



NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
College of Liberal Arts
School of Visual and Performing Arts



Manuscript

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Department of Music
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Welcome

FROM THE CHAIR

As I reflect on the Fall 2019 semester, it seems like it all went by very fast. The old saying “time flies when you’re having fun” seems fitting. Some amazing things are happening every day in our classrooms, private studios, and ensemble rehearsal rooms here in the Department of Music at NSU. It is an honor to connect with you through this publication and give you a little peek into the vibrant activities of our students, the scholarship of our faculty, and the noteworthy accomplishments of our alumni in the field.

I am constantly amazed at the sheer output of our students and faculty. I mentioned the word “fun” above, but I think it is important to point out that our fun occurs as a result of endless hours of work. In recent months, I have been listening to a podcast on my daily commute. One phrase that this particular podcaster uses frequently is “Discipline equals Freedom.” I find this phrase relevant to our work in many ways. The discipline to do difficult things, to work when we really don’t feel like it, to spend time in the practice room working through a particularly difficult few measures, to study and go beyond the call in classroom assignments - all of these things provide the freedom and confidence to enjoy the process and culminating moments in assessment and performance. Our daily discipline provides us the freedom to allow others to enjoy the fruits of our labor as well. While we will continue to celebrate the culminating moments of achievement and performance, I want to take a moment to applaud the daily discipline of our faculty, staff, and students. It is through their discipline that I find myself in a position of freedom to share with you the many public accomplishments contained in this issue.

Sincerely,
Jeff Wall

GUEST ARTISTS AT NSU MUSIC

The NSU Department of Music hosted many guest artists this fall 2019 semester. These artists are experts in their respective fields and instruments and collaborated with music faculty to bring their talents and expertise to our students and the community.



Mr. Mark Roberts served as guest choral clinician September 30th in roundtable discussion and rehearsal with the University Singers. He then spent the day on October 1st with high school singers in our RiverHawk Pre-Audition Choral Workshop. Mr. Roberts is the Director of Choral Activities at Campolindo High School in Moraga, California.



The University of Kentucky Faculty Brass Quintet visited NSU on November 10th, performing a recital in the Jazz Lab. They presented a masterclass with NSU music students on November 11th. The UK Faculty Brass Quintet includes former NSU faculty member, Dr. Jason Dovel on trumpet.

Ms. Tingting Yao visited NSU as collaborative pianist and artist, performing with Dr. Whitney Myers on her December 6th faculty voice recital. In addition to accompanying Dr. Myers, she also performed Liebeslied, arranged by Rachmaninoff.



A few photos from the Department of Music welcome dinner on August 16th



Welcome our New Faculty & Staff



Dr. Clark Gibson returns to NSU as Director of Jazz Studies. Clark Gibson is a jazz saxophonist, composer and educator. Serving as Director of Jazz Studies and Assistant Professor of Saxophone at Northeastern State University, he is a highly sought after adjudicator and clinician throughout the country. His forward-thinking music is strongly rooted in the traditions of jazz musicians of the 20th century, the history of Western classical music, his own life experiences, as well as musical traditions from cultures across the globe.

Clark's professional career began in Denver, Colorado performing popular music genres such as jazz, funk, blues and more. While there, he formed his own group, the Clark Gibson Quartet which was nominated for "Best Jazz Group in Colorado" by Westword Magazine and released his first independently released CD "The Offering".

Clark received his Bachelor of Music in jazz at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, WA. During his studies, he stayed busy teaching his own private students and performing with such notables as the Temptations, the Four Tops, the Jim Knapp Orchestra, Lalo Rodriguez, Nueve Era, Tombeau, the Jim Kerl Big Band and Dina Martin, as well as performing with a host of local masters including Jay Thomas, Greta Matassa, Clarence Acox, Greg Williamson and the Pony Boy All-Star Big Band.

In 2010, Clark recorded his second album "Iapetus," released on Pony Boy Records, which featured his latest original compositions and arrangements.

From 2012-2015, Clark completed his masters and doctoral degree at the University of Illinois. During this time, he recorded a third album as a leader self-titled as the "Old Style Sextet". The cd received high reviews and national airplay through BluJazz Records based out of Chicago, IL.

In 2015, Clark released Charlie Parker with Strings: The Lost Arrangements through BluJazz Records. The recording is receiving national attention from radio as well as positive reviews in publications such as Down Beat, allaboutjazz.com, the L.A. Jazz Scene and Oklahoma Magazine.

Clark Gibson's upcoming release "Tri-Colored Eyes" is set to be released in September of 2019. The album is a collection of original music featuring Euan Edmonds on trombone, Jim Pisano on tenor saxophone, Pat Bianchi on B3 organ and Jeremy Thomas on drums.



Michael Bremono joins us as instructor of Jazz Drums. He is an arranger, composer, drummer, and percussionist with experience in commercial dance, pop, rock, and latin, jazz, and experimental music. He received his education in performance from CODARTS University for the Arts, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.



Dr. Bryan Raya is a professional conductor and educator and serves as the Director of Bands at Northeastern State University (NSU). His responsibilities including overseeing the NSU band program including concert and athletic bands as well as teach applied lessons in low brass. Prior to this appointment, Raya was the Associate Director of Bands and director of the Western Thunder Marching Band at the University of Wyoming (UW). In addition to leading the athletic bands at UW, his duties also included conducting the Symphonic Band and teaching courses in music education including brass methods, aural theory, and marching band techniques. Raya also served as a Teaching Assistant at Arizona State University (ASU) while earning a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in wind band conducting with his doctoral thesis, A Survey of the Current Financial Trends in American Adult Community Bands.

Before earning his Doctorate in conducting from ASU in 2017 and Master's from Fresno State in 2014, he was a bandmaster/conductor in the United States Army. He has performed as a trombonist and conductor throughout his musical career with various military and civilian ensembles throughout the world.

Since graduating in 2005 with his Bachelor's degree in trombone performance from Fresno State, he has played for numerous dignitaries and government officials, including the President and Vice President of the United States of America as well as other elected and appointed officials from around the world. His military band assignments include Alabama, Texas, Hawaii, and South Korea. While he was with the 25th Infantry Division Band stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, he was deployed to support Operation Iraqi Freedom from August 2006 to September 2007. Dr. Raya's highest military position and last assignment was as the Executive Officer with the 323d Army Band "Fort Sam's Own" at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

A decorated military veteran, Dr. Raya has numerous achievements and honors. These include being named the 2006 U.S. Army, Pacific Soldier of the Year, the Distinguished Honor Graduate for the Army's Advanced Leader Course in 2010, and being selected as a warrant officer/bandmaster for the U.S. Army in 2011. More recent academic recognition include: the Promoting Intellectual Engagement (PIE) Award in 2018 and the Mortar Board Honor Society "Top Prof" Award in 2017.

Before he joined the Army, Dr. Raya performed with the Santa Clara Vanguard Drum and Bugle Corps including their 1999 championship season, and has worked with numerous high school and college marching band programs. Dr. Raya is inspired by his previous mentors, Dr. James Klein and Dr. Lawrence Sutherland, in both trombone and conducting as well a Dr. Gary P. Gilroy. He is a member of the Association of Concert Bands, College Band Directors National Association, National Band Association, National Association for Music Education, and also a life member of Kappa Kappa Psi, a national honorary band service fraternity.



Megan Gasca was appointed as Performing Facilities Technical Director in September 2019. She runs all technical aspects of lighting, sound, and setup for the Center for the Performing Arts and the NSU Jazz Lab. Megan is completing her BA in Drama at NSU.

The Frances Fite Memorial Jazz Scholarship



An Incredible supporter of NSU Music

Frances “Francie” Fite was born in 1939 and raised in Muskogee, graduating from Muskogee Central High School, receiving her bachelor’s degree from Randolph-Macon Woman’s College in Lynchburg, Virginia, and earning her juris doctor from George Washington University Law School in Washington, D.C. She worked for 11 years as a systems engineer with IBM on technical projects with the U.S. Navy, and after going to law school, practiced family law in McLean, Virginia for 43 years, retiring as senior partner in the firm of Fite, O’Brien and Anderson. She was an early advocate of mediation and collaborative law to reach fair and lasting agreements in divorce and other family law cases, serving as a founding member of Virginia Collaborative Professionals.

In her private life, Francie was active in music, studying piano as a youth, playing ukulele and guitar while in college and taking up Appalachian dulcimer, mandolin and Russian folk instruments later in life. She and her husband, Max McCullough, founded in 1988 the Washington Balalaika Society, which has grown to be the largest and most fully-developed such orchestra outside the former USSR, with more than 60 active musicians under the direction of a professional conductor.

They built their home at Swannanoa on the Illinois River near Tahlequah to enjoy in retirement. Here, they organized the Tahlequah Mandophonics, a 10-member traditional mandolin and guitar ensemble complemented by flute and vocals. Francie’s last new venture was Mando for Kids, passing her love of the mandolin to children ages 6 to 12.

Francie and Max, fans of the NSU Jazz Program from its inception, through the Mandophonics become close friends with a gifted group of students involved in the NSU Jazz Ensemble, and just before Francie’s untimely passing in 2018, had discussed setting up a scholarship for talented NSU students like these.

In their unwavering dedication to the NSU Jazz Studies division, Max and Francie have dedicated a generous donation and created The Frances Fite Memorial Endowed Jazz Scholarship.

This donation will benefit numerous students for generations to come.

Thank you Max and Frances Fite!



Max McCullough delivers congratulations to Jace Davison, the scholarship’s first recipient.

Choral Workshops



This year's RiverHawk Pre-Audition Choral Workshops were a rousing success, bringing in Junior High and High School students for both days. September 12th was the Junior High workshop and October 1st was the High School workshop. Director of Choirs, Dr. Jeffery Wall, directed the Junior High Choral Workshop in full rehearsals and sectionals. Guest clinician, Mr. Mark Roberts directed the High School Choral Workshop. NSU voice professors, Drs. Whitney Myers and Christian Bester led students in sectionals. Tulsa Community College Director of Choirs, Mrs. Laura Cowan also assisted with sectionals. Collaborative pianist, Farren Mayfield, was at the keyboard for both days. NSU vocal students also helped throughout the days with sectionals, and sang along to help the visitors learn their All-State audition music.



STUDENT NEWS

The fall term brought about many student activities and accomplishments. These featured are just a mere representative sample.



The trumpet studio represented NSU at the Midwest Trumpet Festival in Pittsburg, KS on October 7-8. The students heard and met Internationally renowned soloists Rex Richardson and Vincent DiMartino, attended masterclasses, and performed on the student spotlight recital. Dr. Hay also helped moderate a panel discussion and performed on the faculty recital. Everyone had a wonderful experience!

The NSU Flute Studio participated in the SWOSU Flute Festival, featuring George Pope on October 27th. Flute students played in the world premiere of Jump-Yip, composed by Nicole Chamberlain. NSU Artist Instructor of Flute, Dr. Laura Pillman also conducted, presented, and served as clinician.



NSU Music Business major, Chelsey Kimble, served as an intern with the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra this fall semester. She was introduced to many aspects of the behind-the-scenes action with an arts organization of TSO's size like finance, marketing, PR, operations, legal, development, administration, artistic, and concert management.

Students from the voice studios of Drs. Whitney Myers and Christian Bester competed in the Texhoma National Association of Teachers of Singing contest in Denton, TX. Phillip Bruch, Joshua Bowling, Lacey Franklin, Myklind Reyes-Sosi, Megan Jacobs, and Lissie Franklin competed. Myklind, Megan, and Lissie were semi-finalists.





The NSU Marching Band hosted the OSSAA 5A/6A High School Marching Competition at Doc Wadley Stadium on November 6th. Students assisted with recruiting, concessions, and as contest volunteers. They made the event run smoothly for over 18 bands and represented well.



The trumpet studio and vocalist, Keri Bell provided music for the Veteran's Day assembly in the University Center underground outside of the Colonel John Rahe Veterans Lounge.

NSU President Steve Turner and wife, Penny, invited the NSU Marching Band and NSU Chorus students to their home for dinner two evenings this fall. They were able to interact directly with the President to represent NSU Music.



Student brought holiday cheer as they caroled and played holiday tunes for several events this season. Harmony Hawks sang at the annual Lights On ceremony at Seminary Hall, the flute and clarinet studios played at the President's holiday open house, and the joint voice studios sang carols at Brookdale Senior Living Center.



Faculty News



Dr. Christian Bester, Assistant Professor of Voice, performed a concert at McLennan Community College in Waco, Texas on September 10th. He also performed a concert for the Texhoma division of the National Opera Association at Southern Methodist University in Dallas on September 20th. On October 15th, he performed at Texas Wesleyan University and amid political unrest, traveled to Santiago, Chile to attempt a presentation at the Pan American Vocology Association conference. He adjudicated and prepared students to participate in the National Association of Teachers of Singing Texhoma competition October 31st - November 2nd. He also assisted with the RiverHawk Pre-Audition Choral Workshops and sang for the NSU Opera Workshop's performance of Famous Opera Choruses.



Dr. Ronald Chioldi, Professor of Piano, recently co-authored the 11th edition of *Keyboard Musicianship: Piano for Adults*, published by Stipes Publishing. The longest running group-piano college textbook in the country and the 2nd highest selling, *Keyboard Musicianship* guides the music major through four semesters of beginning piano. Book 1 was published in March of 2019. Book 2 will be published in March of 2020.



Dr. Clark Gibson, Assistant Professor and Director of Jazz Studies, announced the release of his new album *Tri-Colored Eyes*. His fourth release as a leader, *Tri-Colored Eyes* marks the reunion of Gibson with one of his earliest collaborators, Pat Bianchi.



Dr. Ben Hay, Assistant Professor of Trumpet, performed with the "Professors of the Southeast" trumpet ensemble at the International Trumpet Conference in Miami, FL in July. Also, his high school student Oliver Robinson won the Junior Division of the International Trumpet Guild Solo Competition at the same conference. He performed a faculty recital on September 9th. Dr. Hay led the NSU trumpet studio to the Midwest Trumpet Festival at Pittsburg State University in Kansas.



Dr. James T. Lindroth, Associate Professor of Percussion and Music Education, was an active adjudicator this fall with Music Festivals at Kings H.S., Ohio and Campbell County H.S., Kentucky. The festivals included workshops with each band director. He also had his article titled “Musculoskeletal Disorders and the Percussionist” published in Percussive Notes. Percussive Notes is an international peer-reviewed journal of the Percussive Arts Society.



Dr. Whitney Myers, Assistant Professor of Voice and Opera Workshop Director, performed in the Bouquet Kyiv Stage Festival in Kiev, Ukraine this summer. Myers performed in the Marble City Opera production of Suor Angelica. She was a finalist for the 2019 John Alexander National Vocal Competition and sang a gala concert with the Mississippi Opera on October 21st. Dr. Myers also collaborated with Dr. Ben Hay on his faculty trumpet recital this fall semester. She presented a solo faculty voice recital with collaborative pianist, Tingting Yao on December 6th. In addition to this performing activity, Dr. Myers also prepared students for a concert of Famous Opera Choruses and individual competition at the National Association of Teachers of Singing Texhoma contest in Denton, Texas. She also assisted with the RiverHawk Pre-Audition Choral Workshops.



Dr. Bryan Raya, Assistant Professor and Director of Bands, hosted the OSSAA 5A/6A Marching Band Regional East Contest at Doc Wadley Stadium. Eighteen high school bands from across the state performed at the competition.



Dr. Jeffery Wall, Associate Professor and Director of Choirs, conducted a unique concert experience with Vox Solaris Chamber Choir called, “Choir on Tap” at Welltown Brewing in Tulsa over the summer. He served as guest clinician for choir and conducting students at Northwestern Oklahoma State University in Alva. Along with his vocal colleagues, he conducted and assisted with the RiverHawk Pre-Audition Choral Workshops. Dr. Wall was also recently appointed as the Oklahoma Choral Directors Association College/University Repertoire and Resources Chair.

Alumni Feature



Article from The Northeastern by Logan Curtis reprinted with permission.

Many NSU students go on to achieve impressive accomplishments. Some become professional athletes, some start their own successful franchises and some go on to become decorated musicians. The latter has recently been accomplished by NSU's own, Kyle "Willyecho" Williams. On July 2, Williams competed on an NBC singing competition television show "Songland" and was crowned champion. While on the show, upcoming songwriters compete to have their songs chosen by a special guest artist to be the winner. The song is then released on the same night the show is aired. In Williams' case, his song "Getting Started" was chosen by music artist, Aloe Blacc, to be featured in the new movie "Hobbs & Shaw," a spin-off of the "Fast & Furious" franchise.

While a student at NSU, Williams studied the trumpet, among other aspects of music. He accredits much of his success in his career to his time spent at NSU.

"There were many skills I picked up while attending NSU," said Williams. "Some of those being melodic and harmonic theory, rhythmic values in jazz and just the overall experience of performing."

Williams has no intention of coasting off the success he has found, but using it to further his journey.

"I am going to be doing the same thing I have been doing," said Williams. "A majority of musicians and writers do not get opportunities like this their first week in music, I have been working my whole life for moments like this. I have had other successes in music, film and TV but none of this magnitude."

The NSU Department of Music is very proud of Williams and his accomplishments.

“He has gone on to achieve success as a songwriter and vocalist, collaborating with some great artists.” said Dr. Jeff Wall, Department of Music chair. “I watched with the same enthusiasm as everyone else as he won ‘Songland’ on NBC. Kyle’s success represents the multiple ways one can enter the music industry with music training and the NSU Department of Music is proud to have had a small part of his backstory.”

Others outside of NSU also have very pleasant and positive things to say about their experiences working with Williams.

“I’ve written with him once a few years ago,” said Lexi Lindsey, Nashville musician. “He’s very talented and a really great guy.”

Williams is not the only NSU alumnus to have success in television singing competitions. He is following a similar path as another NSU alumnus, Carrie Underwood. On the fourth season of the hit television show “American Idol”, Underwood competed against thousands of aspiring musicians and was crowned the champion at the seasons conclusion.

Williams believes that college is for more than just getting a degree and having fun, but a great time for students to discover and improve their passions.

“I would recommend using that time in college to perfect your craft,” said Williams. “Also, if you know it’s not your passion, don’t waste four or more years studying and paying the money.”

For more information, follow Williams on Twitter at @Willyecho or on Instagram at @Willyechomusic.

We want to know where YOU are and celebrate
YOUR SUCCESS! If you have news to share, please contact us here:
<https://academics.nsuok.edu/music/Alumni.aspx>

or email Dr. Wall at wall03@nsuok.edu

RiverHawk Marching Band

A Season of Success



The RiverHawk Marching Band enjoyed a successful marching season, under the direction of new faculty member, Dr. Bryan Raya. The band marched several shows, featuring crowd favorites at all the home football games and enjoyed supporting our team. They also marched in several parades this year and played for orientation week and RiverHawk Rally. Many spectators commented on the band's quality of sound, precision, and overall professionalism. We look forward to many more years of success as the band continues to grow in number and musicianship. If you would like to make a donation to the band program, please visit: www.nsugiving.com to reach the NSU Foundation and specify your gift to either band program or band scholarships.



NSU Band hosts OSSAA 5A/6A High School Marching Contest

On November 6th, the NSU RiverHawk Marching Band acted as site host for the Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association 5A/6A High School Marching Band Competition at Doc Wadley Stadium. After rescheduling for weather once, the contest went off without a hitch thanks to the volunteer efforts of NSU students who served as runners, monitors, concession workers, recruiters, and guides. Participating high schools included Will Rogers, Thomas Edison, Pryor, Skiatook, Tahlequah, Claremore, Collinsville, McAlester, Guthrie, Coweta, Muskogee, Bartlesville, Sand Springs, Ponca, Sapulpa, Owasso, Jenks, and Broken Arrow. It was a full day of great marching and playing. Thanks to the NSU students and Dr. Raya for their time and efforts in hosting this successful event bringing students onto our NSU campus.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

NSU Music Support

Gifts to support the music program through the NSU Foundation play an important role in the lives of our music students. Whether for the Music Scholarship Fund or for music programming, your investment, regardless of the amount, will help our music program remain strong and vital. Please make out your check to the NSU Foundation, marked for the Music Scholarship Fund or music programming and send it to: Dr. Jeffery Wall, Department of Music, 605 N. Grand Avenue, Tahlequah, OK 74464. Thank you.

Endowed Music Funds

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2018–19 NSU Music Contributors

Reflected below are donations January 2018– November 2019.

Please let us know if we have accidentally left off a donor or placed someone in the wrong category.

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