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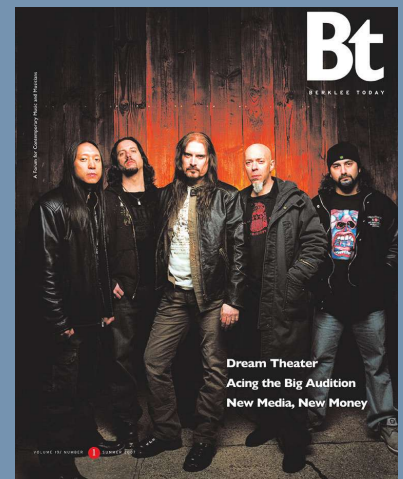
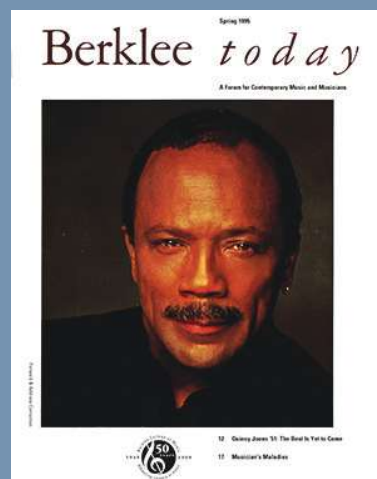
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As the alumni-oriented music magazine of Berklee College of Music, *Berklee today* is dedicated to informing, enriching, and serving the extended Berklee community. By sharing information of benefit to alumni about college matters, music industry issues and events, alumni activities and accomplishments, and musical topics of interest, *Berklee today* serves as both a valuable forum for our family throughout the world and an important source of commentary on contemporary music.

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## FEATURES

**12 Timeless American Tales**  
Strains from the dust bowl, Civil War, and contemporary culture echo in the music of Gillian Welch and David Rawlings '92.  
*by Mark Small '73*



**18 Pop Hit Makers**  
Young alumni songsmiths in Los Angeles are helping Gwen Stefani, John Legend, One Direction, Meghan Trainor, and others tell their stories.  
*by Mark Small*



**21 The BPC Marks 40 Years**  
Since 1976, the college's main stage has been a training ground for students and a venue revered by international artists.



**24 Copyright Matters**  
Here are some key issues that creators of musical content should understand.  
*by David Purcell '91*

## DEPARTMENTS

**2 LEAD SHEET**  
**Designing a Culture of Career Mindedness**  
*by Betsy Newman*

**3 BERKLEE BEAT**  
Commencement 2016, Hal Crook's send-off concert, hip-hop offerings expand, Wendy Rolfe faculty profile, and more

**26 THE WOODSHED**  
**Rumba: A Gateway to Flamenco**  
*by Kai Narezo '99*

**28 EXPERT TESTIMONY**  
**Donny McCaslin '84: Final Sessions with a Legend**  
*by Curtis Killian*

**30 ALUM NOTES**  
News, quotes, and recordings of note

**31 ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT**  
**Jacques Schwartz-Bart '94: Chasing the Voodoo**  
*by Ron Reid*

**39 FINAL CADENCE**

**40 CODA**  
**Recorded Music Is the Most Valuable**  
*by David Newhoff*

## Designing a Culture of Career Mindedness *By Betsy Newman, Senior Vice President for Student Enrollment and Engagement*

One of the best measures of Berklee's success is the college's successful alumni. Our alumni roster includes many award winners and leaders in their fields. They create a powerful network for graduates and valuable mentoring resources for students. It is our role as an institution to advance the network, resources, and programs that help to produce such impressive leaders.

This commitment is central to Berklee's vision for 2025 and we recently launched a process to develop a career strategy to help us advance our commitment to students and alumni fully realizing their artistic, creative, and career potential. In addition to the curriculum, Berklee has several initiatives in place to provide students tools and resources for career success. Faculty and chairs are supportive, informed, and helpful advisers. The Career Development Center offers advisement, speakers, and workshops, and maintains a well-trafficked job and gig board; the Office of Experiential Learning builds relationships with employers and offers an array of internship

opportunities; and Alumni Affairs hosts frequent networking events. The International Career Center at the Valencia, Spain campus provides all these services to its graduate student body. The college recently launched the Berklee Career Manager, which delivers many of these services in a personalized way online and via email notifications from the Berklee Hub. The Berklee Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship (BerkleeICE) is training students to develop their entrepreneurial mind-sets.

Defining a strategy for Berklee that reflects a progressive approach to career services, while developing a model consistent with our unique position as the world's leading music college, has been an area of focus for me and the Career Strategy Steering Committee. We also hope that this strategy will guide us to further integrate advising, classroom activities, and experiential learning opportunities—such as internships, campus employment, and gigs—to be in service of the student and her or his ultimate musical, artistic, and creative objectives.

During the fall 2015 semester, we began assessing the effectiveness of our current offerings. We brought in two top career services professionals for a series of group and individual meetings with more than 65 Berklee community members, including chairs, deans, career staff, students, and alumni. This program review informed the next phase of the committee's work: a project designed to dive deeply into the student experience to generate insights that can shape an innovative, student-centered, long-term strategy for student career services at Berklee.

This semester we launched a joint project with IDEO, a global design and innovation firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and BerkleeICE. Using IDEO's human-centered design methodology, we will develop a shared vision and actionable ideas to make Berklee a world leader in preparing graduates for the ever-changing employment environment. We are exploring ways to build the entrepreneurial capacity of our students; help them take charge of their careers; integrate career educa-

tion throughout our curriculum; develop a culture of career mindedness; and engage alumni, employers, and partners in the career development process with students.

A component of the IDEO project is BerkleeICE's Startup Lab, inspired by Stanford's d.school and designed to enable students to co-create Berklee's career strategy with us. This spring, IDEO designers and BerkleeICE faculty members will co-teach an intensive course in design thinking and entrepreneurial mindset development. Enrolled students are gaining résumé-building experience working alongside IDEO designers while learning IDEO's unique design-thinking process to focus on their future. Students will leave this course prepared for life beyond Berklee, and equipped with the relevant, competitive, real-world ability to apply the design-thinking process to their own musical careers, brands, and startup concepts.

These projects will generate experiments for the Berklee community as a first step toward ultimately creating a better culture of career-mindedness.

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# BERKLEE BEAT

## Commencement 2016 Is a Rap

On Friday, May 6, the audience at Boston University's Agganis Arena was abuzz. Anticipation was high for Berklee's annual commencement concert in which 124 graduating seniors paid tribute to this year's honorees Rita Moreno, Lucian Grainge, the Isley Brothers, and Milton Nascimento.

The show opened with Tickwanya Jones singing "This Old Heart of Mine." It was the first of six selections, including hits such as "Fight the Power," "It's Your Thing," and "Work to Do," chronicling the multi-styled music of the Isley Brothers, who are also Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award winners.

Rita Moreno's celebrated work in musical theater, TV, and movies was represented by tunes such as "Guess Who I Saw Today," "Fever," and the theme song from the TV show *The Electric Company*. Also highlighted was "America" from *West Side Story*. Moreno was the first Latina to win an Oscar for her role as Anita in the show.

From the catalog of Milton Nascimento—perhaps the best-known Brazilian songwriter other than Antônio Carlos Jobim—the student performers presented two medleys of his most familiar songs, including material from his groundbreaking album with saxophonist Wayne Shorter, *Native Dancer*. Of note was "Brazil," which featured vocalist Christina Rodriguez deftly trading phrases with trumpeter Arnetta Johnson.

The program also represented the career contributions of Lucian Grainge and the diverse acts he has worked with as an executive at Universal Music Group. Selections ranged from "Dancing Queen" (Abba) to "Pretty in Pink" (Psychedelic Furs) to "Back to Black" (Amy Winehouse) to "Sorry" (Justin Bieber). Of note was Emily Estefan's heartfelt rendition of Sam Smith's "Stay with Me," on which she

sang and played guitar with the backing of a string section.

Other highlights included an a cappella choral version of "When Doves Cry" in remembrance of Prince and the contrasting jubilant and graceful choreography danced by eight Boston Conservatory students on "Mambo" from *West Side Story*.

Garbed in caps and gowns for the graduation ceremony the next morning, the grads, honorees, college leaders, and faculty members took their places in the Agganis for the formal ceremonies.

Presenting the honorary degrees, Roger Brown gave some background on each recipient. He cited Lucian Grainge's abilities as a negotiator which enabled Universal to amass a larger catalog than any other major record label, and for his prescience in forging alliances with technology companies. After receiving the degree, Grainge said, "The respect I have for you, this class, this graduation, your contributions, and musicianship—I am in awe of you. I am honored and humbled to be here."

Introducing Ronnie and Ernie Isley, Brown noted that the Isleys explored funk, disco, r&b, doo-wop, and rock, reaching the *Billboard* top 50 in five different decades. Ernie Isley told the crowd, "Berklee, I want you to know: last night, you outdid yourselves. You're professionals. Ronald and I, in the spirit of all the brothers, appreciate it beyond words and appreciate you. I'm fully confident that the future of music rests in good hands because of Berklee."

Brown characterized Nascimento as a singular writer and a beloved global ambassador for the Brazilian people. "He has been a voice for social justice over a career of more than 40 years," Brown said.

As the commencement speaker,



Berklee singers and instrumentalists and Boston Conservatory dancers perform together on Leonard Bernstein's "Mambo" from *West Side Story* at the 2016 commencement concert.



Graduating senior Emily Estefan performs "Stay with Me" during the May 6 commencement concert.



Inspired by the Broadway show *Hamilton*, Rita Moreno became the first Berklee commencement speaker to rap her address.



From the left: Lucian Grainge, Ernie Isley, Ronnie Isley, Rita Moreno, and Milton Nascimento received honorary doctor of music degrees at the May 7 commencement.

Rita Moreno rapped part of her message. She rhymed, "You must have the audacity, the pluck, the grit the perspicacity. Your talent may be terrific, your writing pro-li-fic—but do you have the mo-ti-va-tion to use your cre-a-tion for this gen-er-a-tion, to give it the passion, the voice to speak its choice? Yo, I'm

sayin', write your score for more than popularity—live life with clarity—of who you are—your worth on earth."

She also told the grads, "What matters is that you use what you have learned wisely. The only thanks I ask is that you sing properly and honestly. If you do this, I will be repaid."

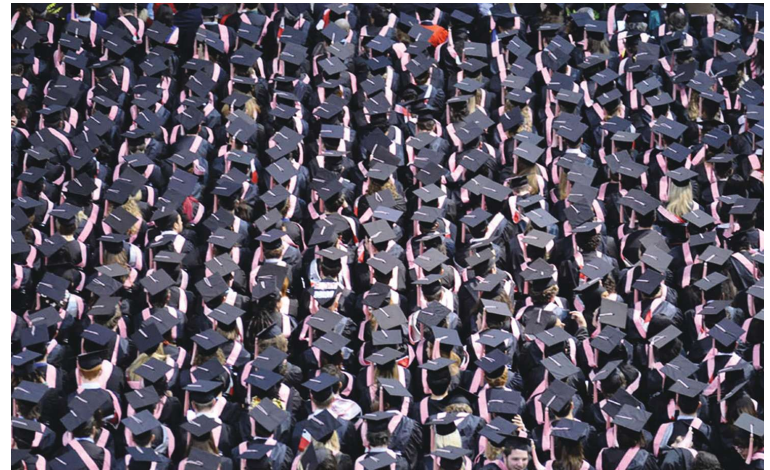
## Looking Back a Half Century

On May 28, 1966, Berklee's first graduating class totaled 16, with 13 grads receiving bachelor of music degrees in either music education or composition. The remaining three earned diplomas in arranging and composition. Among the graduates were Alf Clausen (award winning composer for *The Simpsons* and other TV shows and movies), and Michael Rendish, Charles Cassara, and Ted Pease, all of whom became revered Berklee faculty members.



From the left, first row: Michael Rendish, Alan Marino, Steven Gould, Alf Clausen, Anthony DiMaggio, and Nicholas Aksenczyk. Second row: Richard Milgram, John McGill, John Julian, James Castaldi, Charles Cassara, and George Bookataub. Third row: unidentified, unidentified, Gerald Reber, Ted Pease, William Moulton, and James Miller.

By contrast, 50 years later, the 2016 class numbered 952 graduates who earned degrees and diplomas in a dozen different majors. While there were no women in the class of 1966, this year, 35 percent of the graduating class was female. The graduates came from 68 different countries and all across the United States. While most of the 1966 graduates were close in age, in 2016, the oldest graduate was 59 and the youngest was 20.



The class of 2016, 952 strong, in which women accounted for 35 percent of the graduates, hailed from 68 different countries.

## Sony Music U.S. Latin President Discusses Labels, Artists

By Bryan Parys

Students recently packed the David Friend Recital Hall to catch some music business wisdom from Nir Seroussi '96, president of Sony Music U.S. Latin. Seroussi came to Berklee's campus to deliver the keynote for the 23rd annual James G. Zafiris Lecture for Music Business/Management. The artist roster that Seroussi oversees in his role at Sony includes international music legends Chayanne, Gloria Estefan, Enrique Iglesias, Julio Iglesias, and Ricky Martin, among others.

Don Gorder, chair of the Music Business/Management Department, moderated the interview with Seroussi. Before they explored the theme of artists and labels reinventing their relationships, Seroussi spoke about his experience as a Berklee student and Music Business/Management major.

"Believe me, a lot of the things that you're learning you're not going to grasp until you leave," Seroussi told the audience. "Looking back, I can really identify the moments that defined me." He stressed the importance of cre-

ating a network with people he met at Berklee. "I still work with a lot of the folks from back in the day," he stated.

Seroussi discussed his career path as well. "Working in music publishing got me into song plugging because it's the most fun and the most dramatic," he said. "By doing that I developed A&R skills—you figure out the psychology behind what the artist is going to like and who are the players, because it's all about the song. I know it sounds cheesy, but it's all about the music, and that led me to understanding what hit-making is all about.

"I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing the way I'm doing it had I not been through the core music training at Berklee. It gave me the framework for songwriting and understanding the studio and arranging. It seeded that link that I have with artists—that connection with the artist at the music level is priceless."

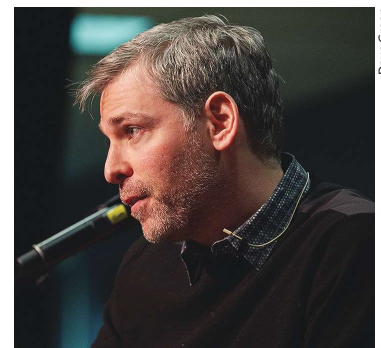
Speaking of his success as president at Sony Music U.S. Latin,

Seroussi said, "I'm a bit unorthodox because I work in different areas. What I enjoy the most—still—is the A&R side. That proximity to the artist is really my favorite part.

"If you start with the music and focus on the artist, everything else is going to come," Seroussi said. The new [way of thinking] is 'Don't lose the passion, because that has to be there, but act responsibly.' There's a lot to be learned from the past, but you have to be looking toward the future."

Addressing the lecture's main theme, Seroussi told the crowd, "Labels will continue to exist as long as they continue to evolve, and as long as they focus on how they can become a better partner for the artist. Period.

"It's not about whether [it will] be all independent or major labels," Seroussi said. "They need to coexist. [Major labels] are not always going to be the solution, but I look back over the last four or five years and it's like one big family. We have this unprecedented roster, and it's not like we went



Dave Green

"Labels will continue to exist as long as they continue to evolve," Nir Seroussi '96 told the Berklee student and faculty audience during his recent visit to the college.

out and bought these artists. It came from, 'How do we become better?'

"We're kind of lucky," Seroussi said. "We've been able to change and we're no longer dependent on the traditional areas of revenue. When something becomes unsustainable, you have to get off your high horse and think of another way to make things work."

# Stars Perform at Hal Crook's Send-Off Concert

After a 30-year teaching career at Berklee, professor Hal Crook celebrated his last semester at the college in an extraordinary way. For a February 18 concert of Crook's original music in the Berklee Performance Center, the educator, composer, and trombonist brought back to campus some of his most illustrious former students. Performing to a packed house for the first set were Antonio Sanchez '97 (drums), Esperanza Spalding '05 (bass and vocals), Chris Cheek '91 (saxophone), Leo Genovese '04 (piano), Lionel Loueke '00 (guitar), and Crook playing his signature "trom-o-tizer" (trombone with effects processing).

Crook generously shared the spotlight throughout, offering each of his virtuosic guests plenty of solo time on his five contemporary jazz compositions. The opener, "Set Me Free" (the title theme of the concert), set the pace with Spalding laying down an insistent odd-meter bass ostinato and singing unison lines with the horns at first before her melody became the top line in three-part harmony with Crook and Cheek. Sanchez steadily churned out the groove alternating quiet accompaniment with intense sections under the solos as Loueke's guitar added percussive accents and chordal swoops, his sound fattened by an octave harmonizer. "Never Again" and "Nothing to Lose" followed, segueing seamlessly via drum and bass solo passages. Throughout, Cheek's rhythmic and angular improvisations contrasted with Crook's muscular so-

loing, and Loueke's cascading notes. Spaulding served up solid bass underpinning and plaintive vocalizing, while Genovese's offered sometimes-pointilistic accompaniment.

Spalding sang the last two songs, "Blue Confessions" and "Domestic Violets," with lyrics she penned. Genovese plumbed the depths of Crook's dramatic chord changes in his intro and comping on "Blue Confessions." The romantic ballad was a perfect vehicle for Crook's bop-flavored lines and Spalding's dreamy vocal. Introducing the last song, Spalding explained that "Domestic Violets" was a play on words for the serious theme of the lyrics: domestic violence against women. A loping, piano and bass unison figure preceded Spalding's almost-spoken melody. The set closed to robust applause.

The concert's second half featured Crook's amazing 10-piece r&b band These Eyes, featuring alumni as well as faculty members Alain Mallet and Crook. The group's expert rendering of nine original songs revealed Crook's gift for writing music and lyrics in popular styles. His killer charts for the four-piece horn section effectively showcased the individual members: trumpeter Noah Conrad '17, and saxophonists Jon Bean and Tucker Antell, both as ensemble players and dazzling soloists. Deborah Pierre '13 applied her agile and soulful voice in a range of settings from the mid-tempo r&b bump of "Behind These Eyes" to the rollicking 12/8 groove of "I Remember"



Kelly Davidson

From the left: Esperanza Spalding, Hal Crook, Lionel Loueke, and Chris Cheek performing in the first half of Crook's February 18 retirement concert. Also performing were drummer Antonio Sanchez and pianist Leo Genovese.

to the reggae beat of "Just Enough." Keyboardist Jiri Nedoma '10 found the right vibe in his solo on the ballad "Winds of Change." The rhythm section of (drummer) Patrick Simard '13, (bassist) Wesley Wirth, and (keyboardist) Santiago Bosch '15 were in lockstep, providing the perfect feel for each song. Crook publicly thanked the band for "making my songs sound better than the really are."

In between sets, a lighthearted Crook stood at the podium and played "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" on a kazoo before offering a mix of tongue-in-cheek humor and poignant thoughts about his three decades at Berklee. "In 1971, Duke Ellington—my hero of heroes—handed me my degree and I stood there awestruck until he spoke those inimitable words of wisdom that I've tried to live my life by ever since," Crook recalled. "He looked me right in the eye and said, 'Please, keep moving.' So I moved, and moved,

and moved. Years later I ended up back here."

Referring to his musical guests in the first set, Crook said, "Each of them is so amazing, so successful, so famous. I knew them in their musical infancy, before the Grammy Awards, performances at the White House, the movie soundtracks, world tours with Wayne [Shorter] and Herbie [Hancock], and in the cases of Chris and Leo, the jobs as night watchmen at Walmart. If I knew they were going to be so amazing, successful, and famous, I would have given them better grades. Back then I thought of them as the kids I never had—and never wanted. I kid them a lot, but I love these guys—some more than others."

Concluding, Crook told the crowd, "I hope to see you all back here in 30 years for the reunion concert," before he exited the stage reprising his kazoo performance.

## Taking it to the House



From the left: Steve Ruchefsky, Michael Gaisbacher '15, Jake Howard '17, Carolyn Kendrick '16, Livingston Taylor, Emma Ruchefsky '19, and Rondi Charleston. In April, Steve Ruchefsky and Rondi Charleston, parents of Berklee student Emma Ruchefsky, hosted a gathering at their home in Westport, CT, for current and prospective students and parents, and friends of the college. Professor Livingston Taylor gave a special performance with Berklee students at the event.



Daniel and Sue Spradling, parents of freshman Emily Spradling, hosted a welcome to Berklee event in their Hillsborough, CA, home. Student ambassadors Kristin Corpuz and Max Brandenburg delighted an audience of newly accepted Berklee students and their parents with an impressive set of original songs.



## Honoring the Fisk Jubilee Singers

By Mike Keefe-Feldman



Professor Donna McElroy (center) joins with the Fisk Jubilee Singers at a special February 21 concert tribute to Fisk University and its famed choral group at Boston's Symphony Hall.

The Nashville-based Fisk University has a storied history as one of the nation's leading black colleges. On February 21, Fisk celebrated its 150th anniversary. As part of Berklee's Signature Series, a commemorative concert, was held at Boston's Symphony Hall and paid tribute to the university and its renowned choral ensemble, the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Since 1871, the group has introduced the spiritual and African American religious music throughout the world. In addition to a large audience of alumni from both Berklee and Fisk University, senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Frank L. Sims, president of Fisk University were in attendance.

Former Massachusetts governor, Deval Patrick and Harvard professor and author Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot delivered narration with the music consisting of poetry and verse written by Boston-area poet and writer Terry E. Carter, a Fisk alumnus.

The Symphony Hall audience heard songs that "covered slavery's most naked truths and uncovered the strength and character of an enslaved multitude in simultaneous sympathy," Patrick recited. "Yet despite its captive origins, it is not a music of resignation and acquiescence to a foreign host. It is rather the sound of liberation's most fervent and hopeful call."

The Fisk Jubilee Singers shone on spirituals such as "There Is a Balm in Gilead" and "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," among others. The evening also included performances by Berklee Voice Department professor Donna McElroy, an alumna of

the Jubilee Singers; an orchestra featuring faculty members from Berklee and the Boston Conservatory playing pieces composed and conducted by Composition Department professor Julius Williams; Ensemble Department professor Dennis Montgomery III; the Boston Children's Chorus; and student and faculty groups performing songs under the direction of McElroy and Jerome Kyles, assistant professor in Berklee's Voice Department. McElroy drew a standing ovation for her soul-stirring performance of the spiritual "Soon Ah Will Be Done."

Paul T. Kwami, the musical director of the Jubilee Singers, led the orchestra and singers in a stunning performance of the spiritual "Hold On" before the program drew to a close with McElroy leading the vocalists in Fisk's alma mater song, "The Gold and Blue."

Following the concert, Berklee President Roger H. Brown noted, "We were honored and proud to pay tribute to the towering musical and social achievements of the Fisk Jubilee Singers. This was truly a historic evening—the music was uplifting and the narration was immensely powerful."

The event received support from lead sponsors Cathy and Jim Stone and colead sponsor Hassell McClellan. Supporting sponsors included Amy and David Abrams, Vivian C. Beard, Nina and David Fialkow, and State Street Corporation.

The evening also served as a fundraiser, with donors contributing more than \$50,000 to a scholarship to support a Berklee student specializing in spiritual and gospel music.

## Hip-hop Offerings to Expand

Dance performer, choreographer, and hip-hop scholar Duane Lee Holland Jr. is the first full-time faculty member to be hired to teach at both the Boston Conservatory of Music (TBC) and Berklee following the merger of the two institutions. "He is the perfect hire," says Cathy Young, director of the conservatory's dance division. "One of our missions in the dance division has been to revitalize what a conservatory education is and re-think the idea that a rigorous dance education is primarily based on classical Western forms such as ballet and modern dance. Duane brings a depth of expertise in hip-hop, a dance form that is influencing the shape of contemporary dance hugely. He has also studied modern ballet and jazz, so he understands the kind of training that most of our students have experienced."

Holland began his professional dance career at 17 dancing for the first hip-hop theater dance company, Rennie Harris Puremovement. He has since performed on Broadway with the casts of *The Lion King* and *Hot Feet*, and in numerous other productions in the United States, Europe, and Japan. Holland has choreographed many works and assisted Rennie Harris with choreography for *Love Stories* for the Alvin Ailey



Duane Lee Holland Jr.

American Dance Theater and *Shut Up & Dance* for the Pennsylvania Ballet. He holds a master's degree in dance with a focus in choreography from the University of Iowa, and is a scholar of the history and cultural impact of hip-hop.

Holland will teach studio and academic courses enabling students to learn the big picture of hip-hop as well as its movements. He will also facilitate artistic collaborations between TBC and Berklee. "Many of us in the conservatory's dance division are excited about the possibilities for collaborations with Berklee composers and performers," Young says. "Part of Duane's charge will be to create collaborative projects with students and faculty, and to continue to build the culture around dance at Berklee."

## Alumni Featured at International Jazz Day



Pianist Danilo Pérez '88 and vocalist Dianne Reeves were part of an ensemble performing Pat Metheny's piece "Minuano."

On April 29, President and Michelle Obama hosted an all-star concert at the White House for the fifth annual International Jazz Day celebration. Berklee was well represented among the performers, which included headliners Herbie Hancock, Aretha Franklin, Sting, Kurt Elling, Pat Metheny, Chick Corea, Wayne Shorter, and others. Eight of the 40 artists who participated in the two-hour set were Berklee alumni, including drummers Terri Lyne Carrington '83 and Kendrick Scott '03, pianist Danilo Pérez '88, guitarist Lionel Loueke '00, bassist and

vocalist Esperanza Spalding '05, saxophonists Sadao Watanabe '65 and Eli Degibri '97, and singer and pianist Diana Krall '83. All the female instrumentalists who performed were Berklee alumnae.

Berklee president Roger Brown and his wife Linda Mason attended the event with former Berklee president Lee Eliot Berk and his wife Susan. "I cannot tell you how meaningful it was to see a global appreciation for the music many of us love—the product of our own unique history and culture," Brown stated.

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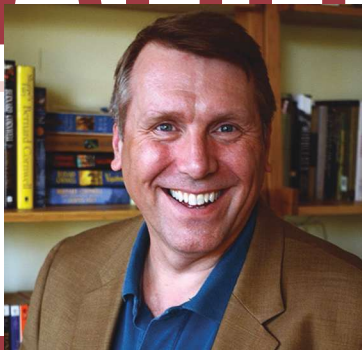
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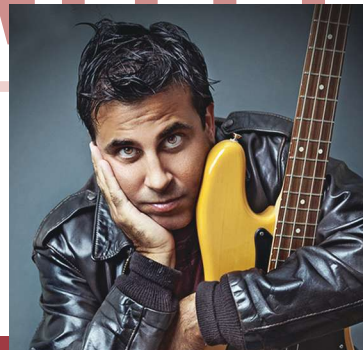
# FACULTY NOTES



Tom Hojnacki



Beth Platow



Tom Stein



Felice Pomeranz

Professors **Bruce Thomas** and **Apostolos Paraskevas** had their respective compositions “Mystery Hill” and “Aegean Fire Magnus” performed by the Berklee Contemporary Symphony Orchestra at Jordan Hall in March.

Professor **Lauren Passarelli** recorded, mixed, and mastered *Songs of the Poets* for pianist and vocalist Kate Chadbourne.

Professor **Tom Stein** was appointed to the Fulbright specialist roster peer review committee for 2016.

Professor **Bill Banfield** was a member of the panel of judges for the Pulitzer Prize in music that awarded a Pulitzer to composer Henry Threadgill for his epic work *In for a Penny, In for a Pound*. Threadgill is the first composer using the jazz language to receive the prestigious award. Banfield also penned the books *Ethnomusicologizing* and *Pat Patrick: American Musician and Cultural Visionary*.

Professor **Bob Gullotti** is heard with Palle Danielsson (bass), Jesper Løvdal and pianist Mathias Landæus on the album *Very Well Vol. 1*.

Professor **Kris Adams** recently performed in Rome with pianist Enrico Zanisi, bassist Jacopo Ferrazza and Luca Pirozzi, and drummer Alessio Santoni.

Assistant professor **Nando Michelin** recorded the CD *Música de Ida y Vuelta*. Visit [nandomichelin.bandcamp.com](http://nandomichelin.bandcamp.com).

Assistant Chair of the Harmony Department **Tom Hojnacki** presented a workshop on the Berklee harmony curriculum at the Society for Music Theory conference in St. Louis, MO.

**Cecil Adderley**, chair of the Music Education Department, received the Visionary Leadership Award from the Massachusetts Music Educators Association.

Associate professor **Bob Stanton** played guitar on tour with Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen.

**Robin Stone** was recently promoted to the rank of professor. She has been a Berklee faculty member for 26 years.

Professor **Jim Stinnett** published the book *What Makes Motown Bass Motown?*. Visit [jimstinnett.com](http://jimstinnett.com).

Professor **Rod Morgenstein** released the CD *Profit* with his band Jelly Jam. The band will tour this summer.

Assistant professor **Ben Houge** presented the premiere of *Ornithological Blogpoem*, a work for choir and audience-member mobile devices, at Georgia Institute of Technology. In March, he presented at the Game Developers Conference in San Francisco.

The magazine *Jam Tarts* published the poem “Human Flaw with History” by assistant professor **Beth Platow**.

Professor **Mark Walker** played drums on Paquito D’Rivera’s CD *Jazz Meets the Classics*, and *The Ludwigsburg Concert* double CD with Lyle Mays, Marc Johnson, and Bob Shepard.

Instructor **Jason Anick** plays violin on *Travels*, the second album by the Rhythm Future Quartet.

On April 12, professor **Bruce Gertz** was featured at the University of North Texas Jazz Lecture Series.

Instructor **Steve Hunt** released the album *Sphere of Influence* featuring professor **Bruce Gertz**, associate professor **Jerry Leake**, and others.

In May, professor **Joe Mulholland** released the CD *Runaway Train* with backing from professor **Bob Tamagni** (drums), and Bob Nieske (bass).

Professor **Mitch Haupers** recorded a spoken-word version of the foreword to the book *No Beethoven: An Autobiography and Chronicle of Weather Report*, by Peter Erskine.

Associate professor **Kevin Block-Schwenk** posts a series of interviews featuring Berklee alumni with successful non-music careers at [blockschwencollective/cool\\_by\\_osmosis](http://blockschwencollective/cool_by_osmosis).

Associate professor **Francisco Noya** has been appointed the music director for the New Philharmonia Orchestra in Newton. He recently conducted concerts with the Berklee Contemporary Symphony Orchestra in Boston’s Symphony Hall and Jordan Hall.

Professor of guitar **Guy Van Duser** received the Living Thumbpicker award from the National Thumbpickers Hall of Fame in Kentucky.

Professor **Kathleen Howland** was invited to Rome, Italy, to give a keynote lecture on music therapy in oncology.

Instructors **Jason Yeager** (piano) and **Jason Anick** (violin) recorded the material for their forthcoming album *United*.

Associate professor **Steven Kirby** recorded the jazz album *Illuminations* featuring nine of his original com-

positions and two standards for the Whaling City Sound label.

Assistant professor **Michael Weinstein** heard the premiere of his work *Gott Hämmer* for chorus and winds with the New England Conservatory Chamber Choir and Wind Ensemble.

Professor **Sheila Katz** authored *Connecting with the Enemy: A Century of Palestinian-Israeli Joint Nonviolence* for University Press of Texas.

Professor **Scott Free** presented a clinic on jazz composition at Saint Louis College of Music in Rome, Italy, in May.

Associate professor **Jerry Leake** recorded his seventh CD, *Crafty Hands*, featuring associate professor **Randy Roos** and **Steve Hunt**.

**Suzanne Hanser**, chair of Music Therapy, produced the CD *The Remembrance of One* with Daniel Kobialka and published the book, *Integrative Health through Music Therapy: Accompanying the Journey from Illness to Wellness*. She made presentations for Harvard Medical School and the Asahikawa Medical Center in Japan.

Assistant professor **Ben Camp** wrote and produced the song “Horns” recorded by Bryce Fox. It reached the top 10 on three streaming services.

The article “Intersectionality’s Binding Agent: The Political Primacy of Class” by professor **Victor Wallis**, appeared in the December 2015 issue of *New Political Science*.

Assistant professor **Peter Bufano** provided original music for the Celebration of American Circus awards, the doc-

umentary *Circus Kids*, and a new production titled *A Cardboard and Duct Tape Spectacular*.

Assistant professor **Victoria Large** published her fiction story "Vandalism" in *Microchondria III: More Short Short Stories* Collected by Harvard Book Store.

Professor **Jan Shapiro** penned the book *So You Want to Sing Jazz: A Guide for Professionals*.

Professor **Joseph Coroniti** covered the March 2016 Pacific Arts Association International Symposium in New Zealand.

Professor **Ellen Francese** received an urban service award for her outreach work organizing student performances at local shelters, they also provide on-line music lessons to Haitian orphans.

Professor **David Fiaczynski** released a vinyl recording based on microtonal bird song transcriptions.

Professor **Marti Epstein** heard the premieres of her cantata *Mary Magdalen*, and her chamber work *weaver*.

Associate professor **Susan Rogers** received a Newbury Comics Faculty Fellowship to support her work in Berklee's Music Perception and Cognition Lab.

Professor **Neil Olmstead** gave a lecture and concert in Wayland, MA, demonstrating the influence of French impressionist music on jazz.

Assistant professor **Amanda Monaco** presented an all-day jazz festival in April with her collective, Queens Jazz OverGround. Visit [www.queensjazz.org](http://www.queensjazz.org).

In July, professor **Peter Eldridge** will release *Disappearing Day* on Sunnyside Records featuring originals and tunes by top songwriters.

Professor **Felice Pomeranz** penned *Berklee Harp*, the first Berklee Press method book for lever and pedal harpists. It contains exercises, ideas for improvisation, and more.

**Don Gorder**, chair of the Music Business/Management Department, moderated a panel discussion on music supervision at the April Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association summit.

Professor **David Vose** conducted the Deep Blue "C" Studio Orchestra in a tribute concert of the music of Burt Bacharach and Hal David in Kittery, ME.

Assistant professor **Vadim Neselovskyi** will premiere an expanded version of his orchestral suite *Seasons* at the Festival at Sandpoint with Gary Sheldon conducting.

## faculty profile

### Wendy Rolfe

## Extending Techniques and Perspective

by Mark Small

During her 29 years in Berklee's Woodwind Department, professor Wendy Rolfe has carved out a multidimensional musical path. She was the first woman the department hired in 1987, and since that time, she has guided countless flute students through the intricacies of technique and repertoire. Additionally, Rolfe maintains a busy schedule teaching, performing, and recording orchestral and chamber music with various organizations throughout the Americas. After earning her bachelor's degree from Oberlin Conservatory, she chose a career that was open-ended musically and professionally.

"I had become interested in the outside edges of the repertoire," Rolfe relates. "So when I finished at Oberlin, I realized that I didn't want to go the symphony audition route." For Rolfe, the "outside edges" started with early music and historical flute performance on period instruments, which led to her involvement with Baroque music. She simultaneously dove deeply into contemporary classical repertoire.

"I ended up meeting Harvey Sollberger, a pioneer in contemporary flute music and extended techniques for the flute, in New York," she recalls. "I went to work with him to learn how to make all the different sounds you could make on the flute." With Sollberger's encouragement, Rolfe enrolled at Manhattan School of Music and completed her master's and doctoral degrees there under his tutelage. "Manhattan was a hotbed of contemporary music," Rolfe recalls, "and I played with the legendary Group for Contemporary Music with Harvey and [group cofounder] Charles Wuorinen."

Rolfe stresses the importance of learning diverse aspects of one's instrument's repertoire. She gained experience early on playing in youth orchestras and later as a Tanglewood Music Center

fellow working with conductors Seiji Ozawa, Leonard Bernstein, and Gunther Schuller. Over the decades, she has brought that experience to her teaching as well as her performances with the Boston Baroque, Handel and Haydn Society, and Cape Symphony orchestras. She recently played historical piccolo with Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra in Toronto for their recording of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Her own recent CD releases, *Images of Brazil* and *Images of Eve* (the latter featuring music by women composers exclusively), reveal other musical interests. On the first, Rolfe explores Brazilian folk-inspired and contemporary works and on the latter, works by Berklee professor Beth Denisch, and alumni composers Yun Chung and Kazuyo Kuriya, among others.

While some of Rolfe's Berklee students hope to join professional orchestras, others have quite different goals. "I have a lot of students coming to me who play jazz," she says, "and others wanting to do film-scoring sessions. They need to develop the ensemble skills to blend with a section and work with a conductor. There is a real need for that kind of training at Berklee."

Rolfe teaches students with many differing interests in her woodwind doubling lab classes. Generally, they play multiple woodwinds and some aspire to working with musical theater productions. She stresses to them the need to develop a great tone and solid intonation among other skills. Of her approach to the doubling labs, Rolfe says, "It's a bit like a one-room schoolhouse. I teach in Latin America frequently, and there, the older kids help the little kids. In my Berklee classes, I think it's important for the classically oriented flute majors to help the doublers and they in turn help the flute majors with jazz. They all have something to offer each other."



Wendy Rolfe

One of Rolfe's long-term goals has been working on social issues through music and music education. When she was the chair of the Cultural Outreach Committee for America's National Flute Association (NFA), she initiated a program to provide funding for disadvantaged youth to attend the NFA conventions in various cities. After establishing musical connections with top flutists and educators in Ecuador and Brazil, and having witnessed the need among impoverished youth in South America, Rolfe mobilized her Berklee colleagues to help provide young people access to musical instruments.

"I visited a town west of Rio de Janeiro that had a wonderful school, but the kids had almost no resources," she says. "I was asked if I could help them." Rolfe enlisted her Berklee faculty colleagues, including Walter Beasley, Beth Denisch, Matthew Nicholl, and others, who donated about 15 or 20 flutes for the program there. Rolfe has also added her energy and expertise to what has become a very successful outreach effort begun by the principal flutist of the national orchestra in Ecuador.

Rolfe imparts lessons about service through music to her Berklee students. "I encourage them to think about how they can make the world a better place through music," she says. "I've taken them to play at senior-citizen residences—we did six of those outreach concerts last fall. It's helped them to appreciate the special skills they have and how much they have to offer. The students were a little shy at first, but then they saw the joy they were bringing to the people. Some students told me after one of those concerts that it was the best thing to happen to them all week. They were happy to see what they could give back with music. It's important to have that perspective."

## Scholarships: Investing in Extraordinary Students Who Need Support

The first in a series about supporting students

By Cindy Albert Link and Jessica Halton

### The Challenge: Affordability

“Two amazing Berklee graduates, Cava Menzies ’99 and Lisa Forkish ’06, taught me at the Oakland School for the Arts [in Oakland, CA],” Kyana Fanene says. “After studying with them, there was no doubt that Berklee would be my first choice to pursue a degree in music therapy.” Berklee’s tuition cost was a challenge, however.

### Scholarships: A Top Priority

Generous support helps make Berklee more affordable for Fanene and thousands of others from around the world. Once Boston-based, Berklee has expanded its geographic reach to a second campus in Valencia, Spain, and its students come from across the United States and more than 100 countries on six continents. Integrating music from many cultures enhances students’ education and experience.

As Berklee today goes to press, *Soundbreaking*: The Campaign for Berklee sailed past \$80 million toward its \$100 million goal, a remarkable milestone in this, just the second of the campaign’s five-year public phase. More than 15,000 gifts from trustees, members of the Presidential Advisory Council, alumni, parents, faculty and staff add up to this total. We are grateful to the many generous donors who have chosen to direct their gifts to scholarships, a top campaign priority. Whether through a gift to the Berklee Fund, which offers unrestricted support to the college’s most pressing needs—particularly financial aid—or through establishing individual term or endowed scholarship funds, these gifts make it possible for students to come to Berklee and earn their degrees. It is a privilege to highlight just a few stories here, in this, the first article of a series that will focus on those who offer scholarship support through their gifts to *Soundbreaking*.

### Elizabeth Boland

When Kyana Fanene learned that she would receive the Elizabeth Boland Scholarship, Berklee was within reach. “Receiving this scholarship has allowed me to concentrate on what is important to my family and me: education and giving back to our community,” Fanene told Elizabeth Boland. “I hope that one day I will be able to help other students pursue their ambition just as you have helped me.”

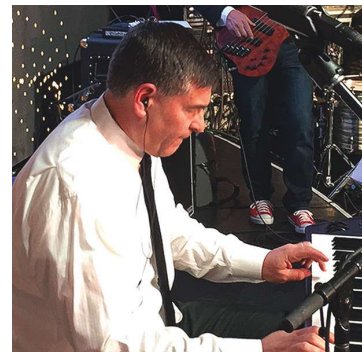
Boland responds, “Music, in so many forms and from so many people, has influenced and colored many aspects of my life. What a thrill to be able to pay it forward, helping to bring some dreams within reach, to bring some creativity to fruition, to simply make available the opportunity to explore and flourish. This scholarship program gives me a unique connection to these inspired students, and lets me directly experience how my love of music gets amplified tenfold!”

### Michael Brown

In his spare time, Michael A. Brown, president and CEO of Symantec, a global corporation and leader in cybersecurity, plays keyboards and manages the Wildcats, a classic rock dance band formed in 2000. As part of the Berklee community for the past decade, first as a member of the Presidential Advisory Council and now as trustee, Brown shares his worldwide experience and passion for music with the college. As he thought about motivations for establishing both endowed and term scholarship funds, Brown explained, “Music means a lot to my wife and me. We are delighted to direct our *Soundbreaking* gift to scholarship support to help assure that the most talented students will attend Berklee and, from there, help shape the future of music.”



Soundbreaking donor Elizabeth Boland speaks with scholarship recipient Kyana Fanene.



Michael Brown

### Paul and Katie Buttenwieser

For Paul and Katie Buttenwieser, community, education, culture, and the arts have been priorities. With keen insight from professional and personal experience, Paul, a psychiatrist, novelist and pianist; and Katie, a social worker at Boston Children’s Hospital in Boston, deeply value the impact of the arts on society. Over the years, they and their family started the Family-to-Family Project, a nonprofit that helps Boston’s homeless, and gave generously of time, wisdom, and treasure to many of Boston’s extraordinary institutions, including the Institute for Contemporary Art, Harvard College and Medical School and the School of Education; and the American Repertory Theater.

In so many ways, we at Berklee appreciate having the Buttenwiesers as members of our community. Paul commented, “It means a great deal to Katie and me to recognize Berklee’s progress under the visionary leadership of president Roger Brown, and to support Berklee’s talented music students, now and in the future, by establishing the Paul and Catherine Buttenwieser Endowed Scholarship Fund.” Beginning in the fall of 2017, the Buttenwieser scholarship will be available to students pursuing the newly established Harvard-Berklee joint degree in music.

### John and Stephanie Connaughton

Berklee trustee John Connaughton, co-managing partner at Bain Capital, has served on several of the firm’s leadership committees and chaired its global private equity board. With a wideranging perspective and a longstanding love for music, Connaughton has observed that Berklee is a unique asset



Paul and Katie Buttenwieser

that can make Boston great, with positive influence that extends beyond Boston to the world. John and his wife, Stephanie, directed part of their campaign gift to establish the Connaughton Endowed Scholarship Fund.

“Stephanie and I have long believed that performing arts, and particularly music, have great positive impact,” John Connaughton says. “Establishing this endowed scholarship fund to ensure that the most talented students will attend Berklee also helps to ensure the future of music. We are delighted to direct a portion of our *Soundbreaking* gift to scholarship support.”

### Len and Mary Anne Baker

Len Baker, a partner at Sutter Hill Ventures in Palo Alto, CA,—one of the earliest venture capital firms—recently joined the Berklee Board of Trustees. As the college contemplates opportunities at the intersection of two rapidly changing industries, music and higher education, Baker brings broad experience from work with entrepreneurs in a range of industries.

His work extends to countries on both sides of the Pacific in the private, public, and not-for-profit



John and Stephanie Connaughton



Len and Mary Anne Baker



Trustee and Soundbreaking donor Bill Kaiser (second from the left) with members of the Berklee student group Java Jive

sectors, and he serves as a member of the Yale Corporation and on a number of investment committees at Yale, the Packard Foundation, and the government of Singapore.

Baker sees Berklee students as entrepreneurs who challenge music today as they look ahead, and invests in them and their futures with the Baker Family Endowed Fellowship Fund. "So many talented students at Berklee deserve more financial support," Baker says. "We are pleased to be able to help a few of them."

### Bill Kaiser

On the surface, it may seem that Bill Kaiser crossed paths with Berklee only upon becoming a trustee. Originally from Ohio, Kaiser graduated from MIT and later, Harvard, before working in the computer industry and at Greylock Partners venture capital firm. But Berklee played an early role in Kaiser's Boston experience. With parents who both loved music, played instruments, and performed, music was ever-present in the Kaiser home where Bill too participated. One vivid high school memory involved traveling from Cleveland to Boston to perform with his school's jazz ensemble at the Berklee High School Jazz

Festival where the group placed second. Since then, Kaiser has attended many Berklee concerts. Recently, one of his daughters—a killer bass guitar player—attended Berklee's Five-Week Performance Summer Program.

Berklee benefits from Kaiser's experience, astute advice, and love for music as he chairs the Berklee Online committee to the Board of Trustees. As familiar as he is with successful entrepreneurship, Kaiser is impressed by Berklee students who embrace innovation. That motivated him to devote a substantial portion of his gift to *Soundbreaking* to establish an endowed scholarship fund. "Berklee and its amazing students are creating and innovating in every aspect of contemporary music," he says. "All scholarship gifts are generous. I particularly like endowed scholarship funds because they keep on giving, forever."

### Conclusion

We thank each of these generous benefactors who have chosen to invest in Berklee students and the future of music. We are pleased to highlight a few stories here, and look forward to sharing more in future issues of *Berklee today*.

## Entrepreneurship Is the Watchword

By Cara Deshaies and Lindsey Howe



Stefanie Henning

At the beginning of the spring semester, BerkleeICE students visited Google and other technology industry leaders during a trip to California's Silicon Valley. Panos Panay (seated front row, left) is the founder and director of BerkleeICE.

Established in 2014, the Berklee Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship (BerkleeICE) is designed to inspire, educate, and launch the next generation of creative musicians and entrepreneurs. BerkleeICE provides students with innovative courses, workshops, and weeklong intensive programs, research projects, sponsored internships at industry-leading companies, and access to physical space for the development of new ideas, which is called the BerkleeICE Incubator.

Sonicbids founder and managing director for BerkleeICE, Panos Panay '94, observes, "As creativity, business, and technology converge, entrepreneurs need to increasingly think like artists, and artists need to cultivate their instincts as entrepreneurs."

Lectures and numerous events held throughout the year by BerkleeICE allow students the inspiration and resources they need to think like entrepreneurs. This past January, students traveled to Silicon Valley to visit industry titans such as Google, Facebook, Twitter, and Apple. On this inaugural trip, students were exposed to a range of career possibilities in the technology sector.

Berklee alumni were well represented at many of the companies, and one of the highlights was meeting Mike Cassidy '97, vice president and project lead for GoogleX Project Loon, a project that provides Internet access to remote areas. "I learned more about creative thinking at Berklee than I did at Harvard Business School," Cassidy says, referencing the time he spent studying jazz piano at Berklee and his graduate work at Harvard.

BerkleeICE is also a partner with Brown University's Leadership Institute in the Creative Entrepreneurship Summer Program. This pre-collegiate experience

merges curriculum from Brown and Berklee with hands-on leadership and innovation practices for students ages 15 to 17 from across the globe. It deploys music as the metaphoric language for entrepreneurial thinking, and features workshops and lectures from renowned music professionals, innovators, and entrepreneurs in the fields of technology, business, and art. Upon completion of the 10-day program, students receive a certificate from both Brown University and Berklee.

The institute is expanding another sponsored initiative: the BerkleeICE Ambassadors Intern Program. This opportunity pairs Berklee undergraduate and graduate students with sought-after employers in the creative and technology industries, including electric car manufacturer Faraday Future, video game publisher Harmonix, and BMW 7 series audio system designer Bowers & Wilkins.

Through the generosity of our donors, the college is able to offer support for these internships and other BerkleeICE initiatives. We thank Len and Mary Anne Baker, Mike Cassidy, John and Stephanie Connaughton, Mike and Laura Dreese, Jim and Audrey Foster, Stefan and Sonchu Gavell, Caren and Dan Harple, Michael and Cynthia Malone, and Tania Zouikun for their support of this forward-looking program.

"The mission of BerkleeICE is to broaden the value of a music degree, to give our students the tools, skills, mindset, and networks needed to succeed in their careers, irrespective of path," Panay says.

For more information or to support the BerkleeICE program, contact Beverly Tryon at (617) 747-2660 or via email at [btryon@berklee.edu](mailto:btryon@berklee.edu).

# Timeless American Tales

By Mark Small

Critics wax poetic about the timeless quality of the music Gillian Welch and David Rawlings have created during their 20-plus-year career. Their oeuvre—seven albums and a few EPs—showcases their seamless blend of American folk and traditional musical forms with elements from contemporary music and culture. Those struggling to pigeonhole their style toss around descriptors such as bluegrass, alt-country, neo-traditional folk, Americana. Imperfect monikers aside, what's crystal clear is that the musical team of Welch and Rawlings has developed a compelling and distinctly American musical persona.

Their voices harmonize effortlessly on their tales of orphan girls, a first lover, the evils of the bottle and morphine, or yearning recollections of childhood in the Dixie of a bygone era. Their melodies are sung to pithy, deftly crafted lyrics that somehow sound deceptively simple.

While acoustic guitars are ubiquitous in traditionally based music, the sonority of their acoustic guitars (plus banjo and harmonica occasionally) stands out from others in the field. Rawlings weaves chromatic guitar lines and ringing campanella scale passages together with jabbing, closely voiced diads over generally diatonic chord progressions. Seeking to approach the sonic realm of the dobro or mandolin, Rawlings plays a 1939 Epiphone arch-top acoustic guitar—an atypical choice for folk-oriented music. All of these elements combine to bring the music of Welch and Rawlings down from the Appalachian mountains of yesteryear to the current era.

Welch, who majored in songwriting (a protégé of Pat Pattison), and Rawlings, who majored in guitar performance, met while auditioning for the only country music ensemble that Berklee offered in the early 1990s. After they both graduated in 1992, they headed for Nashville where some of their favorite music had been made—albeit decades earlier. Traditional music archetypes the Stanley Brothers, the Carter Family, the Blue-Sky Boys, and Monroe Brothers, as well as contemporary icons Bob Dylan, Neil Young, James Taylor, Paul Simon, and others had made deep impressions on Welch and Rawlings.

Once in Nashville, Welch began performing under her own name with Rawlings backing her on guitar and harmony vocals. While they

always appeared as a duo, they opted to maintain the name “Gillian Welch” for their act. By the middle of the 1990s, they were in the studio with lauded producer T Bone Burnett who produced their first two albums, *Revival* and *Hell among the Yearlings*. In 2000, Burnett invited them to collaborate with him on the soundtrack to the movie *O Brother Where Art Thou?* Welch served as the associate producer, cowrote a song with Burnett, and sang in duet and trio settings with Alison Krauss and Emmylou Harris. A huge success, the album has sold 8 million copies to date and netted four Grammys—including one in the Album of the Year category for which Welch received a statue.

Three Gillian Welch albums followed with Rawlings as producer and sometimes engineering. In 2001, they founded their own label, Acony Records, affording them complete artistic and administrative control over their music.

Of the five Gillian Welch albums, three have received a cumulative four Grammy nominations, including one for Rawlings when 2011's *The Harrow & the Harvest* album was nominated in the Best Engineered Album category. They have also released two albums as the David Rawlings Machine: *A Friend of Friend* (2009) and *Nashville Obsolete* (2015). Rawlings is the primary singer for the group, which includes Welch plus additional musicians. Welch and Rawlings tour frequently in America and abroad as a duo and with the band.

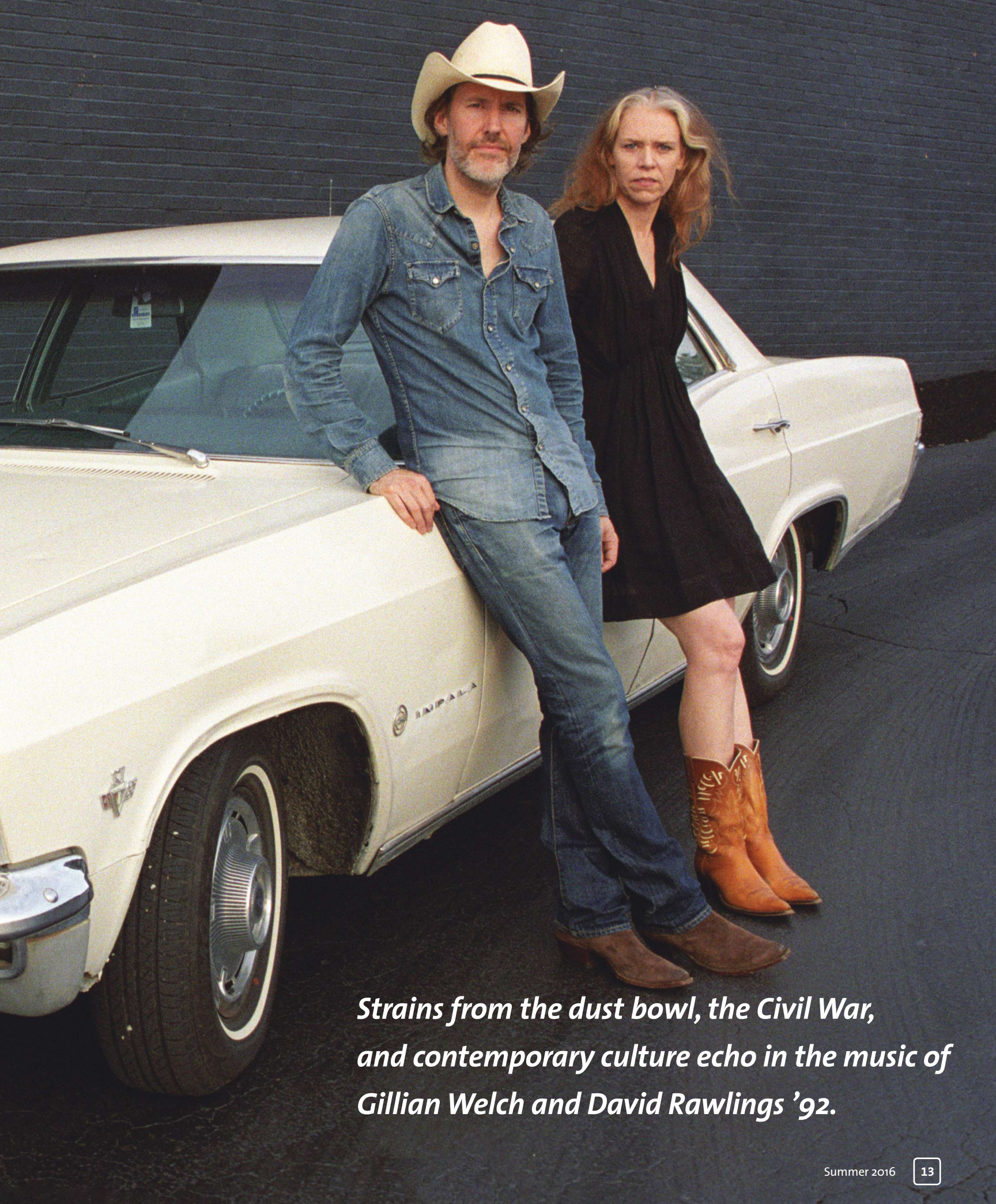
Together and separately, Welch and Rawlings have worked onstage or in the studio with a range of stars from the musical firmament: Solomon Burke, Paul Simon, the Decemberists, Ralph Stanley, Levon Helm, Willie Nelson, Ryan Adams, and Steve Earle, to name a few.

While Welch and Rawlings are known for authoring dark, heartbreak songs, they revealed sunny personalities in phone interviews for this story. And why not? The career they have built on their own artistic terms has earned them the admiration of fans, accolades from the music press, and industry awards.

Welch and Rawlings are engaged in a lifelong journey traversing America's highways and byways, cities and backwaters, introducing the past to the present with words and music.



Photos by Henry Diltz



*Strains from the dust bowl, the Civil War,  
and contemporary culture echo in the music of  
Gillian Welch and David Rawlings '92.*





*“We liked our vocal blend from the beginning. Two people singing together either have something or they don’t.”*

*—Gillian Welch*

***Gillian, when did you write your first song?***

**G.W.:** When I was five or six, I wrote poetry—usually about nature and birds. I started making up songs and keeping a songwriting notebook when I was around 10. By the end of high school, I had written a number of songs, but I didn’t play them for anybody. When I got to college at [the University of California] Santa Cruz, I was still shy about playing them in front of people, but started to perform publicly a little bit. That’s when I changed from the visual arts to music. Before, visual arts were what I did and music was just to entertain myself. After getting a bachelor of arts in photography, I flipped things.

When I was 22, I took a year off and traveled around outside the country. My parents were getting worried that I wasn’t going to come back. Partly as a lure to get me home, they told me that if I was interested in music, I should go to school and study it. They offered to pay for it, so I came back and attended a summer program at Berklee. I was totally self-taught before that, and the summer program got me up to speed so I could continue. The things that I learned at Berklee that I use on a daily basis are the ear training and the vocabulary that enables me to communicate with other musicians. The songwriting classes were also important for me. I had never really analyzed [songwriting] much; my ear just told me what I liked. It was wonderful to have a toolbox and know the names of the tools.

***David, when did you start playing the guitar?***

**D.R.:** I started when I was about 16. Things came to me pretty quickly. I had been playing about two years by the time I came to Berklee. Right after high school, though, I went to the University of Richmond for a short time on a scholarship. It hadn’t dawned on me then that I wanted to choose music for my living, but I took all of their music classes and burned through their entire music curriculum in two semesters. I took harmony and counterpoint there so that when I came to Berklee I was able to place into some higher harmony and ear training classes. But in my playing, I felt I had a lot to learn to catch up to the other guitarists.

When I was young, discovering that music could be your life was like a revelation to me. At Berklee, I was a performance major because by then I knew I wanted to play guitar on stage for a living. I studied with Lauren Passarelli in the beginning and Jim Kelly toward the end of my time there. I also took classes with Tom Szymczak, Charlie Chapman, and Bob Harrigan. I was amazed that you could go and sit in a room and work on some aspect of guitar playing and they would consider it college. There were amazing teachers and curriculum. At the time, I don’t think there was another place that had that approach.

I got to play at a couple of the commencement concerts. I was out of my league with some of the other musicians, but I’d had a lot of performance time onstage. There was a lot of stuff you learned in live performance that you didn’t learn any other way.

***During your time at Berklee, there wasn’t a large curriculum for American roots music.***

**G.W.:** Back then there were only three things: Mike Ihde’s country guitar styles class, Bob Stanton’s fingerpicking

class, and—most important in my world—Bob Stanton’s country ensemble. Dave and I had both auditioned for that during my first year at school, but neither of us got in. The next year, we tried again and got in. That was the audition where I met Dave. We spent two semesters in that ensemble. It was pretty fortuitous. It is pretty hard for me to imagine a world where that didn’t happen.

***What initially attracted you to traditional American music?***

**G.W.:** When I heard the Stanley Brothers and other old time music, I was really drawn in by how tough it sounded. I had grown up around punk music, but I didn’t play it because I have an aversion to loud sounds. I like to listen to it, but I don’t turn it up loud. When I heard the Stanley Brothers, I was struck by how tough and gnarly the music was on acoustic instruments. That was the brand of folk that moved me. I didn’t like the pretty and warbly folk music, I liked the mountain stuff.

I had attended a hippy grammar school where we were taught folk songs and sang them together every Friday. When I discovered recorded folk music and bluegrass, the artists were singing all these songs I’d known since I was five.

**D.R.:** I wasn’t exposed to old-time music as a young person. When I think of what was on the radio when I was a kid, I liked story songs and how country music found its way into pop in the seventies. I remember hearing the Doobie Brothers song “Blackwater” and thinking it was so rootsy. But that’s because of what was playing on the radio on either side of it. Now, it sounds like the slickest thing I’ve ever heard. It is hard to imagine that now when through the Internet, it’s so much easier to trace your way to what you like. Back then, the journey was a slow one. You kept your ears open and when you heard something you liked, you tried to find it and hoped it might lead to something else.

***How did your chromatic approach to playing the guitar evolve?***

**D.R.:** There are certain tones that appealed to me long before I played an instrument. Later, I became aware that there were certain tensions that I liked, so I started learning where they were on the instrument. I found if I wanted to play the ninth on an E minor chord, I didn’t like the way it made everything feel unless I was playing it against the flat-third above it or the root below it, something to pull it towards the key. If you create a minor second, it’s going to be dissonant to some people’s ears. But that dissonance never bothered me. Why I like it, I don’t know. It wasn’t that I heard a certain kind of music and wanted to play like that. I heard little things like that in a lot of different music I’d listened to over the years.

As we started playing music that’s based in a tradition, I began to hear that there is actually a lot more chromaticism and tension than people may think is in that music. You kind of have to know where to listen for it. In the music of Frank Proffitt and Dock Boggs, or the acoustic blues that I was interested in, there is a ton of tension and rubs with things that are going on between what they are playing on the banjo and the singing. The Stanley Brothers have a track where

they are singing a big E minor triad up high and Carter Stanley is wailing on an E major chord below on his guitar, and it just goes by. That's the stuff that hit my ear. When I was at school I learned about the tensions and used that knowledge as a guide as I tried things.

**Did you come to Nashville determined to do only the music you wanted rather than try to fit the mold of what was trending in town at the time?**

**G.W.:** Kind of, but only because I was never a person who had a very broad skill set. I am a shining example of specificity: I do this one thing. Lots of other people came to town and got jobs before I did because they were more versatile and commercial. But it has been interesting. Over the years I've come to appreciate that it's good to be kind of peculiar. You stand apart from the crowd. I came to Nashville because I felt creative ties to this place. Dave and I joke now that the music that we felt tied to was long gone by the time we got here. We liked music that was 30, 40, or 50 years old, but there were still vestiges of it. Some of the people who were on those records were still here. It was really meaningful that we could go hear Bill Monroe, Ralph Stanley, Don Helms, or Scotty Moore playing in town. It was so rich that those people were around. Now, after devoting a couple of decades of our lives to this music, we are starting to feel like a link in the chain.

**Did you scuffle a bit before hitting your stride in Nashville or did you do writing sessions with others once you got there?**

**G.W.:** It was mostly Dave and me working together and developing that creative relationship. There was no grand plan. I did write with others when I got here, but it never felt very natural. What pushed me toward working with Dave was that it was a very natural working relationship. At first, I would finish every song. I was the writer, he was the picker. He agreed to go play with me at these writer's nights.

We would work hard on the arrangements. Duo music is great if you arrange it intricately. We learned that from listening to the brother teams. Their stuff was arranged. If there are only two people, you have to use every textural shift at your disposal and every vocal acrobatic that you can do to broaden the sound. That's when we started to develop a sound. A lot of the old music we loved had a lead and a tenor [singer]. Because I was the higher singer, we had lead and baritone. It sounded different, not like the other duet teams.

**In listening to your music, it's sometimes hard to figure out which voice is on top.**

**G.W.:** There are moments when Dave will shift above me or do unison with me, as we did on some verses in songs on *The Harrow & the Harvest*. That's our old-time version of double-tracking. Dave came up with that, it's a unique texture, arresting.

Two people singing together either have something or they don't. The first time we sang the Stanley Brothers song "Long Black Veil" in Dave's kitchen, we found that our ranges matched up. Dave's range is only a whole step below mine. He's got a big range and is a high singer. So our ranges are close together.

**Are you the primary lyric writer?**

**G.W.:** It's probably still true that I write the bulk of the lyrics, but we really are a songwriting team. Everything is better because we work together. So it's hard to quantify what "primary" means because there is a big difference between an unfinished, unsatisfying song and a satisfying finished one. Only one thing may need to be changed to make it all work, and Dave may make that change.

The same is true for the music. Dave will have more of a handle on melody and harmony and do more of the arranging. But I may make the last change that solves a problem. It goes both ways. I am happy to say that we really enjoy working together as a songwriting team.

**Do you employ the same writing process for the David Rawlings Machine albums where he sings the leads?**

**G.W.:** The writing and the problem solving involve the same process. Machine gives us another outlet creatively and stylistically to do stuff that suits him. Even though people say when they hear us they can't tell who is singing what part, as a lead singer, he is quite different from me.

**Do you find that the David Rawlings Machine and your duo present different musical challenges in concert?**

**D.R.:** With the Machine, we are still looking around for what we do in the arrangement that is the most exciting to us. It's nice to have low notes, fiddles and other instruments, and ganged vocals. Sometimes when we are onstage and focused and it comes down to a whisper, that dynamic range is the most exciting thing. You can achieve really interesting things with a duo, but you have to work really hard to do it. There is a challenge to make it fill up the space and make it what we want. The thing we try to do that is the modern part of our music is to create panoramas and space with our instruments. Some of the earlier traditional duet records are [arranged] with a rhythm guitar with a lead guitar on top of it. I don't hear them in a panoramic way. If we aren't doing something that seems cinematic on some level as soon as our guitars start, we are not that interested in it. The challenge of coming up with new stuff is trying to get that space to happen.

**At times, your song lyrics seem to hark back to an earlier era. Was it a combination of the older musical styles as well the time period that drew you in?**

**G.W.:** To me, the time period is melded with a kind of universal timeless language that I love. It's not so much about being in another era but being in a time where things were more fundamental. An attraction of folk music is its ability to be changing and unchanging at the same time. I feel that Dave and I started to really understand that with our third record, *Time (the Revelator)*. We started to use timeless quality to root things in the tradition and express what was going on with us. Yet, it had a peculiar folk language.



*"The thing we try to do that is the modern part of our music is to create panoramas and space with our instruments."*  
—David Rawlings

**Your songs feature characters like Annabelle and Caleb Meyer who seem like they are from a previous era. But then you'll add references to songs by Taj Mahal or Steve Miller, and mention a surfer party or everything being for free.**

**G.W.:** It's like when a player brings out a phrase from a dead musician in a solo, some listeners will get it and it will enrich that moment. But others aren't going to get it, and that doesn't really matter. But it proves to me that the more you know, the deeper you can go.

**It must be fun when your younger fans discover what some of these references mean.**

**G.W.:** They are like little landmines that go off later down the road. That happened with me too when I was listening to Dylan at 19 or 20. I thought he made up all those words and melodies. Then years went by and I saw where some of these things came from. A line like, "The railroad men just drink up your blood like wine" comes from the folk tradition, songs that have been crafted over 150 years. We will never know who was the first person to say that, but it's a damn-good line!

**You've stated that you reexamined your songcraft in between *Soul Journey* [2003] and *The Harrow & the Harvest* [2011]. I hear some different chord choices and lyric themes on *Harrow*. Was that a time of exploration when you were seeking out new things?**

**G.W.** Yes, it was a time of deep exploration. Things are cyclical, and I feel like we had made a big circle and come back around. *Soul Journey* featured every [configuration] but the duo. There were some solo songs, and we felt that we needed drums on some of the other songs on that record. There were similarities between making *The Harrow & the Harvest* and our first record, *Revival* [from 1996]. After all that time and struggle, we knew that *The Harrow & the Harvest* was going to be strictly a duet record with nothing else on it but Dave and I sitting and playing together live. We felt like we'd been away from the duet format for so long. We wanted to return to it to see how we felt about the music in its most stripped down form. We had pent up angst and gusto for the duet stuff when we got to *Harrow*.

Dave had also gotten to a new place with recording techniques for that album. I was so proud for him when the album got a Grammy nomination as the best engineered album. That's not a folk category, it's all in. I'm hands-off with the engineering process.

**Did working on *O Brother Where Art Thou?* open some doors for you two?**

**D.R.:** The additional awareness in the mainstream for what people call traditional music lifted boats for everybody. *O Brother* was right on schedule. It seems that every 20 years, the country is ready to look at its traditional music and some compilation like that will come along. Before that, it was *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* by the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

So it was good for us in that way. I certainly think that having a few million people buy a record that had Gillian's name on it was a good thing. When T Bone Burnett was approached to work on that project, he had just finished producing two records for us and I had brought in Ralph Stanley records for him to hear. When the Coens asked him to do *O Brother*, he immediately approached Gil to be the associate producer of the record. He then bought a ton of CDs and started poring through them. We were a good resource. T Bone knew of the Stanley Brothers, but he didn't know that Ralph was still alive and working until he was producing our records. In the overall cultural zeitgeist, that project did shine a light on the music and on us as performers.

There was a certain connection to the music that we loved that ended up being part of that compilation. The fact that it all went out into the world and that it had touched our music might have made some people hear our music a little differently or understand it a little more. It is hard to ever know, but those years would have been very different for us without that [soundtrack]. We ended up working on that project for a year or a year and a half and doing some of the scoring for the film with T Bone in the studio. We didn't end up doing any of the [follow-up] tours with the other musicians on the soundtrack because we were in the middle of writing the songs for our third record.


**Is there a new Gillian Welch album in the works?**

**G.W.:** It's in the writing stage. We have a little more domestic touring to do for the *Nashville Obsolete* album first. So I am here writing. I've got my notebook on the table.

**Do you two have any long-range goals?**

**G.W.:** There are always many projects, but at the moment, writing is the top job for me. We've also been working to get our entire catalog on vinyl. That's a passion of ours. It's on the horizon and is very exciting.

**You tour America and in Europe, Australia, and elsewhere. Have you been surprised to find people outside this country flocking to hear your brand of traditional American music?**

**D.R.:** I'm pleased that the music is appreciated there. There is a quality in traditional music that has made it possible to cross cultural boundaries and appeal to people in other places. Our popularity seems to be in places where English is widely understood, places where there are cultural similarities. There is a certain melancholy in what we do and in a lot of American folk music that fits well in Scandinavia where they have an appreciation for the blues and melancholy. It also connects in the British Isles where the root of so much of this stuff comes from. Australia has a connection to England, Ireland, and Scotland. I would be more surprised if we were going off to play football stadiums in Brazil. 



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# Pop Hit Makers

Young alumni songsmiths in Los Angeles are helping Gwen Stefani, John Legend, One Direction, Meghan Trainor, and others tell their stories.

By Mark Small



Luke Fontana

Justin Tranter '01

*For many, pop songs that are deeply embedded in our consciousness become part of the soundtrack of our lives. An unforgettable melody or a lyric that expresses exactly what we've felt has the power to flood our minds with impressions of a joyful moment long past, or to help us get through a rough patch in our lives. People all across the world feel the power of songs that make us want to dance, sing, or lean on them during hard times.*

*In our era, the pervasiveness of popular songs on terrestrial radio, TV, movies, social media, streaming services, and elsewhere, presents the phenomenon that more people are simultaneously having their own personal experiences with any given song. This is especially true for hit songs in today's single-dominated marketplace.*

*Past issues of Berklee today have profiled numerous successful alumni tunesmiths who are part of the pop songwriting machine that produces the music top artists share with the world. What follows are the stories of a handful of young alumni songwriters in Los Angeles who are enjoying their day in the sun. Cowriting with producers, fellow songwriters, and major artists, they labor to create music that will hit listeners as truthful and authentic, and catchy enough to scale the charts.*

## Reinvention

After bowing out of the spotlight as a lead singer for a behind-the-scenes role as a songwriter, Justin Tranter '01 has written many songs that have become fixtures on the *Billboard* Hot 100 charts. Over the past 18 months, Tranter cowrote a number of singles for—and often with—some of pop music's biggest names. His recent credits include “Sorry” (Justin Bieber), “Good for You” (Selena Gomez), “Centuries” (Fall Out Boy), “Nostalgic” (Kelly Clarkson), “Like Mariah” (Fifth Harmony), “Love Myself” (Hailee Steinfeld), and “Used to Love You” (Gwen Stefani), among others.

Tranter entered the business as the front man for the glam-punk band Semi Precious Weapons, formed in 2006 with fellow Berklee alumni Steve Pyne '02, Dan Crean '00, and Cole Whittle. The band's hard-edged music and Tranter's outrageous stage theatrics drew a following in New York clubs, and ultimately the band toured the world opening for Lady Gaga and Kesha and headlined its own gigs. The group recorded with three different labels, including Interscope Records, before landing at

Epic Records. “We signed with Epic and worked on an album with Tricky Stewart and L.A. Reid, but the music never came out,” Tranter tells me across the kitchen table in his Los Angeles home. “The band was signed to Warner/Chappell for publishing, and when [A&R rep] Katie Vinten came in, she listened to our [unreleased] album, which leaned more toward pop than our others. She told me that if I was moving more toward pop, she could put me in sessions with other writers. She made this entire new life for me; I owe her everything.”

In January 2013, Tranter began doing writing sessions while working with his band. Kelly Clarkson was the first big artist to cut a song he'd cowritten, “Nostalgic.” “She cut it almost two years before it came out,” he says. “That was an early sign that writing was what I was supposed to be doing.” Successful sessions with other writers followed. By 2014, enough songs were getting cut that he decided to leave the band and focus solely on writing. “None of us were doing well financially,” Tranter recalls. “Quitting the band was a sky-opening moment for me. The next day Fall Out Boy announced that ‘Centuries’ was going to be their single. It went to number two on iTunes immediately. It was a cool moment.”

A turning point for Tranter came in October of 2014 when he first wrote with Julia Michaels. She is 13 years his junior and has been writing professionally since she was 16. “Right away we knew that there was a connection,” Tranter says. “The first song we wrote was cut by Rita Ora and Calvin Harris in London. Our third song was cut by Christina Aguilera. That's when we knew it was working. The ratio of cuts we were getting and the fun we had together was pretty impressive.”

The pair had a banner year in 2015 with a string of charting singles for a range of artists including the aforementioned Bieber, Gomez, Steinfeld, and Stefani. They wrote extensively with Gomez and Stefani with five tracks appearing on Gomez's *Revival* album. Tranter and Michaels wrote 10 of the 12 tracks with Stefani for her *This Is What the Truth Feels Like* album, (Tranter and Jonathan Rotem '96 were cowriters on the remaining two tracks). Tranter has written about 25 songs to date with Stefani. Recently, Michaels and Tranter have been writing with John Legend and Britney Spears, among others.

When asked about his role in a songwriting session, Tranter says he does whatever is needed. “I do everything,” he says, “but if I rank things, I would put lyrics first and melody second. I play

piano, so I write chord changes sometimes. I love the big picture and doing what an old-school producer would do: not making the beat, but digging into it and picking things apart. Every session is different. When working with Gwen Stefani, every syllable has to be what she is feeling right now. Sometimes we all get in a room and start talking and someone says something cool, and you know it's a song title. For "Nostalgic," all I had was a title, and we created a story."

Tranter loves the path he's on as a hitmaker. "I'm using my Berklee degree [in songwriting] to the fullest," he says. "Helping people figure out their vision and writing with Julia are so special that I'm going to do those things as long as I can. But I enjoy reinventing myself. I never meant to, things just happened. I was a solo songwriter, then I started a band, and now I'm a pop songwriter. I'd be excited about signing artists to a production deal and imprint. Slowly but surely, I want to start doing that. But whatever else appears that I'm passionate about, I'll chase it down. I can't wait for the next reinvention to present itself."

### From the Heart

Songwriter and vocalist Courtney Harrell '01 came to Berklee as a teenager through the City Music program, and she was awarded a full scholarship to pursue a vocal performance major. "Since I was seven, Berklee was on my radar," Harrell relates. "I knew Quincy Jones had gone there and I felt a pull to go there too."

Harrell grew up in Boston in a musical family. Her parents are pastors and musicians. "They're both amazing singers," Harrell tells me over lunch at a sushi restaurant in California's San Fernando Valley not far from her current home. "My dad has a voice kind of like Luther Vandross, and my mother is more like Patti LaBelle. My dad also writes. I guess I got that from him." A broad musical palette and a gift for crafting solid lyrics and melodies has landed Harrell opportunities to work with top producers, songwriters, and artists in a range of musical styles.

"I love all genres," she says. "I do r&b, urban music, contemporary gospel, and pop. I also took a stab at country music working with some great writers and producers in Nashville. Basically, I love to write whatever is truthful. As a black girl growing up in the '80s and '90s, my favorite music was soft rock. My dad exposed me to jazz, Broadway, and Motown songs, and my mother was all things gospel. I utilize all those parts of my background. If I have a goal, it's to maintain music on multiple charts. I have done that in pop, r&b, urban, jazz, and gospel."

Harrell has worked on songs cut by Mary J. Blige, Ariana Grande, Chris Brown, Anastacia, Jennifer Hudson, Brandy, Nikki Yanofsky, and many others. Her collaborators have included John Legend, Makeba Riddick '99, Harmony Samuels, Rodney Jerkins, and the Stereotypes, to name a few.

Harrell's initial break came on the heels of what seemed a failed trip to New York where she hoped to get her music heard. When she arrived, none of the people she wanted to meet with were there. "I was just walking around New York in the rain in three-inch stilettos," Harrell recalls. A random encounter at a restaurant with a man who worked at ASCAP led to an invitation to return and meet with ASCAP's director of membership. "I went down there again a few days later and played him my demo," she says. "Within 10 days I was working with people from all over the country."

Writing sessions interspersed with tours as a background singer behind Tweet, JoJo, and John Legend, and opportunities to produce vocals in recording sessions followed. Career highlights have come with Harrell's work with British songwriter and producer Harmony Samuels. The first song they wrote together, "Think Like a Man," came together very quickly—in just 20 minutes. It ended up in the soundtrack for the movie of the same name sung by Jennifer Hudson and Ne-Yo, featuring Rick Ross. "Two weeks later, we were working with artists like Chris Brown, Mary J. Blige, Kelly Rowland, and Fantasia," Harrell says. "These were people I admired and had wanted to work with. Almost everything I've written with Harmony has found a home."

Other producers and songwriters with whom Harrell clicks

include Rodney Jerkins, Dean Marshall, Rami Yacoub, A-Rod Lambert, and Jay Hart. She's traveled to Sweden, Atlanta, Nashville, and New York to collaborate, but unlike many pro songwriters, she doesn't pack her schedule with daily sessions.

"I feel you need to live a bit in order to have something to write about," Harrell says. "I don't write everyday, just once or twice a week. I like to come in strong. When people ask for me, they want something very specific. They know that they will get strong melody and lyrics—something worth listening to."

Harrell particularly enjoys writing contemporary gospel music. Among other gospel titles, she cowrote "If We Had Your Eyes" with Samuels and Lambert for Michelle Williams. "It's a different side of songwriting when you are writing something sacred," she says. "It's the purest form of writing I've ever done."

Harrell is at her best when the songs truthfully reflect real life. Her songs come from "things I've lived in some fashion or seen happen to someone else," she says. "For me to go from topics of love, good times, bad times, and then God, that's a lot of living, tears shed, and scars to prove the life that has been lived. Everyone understands what's coming from your heart and what's not."

Writing success notwithstanding, the performing artist deep inside her remains. Harrell is currently planning her own album. "I'm a singer first and am working on a project that I hope to release soon," she says. "I wrote everything myself—it's a different side of me as a writer. The process of writing songs for myself was very different from writing for someone else—like night and day."

### The Right Direction

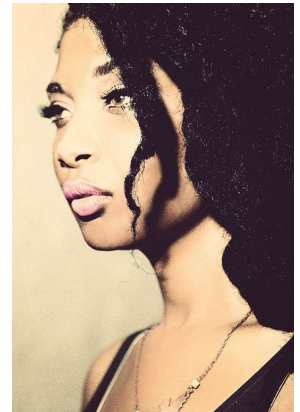
The songwriting and production team of Julian Bunetta '01 and John Ryan '10 has numerous credits together and separately, but the duo is best known for writing some 40 songs (often adding Jamie Scott to the mix), recorded by One Direction. Bunetta and Ryan cowrote hits such as "Best Song Ever," "Story of My Life," and "Drag Me Down," among others that appeared on three multiplatinum-selling albums by the wildly successful British boy band.

Bunetta attended Berklee only briefly a decade before Ryan arrived. The summer after his first year, things opened up for him professionally when he met Judy Stakee, a publishing executive at Warner/Chappell. "Judy heard what I was doing and believed in me," he says "At first, I was just producing demos for songwriters, but then it became a copublishing deal. From there I took it upon myself to learn the craft of songwriting." Bunetta entered his personal songwriter boot camp in Nashville. "My first cut was a song I wrote with Wayne Kirkpatrick called 'Live with Lonesome' for Little Big Town," Bunetta recalls. "In Nashville they really take the lyrics seriously, and I learned from Wayne and John Rich how to shape a lyric." Bunetta's first pop cut, "Crash World," a song cowritten with Desmond Child for Hilary Duff, followed.

A guitarist, Ryan majored in contemporary writing and production at Berklee. While visiting Los Angeles one summer, he met Bunetta at a party. "We were all playing Beach Boys and Beatles songs on the piano when I met Julian and his brother," Ryan remembers. "We hit it off, exchanged numbers, and stayed in touch. I had two years left at Berklee at that point. I began sending them productions and getting critiques. After graduating, I decided to move to L.A. and go into business with them."

Bunetta operates a publishing company with his father and brother, and they signed Ryan in 2010. During their first writing session, Bunetta and Ryan wrote a song that Ryan remembers well. "I hadn't been in the studio before with a real producer who recorded my voice properly," he says. "To this day, I feel that song, 'Pretty Little Girl,' is rocking! It's unpublished, but it's a memory that shows the start of our adventure."

After years in the trenches, Bunetta connected with a song he cowrote with singer Leona Lewis, the 2006 winner of Britain's *X Factor* show. Lewis was signed to Simon Cowell's Syco Music label. "Simon really believed in the song and invited me to his house to talk about the song and the production," Bunetta



Courtney Harrell '01



Left to right: Julian Bunetta and John Ryan

says. “When he brought the *X Factor* to the U.S., I knew a lot of the people on his team, and they recommended that I become the show’s music producer because I was stylistically diverse and could produce all kinds of music.

“The schedule was grueling,” Bunetta continues. “Over the course of 9 or 10 weeks, I did 50 full productions and mixes in various styles. The songs were all covers, but the challenge was to have a country artist prepare something for Motown week and have it work. Then you might have a 15-year-old r&b artist singing something for Billy Joel week. It required pulling apart some of the best songs ever written, shortening them [to fit TV time constraints], and putting them back together. That taught me how to aim for a target.”

After the show’s first season, Simon asked Bunetta to be the producer for his category the following season. As fate would have it, Tyler Brown, a member of Simon’s team, asked Bunetta to write a couple of songs for *X Factor* competitors One Direction. He suggested that Bunetta and Ryan work with British songwriter Jamie Scott on the project.

“We wrote some songs that got to Simon Cowell’s label, and they liked them,” Ryan says. “We went to England to record them and hit it off with the band. The rest is history.” “There was this magic chemistry between us that you can’t explain,” Bunetta says. “Everything we wrote worked for One Direction. Our first three songs were the first three singles for their *Midnight Memories* album.”

Ryan and Bunetta worked without pause on three One Direction albums beginning in 2013. “They were putting out an album a year,” Bunetta says. “So we had to be consistent and not take big breaks to stay in a rhythm together.” The band took a hiatus at the end of 2015, and Ryan and Bunetta have since been working together and apart on various projects. Ryan wrote the hook for the song “Fireball” by Pitbull and sang it on the recording. It showcases his voice and his flair for writing infectious melodies. After taking a well-deserved break at the beginning of 2016, Bunetta spent some time in London working with songwriters Ed Drewett and Wayne Hector.

Ryan and Bunetta are currently busy with various writing projects. Ryan is also penning songs for his own use. “If I go for being an artist,” he says, “I’ll wait until I have a good collection of songs before I make that move.” Bunetta’s future plans include writing as well as building his publishing company. “I want to sign talented people and help them achieve their goals,” he says. “I also want to continue exploring sounds and writing great songs that make people dance and sing along.”

### Singing Their Own Stories

Among the songwriters featured in this story, Pete Nappi ’13 and Ethan Thompson ’14 are the most recent arrivals to Los Angeles. After about two years here, they’ve made inroads. Nappi’s forte is making beats and producing, in addition to playing multiple instruments. His primary collaborator, Thompson, possesses the quintessential male pop music voice—sometimes high and soaring, sometimes breathy—and he also plays a few instruments. As a team, they bring a lot to the table collectively and have crafted and produced songs that have grabbed the attention of artists and label A&R reps.

“State of My Head,” cowritten by Nappi and Thompson with members of the rock band Shinedown (and produced for Shinedown by Nappi), topped *Billboard* magazine’s Mainstream Rock chart earlier this year. In addition to writing with Thompson, Nappi has written with artists Kesha, Thirty Seconds to Mars, Meghan Trainor, Lindsey Stirling, and Will Sparks, among others.

Thompson, who was a contestant on *American Idol* Season 13 during his last year at Berklee, has cowritten and sung songs

for DJs Ferry Corsten and Fareoh in addition to songs he’s written with Nappi and various artists.

A common denominator in the educational and professional lives of both has been Kara DioGuardi. At Berklee, Nappi was a film scoring major and Thompson a songwriting major. Each was handpicked for DioGuardi’s songwriting class. “Kara’s class was the most influential one I took at Berklee,” Nappi says. “I had been focusing on film scoring and producing when I met her. She gave me direction and helped me realize what I needed to do.” Nappi is now among the writers in the stable of DioGuardi’s production company, Arthouse Entertainment.

Thompson first encountered DioGuardi before he came to Berklee when he won a jingle contest for Folgers Coffee, and DioGuardi was a judge. Interestingly, other successful alumni, including Charlie Puth ’13; Jessica Newham ’13 (better known as Betty Who), Laney Jones ’14, and Sarah Walk ’13 were also among DioGuardi’s students. “When the class started, Kara told us we’d need to write one song a week,” Thompson recalls. “Back then we thought that was the hardest thing ever! Now out here, you have to write one or even two songs each day.”


Nappi had been working in Los Angeles before Thompson arrived. New to town, Thompson called DioGuardi, who recommended that he connect with Nappi. In North Hollywood, at Nappi’s home studio, they played me a handful of the songs they’ve been working on. The tunes run the gamut from straight-up pop to rock to acoustic to EDM. The duo takes various approaches in writing sessions. “The other day, I started with a track,” Nappi says. “I put together some chords and Ethan had vocal ideas and we built it from there.” “Some days I want to work with a track and other days I want to hear a live instrument,” Thompson notes. “Often, I like to start by playing an instrument, something that’s real. The best songs for me are the ones that are real and have some raw emotion. I get those emotions playing guitar or piano. Other times Pete makes a track that I immediately want to sing to.”

The two have written more than 50 songs together, and strive to put their best out. They are aware that there are many factors that affect how a new song is received. “We go to different A&R people, and one will flip out over the song another doesn’t react to it,” Thompson says. “There is a lot of personal opinion involved.” “You can’t get your hopes up too high,” adds Nappi. “Even if an artist likes your song and says he will use it, a lot of times it doesn’t happen.”

With singles being the coin of the realm today, labels and artists are looking for hits more than ever. “These days, if you don’t write a hit single, you’re just not going to make that much money,” says Thompson. “One sad aspect about songwriting is that some good ones that don’t get used end up just sitting in iTunes on your laptop,” says Nappi.

This team has found a remedy for that problem. “My publisher at Universal set up a meeting with [British singer-songwriter and DJ] Sam Ronson and me,” Nappi says. “I invited Ethan to come to the session.” The three have formed a band and will make a record soon.”

Hollywood Records, the Disney imprint, signed their group, Ocean Park Standoff, to a recording and publishing deal, and holds out the promise for sync deals for the songs on Nappi’s laptop that others have passed on. While Nappi and Thompson continue to write singles for artists, the band has expanded their vision for their careers, adding plans for touring to the mix.

“The end goal [now] is to be making our own music and performing it,” Nappi says. “I want to be a good songwriter, be good in the band, and produce for other people,” Thompson says. “I started songwriting so that I could sing my own stories.” 



Ethan Thompson ’14 (left) and Pete Nappi ’13

# The BPC Marks 40 Years

By Mark Small

**Since 1976, the college's main stage has been a training ground for students and a venue revered by international artists.**

"The Performance Center is Berklee's stadium," says vice president for special programs Rob Rose. "It's played a huge role in the history of the college." Since the opening as the Berklee Performance Center (BPC) in 1976, two generations of future-great singers and instrumentalists have tested their mettle on its stage as students. Paula Cole, David Rawlings, and Susan Tedeschi, are among the many who have graced the BPC stage before launching their careers. Equally important, many Berklee students have gained valuable experience working as stagehands, sound and lighting techs, ushers, box office personnel, and more before embarking on careers in concert production. So while the BPC may not look like Doak Campbell Stadium at Florida State University where countless football players have burnished their skills before joining the NFL, Rose's analogy is apropos.

In addition to serving as an important educational resource, the BPC is also one of Boston's premier concert stages for internationally celebrated artists. At the venue's grand opening ceremonies on April 5, 1976, Massachusetts governor Michael Dukakis addressed the audience and called the newly renovated 1,227-seat facility "an outstanding contribution to the cultural resources of the city and state."

True to Dukakis's words, the BPC has since hosted performances by Count Basie, the Temptations, Weather Report, Talking Heads, Whitney Houston, Céline Dion, and hundreds more during four decades. Acts such as the B52s, Paco de Lucía, and Makoto Ozone are among the artists that have recorded live albums there. Additionally, the BPC has hosted NPR's annual New Year's Eve worldwide live radio broadcast for the past 10 years. "This hall is known internationally," Rose says. "I've seen many tourists posing for pictures by the front entrance."

Sixty-one years prior to becoming the BPC, the building at 136 Massachusetts Avenue opened its doors as the Fenway Theatre. In the December 19, 1915, issue of the *Boston Sunday Globe* the theatre was lauded as Boston's "newest and most up-to-date photo playhouse." It was the first theater built in uptown Boston expressly for "photo plays" (movies), but some live entertainment was featured there too. A 20-piece orchestra, a pipe organ concert, and "high class and popular singers" were part of the December 20, 1915 opening night festivities preceding a showing of the silent film, *The Iron Strain—A Story of Alaska*. Ticket prices ranged from 10 cents to 25 cents. Silent film idol Dustin Farnum, star of many early Westerns, appears in the movie, not coincidentally, playing a Boston society gentleman.

The Fenway Theatre was a popular movie house for Bostonians through both world wars and up until the 1950s when television made a dent in theater attendance. It narrowly avoided conversion to a giant First National supermarket in 1959. During the 1960s, the theater housed a bowling alley in its basement. After the adjoining property, the Sherry Biltmore Hotel at 150 Massachusetts Avenue was damaged in a tragic fire on March 29, 1963, Bryant and Stratton Commercial School purchased both properties. Later, management for then-unknown Aerosmith arranged for the nascent rock band (including Brad Whitford '71 and Joey Kramer '70) to rehearse in the then-dilapidated theater as Bryant and Stratton contemplated demolishing the structure and constructing an eight-story building on the block.

Bryant and Stratton ultimately offered to sell the theatre and

the former hotel to Berklee in 1972. After extensive renovations, the theater reopened in April of 1976 as the Berklee Performance Center. On the bill that night was a performance of a new work by faculty composer Tony Teixeira for big band titled *Jazz 1776–1976*. The title commemorated the BPC and anticipated the bicentennial of congress's adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

In the early days, many national touring acts began playing in the hall and faculty concerts and educational events were booked around those dates. The college's annual commencement concerts were held there through 2003. Commencement honorees including Natalie Cole, Phil Collins, David Foster, Steven Tyler, Dianne Reeves, and others sat in with student performers on the BPC stage during those concerts through the years. Beginning in 1983, the hall became the home of the hugely popular Singers Showcase semi-annual concert series. By the 1990s, Rob Rose, serving as assistant to the Performance Division chair, began re-serving more of the venue's schedule for various educational activities including guest clinics, and increased number of annual concerts where students could perform and learn the technical side of concert production.

"I have been told scores of times for 34 years that the work-study stage crew position is the best job on campus," says Brad Berger, the BPC's director of production. "Some students have said it was the best part of their Berklee education. We teach them all aspects of live concert sound, lighting, and general stagecraft, things that are rarely taught in formal classes at the college." Berger's former crew members have entered the live entertainment production field, including Eric Marchwinski '10 (lighting programmer, Katy Perry, Usher, the Rolling Stones), Mike Marchetti '84 (New England production director for Live Nation), Warren Willis (DJ and stage technician Demi Lovato, Linkin Park), Josh Monds '12 and Bryson Camper '15 (production managers for Jazz at Lincoln Center Doha), to name a few.

Regarding the professional shows booked into the hall, says Cathy Horn, senior director of concert operations, "The pro shows contribute to the diversity and vibrancy of the event schedule. Whether brought in by a promoter or the college, pro shows bring name artists to Berklee's campus. That in turn brings the public here, increasing the visibility of the college and helping us build an audience for our college events.

"In the BPC, students get to perform in a professional venue and on the same stage as top touring artists. This setting also gives student employees working in the venue valuable experience working with and among artists, agents, and promoters.

"It's exciting and gratifying to see alumni return to the BPC as professional touring artists—and that happens quite often. Antonio Sanchez, Hiromi, and Grace Kelly have been booked as headliners at the BPC this season."

"The BPC has been central in the showcasing and the development of Berklee students, faculty, staff, alumni, and legendary music makers from around the globe," says Rob Rose. "Thousands of people have played and listened to music here for 40 years, and everyone leaves knowing they have been in a special place. The BPC will continue to serve as a great concert hall and classroom, providing unprecedented opportunities for Berklee students to showcase their artistic and creative talents." You wouldn't expect anything less from Berklee's stadium.





# A Century-Old Cultural Landmark in Boston



*In 1915 the Fenway Theatre occupied the space at 136 Massachusetts Avenue. During that era, Massachusetts Avenue was paved with brick.*



*In 1944, the Fenway Theatre was still a popular movie theater. The enlarged marquee advertises several feature films and reminds patrons to buy war bonds.*



*When Berklee purchased the theater from Bryant & Stratton Commercial School in 1972, the once-grand theater, with its gilded proscenium, vaulted ceiling, and box seats on the side walls, had fallen into disrepair.*



*After extensive renovations by Kubitz and Pepi Architects, the Berklee Performance Center opened in 1976. New features included carpeting, new seating, wood paneled walls, an expanded stage, acoustic ceiling, and modern lighting and sound systems.*



Front row, left to right: pianist Alex Ulanowsky, composer Tony Teixeira, saxophonists John LaPorta, Larry Monroe, Bob Hores, Andy McGhee, and Tom Anastas; second row: guitarist Brett Willmott, trombonists David Lindsey, Tony Lada, and Tom Plsek; back row: bassist John Neves, drummer Ted Pease, trumpeters Herb Pomeroy, Wes Hensel, Greg Hopkins, and Jeff Stout. The group performed Teixeira's suite Jazz 1776–1976 for the grand opening of the BPC in April 1976.



Grammy-nominated blues singer Susan Tedeschi returned to the BPC stage in 2003 for a reprise of her student performances in the Singers Showcase concert series.



Aerosmith vocalist Steven Tyler joined the students onstage to sing "Dream On" during the 2003 commencement concert.



The BPC stage door has been autographed by many artists who have performed at the venue, including Chaka Khan, the Temptations, Tony Williams, Brenda Lee, Roy Orbison, the Pointer Sisters, Joe Sample, Al Jarreau, Marian McPartland, Eddie Gomez, and many more. The door is currently on display in Berklee's Office of the President.



BPC staff members 2016 (from the left): Callie Sokoloski, Jeff Mason, Rob Rose, Ed Liberatore, Ryan Jones, Cathy Horn, Brad Berger, and Reggie Lofton

# Copyright Matters

## Some key issues that creators of musical content should understand

By David Purcell '91

Any discussion about the music industry of today (and of the future), inevitably leads to a certain theme: copyright law and its role in the digital age and new music industry economy. Whether we're speaking about songwriters, recording artists, record labels, publishers, digital service platforms, or startups, copyright law is at the center of the discussion about how the music industry will continue to evolve in the 21st century and beyond.

Questions regarding copyright's role are not just a result of the digital age and its various implications, including piracy, streaming, home recording, smartphones, and countless DIY opportunities. In fact, much of the discussion is tied to the age and applicability of copyright law to how artists and rights holders create music, how fans consume and experience it, and how music and copyright can generate meaningful revenue in the digital age.

The age of streaming and digital music is a long way from the origins of copyright law. U.S. copyright law has its genesis in England's Statute of Anne (1710), and the U.S. Constitution (Article 1, Section 8, Clause 8). The last major overhaul of this body of law was in the Copyright Act of 1976 (enacted 1978) and various digital copyright legislation including the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) of 1998.

This article addresses some key points for creators of musical content, whether they be songwriters, recording artists, producers, record labels, publishers, entrepreneurs, digital platforms, or entrepreneurs.

Two key documents will be addressed. The first is the 245-page report *Copyright and the Marketplace* issued in February 2015 by register of copyrights Maria Pallante, in which she outlined of the key considerations in addressing music industry copyright issues in the digital age. The second is an April 2015 follow-up with the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee, *The Register's Perspective on Copyright Review*.

### What's at Stake

For artists, rights holders and entrepreneurs, alike, the ability of artists, companies, and rights holders to generate meaningful revenue from their copyrights for sound recordings and songs in the digital age is what's at stake. The discussion on earning a living from recording and songwriting is not restricted to the United States; it's a point of international dialogue. Recently, France, the home of SACEM,

the world's first performing rights organization (PRO), introduced legislation proposing the need for a "minimum wage" for artists in the digital age.

Assessing the music industry of the future will inevitably touch on several key areas for the future of the music industry, including: music consumption, digital piracy, compensation, and revenue generation for artists and rights holders alike. With that in mind, we'll examine some other key points of consideration from Pallante's reports including moral rights, copyright infringement, PROs, the parity in online and digital platforms for sound recordings and musical works, and royalty rates and revenue for artists and rights holders.

### Moral Rights

U.S. copyright law is primarily steeped in a policy of economic incentive. In granting authors a right to their respective works, the drafters of the Constitution also laid the groundwork for the creation of countless works without the government having to fund authors in the creation of their works.

Copyright law grants a "limited-duration monopoly" to the rights holder and facilitates the ability of the author or rights holder to gain financially from the exploitation of copyrighted works. "Moral considerations" such as whether an artist wants, for example, his songs recorded by another artist or made available on specific platforms, are often addressed in terms of "economics" and not the author's (artistic) message or intent. Alternatively, the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990 provides for moral rights protection for creators of visual arts and sculptures in the United States. Unlike laws in European counterparts such as Germany and France, U.S. copyright law is relatively silent on the matter of moral rights and attribution regarding copyrighted musical works and sound recordings.

In her April 2015 testimony, Pallante recommended further investigation into the role of moral rights, she reiterated that the "rights of authors have been lost in the conversation. . . . They should be the focus." Many members and witnesses throughout the hearings identified the issues of individual authors, including attribution and the ability to say no to specific uses, as some of the most important elements of a well-functioning copyright system."

### Copyright Infringement

By now, we're used to the refrain of how the Pandora's box of file-sharing has turned the

music industry on its head. In many respects it has. Much of the concern in the music industry about the digital age has centered on non-legal activity, such as peer-to-peer file-sharing. An irony, however, is that much of what concerns artists and rights holders is not copyright infringement, but how to effectively monetize their works on legal platforms such as Spotify, Pandora, Tidal, and YouTube—just a few of the legal services that now "compete" with non-legal file-sharing platforms. While these streaming platforms are, overall, continuing to expand their user and subscription bases, as with any innovation, "cottage industries" of adaptation, or in this case, piracy, abound.

Just as we've seen with the MP3, online streaming infringement is proliferating at a rapid pace. And with millions of music consumers growing up in the age of file-sharing and free music, many of today's music fans are accustomed to streaming music online, whether through a legal platform, such as YouTube, or a nonlicensed streaming platform such as Grooveshark, which in 2015 was officially shut down after nine years of operation and millions of unlicensed performances.

Copyright infringement can lead to felony criminal penalties and charges in instances of willful (or intentional) infringement, whereas acts of illegal streaming presently result in a maximum of misdemeanor charges and penalties.

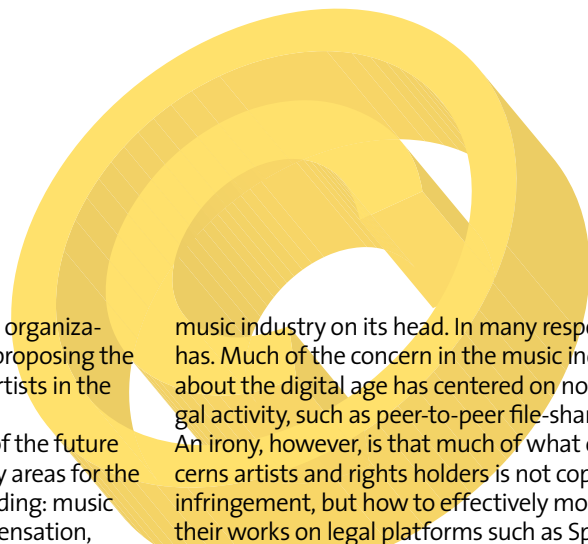
On this issue, Pallante advocates felony penalties in line with those related to piracy and unlawful distribution. Specifically, she stated, "As streaming becomes a dominant method of obtaining content online, unlawful streaming has no less of an adverse impact on the rights of copyright owners than unlawful distribution."

### PROs

In 2014, ASCAP celebrated its 100-year anniversary, and its legacy of important innovations that PROs have created to secure the rights (and revenue generation) of songwriters and publishers.

The age of streaming, however, has ushered in important questions about the future roles of ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC. For example, do publishers need PROs to account for performance royalties on platforms such as Spotify and Pandora when they can work directly with these digital platforms instead?

Historically, PROs have served as an important go-between and advocate for artists and



publishers with the thousands of radio and television stations that broadcast their music. In the “golden age” of radio, PROs would be working to track performances on tens of thousands of stations across the United States. However, with music streaming, publishers and songwriters need to work only with a relatively small number of “broadcasters” accounting for millions of performances. While PROs provided a unique service in tracking radio and television broadcasts with proprietary digital “finger printing” technology and tracking methodology, the relatively limited number of licensed streaming platforms should account for each unique performance, and in turn pass on to songwriters and publishers without the intervention of PROs.

Additionally, there is no shortage of debate as to whether ASCAP and BMI should continue to be limited in the scope of how they can represent the rights of songwriters and publishers. At present, ASCAP and BMI are bound by a consent decree dating from 1941, which limits their administrative purview to public performances only and precludes them from administering other important publishing revenue streams such as mechanical rights and synchronization rights.

Here, Pallante advocates for more input from the legislative process, and from the Copyright Office (rather than the Department of Justice) in determining the way forward for PROs.

#### **Parity in Digital Transmission and Terrestrial Broadcasting**

Presently, recording artists and labels/rights holders do not receive performance royalties for terrestrial broadcasts (e.g., on radio and television.) It may seem odd that recording artists and labels don’t receive royalties for terrestrial broadcasts of their works, but it wasn’t until 1972 that federal copyright protection was extended to phonorecords (sound recordings), however, this grant of protection was limited. Specifically, it omitted a right of public performance for sound recordings, meaning that entities such as radio stations and club DJs could play recordings without permission (or a blanket license) from a recording artist or record label.

Historically, as labels earned their income from singles and album sales, the logic was that the more spins on radio stations or in clubs, the more sales and revenue they generated. In fact, radio play was something one hoped for, not discouraged. In fact, labels have spent millions of dollars to get their recordings played on the radio. The practice of independent third-party promotion persists to this day.

While the 1972 provision did not provide for sound recording performance rights, the Digital Performance Right in Sound Recordings Act of 1995 provided for an exclusive right “to perform the copyrighted work publicly by means of a

digital audio transmission.” This added a royalty burden for digital platforms such as XM Sirius Satellite Radio, Pandora, Spotify, Tidal, and Apple Music (to name a few).

Additionally, the United States is one of the few countries without a terrestrial performance right for sound recordings, and the ripple effects of this historical exclusion go well beyond the borders of America. Other countries have reciprocated with the United States on this missing right and revenue stream. For example, since United Kingdom recording artists and rights holders do not receive a royalty for radio play in the United States, likewise, American artists are denied royalties for radio play in the U.K. (even though Great Britain typically pays performance royalties for the terrestrial broadcasts of sound recordings for artists and rights holders from countries that recognize this sound recording performance right).

In this matter, the Copyright Office advocates a performance right for sound recordings, and the “Fair Play Fair Pay” Act was introduced in the House of Representatives, and is recommending that licensing and revenue agreements for sound recordings and musical works be consistent for both types of works. Stay tuned for more on this.

#### **Royalty Rates and Revenue for Artists and Rights Holders**

Since the advent of the modern recording industry and the “age of the LP,” artists, publishers and labels have traditionally relied on recorded music sales as a catalyst for their business models and revenue streams.

For example, labels relied on their hefty wholesale prices of \$10 or more per more per CD; artists relied on the touring, merchandising, and royalty opportunities generated by an album’s release; songwriters looked forward to their publishing advances and mechanical and performance royalties generated by the release of a new album or single; and publishers, of course, looked forward to their cut of the songwriting pie.

The model of basing campaigns on an album release is changing; increasingly more labels and artists are opting to release singles and EPs instead, thus changing potential touring and branding incentives. Historically, many tours and artist brand development have been associated with the release of a specific album.

The digital age is continuing to change and evolve the reliance on recorded music in business models, as well. Yes, people are still consuming and purchasing music at a record pace, but the revenue and royalty numbers aren’t adding up in a comparable manner to the industry model based on sales. Instead of reaping mechanical royalties and artist royalties based on album sales, artists (and rights holders) are now realizing that they can’t rely on the compensation models that have traditionally fueled their plans. In short, artists and rights

holders are finding that revenue from streaming services doesn’t stacking up to revenue generated directly, or indirectly, from recorded music sales.

Prince was once asked about his practice of removing “unauthorized” content from YouTube, and his response was relevant for many artists and rights holders today. “Since YouTube doesn’t pay equitable licensing fees, isn’t this a nonsensical question? Peace,” the artist stated.

Digital service platforms have an important argument to make however. Unlike traditional terrestrial broadcasters, they have a double royalty burden. That is, they are required to pay both songwriters and publishers plus recording artists and record labels for the performance of their works. But they already pay out a significant percentage of their earnings to artists and rights holders.

The criticism of the revenue generated by streaming platforms goes deeper than the total amount paid out to artists and rights holders, though. Not only can there be significant differences in compensation rates based on the platform and subscription type (for example, free noninteractive Internet radio; paid noninteractive Internet radio; free noninteractive streaming services; paid interactive streaming services, etc.), but also in the amount that songwriters and publishers are paid and the amount that record labels are paid for streams. The difference can be as substantial as a 9:1 difference in favor of sound recordings.

For this issue, the U.S. Copyright Office recommends parity in the treatment of sound recordings and musical works with regard to both terrestrial and digital public performances.

#### **Looking Toward Tomorrow**

Don’t let the conversation on these vital copyright issues stop here; join in the discussion. Contact your congressional representative and voice your opinion with key industry organizations (AZIM, the Future of Music Coalition, ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, NMPA, and others). ☐



*David Purcell is an attorney in NYC specializing in copyright issues.*

# THE WOODSHED

## Rumba: A Gateway to Flamenco

by Kai Narezo '99



*Kai Narezo, a flamenco performer and teacher from Los Angeles, released the CD *Contra Tiempo*. He coauthored *A Compás: The Flamenco Guitar Survival Guide* with Scott Wolf. Visit [kainarezo.com](http://kainarezo.com).*

I've always thought of the rumba, one of the many *palos* or styles of flamenco, as a sort of gateway to flamenco music. It's often the first kind of flamenco people hear that pulls them into what turns out to be an amazing musical world that goes way beyond this accessible form. The rumba is basically the pop version of flamenco.

### Rumba's Past and Present

The rumba is one of what are called the *Cantes de ida y vuelta*, musical forms brought from the new world to Spain, which were adopted and adapted by flamencos. More recently, groups like Ketama and La Barbería del Sur have adapted salsa, Brazilian, and jazz so that contemporary rumba sounds much less like the Gypsy Kings and more like Latin jazz-pop.

Flamenco is folk music at heart. Like other genres—such as the blues—flamenco has been elevated in sophistication and virtuosity by its more talented exponents. But it is simultaneously a form that is sung, played, and danced at parties and in homes throughout Spain without the need of virtuosity or musical education.

The rumba falls into the category of *cante chico*, or light song, and unlike the majority of the flamenco palos, it has very loose parameters. It's basically anything played or sung in 4/4 time and can be in major or minor keys as well as what I'll call flamenco Phrygian (more on that below). Perhaps the most common distinguishing feature is a slightly pronounced accent on the end of beat 2, and weaker accent on the downbeat, though it is also common to hear strong beats 1 and 3.

Popularized outside of Spain by the Gypsy Kings and Rodrigo y Gabriela, the right-hand patterns in example 1 involve a muting slap across the strings that strikes the body of the guitar, usually on beat 1 or on beats 1 and 3, along with an accent on the end of 2 and occasionally on the end of 4. Example 2 is a variation of example 1 without the slap. Example 3 is a common arpeggio pattern that can be used for rumba, but it's more a point of departure than a standard pattern. Example 4 combines an arpeggio pattern and contemporary rumba pattern without the slap.

A misconception about flamenco stemming from the rumba, is the idea

that flamenco is about a couple of guitarists jamming over a chord progression. While Paco de Lucía's hit "Entre dos aguas" and his work with Al DiMeola and John McLaughlin made flamenco appeal to guitarists worldwide, the truth is that improvised soloing over a set of changes is still a rarity in flamenco. It's more the province of Nouveau Flamenco as played primarily by non-Spaniards such as German guitarist Ottmar Liebert and Canadian Jesse Cook. They have borrowed much of the sound of flamenco and much less of the substance.

### Chord Progressions and Scales

The Phrygian scale is characteristic in flamenco, but the flamenco Phrygian scale differs slightly from the traditional Phrygian mode. Example 2a shows the Flamenco Phrygian scale.

The chord progression that defines flamenco Phrygian is D-, C, B $\flat$ , A add $\flat$ 9. In flamenco music, it's common to hear the chord progressions beginning not on the I chord (A), but on the IV (D minor). The I chord comes at the end of the progression. Many non-flamenco musicians would think of the tonal center as D minor, which I'm calling the IV chord. But there is justification for considering A as the I chord because the music always resolves to A.

Note that we arrive at an A-major chord at the end of this progression rather than an A-minor chord, which we would derive from the strictly modal A Phrygian scale. The flamenco Phrygian scale gives us both the flatted third and the natural third as options. The  $\flat$ II chord (B $\flat$ ) can be played as a triad, dominant seventh, or even a major 7th chord. The  $\flat$ III chord (C), is typically played as a triad or a dominant seventh chord. Again, you don't necessarily want to derive scales too specifically from these chords. The IV chord (d minor) makes more sense to the Berklee-trained ear, and the C $\sharp$ , or major third of the A chord, gives us the option of using D harmonic minor as a chord scale.

The  $\flat$ II (B $\flat$ ) has the  $\sharp$ 11 and, more often than not, the seventh degree will be flatted, but in flamenco music, you wouldn't typically use a Lydian flat-7 scale here. If we play the B $\flat$  as a Maj7 $\sharp$ 11 chord, it will sound more like a substitution for the IV chord rather than a  $\flat$ II with Lydian leanings. It's common to insert secondary

dominants along with basic chord-type substitutions for the  $\flat$ II chord. With substitutions, the progression could go D-, G7, C7, F7, B $\flat$ , G-, A. (See example 2.)

### Flamenco Keys

Although the current generation of flamenco players is decidedly more musically literate than its predecessors, an old habit that remains is that of referring to various keys by names other than their actual key names. That's because capos are ubiquitous in flamenco for the purpose of changing keys for the singer and because of how the guitar sounds when capoed. Regardless of how the placement of the capo changes the actual key, chord progressions that resolve to an E chord form are called *Por Arriba* (see example 1) and those that resolve to an A form are *Por Medio* (see example 2). The main difference between the various flamenco keys lies in the voicings that result from the open strings. Other common flamenco keys are F $\sharp$ , B, and E $\flat$ . Additionally, flamenco guitarists may employ some alternate tunings.

### Conclusion

As with Brazilian styles, it's relatively easy to borrow the sound of flamenco without knowing too much about the specific styles. Approaching rumba by playing a Phrygian scale with its added natural third over a progression of A-, G, F, E (add $\flat$ 9), and learning how this rhythm swings is a great starting point. There's a rich and complex world of rhythms and harmonies that is inaccessible without a commitment to listening to and learning the huge variety of flamenco styles, the history, and the cante (singing), which is the foundation of flamenco and the true inspiration for most flamenco guitarists.

I recommend exploring the recordings of singer Camarón de la Isla, who was to the cante what Paco de Lucía was to the guitar in the flamenco revolution of the second half of the 20th Century. Other great singers include Antonio Mairena, Enrique Morente, Diego el Cigala, Jose Merce, and Carmen Linares. Guitarists will be amazed at the accompaniment on any recordings by these singers. They give a taste of what flamenco is really all about.

**Musical Examples**  
(larger images on next page)

Example 1

**Rumba in E (Por Arriba)**

Example 2

**Rumba in A (Por Medio)**

Example 2a

**Flamenco Phrygian Scale on A**

Example 3

**Rumba in B (Granaina key)**

Example 4

**Rumba in F-Sharp (Taranta key)**

All musical examples by Kai Narezo © 2016, all rights reserved.  
To see videos of the examples, visit [berklee.edu/berklee-today/summer-2016/rumba](http://berklee.edu/berklee-today/summer-2016/rumba).

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**Berklee**

Example 1

# Rumba in E (Por Arriba)

♩=172

A-7

G

F7

E sus 4, flat 9

A-7

G

F7

E sus 4, flat 9

Example 2

# Rumba in A (Por Medio)

♩=172

D-7

C7

Bb7

A

A add flat 9

A

D-7

G7

C7

F7

Bb7

G-7

A add flat 9

Example 2a

# Flamenco Phrygian Scale on A

Example 3

### Rumba in B (*Granaina* Key)

$\text{♩} = 208$  p i m i a m i p *continue pattern*

5

9

Example 4

### Rumba in F-Sharp (*Taranta* Key)

$\text{♩} = 196$

5

9

13

17

20

24

28



# EXPERT TESTIMONY

Given by Donny McCaslin '88 to Curtis Killian

## Final Sessions with a Legend

When Donny McCaslin '88 and his jazz quartet were enlisted by David Bowie H'99 to be the core band on what became *Blackstar*, Bowie's 25th and final album, the Grammy-nominated saxophonist, composer, and bandleader was ready for the moment.

"David encouraged us to try anything and everything that we heard," McCaslin says of the three weeks he spent recording with Bowie and his longtime producer Tony Visconti early last year, nearly a year before the star's death. "He said something to me in the beginning like, 'Donny, I don't know what's gonna happen with this, but let's just have some fun.'"

A fixture of the New York jazz scene for the past three decades, McCaslin has worked as a bandleader and sideman for the likes of Steps Ahead, Maria Schneider Orchestra, and Gary Burton '62, with whom he began touring during his senior year at the college. "Being at Berklee and thrust into this world where the boundaries of music or styles were pretty fluid, was really a great experience that helped me to broaden my musical language," McCaslin says.

His dexterity as a musician, bandleader, and orchestrator is clearly displayed on *Blackstar*. Just weeks after the album's release and the shock of Bowie's death, McCaslin shared thoughts about recording with Bowie and how he and his jazz quartet became the rock legend's final backing band.

### **Can you describe how your band was chosen to back David Bowie on *Blackstar*?**

It was an absolute joy to be a part of, as you can imagine. The way it came to be was that I'm a member of the Maria Schneider Orchestra, and she was collaborating with David Bowie in 2014 to write a song called "Sue (Or in a Season of Crime)." During that time she played David a record of mine called *Casting for Gravity* and suggested to him that he do something with me and my band. She brought him down to the 55 Bar—a club I play at regularly in New York City—to hear me and my band play.

So it was after the 55 Bar gig that he e-mailed me and sent an MP3 of songs and asked if I'd like to record with him. I was thrilled to have the opportunity and, of course, I responded affirmatively. I also said, "You know, as much as you want to do, we'd love to do with you."

I think initially it was one or two songs but that pretty quickly grew to six or seven songs. We set aside a week in January of 2015 to record those songs, and

he might have taught us a couple more. At the end of the week, David said he wanted to reconvene in about a month. In the first week of February we got together for another week and in the time in between, he sent me another batch of songs. I'm going to guess it was four or five, and we recorded those songs.

The group to this point included Mark Guiliana on drums, Tim Lefebvre on electric bass, Jason Linder on keyboards, and myself. At the end of the February sessions, David wanted to reconvene again. So we did about four or five days in March, and this time we added Ben Monder, an amazing guitar player who was in my band for a long time. After that and another day of guitar overdubs, Tony Visconti reached out to me in mid-April asking me to come in to do an overdub session. I went to the studio with David and Tony and overdubbed a second sax solo on "'Tis a Pity She Was a Whore," and overdubbed some flute on "Blackstar." That was it until I heard the record in its entirety for the first time in November [2015].

### **Being a sax player himself, did Bowie have any specific input for you on style or did he just let you run free?**

He let me run free. It was really wide open. The way that "Sue" happened was that I did the solo at the end of the day, and I had no idea how much they were going to keep. I assumed it was going to be a few notes here and a few notes there because the song itself is pretty dense with the orchestra playing and there's so much happening. I was sort of blown away when I first heard it, thinking, "Oh my goodness, I'm soloing through the whole thing!" They kept it all—which was wonderful. I'd really worked hard to prepare for that because I wasn't sure what to expect and there's so much going on in the piece. I was trying to find the places where I could play and not clash with the orchestra or with what David was singing. I was so happy with how it came out.

### **It's striking how different the version of the song is on the *Blackstar* album.**

That was a conscious thing. That's the song [on *Blackstar*] for which we did the most takes. We were exploring how to make it different enough from the original version. I said that I thought it would be nice to try a version that was just really stripped down, just featuring David's singing with the drums and bass kind



Donny McCaslin

of going crazy as Mark and Tim do so magnificently. We tried a few versions where I was essentially cuing the two different sections, but it wasn't really coming together so we ended up going back for the most part to the song form of the version Maria did, but keeping the spirit of the bass and the drums with David's vocals.

We got a take that felt really good. I was playing a solo at the end, and overnight I kept thinking about it. I took out Maria's score and did a reduced version for clarinet, flute, and alto flute. It was laden with woodwinds and the saxophone solo, but for the final version we stripped away a lot of the woodwinds and most of the sax solo.

I love both versions. In the newer version I think there's a spot in the end where David modulates up a half step or something. It was this spontaneous thing that happened and it was so beautiful how we all merged there together.

His vocals were very strong, very passionate, he sang with a lot of conviction, and that was a spark-plug for us. We are used to the back and forth, playing off each other and trying to come up with something together. And he was this new, really strong voice. I just love that spontaneous moment, he was like a jazz-er blowing and taking something up a half step and the band modulating. It's so great. Mark and Tim were just going completely nuts at the end. It's so energetic and killing.

On that one we played a lot with the form, but form-wise, most of the others are pretty much as David sent them to me. We were practicing the song "Lazarus" and Tim started playing an arpeggiated thing and David said, "Oh, I really like that!" The whole intro and outro just kind of happened spontaneously in the studio. David heard something he liked, identified it, and encouraged us to develop it. It ended up being a really beautiful part of the tune and example of him being so engaged and collaborative, open to what was going on.

***It sounded like a really natural mixture of jazz and exploratory rock. I read that Bowie was influenced heavily by Kendrick Lamar and D'Angelo, and listening to things that were out of the norm for their genre. Did he provide any specific direction?***

From what I could tell he was a person who listened to and processed a lot of music. Definitely, the Kendrick Lamar record and D'Angelo's record were mentioned, but also a lot of other stuff. One thing that was really impressive and inspiring about him, was just the amount of music and literature he would process. It was neat to hear him and Tony talk about influences from their youth and their time in Berlin.

***How did the making of Blackstar differ from your other experiences as a bandleader?***

A couple things come to mind. One is that the pacing was a lot more relaxed than a jazz record. Not that a jazz record is fraught with being rushed, but in the jazz world you're usually making a record in one or

two days. In this instance we had multiple days at our disposal. It was different having time and not having to do six tunes a day. It gave me the luxury of feeling like I could delve into these songs with the different woodwind sounds I was hearing. I could delve into the orchestration more than I'm usually able to. It's the first time that I did something where I was playing all the different instruments and it unfolded pretty organically.

Another thing I took away from these sessions was feeling so grateful to David for his great and generous spirit. He was humble, gracious, and really funny. There was a lot of fun banter in the studio. But he was very focused on some of the songs and he was working out the lyrics as we were tracking. It was just a great creative environment. It was so much fun to work that way and have time to layer parts and experiment with things.

***Is there a single memory that stands out from the sessions for Blackstar?***

I would say it was the joy on David's face when we would have a take that everybody felt was *the* take. It was very moving to me. It was beautiful.

---

*In May, McCaslin mentored and led a student quartet for several performances as part of Berklee's Masters on the Road Program. Hear more from his interview along with excerpts from Blackstar on the Sounds of Berklee podcast at [soundcloud.com/soundsofberklee/life-after-berklee-donnymccaslin-88](http://soundcloud.com/soundsofberklee/life-after-berklee-donnymccaslin-88).*

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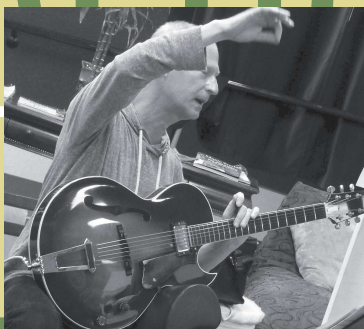
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# ALUM NOTES



Tony Corman '77



Emil Viklicky '78



Josh Sklair '78



Laura Perlman '79

## 1969

Jazz accordionist **Lou Romano** of Red Hook, NY, released the CD *Fun* in February. The album is dedicated to saxophonist Carmen Leggio and teachers Anthony Mecca and Herb Pomeroy. It's available at [cdbaby.com/cd/louromano](http://cdbaby.com/cd/louromano).

## 1971

Saxophonist **Greg Abate** of Coventry, RI, was inducted into the Rhode Island Music Hall of Fame on April 21 for making significant contributions to the national and Rhode Island music scenes. *Down Beat* magazine recently gave his album *Kindred Spirits Live at Chan's*, featuring the late Phil Woods, a four-star review.

**Scott Strunk** of Hillsborough, NJ, presented a TEDx talk called "Finding the Groove," about using drumming in everyday life. Visit [scottstrunk.com](http://scottstrunk.com).

## 1977

**Tony Corman** of Berkeley, CA, and his jazz orchestra the Morchestra, appeared with guest artists Roger Glenn (vibes and woodwinds) at the California Jazz Conservatory in January. The group features Bay-area jazz stalwarts. Visit [Morchestra](http://Morchestra.com) on Facebook.

## 1978

Saxophonist and composer **Guri Agmon** of Tel Aviv, Israel, was awarded the Prime Minister Prize for Jazz Composers in 2015. Agmon is a founder and current academic director of the Rimón School of Music, Israel's leading jazz, pop and rock school.

Composer and pianist **Emil Viklicky** of Prague, Czech Republic, composed a concerto for clarinet that was premiered by Ludmila Peterková in April. He released the jazz duet CD *Afterdark* with trumpeter Miroslav Hloucal. Visit [viklicky.com](http://viklicky.com).

Guitarist **Josh Sklair** of Culver City, CA, released the album *AfterHours* featuring music he composed in the early Blue Note Records vein for the documentary *Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum*. Visit [joshsklair.com](http://joshsklair.com).

## 1979

**Michael Wenslow** of North Hollywood, CA, is a vice president at Bank of America. He has recently formed the WenslowShear Jazz Orchestra with trumpeter Howie Shear, and he is planning a recording.

**Laura Perlman** of Los Angeles, CA, has released *Precious Moments*, an album of jazz standards arranged by Bill Cunliffe and featuring top jazz musicians. Perlman overcame breast cancer and, recently, treatment for a rare blood disease to make this dream album.

## 1980

Singer/songwriter **Lynn Biddick** of La Crosse, WI, released a new album titled *Everybody's Blue*, her second for Momentous Records. On it, Biddick sings and plays piano, mountain dulcimer, and harmonium. Visit [www.lynnbiddick.com](http://www.lynnbiddick.com)

## 1981

Brass player and vocalist **Dennis Keating** of Briarcliff Manor, NY, is playing with several ensembles throughout the New York area, including performances in "Satchmo," his tribute show to Louis Armstrong.

## 1982

**Paul Sciaba** of Wakefield, MA, released the album *Rhythm Changes* featuring acoustic guitar treatments of jazz and pop standards. He performs with Cool Change around greater Boston.

## 1983

**Matthew Cahoon** of Allston, MA, and his dark pop electronica project Everpresent released the EP *Omega Point* and the video "Hypnotic" internationally. Cahoon headlines at various Boston venues. Visit [everpresent.org](http://everpresent.org).

**Jody Espina** of Savannah, GA, the founder and president of JodyJazz Inc., recently traveled to Cuba to meet with leading Cuban saxophonists Michel Herrera and Cesar Lopez to show them the saxophone mouthpieces his company manufactures. Visit [jodyjazz.com](http://jodyjazz.com).

## 1984

**Ray DiVirgilio** of Newark, NJ, is a music teacher at St. John the Beloved School in Wilmington, DE. His middle school jazz ensemble recently performed at the University of Delaware Jazz Festival.

Composer **Joel Goodman** of Topanga, CA, composed the music for three documentary films that aired this spring. *Everything Is Copy*, catalogs the life of reporter, novelist, and playwright Nora Ephron, aired on HBO on March 21. *Obit*, chronicles the work of writers at the *New York Times* that pen obituaries for cultural icons, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival on April 17. *Spectres of the Shoah*, recounts the challenges French filmmaker Claude Lanzmann faced while making his nine-hour epic film *Shoah* about the Holocaust, aired on May 2 on HBO.

Drummer **Rob Hart** of Hayward, CA, leads the Rob Hart Trio, which released the album *3000 Realms of 10 Worlds*. View his instructional drum videos at [youtube.com/robharttrio](http://youtube.com/robharttrio).

## alumni profile

### Jacques Schwartz-Bart '94

## Chasing the Voodoo

By Ron Reid



Kelly Wildowsky '88

### 1986

Guitarist and composer **Kevin Kastning** of Groton, MA, and woodwind player Carl Clements released the album *A Far Reflection* featuring 11 original compositions. Kastning also released the solo album *Skyfields*.

### 1987

**Jeffrey Weinberger** of Liberty, ME, published a three-volume book of etudes for fingerstyle ukulele, which is available on Amazon. He teaches at Bay Chamber Music School in Rockport, ME, and runs the Belfast Guitar and Ukulele Workshop. He performs locally with the band People of Earth.

### 1988

Vocalist **Kelly Wildowsky** of Lompoc, CA, released an album of original blues and rock tunes titled *Blues Prophecy*. It is available on CD Baby.

### 1989

Flugelhornist and composer **Dmitri Matheny** of Oakland, CA, released *Jazz Noir*, his 11th album as a leader, in February. It features classic movie themes, standards, and two original tunes. Visit [dmitrimatheny.com](http://dmitrimatheny.com).

Talk with **Jacques Schwarz-Bart** '94, and you'll find yourself captivated by his passion for French-Caribbean roots music and his dedication to exploring the mystery of his native Guadeloupe's *gwo ka* tradition and the spirituality of Haitian music. In this quest he has found his artistic deliverance.

I had the opportunity to talk with him after his recent clinic at Berklee's David Friend Recital Hall. Many years ago we played in *Souvenir*—a short-lived Boston-based Caribbean dance band—and we've crossed paths at a few festivals over the years.

Schwarz-Bart is a saxophonist, composer, and recording artist who came to the saxophone much later than most. His first instrument was the *gwo ka* drum, and African, barrel-shaped hand drum unique to Guadeloupe. Jacques credits his parents, Guadeloupe-born mother Simone and his French-Jewish father, André—both writers—for taking him to the countryside's sugarcane fields at night to experience the *léwòz*. But the traditional music of Guadeloupe, *léwòz*, was disparaged by the guardians of morality as “the devil's music.”

“I am thankful that my parents were not thinking that way and brought me in to the fields in the darkness of night,” Schwarz-Bart says. “The mixture of music in the tropical night, the stars above our heads, and the blackness of the night created an intensity ... a powerful experience. I could see the spirits dancing around us. For me, the connection between music and spirituality was established right away.”

Schwarz-Bart came to Berklee in 1990 at the ripe age of 27, after leaving the security of a job as an assistant to a French senator. He'd taught himself the saxophone over the course of the previous three years before coming to Berklee. He had let his youthful, muscular frame diminish in order to reshape it around the instrument. “There were fingerings that were not compatible with the way my muscles worked and I had to compete with youngsters who had grown up with that instrument,” he says. At the college, Schwarz-Bart found camaraderie performing with fellow students Ruben Rogers '94, Teodross Avery '95,

Charles Craig '93, and Darren Barrett. He would later play in bands led by Bob Moses, Danilo Perez '88, Alex Alvear, Alain Mallet, and ensemble department chair, Ron Savage.

During his Berklee clinic, he stressed the importance of daily practice and developing the mental toughness and perseverance to reach your goals. “There are principles that apply to any art, and one of them is discipline,” Schwarz-Bart said. “I saw my parents write faithfully and consistently everyday for years, and I understood that if I was going to embrace an artistic path in my life, discipline would have to be part of it.” After humorously describing his early living circumstances in New York, he related a story about ignoring all sound advice and physical restraint when he forced himself onstage during a club performance by Chucho Valdes and Roy Hargrove. “I played the best I could at that moment and two weeks later Roy called me to join his band on tour.”

Residencies in the bands of Chucho Valdéz, Danilo Pérez, Roy Hargrove, and D'Angelo confirmed Schwarz-Bart's resolve to realize his vision as a bandleader playing his own music. “Making a living [in] music is already such a tough road,” he said as he described times when he hid behind his hair and beard to disguise himself in playing situations that he felt obliged to accept just to keep working. “I learned to smile and observe the different types of leadership. I made a note about not wanting to be the type of bandleader as those I sometimes worked for.” He also cautioned that no gig is too big until you can sustain yourself, playing your own music.

Schwarz-Bart has followed that path, which ultimately led him to the *Gwo ka* Project with which he has recorded the albums *Soné Ka-La* and *Abyss* for Universal Music France. He has also recorded *Rise Above* for Dreyfus Music with his wife, Stefanie McKay. It veers from his roots-music trajectory toward a New York urban groove blended with Caribbean overtones. He credits his work with D'Angelo as being influential on his approach to phrasing.

*Jazz Racine Haiti* (Motema Music, 2014)—his most recent project—is



Jacques Schwartz-Bart

at the crossroads of jazz and Haitian sacred music. Schwarz-Bart enlisted an eclectic group of kindred spirits including two voodoo priests: the great singer Erol Josué, and percussionist Gaston Bonga, who together ground this critically hailed recording.

I asked how much of the recording represents the musicians' familiarity and experience with the music as opposed to his writing. “The writing and the conception are first and foremost,” he says. “I have been able to play this music successfully with an array of different bands and I did it [here] with students today. The concept is clear. Being the son of two great writers, I learned how to conceive and express things clearly. It's an advantage in being able to convey to my collaborators what I expect of them.”

*Jazz Racine Haiti's* postlude features a duet between Schwarz-Bart and singer Rozna Zila performing the lamenting “Legba Nan Baye.” “I felt that on a record where a lot of the substance was generated by the orchestral texture of the different horns interacting with the voice, harmonies, arrangements, modulations, and more, it would be fitting to conclude with the ultimate sobriety of two voices—the saxophone and the human voice—talking to one another.”

With his Jewazz Project, Schwarz-Bart honors his paternal heritage by taking Jewish liturgical music and “reshaping the structure adding interludes and nuggets for the heart and soul.” Also in the works is a CD recording of the *Creole Spirits Project*, a blend of modern jazz and Cuban and Haitian spiritual traditions in collaboration with pianist Omar Sosa, propelled by a 2015 performance featuring their respective ensembles. A global visionary and restless spirit, Schwarz-Bart is inspiring the current generation of players exploring the nexus of traditional musical forms and jazz expression.

**Bassist and steel drummer Ron Reid** is an associate professor in the *Contemporary Writing and Production Department*.



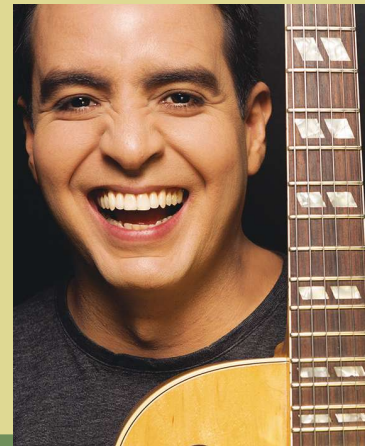
Tomomi Taniguchi '90



Richard Johnson '95



Anne Kessler '96



Daniel Oliva '99

## 1990

Trombonist **Tomomi Taniguchi** of Minamisuzuhara, Japan, the director of the Kyoto Composers Jazz Orchestra, released the album *Today's Lineup* featuring standards and original works by several composers, including professor **Scott Free** '75.

## 1992

**Gary Benson** of Cotati, CA, launched the KickStrap drum accessory by Benson Music, which was featured at NAMM. It keeps a bass drum and/or hi-hat from sliding without the use of a carpet. Visit [thekickstrap.com](http://thekickstrap.com).

## 1994

**Arthur Lynn** of Miami, FL, is producing international singer Dani Shotgun. Lynn has worked with Roy Thomas Baker, Carlos Alomar, Bob Ludwig, Steve Thompson, Lana Del Rey, Wendy Starland, and others.

**Michael J. Perez** of Guam, was named vice president and ebanking department manager for the Bank of Guam.

## 1995

Percussionist **Taku Hirano** of New York City performed on the Grammy Awards broadcast in February for a Lionel Richie tribute that featured John Legend, Demi Lovato, Meghan Trainor, Nicki Minaj, and Lionel Richie.

**Richard Johnson** of Queens, NY, is the Jazz at Lincoln Center global ambassador for the Middle East and books talent for Dizzy's Club in Doha, Qatar. He also teaches at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire.

## 1996

**Anne Kessler** of Mount Laurel, NJ, is the owner and director of the Curtain Call Performing Arts Center near Philadelphia. Her students received the Excellence in Music award at the 2016 Junior Theater Festival in Atlanta, GA. Visit [curtaincallpac.com](http://curtaincallpac.com).

## 1997

**Fabian Lim** and **Joshua Wan** '89 of Singapore and their band the Steve McQueens released the album *Seamonster* on iTunes, Spotify, and Amazon.

Accordionist and composer **Victor Prieto** of New York City released *The Three Voices*, his fifth album as a leader. It combines Tuvan singing, Celtic music, and Latin jazz styles. He also recently performed with Yo-Yo Ma and Cristina Pato on the *Late Show with Stephen Colbert*. Visit [victorprieto.net](http://victorprieto.net).

Drummer **Antonio Sanchez** and bassist **Esperanza Spalding** '05 were featured in a live-music scene in the movie *Miles Ahead*, a biopic about trumpeter Miles Davis starring Don Cheadle.

## 1998

Drummer **Joe DeRose** of San Jose, CA, and his quintet Joe DeRose and Amici have posted a live performance of the tune "Nick's Legacy." Visit [youtube.com/watch?v=25lAgefUDI8](http://youtube.com/watch?v=25lAgefUDI8).

Bassist **Antonio Gandía** of Pennsauken, NJ, collaborated with Colombian percussionist and producer **Danilo Gossain** '96, pianist **Justo Morao** '97 and drummer **Ipeji Morofuji** '97 on the album *Chillociraaptor*. Visit [chillociraaptor.com](http://chillociraaptor.com).

**Soren Sorensen** of Providence, RI, the director of the documentary *My Father's Vietnam*, won the Soldiers and Sacrifice Grand Prize at the 2015 Rhode Island International Film Festival. It was released in video format on-demand platforms and a DVD will follow.

## 1999

Trumpeter **Avishai Cohen** of Tel Aviv, Israel, recently played with his jazz quartet at the Regattabar in Cambridge. He will return to the area in September with his band Triveni for the show The Checkout—Live at Berklee, a concert broadcast from the Red Room by New York radio station WGBO.

**Nicole Luzaich** of Palos Verdes, CA, is a member of the rock band Sukha with guitarist **Michael Vanier** '00, pianist **Peter Stolzman Gray** '99, and percus-

sionist **Tripp Dudley** '05. The band released the album *Rise* in March.

Guitarist and composer **Daniel Oliva** of São Paulo, Brazil, released his debut album *Solar*, featuring a blend of influences in songs and instrumental pieces. Visit [soundcloud.com/daniel-oliva-solar](http://soundcloud.com/daniel-oliva-solar).

**David Laborier** of Luxembourg played guitar and arranged three songs on Angélique Kidjo's Grammy-winning album *Sings*, recorded with Orchestre Philharmonique Luxembourg. Visit [labojazz.com](http://labojazz.com).

Drummer **Sean Noonan** of New York City released the album *Memorable Sticks* featuring Alexis Marcelo (piano) and Marc Bitenc (bass). Visit [seannoanmusic.com](http://seannoanmusic.com).

## 2000

Guitarist **Gustavo Assis-Brasil** of Arlington, MA, has released the CD *Chromatic Dialogues* featuring **Tony Grey** '04 (bass), **Mauricio Zottarelli** '02 (drums), **Vardan Ovsepan** '04 (keyboards), and **Jose Pienasola** '00 (bass). Visit [gustavoassisbrasil.com](http://gustavoassisbrasil.com).

Saxophonist **Bob Reynolds** of Los Angeles, CA, released a new music video on YouTube titled "Blues for Charlie." He has also rereleased his first EP, *The Bob Reynolds Quartet*, which he made 16 years ago as a Berklee student. Visit [bobreynoldsmusic.com](http://bobreynoldsmusic.com).

# WesFest Tribute 11.0

by Peter Gordon '78

The power of music to honor the memory of composer, bassist, and photographer **Wes Wehmiller '92** was on full display March 6 at the Baked Potato in Studio City, CA. The annual WesFest tribute reached new heights as music and Wehmiller's spirit filled the club during this memorable celebration.

Over the past 11 years, WesFest has grown into an extended annual fundraising campaign in support of the Wes Wehmiller Endowed Scholarship Fund at Berklee that has raised more than \$250,000. The Wehmiller scholarship is awarded annually to a bass student at Berklee who best exemplifies the values that Wes represented. As an endowed scholarship, it will honor Wehmiller's legacy for decades.

Derek Frank, Shania Twain's touring bassist, opened with a powerful set that quickly took the energy level into high gear. His quartet, featuring keyboardist Ty Bailie, drummer Mike Bennett, and guitarist Andrew Synowiec, set the tone with remarkable musicianship and groove.

Danny Mo' and the Exciters always deliver a set full of heart and soul, and this year was no exception. Members of this all-star band included **Danny Morris '78**, **John "JR" Robinson '75**, **Scott Gilman '80**, **Kira Small '93**, Fred Kron, assistant professor Marty Walsh, and inaugural Wehmiller Scholarship recipient **Will Snyder '07**.

The most recent recipient of the Wes Wehmiller Scholarship, **Maddie Jay Lough '17**, was featured on bass as she led the band in her original composition "Throw Away Your Hate."

The Exciters closed their set with an Aretha Franklin-styled version of "Bridge Over Troubled Water" that almost took the roof off, courtesy of Kira Small and the trio of background singers, **Samantha Schultz '13**, **Jeniffer Criss-Williams '07**, and **Latoria Boyd '10**. In a special moment preceding the headline set, Maddie Jay Lough, **Abraham Laboriel '72** and Berklee Bass Department chair Steve Bailey performed a bass trio version of the Horace Silver tune "Peace," with musicality and artistry that typified the evening.



Bass summit (left to right): Abraham Laboriel, Steve Bailey, and Maddie Jay Lough

Open Hands, a quartet featuring Laboriel (bass), **Justo Almario '71** (tenor sax and flute), Bill Maxwell (drums), and Tim Carmon (keyboards), delivered a headline set that was inspiring, spiritual, and musically dazzling. Paula Wehmiller, Wes's mother, observed that "in a moment that seems somehow out



Left to right: Peter Gordon, Abraham Laboriel, John "JR" Robinson, and Danny Morris

of human time, [Laboriel] beckoned the crowd to join him in gentle rounds of hallelujah as he spoke to us of [gratitude], of generosity, of love, of peace, of Wes. Now the crowd was on its feet." It was a powerful performance.

Following the most successful WesFest in terms of funds raised,

Stacey Ferguson, the event producer, stated, "This kind of sustaining passion for a scholarship fundraising event is rare. But you know what? So was Wes and everything he did."

For more on Wes Wehmiller and the scholarship, visit [weswehmiller.net](http://weswehmiller.net).

## VALENCIA ALUM NOTES

Compiled by Maxwell Wright

**XueRan Chen '15** of Beijing, China, has been working as a composer and music producer in Los Angeles for the past two years and is the owner of NEM Studios. NEM provides project-specific music for film, television, video games, and commercials. Visit [www.nemstudios.com](http://www.nemstudios.com).

**Nick Esposito VIII '14** of Brooklyn, NY, is an A1 broadcast audio engineer for ESPN in Bristol, CT. He mixes all audio elements for the live broadcasts for ESPN flagship programs "SportsCenter," "NFL Live," and "NFL Insiders."

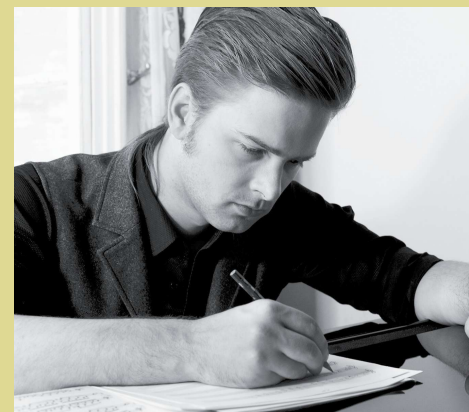
**Michelle Golden '15** is the communications coordinator at Superfly in New York City. The company produces the Bonnaroo and Outside Lands festivals, and creates immersive programming for brands. Golden also works with ProjectNextUp, a global initiative promoting diversity and providing mentorship in the music industry.

**Julia Hoffman '15** of Berlin, Germany, is working in the artist management division of Jackmode Agency, developing the global careers of renowned techno and house DJs and producers.

Pianist and composer **Piotr Orzechowski '14** (aka Pianohooligan) of Krakow, Poland, was the soloist in Philip Glass's *Tirol Concerto* in a performance with the AUKSO Chamber Orchestra in May. He will play it again in August with the National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra at the opening event of the Tauron New Music Festival. Orzechowski also performs with his High Definition Quartet and is completing his third solo piano album, the follow up to *15 Studies for the Oberek*. Visit [pianohooligan.com](http://pianohooligan.com).

**Sammy Pisano '14** of New York City works in the sales department at RED Distribution, a division of Sony Music Entertainment.

**Miguel Ruiz Santos '14** of Madrid, Spain, teaches clarinet, saxophone, and improvisation at the Municipal School of Creative Music in Madrid. He also leads an improvisation workshop with children and an amateur big band, and freelances with orchestras, jazz bands, and contemporary music and chamber ensembles. Santos is currently recording an album with his Guitarinet Jazz Duo.



Piotr Orzechowski

**Will Stone '15** of Brooklyn, NY, is currently part of the creative team developing the musical *ILLA: A Hip Hop Musical*. Stone is the show's music consultant, music director, and co-arranger of the vocals. The show premiered at the New York Music Theatre Festival July 2015, and will have a June run at Cobb County Center for Excellence in the Performing Arts in Atlanta, GA. Visit [www.illathemusical.com](http://www.illathemusical.com).



Sean Noonan '99



Elan Trotman '01



Morwena Lasko and Jay Pun '03



Frederik Wiedmann '05

## 2001

**Matthew Cahoon** of Allston, MA, and his group Everpresent released the CD *Omega Point*. The band's video "Hypnotic" has aired in numerous countries. Visit [everpresent.org](http://everpresent.org).

**Nils de Mol van Otterloo** of Los Angeles, CA, received a Fulbright grant to research music and dementia in South India. His work begins in the fall and will span nine months.

**JooWan Kim** and his Ensemble Mik Nawooj were commissioned by ESPN to reimagine the Ashford and Simpson song "California Soul" for the network's 2016 NFL Super Bowl programming. Visit [ensemblemiknawooj.com](http://ensemblemiknawooj.com).

Saxophonist **Elan Trotman** is hosting the third annual jazz excursion to his native Barbados October 7 to October 11 with guest musicians Jeffrey Osborne, Peter White, Brian Simpson, and Althea Rene. Visit [barbadosjazzexcursion.com](http://barbadosjazzexcursion.com).

**Gregory Pavliv** of Bloomfield, NJ, opened a music school teaching a curriculum he developed for young students. Visit <http://musicteaching.guru>.

## 2002

Pianist **Aruán Ortiz** of Brooklyn, NY, released the album *Hidden Voices* with bassist Eric Revis and drummer Gerald Cleaver.

**Nolan Warden** of Culver City, CA, earned his Ph.D in ethnomusicology from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). His dissertation focused primarily on indigenous musicians performing popular Mexican music (música regional).

Pianist **Megumi Yonezawa** of New York City released her debut album, *A Result of the Colors* on the Fresh Sound New Talent label of Barcelona, Spain. Accompanying Yonezawa are bassist John Hebert and drummer Eric McPherson.

## 2003

Violinist **Morwena Lasko** and guitarist Jay Pun of Charlottesville, VA, released the album *The Hollow*. Performing with them are **Stephane Wremble '02**, **Michael Manring '79**, and Tupac Mantilla. Visit [mojamusic.net](http://mojamusic.net).

**Bernardo Monk** of Buenos Aires, Argentina, has released five albums with his 11-piece tango orchestra. He has also authored *Tango for Two* and *The Tango Saxophone Book* via Advance Music in Germany.

## 2004

**Shinya Ikuta** of Hamamatsu, Japan organized a children's concert for the Hamamatsu World Music Festival 2016. Several youth groups performed for the program.

**Gerad O'Shea** of Long Island City, NY, founded Applied Curiosity Research, an educational research company that encourages children's intellectual curiosity and promotes healthy development. Visit [appliedcuriosityresearch.com](http://appliedcuriosityresearch.com).

## 2005

Film composer **Frederik Wiedmann** of Sherman Oaks, CA, won his first Emmy for his song "True Bromance" (with lyrics by Mitch Watson), which was composed for the Netflix original series *All Hail King Julien*. The song is a duet sung by the lead actors of the show, Danny Jacobs (King Julien), and Kevin Michael Richardson (Maurice).

## 2006

Tenor saxophonist **Melissa Aldana** of Brooklyn, NY, released the album *Back Home* backed by Pablo Menares (bass) and Jochen Rueckert (drums). It features eight original compositions and Gershwin's classic "My Ship." Visit [melissaaldana.com](http://melissaaldana.com).

Vocalist **Jean-Carlos Casely** of Davie, FL, who leads the band Casely and the Jank has released a new video for his single "Tick Tock." Watch it at [facebook.com/casely85](https://facebook.com/casely85).

**Kevin M. Casini** Esq. of New Haven, CT, is an attorney at Billings & Barrett, LLC. He handles copyrights and trademarks and represents writers and performing artists. His clients have appeared on *The Voice* and *America's Got Talent*. Visit [billingsandbarrett.com](http://billingsandbarrett.com).

Guitarist **Jordan Owen** of Atlanta, GA, is teaching and performing in the Atlanta area. As a musical legacy for the grandsons of the late **Craig Herndon '68**, he produced a double CD of music by Herndon, who was a drummer jazz radio host.

**Zachary Ray** of Randolph, MA, has been living in India for the past five years operating Chaitown Creatives, a creative development company providing young musicians and artists in India a platform to gain recognition for their music and art.

## 2007

**Steve Dzialowski** and **Lucas Vidal** of Venice, CA, launched Chroma, a company that creates movie trailer music. Chroma has released 11 albums with music of 47 composers and gotten many media placements. Visit [chromamusic.net](http://chromamusic.net).

## L.A. Newsbriefs

By Justine Taormino '06

*Fortune* magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" list recently included Los Angeles-based video game developer Riot Games debuting at number 13. Presently, six Berklee alumni work there as members of Riot's audio/music team. In 2009, the company launched its flagship game, *League of Legends*, which today boasts 67 million players per month.

"We aspire to be the most player-focused game company in the world," states Riot's company manifesto. The devoted *League* fanbase proves it. To uphold this commitment to player engagement, Riot releases game updates every two weeks, hosts worldwide player competitions, and weaves gaming into company culture.

**Edouard Brenneisen '08**, a composer at Riot, beat out 892 applicants for the position. He credits Berklee with his focus on "individuality and building one's [musical] voice." Brenneisen's daily responsibilities include designing and writing music for champions and events. "Whenever we release music, we receive a tremendous amount of immediate feedback," Brenneisen says. "It's really rewarding."

An EPD and MP&E dual major, **Jayvon Rymer '12** made connections with members of the Riot audio team at the Game Developers Conference (GDC), the largest annual gathering of professional game developers. He was invited to submit his sound design reel and a job application. Now an associate sound designer, Rymer creates sound variations for in-game content and incorporates input from colleagues outside the audio-music team. "Here [at Riot] they allow time to receive feedback and then create more options," Rymer says. "It's really cool how much they care about the players and the product."

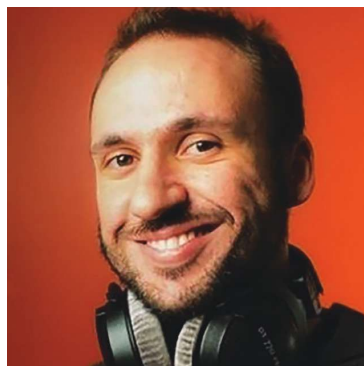
Originally hired for a sound designer and technical role, **Jason Willey '05** now works as a composer for *League*. Before coming to Riot, Willey worked at Activision in New York, adding 18 titles to his résumé. The position ended during a mass layoff, which Willey says is common in the young video games industry. It was a connection at GDC that got his reel to Riot. Willey pursued a dual major in guitar performance and film scoring at Berklee. "I feel like I'm still learning and growing as an individual, not just as a musician," Willey says. "It's more than just a paycheck and a cool



Jason Willey '05



Edouard Brenneisen '08



Matteo Stronati '11

job; it aligns at the core with what I'm meant to do."

**Austin DeVries '15** credits Berklee City Music for catalyzing his career. An EPD major and drum principal, DeVries was the president of the Sound Design Network as a student, which "promoted feedback and a supportive community, which is exactly what they seek at Riot." After coming to the company for an internship, a job opportunity came for DeVries when he landed the sound designer position during his final semester. "It's probably one of the best jobs I could ask for; creating, collaborating and playing drums. I can't even believe that it's real a lot of the time."

## Keyboard Voyager

By Peter Gordon

For every great musician, life is an ongoing journey with an evolving story of artistic growth through highs and lows. Opportunities can come in random fashion and the uncertainty can be challenging. There is, however, always a passion that keeps propelling the movement forward. For keyboardist extraordinaire **John Novello '73**, the passion is playing music with others.

Novello grew up in Erie, PA, and at the age of nine began playing accordion before moving to the piano and ultimately falling in love with the Hammond B3 organ. Experiencing success with his first band, he decided to immerse himself in music and attend a Berklee summer program. He loved the school and the city and opted to continue as a full-time student.

He looked forward to studying with such teachers as Gary Burton, Ray Santisi, Larry Monroe, Dean Earl, and Charlie Banacos, but his finances began running low. He landed a job in Boston's infamous Combat Zone playing jazz standards on the B3 every night behind exotic dancers and honing his bass pedal skills. Berklee friends such as drummers **Steve Smith '76** and **Vinnie Colaiuta '75** occasionally played with him on that gig.

After Berklee, Novello moved to Los Angeles in 1978, and within three months he became the musical director for A Taste of Honey. That band soon had a worldwide hit called "Boogie Oogie Oogie." While on tour with the group, he met iconic disco singer Donna Summer and soon joined her band. That led to a succession of gigs with major artists including the Manhattan Transfer, Ramsey Lewis, Edgar Winter, and **Richie Cole '67**.

Back in Los Angeles, he formed his own solo project called Threshold, featuring **Eric Marienthal '79** (saxophone), Melvin Davis (bass) and Rayford Griffin

For **Matteo Stronati '11**, sound design was love at first sight, and he added extra EPD classes to his Professional Music curriculum. Currently a senior sound designer at Riot, Stronati previously worked at dSonic, Tencent, and Motiga before being recruited by Riot. The company's focus on culture drew him. "Often companies say they have a 'culture,' but it's just some slogan written on a wall," Stronati says. "At Riot, it's clear, intentional, and defined." Every Riot employee experiences the "denewbification" process, an immersion program about culture, company struc-



John Novello

(drums). Novello's original music for the group blended rock, funk, and blues. The outfit experienced radio success with Novello's tune "Celebration."

Playing recording sessions led to Novello's friendship with rock bassist Billy Sheehan. They clicked musically and began writing together, leading to their first CD titled *Niacin* in 1995. "We envisioned this project as a power progressive rock organ trio," Novello says, "and called Dennis Chambers to play drums." Under the band name Niacin, the group has recorded nine CDs and toured the globe. The B3 is the focus of the trio, a clever, veiled allusion to vitamin B3 (aka Niacin).

In 2008 Novello hit a new stride with his CD *B3 Soul* with the title song becoming a contemporary instrumental hit single. Novello's subsequent collaboration with renowned songwriter and producer Andy Goldmark led to his solo recording *Ivory Soul*. As the name suggests, the instrumental flavor has changed from B3 to acoustic piano and the songs have a pop, r&b focus. *Ivory Soul's* first single "Crush," featuring Gerald Albright on saxophone, blends old-school jazz with soulful pop. It recently entered the contemporary jazz top 10.

Novello continues his musical journey, driven by a love for performance, great songs, and music that grooves.

For more on Novello, visit [keysnovello.com](http://keysnovello.com).

ture, and *League* that starts on day one with a playtest.

**Kevin Notar '13** also began his career at dSonic and speaks highly of the Riot culture. "People are aligned to deliver something," Notar says. "You're a part of the team and there's an immense amount of trust." While an EPD major at Berklee, Notar connected with members of Riot's audio team during a campus visit. Notar advises sound designers to "never let software limit your creativity, be proactive about asking for feedback, and show your passion for video games."





Pamela Hersch

Gabriela Martina '08



Fred Emory Smith '08



Megan Hutson '09



Sandro Morales '09

Singer **Jessi Teich** of Skippack, PA, released the EP *JT* and its first single “The Curtain Call” on Madame Freak Records in April. Visit [jessiteich.com](http://jessiteich.com).

## 2008

**Trent Campbell** of Denver, CO, and his group Tnertle released their debut album *MataMata* in November 2015. Visit [tnertle.com](http://tnertle.com).

Swiss-born vocalist **Gabriela (Heer) Martina** released her debut album *No White Shoes* showcasing her original songs and a few jazz standards. She is backed by **Kyle Miles '10** (bass), **Alex Bailey '11** (drums), **Jiri Nedoma '10** (piano), and **Jussi Reijonen '10** (guitar). Visit [gabrielamartina.com](http://gabrielamartina.com).

Composer **Fred Emory Smith** released an original soundtrack to the feature film *Magic Hour* on iTunes and various streaming services.

Drummer **Matt Witek** of Long Beach, CA, performed at the Monterey Jazz Festival with pianist Justin Kauflin.

## 2009

Singer, songwriter, and guitarist **Johnny Duke** of Nashville, TN, released the album *Reimagine*, which features 15 original songs. Duke played guitar on the platinum-selling albums *Tornado* and *Painkiller* by Little Big Town. He has toured with several

country acts and is touring this summer with Mary Chapin Carpenter. Visit [johnnydukemusic.com](http://johnnydukemusic.com).

Songwriter **Megan (Tod) Hutson** of Sherman Oaks, CA, wrote the hook that Ledisi sang on Malcolm-Jamal Warner’s song “Brand New Day.” Hutson cowrote “Smilin’” and “Miracle” for Maysa’s album *Back 2 Love*, which made an impressive debut on *Billboard’s* jazz and r&b charts.

**Sandro Morales** of Sherman Oaks, CA, scored the films *Sleeper*, *The Wrong Roommate*, *Situational*, and *Out of Iraq*. Visit [sandromorales.com](http://sandromorales.com).

Saxophonist **Jonathan Orland** of Paris, France, has released his second album, *Small Talk*, featuring top international jazz musicians. His previous album, *Homes*, featured several fellow alumni, including **George Garzone '72**. Orland is a busy sideman playing with various groups in Europe. Visit [jonathanorland.com](http://jonathanorland.com).

Violinist **Ben Powell** of Los Angeles, CA, has released *The L.A. Sessions*. The album features top Los Angeles session players on originals as well as selections from jazz, pop, and film music repertoire. Visit [benpowell.com](http://benpowell.com).

Pianist **Julian Shore** of Brooklyn, NY, released his sophomore album, *Which Way Now*, featuring his original jazz compositions. In addition to his own gigs, Shore has played with Kurt Rosenwinkel, Chris Cheek, Kendrick Scott, Gretchen Parlato,

Matt Wilson, and others. Visit [julianshore.com](http://julianshore.com).

**Tidtaya Sinutoke** of Rego Park, NY, was selected to participate in the 2016 Johnny Mercer Writers Colony at Goodspeed Musicals, where she will develop “Sunrise Prayer,” a project with Ty Defoe and Mary Kathryn Nagle. Visit [tidtayasinutoke.com](http://tidtayasinutoke.com).

Bassist **Katie Thiroux** of Long Beach, CA, released the album *Introducing Katie Thiroux*, which netted accolades from the NPR Music Jazz Critics poll, Huffington Post, and All About Jazz. Visit [katiethiroux.com](http://katiethiroux.com).

## 2010

Songwriter **Hanna Barakat** of Brooklyn, NY, won first place in the International Songwriting Competition 2016 for her song “Cycle.” The tune is a peace anthem for the world that incorporates numerous foreign instruments and languages, including a spoken-word section in Arabic. Visit [hannabarakat.com](http://hannabarakat.com).

**Brynjar Boe** of Oslo, Norway, had music featured in a U.S. pet adoption commercial. His music is licensed via the Los Angeles-based music library Score A Score.

**Neara Russell** of Studio City, CA, released a video for her song “Dance with Nobody.” She toured as a keyboardist and vocalist for the Boston-based band Magic Man. Visit [neararussell.com](http://neararussell.com).

**Pier Luigi Salami** of Poughkeepsie, NY, leads the PLS Trio, a Berklee alumni act blending jazz and electronic music. The group released its debut album *East River*, which received a five-star All About Jazz review and was nominated for the Best Debut and New Releases categories of the 2015 Jazz Critics Poll. Visit [plstrio.com](http://plstrio.com).

## 2011

Songwriters **Vasuda Sharma** of New Delhi, India, and **Aleksandra Denda '13** of Serbia, collaborated with Yousif Yaseen, **Giosuè Greco '14**, and **Moez Dawad '15**, **Aman Mahajan '07**, and Jan Kus on the production of the song “Already Here.” Visit [zoyamusicofficial.com](http://zoyamusicofficial.com).

**Alexander Trampas** of New Orleans, LA, is the bassist and musical director for Greek tenor Mario Frangoulis, who shared the stage with Smokey Robinson in December. The show included **Zac Zinger '11**, Hinako Sato, **Amberly Rosen '08**, and **Dimitris Mann '14**. Visit [alexandertrampas.com](http://alexandertrampas.com).

**Zac Zinger** of New York City composed music for CAPCOM’s Street Fighter V. He also arranged the album *Monster Hunter: The Jazz*, featuring Takeshi Ohbayashi and **Jordan Rose '12**. In addition, he wrote big-band arrangements for RWBY, an animated series by Berklee professor Jeff Williams. Visit [zaczingermusic.com](http://zaczingermusic.com).

# HERE, THERE, EVERYWHERE

**David Rosenthal '81:** *Music director and keyboardist for the Piano Man for 23 Years and counting.*

By Curtis Killian

During a recent artist residency at his alma mater, **David Rosenthal '81**, Billy Joel's music director and keyboardist since 1993, described his prodigious career as "a fun and exciting journey." He wasn't exaggerating.

On the most recent leg of that odyssey, Rosenthal is booked for indefinite sold-out shows with Billy Joel in a first-of-its-kind residency at Madison Square Garden. Thus far there have been nearly 30 monthly engagements at the fabled venue, which Rosenthal says will continue as long as there is a demand. "It's just remarkable, the enthusiasm of the New York fans for Billy," Rosenthal says. "Worldwide he has that incredible appeal, but particularly in New York he has that home advantage." Notably, Joel and Rosenthal will also play at Fenway Park in August for the third summer in a row, and Joel's sold-out debut gig at Wembley Stadium in September.

Of his role as music director and the unique arena residency, Rosenthal notes, "It's a lot of preparedness. No two shows with him are identical." The arena residency offers Joel the chance to perform his less-known tunes in addition to the hits fans expect. In preparation, Rosenthal says he has about 85 songs programmed for his keyboards.

Rosenthal arrived at Berklee during the late 1970s as a classically trained pianist. He formed a band with fellow student **Steve Vai '79**, a collaboration that has continued throughout their careers and is documented on several albums. "Everybody knew he was a great

player," Rosenthal says of Vai. "We played a lot of different things, and I believe it was Steve's tape of our band that got [him his] audition with Frank Zappa. He's a remarkable talent and [we] have remained great friends." That relationship and others were an added benefit to Rosenthal from his Berklee years.

Rosenthal's first venture after graduating was a successful audition to replace keyboardist Don Airey in guitarist Richie Blackmore's band Rainbow. It extended through two stadium tours and two albums, and was followed by tours with Little Steven, Cindy Lauper, Robert Palmer, and Enrique Iglesias as well as studio work with an array of artists.

In addition to these gigs and his long-term work with Joel, Rosenthal has manned the keyboards with progressive stalwarts Happy the Man, orchestrated a concerto for Yngwie Malmsteen, and done synth programming for Bruce Springsteen.

During a recent Berklee visit hosted by the Electronic Production and Design Department and the Office of Alumni Affairs, Rosenthal gave clinics on designing and playing a touring keyboard rig, the application of Apple's Main Stage, and the role of the music director. "It's fascinating, I'm on the cutting edge of technology now, but every piece of gear I use now did not exist while I was at Berklee," he says. "But what I was fortunate to receive in my education here was all the concepts of how things work, and that enabled me to adapt to whatever technologies came along after I left.

"I really love doing all types of projects [stylistically and musically], but [also enjoy] projects as synth player, orchestrator or producer," Rosenthal says. "There are a lot of things I've been fortunate to do throughout all of my career, so it's been a good run."

*Curtis Killian is a web content producer for Berklee's Office of Alumni Affairs.*



David Rosenthal



Shannon Finney

From the left: Archie Shepp, Wendy Oxenhorn, Gary Burton '62, and Pharoah Sanders were honored as jazz masters by the National Endowment for the Arts at a tribute concert on April 4 at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.



Berklee president Roger Brown and Valencia faculty member Steven Webber (second and third from the right, respectively) reconnect with alumni at the annual alumni showcase, a part of Berklee's 31st annual student spring break trip to Nashville in March. Jenn Bostic '08 (second from the left) organized the showcase.



President Roger Brown (seated) and Angel Cespedes '13 (standing behind Brown) are pictured with members of the band, Hijos De La Malinche who performed at a recent alumni reception in Mexico City, Mexico.



Brynjar Boe '10



Mayssa Karaa '12



Laney Jones '14



Justin Schornstein '15

## 2012

Vocalist **Mayssa Karaa** of Los Angeles, CA, appeared in a Sesame Street-type video singing the Arabic alphabet song. Shortly after its release, the video had more than 3 million views on YouTube. Visit [mayssakaraa.com](http://mayssakaraa.com).

**Peter Maltzan** of Lexington, MA, is one of the three cofounders of U-Turn Audio, a company which manufactures consumer turntables in Woburn, MA. Among its clients are Barnes & Noble and Third Man Records (owned by Jack White of the White Stripes), for whom they are manufacturing a line of customized turntables. Visit [uturnaudio.com](http://uturnaudio.com).

**Francisco Ruiz** of Los Angeles, CA, performed at the Viña del Mar International Song Festival in Chile with Latin Grammy winner Paulina Aguirre. The competition drew an audience of 20,000 and was televised to millions worldwide.

## 2013

Drummer **Ryo Tanaka** of Brooklyn, NY, is playing with the band Peeland-Z for its spring tour.

## 2014

Singer/songwriter **Laney Jones** of Astatula, FL, released a self-titled album, her fourth, on vinyl. She and her band the Spirits are touring the

country to promote the album. Visit [laney-jones.com](http://laney-jones.com).

## 2015

Vocalist **Giselle Hausman** of Toronto, Canada, is a member of the duo GAIIA blending soulful and jazzy singer-songwriter influences with deep-house tunes. Visit [gaiiamusic.com](http://gaiiamusic.com).

**Sergio Torres-Letelier** of Los Angeles, CA, is scoring the feature film *The Extraordinary World of Cecily Blinkstop* by director Jennifer Potts. In 2014, Sergio scored Potts's short film *Charlie & Poppy*.

**Justin Schornstein** of Boston, MA, composed and produced the score for the short film *Jahar*, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in April. Directed by Henry Hayes, *Jahar* depicts events as a young man learns that his friend is one of the Boston Marathon bombers.

**Alper Tuzcu**, originally from Istanbul, Turkey, now residing in Brookline, MA, released the album *Between 12 Waters* for Palma Records. The album release concert in Cambridge, MA, included 11 Berklee musicians from seven countries. Visit [alpertuzcu.com](http://alpertuzcu.com).

## IAMA Acoustic Awards Winners

At the 12th Annual International Acoustic Music Awards (IAMA), members of the Berklee community won the top award and placed as finalists.

The grand prize winner was current Berklee student **Jack Newsome** '18, for his song "Hooked on Me." Among the finalists were **Melissa Ferrick** '90, **Anouschka Peralman** '95, **Andrew Peebles** '13, **Marcos Golergant** '14, **Emily Desmond** '14, and **Caitlyn Offerman** '13.

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# FINAL CADENCE

**Frank G. Cagliuso** '51 of Marblehead, MA, passed away on February 23. He was 87. He was an arranger for Lionel Hampton and a saxophonist with various big bands. He also taught music in Arlington, MA, for 24 years. He leaves his wife, Barbara; son, Gary; and daughter, Dara VanRemoortel.

**Bruce W. Johnson** '67 of Dublin, GA, passed away on February 7. He was 71. Johnson was a trombone player during his time at Berklee and later attended Rutland Business College in Rutland, VT. He leaves his wife, Carolyn.

**James "Jimmy" Arena** '72 of Salisbury, MA, passed away on August 8, 2015. He was 65. Arena earned his degree in music education at Berklee and was a gifted organist. He was a performer for his entire career.

**Jeannie Deva** '75 of Hollywood, CA, passed away on January 17. She was 64. A renowned voice and performance coach, Deva worked with producers and engineers for Aerosmith, the Rolling Stones, the Cars, Amy Winehouse, Ludacris, and DJ Jazzy Jeff. Additionally, she coached television and Broadway vocalists. Deva assisted in establishing Berklee's voice depart-

ment in 1975. She is survived by her husband and manager, Joe Scoglio '74.

**Brad Fuller** '75 of San Jose, CA, died on January 2. He was 62. Originally a jazz musician, Fuller joined Atari in 1982 as the director of audio and was a pioneer in FM synthesis for video-game audio. He is survived by his wife, Rebecca, and sons Jeffrey and Kevin.

**Pablo Manavello** '82 of Miami, FL, died on January 18. He was 65. Originally from Venezuela, Manavello was a composer, guitarist, and singer-songwriter who worked with Ricardo Montaner, Chayanne, and Ricky Martin.

**Mark Alan Schulz** '82 of Norfolk, VA, died March 31 after a long illness. He was 54. Schulz was a freelance film composer, and producer. He earned two Telly Awards and two Emmy Awards for his work as a composer. He is survived by his wife, Holly Benton; his parents; and two brothers.

**Dorothy Sikora** '82 of Oceanport, NJ, died on February 12 after an illness. She was 55. Sikora was a pianist, singer, harpist, and drum circle facilitator. She is survived by her husband, Robert Elinson; and two sons.

**Alan O'Toole** '83 of Middleboro, MA, passed away on March 21 after a brief illness. He was 59. At Berklee, he majored in composition. For much of his career he worked in the food products business. He also played keyboards for various jazz groups.

Vocalist **Michele "Mickey" Burks** '90 of Houston, TX passed away on February 5, 2016. She was 47.

**Jamie Vuignier** '90 of Brooklyn, NY, passed away on November 19, 2015. He was 48. Vuignier was a jazz guitarist and the manager of the Kobal Collection at the Art Resource in Manhattan. He is survived by his wife, Tana; and two daughters.

**Timothy "Timm" Keleher** '97 of Dracut, MA, passed away April 16 from complications following a stroke. He was 43. Keleher earned his degree in Music Production and Engineering and worked extensively in the Boston area for *Blue Man Group* and at WGBH-TV. He is survived by his parents Barbara and Kevin Keleher, and brothers Kevin '99 and Paul.

**Aaron Sauer** '97 of West Brookfield, MA, died unexpectedly on March 3



Jeannie Deva '75

while vacationing in the Dominican Republic. He was 42. He played music and worked at Gordon Music in Worcester, MA, before taking a job at Digital Federal Credit Union. He leaves his wife, Jane Sauer.

**Andrew Lewis** '08 of Montgomery, AL, died January 17. He was 31. A guitarist and songwriter, Lewis earned his Berklee degree in performance. He played professionally as a solo artist and with several area bands. He is survived by his parents and two sisters.

Student **Jae Min Kang** of Cumming, GA, passed away unexpectedly in February. He was 19. A guitarist, Kang was in his fourth semester at Berklee pursuing a dual major in performance and MP&E.

Are you looking to advance your career? Master the latest innovations in music and technology? Augment or improve your playing skills? Or simply achieve a personal goal of completing your studies?

Whatever the reason, there's never been a better time to return to Berklee to:

- Finish your degree (on-campus, online—or both).
- Turn your diploma into a degree.
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## Recorded Music Is the Most Valuable

by David Newhoff

The response to the devaluation of recorded music in our times seems to be that a musical artist simply has to tour more in order to make up for the revenue stream once generated by sales of recordings. The assumption seems to be that the production of recordings wasn't much work in the first place, and that the actual costs, logistics, or wear-and-tear of playing live gigs for artists other than megastars are no big deal. Nevermind that there were songwriters, producers, and others involved in creating the recorded song, which first attracted the fan long before he or she ever considered attending a live show. In reality, as fans, we care way more about recorded music than live performances, and it is in our own self-interest to want a market that supports recorded works in the future.

There's an assumption that recorded music will always be available and that it will never be compensated more than it is right now. Then the conversation turns to these often-fanciful proposals for alternative revenue streams, even supported by dubious applications of data by various pundits. But even if the numbers added up—and they do not—I can't help noticing what a tragically cynical story this has become. Because after 15-plus years of piracy and rationalized predation by major corporate players vying to be lords of the stream, as consumers we've undervalued the one musical experience that most of us cherish above all.

Live performances are great. But we generally form personal relationships with songs because they are recorded, because they are portable and are, therefore, with us in our day-to-day lives. That's how certain songs become the soundtrack to our most visceral experiences—good and bad. That's why songs we may not even technically like or consciously choose to associate with certain moments become part of a unique playlist that only means what it means to us individually. Songs are hardwired to my biography with absolute precision, and I assume this is most people's experience with music.

At my house recently, we were in the mood to play a bunch of hits from the days of A.M. radio—those years when as kids we rode around in the backs of station wagons without seat belts, and all the good music played

on tinny, monotreme speakers in the center of the dashboard. It's cool that a streaming service now enables us to tap into these memories on-demand.

I hadn't heard Linda Ronstadt's rendition of Roy Orbison's "Blue Bayou" since those low-fi days, when I was too young even to appreciate it. But in surround-sound to my adult ears, it really is a gorgeous version of a classic that should be treasured. And if you look at the names of the professionals who played and/or sang on her platinum album *Simple Dreams* and think for a moment that a new Ronstadt somewhere out there will ever produce songs of a similar quality without the investment model we call labels, you simply have no idea how recorded music is produced. But I assure you it has almost nothing to do with the affordability of digital tools. The real investment is in labor, skill, experience, talent, and time. Just because a great recording can be made by one person with some low-cost digital gear doesn't mean that we, as listeners, want the range of available recorded works to be so universally limited. To put it another way, yes, a filmmaker can produce a feature with a few friends and an iPhone, but he cannot produce *Game of Thrones* that way—or almost any of the films you want to see.

I thought about what a streaming subscription costs and how the singles I had cued up in a matter of minutes would have cost about \$25 in 1973, which is nearly \$143 in 2016, factoring for inflation. But a subscription to a near-global catalog of music that turns my sound system into a home jukebox costs about \$10 a month. There's no way that adds up; and no amount of magical wordplay from the Internet industry can make it add up, especially for the next generation of recording artists, and quite possibly for their fans.

The personal relationships my kids form with the music they're listening to right now will be the basis of their own nostalgia in 20 years. Yet, despite the fact that this personal interaction with music is as meaningful as it ever has been, the market in which artists are working today insists that their recordings aren't worth anything. These products are just loss-leaders, which must be made in order to generate a fan base, which might be convertible into revenue by some means other than direct sales of the prod-

uct itself. No business model actually works this way. When recorded works themselves cease to be a commodity, when they're only made for the purpose of selling something else, they cease to be the basis for investment. This can limit the range of creators' options to collaborate and produce a richer universe of sounds.

Tech-industry pundits say, "We have a greater variety of music out there than ever before!" It's true, but in the bigger picture, we are witnessing very early stages of market transformations. The switch from digital downloads to legal streaming is just a few years old; and it is far too early to conclude what the results will be over the next decade or two by looking at how creators are trying to respond right now. Certainly, there are a lot of creators making all kinds of music, but if a lot of that music is being produced by artists under age 30, and they cannot build sustainable careers over the next decade, we don't know what the results will be. We do know that when people invest in the recordings themselves, making bets that their products will be valued, this model produces a great variety of content for listeners.

My teenaged son is into metal and punk and recently introduced the whole family to an artist who, by all appearances, is what we might realistically call a rising star, though not likely destined to be a mega-star. Her sound is original, her guitar playing has been critically praised, she's touring, selling merch, she's hot, and she fits the profile of an artist who would traditionally have a 10-plus-year career with an indie label. As a colleague of mine with 30 years experience working with indies told me, "Under the old system, I can say with confidence that this artist would have 10 times the recording sales she does today. And that would be enough for us to have invested in her career and provide all the support she needs to develop and produce her best work and to support her with marketing, booking, openings for bigger acts, videos, etc. Today, we can't make that investment."

The counternarrative to this indie-label model is that the Internet offers a free platform for promotion, the artist can be her own support system, and therefore, "keep 100 percent of the recording sales" rather than share any of it with that grubby label. The way



David Newhoff

this translates in reality is that the artist gets to do the work she knows (make music) plus a lot of the work she doesn't know (marketing, booking, producing, etc.) and "keep 100 percent of recorded music sales and license fees," which are now quite low. By comparison, the "outdated model" was based on a business strategy in which the indie label says to an artist like this, "You may never make us millions, but we see a way to invest in your career and make that work over the coming decade or so."

The potential loss to fans just might be that kick-your-ass, break-your-heart, can't-live-without-it album that she never produces. By 35, this hot, punk artist will be a different person than she is today. She may be a little burned out on constant touring, or get married, or want a kid, or want to have a personal life beyond producing music for her fans *not* to pay for. And wherever life leads her, this narrative will produce new music in her; and there may be some masterwork lurking in the alchemy of 2022. But because there were never record sales or sustainable license deals for streaming to properly support her, there's no way of knowing what she *won't* produce in the coming years as a result.

On the other hand, if we assume that she'll produce anyway—because that's just how artists are or because artists "do better" when they struggle financially—then as so-called fans, we really have become cynics and leeches. We have no reason to presume that we deserve recorded music for free, or next to nothing, just because digital technology makes it possible. Those are just excuses for our cynicism. Many of us could not imagine a world without recorded music, so how can anyone so dismissively say that it is of little value? Probably, the most cynical belief of all is that recorded music—let alone complex, distinctive, and experimental recordings—will always be widely available no matter what market conditions prevail. This may not necessarily be true. As long as the product we value most of all is the one for which we are least willing to pay, it seems reasonable to say that the future is anything but certain.

*David Newhoff is a writer and consultant living in New York. This article is an edited version of an entry he published on his blog at [illusionofmore.com](http://illusionofmore.com).*

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