Choirs prepare for Spring Tour to New York, Boston

The Choirs of Pittsburg State are busily preparing for an ambitious Spring Tour that will take them to New England. The trip, which will take place during March 21-27, will include stops in New Haven, New York City, Boston, and Worcester, Massachusetts. Performance venues will include the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, St. Paul’s Cathedral in Boston, and the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester. The tour will also take the students to Hanover, Massachusetts, where they will visit a high school choral program directed by Heather (Swartz) Spinney (BM ‘98). In addition to the performances, the students will have some free time in which to visit important sites in these wonderful cities.

Biennial tours have taken the PSU Choirs in recent years to a variety of interesting places, including Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Atlanta, Houston, Dallas, Cincinnati, Louisville, and Washington, DC. The 75 students who have elected to participate in the upcoming tour have been engaged in a number of fundraising activities since September in order to support the trip, which this year will involve travel by airline as well as motorcoach.

For further information about the tour, contact Dr. Susan Marchant, Director of Choral Activities, at 316/235-4476.

Among the choirs’ recent fundraising activities was a Madrigal Dinner, held in the Overman Student Center on December 3. Two troubadours, Laurie Bell-Adams and Eric Haag, pause during the evening for this photo.

Opéra Workshop Offerings, Spring ‘00

The PSU Opera Workshop, under the direction of Dr. Stephen Bomgardner, will present an all-Mozart scenes program on Friday, February 4 and Sunday, February 6, 2000 in Memorial Auditorium, Pittsburg. The program, which will be presented in English translation, will be drawn from The Marriage of Figaro and The Magic Flute. These performances will be accompanied by the Southeast Kansas Symphony. Curtain times are 7:30 pm on February 4 and 3:00 pm on February 6.

On Tuesday, April 18, the PSU Opera Workshop will present a scenes program with piano at McCray Hall. This program will include scenes from opera, operetta, and musical theater.

For further information about the PSU Opera Program, contact Dr. Bomgardner at 316/235-4472.
Congratulations to Robert M. Scott

1999 Alumni Meritorious Achievement Award

Robert Scott (BME ‘60, MS ‘61) was honored at the December Commencement as one of two recipients of the university’s most prestigious honor, the Alumni Meritorious Achievement Award.

An emeritus professor of music at Southwest Missouri State University, his career has been marked by a rich diversity of experiences, from ten years of service in the U.S. Navy as a performer (trumpet), arranger, and director, through more than 30 years as a band director, educator, and administrator. He served as chair of the Music Department and, later, dean of the College of Arts and Letters before retiring from SMSU in 1993.

Prof. Scott has received many honors throughout his career, including the prestigious Phi Mu Alpha Fraternity Orpheus Award for “significant and lasting contributions to the cause of music in America.” He continues to serve as a clinician, guest conductor, and adjudicator throughout the United States. Invitations from abroad have taken him as adjudicator to the 1996 London New Year’s Day Parade and to the Paris Parade Millennium Festival.

Faculty Briefs...

Stephen Bomgardner, assistant professor, will present lecture recitals at the Texas Music Educators Association convention in San Antonio on February 11, 2000 and the Kansas Music Educators Association convention in Wichita on February 26, 2000. The presentation is entitled “The Songs of Aaron Copland” and is given in honor of the 100th anniversary of the composer’s birth.

Karen Dannessa, associate professor, performed with the Delaware Symphony at the Winterthur Estate during the Labor Day weekend. She returned to that region in November for a performance with the West Jersey Chamber Orchestra in Moorestown, New Jersey. Dr. Dannessa has also finished recording a CD of American chamber music that includes works for oboe, clarinet, and piano by Mark Sforzini and former PSU faculty member John MacKay. The disc will be released in the spring of 2000.

On leave for 1999-2000, assistant professor Evan Hause is living in Brooklyn, New York. He has played and sung his songs at several NYC clubs, played recording sessions, written new music, and attended many exciting concerts and operas. He is the musical director and pianist for the Hourglass Group revival of Sex, the notorious 1926 Mae West play which had not been presented in New York City since it was raided by police in 1927. The show includes several Mae West song favorites and some additional music by Dr. Hause and others. His commissioned work for Tales & Scales, A Musictelling Adventure, continues to play to young audiences across the country, and was performed and broadcast by the Boston Symphony in November. Awaken in Amber, an orchestral work, was chosen for a reading through the American Composers Forum and the Plymouth Music Series in Minnesota. Future performances will air his works in Salt Lake City and Havana. He is looking forward to seeing the PSU Choirs in New York in March, and misses dusty sunset drives on random roads west of Pittsburg.

Susan Marchant, professor, has been appointed to a two-year term on the Kansas State Board of the American Choral Directors Association. She will serve as representative for four-year colleges and universities in the state.

Kathryn Parke, lecturer, presented a lecture recital at Texas Woman’s University in Denton on October 14, 1999. The program focused on various elements of performance practice in Baroque vocal music.

Anne Patterson, chair and associate professor, is national treasurer of the College Music Society and serves on the Society’s Board of Directors and Executive Committee. She also chairs the CMS Finance Committee. She attended the annual meeting in Denver this fall. She also attended the annual meeting of the National Association of Schools of Music, the department’s accrediting agency, held this year in Chicago. She participated in the organization’s pre-conference seminar on technology, as well.

‘Tis the Season...

PSU musicians contributed to the holiday spirit again this year by presenting seasonal music throughout the community. Here, the PSU Trombone Quartet poses with Santa following a performance at the Meadowbrook Mall. Members of the quartet include Robert Kehle, Jeremiah Nichol, Ryan Elliott, and Josh Dempster.
Calendar of Events

January

10, 11 Enrollment
12 Classes begin
18 Senior Recital, Laura Hansen, piano, 7:30 pm
25 Pi Kappa Lambda Recital, 7:30 pm
30 * Fisk Organ Recital Series: Susan Marchant, organ, 3:00 pm

February

4 * PSU Opera Production: works of W.A. Mozart, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
6 * PSU Opera Production: works of W.A. Mozart, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
13 Guest Recital, Ernest Kramer, piano, 7:30 pm
19 AGO Young Organists Academy, all morning
22 * Solo & Chamber Music Series: Zephyr, 7:30 pm
27 Graduate Recital, Arlecia Elkmil, percussion, 3:00 pm
29 University Bands, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm

March

3 PSU Annual Jazz Festival, Memorial Auditorium, all day
3 Concert, featuring the Trilogy Big Band, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
5 * Southeast Kansas Symphony, Memorial Auditorium, 3:00 pm
7 * Solo & Chamber Music Series and Fisk Organ Recital Series: Daniel Roth, organ, 7:30 pm
10 Faculty Recital, Stephen Bomgardner, voice, 7:30 pm
11 Federated Music Clubs Festival, all day
13 Junior Recital, Elizabeth Homesley, clarinet, 7:30 pm
18 Mid-America Piano Festival, all day
30 Senior Recital, Becky Payne, piano, 7:30 pm
31 Senior Recital, Eric Haag, voice, 7:30 pm

April

1 Garrett/Liu Piano Duo, 7:30 pm
3 Southeast Kansas String Orchestra, 7:30 pm
4 * Recital, Leah McCormick, voice, and Tara Gray, piano, 7:30 pm
6 Waddill Chamber Music Competition
7 * Solo & Chamber Music Series: El Mundo, 7:30 pm

Take heart,
music educators!

Erma Rose (BME ’63, MS ’64) was the subject of a moving tribute that appeared in the Parsons Sun on October 2, 1999. The ultimate purpose of the article, by editor/publisher Ann K. Charles, was to encourage local residents to purchase subscriptions to the Community Concert Association and, beyond that, to consider bringing a young person along to the concerts as well. To support her contention that such experiences could prove to be a lifelong gift for children, she reminisced at length about the important influence that Erma Rose, her school music teacher, had had on her life as a result of introducing her to classical music, particularly via live performances. Ms. Charles has concluded that no other teacher has had such an impact on her life.

Whether or not we think of ourselves primarily as music educators, most of us will have an opportunity at some point in our lives to help a young person discover a whole new world of music. May we not miss it!

Famed Parisian Organist to perform at PSU

Daniel Roth, renowned virtuoso and organist of the Church of St. Sulpice in Paris, is among the artists who will grace the stage of McCray Recital Hall during the spring semester’s offerings of the PSU Solo & Chamber Music Series. Mr. Roth’s concert is set for Tuesday, March 7.
Laura Parsons appointed to PSU faculty

Laura E. Parsons has been appointed to the PSU music faculty as a lecturer for the 1999-2000 academic year, during which time Todd Hastings, assistant professor, is on leave of absence from the university.

Dr. Parsons hails from North Carolina, where she also received her musical training. She earned a BME degree, summa cum laude, in 1984 at Mars Hill College. Graduate degrees in trumpet performance followed at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she held a graduate teaching assistantship. Continuing her record of academic excellence there, her dissertation was nominated by the School of Music faculty for the 1999 Outstanding Dissertation Award.

In recent years, Dr. Parsons has taught trumpet at several North Carolina schools, including Wake Forest University and Salem College. She has also taught courses in music theory and music appreciation at UNC-Greensboro. Her responsibilities at Pittsburg State have included applied trumpet and music appreciation. She will teach the Fundamentals of Music course this spring.

Among the special interests of this very brave woman is performance on the natural trumpet. Audiences at the annual Timmons Chapel Concerts in December were treated to a taste of this beautiful instrument.

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!

Charlene Anderson (MM ’88) writes that she is teaching elementary vocal music in the Independence, Missouri School District. She adds that she is really enjoying their three-year-old son, Barry.

Rebecca Barringer (BM ’98) is working on a graduate degree in voice at Southwest Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri.

Jane (Brown) Bass (MM ’70) sends word that she retired from music teaching in May, 1999, and has begun work as an implementing artist with the Harwelden Institute for Arts in Education. She is also a teaching artist with the Tulsa Arts & Humanities “Artist-in-the-Schools” program. Jane has contracted to sing an 8th season with the Tulsa Opera Chorus, and she also maintains a small piano studio. In the time that remains, she plays in a Celtic band, “All Strings Attached.”

Rabon Bewley (MM ’95) has accepted a position as Director of Instrumental Studies at Midland College in Midland, Texas. He succeeds the late Walter Osadchuk, former PSU faculty member, in this appointment.

Lori Bolton (BME ’96) reports that she is about halfway through her program at the Washburn University Law School. To keep herself active musically, she teaches piano to a number of children.

Michael Brandel (BM, BME ’95) has begun graduate work in the areas of voice science and clinical speech science at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. His wife Jayne is working as a speech-language therapist in the Ohio school system. Michael and Jayne have also shared the exciting news that they are expecting their first child in July.

Harlan Bryan (MM ’96) and his family are now residing in Orlando, Florida, where Harlan is serving as Minister of Music for the Faith Assembly of God. His duties there include the direction of the church’s 25-member orchestra, which plays for services and accompanies the choir.

Theobell Campbell (MS ’62) continues her fervent work on behalf of the National Federation of Music Clubs, having completed her 39th year as mentor and counselor of the Elementary-Junior Musical Art Club, an affiliate of the Kansas and National Federation. At the state convention in Lawrence during April, she was installed as president of the KFMC. She was named a Rose Fay Thomas Fellow at the National Federation’s Centennial Convention, held in St. Louis, May 6-9.

Joel Dodd (MM ’97) is an instructor of performing arts at Navajo Preparatory School in Farmington, New Mexico. He is still active as a tubist and is considering the possibility of beginning work on a doctorate at the University of Utah.

Gary Green (BME ’74) completed work on a major project during 1999, an adaptation and translation of Jean Baptiste Lully’s Alceste. This modern version of the opera was then performed in June under Gary’s direction at Central Oregon Community College by Performing Arts Link, an organization for which he serves as artistic director. In the true spirit of Baroque music-making, Gary led the orchestra from his position at the harpsichord.

Liz (Bain) Huddleston (BME ’57) is the new children’s librarian at the Calabasas (California) public library. Combining singing and story telling and some tunes by Engelbert Humperdinck, she and another story teller produced a musical version of Hansel and Gretel for the summer reading program. Liz would like to hear from other PSU alums from the ’50s. Her website: home.earthlink.net/~wmoore/toc.htm

Joy Khoo (BM ’93) is working in Chicago as an analyst for the firm of Ernst & Young. She is pleased to send news of her engagement to Byron Bacik, a U.S. government diplomatic security agent. Wedding bells will ring on September 9, 2000.

André Duane Lash (BME ’69) received a Regional Artist’s Grant from the Arts & Sciences Council of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, Inc. The grant enabled him to spend three months in Zaragoza, Spain, where he studied Renaissance and Baroque Spanish organs and organ music. During his sabbatical time, he also guest-lectured for one week in Irkutsk, Siberia, under the auspices of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. In addition to his continuing responsibilities at St. John’s Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, André also accompanies the Oratorio Singers of Charlotte and is an ad
junct professor of music at the University of North Carolina/Charlotte.

David Osborne (MM ’83) maintains an exciting career as recording artist and as pianist at the Palace Court of Caesar’s Palace in Las Vegas. Among the recent celebrities to visit the Palace and sing his praises was Celine Dion. In December, David was invited once again to the White House to perform at the annual Christmas party. Earlier in the fall, he played a vital role in the planning of a special 75th birthday party for former President Jimmy Carter. The gala was held at the newly renovated Rylander Theater in Americus, Georgia, and it was attended by about 700 people.

Michael Straw (MM ’81) and his wife Melissa visited Pittsburg earlier this year and provided us with an update on their activities. They continue to reside in Columbia, Missouri, with their two children, Matthew and Margaret Mac. Mike maintains a private vocal studio and is Director of Music at Broadway Christian Church in Columbia. Melissa is a music specialist for Mithon Middle School, Director of Music at First Christian Church, and a vice-president of MMEA.

Patrick (MM ’89) and Michelle (Lane) Sweeten (BME ’86) send news from their home in Florida. Michelle continues to teach music in the public schools, having established an elementary orchestra this year. She is also working on a graduate degree in special education. Patrick’s ongoing career with the U.S. Navy is really blossoming. Earlier this year, the Commander of the Navy’s Southeast Region of the United States bestowed upon him the Sailor of the Year Award. He was chosen for this honor from a pool of more than 300,000 sailors.

Jo Anne (Young) Taylor (BME ’77) is featured as a soloist in Benjamin Britten’s Rejoice in the Lamb on the newly-released Dale Warland Singers CD, Bernstein and Britten. She also performed as a soloist in conducting master classes with Helmut Rilling and Thomas Somerville during the 1999 Oregon Bach Festival. Jo Anne conducts middle school choirs at Minnehaha Academy and teaches private voice at North Central University, both in Minneapolis. In March, she will sing Pergolesi’s Stabat Mater with Rebecca Lloyd and the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra, in Kansas City. She will also perform as soloist with the Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphony in the final movement of Mahler’s Second Symphony in May.

Richard Wang (att. ’80s) sends word that he is repairing and making violins at Weaver House of Violins in Bethesda, Maryland. He and his wife Vivian reside in Rockville, Maryland.

The final year of the 20th century was a particularly exciting one for Vinita (Hampton) Wright (BME ’82), whose novel, Grace at Bender Springs, was published by Broadman and Holman Publishers of Nashville, Tennessee. The book, which deals with the realities of life as a Christian in a small Kansas town, has been enormously successful in terms of its sales and critical response. It is available through bookstore chains such as Barnes and Noble or Borders, and it will also be carried by Amazon.com. Vinita resides in Chicago, where she works as senior book editor in the Trade Division at Loyola Press.

Obituaries

We received news of the death of Jim Parks (MS ’68) on October 12, 1999. Services were held at Grace Cathedral in Topeka on October 21. Jim worked with the PSU Choirs during 1968-69, when Richard Smith was on sabbatical leave.

The Pittsburg musical community lost a life-long friend and supporter with the death of M.S. “Pete” Stuckey on December 4, 1999 in Pittsburg. Pete was well known for many years as a proprietor of the Pittsburg branch of the Ernie Williamson Music House. He was an active musician as well, having sung for years with the Centennial Choir and other organizations, including the Chancel Choir of First United Methodist Church, for which he served as a cornerstone of the tenor section for more than 50 years.

We have also received from the Alumni Office notification of the deaths of the following music alumni:

William Chitwood (MM ’91)
Lucille (Gabriel) Hausman (BSED ’31)