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C.B. Hunt Remembered by John F. Sawyer

When C.B. Hunt died January 25, Nashville lost a man who made an enormous contribution to the city's cultural life. He was my mentor, whose idea it was that Peabody College should establish a precollege program to teach talented youngsters the joys of listening to and performing classical music. His original concept fostered the creation of what is today the Blair School of Music of Vanderbilt University.

It all began in 1963 when Valere Blair Potter expressed her wish to honor her mother, Myra Jackson Blair—a piano teacher—by establishing a program in music. The members of the Justin and Valere Potter Foundation (David K. Wilson, chairman; Anne Potter Wilson; and Valere Potter Menefee) asked C.B. Hunt, the director of the Peabody College School of Music, for a proposal to implement Mrs. Potter's wishes. Subsequently, C.B. submitted a plan for a preparatory music academy for talented children, which the Foundation endorsed, providing initial funding of \$25,000 a year for three years. In 1964, following a national search, C.B. asked me to start Blair Academy, saying he would support me even when I was wrong. And he did just that—often.

Early on, I was deeply concerned about the availability of quality string teachers. I sought C.B.'s advice, and he suggested I submit a proposal to the Potter Foundation for a resident string quartet to teach and to perform. The foundation accepted my proposal, and in 1967, the Blair String Quartet was born.

By the mid-1970s, Blair had not only become the precollege component of Peabody's School of Music but, because of its

outstanding performance faculty, was recruiting and training approximately 80 percent of Peabody's instrumental performance majors. However, with the dissolution of the performance degrees after Peabody's restructuring, Blair Academy had little reason to stay. Foreseeing the inevitability of the college's demise as a freestanding institution, C.B. encouraged me to seek independence. I spoke with David K. Wilson, who supported the move. It was a two-year process. In the first year, Blair became independent of Peabody's music program. In the second year—1977—Blair separated from Peabody and became an independent institution affiliated with Vanderbilt University.

By 1978 the Potter Foundation had agreed to fund a new building for Blair Academy on the Vanderbilt campus. The plans, unfortunately, did not include space for a library. I turned again to C.B., who by then was dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication at Southern Illinois University, to help me convince Justin Wilson, my liaison with the foundation, that Blair needed space in its new facility for a music library. C.B. was successful, and with his encouragement in 1981—the year in which Blair became the 10th school at Vanderbilt—the music library of the now defunct Peabody School of Music was moved into the space at Blair. The collections had principally been acquired during C.B.'s tenure at Peabody.

These are only a few of the contributions that this marvelous man made to the music community of Nashville. C.B. Hunt was the father of Blair, and in a professional sense, my father, too. What a wonderful legacy he left us.

John F. Sawyer is dean, emeritus, of the Blair School of Music.

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On January 15, the Martha Rivers Ingram Center for the Performing Arts hosted its inaugural concert. When new concert halls are dedicated at colleges and universities, it is customary to present the institution's own performers in rather elaborate productions of size and grandeur, and certainly the Blair School has the faculty and students to present such productions. However, in planning for the inaugural concert in January, the Blair School of Music wanted from the outset to celebrate the role the Ingram Center will play as a focal point for the performing arts in Nashville and Middle Tennessee.

Moreover, we wanted to honor one of Nashville's (and America's) outstanding ensembles, the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Fisk University has served students and the city of Nashville for well over a hundred years, and the Fisk Jubilee Singers have thrilled audiences for nearly 130 years. In that time, though, they have seldom performed at Vanderbilt. It was clearly time to feature the Singers in an event that would bring the community together in a musical celebration. Moreover, because the inaugural concert occurred in mid-January, on what would have been Dr. King's 73rd birthday, it became the keynote event in the Martin Luther King Jr. Series at Vanderbilt University.

The evening itself fulfilled its promise, gloriously. Under the direction of Paul Kwami, the Fisk Jubilee Singers performed a program ranging from selections its predecessors had sung in the late 1800s to modern gospel arrangements. The audience was large and enthusiastic, and the acoustics of the concert hall proved to be everything we and the acoustical engineers had hoped for.

A Historic Evening

In introductory remarks, Chancellor Gordon Gee recognized PresidentCarolynn Reid-Wallace of Fisk University; and Lucius Outlaw, professor of philosophy and director of African American Studies at Vanderbilt, spoke eloquently of Martin Luther King's legacy and the importance of the new partnership between Fisk and Vanderbilt.

The Blair School takes pride in having presented the Fisk Jubilee Singers at this inaugural concert. But quite apart from the tribute paid by one great university to another, their presence embodies the spirit of the person who did so much to make the evening possible: Martha Rivers Ingram, who for decades has brought our community together through all the arts—music, opera, ballet, and theatre. It is her devotion to the arts that has brought intellectual and cultural enrichment to tens of thousands of our citizens and students, and that has earned Nashville its growing national recognition for artistic excellence.



Mark Wait
Dean



PHOTOS BY NEIL BRAKE
AND DAVID CRENSHAW

"Music is like a big jigsaw puzzle," said guitar legend **Mark Knopfler**, who opened the Blair School of Music's 2002 Conversations Series on February 1. "You begin to realize that it all connects, and all the different kinds of music begin to influence your writing."

Knopfler and his touring band, which includes some of Nashville's best session players, demonstrated this connectivity and more to a capacity crowd in the Blair School's Ingram Hall. The program featured an in-depth discussion of his work as guitarist, songwriter, and composer for film, and included examples of songwriting collaboration and instrumental virtuosity centered around Knopfler's distinctive guitar licks and deep baritone.

"While he is world-renowned, this artist's ties to Nashville are one important reason why we asked him to be a guest," said Dean Mark Wait. "He was a long-time friend and collaborator with the late Chet Atkins, who was our first Conversations Series guest." Atkins was instrumental in creating what came to be known as "the Nashville sound," but Knopfler admitted that as a youngster, he never listened to country music. "You change," he said, "you learn to respect music, and in picking together, Chet and I realized we had many things in common."



NEIL BRAKE

2002 BLAIR SCHOOL OF MUSIC HONORS AND AWARDS

On May 10, the Blair School of Music celebrated the achievements of its graduates with its annual breakfast, followed by a commencement ceremony that did not dampen the spirits of graduates despite the rain that forced relocation of the exercises to Memorial Gymnasium halfway through awarding degrees.

1. Chris Walters of Jacksonville, Illinois, is congratulated by Chancellor Gordon Gee after being awarded the Founder's Medal for first honors in the Blair School by Dean Mark Wait.
2. Blair graduates (from left) Jennifer Janes, Lee Hancock, Chris Genovese, Drake Dantzer, and Jason Colgate await the beginning of the ceremony.
3. Jennifer Janes and Chris Genovese visit with family and friends at the pre-ceremony breakfast held in the lobby of Ingram Hall.
4. Musical Arts graduate Maria Gall with her mother (left) and Amy Dorfman, associate professor of piano.



4.



3.



1.



2.

PHOTOS BY NEIL BRAKE, STEVE GREEN, AND JOHN RUSSELL

COMMENCEMENT HONORS

Founder's Medalist	Chris Walters
Banner Bearer	Kristin Cameron
Student Marshals	Colin Jones Lee Ann O'Neal
Alma Mater Vocalist	Amanda Martin

AWARDS

Alpha Lambda Delta Senior Certificates	Colin Jones Amber Standridge Chris Walters
Margaret Branscomb Prize	Austin Osborn
Sue Brewer Award	Josh McGuire
Robin Nell Dickerson Award	Todd Patrick
Jean Keller Heard Prize	Shannon Thomas Anne Warner
S.S. and I.M.F. Marsden Award in Musical Scholarship	Johanna Frymoyer
Benjamin E. Mays Award for Academic Excellence	Charles Charlton
Delene Laubenheim McClure Memorial Prize	Daniel Montgomery
John T. and Lizzie McGill Upperclass Award	John (Chow) Seymour
MTNA Student Recognition Award	Adam Bernick
Elliot and Ailsa Newman Prize	Leslie Romero
L. Howard "Zeke" Nicar Award	Jenni Bernard
Presser Award	Jonathan Chu
David Rabin Prize	Jonathan Chu
SAI College Honor Award	Amanda Martin
SAI Scholastic Award	Kristin Cameron



NEIL BRAKE

The family of **Rosemary Kremer May**, a Nashville resident for many years and survivor of the Holocaust concentration camps of Westerbork, Terezin, and Auschwitz, recently donated two music books to the Anne Potter Wilson Music Library.

The books, presented to the School by Rabbi Ken Kantner and given by Emily May Dolinger, Dudley Dolinger, and Rick and Cindy May, were treasured by their mother as remnants of her life in Germany.

Ballet Mécanique by George Antheil caused near-riots when it premiered in Paris in 1925. Employing an arsenal of piano and percussion instruments and introducing silences as music, the piece was shocking.

The Blair Concert Series presented the piece in February using four pianists—Amy Dorfman, associate professor of piano; Melissa Rose, assistant professor of piano; seniors Maria Gall and Curtis Sydnor—and eight percussionists—including Bill Wiggins, assistant professor of percussion; Adam Bernick; Danna Buchanon; Travis Norvell; and Lin Ong. It comprised the second half of a program that also featured the music of BMI Composer-in-Residence William Bolcom.



DAVID BENSHEAN

Musical Chairs

Profile | Chris Teal and Roland Schneller

This winter the Blair School of Music was honored to announce the creation of two newly endowed chairs—the Joseph Joachim Professor of Violin, endowed by an anonymous donor; and the Chancellor's Chair, endowed by the Valere Blair Potter Charitable Trust with matching funds from the University. Important as the first permanently endowed precollegiate faculty chair, the Chancellor's Chair is held by Roland Schneller. Chris Teal is the Joseph Joachim Professor of Violin.

Faculty chairs are of paramount importance to any school because of their ability to attract the best faculty, who in turn attract the best students. At Blair, faculty chairs also serve to alleviate the operating budget to the extent that chaired faculty salaries do not come out of the annual budget. This is significant to the annual fiscal health of the Blair School.

by Angela Wibking

Chris Teal: The Music Comes First

For Chris Teal, being named the Joseph Joachim Professor of Violin is a double honor. Not only is Teal the first recipient of the endowed chair, the position is named in honor of a musician Teal greatly admires.

Joachim (1831-1907) was a violinist, composer, and dedicated teacher with considerable influence on 19th century German music. He was a close friend of Johannes Brahms, who dedicated his great Violin Concerto to Joachim. His influence spanned several generations of musicians, particularly those where there were solo violinists and chamber players. Most meaningful to Teal is that Joachim believed that the performer should take a back seat to the music. "Joachim was one of the first violinists who wasn't a showman first and a musician second," says Teal. "His priority was to communicate the music, not to use the music as a vehicle to show off."

Putting the emphasis on the music has been a hallmark of Teal's own teaching and performing career since joining the Blair faculty and becoming a member of the Blair String Quartet in 1972. "Chris is a fine violinist and a fine teacher who promotes an atmosphere of cooperation among the string faculty," says Connie Heard, associate professor of violin and quartet member, who also studied with Teal while a precollegiate Blair student. "His emphasis is on everyone working together for the music."

Born and raised in Richmond, Virginia, Teal began music studies at age 10 in the public school system, where his choice of instrument hinged on supply rather than demand. "I went in saying that I wanted to play the trumpet," Teal says. "But the teacher only had a violin. After one weekend with it, I was pretty much hooked."

Teal progressed quickly and by age 13 was playing with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra. "Over the next five years, I was able to play major works and perform as a soloist," Teal says. "I also got to meet some of the giants, like Isaac Stern." After earning a bachelor's in music at Indiana University, Teal was faced with the reality of the Vietnam War and the draft. He became a member of a U.S. Army band stationed in Washington, D.C., and he spent three years playing for state dinners and White House receptions. Teal also found the time to earn his master's in music from Catholic University of America and to play in chamber music ensembles while living in the nation's capital.

In his 30 years at Blair, Teal has seen much growth in the school and considers the Joseph Joachim chair as another example of progress. "It's a great honor to be Blair's first collegiate chair," Teal says, "and it's a great step for the

school. I'm particularly gratified that the name of the chair reflects an intention to focus on the music and the quality of music making rather than the flash of virtuosity."



Roland Schneller: To Hear the Potential in Every Student

With its permanent endowment of a precollegiate faculty position, the Chancellor's Chair in Blair School of Music underscores the school's focus on

early musical education. Appropriately enough, the chair's first recipient is Roland Schneller, a member of the Blair faculty since the school's beginning as an academy providing musical instruction to Nashville area schoolchildren.

Schneller, co-chair of the keyboard department and coordinator of precollege scholarships, began his own musical studies at age five in a small New Jersey town. Though his parents and siblings all played piano or violin and sang together for recreation, Schneller recalls that his first formal piano lesson was actually frightening. "We kids all walked to school together and every day when I was in nursery school, we had to go past what I thought was a haunted house," he says. "The next year when I went to my first piano lesson I found out my music teacher lived in that house."

Despite that intimidating introduction, Schneller went on to study music throughout high school and into college, earning a bachelor's in music at Mount Union University and a master's degree from Indiana University. The following year, he was hired as an instructor at the Blair Academy of Music, as it was then called, and went to work at the academy's original location at 1208 18th Avenue South on the Peabody College campus.

In his 38 years at Blair, Schneller has helped countless precollegiate students realize their musical potential and has seen the school realize its own potential. "We were the first precollegiate institution to be accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music," Schneller recalls. Later, George Peabody College merged with Vanderbilt University, and the school moved to a new facility on the Vanderbilt campus in 1980.

In 1985 Schneller married his wife Pamela and later began working with her as accompanist for the Children's Concert Choir, a precollegiate vocal program at Blair that she directs. "Roland has an amazing gift for hearing the potential in every performance and finding the strength of every student," says Pam Schneller, who directs the entire Blair Children's Choral Program, the Vanderbilt Concert Choir, and the Vanderbilt Community Chorus.

The Children's Concert Choir is composed of junior and senior high school girls and tours annually. Last year, the group sang in England and this summer it will tour Minnesota and Wisconsin. In addition to their work with this choir, the Schnellers also collaborate in the Community Chorus, with Roland singing in this volunteer group. "So, in many respects, she's my boss," Schneller says.

As honored as Schneller is to be named to the first Chancellor's Chair, he is pleased even more that the chair signals Blair's commitment to precollegiate training for generations to come. "Blair's original mission was to teach the precollegiate student," says Schneller. "That this chair is funded in perpetuity is a wonderful thing for these kids."

Profile

In Nashville, the Blair School of Music's influence on classical music, and increasingly on other musical genres, is well known. Its position as a leader of music education on both the precollegiate and collegiate levels is undeniable here at home in Tennessee, regionally, and, more recently, nationally.

But how well known is it that some on the faculty have conducted orchestras in places as remote as Siberia and the Ukraine? That members of the Suzuki faculty have presented clinics in Canada, Australia, and Sweden? That the Children's Chorus has performed in Austria and England? That music by Blair composers has been heard in France, Denmark, Russia, England, the Czech Republic, Japan, South Korea, and on Swedish television?

Around the World

Blair faculty and alumni/ae have conducted research from Africa to Italy, have taught from Scotland to Cyprus to Australia, and have performed all over the world. In this issue, we invite you to read about the recent travels of three faculty and two alums who, by virtue of their excellence in various areas of music, are carrying the banner of the Blair School of Music of Vanderbilt University around the world.

With the Blair School of Music



In Africa, AIDS is a pandemic that has destroyed millions of lives directly and indirectly. In remote villages the problem is worsened by the lack of information and modern medical care. While researching indigenous traditions in Uganda that combine music, dance, and drama, Greg Barz, assistant professor of musicology (ethnomusicology) and professor of religious music, found local women's support groups fighting back.

With little or no money, groups of women in Ugandan villages devastated by AIDS are using music, dance, and drama to educate those most vulnerable to HIV and to improve the lives of those already infected. In a culture where the word for music, *ngoma*, includes singing, drumming, dance, and drama, such traditional performances are as much about education as entertainment. This grassroots intervention has helped reduce the rate of HIV infection from 30 percent to 8 percent of the population even where efforts based on traditional Western medical models have proven largely unsuccessful.

"On many occasions we asked the women living with HIV why they persist in their efforts, why they continue to dance when they have so little energy," says Barz. "The answers given remain profound for me. They do not want other women and children to experience what has been forced upon them, and they will use whatever they can to educate others, no matter how small the rewards," he says.

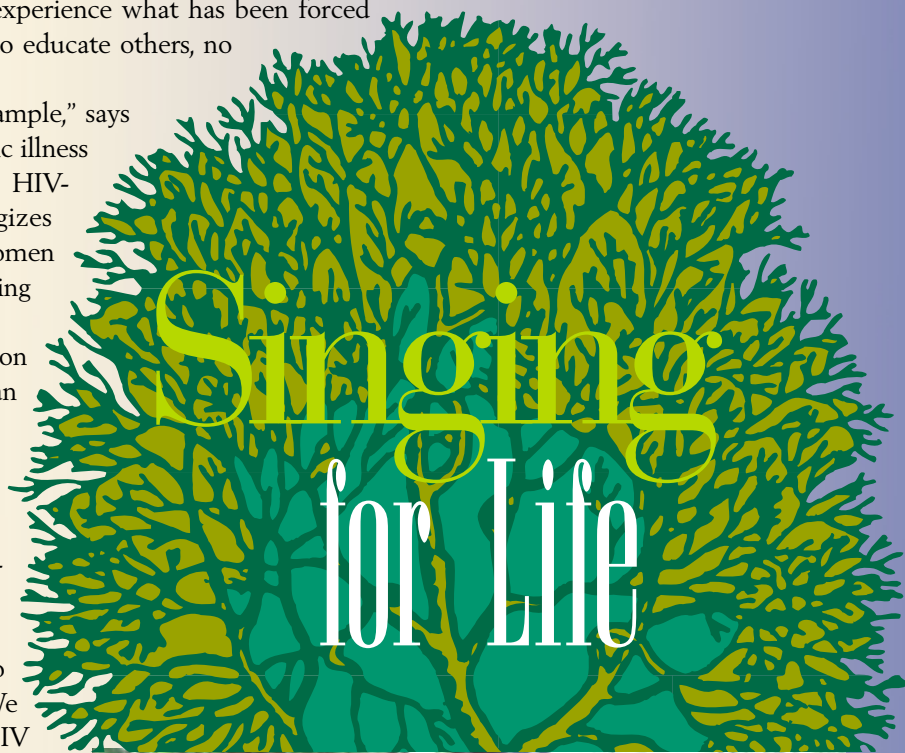
"We have a lot to learn from the Ugandan example," says Barz. "Too often Western cultures deem catastrophic illness as rendering the victims helpless." Many of the HIV-positive women report that dancing energizes and singing gives back more than it takes. "The women we spoke to are choosing to live positively, helping others," says Barz.

Can the same methods work in the U.S.? Based on Barz's field research, Lee Ann O'Neal, BMus '02, an Ingram Scholar at Blair, helped organize a coalition of faculty, staff, students, and community partners to bring Ugandan AIDS activist Noeline Namukisa to Vanderbilt for 10 days in April. The event, called "Meeting Point: Vanderbilt," inaugurated a cross-cultural dialogue on health care issues affecting us all.

"We communicate our messages primarily through music, dance, and drama; counseling is also done through music and drama," says Namukisa. "We show a drama demonstrating how girls acquire HIV because they want to get rich, to become 'smart' at an early age. We show what happens when women go to witch doctors instead of testing centers. We pass along songs in places where AIDS has hit aggressively. Music is our most powerful tool for effecting change in Uganda."

Barz's field research has now received funding from the United States Fulbright Scholar Program. His initial field research trips to East Africa were funded by Vanderbilt, with student research assistants, including, most recently, O'Neal and Blair senior Jonathan Rodgers, BMus '02, supported by the Ingram Scholars Program and the Vanderbilt University Summer Research Program. The Fulbright grant will fund nine months of field research beginning this summer. Senior Jack Rutledge will also be involved.

"Ethnomusicology is concerned with understanding how things change: how music can be used in social action, even with no money in a small Ugandan village," says Barz. "The goal is to understand how others live in the world and to learn about ourselves in the process."



Robin Fountain, associate professor of conducting at Blair, was recently invited to guest conduct the National Philharmonic of Tomsk, Siberia—thirteen time zones east of Nashville. The orchestra had requested two programs, one English (Vaughan-Williams' *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis*, Walton's *Crown Imperial*, Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, and Purcell's *Incidental Music from The Fairy Queen*) and one American (Bernstein's *Overture to Candide*, Kurek's *Sirens*, Barber's *Adagio for Strings*, and Copland's *Rodeo*.) The following impressions are excerpted from a diary of his experiences there.

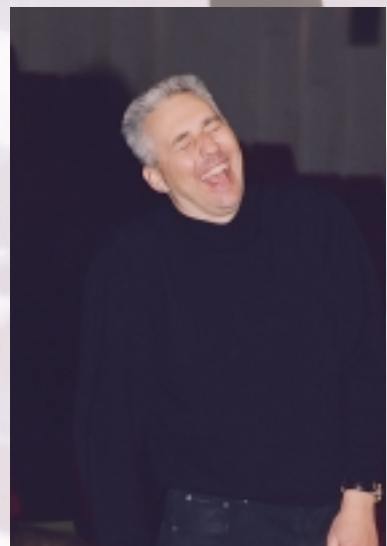
DAY 1 (Monday, February 18) Early Monday morning in Tomsk airport in February is not an inspiring experience. It is very cold. There is no jetway, and no Olga* either. I follow the crowd and eventually find both luggage and host. I am whisked to a hotel for a quick sleep, thence to Philharmonic Café, and finally to the building that will be my home for two weeks. The apartment is tiny but perfectly adequate. Everything is double locked and security clearly an issue. "Don't go out!" says Olga, firmly, leaving me to battle jetlag until the next morning's rehearsal.

DAY 2 (Tuesday, February 19) The orchestra has never played any of the music on the program, and rehearsal is rather exhausting, but it is exciting to be with such a willing and accomplished group. The orchestra's English and my Russian are equally non-existent, which certainly puts pressure on my powers of mime. Explaining to the timpanist about "Romanza" in *Enigma Variations*, for example, proves impossible, and I am eventually reduced to wresting the required sticks from the reluctant grip of the side drum player and playing the timpani part myself (to general applause). Altogether a most satisfying session, as the orchestra seems to be having fun and likes the music. This is a relief—two weeks in Siberia with an orchestra that hates you would be, well, challenging.

DAY 3 (Wednesday, February 20) The strings sectional rehearsal proves interesting, as some of the music (especially the Purcell) requires the exact opposite of the traditional Russian style of string playing, which emphasizes sustained weight and attack. The concertmaster, Sergei, a superb musician with a particularly beautiful economy of motion, has been an elegant presence in Tomsk for over twenty years. After rehearsal, Olga treats me to a huge lunch consisting of a plate of sautéed pork, layered with potato and onion and smothered liberally with both cheese and sour cream. I express some sympathy for my heart. "This will not harm your body!" she says, laughingly, as if the idea is risible. I decide at that moment to adopt that happy attitude for the duration, in the hope that the ravages of cholesterol will be offset by stress reduction. This allows me to eat splendidly fatty foods for two weeks guilt-free.

DAY 5 (Friday, February 22) Disaster strikes. The management had told me that additional players would be at the last few rehearsals; I had assumed they meant the missing "color" instruments (bass clarinet, contra bassoon etc.). At rehearsal I discover that they actually meant a considerable number of additional string players. Everything sounds awful, and I am reduced to sullenly correcting wrong notes we had already fixed at the first rehearsal.

DAY 6 (Saturday, February 23) Feeling somewhat ashamed of my petulant behavior at the previous day's rehearsal, I set off for the Army Day celebration, which provides one of the most moving moments of the trip. In the foyer of the Philharmonic building a military band is playing. As I approach, some members of the band who also play in the Philharmonic catch sight of me and begin making frantic hand signals to the conductor. Suddenly, the ensemble abandons its repertoire of maudlin waltzes and launches into an astonishing medley of American pop/rock/big band classics, complete with wildly idiosyncratic solos and enthusiastic vocal interjections: "TEQUILLAAAAAAA!" A uniformed Russian military band playing this music is surely one of the most surreal sights imaginable, and



ROBIN FOUNTAIN'S TOMSK REHEARSAL DIARY

the change so striking that a small boy, who had been driven literally to tears by the previous numbers, suddenly brightens up and begins to dance. It's difficult at that moment to understand how we were ever in a state of "Mutually Assured Destruction" with these wonderful people.

DAY 7 (Sunday, February 24) A lovely concert experience. Our music making is well received, and the orchestra exits beaming. Afterward I try, in my horrible Russian, to ask Sergei what he thinks of the Elgar—one of my favorite pieces. "Veeeeel," he says hesitantly, "...not Brahms...."

DAY 10 (Wednesday, February 27) The first rehearsal of the Copland *Rodeo* is absolute chaos. Most of the musicians have never played anything resembling this style of music and leave the first half of rehearsal ashen. After the break, we begin working on my colleague Michael Kurek's beautiful *Sirens* symphony, which, to my joy, the orchestra understands and appreciates instantly. For the next several days, on every visit to the Philharmonic building, I find musicians practicing Copland, either alone or huddled in groups. This is gratifying to see, and results in one of the fastest improvement rates I can remember from any group.

DAY 12 (Friday, March 1) The orchestra sounds terrific, so after rehearsal I treat myself to an extended walk round town. I visit the first Tomsk Cathedral, where Father Sergei, regales me (through an interpreter) with fascinating tales of the founding of the church, the healing powers of its icons, its desecration during the communist era, and its recent revival. At present they are running an appeal to replace the ancient and gargantuan (it had required three persons just to move the tongue) church bell, which had been melted down for scrap (!) in the 1930s. One typically poignant story: at some point during the revolution, the interior walls, which had been painted with pictures of the saints, were painted over with whitewash. "...but next day," said Father Sergei, "the paintings reemerged—they were unable to hide them."

DAY 14 (Sunday, March 3) Again, a memorable concert. The Philharmonic musicians clearly enjoy playing American music and do so with considerable panache. It is amazing how little of what is standard repertoire in the USA has made its way into Russia. Sergei, for example, has never heard the wonderful Violin Concerto of Samuel Barber, and I promise to mail him a tape and score. After the concert, a huge crowd of musicians, their students, and children press into the green room to wish me safe journey and to ask if I may return. To which the answer is a heartfelt, "Yes."

*I owe Olga Lesina, the General Manager of the Tomsk National Philharmonic—an ever generous, supportive, and resourceful host—and the Tomsk National Philharmonic a great debt of thanks for their wonderful hospitality and kindness.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF OLGA LESINA



By Georgia Stitt, '94

遠野アメリカンミュージックフェスティバル

Coming Together

at the
TONO AMERICAN MUSIC FESTIVAL

A year ago, I was asked by a friend and colleague to travel to Japan as piano accompanist for her choir. It was a great opportunity; I'd never been to Japan, and now I had a chance to travel with my friend and write the whole thing off as a business expense. Plus, I'd get to look up Kevin Simmonds, a dear friend who'd graduated with me in 1994. He was a singer. I was a pianist and composer, and during our years at Vanderbilt, I had been his accompanist.

Kevin came to one of our concerts in Tokyo, having traveled nearly eight hours by bus from his small town of Tono, where he works as a teacher of English and music. The reunion was sweet, and before long we were fantasizing about my coming back to Japan to visit his students and make music with him on his own turf. Ah, if only we were rich. And plagued with free time. And rich.

A few weeks after I returned home to New York, Kevin sent me an e-mail with a link to Arts International, a foundation that funds American artists traveling abroad to participate in arts festivals. Kevin proposed that I apply for a grant to participate in the First Annual Tono International Arts Association's American Music Festival, which he was creating. He was serious. He had begun the paperwork, started the Web site, and was gathering support in his small village (one of eight that make up the city of Tono) for the largest arts festival the region had ever seen. His proposal covered five weekends of performances, each featuring a different American artist who was a specialist in a specific type of American music. Kevin asked me to open the festival and to represent American musical theater.

Now, I have played on Broadway, I've written songs that have had a life in the cabaret world, and I'm currently writing a musical that is on target for production sometime next year. But to represent musical theater, all by myself, to a rural culture that had little to no exposure to it? I needed help. I invited a friend to join me, Jason Robert Brown, a young composer who wrote

the Off-Broadway musical *Songs For A New World*. Jason also wrote music and lyrics for the Broadway musical *Parade* with book writer Alfred Uhry (*Driving Miss Daisy*). *Parade* was directed by the legendary Hal Prince (*Phantom Of The Opera*), and it won Jason the 1999 Tony Award for best score. Not that I'm name-dropping.

With about a week until the deadline, I wrote a grant application. I burned CDs. I created a budget. I e-mailed Kevin almost every day. And I got the grant, which was plenty of money for us to make the trip and take two singers with us.

By the end of summer, Jason and I had hired Broadway veterans Sally Wilfert and Keith Byron Kirk and began the daunting task of putting together a two-hour concert of our original music. We included our best solos, duets, and quartets. We took turns singing and playing for each other. We were having a blast: putting a concert together with friends, practicing conversational Japanese phrases, buying little gifts for our hosts.

And then September 11th happened.

How many articles these days have that exact sentence? The whole world was shocked, devastated, and changed by the events of that horrifying day. But we were New Yorkers, and the distance from our homes to the World Trade Center had been measured in blocks, not miles. The concert in Japan was scheduled for October 5th and 6th, less than a month after the terrorist attacks. The thought of flying on an airplane for 14 hours was the least appealing thing I could imagine.

Kevin called to ask if we were coming. The people of Tono were eager to meet us. The money was in place. The travel arrangements were secured. We decided to proceed as planned.

I have never been on a plane so empty. I had an entire row to myself and was able to stretch out and sleep for much of the trip. Once in Tokyo, we took a

subway from the airport into town, then a bullet train (traveling at a speed of nearly 200 miles per hour) north into the mountainous Iwate Prefecture. We took a small commuter train the final hour of our journey. We were the only Western faces on board.

We arrived at 11:00 PM having been in transit for about 24 hours. We were greeted by a small group of Japanese women (all named Keiko) who were waving American flags and stumbling over each other to meet us. It was exhausting, humbling, and beautiful. Two days of preparation for the concert went by quickly. We were dined and feted and gifted. We traveled to several schools in the region and performed for the students, who greeted us in studied English and presented their own performances: a traditional deer dance, a poem, a rendition of "Oh Happy Day."

We performed our concert to a full house of non-English-speaking patrons, who had come from as far away as Tokyo. We performed the songs in English, though each was preceded with a short description in Japanese about the meaning of the song or its placement in a specific show. Musical theater is a particularly lyric-driven art form, and we were concerned about our ability to communicate without translating lyrics. We needn't have worried. Judging from the standing ovation we received, it seems we communicated just fine.

Everywhere we went the Japanese people wanted to ask us about "the terror." They wanted to touch us, to feel that we were okay. We had anticipated being ambassadors of music; we wound up being ambassadors of New York and America. We spoke lovingly of our hometown and how it had been changed, physically, emotionally, spiritually. The Japanese people nodded in agreement, and it was clear we had much more in common with them than our love of music.



Stephen Seifert, former Blair faculty member, also played at Tono. Here he signs the Tono American Music Festival quilt stitched by audience members in tribute to the victims of the September 11th attacks.

Proceeds from the Tono American Music Festival were donated to the Twin Towers Fund in New York City. To learn more about the festival and its artists, please visit www.tonoarts.org.

By Cindy Steine

Viggo Italiano

The Blair School's Carl Smith has let his enthusiasm for all things Italian lead to a lifetime of learning and inspiration

Armed with a semester of night school Italian and a burning desire to see for himself the Romanesque architecture and Renaissance frescoes he had studied in books, Carl Smith set out for Italy in 1982, with no contacts, no reservations, one very small suitcase, and a new pair of walking shoes.

"I went solely for art," says Smith, senior lecturer in music composition and theory at Blair. "I was so bowled over by three Caravaggios in the Contarelli Chapel at San Luigi de Francesci in Rome that I fainted. Some very nice Swedes were standing over me when I woke up."

That trip began a series of journeys to a land where painting, sculpture, and music blend passionately, and, for Smith, this has led to great deal of creative work in both performance and composition. To date he has played more than 20 concerts in Italy, all of them on historically important instruments ideally suited to his concentration on the keyboard music of the 17th century.

Last October, Smith's pilgrimages culminated—on his 18th visit to Italy—in an invitation to Brescia to present the final concert in the annual festival series *Itinerari Organistici Bresciani*. Smith was the only American to perform in this prestigious series, on a program that featured the preeminent Dutch harpsichordist, organist, and conductor Gustav Leonhardt, with whom Smith studied in Amsterdam. Each autumn, performers from many countries come to this ancient Roman city, an hour east of Milan, to perform on the extant instruments by members of the famed Antegnati family and their successors.

"In the late Renaissance and early Baroque eras, Brescia was perhaps the most important Italian city for instrument building, initially for instruments of all types," notes Smith. "It became the center for organs and

harpsichords after the stringed instrument makers moved to Cremona. The Antegnati family dominated the scene for generations; their instruments are regarded as the finest of their time."

Brescia today is one of the wealthiest financial and industrial centers in modern Europe. Smith has returned to the city many times and now has many friends there. His concert last fall began with his "Psalm of Joy" for baritone and organ, composed three years ago for the wedding of a friend in Brescia, one of more than a dozen pieces written for friends in the city. The Psalm's phrase "if the Lord does not build a house, that house is built in vain," was a particularly appropriate reference, as the concert took place in the newly-restored, completely frescoed Renaissance Church of San Cristo, built in 1501, whose frescoed walls are called by some art historians the "Sistine Chapel of the north." The occasion also celebrated the 500th anniversary of the church's consecration.

Smith's concert ended with the dedication to victims of September 11 (many of whom were Italian) of his composition *La Ricordiamo*, written in memory of a close friend. The piece ends with a setting of "In Paradisium," a chant from the office for the burial of the dead. The critic for *Il Giornale di Brescia* praised the work as "technically lacking in nothing and never los[ing] its infectious vitality."

Even while teaching and composing in the States, Italy is never far from his mind. For three decades, Smith has been deeply interested in the drawing sheets and poetry of Michelangelo. This led to the composition of Smith's largest work, *Set My Heart Aright: A Michelangelo Portrait*, a cantata for men's chorus with text from the great artist's poems and letters. The work was commissioned and performed by the Gateway Men's Chorus in Saint Louis in 1996, in conjunction with a symposium on Michelangelo's poetry sponsored by the Saint Louis Museum of Art.

"Some of the ideas for poems came to Michelangelo as he was drawing, and the work sheets he wrote contain fragments or even complete versions of the poems," notes Smith; a prized possession is one of the rare sets of all the known drawings in facsimile. "The poems are filled with spiritual yearning—with the sacred



and the profane, the religious and the erotic—all inextricably intertwined."

Smith has recently accepted a commission for a choral motet setting of a contemporary poem about depictions of the resurrection by early Italian Renaissance masters. His plans to return to his inspirational sources remain constant, and for many years have included his wife, Carol, director of the Blair Suzuki program. Carol shares Smith's deep love for Italy—the art and the food—and has become quite a fine Italian cook.

"Carol will be in Sweden and Finland this summer, so our next trip together can't be for at least a year," says Smith.

"But I have a standing offer for a place in Brindisi, in the far south on the Adriatic, where I have never been. There is great Romanesque architecture down there that is hard to see without time and a car.

"I tend to pull these trips together later, rather than sooner," he explains. "For years, I would get the 'itch' to go around February. This year, it didn't hit until March. But quite a few of the buildings I love best have been where they are for a thousand years; I doubt they're going anywhere anytime soon."

In February, precollegiate and collegiate percussion students of **Bill Wiggins**, assistant professor of percussion, participated in a master class with William Moersch, internationally renowned marimba virtuoso, chamber and symphonic percussionist, recording artist, and educator.

PRECOLLEGIATE

The **Blair Children's Concert Choir**, directed by **Pamela Schneller**, senior lecturer in choral music, performed with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra in November with baritone John Ray in a performance of *The Polar Express* by Robert Kapilov.

The **Youth Strings Orchestra** presented a Spring Concert at the Saint Paul Retirement Center, Nashville, and the **Suzuki Reading Orchestra** performed with the YSO in a concert at Cool Springs Galleria. Both groups are under the direction of **Celeste Halbrook Tuten**, artist teacher of Suzuki violin. Her students who gave solo recitals in the past year include: **Spencer English**, **Channing Garber**, **Haley Peterson**, and **Piper Peterson**. Former student **Katie Rush** also gave a solo recital.

Annie Bender, **Will Bender**, and **Anna Rose Harris**, students of **Katherine Mansouri**, adjunct artist teacher of Suzuki violin; **Mary Grace Bender**, student of **Anne Hall Williams**, senior artist teacher of Suzuki violin and cello; and **Sarah Beth Bennett** and **Mary Love Bennett**, students of **Carol Smith**, senior artist teacher of violin; attended Ottawa Suzuki Institute, during the summer of 2001.

Eli Bishop, student of **Carol Smith**, was chosen to audition at the Louisville Suzuki Institute. In December, the **Suzuki Violins and Cellos**, directed by Smith and **Anne Hall Williams**, performed a holiday concert at Green Hills Mall, Nashville. The group was accompanied by **Celeste Halbrook Tuten**.

Patrick Hart, piano and composition student of **Karen Ann Krieger**, assistant professor of piano, was named Music Teachers National Association's (MTNA) state and Southern Division high school composition winner.

David Mansouri, student of **Cornelia Heard**, associate professor of violin, served as concertmaster of the Sewanee Symphony, summer 2001, and was a winner of the concerto competition. He was also a winner of the Nashville Youth Symphony Concerto Competition. David was asked to perform in Lincoln, Nebraska, in November as part of a doctoral lecture and recital.

Emily Perry, student of **Deanna Walker**, adjunct artist teacher of piano, was an MTNA state and division winner in composition this year.

Elizabeth Reiland, student of **Carol Smith**, gave a solo recital in September.

Lilla Sary, recorder student of **Norma Rogers**, adjunct artist teacher of flute, piccolo, and recorder, was a winner of the Nashville Youth Symphony Concerto Competition.

Amanda J. Smith, student of **Cornelia Heard**, won the Eunice Hoffmeister Young Artist Competition and will appear as a soloist with the Shoals (Alabama) Symphony in the fall. She was also the winner of the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra Young Artist Concerto Competition and placed second in the National Federation of Music Clubs Stillman-Kelly Competition. She was recently a finalist in both the Blount and Richardson (Texas) Competitions.

COLLEGIATE

Maria Gall, senior piano major in collaborative arts and student of **Melissa Rose**, assistant professor of piano, and **Amy Dorfman**, associate professor of piano, was one of six pianists chosen to participate in the Mountain View International Festival of Song in Alberta, Canada, with master teacher Rudolf Jansen in the summer of 2001.

Sophomore **Shannon Thomas**, student of **Cornelia Heard**, was a winner of the Vanderbilt Concerto Competition and will appear as soloist with the Vanderbilt Orchestra in the fall.

ADULT

Tim Bryan and **Steve Stubblefield**, students of **David Schnauffer**, adjunct associate professor of dulcimer, and a few friends form the group Starlings, TN. Their CD, *The Leaper's Fork*, which includes a song written by Schnauffer, was reviewed in *The Rage*, a Nashville music publication.

PRECOLLEGIATE

Sara Chazin, former student of **Cornelia Heard**, won second prize in the Musical Merit Foundation of Greater San Diego Competition and is also the recipient of the Lloyd Carr Harris Scholarship, the top string scholarship at McGill University in Montreal, where she is a freshman studying with Yonatan Berick.

Kathryn Eberle, former student of **Cornelia Heard**, was the silver medalist at the Julius and Esther Stulberg International Competition in Kalamazoo, Michigan. As a result, she will present a recital on the Fontana series this summer. Kathryn recently won "outstanding violin performance" at the Corpus Christi International Competition. She is currently a sophomore at the University of Southern California studying with Robert Lipsett.

UNDERGRADUATE

Karen Burciaga, '99, former student of **Gerald Greer**, adjunct artist teacher of violin, writes "A Texan in Boston? Yes, after working six months at Plymouth Plantation, I'm studying early music at the Longy School of Music—Baroque violin with Dana Maiben and viola da gamba with Jane Hershey."

Paul Gamber, '98, former student of **Sally Ahner** and **Michael Kurek**, associate professor of composition, serves as director of music ministries at Riverside United Methodist Church in Macon, Georgia, and is music director for the Choral Society of Middle Georgia.

Melody Man Harter, '94, former student of **Amy Dorfman**, and her husband Joel welcomed Lewis Ming-Yi Harter into their family in January. Melody is currently on leave from the

University of Chicago, where she works with the chair of the music department and is responsible for providing support to the Pacifica Quartet, artists-in-residence. She also has a private piano studio.

Tina Lobenhofer, '01, former student of **Craig Nies**, associate professor of piano, and **Cynthia Cyrus**, associate professor of musicology, was a finalist in this year's American Musicological Society, Capital Chapter, Lowens Award Competition. She was invited to read her paper at the spring meeting of the chapter in Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Kim Aleah Mullins, '95, former student of **Karen Ann Krieger**, and husband Matthew Perkins welcomed their first child, Caroline Elizabeth Perkins, in March.

Lindsay Alexander Owen, '97, former student of **Amy Jarman**, senior lecturer in voice, and **Karen Ann Krieger**, completed her master's of church music degree in choral conducting at Belmont University. She married Lee Owen, A&S '98, in October 2000. They have recently moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, where she is associate director of music ministry for children and youth at a 4,000 member Presbyterian church. She directs five choirs, two handbell choirs, one instrumental ensemble, and also teaches piano.

Holland Phillips, '00, former student of **Cornelia Heard**, is a scholarship student of James Buswell at New England Conservatory, working towards her master of violin performance degree. She is concertmaster of the NEC Chamber Orchestra.

Daniel Seriff, '99, former student of **Amy Dorfman**, is studying musicology, specializing in the music of the early

20th century, at the University of Texas at Austin. In October, he had a chamber work performed by the UT New Music Ensemble while John Corigliano was in residence.

FACULTY

The February issue of *Chamber Music Magazine* includes an article, "The Word on the Record Industry" that quotes **Chris Teal** and **Edgar Meyer**, adjunct associate professor of bass, on recording music and the music industry. The article also mentions the **Blair String Quartet**.

Butch Baldassari, adjunct associate professor of mandolin, and the Nashville Mandolin Ensemble recorded two songs with singer Patty Loveless for her 2001 Christmas CD from Sony/Nashville.

Lawrence Borden, associate professor of trombone, and **Allan Cox**, professor of trumpet, performed a brass quintet concert with Sonus Brass at the International Trumpet Guild Conference at the University of Evansville, Indiana. Sonus Brass then held a two-week symposium and performed concerts in Caracas and Barquisimeto, Venezuela.

Allan Cox taught trumpet, coached brass chamber music, and performed orchestra and chamber music at Sewanee Summer Music Festival in Sewanee, Tennessee, during the summer of 2001, his 16th summer as a faculty member there. He and **Amy Dorfman** recorded a CD entitled *Petite Pieces for Trumpet and Piano* this summer.

Cynthia Cyrus, **Amy Dorfman**, and **Kathryn Plummer**, associate professor of viola, were invited to present a lecture/recital, "Inspiration: Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge," at the College

Music Society's annual meeting in November in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Amy Dorfman presented a recital with **Edgar Meyer** as part of the Flagler Museum Series in Palm Beach, Florida, in November, and in April, they played the famous Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. In February, Dorfman and the **Blair String Quartet** appeared on the Glema Mahr Chamber Music Series in Madisonville, Kentucky.

Aside from his sojourn to Siberia in late February (see p.10), **Robin Fountain**, associate professor of conducting, conducted the Williamsport (Pennsylvania) Symphony in December, in the first live telecast in the orchestra's history. He also conducted the Vanderbilt Orchestra at the Music Educators National Conference's biennial convention held in Nashville; very few ensembles were selected from 150 audition tapes submitted by schools around the country.

Cornelia Heard returns for the third summer to perform at the Roycroft Chamber Music Festival in East Aurora, New York, in June, then joins the faculty of the Killington Music Festival in Vermont, teaching, performing, and coaching chamber music.

Carolyn Huebl, adjunct assistant professor of violin, gave a master class and recital sponsored by the Mid-City Conservatory of Omaha, Nebraska, in October. In February, she was soloist with the Brampton (Ontario) Symphony Orchestra. This summer, she is teaching and playing on faculties of Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory (Steamboat Springs, Colorado) and Killington Music Festival (Vermont) and performing chamber music at Denali National Park, Alaska.

John Johns, associate professor of guitar, in September released his CD, *Diverse Moods*, a sampler of favorite short pieces for guitar from several sources, styles, and countries. He performed solo recitals this spring at New York City's Manhattan School of Music, New York City Technical College, the American Institute of Guitar, and at the Ford Theatre, Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville. In April, he performed at the Nashville Chamber Orchestra Guitar Festival.

Enid Katahn, professor of piano, emerita, gave a lecture and recital in November for the combined groups of the Vanderbilt Retirement Learning Program and the Alliance Française. The topic was "French Piano Music of the Late 19th and Early 20th Centuries."

Michael Kurek's 2001-2002 sabbatical year included a premiere of his orchestral work, *That Which Remains Unspoken*, commissioned by the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, in Los Angeles in October. Kurek, associate professor of composition, served on the NARAS Classical Nominating Committee for the Grammy Awards in Los Angeles. **Robin Fountain** conducted Kurek's Symphony no. 1 (*Sirens*), in Tomsk, Russia, in March (see p. 10). Also, Kurek completed a new sonata for viola and piano, commissioned by **John Kochanowski**, associate professor of viola, and Dean **Mark Wait** for premiere in April in Ingram Hall. The Clarion String Quartet from the University of Southern California will perform Kurek's second string quartet in August in Missillac, France. He is presently at work on a commission from the Nashville Symphony, entitled *Concertino for Celesta and Orchestra (Fairy Dreams)*, to be premiered by the NSO in October.

Sally McFadden, adjunct senior artist teacher of orchestra, was guest conductor of the Serenata Strings at the 2001 Quad State String Festival at Murray State University, in Murray, Kentucky, last October.

Edgar Meyer, adjunct associate professor of bass, and banjo virtuoso **Bela Fleck** received Grammy awards this year from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS) for best classical crossover album for the CD *Perpetual Motion* and for best instrumental arrangement for "Doctor Gradus Ad Parnassum" (from Debussy's *Children's Corner Suite*) on that recording. The CD, on the Sony Classical label, featured works by Scarlatti, Bach, Debussy, Chopin, Tchaikovsky, Paganini, Brahms, and Beethoven.

Carol Smith, senior artist teacher of violin, served last summer as clinician and teacher trainer at Ithaca Suzuki Institute in New York and as clinician at the Hartt College of Music Suzuki Institute in Hartford, Connecticut. She was also guest clinician at Suzuki Weekend at Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia. **Smith, Katherine Mansouri**, adjunct artist teacher of Suzuki violin, and **Anne Hall Williams**, senior artist teacher of Suzuki violin and cello, were guest clinicians at a Suzuki workshop held at the University of Memphis in January.

Celeste Halbbrook Tuten, artist teacher of Suzuki violin, served last fall as accompanist at the Fall 2001 Middle Tennessee Suzuki Association Workshop at Centennial High School in Franklin.

Four Blair Students Play for Hand Therapists

In October, the American Society of Hand Therapists held its annual meeting in Nashville with featured speaker Caryl Johnson, chief hand therapist at C.V. Starr Hand Surgery Center in New York City and one of the leading therapists for musicians in the country. She presented two lectures dealing with the physical problems that can affect musicians, prevention of those problems, and solutions for them. Four Blair violinists were asked to be part of her presentation, to give the attendees a chance to observe, first hand (no pun intended), the physical demands of the instrument and the different approaches that are possible. The violinists who performed were Blair sophomore **Shannon Thomas**; fifth-grader **Christina Chintanaphol**; eleventh grader **Sarah Bennett**; and 10-year-old **Eli Bishop**. (Thomas and Bennett study with **Cornelia Heard**, Chintanaphol studies with **Chris Teal**, and Bishop is a

student of **Carol Smith**.) All four students performed beautifully and with poise, and the therapists had many questions for them at the conclusion of each performance. Johnson also gave a workshop at Blair for students and faculty, demonstrating warm-up exercises that musicians of any instrument can do to help prevent injury.

American String Quartet cellist **David Geber**, on the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music and keynote speaker at the hand conference, presented a cello master class at the Blair School during his visit to Nashville. Both Johnson and Geber were extremely impressed with the students' level of playing.

—*Cornelia Heard*

Blair's Voice Department Boasts NATS Winners

The Voice Faculty are proud of all the students from the Blair School who participated in this year's National Association of Teachers of Singing

(NATS) regional student auditions. Congratulations to the following winners:

Drake Dantzler, 2nd place, Senior Men

Daniel Montgomery, 3rd place, Senior Men

Todd Patrick, 2nd place, Adult Intermediate

Charles Charlton, 3rd place, Junior Men

Lillian Askew, 2nd place, Junior Women

Noelle Jacquez, 3rd place, Junior Women

Heather Lynn, 1st place, Sophomore Women

Katherine Cardin, 2nd place, Sophomore Women

Chris Mann, 1st place, Sophomore Men

Zachary Nadolski, 2nd place, Sophomore Men

Jennifer Berkebile, 1st place, Freshmen Women

Linnette McCloud, 2nd place, Freshmen Women

Kim Ekrem, 1st place, High School Women

Jake Sneed, Finalist, High School Men



On April 9, friends of the Blair School of Music were entertained on the stage of Ingram Hall with dinner and music, here provided by **Carolyn Huebl**, violin, **Amy Dorfman**, piano, and **Felix Wang**, cello.



All Blair School alumni and family are invited to attend a cocktail hour and performance on **Saturday, October 26**. Dean Mark Wait, Blair faculty members Amy Dorfman, Ruth Gotthardt, Enid Kathan, Karen Ann Krieger, Craig Nies, Jama Reagan, Melissa Rose, Roland Schneller, Rachael Short, and former faculty member Charlene Harb, will be featured with the Nashville Symphony Orchestra. Maestro Kenneth Schermerhorn will conduct piano concertos by Carter, Mozart, Bach, and Stravinsky, with each successive work calling for more pianos. For more information on extraVUganza and ticket reservation, call the Blair School Development Office at (615) 322-7650.

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