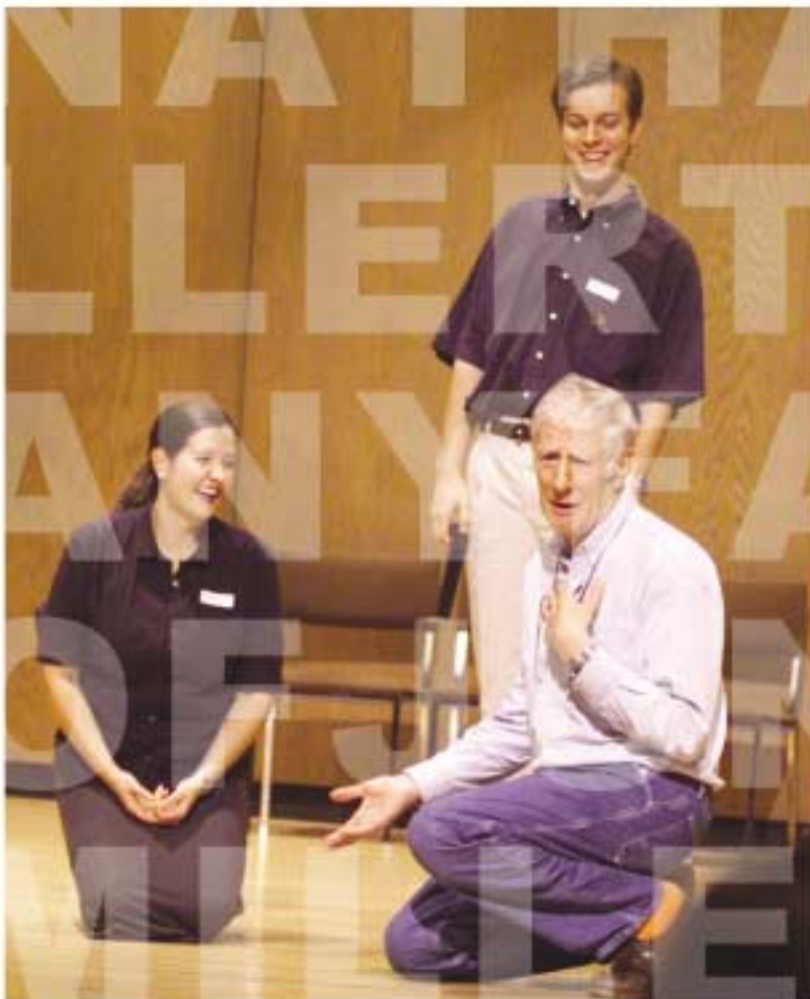
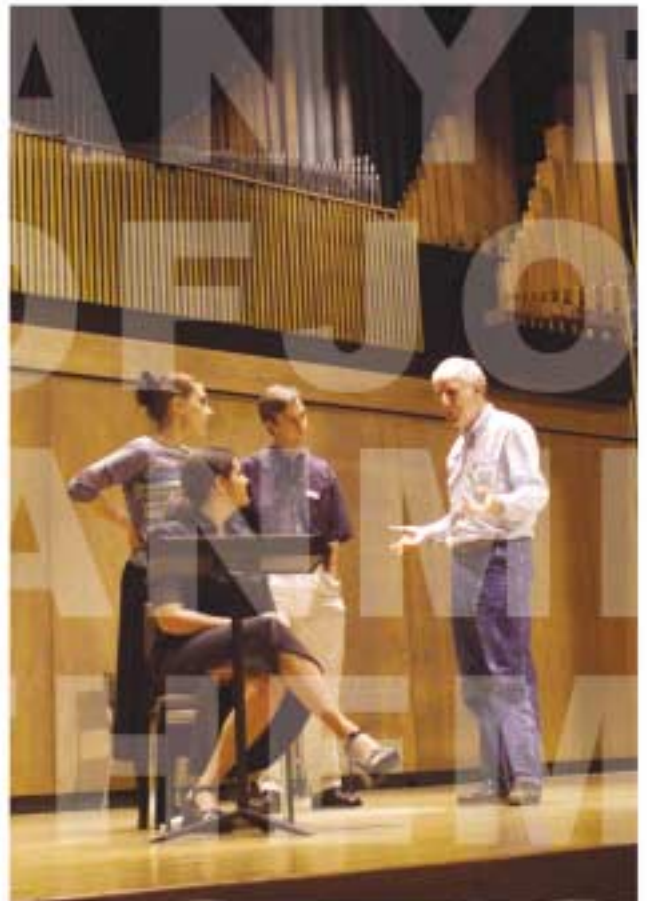


# Blair QUARTERNOTE

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

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## THE MANY FACES OF JONATHAN MILLER



Dean Wait

## Blair QUARTER NOTE VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Cover photo cutline: Jonathan Miller, the Harvie Branscomb Distinguished University visiting Scholar and acclaimed director, author, and neurologist, was in residence at Vanderbilt from October 16 through November 3. While here, Miller worked with the Vanderbilt Opera Theatre. The Blair School cosponsored his residency. See stories p. 8. Photos by Anne Rayner

The BLAIR QUARTER NOTE, the newsletter of the Blair School of Music, is published three times a year in cooperation with the Office of Alumni Publications for alumni, current students, and other friends of the School.

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This fall brought many activities and achievements to the Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University.

As you will read in this issue, the distinguished theatre and opera director Jonathan Miller visited this fall as the Harvie Branscomb Distinguished University Visiting Scholar. During his three weeks at Vanderbilt, Dr. Miller worked with students and faculty members in each of his many areas of expertise: neurology, psychology, philosophy, opera, and theatre. His presence enriched both our curriculum and the lives of the many students and faculty members who worked with him.

In addition to enjoying the presence of this distinguished guest, the Blair School's own students and faculty members continue to build a solid record of their own achievements. As I write this, we have just learned that Blair students won the following competitions at this year's meeting of the Tennessee Music Teachers Association: elementary, junior high, and high school composition; collegiate piano; junior high, high school, and collegiate strings; colle-

giate chamber music; and collegiate voice. I know that you join me in extending our congratulations to the teachers of these impressive students. They include Blair faculty members Elizabeth Cormier, Cornelia Heard, Karen Ann Krieger, Craig Nies, and Jonathan Retzlaff. Further information on these competition winners will be found in the next issue of the QUARTER NOTE.

Finally, let me call your attention to the article in this issue on the Blair School's class in music cognition. This is an emerging and important field of interdisciplinary endeavor, and the Blair School is proud of the leading role that Professor Lawrence Borden has taken in this area of research and pedagogy.

I look forward to communicating with you again in the spring. Meanwhile, please know of my best personal wishes for the New Year.

Mark Wait, Dean

## Unique Recording Console Given to Blair

During the summer of 2000, the Blair School of Music received a unique gift—a custom-built, portable recording console. This incredible piece of equipment came our way from Provo, Utah, due to the encouragement offered to the donors by Denny Purcell of Georgetown Masters and Donna Hilley of Sony Music Publishing.

The console was custom-built by systems designer John Mosely to record classical music. It will be placed behind the stage in the new performance hall when Phase II is completed in fall 2001. Mosely, who died in a plane crash in 1995, served as vice president of operations at Night Technologies International. The formal appraisal describes the console as a “multi-functional portable studio to do multi-track digital recording, any form of television recording, or film recording capable of eight-channel surround-sound mixing. The quality of components and attention to detail is second to none.” Both Blair students and faculty will make use of the console's capabilities. The

Blair School hopes also to make it available to the larger music community.

The Blair School and Vanderbilt University are especially grateful to Richard Zimmerman of NightPro, who was a close friend of John Mosely. He has worked long and hard to make this gift a reality for the Blair School. We are indebted to him for his enthusiasm, guidance and patience. A very special thanks also is due Denny Purcell, who has offered his time, advice, expertise, and hand-holding talents. Together with Garth Fundis, of Sound Emporium, he deciphered the technical capabilities of the console. Paul Worley, of Paul Worley Productions, also played an important role in getting the console to Blair. We are fortunate indeed to receive this unique console. Look for more news about it once it is in its home after completion of Phase II.

—VIRGINIA PAYNE,  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

## Blair's Music Cognition class crosses disciplinary boundaries to answer age-old questions and ask new ones

BY BONNIE ARANT ERTELT

Larry Borden, associate professor of trombone and principal trombonist with the Nashville Symphony, has been asking “why” ever since the days he played in an orchestra in Xalapa, Veracruz. “I would ask my musician colleagues, why does that trumpet solo in the *Leonora Overture*, which is played offstage, sound so out of tune, given that the trumpeter sounded in tune when playing on stage?” Borden thinks the answer has to do with frequency selective filtering (from physics), together with culturally based learning (from psychology). But most of Borden's colleagues didn't have a clue. “Most musicians are busy about the business of playing music,” says Borden, “and not about cognition or thinking about these ‘why?’ questions.”

Borden and John Rieser, professor of psychology at Peabody College, have been exploring for the past two years in their Music and Cognition class questions such as: What do arts and sciences have in common? Does the same music sound beautiful the world over? Why are some people more musical than others? What is musical intelligence? Are there ways we can learn the skills of music faster? Do children experience music the same way adults do? Is music a language? Can perfect pitch be learned? How does music evoke emotions? What universal elements exist in music across cultures? Because of these questions and many, many others like them, they are learning a great deal about the relatively new field of music

cognition in the process. Their teaching goals follow Aaron Copland's 1958 exhortation to listen to music at different levels; Bronowski's celebration of the similarities as well as the differences in the arts and the sciences; and their own determination to view music from the perspectives of different disciplines, including physics, cognitive science, child development, ethnomusicology, and music theory.

Borden insists this emphasis can make students better players and teachers. “We're still teaching private music lessons the way we did 300 years ago with a master teacher in a room with a student saying ‘this is right, this is wrong.’ But how can we help these students become better players with a deeper understanding of what they're doing both technically and cognitively?” he asks. “In the last 300 years, we've learned a lot about thinking, creating, and learning, and how to optimize all of these functions.

But we haven't been using that knowledge to train better musicians and teachers.”

In an effort to do that and in response to the Provost's initiative to establish interdisciplinary courses, Borden and Rieser were funded to buy equipment and pay for research assistance to get the course started. A second grant of \$50,000 allowed the pair to buy a Kyma System made by the Symbolic Sound Corporation, and with the completion of the Phase I construction, to set up a ‘quiet room’ filled with Sonex material that allows testing and recording in a space that filters out all extant sound.

“The Kyma System is invaluable as a teaching and research tool,” says Rieser. “It lets us do things in class that, without the equipment, would be very difficult or impossible to illustrate without an expert knowledge of physics. For instance, in class we can record a voice or instrument and imme-



*Ideas about what people celebrate and mourn differ from culture to culture, and this finds its way into any culture's music. Also, associations upon hearing music mean that one piece of music may evoke entirely different emotions in one person than in another.*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DREW WHITE

diately show the frequency spectrogram of what was played." Even better, the Kyma system lets Rieser and Borden change the sound frequencies and play the changed sounds back in class. "It's a great way to 'hear' the physics of sound in action. We can hear how much of an instrument's tone color is in the upper overtones, and how much of the salient information that we pick up is in the lower frequencies."

"It's hard to attach abstract concepts from physics and perception psychology without the listening experience," says Borden. "With this system, however, you can hear the difference in seconds. Anything of that kind that we'd like to show a student, we can construct if it's not already in the machine. It also means that we can go any direction in research that we can imagine, because we can build a specific stimulus of any type in order to ask the questions we're trying to get answered."

Some of the questions they ask do not require such sophisticated equipment. One class looks at the musicology of happy and sad music. "We call it our weddings and funerals class," says Borden. "I gather music from all cultures that would be related to either weddings or funerals, but we don't tell the students which is which. We let them guess just by listening."

"The first time we did it, I thought, no sweat, I'll pick out the funerals and so will the students," says Rieser. "But we were completely wrong. We mostly didn't have a clue."

"And why would that be?" continues Borden. "Why do we think we could pick it out so easily? In the West, by process of enculturation we know what is happy and sad and how that is reflected in music, but in other cultures, they celebrate completely different aspects of weddings and funerals than we might. So, in that class we look at how music is tied to emotion, to cul-

ture, to musical universals and other elements that may or may not be common across cultures."

A recent class found the students looking at questions related to perfect pitch and human memory, and as with all the topics tackled, questions beget more questions. Are people with perfect pitch auditory learners? Why is it easier to recall the color red than the pitch of C-flat? How does learning to play an instrument differ from learning lyrics, melody, or pitch variations?

"I've always been driven by the 'why' questions," says Borden, "and it has tremendously enriched my life. John is really fond of hearing me make some assertion and then say, 'Now, why might that be?' which usually sets us off on something completely off the subject, and maybe that is the best part of our relationship. I've learned so much by asking why and realizing I don't know."

Their intent with this course and the new music cognition research seminar is to have music and cognition become a research and teaching strength at Vanderbilt.

The research seminar picks up where the introductory course ends—focusing in detail on the nitty-gritty of research methods to answer new questions and involving undergraduate and graduate students in research. "Creating music and cognition as a teaching and research strength at Vanderbilt is a realistic vision," says Rieser. "With Blair joining forces with psychologists at both Peabody and Arts and Science, and with the new Learning Sciences Institute, our joint efforts in music and cognition are a first, but decent-sized, step toward bringing an emphasis on the arts into the broader University-wide study of cognition."

*Perfect pitch is actually a misnomer. Pitch is continuous and most people have the ability to identify a note within a couple of half tones either up or down. Those with bona fide perfect pitch, however, have it somehow encoded into their brains. Within the general population, only 1 in 10,000 people are able to listen to any pitch and correctly name it.*



## Blair Faculty and Graduates Form Core of Symphony at Carnegie Hall Debut

The Blair School of Music was well represented during the Nashville Symphony's Carnegie Hall debut on September 25. Eighteen faculty, the majority of whom are principals for their sections, toured the east coast with the orchestra, which also includes graduates of the school's precollege and collegiate programs. One current Blair B.Mus. student also made the trip. Sara Schultz, a senior from Shepherd, Montana, was a member of the second violin section. (Read more about her experience below.) "The room felt like a true place of business, where one must perform," said Schultz, "and my job, as part of the orchestra, was to play with accuracy and excitement."

The Symphony did just that according to *New York Times* music critic Allan Kozinn, who called the performance "a knockout" and hailed the group as playing "with the energy of an ensemble out to impress." The program featured works by Ives, Strauss, Beethoven and award-winning fiddler and former Blair faculty member Mark O'Connor, who served as guest artist with violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg.

### Reflections on a Journey

BY SARA SCHULTZ

As a substitute violinist with the Nashville Symphony on their recent east coast tour, I traveled a long way. We were headed to Carnegie Hall, and indeed, we got there; but the whole point was the journey and not necessarily the destination. I had a wonderful time with all the people of the Nashville Symphony—the musicians, staff, and families who went along. I wish I could repay them for taking me on tour.



Members of the Nashville Symphony rehearse on Monday afternoon at Carnegie Hall prior to their debut later in the evening. They received glowing reviews from both the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. Blair student Sara Schultz is third from left on the last row.

### The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round

Traveling on the bus was tedious, though the scenery changed often, brightening beautifully as we drove through Pennsylvania. To kill time on the ride, I studied jazz, music theory, and macaque monkeys. To entertain myself I wrote postcards to my boyfriend and studied the people around me. Meals were sometimes a challenge. Few meals were provided, though small bags of peanuts and raisins were offered at the beginning of the tour. I thought I could subsist on power bars alone, so I packed plenty of them. Instead, I became quite hungry. In Albany, New York, an Indian restaurant became popular with the Symphony musicians. Starving, I went to the buffet one afternoon to get a meal. One meal. It was enough to keep me going for a couple of days.

### Conquering Troy

We conquered Troy on this trip. Troy is just outside of Albany. Just inside of Troy is a music hall called the Troy Savings Bank Music Hall which could fit in a one-windowed dollhouse and which has the acoustics of a very cozy church. A person should really be

physically smaller than she is to play on stage in Troy! It is as though the smaller you are, the bigger your voice will sound. Let me explain. I like hearing a large orchestra that sounds like 20 people playing unrealistically full sounds, with the violin section sounding like one (very loud) person. At the hall in Troy, it was so easy to hear what was going on inside the orchestra that fitting in with everyone was not difficult. A beautiful, unified sound resulted, and it was present in everything we played.

### The Big Gig

Playing Carnegie Hall was pretty neat. The hall itself looked surprisingly small to me, and I found that I was not scared to play on stage. I had seen the place at home on my TV so many times that the night of the concert I felt as if I were playing inside a television set instead of on a stage. The audience wore familiar, friendly faces. The room felt like a true place of business where one must perform, and my job, as part of the orchestra, was to play with accuracy and excitement. It was our job to entertain the audience. I am beginning to have that same sense of my "job" now wherever I go to play.

## Blair faculty move into the completed Phase I addition and breathe

There's no mistaking a music school. People hurry, rushing from class to rehearsal to performance. Musical notes emanate through windows, walls, and doors as if the building is saturated with sound. Students with large instruments nearly knock each other down passing in stairwells and halls.

That's the way it has always been at Blair. Until now. There's no less rushing around than before, but with the completion of the Phase I addition, faculty and students now have an additional 40,000 square feet in which to stretch out, sing, study, play, and not automatically bump into each other in the process.

Blair's first home on 18th Avenue South consisted of a remodeled house and garage with no soundproofing and insufficient space. The original building on Blair's current site, built in 1980 with 36,000 square feet, was a welcome relief to the overcrowding at the original location. The soundproofing allowed students and faculty to work on pieces without feeling as though the instrumentalist or vocalist next door was literally in the same room.

But almost from the outset, the building seemed to shrink. "Even before the degree program began in 1986, we were teaching more and more precollege and adult students and Vanderbilt students who wanted to take music for credit," says Jane Kirchner, associate professor of flute and associate dean. "In 1980, our course enrollment was 800, in 1990 it was 1,381, and this year, it's 2,775. Our faculty has grown from 41 in 1980 to 98 this year, including 43 full-time. We kept adding new faculty and new staff and new students, but no new space."

Instead, the building began to be cannibalized in the 1980s says Kirchner. "The coat-check area became an office, faculty began to share studios, administrative offices were carved out of the main office area, many of the practice rooms began second lives as

tiny faculty studios, and piano faculty and others offered their students the use of their teaching studios for late-night practice. We managed to pull rabbits from hats every summer when the studio assignment committee met to figure out where new people were going to teach in the fall. There's hardly a nook or cranny in the old building that was not busy day and night, six and seven days a week."

After a year of construction to put into reality the architectural design of David Baird and Baird Dixon of Street Dixon Rick Architects, Blair faculty and staff moved into the three-story Phase I building in July. Immediately, they had room to breathe. The combined space from the older building and the new addition gives Blair a total of 64 teaching studios, 46 practice rooms, 5 classrooms, 3 computer labs, a restored parents' waiting area, a psycho-acoustic music cognition lab (see related article, p. 3), a faculty lounge with a kitchen area, a student lounge with a terrace overlooking an interior courtyard, and 3 rooms for student organizations. There are 264 instrument lockers and wide stairwells, elevators and halls to accommodate instruments. New techniques in soundproofing, using floating walls and ceilings, rubber gaskets and sand-filled concrete blocks lessen the amount of sound carried from each studio and practice room.

Larger studios and offices are now the rule. Karen Ann Krieger, assistant professor of piano, who teaches keyboard harmony classes, has a teaching lab that has doubled in size, giving ample room to walk without turning sideways between the digital keyboards



*The keyboard harmony studio, with all its attendant electronics, now has room for keyboards, computers, printers, and students, plus room to walk the aisles.*

hooked up to computers and printers. "I almost have enough space to dance the polka in here!" says Krieger. "I have really died and gone to heaven."

Gregory Barz, assistant professor of musicology (ethnomusicology) has office space large enough to house some of the African drums used in the new drumming ensemble at Blair. "I have enough space in here to sit down with students and work out problems. It's wonderful."

Of course, Phase I is only half the project. When Phase II is completed and opened Fall 2001, there will be two rehearsal halls, one for orchestra and one for choral groups that will serve double duty as a lecture hall. The crowning glory will be the 620-seat concert hall with raked seating allowing for good views from every level and adjustable acoustics to create optimum conditions for orchestral, choral, or opera performances. Phase II will add another 55,000 square feet for a total of 131,000 square feet.

"The whole project has been one of the most fun—and difficult—of my life," says Kirchner. "And I have a window on the Phase II work from my new studio. I'm watching it become a dominant presence along Blakemore Avenue. It's wonderful, really our dream house."

—BONNIE ARANT ERTELT

*George Crumb's musical scores are as exciting to look at as they are to hear, as Blair student Sheara Fernandez discovers.*



**George Crumb**, Annenberg Professor of the Humanities emeritus at the University of Pennsylvania and Pulitzer Prize winning composer, joins the Blair School in the spring for a second turn as BMI Composer-in-Residence. Crumb's work has the distinction of being the most frequently performed and recorded by any contemporary composer. His music will be featured as part of the Blair Concert Series on Friday, February 9.

**William Westney**, professor of piano and Browning Artist-in-Residence at Texas Tech University, brings his innovative Un-Master Class<sup>©</sup> to Blair, February 25-26.

In demand as an international lecturer and private consultant on issues such as practice psychology, performance-related injuries, and learning and creativity, he has presented his interdisciplinary ideas at professional meetings from London to Taiwan and to musicians and students throughout the United States and abroad. His focus on vitality in performance and dissolving boundaries real or perceived between the performer and audience helps classical instrumentalists learn to be expressive as well as technically perfect.

All Un-Master Classes<sup>©</sup> presented by Westney will be free and open to the public.

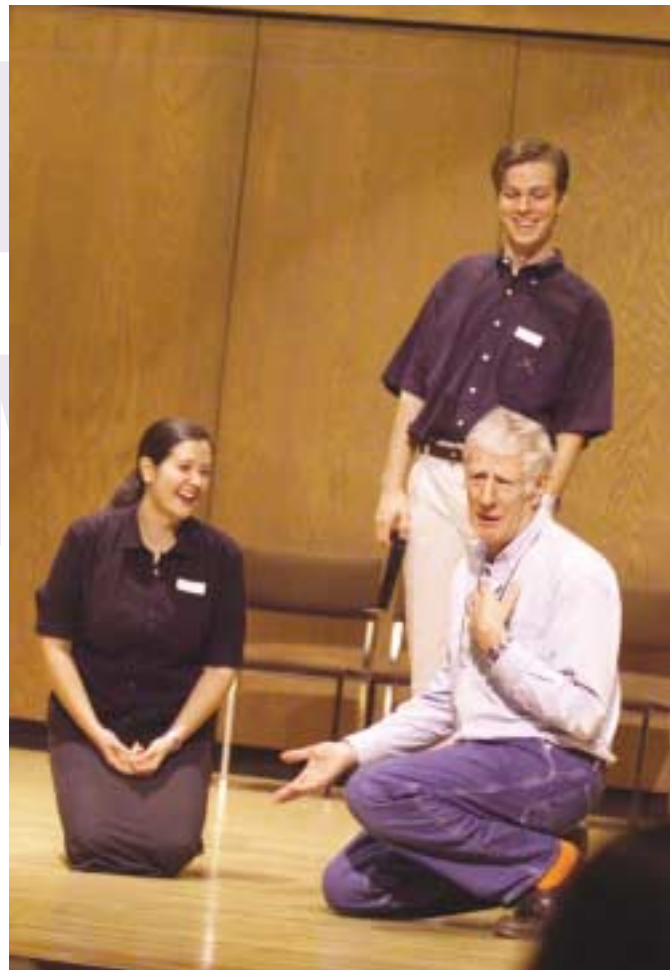


**The Guarneri Trio Prague** make their Nashville debut at Blair on February 27 at 8 PM in Turner Recital Hall. The trio unites three internationally known soloists, each of whom brings a rich expertise of performance within the Czech chamber music tradition.

Since its creation in 1986, the Guarneri Trio has been among the most distinguished ensembles of modern chamber music. They have toured extensively in Europe and Canada, including the International Music Festival of Lucerne, the Carinthian Summer Festival in Austria, The Dvorák Festival in Prague, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, and the Victoria Festival in Canada. Cenek Pavlik plays the Zimbalist-Heifetz violin from Guarneri del Gesù, and Marek Jerie plays a cello made by Andrea Guarneri in 1684. Pianist Ivan Klansky rounds out the trio. They will present a masterclass at Blair on Monday, February 26, at 7 PM. Tuesday's concert is a benefit for the Linden Corner School, which specializes in Waldorf educational methods.

Tickets for the concert may be purchased through the Blair Office.

## JONATHAN MILLER: CUTTING THROUGH TO THE REAL



The students stand on the bare stage of Turner Recital Hall, their hands at their sides, singing the first act quintet from *The Magic Flute* by Mozart. The music sounds glorious, and they know it well already, but they're not here to give a concert. They're here to participate in an opera theatre workshop presided over by Jonathan Miller.

Miller, a Cambridge-trained neurologist, who is one of the leading stage and opera theatre directors in the world, was in residence at Vanderbilt from October 16 to November 3 as the Harvie Branscomb Distinguished University Visiting Scholar. During his residency, cosponsored by the Blair School, Miller worked with the Vanderbilt Opera Theatre, the Shakespeare Workshop, and with classes in directing. He participated in "A Conversation with Jonathan Miller" on October 17 as part of the University's Great Performances series and gave a Dean's Hour lecture at the School of Medicine on "Bedside Manners: Medicine and the Public." As the students on stage are about to find out, his training as a scientist and doctor is inextricably linked to how he directs. He constantly brings his observations of the human condition to his direction, firmly rooting his productions in reality. He has said in the past, "I'm hung up on the actual. I think theatre has to be a *Gesamtkunstwerk*—it has to be integrated into real life. Otherwise, it's not worth leaving neurology for."

What Miller provides for the students is detail on which they can ground their performance. "Opera is an artificiality which brings to life reality," says Miller, and from the beginning he draws attention to subtle details of human behavior that can inform the students' performances. The young man singing the part of Tamino is instructed to react to Papageno's entreaties to unlock the padlock on his mouth with an aristocratic indifference and by singing more loudly, as though Papageno can't understand him, "in just the way the French are deaf to English when you're asking them which way to the railway station," suggests Miller. In turn, Papageno reacts with frustration, "what does a fellow have to do to get help around here?" Miller coaches the students, clearly enjoying himself.

When the three ladies-in-waiting make their entrance, Miller stops them. "Don't do it as though you're musical Siamese twins," he says. "Comic scenes always have three or four funny things happening at once." He works with them to establish a hierarchy: the first young lady immediately hands off the dowel rod representing the flute to the second, as though she is the personal lackey of the first. Meanwhile, the third lady-in-waiting notices Tamino and is instructed to make eyes at him. After Tamino is presented the flute, Miller instructs her to step up the flirting. "Do it like Mae West," says Miller. "Is that a flute you're carrying or are you just glad to see me?" The presentation of the flute becomes a subtle catfight over Tamino. It's clear the students are getting it, and Miller, who walks the aisles, watching from several angles, is plainly full of glee. He sees that they've never thought of it in quite this way before, and neither has the audience.

If his assertion that "a workshop is a familial occasion in which you amuse one another" is true, then he succeeded famously in his work with the Vanderbilt Opera Theatre. Laughter was continually present in the scenes he directed from *The Magic Flute* and *The Marriage of Figaro*. But what was also present, and of much more importance to Miller was the constant realization that these students and faculty were seeing something in a new light. "Directing is removing the accumulated artificialities of past performances," says Miller, "ideas that are encrusted and barnacled, and not necessarily true." In showing the Blair students how to cut through to the real, Miller left, perhaps, his most lasting mark.

—BONNIE ARANT ERTELT

## A CONVERSATION WITH JONATHAN MILLER



All photos by Anne Rayner

*During his three-week residency on campus as the Harvie Branscomb Distinguished University Visiting Scholar, Jonathan Miller found time to speak with senior Heidi Lauren Duke, a Blair voice major also specializing in theatre, about education and training for directors and singers, what to strive for in directing opera, and the "afterlife" of performance.*

What is important for performers and directors to acquire in a liberal arts education?

If you're going to be any good at all at directing, you have to have sensitivity and imagination, because that's what it's about. You're dealing with semantics, you're dealing with meaning; there are no technical skills that you have to have. Singers are somewhat different in that there are vocal skills that have to be acquired, and above all developed, and they don't just simply happen. Voices ripen and cure.

A lot of people think the same about actors, that you need to be in the studio, developing.

I think a beautiful voice is something that is quite useful in order to have a future in theatre, but otherwise, basically the best actors I have known have come from nowhere. One of my favorite actors was a man named Michael Hordern, who played Lear for me three times. He had been in insurance. He had one of the most beautiful voices around, and he was an intelligent, funny, performer. You get better at it, and you get better at it because you do more plays, not because you do more studios. Studios are usually a waste of time because you're with people who are not likely very good. Good actors you can recognize very early on. They're destined for it. They get better and better. One of the great English actors is a woman named Eileen Atkins who's in her sixties now. She came to me and she hadn't had any academic life, but she was an actress. You either can do it or you can't. It's not the same for singing. For instance, consider someone like Dawn Upshaw. I think Jonathan Retzlaff said he knew early on that she had a voice that could break your heart, long before it developed. But it did develop; it was trained. They have to train, they have to do things to encourage their development.

Do you feel that something gets lost in judging a "good performance" when everyone watches to see whether performers are good with the high notes?

Well, yes. That's what happens when you put too much emphasis on that and not enough emphasis on what singing is for—it's an expression. Obviously there are certain sorts of, as it were, athletic virtuosity which delight people when they can make the high notes effortlessly. Like high jumpers, there's an elegance about the way that they go to the wire. On the other hand, it isn't as if the function of all the other notes is like a staircase to get you to the top. Obviously it has something to do with timing, but it's also to do with talent. There are those who delight you with their voices, not because they're going to the top, but because of what they're doing in the things that aren't on the top, by how elegant, graceful, and expressive they are.

Should actors and singers in America go to Europe to study?

I think that studying here is better than anywhere. I'm always impressed by the singers who come out of the various conservatories in the United States. They're extraordinary, very well-trained.

What about after school? Should they go to Europe to gain other experience?

Well, you have to get employed and there isn't enough work here. And often some of the most talented people I know have come out of the American conservatories, done a bit of regional work, then gone to Germany. Mostly Germany, sometimes Italy. There are lots of American orchestral players working in Italian opera houses, but on the whole, most of the Americans I know work in Switzerland or Germany. They're very good indeed, and they have a good time. They spend eight years there, and then they very often don't have any career here in this country at all. Some of the best, most interesting performers don't get recognized here because America is so stuck in its own continent, unaware of what goes on in Europe. The Met often fails to pick people up until they're really big stars.

Why is it that you've mostly picked classics to direct instead of contemporary work?

It's been by accident really, not by design. There are a lot of masterpieces lying around that have been tested and tried, and there are only rarely interesting new works. You've got this vast body of good brands on the supermarket shelf already.

Have you ever dabbled in playwriting or writing libretto or anything like that?

No. My writing is invariably confined to books. I don't write plays.

It just would seem that after so much work in the field, you would have a pulse on what would make a good script or libretto.

Well, I do. This morning I came up with hundreds and hundreds of lines in the play we were working on in workshop. I'm writing all the time, I'm writing subtext all the time, but I'm not very good at writing text! That's what direction is, writing subtext.

"Jonathan Miller's Theatre of Subtext". . . hmmm. . . Well, it's fascinating to watch you direct Chekhov and Mozart. It's definitely true that you touch on things that seem obvious when you bring them up, but we just didn't see them before.

It's when people say that that I know it's worth doing. They are analogous to scientific discoveries. You see deeply and you see previously undisclosed similarities, and if the other performers sitting around laugh at what you get into, you know you've done something important. I come up with things that most of my colleagues don't come up with, but if you're attentive to what I do, you'll learn how to make things really lively. The only thing I'm interested in on the opera stage and the theatrical stage is liveness and verisimilitude.

In opera, it seems we've created this new art form that is different from what the composer was trying to do—it's an art form where you don't know what the people are saying, and the language somehow is given to you in different ways.

Well, it is. It has already undergone very strange transformations merely by being from a different culture. It's what I call in my book the "afterlife" of works of art. And an additional complication is the presence of the sub- or supertitle. Then there is the translation into the language of the audience, for instance, where all the Italian operas of Mozart in Vienna are played in German. Well, that in itself is a tremendous departure from what the composer



intended. The greater the distance between the period of composition and the subsequent performance, the more complicated the artifacts that are bound to be introduced. All works were contemporary at one time and the

idea of a revival was sort of inconceivable. You had a flood of new operas all the time. People would never interview someone and say "What's it like to do new operas?" What do you mean new operas? They're all new.

With supertitles, there's a profound association between the act of reading and the act of listening. There are actually two parts of the brain being used, so it's very artificial to read supertitles, and it's sometimes regrettable, but it's also unavoidable. What we have to put up with all the time when you're dealing with works that have entered their "afterlife" is they are no longer what they were. We're seeing a hybrid object, which is a mixture of things—and it's a restoration sometimes, or it involves repairs, mutilations, bits that have been dropped out. The work undergoes a constant transformation. We can't retrieve the past. However, we can recover it, go through the rubbish and reuse it for our own purposes.

Will you do much more opera?

It would be silly to cut myself off from it and never do it again, but it may well happen by default. If I don't do it, if I start doing significantly less, you simply get significantly less noticeable and then you don't get asked so much because your visibility has lessened. I can't ask people to let me do it. I've never gone to someone and said would you let me do this, that and the other. I've always had to wait for invitations. I have no self-doubts about what I can do, but I have great self-doubts about my place in the world. So, I've never been able to bring myself to say, "These are my conditions." I have no conditions other than make sure it's a nice hotel where I'm going to stay.

I always hope that people who attend my rehearsals come out of them



## Students

### PRECOLLEGE

The **Blair Children's Chorus**, under the direction of **Pamela Schneller**, senior lecturer in choral music, hosted a three-day summer camp in August for Nashville community children ages 8-11. Ninety-six children participated and presented a final concert on August 3. Members of the Blair Children's Choruses attended their own camp September 15-17. The **Blair Children's Concert Choir**, also under Schneller's direction, presented a concert on October 14 as part of the International Albert Schweitzer Conference, Symposium 2000.

The **Suzuki Reading Orchestra** and the **Youth Strings Orchestra**, under the direction of **Celeste Halbrook Tuten**, artist teacher of Suzuki violin, combined with the Nashville Youth Repertory Orchestra at Langford Auditorium for their spring concert in May.

**Anna Baik**, student of **Karen Ann Krieger**, assistant professor of piano, won the 10th grade level of the Tennessee Music Teachers Association High School Solo Piano Competition in June.

**Mary Lane Bennett** and **Sarah Beth Bennett**, both students of **Carol Smith**, senior artist teacher of violin and director of the Suzuki program, were selected by audition to perform solos at the Ottawa Suzuki Institute, Ottawa, Kansas, in June.

**Sarah Bennett**, student of **Cornelia Heard**, associate professor of violin, was the winner of the High School Strings Division of the TMTA state auditions in June. This is the third consecutive year she has won this honor.

**Hamilton Berry**, student of **Felix Wang**, assistant professor of cello, and **David Mansouri**,

## Faculty Additions and Changes

**David N. Childs** joined the Blair School faculty this fall as assistant professor of choral studies and director, Vanderbilt Symphonic Choir and Blair Chamber Choir. A native of New Zealand, Childs recently completed work on his D.M.A. at Louisiana State University.

Two part-time faculty are now full-time: Professor of Trumpet **Allan Cox** and Assistant Professor of the Philosophy and Analysis of Music **Stan Link**.

Eleven adjunct faculty joined the Blair school this fall. They are **Okyerema Gyane-Kwame Ahima**, adjunct instructor in music and co-director of the African Performing Ensemble; **Constance N. Ely**, adjunct artist teacher of chorus and co-

director, Young Singers of Blair; **T.G. Engel**, B. Mus. '90, adjunct lecturer in music; **Susan Baldwin Green**, adjunct artist teacher of piano; **Nathan K. Hoeft**, B. Mus. '00, adjunct lecturer in music; **Jeanette Jezioro**, adjunct artist teacher of chorus and director, Blair Choristers;

**Karen Voytek Mueller**, adjunct artist teacher of chorus and co-director, Young Singers of Blair; **Craig E. Nelson**, adjunct assistant professor of bass;

**Sarah K. Page**, B. Mus. '95, adjunct lecturer in aural skills; **Chandler Thompson**, adjunct assistant professor of voice; and precollege alum **Lawson White**, adjunct artist teacher of percussion.

student of **Cornelia Heard**, were concerto competition winners at the Sewanee Summer Music Festival this past July. Both gave recitals this year: David performed works by Bach, Bartok, Massenet, and Wieniawski in May. In October, Hamilton performed works by Bach, Popper, and Lalo.

**Margaret Cerjan**, student of **Cornelia Heard**, studied at the Sewanee Summer Music Festival.

**Spencer English** and **Germaine Rada**, both students of **Celeste Halbrook Tuten**, presented their Book I violin solo recitals during the summer.

**Jack and Sam Quiggins** and **Rachel and Joshua Vann**, Suzuki cello students of **Anne Williams**, senior artist teacher of Suzuki violin and cello, attended the American Suzuki Institute at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point. Sam participated in the Advanced Chamber Music Program, and both Sam and Jack presented solo performances.

**Bethany and Holly Rudge**, students of **Katherine Mansouri**,

adjunct artist teacher of Suzuki violin, gave Book 2 violin recitals in May.

### UNDERGRADUATE

Several students of **Cornelia Heard** studied at various festivals across the United States this summer. **Nate Ahearn** attended the Aspen Music Festival, studying with Naoki Tanaka. **Liana Austin** attended Musicorda and studied with Andrew Jennings. **Julia Hampton**, '01, **Laura Moye**, '03, and **Misty Elfer**, '03, all returned to study at the Sewanee Music Festival. **Holland Phillips**, '00, attended Meadowmount where she studied with Stephen Clapp, and **Shannon Thomas**, '04, returned to the Encore School for Strings to study with Robert Lipsett.

Four flute students, **Kim Crawford**, '01, **Arielle Helmick**, '03, **Ali Maloof**, '03, and **Stephanie Trautwein**, '04, along with their teacher, **Jane Kirchner**, associate professor of flute and associate dean, attended the annual convention of the National Flute Association in Columbus, Ohio, in August. Ali and Stephanie each performed in a masterclass.

Blair alumnae **Carol Fisher**, '91, and **Tish Anderson Dunn**, pre-collegiate certificate of achievement '92, were also in attendance.

**Evan Mack**, sophomore student of **Craig Nies**, associate professor of piano, had a medley of songs from his in-progress musical drama *William Wallace* performed by the Port Jervis Middle School Band in Port Jervis, New York, at its spring concert. In July, his musical version of the Washington Irving story *Rip Van Winkle* was produced by the Paramount Theater, Middletown, New York. He has had two previous musicals produced by the Paramount: *Alice in Wonderland* and *Hansel and Gretel*.

## Alumni

### PRECOLLEGE

**Sarah Chazin**, former student of **Cornelia Heard**, was accepted into Dorothy DeLay's class at the Juilliard School, precollege division, where she is working on a weekly basis with Naoki Tanaka, one of Miss DeLay's assistants.

Pianist **Gabriel Dixon**, former student of both **Elizabeth Cormier**, senior artist teacher of piano and **Roland Schneller**, senior artist teacher of piano, graduated in May 2000 from The University of Miami College of Music as the outstanding laureate in classical keyboard performance. At UM he was a student of J. Robert Floyd. In July, Gabe performed a recital at the Turner Recital Hall. His piano rock quartet, The Gabe Dixon Band (<http://www.gabedixonband.com>), relocated from Miami to New York in August to perform and record with Palm Pictures/Mars Records.

**Kathryn Eberle**, former student of **Cornelia Heard**, performed Associate Professor of Composition **Michael Kurek's** *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* (with piano) at the prestigious opening concert of the Encore School for Strings outside Cleveland, Ohio, in July for about 350 string faculty and top string students from around the country. This fall, she performed the concerto at Emory University, Atlanta; Baylor University, Waco, Texas; and

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, in conjunction with guest composer residencies by Kurek at each of the schools. She is a full scholarship student of Robert Lipsett at the University of Southern California.

### UNDERGRADUATE

**Bill Brittelle**, '99, former student of **Michael Kurek**, is studying at the City University of New York with Del Tredici. He spent the summer studying composition at the Aspen Music Festival.

**Zac Crockett**, '00, former student of **Michael Kurek**, studied composition at Fontainebleau, France this summer. He is now living in California.

**Jordan Donley**, '98, former student of **Marian Shaffer**, adjunct professor of harp, was one of six harpists featured in a concert in September with the Toledo Symphony. Last July she studied with jazz harpist Deborah Henson-Conant in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

**Bzur Haun**, '93, finished his first Ironman competition this

*Canadian fiddle champion and director of the fiddling program Crystal Plohman was joined by Irish flutist Stefan Engstrom and renowned guitarist Russ Barenberg, for a Celtic Music Celebration on October 19 in Turner Recital Hall. Others joining in the night's festivities included Scottish guitarist Peter Cairney, Irish multi-instrumentalist Eamonn O'Rourke, and Pulse, a high energy Irish stepdance group, featuring champion stepdancer Chanda Gibson.*



DAVID GREENSHAW

summer. He writes, "It was the most horrible, painful physical experience I have ever endured, and I didn't even pretend to be competitive. I was on a mission to finish and survive the event (which requires competitors to swim 2.4 miles, bike 112 miles, and run a marathon—26.2 miles) in less than the regulation 16 hour cut-off time. Nearly 15 hours after I had begun, I was able to cross this event off my 'Things to do before I die' list. Maybe it

should be renamed my 'Things to do to make me die' list."

**Karen Oosterbaan**, '94, former student of **Cornelia Heard**, joined the faculty of the Sewanee Music Festival this past summer.

**Daniel Roumain**, '93, former student of **Michael Kurek**, made the cover of the September 3rd *New York Times*, but not for music. He was shown sunning by the river at a Labor Day Picnic.

**Georgia Stitt**, '94, former student of **Michael Kurek**, has been touring the country as the associate conductor of the first national tour of the Broadway show *Parade*, which won a number of Tony Awards in 1999 including Best Score and Best Musical. She plays the piano in the pit orchestra and conducts the show in a pinch.

## Faculty

**Cornelia Heard**, associate professor of violin, and **Felix Wang**, assistant professor of cello, participated in the Roycroft Chamber Music Festival near Buffalo, New York, in June. They then joined their colleagues in the Blair String Quartet, **John**

## Edgar Meyer Wins Prestigious Avery Fisher Prize



MERICYR

**Edgar Meyer**, adjunct associate professor of bass, was awarded the Avery Fisher Prize, one of the most prestigious awards given in classical music, Monday, October 23, at New York's

Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. He was one of two winners for this year's prize, along with clarinetist David Shifrin, director of the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Each was awarded \$50,000.

The Avery Fisher Prize is given for outstanding achievement and excellence in music. In existence since 1974, the awards have gone to only 16 people in 26 years. Previous recipients of the award include Yo-Yo Ma, Murray Perahia, and Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg.

"Edgar Meyer's place in the musical world is absolutely unique," said Mark Wait, dean of the Blair School. "His perspective and intellect are all-embracing, and his artistry is unparalleled. He is the perfect recipient of the Avery Fisher Prize. We are deeply proud of Edgar's affiliation with the Blair School and Vanderbilt University."

—Beth Fox

## Blair Faculty Earn Multiple NAMMY Nominations

Blair faculty members garnered a number of nominations in Nashville's sixth annual Nashville Music Awards to be given in January. Those nominated include Dean **Mark Wait**, **Wilma Jensen**, adjunct professor of organ, **Leslie Norton**, adjunct assistant professor of horn, and **Mary Kathryn Vanosdale**, adjunct assistant professor of violin, all in the classical musician of the year category. **Edgar Meyer**, adjunct associate professor of bass, was nominated in the bassist of the year category as well as in the instrumental album of the year category for *Short Trip Home* with Joshua Bell, Mike Marshall and Sam Bush. **David Schnauffer's** *Delcimore* was also nominated in the instrumental album category. **William Wiggins**, assistant professor of percussion and chair of the brass and percussion department, was nominated in the drummer/percussionist cate-

gory; **Bobby Taylor**, associate professor of oboe, was nominated in the miscellaneous wind instrumentalist category; and **Craig Nies**, associate professor of piano and co-chair of the keyboard department, was nominated as pianist/keyboardist of the year.

Nominees within each of the 33 categories are selected by groups of judges well-versed in each category and genre and are based on artistic, rather than commercial, success.

Leadership Music, which sponsors the awards, is a nonprofit organization founded in 1989 to facilitate communication between members of the music community and to establish industry decision-makers and leaders. They created the Nashville Music Awards in 1994 to recognize excellence in all types of music in and around Nashville, regardless of genre.

**Stan Link**, assistant professor of the philosophy and analysis of music, delivered his paper, "Looking Through the Ear: Musical and Auditory Encodings of Seeing in Film" in November at the Toronto 2000 meeting of the Society for American Music.

**Joe Rea Phillips**, senior artist teacher of guitar and assistant to the dean, presented an in-service program for guitar teachers of Metropolitan Nashville-Davidson County Public Schools in August. James Satterwhite, coordinator of guitar studies for the school system, has adopted one of Phillip's method books for use in his classes. In September, the Lassiter and Phillips Guitar Duo presented a program for the annual meeting of the Tennessee Board of Regents in Hendersonville, Tennessee.

**Melissa Rose**, assistant professor of piano, performed four concerts with the Summerfest Chamber Music Series in Kansas City. This was her seventh season as resident guest artist for the series. She also collaborated with **Gayle Shay**, assistant professor of voice and director of the Vanderbilt Opera Theatre, in concerts at Meredith College, Raleigh, North Carolina, and at the University of North Carolina, Greensboro.

This summer **Dwayne Sagen**, assistant dean of admissions and adjunct professor of music, was invited to adjudicate bands and guest conduct band festivals in Dublin, Virginia; Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Glenbard, Illinois; Omaha, Nebraska; Orlando, Florida; Williamsburg, Virginia; Louisville, Kentucky; and served as guest conductor of the Arkansas Tech University Summer High School Honor Band.

**Carl Smith**, senior lecturer of music composition and theory, lectured to the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science on "Linear Development: Teaching,

Thinking, Painting, Composing (Music and Verse)" at their annual conference on Star Island in August. In November, Musica Armelin Padova (Italy) published four pieces for organ—a group of three pieces, *Tre Pezzi Bresciani*, commissioned by the Antegnati Association of Brescia, and the memorial "Benedizione."

**Carol Smith**, senior artist teacher of violin and director of the Suzuki program participated in a panel discussion entitled "From Pre-Twinkle to Pre-Teen" with Daphne Hughes and Kathy Wood at the Suzuki Association of the Americas Teachers Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. This past summer she taught Suzuki students at the University of Washington, Pullman; the Ithaca

Suzuki Insititute at Ithaca College in New York; and at the Hartt Suzuki Institute at the University of Hartford, West Hartford, Connecticut. She trained Suzuki teachers in Pullman as well as at the Southwestern Ontario Suzuki Institute held at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

**Celeste Halbrook Tuten**, artist teacher of Suzuki violin, attended the Suzuki Association of the Americas Teachers Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, this past May.

**Mark Wait**, dean of the Blair School and professor of music, was chosen to participate with 43 other community leaders in the 25th annual program of Leadership Nashville.

**Deanna Walker**, artist teacher of piano, spoke in September on "Creating Better Melodies" as part of the Prairie Music Week Symposium in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. The event was sponsored by SOCAN (Society of Composers and Authors of Canada).

**Trisha Johns**, registrar, and **Darlene Bethke**, associate registrar for the precollege and adult programs, were honored in October for 20 and 15 years of service respectively, to the Blair School and Vanderbilt University.

## Staff

**Debra Creasman**, director of public relations, attended a week-long seminar in August called "Classical Connections" at La Jolla, California. The event was sponsored by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters.

**Kochanowski**, associate professor of viola, and **Chris Teal**, professor of violin, for a performance at Music Mountain, Connecticut, that was broadcast throughout the United States and Europe.

**John Johns**, associate professor of guitar, presented concerts this fall at Loyola College, Baltimore, Maryland; Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C.; Interlochen Arts Academy, Michigan; Renaissance Center, Dickson, Tennessee; and in Dyersburg, Tennessee.

**Enid Katahn**, professor of piano, and **Edward Foote**, piano technician and adjunct instructor of music, recorded a compact disc featuring works by Scarlatti, Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven, Chopin, and Grieg with the piano tuned using the temperament authentic to each composer. In July, Foote and Katahn demonstrated well temperaments in two classes for the National Piano Technicians Convention in

Washington, D.C. In September, Katahn and **Amy Dorfman**, assistant professor of piano, gave the first concert in the Rotunda Series at the Renaissance Center in Dickson, Tennessee. In October, Katahn gave a recital at Martin University in Pulaski, Tennessee, and in November, Katahn joined **Chris Teal** for a recital in Franklin, Tennessee, at the Allied Arts Club.

Assistant Professor of Piano **Karen Ann Krieger's** newly published book, *Learn from the Legends: Blues Keyboard*, made its debut at the summer NAMM show in Nashville. The book includes interviews with Dr. John, Reese Wynans, Chuck Leavell and Al Kooper. She presented workshops on how to teach blues, jazz, and rock at the TMTA convention and across Georgia and Texas in July and August. Her solo piano composition, "A Saturday Swing," published by Alfred, has been selected for the National Federation of Music Clubs auditions.

She was also seen this fall on Nashville Public Television in an educational series called *Music to Our Ears*, performing with the Nashville Chamber Orchestra Trio.

**Michael Kurek**, associate professor of composition, was guest composer in July at the Encore School for Strings near Cleveland, Ohio, where his lecture was followed by Blair precollegiate alumna violinist **Kathryn Eberle's** performance of his *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* with piano at the school's gala opening concert. Additional guest composer residencies have been at Emory University and Baylor University in September, and at the University of Southern California in November. Kurek has been commissioned by Blair String Quartet violist **John Kochanowski** and Dean **Mark Wait** to write a viola sonata. The Vanderbilt University Wind Ensemble will premiere a Kurek march this spring.



## Blair Student Dies of Complications From Rare Genetic Disorder

Luther William Sink, a sophomore in the Blair School of Music, better known as "Luke," died of complications from a rare genetic tissue disorder called Ehlers-Danodanlos Syndrome at his home in Lexington, Kentucky, on Monday, August 21. Victims of the condition suffer from extreme tissue fragility, which can cause rupture of blood vessels. Sink died suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage.

Vanderbilt's Dean of Students Larry Dowdy joined the family and friends in attendance at Sink's funeral on August 25 in Lexington. "Luke was very special to me personally," said Dowdy. "This loss is extremely tragic and sad. You can tell so much about him and his character by his family. The whole place was filled with a sense of love and caring, and I think that speaks immensely about Luke's character." About 30 Vanderbilt administrators and students also attended the funeral.

Sink, a student of Gayle Shay, assistant professor of voice, was very involved on Vanderbilt's campus, participating in Vucept, Reformed University Fellowship, Original Cast, and Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity. Fellow students

found Sink's voice awe-inspiring, and many believe that he would have pursued opportunities in the music world after college. "He loved to sing," said sophomore Blair student Jennings (Jenni) Miller. "That was his joy."

Students and faculty gathered to celebrate his life at a memorial service held on September 13 at the Blair School of Music. The Reverend Gary White, associate University chaplain, shared a reading as well as the benediction, and Dowdy delivered an inspirational presentation. Close friends of Sink, sophomore Peabody student Erin Quinn and Miller, shared heartfelt eulogies as they recalled the impact he made on their lives.

Members of SAE fraternity and Original Cast also participated in honoring Sink. In addition, Blair students in the Clementine Quartet played Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* and senior Carmen Pastorek performed "Liebst Du Um Schönheit" by Clara Schumann, a work Sink loved to sing.

The memorial service seemed to offer a sense of closure to all mourning for Sink. Still, "it is a tragic loss for the Vanderbilt community," said Brock Williams, associate dean of Residential and Judicial Affairs. "We all hurt when we lose one of our family members, and I look at Vanderbilt as a family. Luke will be greatly missed."

—Rebecca Folmar



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## Blair Children's Chorus Announces Second Annual Summer Camp

On June 5, 6 and 7, Blair School of Music will welcome children to campus for a three-day music camp. From 9:00 AM till noon, participating children in grades 3-7 (rising) will sing in choir and participate in hands-on music activities led by the faculty of Blair Children's Chorus. They will celebrate their music making in concert Thursday, June 7 at 7:00 PM in the Turner Recital Hall at Blair School.

To participate, children will need a recommendation from a teacher or church choir director. The cost of the event is only \$15.00 per child, and each child will receive a Blair Children's Chorus Summer Camp t-shirt. Registration will begin in February and close April 15. A total of 100 children will be accepted, so early registration is recommended.

Leading the event will be Blair Children's Chorus faculty including Pam Schneller, Artistic Director. Summer Camp 2000 was a great success among singers and parents alike. For more information, or to request registration/recommendation forms, please call program administrator Susan Kirby at 883-6479.



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