Frost Online

Serona Elton

Scott Flavin

Brian Lynch

Gonzalo Mejia

Raina Murnak

Guillermo Page

John Redmond

Javier Sanchez

Reynaldo Sanchez

Gary Wood

Guitar

Rafael Padron
Federico Musgrove Stetson

Harp

Laura Sherman

Henry Mancini Institute

Scott Flavin

Maria Schneider

Horn

Richard Todd

Jazz Bass

Charles Bergeron

Jazz Composition

and Jazz Arranging

John Daversa

Stephen Guerra Jr.

Jazz Drums

David Chiverton

Harvel Nakundi

Dafnis Prieto

Stephen Rucker

Leon Thomas

John Yarling

Jazz Guitar

John Hart

Tim Jago

Jazz Piano

David L. Anderson II

Shelton G. Berg

Martin Bejerano

Gonzalo Rubalcaba

Jazz Saxophone

Patrick Bartley Jr.

Stephen Guerra Jr.

Marcus Strickland

Jazz Trombone

Dante Luciani

Jazz Trumpet

Etienne Charles

John Daversa

Brian Lynch

Jazz Vibraphone

Errol Rackipov

Jazz Voice

Kate Reid

Keyboard Performance

Inesa Gegprifti

Oleksii Ivanchenko

Kevin Kenner

Santiago Rodriguez

Naoko Takao

Tian Ying

Keyboard Performance

and Pedagogy

Naoko Takao

Live Entertainment

Management

Guillermo Page

Christopher Palmer

Gary Wood

Media Scoring and

Production

Randall Barlow

Ray DoHyoungh Kim

Carlos Rafael Rivera

Camilo Rodriguez

Rick Urban

Music Industry

Pablo Ahogado

Jonathan Dadurka

Serona Elton

Guillermo Page

John Redmond

Reynaldo Sanchez

Thomas Mitchell*

Pauly Esmir German Torres*

Musicianship, Artistry,

Development and

Entrepreneurship

Roxana Amed

Craig Carothers

Cassandra Claude

Jonathan Dadurka

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Thomas Sleeper

With profound sadness and grief, we mourn the death of our dear friend and colleague, Thomas Sleeper. After a courageous battle against Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), friend and colleague, Thomas Sleeper, passed away on Saturday, October 15, 2022, at 66. Sleeper was the Frost Symphony Orchestra conductor for 25 years and served as Director of the Florida Youth Orchestra for 27 years. In contextualizing

Professor Sleeper’s legacy, Shelton Berg, Dean of the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music, remarked, “Thom Sleeper was a brilliant musician, composer, and advocate of new music whose work had a unique depth and passion. As an educator, Thom was fiercely dedicated, profoundly impacting legions of students and colleagues. He left us too soon, but his legacy on those who knew him is indelible.”



Don Coffman

Don Coffman, South Florida jazz bass legend and retired professor of Jazz Bass and associate chair of the Studio Music and Jazz Department at the Frost School of Music, passed away peacefully in his Davie, Florida home on December 11, 2022, at age 83. A University of Miami alum, admired teacher, and musician, Don Coffman helped burnish the Frost Jazz Program’s extraordinary reputation. He also served as the program director of Jazz Pedagogy during his tenure and positively impacted his students

and peers through the gift of music. “Don Coffman was an impeccable musician, a master teacher, and a true gentleman,” said Shelton G. Berg, Dean of the Phillip and Patricia Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. “He changed the lives of legions of students, many of whom came from all over the country to celebrate Don upon his retirement from the Frost School in 2017. I was fortunate to be his colleague and to share the stage with him on many occasions.”



Frances Hipp

Frances (Frankie) Hipp, the beloved wife of former Frost School of Music’s Dean James William (Bill) Hipp, passed away on January 23, 2023 in Stuart, Florida, at 89. She was born on March 22, 1934, in Pensacola, Florida. “Frankie owned a deeply held love of family, friends, and life,” said former Frost School of Music’s Dean James William (Bill) Hipp. “She possessed a fertile and creative vision and insights about human nature and art and was drawn to those who shared her interests and values. She would challenge those

who did not in a gracious and sometimes humorous way.” Her family moved 21 times during and immediately after WW II because Frankie’s father was a naval officer. Those cultural and societal influences helped her develop a love for art, music, gourmet cuisine, and fashion. A decade later, this led her to follow a career as a model in Honolulu and Los Angeles. In the early 70s, she moved to Corpus Christi, Texas, where she established a school for aspiring young models. There, she met Bill, and they were married in 1972.



Rolando Ramirez

Rolando Ramirez, M.M. ’22, of Coral Gables, Florida, passed away on February 25, 2023. He was a graduate student and teaching assistant in the Music Business and Entertainment Industries program and served as the president of the student-run Frost Sounds live event production/promotion enterprise. He had recently begun his career working as a music data analyst at 1021 Creative.

“Rolando was a very enthusiastic and passionate student,” said Serona Elton, professor and director of the Music Industry Program. “He greeted me every class session with a warm hello, eager for the session despite our challenges of all being masked during COVID protocols. He was kind and generous, taking the time to come back after graduating to speak to current students about how he landed his first job. He will be greatly missed.”

CODA

Getting to know Martin Bejerano, associate professor of Jazz Piano at the Frost School of Music



What is your idea of perfect success?

To find the ideal balance between my personal, family, and career (i.e., achieving happiness and success while maintaining a happy and fulfilling family life).

If you could study any field aside from your own, what would it be?

I was really into sports when I was younger and would have loved to be a baseball player!

Whom do you most admire?

I really admire those who have had to overcome struggles and adversity to achieve success and happiness in life. I have many such people to look up to amongst my family and friends and artists I have worked with professionally.

What are three adjectives you would use to describe Frost School of Music?

Supportive, innovative, and talented.

Where is your favorite spot at Frost?

Sitting at a Rat glider facing the lake, preferably from January to April.

What words or phrases do you most overuse?

“Awesome,” “Killing (or Super Killing),” and cooking and sports metaphors in general, as my students will tell you.

What do you consider your greatest achievement?

Professionally: Being nominated for a Latin Grammy was an amazing and fulfilling moment. Personally: Being present for my wife and two daughters while maintaining a healthy and fulfilling playing and teaching career.

What is your greatest regret?

I wish I had taken more risks and been more assertive earlier in my career.

Who are your favorite musicians?

SO MANY! Keith Jarrett, Prince, John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Herbie Hancock, Living Colour, Fishbone, Ahmad Jamal, Thelonious Monk, Van Halen, Michael Brecker, Rush, Black Sheep, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Chick Corea, McCoy Tyner, Ice Cube, Branford Marsalis, Kenny Kirkland, Brad Mehldau, Miguel Zenón, Rage Against the Machine, KISS, and many more.

If you could have dinner with one person—alive or dead—who would it be?

Prince!

If you could have any music superpower, what would it be?

Total recall—memorizing has always been a hassle for me.

Music guru or geek?

Guru in my own mind, but probably a geek in reality.

Your biggest influencer?

A conglomeration of all my musical heroes.

In-person or Zoom call?

In-person with friends; Zoom for business meetings!

Music and lyrics? What do you like about each one?

I love music without lyrics as it can be perceived so wildly differently from person to person—plus, it gives you a lot of freedom as a player because you are free to interpret it in so many ways. Lyrics bring a whole other dimension to the music, as they (typically) express a story or sentiment and can deepen the experience for the listener—perhaps conjuring visuals and memories of personal experiences that can be more relatable and powerful than music without lyrics.

Classical or pop music? What's on your playlist?

Classical: I have been getting into playing Scriabin's Études and Preludes, as well as similar 20th-century post-romantic music, mostly pianists Evgeny Kissin and Sviatoslav Richter. Pop: I love the *MOTOMIAMI* album by Latin pop artist Rosalía. Otherwise, I listen in the car to what my daughters like.

Where would you go if you could spend 24 hours in any city around the globe?

Tokyo!

What song are you most embarrassed to love?

“Rock and Roll All Nite” by KISS (really, any song by KISS—I love them all).

What is your motto?

Music is my religion.

What is the best thing about Frost?

The community and the sincere dedication the faculty has toward their students.

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