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NOTES



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EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
UNIVERSITY *of* ROCHESTER



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## EDITOR

Anna Reguero

## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

David Peter Coppen

Jonathan Heath

Jessica Kaufman

Daniel J. Kushner

Lauren Sageer

## CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Kurt Brownell

Luke Juntunen

Jinhong (Mint) Lu

Kerry Lubman

Rich Paprocki

Lauren Sageer

Nick Samper

John Schlia

Matt Wittmeyer

## DESIGN

Tucker Creative Company

## PRINTING

QMC Group

## OFFICE OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

#### OF MARKETING

#### AND COMMUNICATIONS

Jessica Kaufman

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF

#### PR AND DIGITAL CONTENT

Lauren Sageer

### SENIOR CREATIVE AND

#### DESIGN MANAGER

Luke Juntunen

### SENIOR WRITER AND

#### EDITORIAL MANAGER

Jonathan Heath

### DESIGNER AND GRAPHICS

#### SPECIALIST

Kerry Lubman

### COMMUNICATIONS

#### ADMINISTRATIVE

#### COORDINATOR

Candace Kisiel

Published twice a year by the Office of Marketing and Communications, Eastman School of Music, 26 Gibbs Street, Rochester, NY 14604, (585) 274-1050.

Eastman-Notes@  
esm.rochester.edu

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## ► FROM THE COMMUNITY



### Dear Eastman Alumni,

In the past issue of Eastman *NOTES*, the Eastman School of Music Joan and Martin Messinger Dean Kate Sheeran shared that the opening letter of the magazine would be penned by new voices from our Eastman community. I'm proud to be the first new voice to contribute to this space.

Years ago, while searching for a school, I discovered a promotional cassette titled *The Sounds of Eastman*. I was captivated by the remarkable performances of Michael Torke, Diane Farrell, and Pamela Coburn, all under the masterful direction of David Effron conducting the outstanding Eastman Philharmonia. Robert Freeman's engaging narration brought the experience to life. From that moment, I knew Eastman was where I needed to be.

As I reflect on my journey since I first walked through the doors of the Eastman School of Music in 1990, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude. The connections I made here as a student continue to shape and guide my work, both personally and professionally. No matter where I go, I still feel the impact of Eastman in the world, where alumni make profound contributions to their communities, in ways large and small. Eastman is more than just a place to study music—it is an institution that inspires us to care about the world and for one another. My education at Eastman, paired with my personal experiences, guided me toward meaningful projects that reflect these values, such as the North American Indigenous Songbook and The Plimpton Foundation, which you will read about more in the pages within.

My journey as a student was not without challenges. I was initially rejected for a desperately needed scholarship. In its place, I was offered an opportunity to accompany Eastman's choral en-

sembles, which unexpectedly immersed me in a world of vocal music that has led to the fruitful creative life I now lead as director, pianist, conductor, and composer. That role not only shaped my professional career but ultimately brought me back to Eastman as a faculty member. It taught me the value of resilience and community and gave me a sense of belonging. I hope to pass on to my students the same deep sense of connection I hold to this place and hope that they will carry this connection out into the world, where they will use their musical talents to bring positive change to the communities they serve.

In this edition of the alumni magazine, we highlight several Eastman alumni who are doing just that—making a real difference in the world around them. From alumni who are leading innovative educational initiatives to those using music to create social change, their stories are a testament to the impact that an Eastman education can have. We also turn our attention to the future of Eastman, with a fascinating look at the new directions of the composition department, and we explore how Eastman is prioritizing wellness for its musical community. Finally, we pay tribute to the many women who have played pivotal roles in Eastman's rich history, honoring their legacy and impact.

I hope you find inspiration in these stories and that, as you read, you feel the same deep sense of pride and connection that I do as a member of the Eastman family.

With warm regards and enduring gratitude,

### TIMOTHY LONG '92E (MM)

Associate Professor of Opera

Artistic and Music Director of Opera

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*Photo by John Schlia.*





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# Transforming Communities THROUGH MUSIC

BY ANNA REGUERO

▼ **FOR MANY EASTMAN ALUMNI**, music's transformative power catalyzes social change—bridging divides, amplifying underrepresented voices, and creating opportunities for communities where music has traditionally been inaccessible. In this article, we highlight four exceptional Eastman graduates who are applying their musical expertise to enrich their communities and reshape the cultural landscape. From a groundbreaking venue that supports music education through craft brewing to a foundation dedicated to elevating Native American musicians, a school for refugee students that helps them learn music and life skills, and an organization advocating for gender and queer inclusivity in brass performance, these alumni demonstrate that music is not merely an art form—it's a vehicle for change. In each of their stories, we observe a reflection of Eastman's influence, which inspires and cultivates leaders who use their talents to improve the world around them.

**WILLIAM EDDINS**  
'83E, '86E (MM),  
METRONOME BREWERY

## The idea came to him in the shower.

It was a beautiful June day in 2020, following the George Floyd protests in May that took place merely a mile from his Minneapolis home, and conductor William Eddins was thinking of two things: why he wasn't spending time outside on his hobby, brewing beer, and how to nurture future citizens through music to create more understanding across identity barriers.

While aimlessly staring at the bathroom tiles, the two ideas fused like magnets. So, he called his brewing buddy Matt Engstrom with his concept: "We're going to found a brewery. It's going to be a for-profit entity. When we get profitable, we're going to take our money, and we're going to support music education for underprivileged kids here in the Twin Cities metro area."

Together, they founded MetroNOME Brewery, which opened in February of 2022. A major roadblock was checked off in 2021 when a space already outfitted as a brewery (one that went under during the pandemic) became available. It conveniently had an

extra room downstairs that was perfect for hosting concerts. The space changed the business model to one that included presenting music. Eddins had the perfect name for the cavernous space: Fingal's Cave. "Any Eastman grad that walks in goes, 'yeah, I get the reference,'" said Eddins.

The space has become one of the most active small venues in the upper Midwest. Between November and December 2024, the space hosted over 60 concerts.

"We have become this center for small audiences of all types, classical, jazz, rock, punk, funk, world," he said. "I don't care what I put into my facility as long as it's good and they understand what our mission is."

Part of that mission is the MetroNOME Foundation, which, as the brewery becomes more and more profitable, will be a charitable foundation to support music education in their city. For now, though, they support music education by offering space for youth music groups to perform, as well as host performances from some of the area's major non-profit music organizations. So far, they've collaborated with the Minnesota Orchestra, Minnesota Opera, Saint Paul Conservatory of Music, Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists, independent music studios, and more.

A piano major, Eddins found his passion for conducting at Eastman, where he conducted everything from student-organized ensembles to the school orchestras. "I didn't know it at the time, but all those experiences allowed me to find my musical voice," he recalls. "I rely on the training that I received at Eastman every single day."

**TIMOTHY LONG**  
'92E (MM), NORTH AMERICAN  
INDIGENOUS SONGBOOK

## Conductor, composer, and pianist

Timothy Long, an associate professor of opera and the artistic and music director of opera at Eastman, is 100 percent Native American. His mother belongs to the Choctaw Nation, while his father was from the Muscogee Creek Nation. His tribes were displaced during the Trail of Tears, when the government forcibly relocated Native American tribes east of the Mississippi River. They eventually settled in Oklahoma, where Long was raised.

His mother, who first encountered Beethoven while recovering from tuberculosis in a Native American hospital as a child,



introduced Long to music. His father further supported his creative streak, ensuring Long became expressive and outspoken rather than inhibited. Long first heard the piano—his primary instrument—in church, where his grandfather was the minister.

Despite his background, he never pursued projects that connected his native Indian roots to his work in Western art music until he was tapped in 2016 to conduct the premiere performances of *Missing*, an opera co-commissioned and co-produced by Pacific Opera Victoria and City Opera Vancouver. The opera told the story of the over 5,000 cases of missing Indigenous women and girls across Canada and Alaska, which has been called, by the Canadian National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, a “race, identity, and gender-based genocide.” In each city where the opera was performed, the company would do a private performance for the victims’ families, most of whom had never been to an opera or classical music performance.

“It changed me,” said Long. “I realized at that moment how privileged I was and how millions of people who are just like me don’t have that privilege or even a voice. And it became very important to me to give them a voice, or at least a presence. If I can symbolize that presence for other people in the country, so they think about us, I will serve a purpose.”

When the Black Lives Matter movement emerged in 2020, Long received numerous requests from individuals wanting to highlight underrepresented Native American performers and composers. In response, he conceived a foundation to support Native American musicians, offering scholarships, grants, and, most importantly, a new collection of vocal works called the *North American Indigenous Songbook*. The foundation, named after his father-in-law and supporter

**[1]** Eastman alumni Tony Levin '68E (left) and Sarah Navratil '24E with and William Eddins gathered in Fingal's Cave at MetroNOME Brewery (St Paul, MN) in July. Tony played the previous night in Minneapolis for the opening date of the StickMen band tour and has most recently been on a world tour with his longtime friend and colleague Peter Gabriel. Sarah played her last show in Fingal's before moving to New York City to continue her young career as an upcoming saxophonist. **[2]** Timothy Long.


Randy Plimpton, is known as The Plimpton Foundation. Together with Eastman alumnus Anna Louis Martin '22E (MM) (Director of Operations at Plimpton) and Peggy Monastra '92E (MA), Vice President of G. Shirmer/Associated Music Publishers, they were able to commission and secure composers for the project, which included works by composers such as Tim Archambault, Sage Bond, Raven Chacon, Connor Chee, R. Carlos Nakai, Charles Shadle, and even Long.

The *North American Indigenous Songbook* premiere took place at National Sawdust on November 16, 2024. The performance sold out a week in advance thanks, in part, to a significant feature in *The New York Times*. A large Eastman contingent was also in attendance to support the project: Joan and Martin Messinger Dean Kate Sheeran '02E, Eastman National Council member and alumna Joan Beal '84E, as well as members of both Friends of Eastman Opera and Eastman's vocal and opera department. Alumna and Rochester native Jazmine Saunders '22E, a Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist, and mezzo-soprano alumna Hai-Ting Chinn '95E were among the performers. There was also a significant Native American presence at the concert.

"It was one of the most important things I've ever done," reflected Long.

Since the National Sawdust performance, he has received several requests to bring the performance to other venues and hopes to publish the repertoire created through The Plimpton Foundation.

## YUKI NUMATA RESNICK '03E, FOUNDER OF BUFFALO STRING WORKS AND DIRECTOR OF ARTS AND CULTURE AT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR GREATER BUFFALO

**Yuki Numata Resnick's path** to starting Buffalo String Works began when she was an Eastman student in the early 2000s.

The University of Buffalo (UB) enlisted Eastman students for their faculty's new music ensemble, so Resnick and her friends often joined in these performances. Later, while Resnick was a member of the New World Symphony, UB needed a last-minute violinist for a concerto with the faculty ensemble, so they reached out to her. This led to her becoming an adjunct professor and she was ultimately awarded a full-time position.

While on faculty at UB, a colleague's wife,

who was a public-school music teacher, received funding to bring UB professors to perform and interact with the kids. Resnick and her colleagues brought an all-Brahms concert of chamber music to share.

"This group of kids that we played for in Buffalo, they were really different. And we always tell this story as founders—we played this slow movement in Brahms, and we asked the kids, 'What does that make you think of? How did that make you feel?' And this little boy kind of peeked out from under his desk and was like, 'It sounds like love.' To have a young child be able to articulate that so beautifully and simply really hit us."

The school was on the west side of Buffalo, a center of refugee resettlement, and the school's population was a potpourri of languages and cultures. With little prior exposure to live classical music, the kids stayed long after the concert to ask questions, filled with curiosity.

"It was so inspiring for us to be with this group of kids, some of them from all over the world, so that was the accidental kick-off for Buffalo String Works."

This was March 2014. By September 2014, Resnick and her co-founders opened the doors of Buffalo String Works, serving 17 violin students. Buffalo String Works was formed in the spirit of El Sistema, using music as a vehicle for holistic development. "We really wanted whatever they learned in the music classroom to bring that back into their homes, back into their communities." Through music, students would learn problem-solving, negotiation, listening to others, and more.

The relationships forged resulted in more than just music learning—the families leaned on Resnick and her Buffalo String Works staff as a trusted resource where families could ask for the help they needed to access basic services for things like housing.





By the time Resnick left the organization in 2023, the school had grown to 185 children playing violin, viola, cello, and bass. They recently sent 16 kids—mostly refugees—to Paris, France, for a music exchange. They even have a student who went through the program pursuing a music degree.

Resnick is now in a new role in Buffalo that impacts organizations like the one she created: Director of Arts and Culture at the Buffalo Community Foundation, an entirely new position where she manages the foundation's grant programs for arts organizations over the eight counties of Western New York, including Monroe County (where Eastman is located).

"Being able to sit in a funder position is this huge privilege and honor," she said. "It also just gives me a very different lens on the nonprofit sector as a whole."

## CATIE HICKEY '07E, BRASS BEYOND BINARIES

In February of 2024, alumna Catie Hickey hosted the first installment of her Brass Beyond Binaries organization's Winter Warm-up Solo Days, a chance for brass players under 18 to perform. A trumpet student got up to play and decided it was the right moment to come out as trans.

"I don't know how else more objectively you can state, this is why we're doing what we're doing," Hickey said.

Hickey is a freelance trombonist across Chicago, with adjunct appointments at four area schools. After a string of employment that didn't align with her values as a gay woman, she ended up in Chicago just in time for the pandemic and the concurrent social unrest. It was a chance to ask, "What would I do in a perfect world? How could I connect, mentor, and empower many of the people coming up in this industry that I've spent so much time working in?"

With initial funding from her mother-in-law and help from her Eastman School of Music connections—including trombonist and sackbut specialist Liza Malamut '06E, who secured some extra funding from her ensemble, the Newberry Consort, and administrative support from Priscilla Yuen '11E (MM), an assistant professor of collaborative piano at Eastman—she began Brass Beyond Binaries to support and connect gender-expansive brass players through workshops and performances. It started with a four-day summer trombone retreat in 2023 with 10 participants and grew to 15 participants for the summer of 2024. Hickey is hoping to have 25 for this coming summer. Her Eastman connections continue to help her develop the organization.

The organization has also added year-round opportunities for brass players of various ages. In addition to collegiate summer workshops—which will also feature horn and tuba workshops this upcoming

summer—Brass Beyond Binaries organizes Winter Warm-up Solo Days and a Gender-Friendly Jam Session, which occurs every few months and features a femme house band. The jam is open to everyone since Hickey wants "everyone in the room learning how to listen to each other."

Initially conceived casually as "Not Dude Camp," Hickey realized the importance of including any brass players who don't identify as cisgender males. Consequently, Hickey embraced "gender-expansive" as a more inclusive and fitting terminology.

"That's the best term I found. How can we create solidarity? How can we create an organization that supports both women in brass but also all these queer identities. How can we create a space of safety to say, 'We're going to meet you where you're at because you have value.'? And we're going to focus on creating individual relationships."

Hickey came to Eastman as a straight, self-taught jazz trombonist, and she left as an out gay woman with an increased range as a player. She plays music across genres, from orchestral music to Broadway pit work to moonlighting in jazz ensembles. That range, she says, is unique to students who come out of Eastman. But at Eastman she was a woman in predominantly male areas of brass and jazz. "It was exhausting," she recalls. "I'm just beginning to understand how and why."

Brass Beyond Binaries creates the kinds of safe spaces she never had, to discuss identity in the brass world and find community. And the word is spreading. While conducting an honors jazz band recently, there were two girls who found her during the lunch break to introduce themselves and express interest in the organization.

"That kind of grassroots work feels like the sign of progress," she said. And creating the organization has helped her continue to find her voice within a male-dominated brass world. "It's very much this feedback loop of the more folks I see who are starting to emerge and use their own voices, the more it empowers me to use mine in places where they aren't yet."



[3] Yuki Numaka Resnick. [4] Catie Hickey leads a Brass Beyond Binaries trombone workshop.


# THE YING QUARTET:

## Inspiring the next generation of chamber musicians

BY DANIEL J. KUSHNER

IT'S ALMOST TOO OBVIOUS TO SAY that the Ying Quartet is a household name in music. Having played as a group professionally for more than 30 years, siblings David, Janet, and Phillip Ying have had enduring careers as professors and musicians in the Greater Rochester area, and as touring performers throughout the United States and internationally. But the quartet continues to grow and change, propelled by its ongoing legacy as Eastman School of Music's quartet-in-residence, to impact a new generation of elite musicians.



David, Janet, and Phillip, along with their brother Timothy, the other founding member of the quartet, all came to study at Eastman individually in the late 80s. But they had no intention to embark on a collective path that would eventually lead them to succeed the Cleveland Quartet as the music school's quartet-in-residence, go on to commission more than 30 new compositions, and earn Grammy wins and nominations—all over the course of three decades.

David Ying, the quartet's cellist, says he and his brothers and sister didn't initially envision a joint career when they arrived in Rochester. "We were siblings," he says. "We weren't a quartet. And that was an interesting transition—we had to put aside the feeling of being siblings as much as we could. There's a good side: the trust factor. There's a very bad side, too. Like when we started playing quartets together, we already had decades of baggage."

The Ying children were born to a mother who taught elementary school and a physician father who served in the U.S. military during the Vietnam War. Their parents weren't setting out to raise professional musicians, but they did seek out private teachers and summer music programs for their children, who attended the prestigious public school New Trier High School (whose famous alumni include actors Charlton Heston and Rock Hudson).

The Yings' mother was very supportive of her children's music education. She would sit in on music lessons and take notes to help remind the young Ying siblings what they needed to focus on when practicing at home. David estimates that their mother has attended about 50 years of music lessons.





2

One of the reasons the Yings became so deeply immersed in music was because their mom regretted not having enough music in her own life. “She was determined to give her kids something that she didn’t quite get, as much as she wanted.”

In particular, she encouraged them to play the piano. “The fact that we turned out to be string players is a major act of rebellion on our part,” he says. “We weren’t in general super-rebellious kids, but I guess in that way we were.”

For quartets whose members are not blood-related, it’s more common to have the musical connection first, before developing the deep-seated trust that comes from personal connection. Growing up together in suburban Chicago, their mutual trust was intrinsic. The next step was learning to become colleagues.

Phillip, the quartet’s violist, estimates the group has rehearsed together close to every day for nearly four decades. He says a particular shared mindset is what has contributed to the Yings’ longevity.

“A respectful kind of ‘one-for-all, all-for-one’ mentality is when it works best,” Phillip says. And since Timothy, the quartet’s founding violinist, left the group in 2009, the remaining three siblings’ ability to adapt to the group’s changing performance dynamics has been key.

“The way your personality interacts with each of the other personalities is another part of the puzzle, so it becomes much more than about you,” he continues. “That was made very real to us when we went through membership changes. We’ve played with three different first violinists.”

Since Timothy’s amicable departure, Frank Huang, Ayano Ninomiya, and Robin Scott, the current first violinist, have filled that role. David Ying says these lineup changes have helped to rejuvenate the group over the years.

“If you change one player, especially the first violinist, it’s going to change everything in your group,” he says. “Obviously, the way they sound, but even the way Janet, Phil, and I hear each other and interact with each

**[1] As quartet in residence at the prestigious Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY, the Ying Quartet teaches in the string department and leads a rigorous, sequentially designed chamber music program. [2] Ying Quartet performing at Bowdoin International Music Festival**


other. It’s like a chemistry experiment. Baking soda operates in a different way when it’s mixed with different things. That’s me, I’m baking soda.”

David insists that these changes have enabled him to play the quartet repertoire better than ever before. “That’s the best thing about playing in quartets, because you can never live just with your own self and your own thoughts,” he says. “There’s three people constantly challenging your thoughts or expanding them or questioning them. It’s been the greatest education of my life.”

In several ways, Robin Scott’s presence as first violin has seen the Ying Quartet come





**[3, 4] The Ying Quartet rehearse at Eastman for upcoming March concert. [5] Ying Quartet with Push Physical Theatre**


shared humanity—that made a lasting impression on the quartet.

David says there were suddenly new considerations about what venues could work best for audiences. “Does it have to be in Kilbourn Hall? Does it have to be Carnegie Hall? The answer was a resounding ‘No,’” he recalls. “Because we had neither of those places or anything remotely resembling it in Jesup, Iowa. We luckily realized that a meaningful musical experience can be had in any situation at any time of day, with any number of people, with any age, with people of any background. And that was our challenge.”

While it was the residency in Iowa that solidified their reputation as an exciting new quartet, it was the group’s appointment as the Eastman School’s quartet-in-residence in 1997 that provided stability and established Rochester as the musicians’ home for 25 years and counting.

The Ying Quartet has continued to perform outside of Rochester and the surrounding region, but as quartet-in-residence, it’s locally that the group cultivates a sense of community most profoundly, through its concerts, student instruction, and other educational and outreach initiatives.

Kate Sheeran, Eastman’s Joan and Martin Messinger Dean, sees the chamber music ensemble as indispensable to life at the Eastman School.

“The enthusiasm and warmth are palpable from our audiences every time the Ying Quartet takes the stage,” Sheeran says. “But just as influential, David, Phil, Janet, and Robin all bring individual artistry and incredible teaching pedagogy to our students. Their unique experience and national reputation are a true boon for Eastman.”

The quartet also expands its reach in the broader academic community. David and Phillip Ying have served as co-artistic directors of the Bowdoin International Music Festival for the last decade. It’s a role that the festival’s board chair Lorna Flynn says has shaped its identity as a hub for educational growth among ascendent young chamber musicians.

“The impact of the Yings has been transformative for the Bowdoin International



full circle since their formative years with Timothy. David explains that although Robin interprets the music differently than Timothy would, the two violinists play with a similar tone. And like the Yings, Robin came from a large musical family before taking on a career move where he played for unlikely audiences not necessarily well-versed in classical music. For Robin, that experience was in Alabama.

For the Yings, the place was the rural town of Jesup, Iowa. The quartet’s two-year residency there, beginning in 1992, came courtesy of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It became the pivotal

experience that shaped the quartet into the ensemble it is now.

The composition that exemplifies this time, and the eye-opening effect it had on the Yings, was Antonin Dvořák’s String Quartet No. 12. Nicknamed the “American quartet,” the piece was written in Iowa by the 19th-century Czech composer during his tour of the United States. This connection helped the people of Jesup relate to the music in a way they wouldn’t have otherwise, David says.

While players’ abiding love for the music persisted, it was the music’s ability to unite them with their audiences—bonding in their

Music Festival,” Flynn says. “In their ten years as our artistic directors, our reputation as a primary element in the education of young chamber music artists from all over the world has mushroomed. David and Phillip’s genius in creating programs that mix classical with contemporary music has resulted in six weeks of magic each summer.”

One way in which the Ying Quartet has stayed relevant to the communities it plays for is through its ongoing commissioning projects, which were initially branded LifeMusic.

The LifeMusic commissioning series was inspired by the quartet’s formative experiences in Iowa, helping the group to better engage with audiences. For example, fellow Eastman alumnus Kevin Puts’s ’94E, ’99E (DMA) composition “Dark Vigil” was inspired by the 1999 tragedy at Columbine High School in Colorado. The challenging subject matter provided a unique opportunity for the quartet to connect with students who could relate it to their own experiences in school and life.

Though the LifeMusic series is no longer an active part of the quartet’s programming, it helped set a precedent for how the group bonds with its audiences.

David estimates there have been 35 to 40 new commissions for the Ying Quartet over the years. The musicians who provide these new interpretations, including students at Eastman and elsewhere, are the best part of Ying’s legacy, David says.

Timothy, who currently teaches music in Toronto, concurs with his brother about how commissions contribute to the quartet’s enduring legacy, now and for the future.

“If I think about what people might remember the Ying Quartet for in 50 years, it’s not going to be the way we played a late Beethoven quartet,” Timothy says.

Instead, he thinks the group’s impact will be most felt in the field of education and the future canon of string quartet music. “What they might remember the Ying Quartet for is the students that we trained or the pieces that we commissioned.”

The Eastman School of Music’s quartet-in-residence has also ventured into compelling multidisciplinary performances. The group’s collaboration with fellow Rochester-based troupe PUSH Physical Theatre, which combines movement-based storytelling with elements of acrobatics and dance, is a compelling example. The Ying Quartet-PUSH crossover performance “Creative



Collision” at Kilbourn Hall in 2019 arose from a commitment between the two groups to embrace the challenges of collaboration rather than avoiding them.

PUSH’s founding Artistic Co-Director Darren Stevenson remembers their creative process well. He says the two groups set out to embrace ideas that would seemingly clash in order to make more interesting art.

“Instead of seeing these as problems we need to avoid or mitigate, let’s lean into those, let’s actually put the musicians right smack-dab in the middle of the stage and move behind them up the side, and what if we move musicians halfway through the show? Or what if we switch places? What if we lose them completely and put the musicians in the audience? So, we kept allowing those collisions to create new avenues for creativity.”

The Ying Quartet’s collaboration with other artists has also taken the form of joint recordings with other quartets. The Yings have been nominated for Grammys on multiple occasions, including nods for their work with the St. Lawrence String Quartet

and jazz pianist Billy Childs respectively (a new Ying Quartet album of music written by Childs is in the works). The group won a 2005 Grammy for *4+Four*, a collaborative album with the Turtle Island String Quartet and was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2007 for their recording of Tchaikovsky’s three Quartets and the Sextet. The recording was released on Telarc and was nominated for Best Chamber Music Performance.

No matter what the endeavor, David Ying says the spark that keeps the quartet’s members inspired is the love they have for the music and the good it reveals in our collective humanity.

“It’s kind of an esoteric thing to some people,” he says, “but why it’s totally relevant today is because we live in a world where beauty and humanity are even more needed than at any other time in my life.”

Whether teaching at Eastman School of Music or performing and programming music elsewhere, the Ying Quartet is first and foremost about making a genuine connection with its audiences.



# FIRSTS: WOMEN OF EASTMAN

There have been many significant accomplishments by women throughout Eastman School of Music's history. We celebrate some of the incredible 'firsts' that have occurred in the last 100 years.

1962

Mary Joanne Curnutt (organ) and Joan Marie Mack (cello), the first two women instrumentalists to receive the DMA at Eastman

1972



In the 1970s, several women served on the Musicology faculty on short-term appointments: the first two were Jane Bowers (pictured), Assistant Professor of Musicology (1972-75) and Priscilla Drucker, Associate in Musicology and Music History (1972-73)

1941

Alice McElroy Procter, '41E (PhD) the first woman to receive Eastman's PhD in Composition

1922

Eastman's first two graduates were women: Marion Berenice Eccleston and Roslyn Sylvia Weisberg



Appointment of Barbara Duncan, first head librarian of the Sibley Music Library

1943



Louise Helen Johnson '43E was the first woman to teach flute at Eastman

1945



Bernadine Marie Thayer was the first woman to teach trumpet at Eastman

1953



Orpha Ochse, '48E (MM), '53E (PhD) the first woman to receive Eastman's PhD in Music Education



1921



When Eastman opened, there were four faculty members teaching music theory, one of whom was a woman, Marjorie Truelove MacKown

1934



Ruth Hannas, Eastman's first-ever PhD

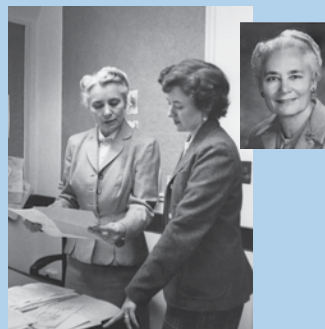
1944



Zena Gemmalo '42E (identified after her 1946 marriage as Mrs. Zena Baranowski) was the first woman to teach clarinet at Eastman

1946

Sister John Joseph Bezdek, C.S.J., '47E (PhD) the first woman to receive the PhD in Music Theory



Appointment of Flora Burton, Dean of Students, the first woman to serve in Eastman's Administration

1958



Anastasia Jempelis the first Eastman violinist to perform on the May-Jaquet Stradivarius, which was received in November, 1957



# 1980



The first woman in the Eastman Brass Quintet was Barbara Butler, who taught trumpet here from 1980 until 1998



Appointment of Ellen Koskoff, first Ethnomusicologist on faculty

# 1984



Retirement of Ruth Watanabe, the longest-serving Sibley Head Librarian (1947-84)

# 1989



Retirement of Eileen Malone, the longest-serving female faculty member (1930-89)

# 1994



Appointment of Augusta Read Thomas, first woman to serve on the composition faculty

# 1995



Armenta Adams Hummings, Eastman School of Music associate professor and founder of Gateways Music Festival, hosted the festival at Eastman for the first time

# 1998



Donna Brink Fox named the Eisenhart Professor of Music Education, which was Eastman's first endowed professorship

# 2019



Elizabeth (Betsy) West Marvin named the Minehan Family Professor of Music Theory

# 2022



Christine Jensen, the first woman appointed to the jazz studies and contemporary media faculty



# 2024



Appointment of Kate Sheeran '02E, Joan and Martin Messinger Dean

# 2023



Sara Gazarek, the first Associate Professor of Jazz Voice



SCAN TO LEARN MORE



To learn more about these women and their histories, scan the QR code or visit:  
[esm.rochester.edu/firsts-women-of-eastman](http://esm.rochester.edu/firsts-women-of-eastman)

# The Composition Department's New Score: Four New Faculty Set to SHAPE ITS FUTURE

BY ANNA REGUERO

OVER THE LAST TWO ACADEMIC YEARS the Eastman School of Music's composition department has undergone a radical transformation. Following the retirements of three esteemed members of the faculty—David Lip-tak, Robert Morris, and Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez—and the departure of Matthew Barber, who served as interim director of EARS (now EMuSE), the composition department welcomed four new faculty members. Composers Elizabeth Ogonek and Evis Sammouritis are new to the Eastman faculty this academic year; Daniel Pesca '05E, '16E (DMA) and Mikel Kuehn '93E (MA), '95E (PhD) joined the faculty last year. Professor of Composition Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon, the venerable departmental chair, is now in his 22nd year at Eastman. With new sounds, influences, and pedagogical viewpoints, the department has an opportunity to reflect and reimagine directions in compositional training at Eastman.

"The new faculty team reunites diverse backgrounds and education, with international experience, and a wide generational spread," says Zohn-Muldoon. "I think we're well equipped to balance that sense of continuity and connection to tradition and at the same time openness to a lot of new things happening in composition."

He says the department, however, was not looking to fill the faculty with specific sounds or styles. "There's too much variety in the field of composition to think that we could cover every facet of it," he says, "and so it was more about resonating with the values of the department, with upholding the high

level of craft and expertise that has defined Eastman composition faculty, and also with being very attentive to teaching—that kind of track record. How they can connect with students and offer real guidance."

Because the composition faculty at Eastman is "in residence," meaning present full-time, the department has historically been closely knit. Students rotate studios, a chance to gain multiple perspectives on their works. And the faculty work together on developing performance opportunities, for themselves and their students, which also involves collaborating with faculty and student performers from other departments. Faculty

composers remain active practitioners, fielding commissions and projects outside of Eastman's walls.

"We're a very active department in terms of the events that we bring to the cultural life of the campus, and also with our participation in the contemporary music scene nationally and abroad," Zohn-Muldoon says. Finding the right members to build an active and collegial department was important to maintaining the department's culture.

"I am very happy to have been part of the fantastic 'old guard,'" he says. "And I now feel very privileged to be in this situation, to somehow have a renewal of my job without having to leave, to get to work with the wonderful people in the current faculty team and experience this new dynamic."

Elizabeth Ogonek came to Eastman after serving on the faculty at Cornell University. Her orchestral works have garnered praise: she served as the composer-in-residence for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 2015–18. Additionally, her works have been premiered by orchestras in major cities, including Boston, London, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, among others.

"I'm so unbelievably excited to join Eastman's esteemed composition department," she says. "For me, it really is the opportunity of a lifetime to work alongside such wonderful colleagues and to mentor the next generation of composers."

Sammouritis brings significant European experience to his post at Eastman, having worked closely with many renowned international ensembles. With an emphasis on timbre, new technologies, and sounds inspired by his native Cyprus, his compositions have been recognized with over 40 international accolades, including the Royal Philharmonic Society Award. His music has been performed at prestigious venues in more than 45 countries and broadcast worldwide. As the co-founder and artistic director of the International Pharos Contemporary Music Festival and a former International Music Council Executive Board member, he also brings substantial international musical advocacy expertise.

"I am deeply honored to join the distinguished composition faculty at the Eastman School of Music," Sammouritis says. "I look forward to collaborations with my new colleagues and engaging with the gifted



Alumni Sungmin Shin (left),  
Dieter Hennings Yeomans  
(center), and Tom Torrisi (right)  
gather backstage in September  
2024, when they performed on a  
composition department recital.



composition students as they forge their own personal composition voice and style to make their mark on the world.”

Both Daniel Pesca and Mikel Kuehn, who joined the faculty in the fall of 2023, are Eastman alumni. Pesca earned an undergraduate degree in piano performance and composition in 2005 and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in composition in 2016; Kuehn attended in the 1990s, earning a master’s degree in 1993 and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in composition in 1995. In addition to composing, Pesca is an active pianist. His previous teaching post was as an assistant professor of piano at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, where he was also engaged in new music activities. Kuehn brings a significant background in electroacoustic composition and pedagogy and serves as the director of the Electroacoustic Music Studios @ Eastman (EMuSE), which was formerly the Eastman Audio Research Studio, renamed with Kuehn’s arrival.

Zohn-Muldoon says the new composers bring a panorama of musical views and sounds to Eastman. “At the core, we have a lot of agreements philosophically and pedagogically, but in terms of our individual work, we all look to different horizons. And I think that is one thing we were really trying to come up with in the faculty searches—sharing certain values so that we continue with this very congenial department, but at the same time have a broad aesthetic perspective.”

It’s also an opportunity for the department to discuss whether the curriculum is meeting the needs of composers in an unpredictable cultural landscape for artists. Students leave Eastman needing skills beyond their art form, including refined performance skills, organizational acumen, and experience in topics such as music technology, grant writing, legal and accounting issues, non-profit structures, and fundraising, to name a few.

“Traditionally, we have upheld a curriculum that supports the creation of a strong portfolio of compositions, the attainment of a high level of performance ability, and the acquisition of a thorough knowledge of music theory and history. Our experience has been that if we give our students the best education in composition, they will figure out how to forge a rich life in music,” he says,



**[1]** Dieter Hennings Yeomans performs Evis Sammouris’s *Eos*. **[2]** Ricardo Zohn-Muldoon. **[3]** From left to right: Paul Vaillancourt, conductor; Connor Stevens, percussion; Kiera Duffy, soprano; Joseph Johnson, cello; Jiaqi Yu, violin; André J. Washington, flute; Hennings Yeomans, guitar, and Zohn-Muldoon. **[4]** Hennings Yeomans, guitar, with Sammouris in Lowry Hall. **[5]** Elizabeth Ogonek. **[6]** Mikel Kuehn. **[7]** Daniel Pesca. **[8]** Evis Sammouris.

“but the best education in composition is a moving target, since it is an ever evolving creative field, so we are taking this renewal of the faculty as an opportunity to reconsider what we do, and to make any changes and adjustments that will keep our program vital for the future.”

Project-based learning, which is at the core of the department’s pedagogy, Zohn-Muldoon continues, provides some of the real-world experience of assembling performers and establishing performing opportunities. Students at Eastman who have taken degree requirements as real projects (rather than “hoops to jump through”) have done well professionally. This is not only true for composition students. For instance, guitarist Dieter Hennings Yeomans ’05E (MM), ’15E (DMA) “was very enterprising,”

Zohn-Muldoon remembers. For his degree recital, Hennings commissioned works, invited high-profile guests, and assembled a full orchestra to present a new guitar concerto. He even made t-shirts for the concert participants to wear. Hennings went on to start a guitar department from the ground up at the University of Kentucky and is now regarded as an extraordinary chamber musician and a star of the guitar world. “He’s had a very big career thanks, in part, to his embracing a fruitful collaboration with composers and performers, which began for him at Eastman.”

Accordingly, Zohn-Muldoon thinks that it will be important for the department to implement more opportunities for composition students to collaborate with artists from other disciplines. “We have very little





official connection with any kind of theater, dance, or opera,” he reflects. Plans, however, are in the works for more cross-disciplinary opportunities.

One thing that won’t change, however, are the requirements for admission. Composition students must also be accepted to a performance studio, meaning their performance skills must be competitive with Eastman-level performers. “I think that’s something we want to keep because that connects them to music-making in a way that you can’t do otherwise.”

The new composition department was showcased this past fall on a Faculty Artist Series concert on September 16 in Kilbourn Hall. The works highlighted the department’s gamut of inspiration and sounds. On the program was Ogonek’s work *Lightnings* (2016), a high-energy work for piano, violin, clarinet, and percussion that is inspired by a set of poems written by Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney.

Sammoutis had three works performed, all for guitar/s, which drew upon Greek themes or concepts, incorporated extended techniques, and experimented with new ways to combine instruments. Pesca found inspiration in the playfulness of cats in a solo piano work that he also performed, and in the flowing waters of a river in a duet for cello and piano. Kuehn presented a work for flute and piano inspired by the mythological Chimera, a monster mashup of a lion, goat, and snake. And Zohn-Muldoon’s work was a homage to Rochester, his home for over two decades, as well as the sounds of his native country of Mexico, in settings of sonnets by Shakespeare and poems by writer Raúl Aceves that embrace “the remembrance of love.”

Although the concert featured the composition faculty, it also brought together many areas of the school, from performance faculty to students, alumni, and guests. Two relatively new names to Eastman’s performance

faculty performed: soprano Kiera Duffy, an associate professor of voice who only joined the faculty last academic year (she also sat on the hiring committees that brought Ogonek and Sammoutis to Eastman), and Joseph Johnson, an associate professor of cello who joined the faculty in the fall.

Additionally, seven alumni returned to Eastman to bring the concert to life: guitarist Dieter Hennings ’05E (MM), ’15E (DMA), pianist Thomas Rosenkranz ’01E (MM), ’06E (DMA), guitarist Sungmin Shin ’11E (MM), ’18E (DMA), percussionist Connor Stevens ’15E (MM), ’21E (DMA), guitarist Tom Torrisi ’18E (DMA), flutist André J. Washington ’10E, and violinist Jiaqi Yu ’23E (MM).

Pesca says the concert was a celebration of the new makeup of the composition faculty. “This was a wonderful opportunity for attendees to become acquainted with all of our unique voices, in performances by outstanding faculty, students, alumni, and guest artists.”

# Eastman Opera Theatre Performs Collegiate Premiere of Paola Prestini's *Silent Light*

THE EASTMAN OPERA THEATRE kicked off its 2024–25 season in an innovative fashion with its fall production of *Silent Light*, a new opera by Paola Prestini with a libretto by Royce Vavrek, which ran from October 31 to November 3, 2024. The opera's world premiere occurred only a month prior, from September 26–29, at National Sawdust in Brooklyn, NY, marking Eastman's performances as the second production on record and first collegiate one. Eastman's production was directed by Pat Diamond, director of production for the Eastman Opera Theatre, and conducted by Timothy Long '92E (MM), the artistic and music director of opera at Eastman.

"When the next generation learns your music, it feels like a real moment of arrival," shared Prestini, who spoke with students about the opera over Zoom and attended the collegiate premiere at Eastman.

An adaption from the film of the same name by Carlos Reygadas, *Silent Light* is about the resonances of infidelity in a rural Mennonite community. Johan is married to Esther, with whom he has several children, but has fallen in love with Marianne, a member of their community. This out-in-the-open affair has a spiraling effect, reaching beyond just the three in the love triangle, affecting their families, their support systems, and even the tightly knit, structured society that they live within.

The National Sawdust and Eastman productions shared an important connection: Eastman Professor of Voice Anthony Dean Griffey '01E (MM), a four-time Grammy Award-winning tenor, was cast in the opera's premiere. Griffey was able to teach the opera to his students, who had roles in the Eastman production, alongside his own learning process.

*Silent Light* is a foley opera, which means that realistic, atmospheric sounds are part of the score and overseen by a foley sound artist. The production also included immersive projections across Kilbourn Hall to set the opera's consequential landscape.



**[1]** The Eastman Opera Theatre presented the first collegiate performance of *Silent Light*, which featured immersive projections across the Kilbourn Hall stage to set the background of a rural Mennonite community.

## Gateways Music Festival Highlights Black Artistry with Performances Across the US

Gateways Music Festival, in association with the Eastman School of Music, kicked off its 2024–25 season with performances in Rochester from October 14–18, 2024, featuring performances by professional Black classical artists. It was the first performances of Gateways led by its new President and Artistic Director Alexander Liang. The Rochester performances were followed by debuts at Walt Disney World (November 28) and the Cleveland Institute

of Music (February 3). The season culminates in a week-long residency in Rochester and New York City from April 22–27, ending with a return to Carnegie Hall on April 27 where the Gateways Festival Orchestra will bridge symphonic traditions with Dvořák's Eighth Symphony and William Levi Dawson's *Negro Folk Symphony*.

For more information and tickets, please visit [www.gatewaysmusicfestival.org](http://www.gatewaysmusicfestival.org).

To read about School News in more depth, please visit our News Room at [www.esm.rochester.edu/news](http://www.esm.rochester.edu/news) or through this QR Code:





# Eastman Performance Arts Medicine Named as Official Center

Building upon the Eastman Performing Arts Medicine's (EPAM's) last five years of growth, the University of Rochester newly designated EPAM as the transdisciplinary Eastman Performing Arts Medicine Center. By merging the artistic strengths of the Eastman School of Music with the cutting-edge scientific and research strengths of the University of Rochester Medical Center, the center focuses on clinical services for artists, creative arts therapy for hospitalized patients, scientific research, and performances in clinical spaces.

"Music has a positive effect on our body, mind, and soul, and is especially powerful during recovery from illness or injury," says David Linehan, CEO of the University of Rochester Medical Center and dean of the School of Medicine and Dentistry. "The Eastman Performing Arts Medicine Center brings together the strengths of the Eastman School of Music and University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry to harness the power of music and medicine to support our patients, musicians, and community."

"The steady growth of EPAM over the last five years and its designation as a center validates the impact arts have on our health and well-being, and the University of Rochester's place in growing this field," says Gaalen McCormick '92E, program manager of the center.



ESSO, JINHONG (MINT) LU

[2] Jherrard Hardeman, Assistant Conductor of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Music Director of the Rochester Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, led the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra in a concert in Kodak Hall on September 23, 2024.



## Guest Conductors Command Eastman's Orchestras

**FIVE DISTINGUISHED GUEST CONDUCTORS** led the Eastman Philharmonia (PHIL) and Eastman School Symphony Orchestra (ESSO) in the fall semester, offering a unique and valuable opportunity for students. Invited by Joan and Martin Messinger Dean Kate Sheeran, guest conductors guided rehearsals and performances, while working closely with Eastman's conducting students. Performing under the baton of world-class conductors provides a rare and transformative experience, allowing students to deepen their musical skills and broaden their professional perspectives.

Conductors include Jherrard Hardeman (September 23, 2024, ESSO and PHIL; February 9, 2025, ESSO), Anthony Parthner (October 21 and 23, ESSO and PHIL), Tito Muñoz (November 13, 2024, PHIL; March 3, 2025, ESSO), William Weinert (Eastman Faculty) (December 6, 2024, PHIL and the Eastman-Rochester Chorus (ERC); May 2, 2025, ESSO and ERC), Mei-Ann Chen (December 9, 2024, ESSO), Leonard Slatkin (March 19, 2025, PHIL), Matilta Hofman '09E (March 31, 2025, ESSO), Jerry Hou '15E (DMA) (April 7, 2025, PHIL), and Brad Lubman (Eastman Faculty) (April 30, 2025, PHIL).

Guest conductors will continue to lead spring orchestra concerts, all in Kodak Hall, which will be livestreamed. Use the QR code to see Eastman's concert calendar for the full schedule and livestream links.





## George Walker Center Recital Series Launches



**THE GEORGE WALKER CENTER** for Equity and Inclusion in Music (GWC) at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, launched its inaugural recital series during the fall semester, with media sponsorship from WXXI Classical. The series showcases diverse musical talent and provides a platform to celebrate underrepresented voices in classical music. Curated by Crystal Sellers Battle, Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion and Director of the GWC, the series has featured three concerts this academic year: a recital by Battle (September 18, 2024), a Hispanic Heritage Recital by the newly formed Eastman Latino and Hispanic Student Association (October 4, 2024), and a recital by pianist Joshua Mhoon in collaboration with the Gateways Music Festival (October 15, 2024). The series continues in the spring semester with additional concerts.



## Sisters in Jazz Weekend

The Eastman School of Music hosted the inaugural “Sisters in Jazz” weekend on September 20-21, 2024, celebrating female jazz musicians with concerts and workshops. Initiated by the Jazz & Contemporary Media department, this event featured performances by bassist and composer Endea Owens (September 20) and harpist Brandee Younger (September 21) in Kilbourn Hall. Saturday’s workshops, led by Eastman jazz faculty Christine Jensen and Sara Gazarek, along with guest artists, were free and designed to empower young female musicians through hands-on improvisation and networking opportunities. As Assistant Professor of Jazz Studies & Contemporary Media Christine Jensen expressed, she looked forward to “connecting with young musicians through the art of spontaneity and jazz.” Eastman hopes to make this an annual event.


- [1]** Students performed as part of the Hispanic Heritage Recital on October 4, 2024. **[2]** Crystal Sellers Battle, Associate Dean of Equity and Inclusion and Director of the GWC, gave the inaugural recital. **[3]** Jazz harpist Brandee Younger (center) spoke on a panel with Sara Gazarek (left) and Christine Jensen (right), the organizers of Eastman’s inaugural “Sisters in Jazz” weekend. **[4]** The American Brass Quintet. **[5]** The inaugural class of Eastman’s new vocal jazz program gave its first concert. **[6]** Han Lash. **[7]** Valerie Coleman. **[8]** Jennifer Micelli.



# Fall Guest Artists Featured Artists-In-Residence and More

MANY GUEST ARTISTS VISITED the Eastman School of Music over the fall semester to share their artistry and knowledge with the Eastman community. Included was flutist and composer Valerie Coleman, who gave the Glenn E. Watkins Lecture on November 6, 2024, and the American Brass Quintet, which visited as part of the James E. Clark Chamber Music Residency on December 2 and 3, 2024. Composer Han Lash '04E was featured on a composition department recital in a new work that included contemporary dance on October 21, 2024. The contemporary music group Ensemble Signal, which was founded by alumna and cellist Lauren Radnofsky '03E, '07E (MM) and features many alumni, joined Musica Nova for an all-Reich program on October 28, 2024. Eastman alumna Jennifer Micelli '89E (MM), '98E (PhD) shared her expertise on health and wellness with the community in September. Zimbabwean artist Othnell Moyo, also known as "Mangoma" (freely translating as "the one with the drums") gave a percussion workshop and demonstration through the Eastman Community Music School in November. Also in November, Grammy-nominated producer, technician, and pianist Jesper Andersen, associate professor and



head of Tonmeister Program at the Royal Danish Academy of Music, was in residence at Eastman to present on audio production and engineering and participate in an Eastman Performing Arts Medicine research study. In addition, there were many more artists on campus to give workshops, master classes, and performances. Please visit Eastman's News Room (link on first page of School News) to read information on all of the fall's guest artists.



## Eastman's Vocal Jazz Degree's Inaugural Concert on December 9, 2024

The Eastman School of Music's new vocal jazz degree program led by Associate Professor of Jazz Voice Sara Gazarek was showcased on an inaugural jazz vocal concert on December 9, 2024, in Kilbourn Hall.



## First-Generation Students Inducted into Tri-Alpha National Honor Society



**FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS** at the Eastman School of Music were recognized for the first time with the addition of a new National Honor Society called Alpha Alpha Al-

pha, Lambda Zeta chapter, or “Tri-Alpha.” The organization was founded in 2018 at Moravian College and has since expanded to include chapters at collegiate institutions nationwide. The society acknowledges, celebrates, and supports high-achieving first-generation students and connects them with first-generation faculty and staff members for mentorship support.

“Tri-Alpha is a celebration of the hard work and achievements of this group of students, staff, and faculty,” says Danielle Arnold, Eastman’s associate director of admissions and a Tri-Alpha chapter advisor. “First-generation college students offer us a unique perspective on what it means to navigate post-secondary spaces.”

Over Meliora Weekend on September 28,

2024, 14 undergraduate and graduate students, along with 14 faculty and staff members and one honorary member, were inducted in a ceremony in Hatch Recital Hall. The organization defines first-generation as a student whose parents, stepparents, or legal guardians are without a college degree. Inducted faculty and staff were all first-generation students when they completed their bachelor’s degrees.

Students who could not attend the formal induction ceremony were inducted on November 8 in the Tri-Alpha’s First-Generation Celebration Day at the George Walker Center. The society’s first official program, the gathering was an opportunity for members to meet and socialize, as well as share information with interested students.

## Eastman Hosted a Free Camp and Pilot Study on Music Technology Supported by a Major National Science Foundation Grant

**THE EASTMAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC’S** Institute for Music Leadership (IML) led *Future Leaders of Music Technology*, a free, one-week camp from July 15-19, 2024 for high school aged students across Rochester in grades 9–12—targeting Rochester city school students, but which ultimately brought students from 13 schools in the Rochester area and some more regionally—interested in learning music and sound-based technologies, including new artificial-intelligence tools.

The camp was made possible due to a \$1.8 million grant from the National Science Foundation to further its Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier program. The camp is a small piece of the overall study, functioning as a pilot program to collect research questions that an interdisciplinary team of 16 faculty, staff, and students from throughout the University of Rochester, including the Eastman School of Music, and Northwestern University—across the fields of music, audio engineering, ethics, and education—will investigate more closely.



“A lot of technology training has been self-taught, there are very few formal programs,” says Blaire Koerner, the assistant director of Eastman’s IML. “We wanted to connect with students as early as possible and start giving them the tools they need for whatever music might impact their career.”

Students received training in sound syn-

thesis, digital audio workstations, MIDI sequencing, and audio recording technologies, and learned about burgeoning artificial intelligence tools that will pave the future of technology. The IML plans to host the camp again in summer 2025.

Please visit [www.iml.esm.rochester.edu](http://www.iml.esm.rochester.edu) to keep updated on application deadlines.





## Eastman Honored in QS World University Rankings

The Eastman School of Music has been honored in the prestigious QS World University Rankings for 2024. Ranked No. 3 in North America and No. 11 globally, Eastman shares the international stage with other leading music institutions.

This year marks the first time QS World University Rankings has included a music category. The QS ranking for music schools assesses such criteria as research quality, strategic partnerships, innovation, and employability. Academic reputation provides 80 percent of the total score, and the remaining 20 percent is based on employer reputation.

## Elf in Concert

Eastman School of Music successfully hosted “Elf in Concert” at Kodak Hall on December 14, 2024, as part of a special event by Cine-Concerts and Warner Bros. Themed Entertainment. The timeless holiday film *Elf*, directed by Jon Favreau and starring Will Ferrell, was brought to life with a captivating live performance of John Debney’s heartwarming score. Conducted by six-time Emmy Award-winner Mark Watters and performed by Eastman’s Empire Film and Media Ensemble (EFAME), the performance delighted audiences and celebrated the enduring charm of this beloved holiday classic.



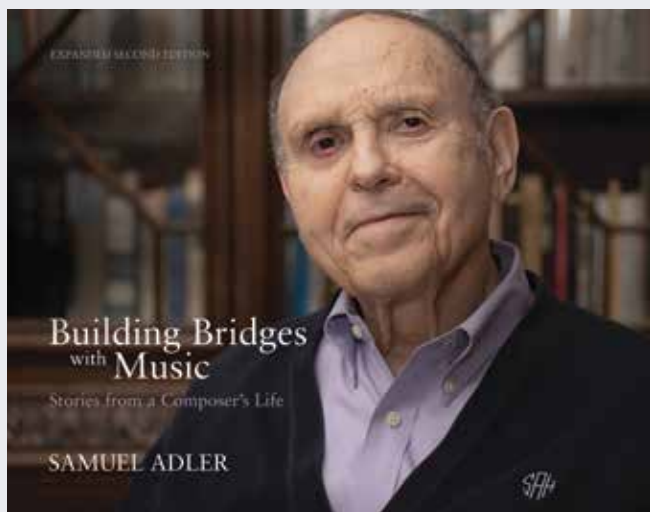
## Holiday Sing Revamped into a Holiday Musical Walk

**CONCEIVED BY KATE SHEERAN**, Eastman’s Joan and Martin Messinger Dean, the annual Holiday Sing tradition was updated to accommodate the growing population of the Eastman community. In “holiday carolers” style, Holiday Sing was transformed into a musical walk, where audiences split into groups and rotated through three iconic locations throughout the school, ending in Lowry Hall for a community sing of “Dona Nobis Pacem” led by William Weinert. It was a new, unique experience that was the perfect start to the holiday season.

Follow the QR code to see a video of Holiday Sing.

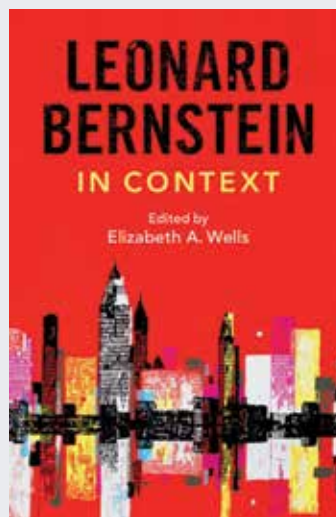


- [1] Alumna Tanatchaya (Tanya) Chanphanitpornkit '15E, a double bassist, conductor, and educator in New York City, was given honorary induction to Tri-Alpha over Meliora Weekend.
- [2] Students used midi keyboards as part of IML’s Future Leaders of Music Technology camp.
- [3] The Cello Plum Fairies ensemble performed “Waltz of the Flowers” from *The Nutcracker* in Wolk Atrium, part of the re-imagined Holiday Sing musical walk.



**SAMUEL ADLER, PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF COMPOSITION**  
**BUILDING BRIDGES WITH MUSIC**  
*Paraclete Press*

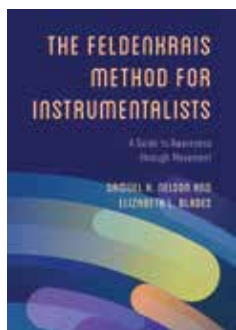
Adler, a longtime professor at Eastman and celebrated composer now in his mid-90s, shares a biographical account of his career and views on musical philosophy in his new book—one that provides insights not only for fans of his music but for composers broadly. Adler's vivid recollections span from his early life in Germany and collegiate teaching to essays on worship and music for the synagogue.



**ELIZABETH A. WELLS '96E (MA), '04E (PHD)**  
**LEONARD BERNSTEIN IN CONTEXT**  
*Cambridge University Press*

Wells, who serves as the dean of arts and the Pickard-Bell Chair in Music at Mount Allison University, recently edited this volume of essays on conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein, which also includes chapters by **Rob Haskins**

**'96E (MA), '97E (DMA), '04E (PhD), Maria Cristina Fasva '12E (PhD)**, and Eastman professor emeritus **Ralph Locke**. Essays shed light on Bernstein's social, professional, and ideological contexts and provide a fascinating overview of American classical music culture during Bernstein's long career in the public spotlight. Wells is also a co-editor on the recently published *Cambridge Companion to West Side Story*, in which she contributed the essay "The Real Gang History of New York" and was a co-author for the essay "West Side Story Abroad as an American Icon."



**ELIZABETH BLADES '83E (MM), '93E (DMA)**  
**THE FELDENKRAIS METHOD FOR INSTRUMENTALISTS: A GUIDE TO AWARENESS THROUGH MOVEMENT**  
*Rowman & Littlefield Publishers*

In this book, Blades and co-author Samuel H. Nelson demystify the Feldenkrais Method, a movement-based

self-discovery process that aims to maximize efficiency and reduce the chance of injury. The book received a glowing review from violinist and orchestra director **Anne Rardin '89E, '93E (MM)**, "No one knows more about how musicians' bodies make music with ease and comfort than Nelson and Blades. This book constitutes several lifetimes of wisdom packed into a treasure trove of movement. My performing life was so much easier and richer using these techniques."



**DARIUSZ TEREFENKO '98E (MM), '03E (MA), '04E (PHD), PROFESSOR OF JAZZ STUDIES & CONTEMPORARY MEDIA**  
**BENJAMIN WADSWORTH '03E (MA), '08E (PHD)**  
**EXPLORATIONS IN MUSIC THEORY: HARMONY, MUSICIANSHIP, IMPROVISATION**  
*Routledge*

Terefenko, a professor of jazz studies and contemporary media and an affiliate member of the music theory department at the Eastman School of Music, recently published this innovative approach to music theory that centers on instrumental skills, improvisation, and composition, co-authored with Benjamin Wadsworth. With a modular organization that eases its use in a variety of course structures, the textbook offers a comprehensive and performance-informed foundation in music theory. An adjoining workbook is also available.



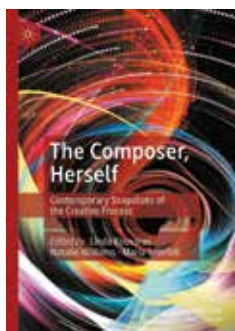
## ► RECORDINGS

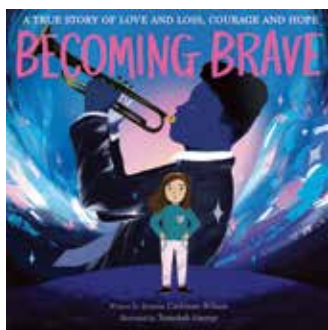


**MARIA GRENFELL '94E (MA)**  
**A CENTURY OF  
 COMPOSITION BY WOMEN /  
 THE COMPOSER, HERSELF**  
*Palgrave Macmillan*

Grenfell, a composer and associate professor at the Conservatorium of Music at the University of Tasmania, Australia, recently co-edited two groundbreaking books on women in composition, collaborating with Linda Kouvaras (University of Melbourne, Australia) and Natalie Williams (Sydney Conservatorium). *A Century of Composition by Women* presents accounts of creative processes and contextual issues of current-day and early-20th century women composers. This collection of essays balances narratives of struggle, artistic prowess, and the experience of “breaking through” the obstacles in the pro-

fession. *The Composer, Herself* is a collection of 26 essays authored by living composers of Western art music from across the globe. The book provides a unique wealth of auto-ethnographic accounts from the composers themselves—a resource for musical artists and musicologists alike, with insights that will last well into the future.

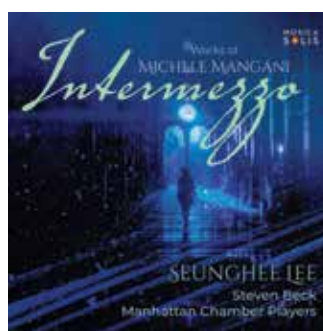


**JENNIE CASHMAN WILSON,  
 WITH ILLUSTRATION BY  
 TOMEKAH GEORGE**  
**BECOMING BRAVE: A  
 TRUE STORY OF LOVE  
 AND LOSS, COURAGE,  
 AND HOPE**  
*Little Tiger Publishing*

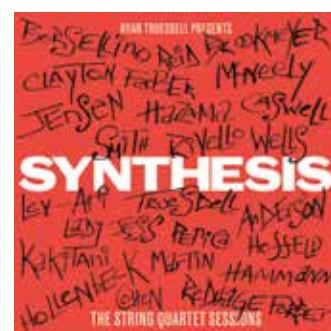
When the jazz trumpeter and Eastman alumnus **Abram**

**Wilson '97E (MM)** died, his wife Jennie Cashman Wilson founded a musical charity in his honor that raised more than \$1 million over 11 years and that inspired 10,000 children through its programming. It inspired her to write the illustrated children’s book *Becoming Brave*, an inspirational story that explores grief and celebrates courage, touching on themes of love, loss, hope, and believing in yourself in a gentle and uplifting way that can help spark important conversations for children.



**SEUNGHEE LEE '90E**  
**INTERMEZZO**  
*Musica Solis*

Clarinetist Lee follows her Grammy-nominated album *Aspire* with a new release titled *Intermezzo*, featuring works by contemporary Italian composer Michele Mangani. The Manhattan Chamber Players and pianist Steven Beck join her. *Intermezzo* presents a deeply personal program that reflects Lee’s musical journey, celebrating themes of rejuvenation and artistic rediscovery. The album highlights the importance of self-care, demonstrating how embracing life’s pauses can inspire revitalized creativity and confidence. In addition to Mangani’s original works, the album features his arrangement of Astor Piazzolla’s “Tango Étude No. 3,” originally written for the flute. Lee commissioned the new arrangement for the clarinet and chamber ensemble.



**JOHN HOLLENBECK '90E,  
 '91E (MM)**  
**CHRISTINE JENSEN, ASSISTANT  
 PROFESSOR OF JAZZ &  
 CONTEMPORARY MEDIA**  
**DAVE RIVELLO '89E (MM)**  
**NATHAN PARKER SMITH  
 '08E (MM)**  
**SYNTHESIS: THE STRING  
 QUARTET SESSIONS**  
*ArtistShare*

Newly commissioned works by Hollenbeck, Jensen, Rivello, and Smith are featured on *Synthesis*, an epic, three-CD collection curated by the multi-Grammy Award-winning producer Ryan Truesdell, pairing 15 of today’s leading large ensemble jazz composers with the timeless and venerable instrumentation of the string quartet. The album, released by ArtistShare, features nearly three hours of new music commissioned by Truesdell specifically for this project. Some of the top call string players in New York City, including **Lois Martin '74E**, brilliantly executed and brought these remarkable new works to life.

## ▶ RECORDINGS



### JACQUELINE LECLAIR '88E ROGER REYNOLDS WIND CONCERTOS

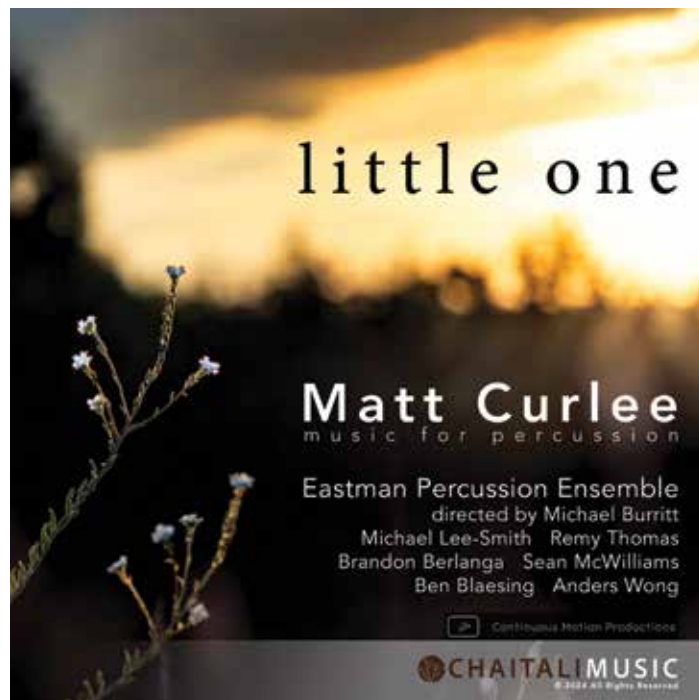
*Ekkozone*

### VIET CUONG "TRAINS OF THOUGHT"

*Independent*



Oboist Leclair performed the world premiere of Roger Reynolds's *Journey* for oboe and chamber orchestra—a work commissioned by and dedicated to her—with Matthias Reumert, conductor, and the Esbjerg Ensemble. The composer describes *Journey* as a work that “does not give up its secrets easily” and of immense subtlety, in which the solo part weaves in and out of the polyphonic orchestral texture. The unusual harmonies of the ensemble writing are based on Leclair’s trademark oboe multiphonics. Additionally, Leclair performed on an independent release of Viet Cuong’s “Trains of Thought,” with Christian Whitacre on bassoon and Pamela Reimer on piano. It is available on YouTube.



### MATT CURLEE, '99E, '01E (MA) ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF MUSIC THEORY WITH THE EASTMAN PERCUSSION ENSEMBLE, DIRECTED BY PAUL J. BURGETT DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF PERCUSSION MICHAEL BURRITT '84E, '86E (MM)

#### LITTLE ONE: MUSIC FOR PERCUSSION

*Chaitali Music and Continuous Motion Productions*

This album mediates personal cataclysms, those moments when tiny, trivial matters can become disastrous. An “incongruity is both terrifying and beautiful, holding within it the paradox of simultaneous fragility and tenacity that is at the core of life,” writes Curlee. Using a mathematical paradox as his jumping-off point, Curlee’s album *Little One* is a rumination on unknowable things, where the permutations and transformations of components can lead to new degrees of freedom. The Eastman Percussion Ensemble performs under Michael Burritt’s direction.



### INGRID GORDON '92E PLUCKED AND STRUCK

*Neuma Records*

This recording of original works for Celtic harp and micro percussion may be the only album to feature classical music for this unique instrument combination. It is performed here by Percussia, a duo that includes Gordon, a percus-

sionist, with Celtic harpist Susan Jolles. The album also features several tracks composed for Orff xylophone, an instrument that is traditionally associated with early childhood education. The works are rooted in New York City, where all performers and most composers featured on the album reside.



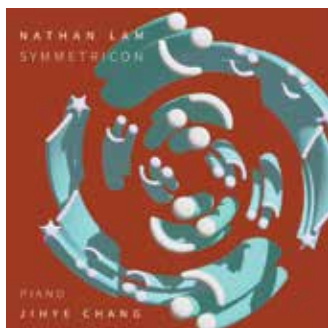
### AMELIA HOLLANDER AMES '01E SWIRL

*New Focus Recordings*

The RAHA Duo, which includes violist and Eastman alumna Ames, released their debut album, *Swirl*. The album features six premiere recordings of works for viola and piano, with guest musicians joining on two pieces. Theatrical music

plays an important role in three of the six, with two works that are adapted from original theatre contexts (a puppet opera and a human opera) and one that sets a poem with narration. The three works of absolute music balance out the program with diverse approaches to the fruitful possibilities available in this instrumentation.





**NATHAN LAM, ASSISTANT  
PROFESSOR OF MUSIC THEORY  
SYMMETRICON**  
*Bandcamp*

Beginning as classroom examples, Lam worked with pianist Jihye Chang to write 77 complex, two-voice canons on the tune “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star” called *Symmetricon*. In it, Lam explores canon styles, rhythm, and time, ending with a ‘phase canon’ that stitches 26 mini canons into a super canon that shifts and phases in pitch and time, not unlike Steve Reich’s phasing. Of the canons, Lam writes, “I finished the piece in 2020 amid political unrest and a global pandemic, so the mood of the last few variations grew progressively darker. Subsets of the canons were premiered in 2020 and 2022 . . . and after so many difficult months, hearing the canons live was truly cathartic.”



**JIM SHEARER '90E (DMA)  
CLOUD BOWLING WITH  
CLAUDE BOLLING**  
*Summit Records*

This album is Shearer’s sixth commercial CD release on Summit Records, receiving international acclaim. He began working on a tuba transcription of Claude Bolling’s *Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano Trio* in 1983. Over 40 years later, this recording is the final result. When composer and pianist Chris Reymann signed on to do the project in 2021, he asked if he could also compose a companion seven-movement suite, which became the music featured on the second disc, titled *Cloud Bowling*. The work explores a variety of jazz styles and offers improvisation space for both the solo tubist and all members of the jazz trio. A published version of the work was released by Potenza Music.

## GRAMMY NOMINATIONS AND WINS

Several graduates of the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music, along with Sara Gazarek, Eastman’s Associate Professor of Jazz Voice, have received nominations in the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, Inc.’s 67th GRAMMY Awards:

### BEST ENGINEERED ALBUM, CLASSICAL

- Adams: *Girls of the Golden West* | **Julia Bullock '09E**, soprano
- *Clear Voices in the Dark* | **Skylark Vocal Ensemble** including **Fotina Naumenko '10E**, soprano

### BEST ARRANGEMENT, INSTRUMENTAL OR A CAPELLA

- *Silent Night* | **säje** including **Sara Gazarek**, Associate Professor of Jazz Voice

### BEST ARRANGEMENT, INSTRUMENT AND VOCALS

- *Alma* | **säje** including **Sara Gazarek**, Associate Professor of Jazz Voice **WINNER**

### BEST OPERA RECORDING

- Adams: *Girls of the Golden West* | **Julia Bullock '09E**, soprano
- Puts: *The Hours* | **Kevin Puts '94E, '99E (DMA)**, composer; **Renée Fleming '83E (MM), '11 (Honorary)**, soprano

### BEST CHORAL PERFORMANCE

- Sheehan: *Akathist* | **Fotina Naumenko '10E**, soprano; **Pamela Terry '07E (MM)**, mezzo-soprano
- *Clear Voices in the Dark* | **Skylark Vocal Ensemble** including **Fotina Naumenko '10E**, soprano

### BEST CHAMBER MUSIC SMALL ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE

- Adams, J. L.: *Waves & Particles* | **JACK Quartet** including **Christopher Otto '06E, '06**, violin; **John Pickford Richards '02E, '04E (MM)**, viola
- *Rectangles and Circumstances* | **Caroline Shaw & Sō Percussion** including **Jason Treuting '99E**, percussion **WINNER**
- Cerrone: *Beaufort Scales* | **Lorelei Ensemble** including **Sarah Brailey '04E**, soprano; **Kate Maroney '10E (DMA)**, mezzo-soprano

### BEST CLASSICAL INSTRUMENTAL SOLO

- Perry: *Concerto for Violin & Orchestra* | **Experiential Orchestra** featuring soloist **Curtis Stewart '08E, '08**, violin

### BEST CLASSICAL SOLO VOCAL ALBUM

- Newman: *Bespoke Songs* | Soloist **Fotina Naumenko '10E**, soprano

### BEST CLASSICAL COMPENDIUM

- *American Counterpoints* | **Curtis Stewart '08E, '08**, violin

### BEST NEW AGE, AMBIENT, OR CHANT ALBUM

- Redding: *Visions Of Sounds De Luxe* | **Mitchell Hutchings '18E (DMA)**, baritone


Eastman also has several alumni in the following ensembles that played on nominated albums: the Chicago, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Los Angeles, and Cleveland Symphonies; the Louisiana and BBC Philharmonic Orchestras, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.



**MARIA GRENFELL  
'94E (MA)  
RIVER  
MOUNTAIN SKY**  
*ABC Classic*

Grenfell’s music has been described as “expansive, effusive and energetic,” “magic,” and “refreshingly groovy.”

Her chamber music is played worldwide, and her orchestral music has been commissioned and performed by all the major symphony orchestras in Australia and New Zealand. This disc presents the world premiere recordings of six of Grenfell’s best-loved orchestral works, exploring subjects as diverse as Māori legend, Tasmania’s natural beauty, the struggles of immigrant workers, and 18th-century explorer Matthew Flinders’s extraordinary cat Trim.

## ▶ ALUMNI NOTES

### 1960s

**Steven Herbert Smith '66E (MM), '78E (DMA)** completed his term as president of the American Matthey Association for Piano, after presenting a recital at the Matthey Festival at Pepperdine University in June 2024. He also performed a recital in February 2024 at Penn State, where he has been piano professor emeritus since retiring in 2014. Both programs included **John Beall's '73E (PhD)** *Vandalia Suite*, composed between 2004–08 for Steven.

### 1970s

In March 2024, **Jessica Burri '76E** performed in a new opera production of *L'Amant anonyme oder unerwartete Wendungen* at the Aalto Theater in Essen, Germany.

In November 2024, harpist **Rita Costanzi '76E** brought her fascinating life story to the stage in *Woman on a Ledge*, based on her memoir and adapted by Hershey Felder. A highly personal drama exploring the vulnerabilities experienced by a female musician

torn between her artistic self and her roles as a wife and mother, the play ran at Theater for the New City in New York City and included musical excerpts by Debussy, Tournier, Bach-Gounod, Puccini, Albinoni, Liszt, Paganini/Mchedelov, and traditional Irish and Scottish folk songs.

**Leigh Howard Stevens's '75E** company Mallettech, a renowned maker of keyboard percussion instruments, mallets, and accessories, was acquired by the Eastman Music Company, a global leader in musical instrument manufacturing.

### 1980s

**John Fedchok '85E (MM)** is the 2024 recipient of the International Trombone Association's ITA Award. The ITA Award is presented to an individual who has greatly influenced the field of trombone and recognizes an elite level of dedication to excellence in performance, education, composition, arranging, and the advancement of the instrument. In conjunction with this honor, John was featured on the cover of the

July 2024 issue of the *International Trombone Journal*.

**Mark Foley '89E (MM)**, double bass, was prominently featured in a *Washington Post* opinion piece about the impact of artificial intelligence on music, and why musicians would be wise to embrace it. "Why musicians are smart to embrace AI" by Yan Wu published on August 27, 2024.

**Donald Kendrick '85E (DMA)** directed the Sacramento Choral Society and Orchestra in a performance of the Dvořák *Stabat Mater* in March 2024 at the SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center in Sacramento, California. Donald is also director of choral activities and professor emeritus at Sacramento State School of Music, and music director at Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

**Madeleine Mitchell '81E (MM)** is the artistic director of the international Red Violin Festival, which was held throughout Leeds, UK in October. The festival was planned over five years, with a highlight being the European premiere of *Intonations: Songs from the Violins of Hope* by Jake Heggie and **Gene Scheer '81E, '82E (MM)**. Madeleine and Gene became good friends while at Eastman, making this collaboration especially meaningful.

### 1990s

**Todd Frazier '92E** composed *Breath of Life: The Story of a Heart Transplant, An Opera in Two Acts* with libretto by Michael Remson, which debuted with Lone Star Lyric in Houston, TX in June 2024. Through music and storytelling, the opera highlights the emotional and spiritual journey of those involved in the transplant process. In addition to composing, Todd is the director of the Center for Per-

forming Arts Medicine at Houston Methodist Hospital, where specialists collaborate on the health care needs specific to artists.

**Erin Hannigan '96E (MM)** was appointed as professor of oboe at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. During her time in Rochester, Hannigan studied under Professor Richard Killmer. Hannigan is currently the principal oboist and Nancy P. & John G. Penson Chair of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra (DSO).

**Lee Koonce '96E (MM)**, Eastman alumnus and former president and artistic director of Gateways Music Festival, was recently honored with the League of American Orchestras's Gold Baton Award. Alexander Laing, Lee's successor shared: "This prestigious recognition highlights Lee's transformative leadership and his unwavering commitment to advancing Black classical artistry. Over the last 15 years, Lee not only revolutionized Gateways Music Festival but also etched its legacy into the fabric of the classical music landscape at large. Lee's impact has been profound and inspired us all through the power of community and performance."

**Robert Moody '91E (MM)** has been named the new music director of the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra in Baltimore, MD. In addition to this position, Robert currently serves as music director for Arizona Musicfest, the Memphis Symphony Orchestra, and principal conductor for Lakeland Opera (FL).

**Brett Stemple '90E**, the vice dean of ensembles, head of brass and percussion, and associate professor of music at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music at the National University of Singapore, has been active this fall.

While attending the Lehrer Vocal Institute at the Music Academy of the West, Eastman alumni and students performed in Bizet's *Carmen* at the Granada Theater in Santa Barbara. The opera was directed by Ken Cazan and Daniela Candillari.



**Pictured (L-R): Kayla Stein '23E; Alexandra Rose Hotz '20E (MM), '23E (DMA); Kayla Sconiers '24E; Meg Brilleslyper '23E; Xuyue Qing, DMA Candidate.**



He led a brass ensemble workshop and was the tuba soloist in John Williams's "Tuba Concerto" with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra.

**Lawrence Strohm '99E** was appointed as the first titular organist of the Abbey of St. Michael in Silverado, CA.

**Louise Vickerman '95E (MM)** was appointed adjunct professor of harp at the University of Nevada Las Vegas beginning in the 2023–24 academic year.

2000s

**Beata Golec '05E (MM), '12E (DMA)** was interviewed and featured in *Rochester Woman* magazine, and was an honoree of the 39th Ontario County ATHENA Leadership Awards.

**Sarah Ikerd '05E** is the founder of the multimedia production company Studio Shangri-La and OCTAVES, a music label that includes original sheet music publication. Most recently, multi genre OCTAVES Music was approved by the Recording Academy for entries to the 2025 Grammy Awards. The production company already has four entries in four different genres, including *Electric Echoes: A Cosmic Tech Opera*.

**Anna Reguero '05E, '05** is the program note annotator for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra's 2024–25 season.

**Curtis Stewart '08E, '08** was a recipient of the 2025 Sphinx Organization Medal of Excellence. Awarded annually, the medal recognizes leaders in the classical music field who are transforming lives within Black and Latino communities through their artistic excellence, work ethic, and determination. Each recipient receives a \$50,000 career grant.

**Li Xu '02E, '17E (MM)** generously donated a Luciano Golia double bass to the Eastman School of Music and bass studio of James VanDemark. He also was in residence at Eastman late spring 2024 to work with bass students.

2010s

Best friends from their time at Eastman, **Alexandra Cade '14E, '14** and **Tommy Dougherty '13E** were awarded Maker-Creator Fellowships at the Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library, which gave them free creative reign of the museum and its resources. Alexandra researched the history of select pieces from the 90,000 historical objects at Winterthur, and Tommy composed a suite that was a musical reaction to their material and historical qualities. After years of work, the finished product *The Winterthur Suite* is being featured in Winterthur's Transformations Exhibit, which will run into 2025.

In the *Orchestrating Your Career* podcast, **Rebekah Carpio '13E** chatted with music graduates

Eastman School of Music was well-represented at the 56th Symposium of the International Horn Society, with numerous students and alumni participating in performances and presentations. Alumni included **Katherine Caruthers McBain '01E (MM), '08E (DMA)**; **Marie Smith '20E (DMA)**; **Alex Shuhan '84E**; **Dan Nebel '08E**, and **Emily Shewan Britton '08E (MM)**. Professor of Horn **Peter Kurau '74E** collaborated with **Elizabeth Matchett Freimuth '96E** to present a lecture/clinic for the International Horn Competition of America (IHCA) participants, and was involved in adjudicating the preliminary and final rounds of the biennial IHCA University Division, as well as the final round of the IHCA Professional Division. "It was my privilege to present an award to Harrison Bruner [University of Alabama] in the University Division for **Tim Martin's '11E** "Lament" composed in memory of **Gretchen Snedeker '05E, '08E (MM)**."



Each year, the College Board sponsors the advanced placement reading to grade the advanced placement music theory examinations. Of the 100 music theory teachers from collegiate and high school programs across the nation who gathered in Kansas City to grade 19,000 exams, 17 were Eastman alumni. Front row: **Adriana Martinez Figueroa '00E (MA), '09E (PhD)**; **Kelly Francis '11E (PhD)**; **Laura D'Angelo '90, '00E (MA)**; **Betsy Marvin '81E (MA), '89E (PhD)**; **Jenine Brown '06E (MA), '14E (PhD)**; **Anna Stephan-Robinson '03E (MA), '09E (PhD)**; **Nancy Rogers '00E (PhD)**. Back row: **Sam Reenan '18E (MA), '21E (PhD)**; **Matt Bribitzer-Stull '97E (MA), '01E (PhD)**; **Chris Bartlett '01E (MA), '07E (PhD)**; **Kary Haddad '04, '06E (MA)**; **Phil Chang '99E (MA), '11E (PhD)**; **Joe Kraus '77E, '87E (PhD)**; **Stephanie Venturino '17E, '19E (MA), '22E (PhD), '21W (AC)**; **Michael Buchler '98E (PhD)**. Not pictured: **Jocelyn Neal '95E (MA), '02E (PhD)**, **Beata Elzbieta Golec '05E (MM), '12E (DMA)**.




Eastman faculty and alumni reconnected at the 2024 Cabrillo Festival of Contemporary Music. In late July and early August each year, audiences are joined by both preeminent and emerging composers, spectacular guest artists, and an orchestra of dedicated professional musicians from across the globe to give voice to new works, which are rarely more than a year or two old. Pictured (L–R): **Tommy Dougherty '13E**; **Andrea Velasquez '22E**; **Kasumi Leonard '09E, '22E (MM)**; **Una O'Riordan '98E**; **Emelyn Bashour '18E, '18**; **Norbert Lewandowski '01E (MM)**; Associate Professor of Tuba and Euphonium **Justin Benavidez**.

## ► ALUMNI NOTES

about what comes after the degree and how they're orchestrating their own careers. A recent episode with **Jamal Rossi '87E (DMA)** covered his musical background and journey to becoming dean of the Eastman School of Music. The episode can be watched on YouTube, Spotify, or wherever you listen to podcasts!

**Ryan Chan '19E (MM), DMA Candidate**, was featured in the July 2024 *Early Music America* newsletter. Ryan is recognized as a versatile musician specializing in organ and harpsichord with passions for both early and con-

temporary repertoire, performance practice, historic/antique keyboards, experimentation, and teaching.

Composer **Ching-Shan Chang's '17E** first feature film, *Laws of Man*, premiered at the Festival de Cannes.

**Irina Chang '19E** has been appointed principal clarinet of the South Dakota Symphony.

As part of the 150th anniversary celebrations at the University of Nevada Reno (UNR), the school commissioned **Steve Danyew**

**'10E (MM)** to write a piece for wind ensemble and choir. Steve's composition incorporates poems by three Western-US poets, including a poem by a student at UNR in the 1920s. The piece, "And the Cities Rise Like Dreams," was premiered by the University of Nevada Reno Wind Ensemble, Concert Choir, and Chamber Choir, conducted by **Reed Chamberlin '14E (DMA)**, in April 2024.

**Alyssa Grey '13E (MA)** has been appointed to a four-year term as a member of the Music Educators Journal Editorial Board Advisory Committee. Alyssa has previously served as a member of the Music Educators Journal Advisory Committee. She currently works at Berry College in Georgia as the assistant professor of music education and director of wind studies.

**Brittany Harrington '10E** recently joined the faculty at the University of Puget Sound as bassoon instructor and affiliate artist. Brittany says, "I look forward to contributing to the vibrant community at the University of Puget Sound and the tradition of excellence in music education while continuing the legacy of the Eastman School of Music."

**Alfonso Hernández '15E (MM)** co-founded the Festival-Concurso de Piano "Luis Felipe Arias," an emerging piano festival and competition in Guatemala. The festival and competition aims to enhance pianists' skills in artistry, performance psychology, and pedagogy while integrating Guatemalan piano compositions as a central component of the program. Prizes included lifetime memberships to ToneBase, professional recordings, and fully paid travel to a piano summit in Costa Rica.

Oboist **Noah Kay '16E**, from the studio of Richard Killmer, was ap-

pointed the newest member of WindSync.

**Sanders Lau '15E (MM)** was the winner of the 2023 Romano Gandolfi International Competition for Choral Conductors in Parma, Italy. He was also awarded a special prize for an outstanding performance on chants and a second award to support a performance in the US at a major music center. Lau is the artistic director and founder of NOËMA, a professional chamber chorus in Hong Kong.

**Rebekah Lorenz '17E** was appointed principal horn of the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra in Oklahoma.

Violinist **Markiyano Melnychenko '12E, '14E (MM)** returned to Rochester last summer as part of a US tour, where he presented a program of rarely heard violin/piano pieces by some of Ukraine's greatest composers.

**Sun-Ly Pierce '16E** won third prize in the international Operalia 2024 competition in Mumbai, India. Operalia's goal is to attract singers between the ages of 20 and 32, of all voice types from and all over the world, to have them audition and be heard by a panel of distinguished international personalities.

**Jennifer Ronyak '05E (MA), '10E (PHD)** has been promoted to associate professor with tenure at the Institute for Music Aesthetics of the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz (Kunstuniversität Graz).

**Russell Rybicki '13E** won the second horn position with the North Carolina Symphony.

**Laura Corina Sanders '16E, '18E (MM)** made her role and house debut as Gretel in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* at Mobile Op-

In June, the Malaysia Bach Festival Singers and Orchestra, a group founded by **David Chin '12E (MM), '17E (DMA)**, made its debut at the St. Thomas Church during the international Bachfest Leipzig 2024. There were five Eastman alumni in the ensemble. It was also the first Southeast Asian ensemble to ever perform at Bach's St. Thomas Church. The group was also featured in the award-winning German documentary-film *Living Bach* (2023). In August, Eastman Professor of Conducting and Ensembles and Director of Choral Activities William Weinert joined the group in Malaysia and conducted Haydn's *The Creation*, gave choral master classes in the nation's capital Kuala Lumpur, as well as conducted Bach's *Magnificat* in Bintulu, Sarawak (Borneo). There were seven Eastman alumnus who performed and participated in these events.



Alumnus David Chin (left) along with renowned Bach conductor Ton Koopman (middle), and Artistic Director of Bachfest Leipzig Michael Maul (right).



era on October 18 and 20, 2024. Laura made her house debut as the role of The Water and multiple ensemble roles in Rachel Portman's *The Little Prince* at Opera in the Heights in Houston, Texas in December 2024.

**Amy Skjerseth '13E, '13** has been appointed as assistant professor of popular music in the Department of Music at the University of California, Riverside. Before UCR, Amy ran the master's program in Music and Audiovisual Media at the University of Liverpool, where she recently hosted a wildly successful conference on Taylor Swift. The conference was covered by *BBC*, *The Guardian*, *Sky News*, *ARD* (German public broadcasting), *Radio France*, *The Atlantic*, and more.

In partnership with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the San Francisco Symphony has awarded **Tyler Taylor '17E (MM)** as the winner of the fourth annual Emerging Black Composers Project. Launched in 2020, the project spotlights early-career Black American composers and their music. The San Francisco Symphony, led by Cristian Măcelaru, will give the world premiere of Taylor's commissioned work during the 2025–26 season.

## 2020s

The Black Collegiate Musicians (BCM) began this fall and was founded by **Brittany Burgess '22E (MM)**, **Brianna Garcon '23E**, and **Alexis Prescott '23E (MA)** to provide Black Collegiate

Musicians with access to financial, professional, and mental health resources. They aim to uplift these students through a network of community support as they navigate their journeys through higher education. **Kayla Sconiers '24E** joins as BCM's social media manager.

**Avery Dabe '24E (MM)** successfully auditioned for the position of 2nd bassoon with the New Mexico Philharmonic.

**Julianna Darby '21E (MM)** won a one-year position as 2nd clarinet with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

Violinist **Angelina Phillips '24E** won the associate concertmaster position with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. Phillips was a fellow last summer at the National Orchestra Institute and Festival and was concertmaster under Marin Alsop for a performance of Mahler I when the NOI+F performed at the Ravinia Festival.

**Paul Halberstadt '20E**, who most recently held the position of assistant concertmaster with the Alabama Symphony Orchestra, is the newest violinist for the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.

**Connor Landers '22E** recently won the audition for associate principal/utility horn with the Naples Philharmonic.

**Davan Sagara '23E** won the principal trumpet position with the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra.

Congratulations to the winners of the Tal Perkes Competition, **Angelina Lim '24E** and **Sean Marron '23E, '25E (MM)**, students of **Bonita Boyd '71E**. This year's competition was held on May 10th at Eastman and featured a jury of all Eastman alumni, including this year's clinician, **Jeffrey Barker '06E**, associate principal flute of the Seattle Symphony; **Kasumi Leonard '09E, '22E (MM)** of the Omaha Symphony; and Eastman Trombone professor **Mark Kellogg '86E**. Open to all Eastman undergraduate and graduate flute students, the competition was founded by **John Hunter '84E, '98E (MM)** and honors the memory of the late flutist **Tallon Perkes '84E**.



Eastman presented awards to six exceptional alumni in 2024: **Joan Beal '84E** (Dean's Medal); **Tanatchaya Chanphanitpornkit '15E** (James S. Armstrong Alumni Service Award); Dean **Jamal Rossi '87E (DMA)** (Centennial Award); **Maria Schneider '85E (MM), '24 (Honorary)** (Honorary Degree); **Alexa Tarantino '14E** (Distinguished Alumni Award); and **Dariusz Terefenko '98E (MM), '03E (MA), '04E (PhD)** (Eisenhart Award for Excellence in Teaching). Additionally, the dedicated Friends of Eastman Opera received the John N. Wilder Award. For more information on each award, and other Eastman awards and honors, visit the Eastman Awards page. Pictured top row L to R: Joan Beal, Tanatchaya Chanphanitpornkit, and Jamal Rossi. Bottom row L to R: Maria Schneider, Alexa Tarantino, and Dariusz Terefenko.

**Jazmine Saunders '22E**, soprano, joined the 2024–25 Metropolitan Opera Lindemann Young Artist Program and will be making her Metropolitan Opera Debut as Barbarina in *Le Nozze di Figaro* in May 2025.

**Rahul Shah '22E** was the first prize winner in the Carinthian International Jazz Award Saxophone Competition.

**Nicholas Sharma '17E, '24E (DMA)** has been appointed to the South Dakota Symphony as assistant conductor and conductor of the South Dakota Symphony Youth Orchestra.

**Matthew Straw '23E (MM)** has been appointed assistant conductor at the Opéra national du Rhin in Strasbourg, France for the 2024–2025 season.

**Paul Tingley '20E (MM), '23E (DMA)** is the program coordina-

tor for Arts Empowering Life Performing Arts Center, Brewster MA, and hosts a monthly free in-person and livestreamed Arts & Entertainment Lecture Series. This series featured **Maria Finkelmeier '09E (MM)** in a lecture in June, 2024, as well as Professor and Chair of Musicology Michael Anderson in a lecture on September 21, 2024.

**Serena Reuten '24E (MM)** was appointed as the Omaha Symphony's assistant conductor.

**Stephanie Tateiwa '23E** toured the country and Canada with the world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra playing Alto 2. In January, she moved to NYC to start graduate studies in woodwind doubling (for a path in Broadway) at New York University.

**Christopher Witt '22E** successfully auditioned for the position of associate principal/2nd bassoon with the Phoenix Symphony.

## ► ALUMNI NOTES IN MEMORIAM

### CHARLES S. BROWN

Charles S. Brown '64E (MM), '71E (DMA), who passed away July 14, 2024, at the age of 86, was an accomplished organist and longtime faculty member of harpsichord and organ at the University of North Texas. He served as the dean and coordinator of educational projects for the Dallas, Texas, chapter of the American Guild of Organists. He was an active church organist and choirmaster, organ recitalist, amateur actor, playwright, and researcher of early music.

Brown earned master of music and doctor of musical arts degrees from the Eastman School of Music and was awarded a Performer's Certificate. After graduating from the Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas, he was ordained into the ministry for the United Church of Christ and served as a pastor of St. Paul United Church of Christ, Corpus Christi, Texas.

Several former students wrote tributes in remembrance. "Charles is remembered for his imaginative teaching, his keen intuitive nature, his innovative ideas, his vast knowledge, and his creative, hopeful spirit," wrote Susan Ferré '71E (MM). "He was loved for his unassuming modesty and his willingness to give of himself, inspiring others. He contended that worship, performance, and teaching should come at significant personal cost."

Eastman alumna Jeanne Rizzo Conner '66E, '68E (MM) wrote, "I knew Charles when he was a doctoral candidate at Eastman and later was delighted to study with him in the DMA program at North Texas. He was such a gentleman, a

scholar, and a fine musician, but most of all, a genuinely good person."

### 1 ANNETTE (RAHM) FLOYD

Annette Floyd '70E (MA), who passed away on September 21, 2024, was a pianist, organist, and oboist based in Saskatoon, Canada, who had a significant impact on supporting the music of living Canadian composers. Born in Enid, Oklahoma, in 1942, she received degrees in music and music education at Phillis University in Enid before attending the Eastman School of Music, where she earned a master of arts degree in music theory in 1971. While at Eastman, Floyd studied piano with famed Cuban-American virtuoso José Echaniz, organ with Norman Peterson, and sang in Eastman's school choir.

In 1971, Floyd moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, where she became an active member of the music community. Throughout her musical career, she performed in venues across Canada, the United States, and internationally, including France and Poland. She has recorded for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) for both regional and national broadcasts, and may be heard on a Canadian Music Centre CD, *Vistas*.



Floyd was the co-planner and organizer of concerts for SPEKTRUM-SASKATOON 2005 and 2006—part of the Canadian Music Centre's national New Music in New Places Program, funded by Society of Canadian Composers, Authors and Publishers (SO-CAN). All of this led to her being honored by the Saskatoon Composers' Performance Society (SCPS) with its "Amicissima" award in 2008 for outstanding excellence and effort in the performance and furtherance of new concert music by living Canadian composers.

### 2 WALFRID KUJALA

Walfrid Kujala '48E, '50E (MM), the longtime principal piccolo player in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, passed away on November 10, 2024.

Kujala, a native of Warren, Ohio, attended the Eastman School of Music and earned a bachelor of music degree in flute performance in 1948 and a master of music degree in 1950. His undergraduate education at Eastman was interrupted by his military service in the U.S. Army during World War II from 1943 to 1946. He served in both the European and Pacific theatres while also managing to pursue his musical training in the 86th Infantry Division Band and, after the war ended, in the Manila Symphony Orchestra. He returned to Eastman in 1946.

Upon graduation from Eastman, he immediately joined the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra under Erich Leinsdorf. Then, in 1954, he accepted the assistant principal flute position under Fritz Reiner in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, where he later became principal piccolo.

Kujala had a simultaneous career as professor of flute



at Northwestern University School of Music from 1962 to 2012, profoundly influencing generations of flute students. He contributed to the broader flute community as president of the National Flute Association and as consulting editor for *Flute Talk* and other music publications. He founded Progress Press in 1970, through which he published solo and chamber music and authored *The Flutist's Progress* (1970), *The Articulate Flutist: Rhythms, Groupings, Turns, and Trills* (2008), and *The Flutist's Vade Mecum* (second edition 2021), among other studies, monographs, and articles. He was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1997 from the National Flute Association.

### 3 JOHN MARCELLUS

Eastman School of Music professor emeritus of trombone John Marcellus, affectionately known as "Doc" to his students, died December 31, 2024. The International Trombone Association, where Marcellus served as president, called him a "visionary educator, performer, and advocate for our instrument" and said that Marcellus set the gold standard in trombone performance and pedagogy.

Marcellus was appointed to Eastman in 1978 and stayed



until his retirement in 2014. He served as a chair of the Woodwind, Brass, and Percussion Department and directed the Eastman Trombone Choir and the Eastman Bionic Bones. He was also a member of the Eastman Brass.

As a performer, he was known internationally for holding the principal trombone position with the National Symphony Orchestra and as a soloist with the United States Navy Band. He appeared as a soloist with countless ensembles and was invited globally to teach master classes. In addition, he was an international recording artist and published arrangements as well as research in trade journals.

Current professor of trombone Mark Kellogg '86E, a former student of Marcellus, wrote, "Doc maintained a tremendous international career as a performer and conductor. He was a 'big personality' and will be remembered fondly by his family of students." Former student Isrea Butler '04E, '06E (MM), who now serves as the director of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Music, said, "Doc taught us to believe in ourselves. We will remember his patient, kind, gentle way, outrageous sense of humor, and love for each of his students."



PHOTO BY WILLIAM BURLINGHAM

## ► ALUMNI NOTES DEATHS

*As of December 31, 2024*

### 1940s

**Anna Mae (Fielder) Anast**  
'48E; June 2024

**Phyllis (Dutton) Courter**  
'48E; March 2024

**Emma Lou Diemer**  
'49E (MM), '60E (PhD);  
June 2024

**Walfrid Kujala**  
'48E, '50E (MM);  
November 2024

**Jeanette (Korris) Schonfeld**  
'48E; June 2024

### 1950s

**Charles A. Baker**  
'58E, '59E (MM), '65E (DMA);  
July 2024

**Dorothy J. (Pozniko) Beam**  
'56E, '57E (MM);  
November 2024

**Daniel Boda**  
'54E (MA); June 2024

**Mary Yetta (Conley) Hausle**  
'56E; October 2024

**Marcia K. (Loeffler) Hishman**  
'58E; October 2024

**Elizabeth J. (Deischer) Hodkinson**  
'57E; September 2024

**Marjorie (Comstock) Hunsberger**  
'58E, '60E (MM);  
November 2024

**Paul W. Lyddon**  
'54E; May 2024

**Diane J. (Wangman) McIntosh**  
'58E; June 2024

**Marlis J. (Drews) Schmidt**  
'52E (MM); July 2024

**Daniel J. Stolper**  
'57E, '58E (MM); June 2020

**Jane (Johnson) Theiss**  
'53E (MA); June 2024

**Christine C. Wilcosz-Thompson**  
'54E; July 2024

### 1960s

**David E. Anderson**  
'62E; April 2010

**Mary Elizabeth (Adams) Bickel**  
'69E (MM), '91W (EdD);  
October 2024

**Rex Britton**  
'62E; August 2024

**Susan Isabel (Grettler) Brooks**  
'69E (MM); August 2024

**Charles S. Brown**  
'64E (MM), '71E (DMA);  
July 2024

**Sandra E. (Nugent) Criner**  
'61E (MA); October 2024

**Paul Edward Eickmann**  
'67E (MM), '71E (PhD);  
July 2024

**Mervyn James Farrar**  
'61E; August 2024

**K. Drew Hartzell**  
'65E (MA), '71E (PhD);  
October 2024

**Elaine M. (Killon) Helling**  
'61E; August 2024

**Monte Kursheedt Hoffman**  
'64E; May 2024

**Raymond Albert Howard**  
'68E; June 2024

**Lois Beth Jennings-Eggar**  
'62E; September 2024

**Clarissa Hart (May) Kramer**  
'66E; November 2024

**Mary Jane Lang**  
'63E; February 2024

**Anthony Alan Lenti**  
'67E, '69E (MM), '79E (DMA);  
November 2024

**Madeleine Moore**  
'61E (PhD); September 2007

**Rita M. Resch**  
'60E (MM); July 2024

**Alice W. (Whitcher) Smith**  
'62E; September 2024

**Rosamond M. Stone**  
'61E; November 2024

**John Chandler Wysor West**  
'68E; July 2024

### 1970s

**Paul H. Barrett**  
'77E; January 2018

**James Frederick Burchill**  
'74E (MA), '80E (PhD);  
June 2024

**Brian Gordon Cerow**  
'72E; August 2024

**Janos Csaba**  
'70E (MM); July 2024

**Annette (Rahm) Floyd**  
'70E (MA); September 2024

**Sylvia (Found) Hagerman**  
'74E; June 2024

**Ting Ho**  
'74E (PhD); September 2024

**Alvin Parris**  
'73E; November 2024

**Michael William Rechel**  
'73E; June 2018

**Andrea Splittberger-Rosen**  
'77E (MM); September 2024

**Anne L. Witherell**  
'71E; September 2024

### 1980s

**Alan David Lichtman**  
'83E; November 2024

**Richard B. Nelson**  
'84E (PhD); August 2024

### 1990s

**Lisa Anne Ensinger**  
'92E (MM); October 2024

## ► FACULTY NOTES



**1 Christopher Azzara '88E (MM), '92E (PhD)**, Eisenhart Professor of Music Teaching and Learning, taught classes and performed at the Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg in October 2024. Participants included Hochschule students, and musicians from the UK, Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria and several cities across Germany.

**Peter Kurau '74E**, Professor of Horn, and **Chiao-Wen Cheng '13E (DMA)**, Assistant Professor of Collaborative Piano and Chamber Music, represented Eastman at the prestigious 56th Symposium of the International Horn Society. The faculty duo performed *Sonata for Horn and Piano*, a new work composed by Eastman's Professor of Music Theory David Temperley.

**Brad Lubman** conducted two orchestra concerts for the Suntory Hall Summer Festival in Tokyo, Japan.

Jazz and Contemporary Media professors **Dave Rivello '89E (MM)** and **Charles Pillow '84E (MM)** launched a new initiative in NYC involving other Eastman alumni, including Jared Schonig '05E, Michael Davis '87E, Jim Hynes '81E, John Lowery '10E, Aidan O'Connor '19E. The goal is to inspire new music and arrangements for large ensemble.

Associate Professor of Composition **Evis Sammouris** was awarded a distinguished Senior Research Fellowship from the GATES Interna-

tional Excellence in the Humanities Program at Université Grenoble Alpes, France. He will spend part of 2025 in Grenoble working with faculty from various disciplines and will also be a Visiting Fellow at St. Cross College, Oxford, in May 2025. Sammouris will also give lectures and presentations in France and the UK as part of his fellowship.

**James (JB) VanDemark** performed alongside legendary violinist Midori at the Atlantic Music Festival in Maine on July 27. Under the baton of Garrett Keast, VanDemark played on an all Prokofiev program, in which Midori was featured on the D major Violin Concerto. VanDemark also provided narration to Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, a skill that he has cultivated in recent years by lending his speaking voice to over 60 performances with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and Eastman.

**2 William Weinert** conducted two concerts for Bachfest Malaysia in August 2024. The Haydn *Creation* in Kuala Lumpur and the Bach *Magnificat* in Bintulu, East Malaysia, both featured alumni soloists. This was the first performance of the Bach *Magnificat* on the island of Borneo. Bachfest Malaysia founder and music director David Chin organized this summer's festival after conducting the professional Bachfest Malaysia ensemble in performances at the annual Bach Festival in Leipzig, Germany, in June.



### Eastman Faculty Present at Conferences

Several faculty members in the Eastman Musicology Department presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society, held November 14-17 in Chicago, IL. Associate Dean of Sibley Music Library and Associate Professor of Musicology **Jonathan Saucedo** chaired the panel "The Current State of Music Librarianship and Implications for Musicology," and Professor of Musicology **Honey Meconi** participated in the roundtable "Looking to the Past, Envisioning the Future," organized by the AMS Committee of Women and Gender. Professor and Chair of Musicology **Michael Alan Anderson** led Chicago-based early music ensemble Schola Antiqua in a 90-minute concert titled "From Prague and Beyond: Slavic Routes for Voices and Winds" and also directed a short memorial program honoring Lenka Hlávková, the Czech musicologist murdered in the mass shooting at Charles University in Prague in 2023.

The Eastman Theory department had an impressive showing at the Society for Music Theory annual conference, held November 7-10 in Jacksonville, Florida. The program was a showcase of the innovative and diverse research being conducted at Eastman. 13 papers were given by current students and faculty, including professors **Zack Bernstein** and **Nathan Lam**, and Emerita Professor **Betsy Marvin '81E (MA), '89E (PhD)**. Additionally, Assistant Professor **Ben Baker '18E (MA)** and Professor **David Temperley** chaired sessions of the Jazz and Composition Interest Groups, respectively, and Associate Professor **Bill Marvin '94E (MA), '02E (PhD)** was a participant in a workshop on 16th-century polyphony.

Several professors from the Department of Music Teaching and Learning contributed to the International Society for Music Education World Conference, including **Philip E. Silvey, Alden H. Snell, II '06E (MA), '13E (PhD)**, **Mara E. Culp, Lisa Caravan '07E (MM), '12E (DMA)**, and **Sangmi Kang**.



**Sylvie Beaudette '93E (DMA)**, longtime Summer@Eastman director, transitioned to a new role as an associate professor of chamber music, where she is coaching chamber groups and piano duos, and coordinating the revived "Music For All" community engagement program. During her 13 years at the helm of

Summer@Eastman, Beaudette coordinated an average of 40 institutes, collegiate courses, and online workshops per year, hiring over 100 people and scheduling approximately 60 concerts per summer. Starting in 2017, she launched the first summer online course and expanded the offerings over the years, including pivoting to online programming during the summer of 2020. Summer 2024 counted 82 online students, including current Eastman students as well as other participants interested in specific topics.



## ▶ STUDENT NOTES

Students from the voice studios of Joshua Conyers and Katherine Ciesinski '18 (MS) were winners in the Central New York-Finger Lakes National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) chapter auditions held at Buffalo State University on November 2. Student winners were: **Evan Anderson, Kaylie Barbosa, Haley Boyd, Sarah Cao, Elijah Gebers, Kai Harrington, Sofia Mains, Anastasia Maritsas, Sofia Martinez, Caleb Meyerhoff, Karynna Moore-Sobel, Jordan Oney, Michael Sabatino, Evan Sercombe,** and **Gu Hong Wu.**

**Nicholas Zehao Bai '20E (MM),** DMA student of Marina Lomazov '93E, '00E (DMA) and Joseph Rackers '01E (MM), '05E (DMA), joined the full-time faculty of the University of Toledo, Ohio, as Visiting Assistant Professor of Piano and Music Technology.

PhD students in the **Eastman Musicology Department** had a strong showing at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Musicological Society, held November 14-17 in Chicago, Illinois. **Lauren Berlin '21E (MA)** and **Paul David Flood** delivered papers, while **Eleanor Price '21E (MA)** and **Nick Anderson '22E (MA)** contributed to themed panels.

**Caleb Borick,** a student of Joseph Rackers, made his debut as soloist with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Germany, performing the Brahms Piano Concerto No. 2 with conductor Lionel Bringuier, in September 2024.

Jazz Voice student **Harrison Candelario,** from the studio of Sara Gazarek, was selected by the Recording Academy's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion team and the GRAMMY Museum as a recipient of the Quinn Coleman Memorial Scholarship. Aiming to elevate the next generation of Black and Brown

music creators, this scholarship offers a comprehensive internship and career development program for college students. As a recipient, Harrison will be awarded two \$1000 scholarships for tuition, a \$500 stipend for interview preparation, two \$250 stipends for books and equipment, and financial and emotional wellness seminars, in addition to being awarded a spring internship at the Recording Academy or Latin Recording Academy. Harrison was also chosen to participate in the Recording Academy and GRAMMY U's mentorship program for the 2024-25 academic year, where he will be paired with Grammy-winner Steve Pageot.

Third-year tuba student **1 Addilae Canning** and first-year tuba student **2 Jonathan Miller** were named Shires Rising Artists after competitive auditions. As Rising Artists, they will participate in a two-year program in which they are mentored by internationally recognized teachers and performers via seminars and masterclasses.

Doctoral candidate **3 Ryan Chan '19E (MM),** a student of Minehan Family Professor of Organ David Higgs, was the first prize and audience prize winner in the National Young Artists Competition in Organ Performance (NYACOP)

held in San Francisco, California, during the 2024 National Convention of the American Guild of Organists (AGO), which took place from June 30 to July 4. Ryan received a \$14,000 cash award, two years of concert management from Karen McFarlane Artists Inc., a performance during the 2026 AGO National Convention in St. Louis, and a commercial CD recording on the Pro Organo label. Students from Higgs's studio comprised five of the nine semi-finalists in this important competition. They were DMA students **Andrew Johnson, Jacob Montgomery '20E (MM), Jennifer Shin '20E (MM),** and **Ali Santos '24E (MM).** In addition to Chan, Johnson and Santos were put forward as finalists. Additionally, Chan was spotlighted as a "Featured EMA Member" in the *Early Music America* e-newsletter on July 16.

**Jack Earnhart,** a master's student in Music Teaching and Learning, received an award at the Greater Rochester Excellence and Achievements in Technology event hosted by TechRochester on October 15. Recognized as a "leader and visionary" within the music industry, Earnhart's company, which builds custom brass mouthpieces, was honored for "demonstrating exceptional innovation, boldness, and an unwavering commitment to pushing the



boundaries of what is possible with technology."

Doctoral students in Eastman's theory department gave papers at the Society for Music Theory annual conference, held November 7-10 in Jacksonville, FL: **Sam Falotico, Ryan Galik, Maeve Gillen, Ruixue Hu, Hanisha Kulothparan, Evan Martschenko,** and **Alex Rodzianko.**

Musicology PhD candidate **Paul David Flood** presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, held virtually, on October 17. His paper, titled "Crying at the EuroClub: Rainbow Europe, Queer Diasporas, and the Politics of Escapism at the 2024 Eurovision Song Contest," was read as part of a panel titled "Partying on the Periphery: Global Queer/Trans Nightlives" which he co-organized with colleagues from Harvard University, University of California San Diego, and the University of Birmingham.

**Lauren Gibson,** an undergraduate student in the inaugural class of jazz voice majors, won the 2024 Deborah Landon Memorial Jazz Scholarship from the Jazz Education Network (JEN). In addition to a \$1500 award, the scholarship comes with one year of success coaching and a year-long membership to the JEN organization.



## STUDENT NOTES

**Ruixue Hu**, a theory PhD student, received Honorable Mention for the Society for Music Theory's Diversity in Course Design Award. His award-winning syllabus, "Engaging with Timbre," explores timbre in a wide range of global musical genres.

Several students of Alan Chow were prizewinners in piano competitions. **Michael (Xiaolong) Liu '24E** was first prize winner in the Aloha International Piano Competition. Michael also won first prize in the 2024 Thousand Islands International Piano Competition, where he was also awarded the audience favorite prize; **Hanxiao Lai '21E, '23E (MM)** won second prize. **Veniamin Blokh** was second prize winner in the Spotlight International Piano Competition. **Huiping Cai** was a finalist and winner of the Contemporary Music prize in the San Francisco International Piano Competition.

Two PhD theory students recently published articles. **Ash Mach's** "From Microformal Transformations to Macroformal Structure in Tristan Murail's *C'est un jardin secret* (1976)" appears in the fall 2024 issue of the *Journal of the American Viola Society*, and **Andrew Blake's** "Tempering the clavier: a corpus-based examination of Bach's cognition of

intonation in the Well-Tempered Clavier" was published in the *Journal of New Music Research*.

**Victor Ni '24E**, a current master's student in the studio of Michael Wayne, was selected as Eastman's representative for the NPR *Performance Today* Young Artist's Residency Program. During the three-day residency in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Ni will interview and perform for nationwide broadcast and participate in community outreach. Ni was also selected for the China Youth Symphony Orchestra (NYO-China) twice and toured Europe in this capacity.

Congratulations to doctoral student **Luke Poeppel '24E (MM)** for being named a David T. Beals III assistant conductor of the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra for their 2024–25 season.

Undergraduate jazz bassist **Gavin Rice** won the 2024 Young Talent Award from the Whitley Bay Classic Jazz Festival in the UK, a festival dedicated to the preservation of early jazz/popular music from the turn of the century to the 1930s. The award is given to a young musician aged 18–23 who shows exceptional talent and dedication to preserv-

ing and performing this music. The award covers all travel fees plus a £1000 cash prize.

**Maya Stock**, an undergraduate flutist in Bonita Boyd's '71E studio, was the second prize winner in the National Flute Association Orchestral Excerpt Competition.

Congratulations to **Alexandra Stokes '24E**, a current student of professors Bonita Boyd and Anne Harrow '81E, '96E (MM), for winning the piccolo position in the North Carolina Symphony.

**Pipedreams Live!** Eastman organ students were featured in a series of episodes of Pipedreams. Recorded on several of Rochester's outstanding organs, these programs will each feature two hours of performances by Eastman students of David Higgs and Nathan Laube, including **Yuhe Su, Augustine Sobeng, Daniel Minnick, Adam Chlebek, Jennifer Shin '20E (MM), Edith Yam '24E (DMA), Charles Francis, and Katherine Joliff**. Pipedreams is a nationally syndicated radio program produced and distributed by American Public Media (APM), created and hosted since its inception by J. Michael Barone.

Students of Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers report several recent competition awards. **Xiaoyu Tang**, student of Marina Lomazov, won first place in the Music Teachers National Association piano competition in New York and **Yuchen (Vincent) Li**, student of Joseph Rackers, won second place. **Ivy Fan**, student of Joseph Rackers, won first place and was recipient of the Haddassah Sahr Prize in Collegiate Piano Performance in the Heddy Killian Empire State Competition. **Jenna Tu '24E, '24**, student of Joseph Rackers, won first prize in the Marian Garcia Piano Competition held at Penn State University, Pennsylvania, and **Christopher Yao**, student



of Marina Lomazov, earned second prize. **Ruoyu Daris Ni**, student of Marina Lomazov, received third prize at the Thousand Islands International Piano Competition.

Second year Contemporary Media and Film Scoring masters student **Odysseas Papathanasiou Terzis** won the Best Score Award at the Apollo Global Music Awards held in Greece. The movie is *Berend Botje*, directed by Mans van den Berg.

**Yiran Zhao**, a DMA conducting student, won the American Prize in Composition in the college/university division for shorter works for chorus.

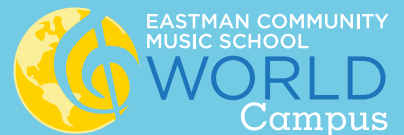
**Xinyue (Scarlett) Zheng '23E** won first prize in the Lancaster International Piano Festival Competition and was awarded the certificate on July 26 on the stage of Barshinger Center in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Several graduate students contributed to the International Society for Music Education World Conference, held from July 29 to August 2, in Helsinki, Finland, and the NAFME Music Research and Teacher Education National Conference, held September 26–28, in Atlanta, Georgia. **Rachael Sanguinetti '15E, Samantha Webber, Kelton Burnside, Zhilin Zhang, and Alexis Prescott '23E (MA)** led research presentations, workshops, and poster sessions.





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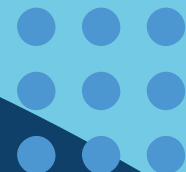
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**The University of Rochester** and Eastman School of Music share an exciting connection to a 2024 Pulitzer Prize finalist in the music composition category. Written by Armenian-American composer Mary Kouyoumdjian, *Paper Planes* is a “socially urgent” musical drama that centers around the refugee experience. The live-performance stage work weaves together music, visuals, and first-person audio from the four refugees it profiles. Nigel Maister, the University of Rochester’s Russell and Ruth Peck Artistic

Director of the International Theatre Program, contributed the text and staging, while Alarm Will Sound, the contemporary music ensemble founded in 2001 by Eastman alumni and led by Artistic Director Alan Pierson ’06E (DMA), premiered the work in February 2023 and was involved in its genesis in 2016. *Paper Planes* will reprise in New York City this spring before embarking on a 2025 tour.

**Photo provided by Nigel Maister.**