PSU trumpet students have a year to remember
- by Ron Womble -

Sometimes you just know that the timing is right. That’s the way Todd Hastings, associate professor in the Pittsburg State University Department of Music, felt about his trumpet students at the beginning of the 2006-2007 academic year. Hastings said he noticed “an extremely high level of trumpet playing by the current class of students” and wanted to make it a special year by forming an ensemble to take advantage of the talent.

The effort paid off and the result was performances at the National Trumpet Competition at George Mason University in Fairfax, Va., and the International Trumpet Guild Convention at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Mass.

Hastings said he began by setting up blind auditions in which students performed for judges who could not see them. The judges selected five students for the new ensemble: Matt Carter, Altoona, Kan.; A.J. Metzger, Pittsburg, Kan.; Erin Smith, Miami, Okla.; Trey Wadell, Olathe, Kan.; and Will Koehler, Pittsburg, Kan.

Then, Hastings enlisted the help of fellow Music Department faculty member John Ross, who composed a new piece for the group to record. Hastings sent the resulting CD off to be judged. Despite his confidence in his students, Hastings said he knew the competition would be intense.

“I knew that I had strong players, hard-workers, and serious musicians in the trumpet studio,” Hastings said, “so we had high hopes.”

The invitations to perform at both the National Trumpet Competition and the International Trumpet Guild Convention were like hitting the jackpot.

At the National Trumpet Competition in March, the PSU ensemble found itself among groups from places like the Juilliard School of Music, Boston University and Northwestern. Just five awards were given and although the PSU students didn’t win one of those, the fact that they were among the select group invited to compete was honor enough.

“It was an incredible honor for us to be invited to compete against such legendary institutions,” said Hastings. “The competition was also a great learning event and provided my students a chance to see how they are ‘stacking up’ against their future career competitors. I believe the students discovered that they are becoming very competitive with students at some of the nation’s most elite music schools.”

At the end of May, the ensemble hit the road again. This time they were on their way to the International Trumpet Guild Convention where they were invited to perform a prelude for the Orchestral Audition Roundtable Discussion. The roundtable panelists included the first trumpet players from the Chicago, Boston, Minnesota, and Atlanta symphony orchestras. Hastings said the event was well attended and the PSU students performed “brilliantly!”

The remainder of the convention was devoted to attending recitals, master classes and lectures. Hastings described it as a “world-class experience” for the students. An added benefit, Hastings said, was the exposure that Pittsburg State University and the students received as a result of participating in the convention.

Hastings thanked the Office of University Advancement for providing financial support to the students to make the trips possible.

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Choirs Plan Trip to Germany

The choirs of Pittsburg State normally tour during Spring Break of the even-numbered years. Since the establishment of this pattern, the touring has been almost entirely domestic (the 2006 tour did include several days in Montreal). The year 2008 will mark an exciting departure from the norm, as the choirs are planning a trip to Germany and Austria during January. Focusing on the cities of Heidelberg, Munich, and Salzburg and their surrounding areas, the trip is scheduled to take place soon after the arrival of the New Year.

For further information about this project, contact Susan Marchant, Director of Choral Activities, at 620-235-4476 (smarchan@pitt-state.edu).
Faculty Briefs...

Reena Berger, associate professor, had a busy spring performance season that included concerts and master classes at universities in California and Nevada. She also performed two piano concertos with the St. Joseph Symphony of Missouri. Dr. Berger will be on leave from the university during the upcoming academic year, during which time she will travel to Southeast Asia to present concerts and master classes.

James Clanton, instructor, presented solo performances at regional gatherings of the Society of Composers, Inc. In April, he traveled to Reykjavik Arts Academy in Iceland for lecture/presentations on two topics: regional folkloric music of Mexico, and the percussion writing of composer John Leifs. During the 2007-2008 season, she will sing with the Tulsa Opera Chorus.

Craig Fuchs, chair and associate professor, was guest clinician for the KMEA Northwest District Honor Band. He also has had two articles published in The Instrumentalist.

Lisa Gerstenkorn, lecturer, was an artist with the College Light Opera Company in Falmouth, MA, this summer, where she performed musical theatre and operetta. During the 2007-2008 season, she will sing with the Tulsa Opera Chorus.

Selim Giray, associate professor, returned to Turkey this summer for a second round of teaching as a Rotary International Ambassadorial Scholar. He served as a resident scholar at Istanbul Technical University’s Center for Advanced Studies in Music. Additionally, he presented numerous lectures and master classes at universities in Ankara and Eskisehir.

Todd Hastings, associate professor, presented recitals and trumpet master classes at the University of Kansas, Wichita State University, and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Patrick Howle, instructor, once again spent the summer singing with The Ohio Light Opera Company in Wooster, Ohio. Earlier in the year, he sang several supporting roles in Emmerich Kalman’s Marinka in a Los Angeles performance.

Russell Jones, professor, presented a clinic titled “Preparing Middle and High School Instrumental Groups for a Contest or Festival Trip” at the KMEA In-Service Workshop in Wichita.

Robert Kehle, university professor, performed at the International Trombone Festival in Birmingham, England, as part of the American Trombone Choir.

Jessie Wright Martin, assistant professor, completed her second year of the Alexander Technique Teacher Training at the Alexander Alliance in Philadelphia. She also participated in a performance and CD recording of Emmerich Kalman’s Marinka with Operetta Archives in Los Angeles.

Matthew Montague, associate professor, has been invited by the Kansas State Department of Education to chair a music program review team.

John Ross, associate professor, was one of three finalists in the John F. Kennedy Center’s Composer Competition. Open to Kansas composers, this competition was held in conjunction with the National Symphony Orchestra’s tour of the state in March.

Douglas Whitten, assistant professor, performed with the “Faculty All-Star” Tuba Ensemble at the Great Plains Tuba/Euphonium Conference. He was also instrumental in securing a performance for the PSU student quartet at the South Central Tuba and Euphonium Conference.

Student News

Pianists Gulimina Mahamuti and Zerlinda Tertia performed in the piano masterclass of Tatiana Tessman. First Prize Winner in the 2006 Missouri Southern International Piano Competition.

Members of a PSU student low brass quartet performed at the South Central Tuba and Euphonium Conference. Students Matt Carter, Erin Smith, and Terri Houston represented PSU in several other events, the CBDNA Small College Intercollegiate Band and the KKY National Intercollegiate Band.

Several students were selected to perform with the 2007 Kansas Intercollegiate Jazz Ensemble: Matt Bennett, as lead tenor sax; Trey Wadell as third trumpet; and Lewis Hundley as alternate tenor sax.

Schrag Prize

The 2007 PSU Department of Music Honors Convocation once again culminated in the presentation of the Priscilla S. Schrag Prize, an honor bestowed upon one outstanding music student who demonstrates strength of character and dedication to excellence in musical pursuits. This year’s recipient was Terri Houston, a senior BME trombone major from Olathe. The Department extends its congratulations to Terri on this well-deserved honor.

Linda Hoffman Announces Retirement

The rumors are true. Armageddon is descending upon McCray Hall. Following 38 years of service, Linda Hoffman has announced her retirement from PSU. With more years of seniority than any other inhabitant of McCray Hall, Linda has — forever, it seems — been the central cog in the wheels of the Department, holding everything together and moving us forward in a process that can at times be somewhat akin to herding cats. She has served in the capacity of Administrative Specialist to no fewer than eight permanent and interim chairs. Clearly, she is a survivor!

Linda’s affection and care for members of the McCray Hall family have been hallmarks of her service, and she has loved the challenges and — well, craziness, at times — of this position. She also has many interests outside the Department, and she has determined that now is the time to pursue some of these.

Rather than departing at the end of an academic year, Linda has characteristically offered to stay at her post through mid-October, so that she can help launch the fall semester and have ample time to work with whomever will come into the office to try to fill her shoes.

Retirement Reception

Friends and alumni are welcome to join us at a reception to honor Linda’s many years of service. The reception will take place on Wednesday, October 17, from 2:30-4:00 pm. The location: McCray Lobby, of course! For further information, contact Susan Marchant at (620-235-4476, smarchan@pittstate.edu).
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Joanne Britz, Associate Professor
Clarinet and Saxophone

James Clanton, Lecturer
Percussion

Carol Deats, Assistant Professor
Elementary Music Education, Horn

Lisa Gerstenkorn, Lecturer
Voice

Selim Giray, Associate Professor
Violin and Viola

James Hall, Lecturer
Flute

Stella Hastings, Associate Professor
Director, Southeast Kansas Symphony
Voice, Theory

Todd Hastings, Associate Professor
Trumpet, Jazz, Music Appreciation

Patrick Howle, Instructor
Voice and Opera

David Hurley, Associate Professor
Music History, Oboe, Music Appreciation

Russell Jones, Professor
Director of Graduate Studies
Music Education, Woodwinds

Lori Kehle, Lecturer
Piano

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Director of Jazz Studies
Trombone and Music Appreciation

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Piano

Susan Marchant, University Professor
Director of Choral Activities
Organ, Harpsichord

Matthew Montague, Associate Professor
Music Education Coordinator
Choral Education, Music Appreciation

Wilfredo Pasamba, Lecturer
Cello and String Bass

John Ross, Associate Professor
Theory and Composition

Kelly Samarzea, Assistant Professor
Voice, Vocal Pedagogy and Literature

A. Douglas Whitten, Assistant Professor
Director of Athletic Bands
Tuba and Euphonium
Calendar of Events

September
20 * Henan Song and Dance Troupe, 7:30 pm
21 * Solo and Chamber Music Series: Anonymous, 4, 7:30 pm
30 * Southeast Kansas Symphony, Memorial Auditorium, 3:00 pm

October
8 Jazz Concert, Overman Student Center, 7:30 pm
19 * Solo & Chamber Music Series: Ethos Percussion Group, 7:30 pm
21 Senior Recital, Megan Hizey, voice, 3:00 pm
25 Chamber Orchestra, 7:30 pm
26 Opera Scenes, 7:30 pm
28 Opera Scenes, 3:00 pm
31 Tuba Studio Recital, 7:30 pm

November
2 University Choirs, 7:30 pm
9 * Solo and Chamber Music Series: Hakan Rosengren, clarinet, with the Chiara String Quartet, 7:30 pm
15 Wind Ensemble, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
16 Music Scholarship Audition Day
19 * Southeast Kansas Symphony, Memorial Auditorium, 3:00 pm
28 Choir Holiday Luncheon, Overman Student Center, 11:30 am-1:00 pm
29 Jazz Concert, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
30 Chamber Music Concert, Pittsburgh Public Library, 3:30 pm
30 * Madrigal Dinner, University Choirs (reservations required), Overman Student Center

December
5 Timmons Chapel Christmas Concert, Timmons Chapel, 7:30 pm
7 Timmons Chapel Christmas Concert, Timmons Chapel, 7:30 pm

*Tickets required. For further information, contact the PSU Department of Music (620/235-4466).

Please consult local news media for changes and/or updates to the above information and for additional calendar events.

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Craig A. Fuchs
Chair, Department of Music
Susan Marchant
Newsletter Editor

Jessie Martin Departs For North Carolina

Jessie Wright Martin, assistant professor, has resigned from her position in the Department of Music in order to accept an appointment at Wingate University in North Carolina.

A member of the PSU faculty since 2001, Dr. Martin taught applied voice, vocal pedagogy and literature, and other courses related to the voice area. She quickly developed a reputation throughout the region as a superb teacher, and her students' success in NATS competitions as well as in auditions for performance engagements and graduate programs has been a testament to the excellent work taking place in her studio.

The geographical location of North Carolina affords Dr. Martin some important advantages. We wish her the very best as she moves to this new appointment in the Tarheel State.

ALUMNI NEWS

Have we heard from you lately? If not, please take a moment to complete the response form and return it to us! This is the best way to keep our files updated and to share news of your recent activities with other members of the PSU Music Alumni network. Thanks!

Scott Allison (MM '07) has been awarded a graduate assistantship as a doctoral candidate in choral conducting at the University of Iowa.

Kari (Burgess) Arehart (BME '01) sends word of a new direction in her career. She will move from the elementary music classroom to the principal's office! Kari is very excited about the role that she'll continue to play, now as an administrator, in making music an important part of the lives of young people.

Jason (BME '99) and Lisa (BME '99) Dunn are both teaching in Commerce, OK. Lisa works with K-5 students, and Jason's assignment covers 6-12 vocal and instrumental students. They are the proud parents of a new son, Scott, born on September 26, 2007.

David (BGS '03) and Emily (Row) Edson (att. '01-'02) welcomed their second child, Oliver Louis, into the world on April 3. Emily reports that their older son, Ivan, will begin kindergarten this fall. The Edson family is residing in Webb City, MO.

Gerad (BA '03) and Megan (Potter) Gabehart (BME '03) announce with joy the birth of their first child, Spencer Reece Sanders Gabehart, on February 12 in Pittsburg.

Gail Hamilton (MM '78) writes that she continues to perform and teach in the Denver area. She is also busy finishing her book, which she hopes to publish soon. Gail has begun a position with Weight Watchers, and she is also very excited to report that she has been chosen to receive a house through Habitat for Humanity. She hopes to move into her new home by Christmas.

Shelby Huddleston (BME '01) will move into a new teaching appointment this fall. He has accepted a position at Macksville High School, where he'll teach 9-12 choir and 5-12 band. Additionally, he will supervise the volleyball program.

John Jarboe (BME '65) is employed in a new position as the Music Specialist/Program Advisor with the Arkansas Department of Education in Little Rock. He continues as a studio instructor of violin, as well as violist in the Jarboe String Quartet, an ensemble that includes his wife Karen and daughter Maria as violinists, and son Jeff as cellist. John was published as a poet in the February issue of The American Suzuki Journal. Personal joys include a new grandson, success in running marathons, and an ever-improving pool game. He reports that he's developing a killer break and focusing on bank and kick shots!

Terri Houston with Dr. Craig Fuchs, chair
Carrie Kesler (BME '07) has accepted a position with the schools of Webb City, MO, where she will teach 7-8 grade choir and general music courses.

Keira (Bedore) Luntsford (BME '06) married Jeremiah Luntsford on April 21 in a ceremony in Pittsburg's Covenant Harvest Church. The couple is residing in Mankato, MN, where Jeremiah works as a mechanical engineer and Keira will soon begin a teaching position. She will work in the community of Le Center, MN, teaching K-3 general music in the mornings and subbing in the afternoons.

Gulimina Mahamuti (MM '07) was awarded assistantships and/or scholarships at several prominent institutions. She has elected to begin work on the DMA degree at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in the studio of Robert Weirich.

Janice Malan (BME '73, MM '91) is teaching at the Crawford County Alternative School. Among her current projects is her work as director of the second annual Southeast Kansas Songwriters Festival, September 28-29, an event designed to assist aspiring songwriters via critiques by guest artists Todd Cerney and Casey Kelly. For further information about the workshop, contact Janice at Center Creek Records, 620-249-0609 (www.centercreek.com).

Cindy Rucker (BME '06) has accepted an appointment at Edna Elementary School, USD 506. This is a part-time K-8 vocal position, which will allow Cindy to maintain her private piano studio as well.

Dana Saliba (MS '66), formerly Head of the Music Department at Labette Community College, reports that she remains active as a performer on harp, violin, and piano for various functions in the area. She also serves as an adjudicator for music festivals throughout the region.

Roger (BME '95) and Lori (BME '96) Scantlin moved to Newton, KS, in May, 2005. Roger is the pastor of New Life Assembly of God church, where he is also active in the congregation's music ministry. Lori leads worship in the church, is involved with children's ministries, has a flute/piano studio, and is a paraprofessional at Newton High School, where she works with adaptive-PE students. Lori, after taking some time away from teaching to stay home with their two daughters, is expecting to return to teaching this fall.

Debra (Barnes) Snodgrass (BM '70, MM '07) has been appointed to a full-time position as Assistant Professor of Music at Missouri Southern State University in Joplin. A winner of the 2007 Southeast Kansas Symphony Concerto Competition, Debra will return to Pittsburg for an April, 2008 performance of the Chopin Piano Concerto No. 2 with the orchestra.

Erman Turkili (MM '07) has been awarded a graduate assistantship as a doctoral candidate in violin performance at Florida State University.

Jill Venter (MM '07) has been a member of the Fountain City Brass Band of Kansas City. This ensemble, having won the North American Brass Band Association competition in March, went on to compete in Cambridge, England, against more than 20 of the world's best brass bands. Jill has been accepted into the doctoral program at The University of Georgia, where she will continue to study euphonium and tuba.

Anna Wishall (BA '07) has moved to Brooklyn, NY, where she will be a teacher’s assistant working with special education students. Anna is sharing an apartment with Brett Palmer (BS '07) and Ryan Key (BA '07), so there is a new PSU presence in the Big Apple.

Obituaries
Stephanie Bryce (MM '91), died on June 1 at St. John's Regional Medical Center, Joplin, due to complications from an automobile accident. Following completion of her graduate degree in cello performance at PSU, Stephanie remained in Pittsburg. She loved cats and had a number of other interests, including the study of theology and philosophy. She is survived by her parents, a sister, and her special friend, Dr. Carolann Martin. Memorials in honor of Stephanie may be directed toward the PSU Department of Music or the local Humane Society.

Donald Cukjati (BME '62) died on May 6 at St. John's Regional Medical Center. Donald served 20 years in the U.S. Army as a major. He was a veteran of the Vietnam War and also served a tour of duty at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia. Following his military career, he worked as recreation supervisor of the fine arts for the city of Manhattan, KS. His retirement years were spent back in southeast Kansas, where he was the owner and property manager of DJ Homes in Franklin.