Music Notes

Vol. 18, No. 1 Winter/Spring, 2003

Festival of New Music Set for February 20-23

Pittsburg State University has announced plans to host a Festival of New Music during February. Designated as one of the official events of the PSU Centennial Year Celebration, the festival will offer four concerts and three workshops involving contemporary music. Of special interest will be an improvisation project that will be geared toward high school students.

Concerts will take place in several venues, including McCray Recital Hall, Porter Hall, and Pittsburg’s Memorial Auditorium. The festival will present a great variety of literature, from 20th-century classics such as Olivier Messiaen’s *Quartet for the End of Time* and Terry Riley’s *In C*, to recent works by festival composers.

The event will bring a number of guest artists to campus, including composers Persis Vehar and Phillip Schroeder, pianist Dylan Savage, and oboist Susan Savage. The festival will conclude with a February 23 concert by the Southeast Kansas Symphony. Among the offerings of that program will be the premiere performance of a piano concerto by John Ross, featuring PSU faculty pianist Reena Berger as soloist.

For further information about the festival, contact Dr. John Ross at 620-235-4477 or jross@pittstate.edu.

PSU Jazz Ensemble to Perform at KMEA

The PSU Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Professor Robert Kehle, has been invited to perform at the 2003 In-Service Workshop of the Kansas Music Educators Association in Wichita.

The performance will take place at 2:45 pm on Friday, February 28, in Rooms F-H at the Hyatt Hotel adjacent to the Century II complex. Distinguished PSU alum Steve Wilkerson (MM ’89) will appear as featured soloist with the ensemble.

For further information about this or other upcoming performances by the PSU Jazz Ensemble, contact Prof. Kehle at 620-235-4474 or rkeble@pittstate.edu.

PSU Alum Working to Establish Bangkok Music Program

Following completion of his master’s degree in theory and composition at PSU, Kittisak Poonsawat (MM ’02) returned to his undergraduate alma mater, Assumption University in Bangkok, Thailand, to help put things in motion to create a comprehensive music program at this Catholic institution of 25,000 students.

Following a year of careful planning and approval by Thailand’s Ministry of University Affairs, the first program, a curriculum in Music Business, will begin in June with a projected enrollment of 45 students. Plans call for the establishment of the Bangkok Conservatory of Music sometime within the next five years. Significant growth is predicted for the university during this time; the enrollment is expected to reach 40,000 students.

Dr. Paul Carlson’s visit to the school during the fall semester (see related article), was the first of what is hoped will be a long and fruitful collaboration between the two institutions.

Music Scholarship Audition Days at PSU

Saturday, February 15

Friday, March 14

Auditions also scheduled according to individual students’ needs.

Further information:

PSU Department of Music
620-235-4466
music@pittstate.edu

Music of Handel & Haydn Planned for Spring Collaboration

The Southeast Kansas Symphony will join forces this spring with combined choral ensembles for a performance of music by Handel and Haydn. The concert will take place at Pittsburg’s First United Methodist Church at 3:00 pm on Sunday, May 4. The program, under the direction of Susan Marchant, will begin with two of the Coronation Anthems composed by Handel for King George II and will continue with the *Harmoniemesse* of Haydn.

The large chorus will be comprised of members of the PSU choral program, singers from the Pittsburg community, and the choirs of Independence and Coffeyville Community Colleges.

For further information, contact Susan Marchant, Director of Choral Activities, at 620-235-4476 or smarchan@pittstate.edu.

Visit the PSU Department of Music Home Page for Up-to-Date Information concerning Concerts, Workshops, Auditions, and Faculty Biographies at http://www.pittstate.edu/music
New Faculty Appointments

Selim Giray has been appointed to the PSU music faculty as instructor of upper strings, succeeding Dr. Paul Carlson, who graciously had come out of retirement to return to teaching for the past two years.

Dr. Giray’s early musical training was in Istanbul, Turkey. He came to the United States about ten years ago, first earning an MM degree in performance as a student of Fritz Gearhart at East Carolina University, and then completing a DMA in performance at Florida State University under the tutelage of Eliot Chapo. Prior to accepting this position, Dr. Giray was a member of the music faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, where his teaching duties included applied strings, music theory, music appreciation, and conducting the University/Community Orchestra. Since 2000, he has also been an instructor at the Interlochen Summer Music Camp, where he has taught violin, viola, and chamber music. At PSU, Dr. Giray is teaching violin, viola, and upper string techniques. He is also directing the PSU Chamber Orchestra.

On a personal note, Selim and his wife Wendy are the proud new parents of their first child, Sara Pelin, born in Pittsburg on November 15.

James Ackman was appointed to the PSU Music Faculty this fall as Assistant Director of Bands and percussion instructor. Dr. Ackman received his undergraduate training at Southern Illinois University, where he was awarded degrees in both performance and music education. He then earned a master’s degree in instrumental conducting at Eastern Illinois University.

Following a number of years as an instrumental director in high schools in Illinois and Massachusetts, he completed work on the Ph.D. in Music Education at the University of Florida. Collegiate appointments at Texas A & M-Kingsville and the University of Rhode Island then followed, where his duties included instrumental conducting, percussion instruction, and observation of student teachers.

Dr. Ackman has written extensively on matters related to percussion pedagogy. He also presented a paper titled “Changing Trends in Preparing Students for College Level Theory” at the MENC Biennial National Conference in Nashville during April, 2002.

A busy semester for PSU composer John Ross

It has been a busy and fulfilling semester for composer John Ross, who heads the theory and composition program at Pittsburg State. His orchestral work After a Line By Theodore Roethke continues to catch the attention of conductors across the country. It was chosen from a field of international entries as one of three American compositions for inclusion in a September public reading session by the Riverside Symphony of New York City. The purpose of this session is to produce a demonstration recording of the works and then distribute it to other professional orchestras for their consideration. Later in the semester, the work was performed at the Mid-America Contemporary Music Festival at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. This performance was recorded, along with comments about the work from Dr. Ross, by Albany Records, and it will be released under the title The Voice of the Composer: New Music from Bowling Green.

Additional recognition came when his work Melodia was selected from a field of more than 250 compositions for performance in Kansas City during the opening night concert of the College Music Society’s National Meeting. The concert took place on September 26 at the UMKC Conservatory.

Closer to home, the PSU Chorale, under the direction of Susan Marchant, presented the premiere of his new choral composition, The Last Thing I Say. The SSAATTBB work, a setting of a poem by Marvin Bell, is dedicated to the composer’s father.
Calendar of Events

January

14 Enrollment
15 Classes begin
26 Fisk Organ Recital Series: Susan Marchant, organ, 3:00 pm

February

7 * Choir Dinner Event, Music from American Musical Theater and Popular Song, Overman Student Center (reservations required)
14 * Solo & Chamber Music Series: Gilles Vonsattel, piano, 7:30 pm
15 Scholarship Audition Day
18 Faculty Recital: Kathryn Parke, soprano, 7:30 pm
20 University Bands, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
23 * Southeast Kansas Symphony, Memorial Auditorium, 3:00 pm
28 Jazz Ensemble at KMEA, Hyatt Hotel Rooms F-H, 2:45 pm

March

2 Fisk Organ Recital Series: Organ and Choral Music of Dan Locklair, 7:30 pm
3 Guest Recital: Jack Wieneck, piano, 7:30 pm
4 Junior Recital, Jenny Marlin, flute, 7:30 pm
7 Jazz Festival, Memorial Auditorium, all day
7 * Jazz Festival Concert, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
9 University Choirs, 3:00 pm
10 Senior Recital, Ni Mei, violin, 7:30 pm
11 * Solo & Chamber Music Series: Ensemble Galatea, 7:30 pm
13 Senior Recital, Lacy Brant, alto sax, 7:30 pm
14 Scholarship Audition Day
25 Guest Recital, Liberace Winds, 7:30 pm
28 * Solo & Chamber Music Series: Claudia Waite, soprano, 7:30 pm
31 Senior Recital, Timothy Henderson, bass, 7:30 pm

April

1 Senior Recital, Katie Burton, trumpet, 7:30 pm
3 Senior Recital, Xiaguo Zha, violin, 7:30 pm
5 Regional Solo/Ensemble Festival, all day
6 * Southeast Kansas Symphony, Memorial Auditorium, 5:00 pm
7 SAI Concert, 7:30 pm
8 Phi Mu Alpha, American Music Concert, 7:30 pm
10 University Bands, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm
11 SEK Symphony Children’s Concert, Memorial Auditorium, 9:45 am
12 Mid-America Music Festival, all day
13 Suzuki Strings Concert, 3:00 pm
14 Junior Recital, Demaris Herrera, piano, 7:30 pm
15 Opera Scenes, 7:30 pm
17 State Large Ensemble Festival, all day
18 Senior Recital, Christina Bartlow, soprano, 7:30 pm
21 Senior Recital, Casie Wolfe, soprano, 7:30 pm
22 Graduate Choral Conducting Recital, Lu, Wen-Hsuan, 7:30 pm
24 Faculty Recital, James Hall, flute, 7:30 pm
27 Senior Recital, Candice Coffey, mezzo-soprano, 7:30 pm
28 Senior Recital, Barbara Vandiver, euphonium, 7:30 pm
29 Jazz Ensemble, Memorial Auditorium, 7:30 pm

May

1 Four-State Band Festival, Memorial Auditorium, all day
2 Graduate Recital, Camay Liao, piano, 7:30 pm
4 Handel and Haydn, Combined Choirs and Orchestra, First United Methodist Church, 3:00 pm
16-17 Commencement Ceremonies

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

Concert Honors Memory of Margaret Thuenemann

A number of former students of Professor Margaret Thuenemann gathered this fall to present a concert in memory of their beloved mentor. The concert took place on Friday, October 25 on the campus of Central Methodist College in Fayette, Missouri, home of the Thuenemann Library.

Professor Nancy Jones, curator of the Library and organizer of the concert, reports that alumni travelled from Indiana, Tennessee, Missouri, Kansas, and New York in order to attend the event.

Among the participants were Sandra Ellis Freeman, William Vance, John Casey, Erma Rose, Mary Margaret Woods Blumhorst, Iraelene Swain, Warren Huffman, Pam Gaston, Kathleen Coffee, Michael Straw, Tom Anderson, and Kirk Pemberton.

Solo & Chamber Series Continues Through March

The 2002-2003 PSU Solo and Chamber Music Series enjoyed an immensely successful fall semester, with outstanding performances by The Aspen Ensemble, Percussion Group Cincinnati, and a full-length Jazz Concert by trumpeter John Sneider and his ensemble.

The Spring Series will begin with a special Valentine’s Day concert by Gilles Vonsattel, Swiss-born pianist who is this year’s winner of the prestigious Naumburg International Competition.

On March 11, guitarist Richard Savino returns to Pittsburg with Ensemble Galatea for a program of Spicy virtuoso music from Italy. Among the other members of the ensemble are Bruce Dickey, cornetto, and Monica Huggett, violin, both of whom are known to audiences around the world for their performances of this literature.

The season finale on March 28 will present soprano Claudia Waite from the Metropolitan Opera. Ms. Waite will also share her gifts as a teacher as she works with PSU student singers in a special master class.

For further information about the SCM Series, contact the Department of Music at 620-235-4466.

Robert Kehle Elected President of PSU-KNEA

Professor Robert Kehle is wearing another important hat this year, that of president of PSU-KNEA. This new responsibility comes following a number of years of dedicated service to various aspects of governance within the university, including a term as Faculty Senate President.

Although this position requires an extraordinary investment of time and energy, Prof. Kehle has managed to continue working on a number of other important projects. Among those projects is a new textbook for use in low brass instruction. The work is designed as a comprehensive resource that will even include items such as interviews with major artists.

Claudia Waite, soprano
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!

Paul Benner (BA ’84) writes that he is working for the Reuter Organ Company in Lawrence, Kansas. He is enjoying the work immensely and has gained experience in a number of areas of the shop, including chest construction, keyboard regulation, and final assembly.

Michael Brandel (BM, BME ’95) is in his second year as K-12 vocal music director for the McLouth Schools, USD 342. His added teaching duties this year include high school drama. His wife Jayne continues work on an NIH Grant in the Department of Speech-Language and Hearing at the University of Kansas. Michael and Jayne were blessed with the birth of their second daughter, Jessica Nicole, on June 4, 2002. Michael writes that Jessica joins their two-year-old daughter Tabitha in welcoming each day as a wonderful opportunity for life.

John Cook (MM ’01) and Liz Homeley (BM ’01) have announced their engagement. The couple is planning an April 26 wedding in Fort Scott.

Toni (Tucker) Croxton (BME ’85) is currently in her 13th year of teaching. She has recently begun her second year in the Clay County School District, where she teaches K-12 vocal and instrumental music at Wakefield School. She also teaches piano lessons before and after school. Toni reports that her husband is a geologist for KDOT, and that her daughter is in the fifth grade and is excited about starting band this year.

Joel Dodd (MM ’97) writes that he completed a degree in music education and is now employed as band director and K-5 music teacher at Jemez Valley Public Schools in Jemez Springs, New Mexico. He reports that life is good in the southwest, where he is married, playing tuba when he can, and eating plenty of New Mexico red chili.

Becky (Porter) Fulgham (BME ’74, MM ’77) is the new Executive Director of the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri, after serving for eleven years as Director of the Southeast Missouri Music Academy. She still teaches a few piano students and accompanies for her husband Marc (BME ’77), who is Associate Professor of trumpet at Southeast Missouri State University.

Brad Harrison (BME ’98) and his wife Andrea are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter, Hannah May, on May 22, 2002. The Harrisons are residing in Holdenville, Oklahoma, where Brad is the director of bands.

Brett Lyerla (BM ’92) continues as a graphic designer for College Press Publishing Company in Joplin. Brett’s wife Kristi teaches gymnastics to pre-schoolers and works in the nursery at the Joplin Family YMCA. Their older son Brandon is enjoying kindergarten, and their younger son Connor keeps them busy doing what three-year-olds do. The Lyerla family currently resides in Carl Junction, Missouri.

Leah McCormick (BME ’01) is enjoying her teaching position in Pennsylvania, where she is currently working with 7th and 8th grade students. She has begun studying cello, which she finds to be a fun and rewarding outlet.

David Osborne (MM ’84) continues to thrive in his position as pianist at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. He has recently married Jeannine Carter, who works as a model and human resources specialist. The Northstar Music record label has sold more than 2 million piano recordings bearing David’s name. He looks forward to upcoming collaboration with Celine Dion at Caesars Palace.

Andrea (Baker) Wilkerson (MM ’91) continues a busy singing schedule in the Los Angeles area. She is the first female director of the top jazz ensemble at Pasadena City College, where she is also on the commercial music staff. Andrea recently accepted a position as choral director at South Hills High School in West Covina, California. Her latest CD should be released in the summer of 2003. She and Steve have a very talented 16-year-old, Chance, who plays drums and tenor sax.

Steve Wilkerson (BM ’89) continues as full-time music lecturer at Mt. San Antonio College at Walnut, CA. He recently played lead alto and flute behind Barbra Streisand at the Kodak Theater for her fundraiser for Dick Gephart. He also performed with Barry Manilow and was featured on the soundtrack of Rush Hour II. His CD, It’s a Blues Sort of Thing with organist Joey DeFrancesco, continues to sell well nationwide. In high demand for clinics and concerts, Steve has recently been a guest conductor at UCLA.

Obituary

Darrell “Stoney” Glenn (BM ’01) died at his home in Cassville, Missouri on November 28. At the time of his death, Stoney was employed as K-12 director of vocal music at the Wheaton, Missouri schools. He was also serving as organist for Central Community United Methodist Church in Shell Knob, Missouri. He is survived by his wife Stacy and two daughters, Emily and Ashley.