

**Northern Illinois University  
School of Music  
May, 2006, Newsletter**

**FACULTY NEWS**

Accademia Voci d' Estate (Voices of Summer Academy) is a new summer program for singers and pianists. It will take place in Verona, Italy, during the last three weeks of July, 2006, at the Conservatorio dall' Abaco, the same building in which Mozart once played. Students will work on their interpretive skills by first acting the texts which they will later sing. The music featured this year will be Tosti and Donaudy, and Gershwin, Bernstein, and other American composers. The faculty is Stephen Swedish, pianist, Nancy Henninger, soprano and Myron Myers, bass. Students will perform concerts in a number of beautiful venues, and deeply discounted tickets to the Arena Opera will provide students with exposure to first-rate singers in Roman arena. Included in the price of nineteen hundred dollars is tuition and accommodation for three weeks. Cheaper airfares will be accomplished through charter flights. Contact **Myron Myers** at [myronmyers04@comcast.net](mailto:myronmyers04@comcast.net), or at 630 639 6483 for further information.

**Rodrigo Villanueva's** composition for jazz ensemble *Keep Tryin'* has been published by Walrus Music, and The NIU Jazz Ensemble, directed by Ronald Carter performed it wonderfully at the IAJE international conference in New York in January with Steve Duke and Rodrigo as guest artists. Rodrigo just signed with Sabian Cymbal Makers as an artist endorser, and he was invited as a guest artist to the "Seminario Internacional de Jazz" that will take place in Puebla, Mexico in late July. He also participated as an adjudicator in the Rolling Meadows Jazz Festival in February. The NIU Jazz Lab Band performed at the Elmhurst Jazz Festival on February 26th.

**Greg Barrett** played concerts in February with the Ars Viva Symphony and the Joffrey Ballet for the run of Prokofiev's Romeo and Juliet.

**Nicole Mitchell**, NIU part-time faculty and Vice Chair of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, recently returned from Paris as a programmer for the AACM concert at the Sons d'Hiver Festival in Paris. The performers were Ed Wilkerson's 8 Bold Souls and a duo between former NIU student Matana Roberts and Roscoe Mitchell. Ms. Mitchell traveled to the Banlieues Blues Festival (Paris) at the end of February. There she performed with her trio, including percussionist Hamid Drake and bassist Harrison Bankhead.

**Brett Mitchell** was invited to New York by Maestro Kurt Masur, former Music Director of the New York Philharmonic, in January. At the request of Masur, Mitchell shared the podium with him for a concert with the Manhattan School of Music Symphony, conducting a performance of Mozart's monumental 40th Symphony on January 27, the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth. Dr. Mitchell has also been selected by Maestro Masur to serve as Assistant/Cover Conductor of the Orchestre National de France.

**Julia Bentley** has had a busy spring. She performed works by composer David Smooke at the new Merritt School of Music. Bach B minor Mass with the Apollo Chorus at the Harris Theater in downtown Chicago, in the School of Music's own Recital Hall with the fabulous Diane Ragains, music by Bruce Saylor at the Music Institute of Chicago, and Fulcrum Point's next "Essential Art/Essential Elements" concert at the Harris Theater. Julia recently performed Handel cantatas at Grace Episcopal Church in Oak Park, at Symphony Space in NY with the New Budapest Orpheum Society (Jewish cabaret), new music for mezzo and string quartet at the Music Institute of Chicago (Evanston), concert version of Handel's opera *Ezio* for the conclusion of Handel Week at Grace Episcopal, and more Jewish cabaret at the Quadrangle Club in Hyde Park. Phew.

**Robert Fleisher's** *Five Songs from Carl Sandburg's "Prairie"* was selected for a forthcoming CD (#3) in the Performers Recording Series of the Society of Composers, Inc. (SCI). The CD will feature soprano Lynn Eustis (author of "The Singer's Ego") and pianist Elvia Puccinelli, both currently on the music faculty at the University of North Texas.

Three movements of **Tim Blickhan's** Iraq war Jeremiad, *Songs for the Abandoned*, were premiered by the NIU Concert Choir, directed by Eric Johnson, on April 25.

**Ann Montzka-Smelser** was a guest clinician at a Suzuki workshop at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, MN in February and at the Cleveland Institute of Music in Ohio in March. Ann will also give a presentation at the National Suzuki Teachers Conference in Minneapolis, MN this May on the topic of "Balancing Teaching and Parenting." She played with Camerata Chicago's concert in February. This concert featured Shmuel Ashkenasi performing Mozart's 5th violin Concerto. NIU graduate Drostan Hall conducted the group and Ann played principal viola.

**Robert Sims** was in performance at the historic Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York in celebration of African-American History Month in February. He performed spirituals accompanied by Roy Jennings and Lee Koonce.

John Kitzman, principal trombone of the Dallas Symphony was here at NIU on March 3 and 4 for masterclasses, coaching sessions and a recital.

**William Koehler** played piano in Chicago on Friday, March 31 for a live broadcast on WFMT. He played as part of the Fazioli Salon Series.

**Paul Bauer** was a co-presenter at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago for a presentation entitled, "No Bones About It: Bona Fide Advice for the Jazz Ensemble Trombone Section."

The NIU School of Music is pleased to announce it has completed a successful national search for a new faculty member to serve as a member of the Music Education faculty, and her name is **Dr. Mary Lynn Morrissey-Doherty**. Mary Lynn received her Master's and Doctoral degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and her Bachelor's degree from Luther College (Iowa). She currently holds the post of Director of Music Education and Associate Conductor of the Chicago Choir Academy, a Charter School in Chicago. She previously also taught in Wisconsin public schools, and for two years, she was Interim Director of Music Education at Luther College. Well-versed in qualitative and quantitative research, her interests and presentations thus far have focused on singing students' vocal health. She will also seek to continue to work with children's choirs. Mary Lynn looks forward to working together with her new NIU colleagues, but even more important than her new job is the February birth of her first child, Joseph. Mother, son, and father are doing fine. "Dr. Morrissey-Doherty's experience as a teacher and administrator at the public school and university levels, as well as her diverse teaching background, research interests, commitment to technology, and delightful personality provide NIU with an outstanding addition to our faculty," said Paul Bauer, Director of the School of Music.

The NIU School of Music is pleased to announce it has completed a successful international search for a new tenure track theory/composition faculty member, and **Dr. David Maki** has accepted the position. David's degrees are all in composition and he earned his BM from NIU, MM from the University of Iowa, and DMA from the University of Michigan. For the past four years he has served as a Visiting Assistant Professor at NIU. Maki has completed numerous commissioned compositions, including a recent commission from the University of Iowa Center for New Music. Some of his compositions have been performed by NIU faculty. "David Maki's dedication to teaching and the improvement of his teaching skills makes him a good fit as our newest tenure track theory/composition faculty member and an excellent addition to the School of Music family. We are looking forward to his enthusiastic involvement and contribution as a faculty

member to the composition and New Music activities in the School of Music," said Paul Bauer, Director of the School of Music.

The NIU School of Music is pleased to announce it has completed a successful national search for a new tenure track jazz studies faculty member, and **Arthur Davis** has accepted the position. Art received his Bachelor's degree in Music Education and Master's degree in Musicology from the University of Illinois. His graduate degree program included emphasis in ethnomusicological studies, including West African percussion. For the past eleven years he has served as a part-time faculty member at NIU, and he has also taught on the jazz faculties at Northwestern University, North Central College, and Illinois Benedictine University. Davis has performed as an active jazz artist in the Chicago area for more than 25 years, and currently performs with the Chicago Jazz Orchestra (Charter member since 1978), Jeru, Red Rose Ragtime Band, and the Janice Borla Group. He has performed with dozens of internationally recognized jazz artists and on numerous commercially released recordings. "The combination of Art Davis' experience as a jazz artist and educator and his background in ethnomusic studies and performance provides NIU with an outstanding addition to our faculty. Art, through his artistry and broad musical perspective, will serve as a outstanding model for our students and faculty colleagues," said Paul Bauer, Director of the School of Music.

The NIU School of Music is pleased to announce it has completed a successful international search for a new tenure track voice faculty member, and Ms. **Orna Arania** has accepted the position. Orna's MM degree in voice and opera performance is from Northwestern University where she is completing doctoral studies. At NU she has studied with Mignon Dunn, Sherrill Milnes, and Karen Brunssen. Her bachelor's degree in voice (including a minor in conducting) is from the Rubin Academy of Music, Tel Aviv University, in her native country, Israel. She has performed as a soloist on numerous concert series and festivals in Israel, as well as in Italy and, more locally, with the Bach Chamber and Elgin Symphony Orchestras.

"Orna Arania's demonstrated skills in teaching and vocal artistry will be a great asset to the students in the voice area and faculty in the School of Music. Her international experience as a student, performer, and teacher; her experience as a choral conductor; and her advanced graduate studies enable her to bring a broad perspective as a new academic colleague. We are looking forward to her energetic contributions as a faculty member to the applied instruction and performance activities in the School of Music," said Paul Bauer, Director of the School of Music.

Check out the following CD reviews:

NIU faculty members **Willie Pickens** and **Marlene Rosenberg** and alum Tito Carillo (BM 1998).  
<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=21075>

NIU Jazz Ensemble:  
<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=20996>

#### **STUDENT/ALUMNI NEWS:**

Hon. Richard Siegel (MM, 1978) is a Will County Circuit Judge presiding in the Arbitration Division and hearing Civil Jury Trials Licensed to practice before the Illinois Supreme Court, U.S.D.C. Northern Division (Trial Bar), U.S.D.C. Central Division, 7th Cir. Ct. of Appeals, United States Supreme Court. He formerly served as an Assistant Will County State's Attorney, Assistant Illinois Attorney General, Regional Claim Counsel for CNA, and Associate at Hinshaw & Culbertson. He taught for 5 years in the Joliet Township High School District 35 years as an organist and choral director, as a performer and arranger of pop, rock, and country music as well as experience as a classical orchestra conductor, a published composer, carillon artist, instructor at Joliet Junior College. He is the founder and director of "The New People" choral/instrumental

group. He has been married for 23 years to Christine. They have two children, Nicholas, age 20 and Elizabeth, age 17.

Congratulations to Erin Pettitt (MM 2005) for receiving the Amelia Guthrie Promising Young Singer of Merit Award from the Mendelssohn Club of Rockford. Erin will receive a \$1,000 cash award.

Karlene Olesuk (BGS 1995) just moved from Chicago to St. Charles for a better commute, sort of, while working as development assistant for Elgin Symphony Orchestra and administrative manager for her parents' financial services business in McHenry, IL. She got engaged on Valentine's Day and plans to marry Howard Robert Anderson on 7/8/06.

Alan Hood (MM 1992) is an assistant professor of trumpet at the University of Denver's Lamont School of Music where he also teaches jazz studies. He plays and records regularly with the Aries Brass Quintet, Denver Brass, Ken Walker Sextet, Hot Tomatoes Swing Orchestra, and Climb Jazz Group, among others. In 2004, he hosted the highly acclaimed International Trumpet Guild Annual Conference and has recently recorded with the Ken Walker Sextet, the Denver Brass, the Mike Pagan Big Band and Keith Oxman (alongside jazz trombone great Curtis Fuller). He will be presenting a clinic on Clifford Brown at the 2006 National Trumpet Competition in Virginia.

Brent Michael David's (BM1981) *Trumpeting the Stone* was premiered on February 4, 2006. This piece musically includes elements of Oneida life, such as Oneida brass band music and especially the famed Oneida hymn singing. Early in American history and today, the Oneida People established a reputation for themselves as great hymn singers. Increasing in tempo, the work is rhythmic and exciting as the trumpet soars over the rhythms to the final two drum beats. *Trumpeting the Stone* was made possible by generous grants from Florida State University, the Oneida Nation Arts Program (ONAP), and the Wisconsin Arts Board (WAB).  
<http://www.brentmichaeldavids.com/tts.html>

The NIU Steel Band, co-directed by Cliff Alexis and Liam Teague, performed Robert Chappell's *Wood-N-Steel* for Steel Band, African xylophone and orchestra with the Chicago Sinfonietta on March 12 & 13. They also performed at Dominican College in River Forest and at Symphony Center in Chicago.

Bob Coats (MM1987) is the Associate Director of Bands for Calhoun High School in Port Lavaca, TX, where he has held the same job since 1994. He teaches sixth through twelfth graders in various band instruments (mostly brass) and ensembles, is the staff composer, theorist, arranger, and Finalemeister, and does a LOT of paperwork (welcome to music ed!). As both Region 13 Orchestra Chair and Region Secretary, he serves on the state board for the Texas Music Educators Association. Outside of work, he plays piano with a Dixieland jazz band and horn in a community band. He has two children: Caleb, 15, and Katie, 12 who he sees as often as possible. They live and thrive with their mom, in Houston, about 130 miles from Port Lavaca.

Megan Besley (BM 1998) is currently a young artist with Florida Grand Opera where she will make her debut as the Page (Rigoletto) and Frasquita (Carmen) this spring. This summer she returns to Glimmerglass Opera where she will sing Edith in *The Pirates of Penzance*. Megan completed her doctorate in voice performance in January of 2005 at the University of Michigan. On March 4, 2006 she will return to her hometown (Freeport, IL) to perform a concert at 7:30PM in the Masonic Temple. Tickets are available by calling 232-4214.

Casey Maday (BM 2000) and Tom Stark (BM 1997) are part of the Chicago Trombone Quartet. Check out their website: <http://chicagotrombonequartet.com>.

Albert Suarez (BM 1996) won the principal horn job with the Kansas City Symphony. A little history/trivia - both Philip Farkas and Dale Clevenger were at one time principal horn in KC. Congratulations Albert!

Congratulations to our students, and faculty Liam Teague, and Cliff Alexis for their participation and success at the 2006 Panorama in Trinidad. The final results: Small Band Category - first Place (27 bands) – Merrytones, arranger - Seion Gomez! Large Band Category - seventh place (tie) (17 bands) - Skiffle Bunch, arranger - Liam Teague. Selected for but eliminated in Semi-Finals - Our Boys, arranger - Cliff Alexis (last minute fill-in due to death in original arranger's family).

Sean Higgins (MM 2005) recently held a CD release party at LeJardin Restaurant. To order a CD or for more information: Sean Higgins' website: [www.seanhiggins.net](http://www.seanhiggins.net)

Congratulations to current music graduate student Karen Patton, who had a paper proposal accepted for the "Pushing Boundaries 2006" ethnomusicology conference at Indiana University in Bloomington. Also, congratulations to her mentor, Janet Hathaway.

Patrick Schleker (BM 2004) recently won the Cincinnati Symphony and Pops Orchestra Timpani position. Way to go Pat!

Two of our music students, Jeff Loda and Kelly Coyle have been selected for membership in the 2006 College Band Directors Intercollegiate Honors Band. This group is comprised of the top instrumentalists in the North Central region of the US, and was in session March 9-11, 2006 at Northwestern University.

New graduate Donnie Norton has been accepted into graduate school at the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston. Congrats Donnie! We'll miss you.

Scott Mertens (MM 1995) is the band director in the Sycamore School District, where he teaches middle school band and the high school jazz band. He is also an active composer and arranger for jazz bands, and plays jazz piano around the Chicago area.

Jim Hendricks (BM 1995, MM 1997) just released his seventh piano recording, *America's Favorite Songs*. The recording features 18 of America's favorite songs, all time-tested classics. The recording is available through this web site: [www.jimhendricksmusic.com](http://www.jimhendricksmusic.com).

Current graduate assistant Matthew Erpelding was awarded the 2006 School of Music Graduate Teaching Assistant Award for Teaching Excellence.

Joren Cain (BA1998) accepted the saxophone position at Valdosta State University (in Valdosta, GA), where he will be starting this fall. He will be the saxophone teacher, direct their 2nd jazz band (they have a very strong jazz program), and teach first year improv. He will be heading there in August. To keep in touch: [jorencain@mac.com](mailto:jorencain@mac.com) and <http://web.mac.com/jorencain> (new website; under construction).

The School of Music has just been notified that the Liberace Foundation for the Performing and Creative Arts will fund the 2006-07 NIU Liberace Jazztet, the sixth consecutive year of support. The \$12,000 awarded goes directly to six students to fund junior/senior/graduate student scholarships or GA appointments. One of the positive factors in NIU's application for renewal was the result of the cultivation of the relationships Jazz Studies Coordinator Ronald Carter has

developed with the people at Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC) in New York City. The Liberace Jazztet performed last year by invitation at the new JALC Dizzy's Club Coca Cola as the first collegiate ensemble from outside of New York. Upon hearing the group perform last year, Dizzy's Club Artistic Manager Todd Barkan said, "Any band that good can be here any time." The Liberace Jazztet will perform by invitation at the Iowa City Jazz Festival on July 2, 2006. The Liberace Jazztet CD, titled "On the Verge," is available from the School of Music.

The George and Betty Dutton Foundation will again fund a graduate assistantship in response to our application (\$4,000). That makes six consecutive years for Dutton Foundation funding for us. This funding pays for 10-hours of graduate assistant work, to serve in (an) intern position(s) in the Sycamore Schools string program and perform in the NIU Philharmonic as the George and Betty Dutton Orchestral Chair AND/OR the Sycamore Schools choral program as a pianist and the School of Music as the George and Betty Dutton Collaborative Pianist.

We wish to congratulate the following students for the following awards that were listed in the 2005/06 commencement bulletin:

Name of Award: **College of Visual & Performing Arts Dean's Award**

Description: **The CVPA Dean's Award honors graduating seniors who, in the opinion of the faculty, have exhibited exceptional academic work and leadership and who have made outstanding contributions to their school's programs and activities.**

Recipient: **Kerry O'Brien**

Name of Award: **Sally Stevens Award**

Description: **Awarded to a senior in the School of Music who demonstrates the highest artistic and academic achievement.**

Recipient: **Anna Schweitz**

Name of Award: **School of Music Graduate Teaching Assistant Excellence in Teaching Award**

Description: **Awarded to the outstanding graduate teaching assistant in the School of Music.**

Recipient: **Matthew Erpelding**

Name of Award: **Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity Collegiate Honor Award**

Recipient: **Amanda Knittel**

Name of Award: **Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity Scholastic Award**

Recipient: **Charleen Patton**

And finally – congratulations to the 2006 graduating class of the NIU School of Music

Undergraduates

Garett Arrowood

Terry Bartolotta

Frank Check

Hui-Ju Chuang

Robert Collazo

Benjamin Crosby

Nathan Heffron

Jennifer Hoversen

Patrick Jenkins

Carl Johnson

Donnie Norton  
Kerry O'Brien  
Charleen Patton  
Katherine Prom  
Jay Raymond  
Denise Trautmann  
Katie Wiegman

Master of Music

Sune Borregaard  
Carla Dirks  
Matthew Erpelding  
Brandon Estes  
Michael Goldfine  
Yuri Grankin  
Jessica Hajek  
Cosmin Harsian  
Li Chi Hsieh  
Adam Hucke  
Mary Hwang  
Jessica Inch  
Andrew Jeffrey  
Mary Kramer  
Tomoko Kuba  
Mabel Kwan  
Peter Laveck  
Vicki McCord  
Fabiana Mino  
JoAnne Moan  
Madelyn Moore  
Molly Morrissey  
Graciela Pineda  
Young Park  
Talia Pavia  
Sunhye Shim  
Morgan Snyder  
Paula Vasko  
Jennifer Whiting  
JiaFeng Yan

Performer's Certificate

Owen Cox  
Anna Mayne  
Alex Revoal  
Richard Zili

We are so very proud of each and every one of you. Be sure to keep in touch!

**Our web site is updated almost daily.**

**Check it out! <http://www.niu.edu/music>**

**Alumni - Do you have a link you want to add to our website? Just let us know!**

**We also have an alumni [update form](#) on the website just for you!**