Alumni News
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1970s

Kathy Morse (B.S., Music Education, B.M., Music Therapy 1977) was first employed by the State Orchestra of Mexico. Upon returning to the United States, she earned her Master’s Degree from Yale University and toured world-wide with various ensembles. She has carried her passion for music into the classroom for the past 26 years and has led teacher workshops for Carnegie Hall and the New York Philharmonic. Ms. Morse received a “Fund for Teachers” grant to research the history, culture, and musical composers of three Russian cities. Her goal was to create interdisciplinary learning experiences incorporating music, dance, and architecture.

1980s

Colette Silvestri (B.M. Performance, 1983) is the Gifted Support Teacher at Hershey High School in Pennsylvania. She is the coach of the High School Memory Team, where she established a new program whose various teams and individual students succeeded in winning five national titles, setting three adult national records and one international record. Her students have also represented Pennsylvania at the National Brain Bee, Poetry Out Loud and business design competitions.

1990s

Justin Bendel (B.M. Performance, 1998) has had an active career as a performer since graduation. He has been performing with the Pittsburgh CLO since 2004.

2000s

Jennifer Sokira (B.S. Music Therapy, 2001), MMT, LCAT, MTBC has been a Board Certified Music Therapist since 2002, and her primary clinical focuses are working with children with special needs and with adults in hospice/palliative care. She has authored two chapters and a published research study and has presented locally, regionally, and nationally on topics including Rett Syndrome, Children with Physical Disabilities, and on various topics in music therapy business including practice building, marketing, and ethics.

Rose French (B.S., Music Education; B.M. Music Technology, 2002) is currently a member of the Mill Ave Chamber Players, which entered its tenth season this fall and was nominated for the Arizona Governor’s Arts Awards, the City of Phoenix Mayor’s Arts Awards, and recognized by Chamber Music America for their work in building long-term relationships in their community. In 2016, the Mill Ave Chamber Players released its second album, “What the Birds Said” the Music of John Steinmetz and in 2018 will record its third album, a culmination of four commissioned works for its tenth anniversary.

Ted Kocher (B.M. Music Performance, 2008) is a composer, music producer, and GRAMMY-nominated music editor. He has scored award-winning advertisement campaigns for leading clients like the Mirage Casino. Ted has also edited music for hundreds of trailers for Sony Playstation’s marketing team. Highlights include a GRAMMY Nomination, BAFTA Award Winner, TEC Award Winner, and Internet Advertising Competition Award.

Lindsey Goodman (B.M. Performance, 2001) released her debut CD, reach through the sky, on New Dynamic Records in April. The recording, which includes works written for her by six living American composers, features Goodman as soloist, flutist, vocalist, and chamber musician, and is available through iTunes, Google Play, and CD Baby.

2010s

Proud parents Aubrey (B.S., Music Education, 2010) and Jacob Ploesch are happy to announce the birth of their daughter Adia Greer Ploesch. Born on May 4, 2017 at St. Clair Hospital in Mt. Lebanon, PA, Adia was 8 pounds, 20 inches long. She is the first child of the family, and is loved by so many.

StringBone!, a duo made up of MPSOM graduates Mike Borowski (M.M. Performance, 2012; B.M. Performance, 2010) and Naoko Hirai (A.D. Performance, 2012), has been performing throughout the Pittsburgh area as well as London and Japan for nearly three years. Both members are highly trained musicians who love playing and sharing their music.

Tim Beck (B.M. Music Technology, 2012) is a composer based in Los Angeles, California. Tim has had recent works featured in the comedy series Foreign Exchange, directed by Dan Janis and in the short film The Chameleon, produced by Alex Hanno.

Ingrid (Gerling) Hunter (M.M. Performance, 2012) is currently a violinist in the Axiom Quartet, which has just been named University of St. Thomas Houston Quartet-in-Residence.

Alianna Whiteaker-Chudecke (M.M., 2015; B.M., 2013) coloratura soprano, was the winner of the Pittsburgh Concert Society Competition and has also just made her debut performance in China.

Arianna Powell (B.S., Music Education, 2012) is a performer, educator, and composer who has set herself squarely on the path to success. She has recently been seen performing with Nick Jonas, the Black Eyed Peas, and her own band, Velvet Heat.

John Dicesare (A.D., 2012), former Principal Tuba of the Louisville Symphony Orchestra, has been named the new Principal Tuba of the Seattle Symphony.

In addition to touring the world with bassist Marcus Miller, Brett Williams (B.M. Performance, 2014) has also made appearances on the Late Show with Stephen Colbert and has recently opened for Mumford & Sons.

Bronwyn Wyatt (M.M. Performance, 2014) had two of her songs featured in the Netflix show Mindhunter.

School of Music graduates Ross Antonich (B.M. Performance, 2016) and Bryce Rabideau (B.M. Performance, 2015) are members of the band Ferdinand the Bull and just finished doing a summer tour of the Midwest.

Steve Wilder Blumenthal (B.M., Music Technology, 2010) wrote additional music for the live-action feature adaptation of Max Steel, Michael Damian’s independent feature film, High Strung with Jane Seymour and musical fantasy drama, Jem and the Holograms, featuring Molly Ringwald and directed by Jon M. Chu. Recently, he wrote the music for MINDWORKS Café. Currently, he is writing the music for the comedy-adventure Lost Treasure of the Valley, starring Lori Beth Denberg from Nickelodeon’s All That and Greg Lee from Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego?

Chris Catone (M.M. Music Technology, 2012) is a composer, producer and multi-instrumentalist whose music for film has won awards at prominent film festivals such as the Los Angeles 48 Hour Film Fest, Four Points Film Festival, and Filmapalooza. Residing in Los Angeles for a time, Chris collaborated on various projects with film composer and electronic producer Junkie XL at Hans Zimmer’s Remote Control Productions in Los Angeles.