

# Quarter Note

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY



**A Fragile, Wonderful Thing**  
The Blakemore Trio prepares to premiere  
a work by composer Susan Botti [page 3](#)

Cover photo of the Blakemore Trio by John Russell

The BLAIR QUARTER NOTE, a newsletter of the Blair School of Music, is published twice a year in cooperation with Development and Alumni Relations Communications for alumni, current students and their parents, and other friends of the School.

The BLAIR QUARTER NOTE, Vol. 33  
No. 2, Fall 2009  
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*Editor*, Bonnie Arant Ertelt  
*Art Director*, Donna DeVore Pritchett  
*Designer*, Christopher Collins  
*Contributors*, Angela Fox, Liz Latt,  
Lisa Robbins and Cindy Thomsen

*Associate Dean for Development and  
Alumni Relations*, Virginia Payne  
*Director of External Affairs*, Cindy Steine

Pre-college, adult, and undergraduate  
alumni are encouraged to send their  
professional or personal news to:

The BLAIR QUARTER NOTE  
2400 Blakemore Avenue  
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Or by e-mail to:  
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# From the *Dean*

DANIEL DUBOIS



Dean Mark Wait

This issue of the *Quarter Note* features a broad range of subjects reflecting both the achievements and expanded mission of the Blair school.

You have read in previous issues of the Blair Commissioning Project, funded by the James Stephen Turner Family Foundation, which is producing major works for the school's leading chamber ensembles. This issue deals with one of the most ambitious commissions: Susan Botti's *Gates of Silence*, composed for the members of the Blakemore Trio. As I write this, the work is approaching completion. Plans have been made for the Nashville premiere performance in

February 2010, and the subsequent New York premiere will take place at Merkin Hall in March. *Gates of Silence* already promises to transcend several boundaries of the traditional piano trio, and we anticipate its rehearsals and performances with special pride and great pleasure.

Just as our faculty are creating and performing the music of the future, so are our students extending the art of music into parts of the community that might not otherwise have access to instruction and performance. The W. O. Smith Music school in Nashville holds special importance, for its faculty teach entirely on a volunteer basis. Students and faculty from the Blair School are an essential part of this mission; it affords us the opportunity to give back to the art form which has nourished us for many years. I hope that you will derive the inspiration from this article that we have felt at the W. O. Smith school and in other ventures.

Finally, I hope you will read carefully of the achievements of our students—both collegiate majors and alumni of the pre-collegiate program. They have distinguished themselves in a remarkable array of accomplishments which clearly demonstrate the degree to which music itself, and its place in the world, have been transformed in recent years. These are all signs of an art form and a school that are vitally and integrally involved not merely in preserving the monuments of the past, but in creating a bold future that will guide, instruct and inspire generations to come.

Mark Wait, Dean  
Martha Rivers Ingram Dean's Chair

# A Sense of

By Lisa Robbins

The Blakemore Trio prepares to premiere a new work by composer Susan Botti in both Nashville and New York City

# Singing



WHEN DEAN MARK WAIT INVITED VIOLINIST CAROLYN HUEBL to commission a piece for “The Blair Commissions: Music for the 21st Century” project, she had never heard of Susan Botti.

“I happened to get her CD out of the library,” Huebl says, remembering the stacks of CDs she worked her way through during the process. “Michael Jones, one of our librarians, said, ‘Oh, listen to this.’ I latched on to it pretty quickly. Her music for violin—it’s beautiful, with lyrical, singing lines. The colors feel new and unusual. They grab you. It’s not like what I’ve heard before.”

—Continues on Page 4

During the same period, Huebl, cellist Felix Wang and pianist Amy Dorfman were looking for a composer for the Blakemore Trio, which is one of the three Blair ensembles participating in the commissioning project, thanks to generous funding from the James Stephen Turner Family Foundation. The trio, whose recent performances in Florida were described in a review as precise and exciting with “expressive phrasing” and “a high quality of artistry,” was developing a shortlist of composers. Huebl shared Botti’s music with Wang and Dorfman. They loved her work.

“Botti’s music is very imaginative,” Wang says. “The thing that draws me—there’s often a sense of drama. Even in the dissonances and timbres, there’s a sense of singing in her work. The kinds of sounds she gets are very emotional and surprising.”

Eventually Huebl and the trio decided to combine the two commissions to create a larger-scale piece that they could perhaps record in the future. Botti is now composing *Gates of Silence*, three connected but independent pieces that can be performed together as a cohesive program or individually.

For the trio, an important part of the selection process was getting a better sense of the most current developments in contemporary chamber music.

“If you program something written 10 years ago, that’s considered new,” Huebl says. “But 10 years ago was very long ago if you’re composing something now. There are so many wonderful composers out there, but you have to decide what you really value in new music. That it was innovative was important to me. I knew we would be surprised by what we got from Susan.”

“The selection process was exciting, but exhausting,” Wang says. “It’s one thing to play new musical works, but it’s different when commissioning premieres. People who do this a lot, it’s almost all they do. We haven’t been together very long. We really have to get out there, to hear what’s going on. But it’s something the trio loves to do. We love embracing contemporary music, and we want to be more active in getting new pieces written for us.”

Once the trio chose Botti as their composer in early 2006 the long wait set in. Like prospective parents, the trio mem-

bers knew to temper their sense of great anticipation and excitement with patience.

“All of us knew that we weren’t going to get anything very soon,” Wang says. “We were selecting composers in demand.”

So far, two of the Blair commissions have been completed. The first is the trio for horn, violin and piano that Lowell



Felix Wang, cello; Amy Dorfman, piano; and Carolyn Huebl, violin, rehearse for the premiere of *Gates of Silence*, a work by Susan Botti created for the Blakemore Trio through funding by the James Stephen Turner Family Foundation.

DANIEL DUBOIS

Liebermann composed for faculty member and horn player Leslie Norton through funding from the Office of the Dean. It premiered at Blair in April 2008. Peter Schickele’s *A Year in the Catskills*, commissioned for the Blair Woodwind Quintet through funding from the James Stephen Turner Family Foundation, premiered in March to great acclaim. Botti’s *Gates of Silence* will debut next.

The Botti work has three parts: “Lament: The Fallen City” for violin and piano; “The Journey without Her” for piano trio; and “Dido Refuses to Speak” for piano trio and soprano. Botti, widely acclaimed as both a soprano and a composer, will perform with the trio when *Gates of Silence* premieres in Nashville and New York City.

“I think that the biggest factor in being a singer—and bringing that into my composition—is that I have a strong sense of the music from a melodic standpoint,” Botti says. “There is a certain amount of line that I tend to use. But on the other hand, when I write for violin and piano, I’m not thinking of voice.”

In composing *Gates of Silence*, Botti was inspired by Vir-

gil's epic poem, *The Aeneid*, and the rhythms of loss, renewal, hope and continuation that she feels resonate powerfully today.

"I was reading the description of the fall of Troy, and then I'd pick up the newspaper and read about the destruction of Baghdad or the devastation of a small town in Oklahoma after a storm—this experience of your home and community being devastated through war or natural disaster, the emotion of that, and the question of how people continue on," Botti says. "I read about the people in Greensburg, Kansas. It's been two years since the terrible tornados that devastated the town. And they're rebuilding—it's going to be this incredible green city. It's remarkable, people's sense of hope. So the line of the piece

great writing, and each time he had a production, he rewrote the aria for who was singing it."

Like the members of the trio, Botti has high praise for Dean Wait, his approach to the commissioning project and the process he has created for his faculty.

"Mark Wait is a visionary," Botti says. "He's creatively looking at what is going to make his faculty and his school grow and empowering them. What greater gift to give them than to say, 'Here is something to be created for you.'"

Wang, Dorfman and Huebl especially appreciated the autonomy they were given over their choice of composer and the process.



“It's very important to me that there's a certain level of risk and terror to the whole process. I love that moment in the theater when the lights come down, and you don't know what's going to happen. It's a fragile, wonderful thing.”

—Composer Susan Botti



is inspired by that in a way—that no matter what we lose, there's a sense of hope and the ability to look forward. I find it very inspiring and beautiful.”

For “Dido Refuses to Speak,” Botti commissioned original poetry from Linda Gregerson, whom she met during her tenure on the composition faculty at the University of Michigan. She has used Gregerson's poetry in her work before.

“Linda knows my music well. Her words are meant to be sung,” Botti says. “The more I work with them, the more I love them. Linda has a background in theater, so they have a sound world to them, because they were meant to be performed.”

The members of the Blakemore Trio are excited by the prospect of working so closely with a composer. They have commissioned pieces before, but their interaction with Botti has been much more extensive, especially since it culminates in a joint performance.

“Susan's visited here,” pianist Amy Dorfman says. “She's come to hear us play. She wants to meet with us individually.”

Botti says she loves to write with musicians, rather than just instruments, in mind.

“I'm writing for these players,” Botti says. “It's very personal, but I don't think that makes it so particular. I use the example of Handel. The arias are so powerful, and they're such

“It's all centered on chamber music, which is really exciting,” Dorfman says. “That we can play in a major city—it benefits the school, it benefits the groups. It's a far-reaching gift.”

The trio members also feel that the commissioning project gives them a new avenue to contribute to the musical community.

“We view our work with our students as having a long impact,” Huebl says. “And then there will be our impact through this. When we talk to our friends and tell them about this opportunity we have, they are floored.”

“It's very important to me that there's a certain level of risk and terror to the whole process.” Botti says of performance in general. “I love that moment in the theater when the lights come down, and you don't know what's going to happen. It's a fragile, wonderful thing.”

The premiere of Susan Botti's *Gates of Silence* will take place at Blair at 8 p.m. on February 19, 2010, in Ingram Hall.

The New York City premiere will take place in Merkin Concert Hall on March 13, 2010.

# Playing It Forward

*Blair volunteers pass on their craft*

By Angela Fox



Student volunteers Tiffany Tieu and Katherine Nagy from the Blair School of Music board the W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School van. Blair students make up a large percentage of volunteer teachers at the W.O. Smith school.

For 25 years, the W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School has provided music instruction to schoolchildren from low-income families for just 50 cents a lesson. These talented and dedicated students are often taught by other talented, dedicated students—Blair School of Music students, that is. Every week student volunteers from Blair conduct private lessons with children ages 9-18 in almost every major instrument.

This harmonious relationship benefits both the giver and receiver. “A great many Blair students go on to become teachers,” Dean Mark Wait says. “At W.O. Smith, our students hone their teaching skills and give back to their art.”

Blair students make up more than 20

percent of the W.O. Smith school’s 100-member faculty. Last year, more than 30 Blair students taught at the school. “We just couldn’t do it without them,” says Jonah Rabinowitz, executive director of the W.O. Smith school. “Blair is on the forefront of music education, and their students’ volunteer work here has helped us grow as an institution.”

That growth is evidenced in a modern new facility on Eighth Avenue South and an enrollment of 400 students who come from all parts of Nashville and Middle Tennessee. The school offers individual and group lessons in all band and orchestra instruments, as well as piano, guitar and voice. There are also classes in music fundamentals and theory, composition,

music technology and recording. Three choirs, a string ensemble, wind band and other performing groups provide ensemble experience. The volunteer faculty also includes Blair faculty members, Music Row studio musicians, symphony players, public school teachers and church musicians—all donating one to four hours each week.

Blair student teachers are typically sophomores and upperclass students, recruited each fall by Rabinowitz, who visits the Blair campus and talks with the students about service opportunities. “It’s incumbent upon us as musicians to pass along our craft to the next generation,” he says. “There’s a wonderful continuity when we pass along how we play our instruments from person to person.”

Recent Blair graduate Julie Aiken passed along her craft at the W.O. Smith school for most of her college career. For the past three years, Aiken gave private instruction at the school to the same violin student. “Darold was my first student and had never had private lessons before,” Aiken recalls. Over the years Aiken saw her student grow from a shy sixth-grader who had never held a violin and hardly spoke during class to a versatile musician who also plays trombone in his school band and talks with his teacher about his life outside class. The teacher has perhaps grown even more than the student. “I’ve learned how important it is to break down problems into manageable steps and what to focus on,” Aiken says. “I’ve also learned how important it is to be faithful, each week, that what you’re doing can bring about change.”

Sigma Alpha Iota music fraternity members Hannah Hickerson (rising senior, clarinet) and Lara Pitts (rising jun-

“There’s a wonderful continuity when we pass along how we play our instruments from person to person.”

—Jonah Rabinowitz, executive director of the W.O. Smith school

ior, trombone) are also volunteer teachers, and the entire SAI membership helps out at special events at the school. “The Smith school has a Halloween recital and last year our members baked treats, handed out goodie bags and had an arts and crafts activity for the kids,” says Shona Goldberg-Leopold, SAI president and musical arts/teacher education major at Blair. In March Goldberg-Leopold and her fellow SAI members organized a joint recital by members of the Blair and Belmont SAI chapters at the W.O. Smith school. Proceeds from a bake sale and door prizes at the recital were donated to the school.

Members of the men’s music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha volunteer at the school as well. “The birdhouse auction is our major fundraiser,” says Lynn Adelman, assistant director at the W.O. Smith school. “Phi Mu Alpha members help us with

everything from setting up tables and hauling equipment to emptying ice chests and cleaning up after the auction.” The annual event features one-of-a-kind birdhouses created by local artists that are auctioned off to the highest bidder.

“Our students get a tremendous satisfaction and joy from their experiences at the Smith school,” says Pam Schneller, associate dean and liaison for Blair student volunteers with the school. “All of us at Blair feel privileged to be in music at Blair and at Vanderbilt. With that comes the responsibility to give back to others who don’t have those opportunities.”

In giving back through their art, Blair students find they also receive. “An hour a week is such a small part of my life,” Aiken says of her time commitment. “Yet teaching at the Smith school has helped me see my own playing—and my life—in a new way.”



Blair sophomore James Larson instructs David Horner on violin.

STEVE GREEN

## Blair and community service

The W.O. Smith Nashville Community Music School is not the only institution to benefit from the Blair school’s talent and knowledge. As long as Blair has been in existence, the faculty and students have served Nashville and surrounding communities by offering free lectures, performing free concerts and volunteering to teach in a number of venues. For instance, faculty members in musicology have given free lectures at the Frist Center for the Visual Arts, Nashville Pub-

lic Library and at several Tennessee universities. Pre-college and undergraduate soloists and ensembles frequently perform, not only to entertain listeners at lunchtime concerts or art exhibit receptions, but also at area hospitals to give patients a musical respite during their stay. The following is a listing of places faculty and students from Blair have performed, lectured or taught as a community service during the last three years.

**The Blakeford at Burton Hills**

**Fireside Reading Room in the Peabody Library**

**Frist Center for the Visual Arts**

**Health Center at Richland Place**

**Leah Rose Residence for Senior Citizens**

**McKendree Village retirement center**

**Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools**

**Monroe Carell Jr. Children’s Hospital at Vanderbilt**

**Park Manor retirement center**

**Parthenon Towers**

**Psychiatric Hospital at Vanderbilt**

**Richland Place Retirement Residence**

**Rutherford County Schools**

**Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center**

**Vanderbilt Stallworth Rehabilitation Hospital**

**West End Home for Ladies**

**Williamson County Schools**

**Wilson County Schools**

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# A Sense of Belonging

*Myra Jackson Blair and Valere Blair Potter scholarships fuel pre-college dreams*

By Cindy Thomsen

Alec Holcomb claims that he's not very good at the popular video game "Guitar Hero." That's hard to believe, though. The 14-year-old is an accomplished guitarist who has already won two competitions.

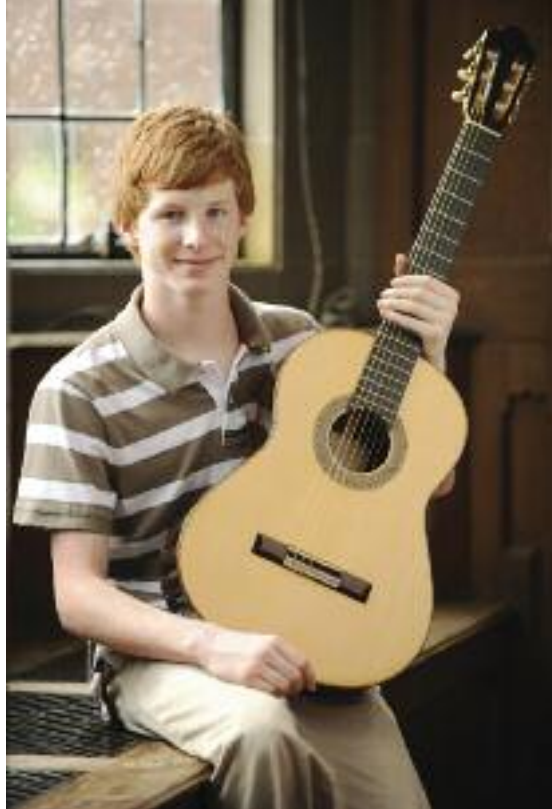
"It just takes a lot of hard work to be great at an instrument," Alec says. "You have to really focus on how you're playing. You have to be scientific about it and make sure you can overcome each little obstacle."

Alec is a Myra Jackson Blair Scholar at Blair, where he has been studying with Associate Professor John Johns for two years. He started playing when he was 7 and became serious about it at age 10.

"He's a phenomenal talent because of his age," Johns says. "He's only 14, and he's playing music that's generally not played until you get much older. I have music majors who aren't playing some of Alec's repertoire."

The Myra Jackson Blair Senior Scholarships nurture young talent like Alec. The funds are awarded to pre-college students in grades 7–12 on the basis of their talent and ability. Each scholarship recipient receives private lessons. They also take a music theory course and a music history course—all at no charge. Roland Schneller, Chancellor's Professor of Piano, oversees the program which currently funds about 40 students. The value of each scholarship is \$2,500 to \$3,000.

"You would be amazed at the level of some of our junior and senior high students," Schneller says. "And at our last auditions, there were half a dozen students that just blew us away. The maturity level of some of these teenagers is incredible. I never played at that level at that age."



Myra Jackson Blair Scholar Alec Holcomb

Blair also offers need-based pre-college scholarships to students in grades 3–12, namely the Valere Blair Potter Scholarships. In all, close to 200 Blair pre-college students are on scholarship.

"We try to attract kids who can't afford to come to Blair," Schneller says. "We

have kids who come from schools where music isn't cool. Then they come to Blair and see all the other kids playing the piano and carrying their instruments, and they feel like they're part of something."

The sense of belonging is something that Alec has noticed about Blair as well.

"It's really nice being here because there are other people in the same boat as you," he says. "They understand what it is to work at an instrument. It's just fun to walk down the hallways and hear and see all the different instruments playing."

Many of Blair's pre-college scholarship students have gone on to careers in music, whether it be playing or teaching. However, a musical career is not necessarily the goal, according to Schneller.

"If a student can feel the excitement of what it is to make beautiful music, that's a success story,"

he says.

Like all teenagers, Alec isn't sure what the future holds.

"I don't know yet where the guitar will take me," he says. "But I know that if I keep working at it, it will take me pretty far."

## Ward and Wilson scholarship winners announced

Wilma Ward provided scholarships for eight students at Blair during her lifetime, and David K. (Pat) Wilson, former chairman and life member of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust, gave tirelessly to the Blair school, often in memory of his wife, Anne Potter Wilson. These two beloved and generous friends also designated bequests to create scholarships in the collegiate program.

The first Wilma Ward Scholar, Sarah Rhoades, a violin student from Lubbock, Texas, will enter Blair this fall.

This is the second year that the Anne Potter Wilson Scholarships will be awarded. Incoming freshmen receiving this scholarship are: Seth Johnson, voice, Apex, N.C.; Shelby Flowers, piano, Highlands Ranch, Colo.; Ann Goodrich, alto saxophone, Nashville, Tenn.; Sarah Rhoades, violin, Lubbock, Texas; Rami Grossman, percussion, Marietta, Ga.; Ali Cole, voice, Corona Del Mar, Calif.

# Join us for the Fall 2009 Concert Series Performances

## A SEASON OF UNCOMMON DELIGHTS

As always, nearly all concerts, lectures, guest artist performances, master classes and special events are free and open to all. Complimentary valet parking is provided for many events, and free self-parking in South Garage is available for all concerts listed in the fall calendar.

### Highlights include:

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#### BLAIR SIGNATURE SERIES

##### **A Plucked String Event, John Johns, guitar**

Chair of the guitar department, John Johns, duets with Blair's Marian Schaffer, harp, and Amy Dorfman, harpsichord.

**Thursday, September 10, 8 p.m., Ingram Hall**

**Vanderbilt Wind Symphony, Thomas Verrier, conductor, and Vanderbilt String Orchestra, Robin Fountain, conductor**

With guest conductor Michel Camatte, directeur, Conservatoire Darius Milhaud

**Thursday, October 8, 8 p.m., Ingram Hall**

"Viva La France!" Program to include Debussy's Danse Sacree et Profane and Milhaud's Suite Francais.

##### **The Blair String Quartet Celebrates Mendelssohn**

Christian Teal, violin; Cornelia Heard, violin; John Kochanowski, viola; Felix Wang, cello; with guest artists The Ceruti Quartet

**Friday, October 30, 8 p.m., Ingram Hall**

The Blair String Quartet and guests the Ceruti Quartet bring together two fine ensembles to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Felix Mendelssohn.

Sponsored by Delphine and Kenneth L. Roberts in honor of Norma Gandy, Operations Officer, Blair School of Music

**Vanderbilt Opera Theatre and Vanderbilt Orchestra present *The Marriage Of Figaro* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

**Friday, November 13**

6:45 p.m. pre-show talk

8 p.m. performance

**Sunday, November 15**



2 p.m. matinee

### All shows in Ingram Hall

Fully staged and costumed with Gayle Shay, director, and Robin Fountain, music director. Friday's performance features a pre-show talk with musicologist Melanie Lowe. Sung in English.  
Sponsored by An Anonymous Friend of the Blair School

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### Music on Film

#### Introduced by John Kochanowski

**Sunday, September 13, 4 p.m., Steve and Judy Turner Recital Hall**

Back for its second year, the Music on Film series presents large-format screenings of contemporary conductors filmed in live performance with 5.1 surround-sound technology. John Kochanowski, violist for the Blair String Quartet and dynamic coordinator of the student chamber music program, leads the pre-film discussion that will introduce his selection for this fall's presentation.

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## BLAIR NIGHTCAP SERIES

### The Violin Now!

**Guest Artist Peter Sheppard Skærved with composer and Blair faculty member Michael Alec Rose**

**Thursday, September 24**

**8 p.m. discussion**

**8:30 p.m. performance**

**Steve and Judy Turner Recital Hall**

Blair's Nightcap format is the perfect vehicle for this evening's guest artist, world-class violinist Peter Sheppard Skærved. He will explore in a lecture/demonstration style what it is to be a violinist today, drawing on his unique repertoire of rare works from the 18th and 19th centuries, and the many works written for him.

Sponsored by Nissan North America Inc.

### Three by Three: Flute and Friends

**Monday, November 2**

**8 p.m. discussion**

**8:30 p.m. performance**

**Steve and Judy Turner Recital Hall**

Jane Kirchner and faculty friends Marian Shaffer, Cynthia Estill, Kathryn Plummer and Craig Nies, along with exceptional harp student Frances Cobb, team up to present a program of three charming, highly varied works.

Sponsored by Nissan North America Inc.



# Alexander Heard, fifth chancellor of Vanderbilt, dies

Alexander Heard, an adviser to three U.S. presidents who, as Vanderbilt's fifth chancellor, guided the university smoothly through the stormy period of the 1960s and 1970s without the unrest and violence that afflicted many college campuses, died July 24 at his home after a long illness. He was 92.

"For more than 40 years, Alex Heard was a powerful presence at Vanderbilt University," Chancellor Nicholas S. Zeppos said. "Through his intellect and calm demeanor, he raised Vanderbilt's stature on the national stage during his 20-year administration. And even after he stepped down as chancellor he graciously made himself available to his successors for advice and guidance. I was gratefully one of the beneficiaries of his wisdom, and his loss is one I feel deeply."

Under Heard's leadership, Vanderbilt grew and prospered, adding three schools

to the seven it already contained, including the Blair School of Music.

"It was during his leadership of the university that the Blair School of Music became part of Vanderbilt," Dean Mark Wait said. "It is no exaggeration to say that without him this vital affiliation would not have occurred. Alex and Jean Heard have been good friends and loyal supporters of the Blair School for decades. It was an honor to know him and to enjoy his friendship."

Heard had been serving as dean of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina when Vanderbilt tapped him for its top job in 1963, succeeding Harvie Branscomb. A giant in the field of political science, Heard was the recipient of 27 honorary degrees from various colleges and universities over the years and

published numerous books on the presidential election process.

Heard is survived by his wife, Jean Keller Heard, and four children: Stephen, a Nashville attorney; Christopher, an acknowledgements coordinator for Vanderbilt's development office; Frank, a Florida businessman; and Connie Heard, Valere Blair Potter Professor of Violin at Vanderbilt's Blair School of Music; and two grandchildren: Alexander Michael Heard of Boca Raton, Fla., and George Alexander Meyer of Nashville.

A memorial service was held on July 29 in Benton Chapel on Vanderbilt's campus. Donations may be made to the Alexander Heard Memorial Fund at Vanderbilt. By arrangement with the university, Heard's ashes will be interred at Benton Chapel.



Alexander Heard

## OpportunityVanderbilt

### A scholarship is the gift of opportunity...

Maria Hibbard is thinking big about the intersection of art and public policy. With majors in bassoon at Blair and human and organizational development at Peabody plus an internship at Vanderbilt's cultural think tank focused on the creative campus initiative, Maria is combining her passions into a career path.

It's the scholarship she receives that makes all of this possible.

"I want to be a part of fully integrating art into the campus experience, finding the connection between creativity and objectivity, between art and logic," she says.

With a scholarship gift, you give other exceptional young women and men the opportunity to learn, discover and achieve at Vanderbilt.

*Opportunity Vanderbilt supports the university's commitment to replace need-based undergraduate student loans with grants and scholarships, with a goal of \$100 million in gifts for scholarship endowment.*

Photo by Winifred O'Connell Services



Maria Hibbard  
Blair and Peabody  
2011 Laura Kemp Good Scholarship

SHAPE THE FUTURE A CAMPAIGN FOR VANDERBILT

Make a gift to Vanderbilt online—[www.vanderbilt.edu/givenow](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/givenow). Questions—Virginia Payne, [virginia.payne@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:virginia.payne@vanderbilt.edu), 615/322-7650.

# Tutti



STEVE GREEN

Composer Peter Schickele held a master class for Blair students and faculty in Turner Hall last March prior to the premiere of his piece *A Year in the Catskills*, composed for the Blair Woodwind Quintet.

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## FACULTY

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**Joy Calico**, associate professor of musicology, delivered a paper at the “Music in Poland since 1945” conference in Canterbury, England, in May and then conducted archival research in Vienna, Austria; Leipzig, Germany; and Prague, Czech Republic, for a month. This spring she published a book review in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* and joined the international board of the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*.

**David Childs**, associate professor of choral studies, attended the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) national conference, held in March, where his work *The Choir Invisible*, commissioned in memory of past ACDA Executive Director Gene Brooks, was

premiered by the Soprano Alto Tenor Bass (SATB) Honor Choir at the final concert. He also directed the Mississippi SATB All-State Honor Choir in April and was guest composer-in-residence at Wichita State University in April, where he attended the premiere of *Of Fire and the Rose*, his unaccompanied SATB setting of T. S. Eliot’s “Little Gidding.” In June, he conducted his *Requiem* in a world premiere performance at Carnegie Hall in New York City. He was guest speaker and clinician at Perspectives Choral Music Conference in Santa Fe, N.M., in July.

**Jen Gunderman**, senior lecturer in music history and literature, performed an accordion/ukelele duet with Michael McDonald (formerly of the Doobie Brothers) at the Nashville Songwriters Hall Of Fame induction ceremony and performed at Warren Haynes’ 20th Annual Christmas Jam in Asheville, N.C., benefitting Habitat for Humanity. Recent recording projects include a Vedic chant album with a woman who worked with the late Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a rock album with an Irish musician and a country album for a real-life Iranian princess. Guest speakers in her classes included multiple Grammy winner Ashley Cleveland and members of the musical groups Old Crow Medicine Show and Widespread Panic.

**Connie Heard**, Valere Blair Potter Professor of Violin, presented violin master classes in Irvine, Calif., in January and Wilmington, Del., in early May, where she also judged a competition at the Music School of Delaware.



STEVE GREEN

Internationally renowned soprano Renee Fleming presented a sold-out concert in Ingram Hall in April. A reception was held following the concert. Fleming, a star of the Metropolitan Opera, praised the acoustics and the audience at Ingram Hall.

**Karen Ann Krieger**, associate professor of piano and piano pedagogy, judged the 2009 Fletcher and Nell Morris Piano Competition in February with Jon Nakamatsu and Witold Turkiewicz in Birmingham, Ala. In April, Krieger performed as accordionist with the Battle Ground Academy middle school choir in Franklin, Tenn.

**Melanie Lowe**, associate professor of musicology, read three papers on Haydn this spring and summer at Princeton University's Musicology Colloquium Series, at the York University (Toronto) conference titled "Haydn: His Times and Legacy," and at the Haydn Society of North America conference in Boston.

**Valerie Middleton**, adjunct artist teacher of piano, performed a lecture recital on Mendelssohn's intermediate repertoire in January for the National Guild of Piano Teachers, Nashville chapter. She also performed for the Nashville Piano Study Club in February.

**Marianne Ploger**, senior artist teacher and director of the musicianship program, during a three-day residency at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in December taught classes, met with composition students, coached a saxophone

quartet and attended final rehearsals for the premiere of her composition *Passacaglia and Fugue*, commissioned by the university's wind ensemble. In January, she conducted a lecture-workshop on aural training for the faculty and graduate teaching assistants at the College of Music, University of Colorado, Boulder. In January, she served as clinician in advanced aural skills for orchestral conductors at the International Academy for Advanced Conducting Workshop. She also served a residency at Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., conducting classes in music perception and cognition for the conducting participants who came from the United States, France, Italy and Taiwan, and also taught classes and presented a lecture for music students and faculty.

**Michael Alec Rose**, associate professor of composition, had *Everything Under the Sun: Four Seasons for Two Violins* given its world premiere in May at Wilton's Music Hall, which commissioned the work for its series of concerts in the heart of London. In June, Rose's *The Periodic Table* served as the inaugural work for the four-day International Piano Festival at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama with the festival's director, Aaron Shorr, featured as piano soloist.

*A Tree of Life: Fantasy for Clarinet, Cello and Piano* was selected for "Music in Our Time: 2009," the June concert of the American Society for Jewish Composers at the Center for Jewish History in New York City.

**Agnes Wan**, adjunct artist teacher of piano, in May performed a solo piano work by composer Pui-Shan Cheung at the 10th Feminist Theory and Music conference, held at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. In June, she performed a solo recital on the Brio Concert Series in Weaverville, N.C. This fall, she will perform her debut solo recital at Blair and will also perform at Christ Church Cathedral in Louisville, Ky., and in a solo performance on *Live in Studio C* on WPLN-FM, Nashville Public Radio.

**Felix Wang**, associate professor of cello, appeared in concerts as principal cellist of the IRIS Orchestra in Memphis. In April, he gave a master class at Western Kentucky University, where his former Blair student, **Sarah Boronow**, is on faculty. In February, Felix and his wife, **Carolyn Huebl**, assistant professor of violin, welcomed their third child, Louisa Xin-Ying Wang, to the Blair family.

## Get connected with VUconnect, Vanderbilt's new online community

Vanderbilt has recently launched VUconnect, a new online community for alumni and students. Replacing Dore2Dore, VUconnect includes new and enhanced features. With VUconnect, you can share your latest news, find old friends and classmates, build networking relationships, share career advice and leads, locate a nearby alumni chapter, sign up for events—and connect with Vanderbilt, wherever you are.

Registering for VUconnect is easy. You'll create your user ID and password using a 4-digit VUconnect code. If Vanderbilt has your e-mail address on file, you should have received

this code in June via e-mail. Then go to [www.vuconnect.com](http://www.vuconnect.com) and click "First time here?" to get started. (Your code will help you create a password; it is not your password.)

Registered Dore2Dore users will need to create a new user ID and password for VUconnect. The user name and password you had for Dore2Dore will not automatically register you for VUconnect, and Dore2Dore is no longer active. Biographical information from Dore2Dore has been automatically transferred to VUconnect with the exception of Career Advisor profiles, as VUconnect includes a new, improved system for this resource.

Alumni with an [@alumni.vanderbilt.edu](mailto:@alumni.vanderbilt.edu) e-mail address will continue to have e-mail forwarding service. Users of OwenConnect, the Owen Graduate School of Management's online community, will need to also register for VUconnect to gain access to this comprehensive Vanderbilt online community.

Vanderbilt is committed to the privacy of its alumni, and registration for VUconnect is only open to Vanderbilt alumni and students.

**Questions?** Email [vuconnect@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:vuconnect@vanderbilt.edu) or call the Help Desk at (615) 322-5578. Help is available weekdays 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Central time.

# Composer Daniel Bernard Roumain, BMus'93, to teach at Blair

The Blair School of Music announces the appointment of nationally hailed composer, performer, violinist, bandleader and alumnus Daniel Bernard Roumain (DBR) as visiting associate professor of composition for the 2009–10 academic year.

"This is a signal event in the evolution of the Blair school, as an alumnus who has attained national renown as a performer and composer returns to teach another generation of classical music artists at Vanderbilt," Dean Mark Wait said. "Our students are immensely fortunate that DBR is available for this teaching appointment. He will make extended residency visits to Blair two or three times each semester, and will work with student string quartets and teach extended techniques and performance art."

DBR's residency dates at the Blair school are scheduled for September 10–14; October 14–19; January 24–28; March 16–19; and April 19–22. The October residency will take place in connection with DBR's performance for Vanderbilt's Great Performances Series on Saturday, October 17, in Blair's Ingram Hall. Blair students and faculty will perform with DBR on this concert. Ticket information for this concert is at [www.vanderbilt.edu/greatperformances](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/greatperformances).

More information about master classes, performances, lectures and other activities will be released in connection with the residency period.

DBR melds his classical music roots with his own cultural references and vibrant musical imagination. In 2007, he premiered *One Loss Plus*, the first of three works commissioned by the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) for their Next Wave Festival. His latest orchestral work and second BAM commission, *Darwin's Meditation for the People of Lincoln* is a musical setting of a play by Daniel

Beaty that explores an imagined conversation between Charles Darwin and Abraham Lincoln, and the political relationship between England, North America and Haiti. Following its New York premiere in October 2008, *Darwin's Meditation for the People of Lincoln* moved

a student quartet which premiered at the First Works Providence festival; and newly commissioned works for the Florida Youth Orchestra, Ahn Trio and Claremont Trio.

As bandleader of DBR and the Mission, he presents an electrifying show



Daniel Bernard Roumain, BMus'93, will be visiting associate professor of composition at Blair for the 2009-10 academic year.

to the University of Connecticut as a special celebratory concert on February 12, 2009—the icons' shared bicentennial anniversary of their birth.

Other recent performances and commissions include: *Five Chairs and One Table*, a commissioned work for Imani Winds premiering at Carnegie Hall in 2009; *WE MARCH!*, a guitar concerto premiered by Eliot Fisk and the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra; *The Tuscaloosa Meditations*, commissioned by the University of Alabama; *Voodoo Violin Concerto*, premiered by the Vermont Youth Orchestra; *Double Quartet: The Kompa Variations*, for the Providence String Quartet;

described as "an evening of chamber music with the accessible feel of a rock concert" (Albany Times-Union). Touring nationwide since 2004, DBR and the Mission made its international debut at Australia's 2008 Adelaide Festival.

DBR serves as artist-in-residence of the Starbucks-sponsored Seattle Theatre Group and as music director of Seattle's More Music @ The Moore program for the third consecutive year. A native of Margate, Fla., DBR completed his master's and doctoral work at the University of Michigan under the tutelage of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer William Bolcom.

# 2009 Commencement Honors and Awards



DANIEL DUBOIS

**Founder's Medalist:** Kathryn Moreadith  
**Banner Bearer:** Julie Aiken  
**Alma Mater Vocalist:** Jena Carpenter  
**Student Marshals:** Molly Reinker and Sam Parler

**New Members of the Eta Iota chapter of Pi Kappa Lambda**

**Class of 2009**

Sam Parler  
 Molly Reinker  
 Alina Satterfield

**Class of 2010**

Lindsay Cunningham  
 Jordan Holland  
 Alexandra Matloff  
 Arreanna Rostosky  
 Johna Smith

**Vanderbilt University Summer Research Program participants**

VU Global Summer Fellowship: Andrew Merritt  
 Vanderbilt University Summer Research Program: Mary Mathews

## AWARDS

SAI College Honor Award: Brittany Cooper  
 SAI Scholastic Award: Alina Satterfield

MTNA Student Achievement Recognition Award: Michael Krewson

Martin Williams Award: Arreanna Rostosky

Delene Laubenheim McClure Memorial Prize: Katie Heaton

Robin Dickerson Award: Victor McMillan

Jean Keller Heard Prize: Julie Aiken, Sarah Davis, Ben Detrick, Ben Hart, Chris Lowry

Magda Lachs Award: Tierney Bamrick

Blair Composition Competition Prize: Scott Lee

Blair Volunteer Service through Music Award: Madeline Myers

L. Howard "Zeke" Nicar Award: Brittany Cooper

Elliot and Ailsa Newman Prize: Lauren Henry and Alina Satterfield

Richard C. Cooper Award: Ben Detrick

Sue Brewer Award: Pierce Siebers

David Rabin Prize: Jacob Sievers

Margaret Branscomb Prize: Caroline Hart

Presser Scholarship: Johna Smith



STEVE GREEN



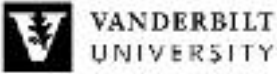
STEVE GREEN



STEVE GREEN

Top: Dean Mark Wait prepares to award the Founder's Medal to Kathryn Moreadith, who will embark on a year of travel and study as a winner of Vanderbilt's Michael B. Keegan Traveling Fellowship. Middle left: Dean Wait confers the Bachelor of Music degree on graduates. Middle right: Blair's Michael Hime presents the Richard C. Cooper Award to Ben Detrick. Bottom: Blair's pink banner among the other school banners in the Commencement processional.





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