News and Notes
SYMPOSIUM MARKS FIRST FORMAL DISCUSSION ON MUSIC AND PHENOMENOLOGY

Academics from across North America and Europe convened for one of the first-ever formal discussions of music and phenomenology at the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center’s 29th annual symposium in March.

Phenomenology is the philosophical study of how human beings experience being in the world—not the scientific study of their world, but the sensory experiences that combine to form the total, complex human experience.

While phenomenology has traditionally examined verbal and visual experiences, the field is witnessing a shift toward the aural, said Dr. Jeff McCurry, director of the Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center.

“Our symposium served as one of the first attempts to understand how music might lead phenomenological inquiry in the 21st century,” he said. “Our presenters discussed what the experience of listening to music truly means.”

The Simon Silverman Phenomenology Center was founded in 1980 under the direction of Professor Amedeo Giorgi as an expression of the phenomenological orientations of Duquesne University’s graduate programs in philosophy and psychology.

The goal of the Center is to promote and facilitate original phenomenological research and add to the body of literature in all disciplines, especially in continental philosophy and psychology as a human science. The Center also serves as a campus hub for numerous intellectual activities that complement graduate programs in philosophy, psychology, theology and communication and rhetorical studies.

The full symposium schedule, speaker bios and papers that were presented in March can be viewed in video format at www.duq.edu/phenomenology.

OPERA WORKSHOP PERFORMS TWO ONE ACT OPERAS BY GIACOMO PUCCINI

In April, the Duquesne University Opera Workshop performed two beautiful one act operas at the Carnegie Library Concert Hall – Suor Angelica and Gianni Schicchi, two of Puccini’s operas from the collection, Il Trittico.

Guenko Guechev, chair of the voice department, served as artistic director, and Xiu-ru Liu, a professor of voice, acted as assistant director. Along with talented pianists and vocal coaches, John Moyer and Inessa Beylin, students achieved a successful performance.

Carl Hess, assistant conductor of the Duquesne University Symphony Orchestra conducted both operas. Guechev said it was a pleasure for both vocal students and teachers to work with Hess as a first-time opera conductor.

The Duquesne University Opera Workshop is a training and performing ensemble open to undergraduate and graduate voice students. Each year, the Opera Workshop gives a fully-staged production, a scenes program, Aria Nights, as well as outreach performances in the community.

Voice majors at Duquesne enjoy opportunities to perform in a variety of settings including the Opera Workshop. Students who seek further training may consider the Ezio Pinza Council (EPCASO) summer program in Italy.

For more information, visit www.duq.edu/music.

(left to right) Anna Kovalevska, Xiu-ru Liu, Guenko Guechev, Rebecca Belczyk, Grace Callahan, Andrey Nemzer
Dr. Ann Labounsky
Performs in Sacred Music Colloquium

Dr. Ann Labounsky, professor and chair of Organ and Sacred Music, was the featured organist during Sacred Music Colloquium XXI, the largest and most in-depth teaching conference and retreat on sacred music in the world, held at Duquesne University in June.

The focus of the Colloquium is on instruction in Gregorian chant and the Catholic sacred music tradition, participation in chant and polyphonic choirs, nightly lectures and performances and daily celebrations of liturgies in both English and Latin.

“I was the featured organist for the breakout sessions in organ and covered the organ works of Cesar Franck specifically dealing with his last work, L’Organiste,” Dr. Labounsky said.

Seven students took the course for credit. They will continue their practice when the Church Music Association of America meets in Salt Lake City next June.

Through daily singing, chant and polyphonic rehearsals, colloquium participants obtain the knowledge and tools to initiate and develop these practices in local parishes, Labounsky said.

“Gregorian chant is integral to Catholic liturgical life and should be heard and experienced with wide participation in every parish,” she said. “The Church Music Association of America is working to bring about this idea with its Sacred Music Colloquium.”

Attendance at the annual summer colloquium is open to anyone interested in improving the quality of music in Catholic worship.

Visit www.musicasacra.com/colloquium for more details.

Dr. Stephen Benham Directs Seventh Season of Strings Without Boundaries

Strings Without Boundaries (SWB), a leading international workshop for the teaching and performance of string music in ensemble settings, completed its seventh season at Duquesne University this summer.

“This cross-generational and cross-genre event has attracted a huge international following,” said Dr. Stephen Benham, SWB director and associate professor of Music Education. Participants ages 12 to 70 came from 16 different states and Germany, Canada and the Caribbean for the June workshop.

With an exceptional faculty including Julie Lyonn Lieberman, Grammy-award winner Richard Greene, Martin Norgaard, Matt Turner, Kelli Trottier, Bob Phillips, Scott Laird and Vicki Richards, SWB provided numerous musical offerings.

“Our classes are content-driven and offer an incredible array of topics,” Dr. Benham said. “Our stellar faculty focuses on creating high quality learning experiences. Students have direct access to all of the teachers.”

This summer’s classes included instruction in both American and international fiddling styles, rock, jazz, North Indian and Arabic folk music, in addition to improvisation for students at all levels. While some eclectic-style workshops focus only on performance, SWB also provides intensive teacher training for both studio and school string and orchestra teachers.

“Strings Without Boundaries is now the leading workshop for teacher training and performance in eclectic styles of string performance,” Dr. Benham said. “The Mary Pappert School of Music has established a strong reputation as a leader in this field.”


Maureen Budway Inducted into Pittsburgh Jazz Society Hall of Fame

With extensive performance credits in both classical and jazz repertoires, Maureen Budway, adjunct professor of voice, was inducted into the Pittsburgh Jazz Society Hall of Fame in September.

A nonprofit established in 1987, the Pittsburgh Jazz Society is dedicated to the promotion, preservation and perpetuation of jazz through education, performance and community outreach. Each year, Pittsburgh musicians who have made significant contributions to jazz history are nominated by their peers for induction into the Hall of Fame.

A previous winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society Competition, Budway has performed with renowned jazz musicians including Louis Bellson, Jeff “Tain” Watts, Hubert Laws, Ronnie...
Pappert Center Lobby Upgraded, Shearer Classic Guitar Studio Dedicated

In September, the Mary Pappert School of Music celebrated completion of several upgraded spaces including PNC Recital Hall, the Pappert Center lobby and the Aaron Shearer Memorial Classic Guitar Studio.

All will function as premiere spaces for listening to and performing concerts, teaching students or gathering to celebrate music.

On September 30, following performances by Professor Thomas Kikta and students in the classic guitar program, Mrs. Lorraine Shearer cut the ribbon, officially dedicating the Aaron Shearer Memorial Classic Guitar Studio to her late husband. Aaron Shearer was a former professor at Duquesne, where he received an honorary doctorate, and was nationally renowned for his method of teaching classical guitar.

To complement the beautifully designed Dr. Thomas D. Pappert Center for Performance and Innovation, which opened in October 2010, the lobby area outside the Pappert Center was spruced up with new paint, wood trim and specially commissioned oil paintings of Mary and Thomas Pappert. New sound-proof double doors were installed at the entrance to the center.

The lobby upgrade concludes work on the 5,000 square-foot, 150 seat, cutting-edge, acoustically engineered space for performance, recording, rehearsal and other meetings.

Sacred Music Professor Completes Labor of Love with CDs and Book on Jean Langlais

A multi-year labor of love by Dr. Ann Labounsky, professor and chair of organ and sacred music, the Complete Organ Works of Jean Langlais, a collection of 25 CDs with an accompanying book, became available to the public in November.

Langlais wrote a body of music for organ second only to that of Bach. Dr. Labounsky, author of Langlais' biography and DVD, completed the long-term project of recording all of his works, including some that were never published, and the results have met with universal praise. A leading American disciple of Langlais, she enjoyed his collaboration in recording the earlier volumes in the series.

Published by the Musical Heritage Society in Oakhurst, N.J., the series is the first and only complete recording of the organ works of Langlais.

Alumna Publishes Memoirs

Shirley R. Barasch, who received a Master's degree in Music Education in 1969, has published a memoir, For Professional Purposes: An Artistic Journey.

Encouraged by her teachers and grandmother, Barasch's successful, creative journey is described as uplifting, inspiring and filled with the force of the human spirit. “Her path will resonate with anyone who has ever realized a dream against all odds,” reads a description of the book, which is available online at Amazon.com.

For Professional Purposes is a celebration of family life and includes a chapter of comfort food recipes and amusing family anecdotes.

Barasch, who currently lives with her husband Ron in Mt. Lebanon, Pa., says she could never make up her mind...
School of Music Welcomes New Faculty and Staff

The Mary Pappert School of Music welcomed the following new faculty and staff members for the 2011-2012 school year:

Elena Alexandratos, Adjunct Professor, Acting for Singers

Elena Alexandratos is a professional actress who has worked with almost every theater company in the Pittsburgh area. Her performances have been critiqued in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette as “Best of” on several occasions.

Alexandratos previously served as the co-artistic director of Pandora’s Box, a local theater company, and studied with Uta Hagan, F. Murray Abraham and Catherine Gaffigan in New York. She also studied at Duquesne University and the University of Pittsburgh.

Best known as a styles teacher, with emphasis in the 17th, 18th and 19th century, Alexandratos currently divides her time between teaching and performing.

Benjamin Cornelius-Bates, Adjunct Professor of Organ and Sacred Music

Benjamin Cornelius-Bates earned an M.M. in Sacred Music at Duquesne University in 2009, and an Artist’s Diploma in 2011, studying under Dr. Ann Labounsky.

He is the organist and Director of Music Ministries at St. Paul of the Cross Monastery, Composer in Residence at First Lutheran Church and a founding member of the Cinquefoil Ensemble in Pittsburgh.

Bates previously studied under Dr. Nancy Cooper at the University of Montana, and Rachel Alflatt and Denis Bédard in Vancouver. He was chosen as a finalist in the André Marchal Organ and Improvisational competition in France in October.

Christopher Bromley, Director of City Music Center

Christopher Bromley studied cello, piano, theory, solfege and composition at the Academy of Music in Mahawa, N.J., and the Manhattan School of Music in New York.

In 1997, Bromley moved to Pittsburgh to study cello performance at Duquesne University with Misha Quint, and after graduation, taught at the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. In 2005, Bromley returned to Duquesne to pursue an Artist’s Diploma in Cello Performance, and in 2007, was a winner of the Duquesne Concerto Competition. He performed as a soloist with the Duquesne Symphony Orchestra under Sidney Harth.

Bromley previously served as Festival Manager for the Interharmony International Music Festival and as Manager of Musical Events at Duquesne. In July 2011, he was appointed Director of City Music Center where he currently works to help provide a comprehensive musical education to any interested student.
Dr. Patrick Burke, Assistant Professor of Musicianship and Music Technology, Co-director of Duquesne Symphony Orchestra

Patrick Burke, who received his D.M.A. at the Yale University School of Music, M.M. at the University of Texas, and B.M. at Duquesne University, was recently granted a tenure track position.

Burke previously taught at Westminster College and Yale University. He is a composer, co-founder of NOW Ensemble, recipient of numerous ASCAP awards and an Aaron Copland Grant. Burke regularly performs throughout North America and has been commissioned by the Albany Symphony, Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, IonSound Project and Alia Musica Pittsburgh.

Burke is a member of ASCAP, the American Composers Forum, the American Music Center and College Music Society. He is a recipient of the Virgil Thomson Fellowship (Yale) and the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composers award.

Steve Groves, Manager of Musical Events

Steve Groves is a graduate of the Mary Pappert School of Music at Duquesne University. While studying at Duquesne, he received a B.M. in Music Technology and an M.M. in Music Composition. Groves studied trumpet with Charles Lirette and Sean Jones and composition with David Stock.

An active composer and arranger, Groves performs with the Pittsburgh band, Uptown Rhythm & Brass, on vocals and trumpet. He also teaches private lessons for students in western Pennsylvania.

Following success in the music retail industry, Groves now coordinates special events, concerts, student recitals, web site listings, mailings and other public affairs for the music school.

Dr. Zvonimir Nagy, Assistant Professor of Musicianship

Dr. Zvonimir Nagy was educated at the University of Zagreb Music Academy, Conservatoire Municipal Jacques Ibert, École Normale de Musique de Paris and Texas Christian University, completing his doctoral studies in music composition at Northwestern University.

Before coming to Duquesne, Dr. Nagy taught music theory, composition and improvisation at St. Xavier University in Chicago. Dr. Nagy is the recipient of music awards, fellowships and scholarships including the distinguished Croatian Music Institute Award; The Durlington Composition Award and the William Karlins Composition Award.

His works have been commissioned and performed by the Zagreb Piano Trio, String Quartet Slavonsky, Jack Quartet, Belle Voix Choir and Fused Muse Ensemble. Nagy won the Iron Composer Competition at Baldwin-Wallace College and was chosen as a finalist in the André Marchal Organ and Improvisational competition in France in October.

He is also short-listed for the Aberdeen Music Prize with his work for trumpet and string quartet, which received its premiere by musicians from the BBC Symphony Orchestra of Scotland in Fall 2011.

Edward Stephan, Adjunct Professor of Percussion, Principal Timpanist of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra

Recognized as one of the most exciting and diverse timpanists in the United States, Stephan received a B.M. from the University of North Texas, and a M.M. from the New England Conservatory of Music. Stephan has performed with the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops, the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the New Haven Symphony and the National Lyric Opera.

A Pittsburgh native, Stephan returned to his hometown after serving as the Principal Timpanist of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and Principal Timpanist of the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra. He has had the opportunity to work with distinguished artists such as Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax and Gil Shaham.

In addition to performing, Stephan is a sought-after teacher and clinician and previously served on the faculty of the University of Texas at Arlington.