

# Tell a friend . . .

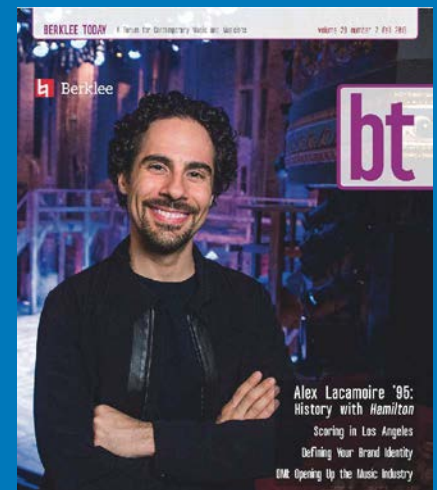
Virtual subscriptions to Berklee today are available for free to *all* interested parties.

Visit [www.berklee.edu/bt/subscribe.php](http://www.berklee.edu/bt/subscribe.php) and sign up to receive an e-mail when each new issue is published.

To see all recent e-pub editions visit <http://berkleetoday.epub.com>



Read archived issues at <http://www.berklee.edu/bt/archives.html>.





**Sierra Hull '11 and  
Molly Tuttle '14:  
Young Bluegrass Virtuosos  
Night School at Wally's  
Fostering Jazz in Dublin**



Berklee Online

# Degree Completion with Berklee Online

Did you leave Berklee prior  
to completing your degree?

You now have an opportunity to complete  
your Bachelor's degree with Berklee Online.

**LEARN MORE**

[online.berklee.edu/degree-completion](https://online.berklee.edu/degree-completion)

## **ONLINE BACHELOR'S DEGREE MAJORS**

Music Business / Music Production / Songwriting  
Interdisciplinary Music Studies / Songwriting & Producing Music  
Music Composition for Film, TV & Games / Guitar  
Electronic Music Production & Sound Design

## **CONTACT**

[degreecompletion@online.berklee.edu](mailto:degreecompletion@online.berklee.edu)

1-866-BERKLEE (USA)

+1-617-747-2146 (INTL)

## Managing Editor

Mark Small



## Contributors

Cindy Albert-Link, Kim Ashton, Nick Balkin, Lucia Burbano, Danielle Dreilinger, Tori Donahue, Margot Edwards, Rena Farkas, Ginny Fordham, Mary Giurleo, Jessica Halton, Rob Hochschild, Richard Niles, Lesley O'Connell, Panos Panay, Danielle Parillo, David Petrelli, Mimi Rabson, Beverly Tryon, Davis Wimberly

## Cover photo

Stacie Huckeba

## Art Direction

Dave Miranda

## Copy Editor

Lauren Horwitz

## Editorial Board:

Rob Hayes, *Director, Special Projects, Berklee Presents*

Darla Hanley, *Dean, Professional Education Division*

Debbie Cavalier '87, *Vice President for Online Learning and Continuing Education*

## Office of Institutional Advancement:

Cindy Albert Link, *Senior Vice President for Institutional Advancement*

Virginia Fordham '80, *Senior Director, Major Gifts and Campaign Planning*

Dana Grider, *Senior Director, Institutional Advancement*

Dana M. James '09, *Associate Director, Alumni Affairs in Los Angeles*

Fritz Kuhnlenz, *Director, Alumni Affairs*

Michael Magee, *Senior Director, Institutional Advancement*

Callan Moody, *Assistant Director, Alumni Affairs*

Caitlin St. Laurent, *West Coast Advancement Officer*

Beverly Tryon '82, *Assistant Vice President for Institutional Advancement*

Mirek Vana '01, *Global Development Officer*

Davis Wimberly '05, *Advancement Officer*

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.

*Berklee today* (ISSN 1052-3839) is published three times a year by Berklee College of Music's Office of Institutional Advancement. All contents © 2018 by Berklee College of Music. Send all address changes, press releases, letters to the editor, and advertising inquiries to *Berklee today*, Berklee College of Music, 1140 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02215-3693, 617-747-2843, kashton@berklee.edu. Alumni are invited to send in details of activities suitable for coverage. Unsolicited submissions are accepted. Canada Post: Publications Mail Agreement #40612608, Canada Returns should be sent to IMEX Global Solutions, P.O. Box 25542, London, ON N6C 6B2, Canada.

Visit us at [berklee.edu/berklee-today](http://berklee.edu/berklee-today)

## FEATURES

**14 Young Bluegrass Virtuosos**  
Mandolinist Sierra Hull and guitarist Molly Tuttle honor traditional music while following divergent paths with their original songs.  
*by Mark Small '73*

**19 Night School at Wally's**  
Three generations of Berklee musicians have learned invaluable lessons after school hours at Wally's Café Jazz Club.  
*by Rob Hochschild*

**22 Fostering Jazz in Dublin**  
Bassist Ronan Guilfoyle is a champion of jazz education in Ireland and the point man at Dublin City University, a Berklee global partner institution.  
*by Mark Small*

**25 Remembering a Guitar Giant**  
John Abercrombie '67 is esteemed for his musical legacy and humanity.  
*by Mark Small*



## DEPARTMENTS

**2 LEAD SHEET**  
**Pathways Roadmap: An Update on Berklee's Strategic Direction**  
*by Panos Panay*

**3 BERKLEE BEAT**  
Preparing the class of 2022, EDI initiative, new chair appointments, Soundbreaking, Panagiotis Liaropoulos and Olga Román faculty profiles, and more

**26 THE WOODSHED**  
**Writing String Pads**  
*by Mimi Rabson*

**28 EXPERT TESTIMONY**  
**Bruno Destrez '89: Improving Any Bass**

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

**31 ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT**  
**Ishaan Chhabra '10: Boston to Bollywood**

**39 FINAL CADENCE**

**40 CODA**  
**What Is an Arrangement Anyway?**  
*by Richard Niles and Mark Small*

## Pathways Roadmap: An Update on Berklee's Strategic Direction

By Panos Panay, Vice President for Innovation and Strategy

It is no secret that the role of higher education is evolving and the media and music industries are changing rapidly. A recent Harris Poll found that two-thirds of 14- to 23-year-old students ranked financial security as their top motivator for obtaining a college degree. Furthermore, in the wake of rising tuitions and stagnant wages, providing an affordable education that prepares graduates for an evolving jobscape is a priority. Here at Berklee we have launched Pathways: A Strategic Direction for Berklee to address these very issues.

Pathways sets a bold direction for the institution's future

by positioning Berklee as the global leader in creative education, driven by a student-centered focus, entrepreneurial spirit, inclusive culture, reimagined student services, the integration of transformational new technologies, and a career opportunity network. By using accessibility, affordability, and career preparation as our guideposts, our strategic direction is rich with initiatives that will help us educate and empower our students to better our world.

The promise of this strategic plan for 2017-2020 is the capacity it creates to open up flexible edu-

cational pathways across Berklee's educational ecosystem: the Boston campus, Berklee Online, Boston Conservatory at Berklee, Berklee Valencia, BerkleeNYC, study abroad, internships, institutes, and our Global Partners network to create the world's most innovative and comprehensive platform for music, dance, and theater education.

Furthermore, it can inspire and support our community to create new works, programs, and products that help launch the careers of our students, promote the work of our faculty, staff, and alumni, and cata-

lyze innovation across the creative and media industries. I encourage you to review it in detail at [berklee.edu/vision/pathways-2017-2020](http://berklee.edu/vision/pathways-2017-2020).

Numbering 58,000, our alumni are among Berklee's strongest ambassadors, and in forthcoming issues of *Berklee Today*, we will keep you updated on the development of these initiatives via the Pathways Roadmap column. We also welcome your input at [strategy@berklee.edu](mailto:strategy@berklee.edu) and look forward to sharing our progress with you.

## Sign Up Now for Free Access to Berklee PULSE

### Online Music Education Resources in English and Spanish

The **Berklee PULSE® Music Method** is an online music education portal that enables students to study, jam, and practice using interactive modules and an engaging collection of contemporary music and grooves.

Visit [pulse.berklee.edu](http://pulse.berklee.edu) to:

- > explore new lessons and resources on the PULSE homepage that are engaging to students of all ages, with no password required; or
- > request a free, 60-day demo account to access the full PULSE website, where teachers and students can take advantage of the unique lessons and interactive tools that make up this online resource.

[pulse.berklee.edu](http://pulse.berklee.edu)



**Berklee**  
PULSE

pedaltrain-2

VOX

LOVE

# BERKLEE BEAT

## Preparing the Class of 2022 to Tell Its Story

By Mark Small

On September 2, leaders from Berklee and Boston Conservatory at Berklee welcomed the class of 2022 at the annual convocation in the Berklee Performance Center. The theme of the event was: “Tell Your Own Story.”

In his opening remarks, president Roger H. Brown gave a bit of the story of the entering class. He shared that the new students hail from 101 different countries with the largest number coming from China, followed by South Korea, Canada, Colombia, and Italy. The largest cohort of American students come from California, followed by those from Massachusetts, New York, and Florida. With enthusiasm, Brown announced, “For the first time in the history of the college, this class is made up of 42 percent women and the conservatory has more than 50 percent women. We’re going to have a lot of great female energy in this institution this year. We are really glad you’re here.”

The theme of the convocation, “Tell Your Story,” Brown explained, “is to inspire you to imagine being an artist who can express yourself in an authentic way, and tell your story, not try to imitate someone else’s story.”

Brown was the first of four college executives to share a bit of their personal stories. Brown spoke of growing up in Georgia and playing drums in various bands from middle school through college, and even shared rejection letters sent to him by the Elektra/Asylum and Arista record labels. After graduating from Davidson College, he taught science and math in Kenya. Following graduate studies at Yale, he and his future wife, Linda Mason, served refugees in Cambodia and Sudan. Brown and Mason later founded Bright Horizons Family Solutions, offering early childhood education programs in America, Canada,

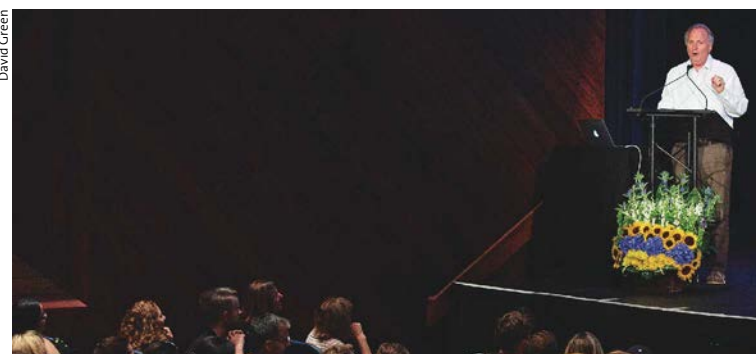
and the United Kingdom. In 2005, he became Berklee’s third president.

He summed up the lessons of his own career by saying that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line—in two-dimensional space. “But we live in a three-dimensional world with hills, valleys, rivers, and mountains,” Brown stated. “Often the shortest distance between two points in this three-dimensional world is the long and winding road. My career has been a long and winding road.” He related that seemingly unrelated things he did prepared him for his current job.

“You don’t know how what you do tomorrow will prepare you for what you may be doing in 30 years,” Brown said. “Do it with all your heart, vigor, passion, and commitment, and my promise to you is that your long and winding road will lead to where you are supposed to be.”

Other leaders shared parts of their stories, including Cathy Young, executive director for Boston Conservatory at Berklee; Betsy Newman, Berklee’s senior vice president for student enrollment and engagement; and Larry Simpson, senior vice president for academic affairs/provost. After describing episodes from her journey, Young told the students, “If you can’t go right, go left, if you can’t go straight, go around, and if someone tells you you’ll never make it in this field, don’t listen to them. And don’t be afraid of wrong turns. They may lead you somewhere more wonderful than you ever imagined.”

Student performances were interspersed between speakers. Selections included a Latin-jazz instrumental by Sheila del Bosque Fuentes (flute), Camila Cortina Bello (piano), and Takafumi Nikaido (congas). Conservatory students



President Roger H. Brown addresses entering students at the September 2 convocation.



Dance students from Boston Conservatory at Berklee performed at both convocation and opening day. From the left: Brittany Brown, John Chin, and Tyeri Morrison.



Vocalist Yanina Johnson and a seven-piece student group from Berklee College of Music performed three songs at the September 7 Opening Day exercises.

Brittany Brown, John Chin, and Tyeri Morrison danced to the solo piano piece “Written on the Sky,” and Daniel Reifsteck played an original piece on solo vibes. Closing the evening was Common Cents, a nine-piece band led by guitarist William Nelson, featuring vocalist Malaya Watson. They played Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” and an original instrumental titled “Breathe.”

On September 7, College and Conservatory leaders gathered with faculty and staff members at the Sheraton Boston Hotel for Opening Day 2018, a program of speakers and musicians. Larry Simpson spoke of the recently concluded negotiation of a three-year faculty contract that includes a commitment to convert 30

faculty members to full-time status.

In his remarks, president Brown shared aspirations for the year ahead. He mentioned creating access, affordability, and success opportunities for students. On a macro level, he said, “My admonition in this world—is that within our community of 6,000, let’s try to treat each other with compassion and respect.” He advocated showing a heightened compassion toward all. “If as teachers, students, staff members, and leaders, we can model it for the world, that’s the most important thing we can do to address the swirling confusion of the larger world we live in. So welcome back, I hope you have a great year. I’m excited about it.”

## EDI Initiative Looks to the Future

By *Tori Donahue*

Beginning in 2019, Berklee College of Music will offer incoming students the option to choose an electronic digital instrument (EDI), a computing device equipped with music software and performance controllers, as their principal instrument. The EDI initiative will allow Berklee to meet to the needs of all musicians, including those who do not play a traditional instrument. Selecting an EDI as a principal instrument was first made available to students in the 2018 Five-Week Summer Performance Program.

The inclusion of an EDI as a principal instrument recognizes the central role that computers play in all types of music-making. Berklee students currently compose and produce a variety of music using computers, and performing music with an EDI is a natural progression in developing a contemporary performance practice. According to a re-

port from the International Music Summit earlier this year, electronic music is growing at a steady rate worldwide, and the industry could be worth \$9 billion by 2021. Hardware and software used for EDIs (in the study, Pioneer DJ and Native Instruments are primary examples) continue to grow year to year; in general, the music production software industry is expected to grow at more than nine percent per year through 2021.

“This new initiative is going to have a huge effect on the field of music education,” said Michael Bierylo, chair of the Electronic Production and Design Department at Berklee. “We’ll now have the opportunity to study and teach an important way that artists are currently exploring music.”

Berklee faculty members are developing an audition and evaluation process for students applying to the



Peter Larson

college as an EDI principal. Once enrolled, EDI students will further develop their performance capabilities, allowing them to explore a variety of repertoire along with other traditional instrumentalists. The intro-

duction of new technology will add to the breadth of Berklee’s academic options and create new opportunities for collaborations across a wide scope of principal instruments.

## New Leaders Onboard

Tommy Neblett has been named the dean of dance at Boston Conservatory at Berklee. Neblett has been affiliated with the Conservatory since 1994 and has been in the dance profession for more than 35 years. As a performer, Neblett has worked with Dan Wagoner and Dancers, Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians, Concert Dance Company of Boston, Maryland Dance Theater, and Prometheus Dance. Neblett has also performed in films, fashion shows, nightclubs, operas, and theater productions. He has served on the dance faculties of Harvard University, Emerson College, Walnut Hill School for the Arts, the Dance Complex, and the Oure Idrætshøjskole in Denmark. He holds two bachelor’s degrees from James Madison University.

After serving as an associate professor and interim chair of dance at the Conservatory, Mila Thigpen has been named the dance department’s new chair. She came to the Conservatory in 2015 after serving as a teaching fellow at Harvard University and dance lecturer at Tufts University. She has extensive experience as a choreog-

rapher, dance performer, and conference and workshop presenter. Thigpen earned her B.A. degree from Kenyon College, M.F.A. at the Boston Conservatory, Ed.M. at Harvard Extension School, and anticipates earning her doctorate from Texas Women’s University in 2019.

Matthew M. Marsit has been named chair of instrumental studies at the Conservatory. In his new position, he will oversee all instrumental areas within the Conservatory’s Music Division. Since earning his master’s degree in orchestral conducting from the Conservatory in 2012, Marsit has led ensembles and performed as a solo, chamber, and orchestral musician throughout the United States. He is the director of bands for the Hopkins Center for the Performing Arts at Dartmouth College, music director of the Charles River Wind Ensemble, and assistant conductor of Symphony Nova. He has previously held conducting positions at Ithaca College, Cornell University, and Drexel University, among others.

Michele Darling has joined Berklee’s Electronic Production and Design Department as assistant chair. She is an accomplished sound



*Tommy Neblett*



*Michele Darling*



*Matthew M. Marsit*

designer, composer, recording engineer, and educator who worked for years as part of the Emmy Award-winning production team at Sesame Workshop. Her career highlights also include sound work for several animated television shows, online media, games, and applications. Darling holds a B.S. in music from Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and a master’s degree in music technology from New York University.

Toki Wright has assumed the role of assistant chair of Berklee’s Professional Music Department. He formerly headed the hip-hop studies program at McNally Smith College of Music and is a veteran performer,

recording artist, and radio program creator and curator. He won two Emmy Awards for original music he composed for documentary films and has won two Clio Awards for advertising campaigns. Wright earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Minnesota.

Aja Burrell Wood is the new managing director for the Berklee Institute of Jazz and Gender Justice. An ethnomusicologist, Wood is a specialist in jazz, women in jazz, black classical musicians, blues, hip-hop, and other genres related to the African diaspora. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Howard University and is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Michigan.

# Two Berklee Titans Retire

By Lesley O'Connell and Mark Small

Last summer, two prominent leaders in the Berklee community, J. Curtis Warner Jr. '76 and Kari Juusela '86, retired from their positions after decades of service.

Warner has a long history of building bridges among constituents with different aims. And Berklee benefitted from his experience and service ethic for a quarter-century.

He began his education career at South Boston High School during the height of Boston's desegregation busing crisis in the 1970s. Prior to his arrival, students rioted and threw a piano down the stairs, resulting in the removal of the instrument. Warner convinced administrators that he would keep the piano safe and worked with the school's theater teachers to produce a musical as a way to re-introduce performances to a school riddled with racial tension.

"Music became the unifier," he recalled. "You had white and black kids who couldn't walk down the hall together, but they could play together in music class."

Such experiences shaped Warner's understanding of the value of music education and cultivated his aptitude for diplomacy during his 17 years with the Boston Public Schools. It was a prelude to his work as the architect of the City Music Program and his cultivation of strong relationships between Berklee and its neighbors.

A 1976 graduate of Berklee, Warner returned in 1993 to manage the Berklee International Network (now Berklee Global Partners) as well as to run a

scholarship initiative for Boston high school students to attend Berklee's Five-Week Summer Performance Program. He later built a year-round program, Berklee City Music, to mentor students in schools with no music programs. As well, his work with the international network served as the inspiration and model for the City Music Network, now a consortium of more than 40 community organizations.

In 2015 Warner became associate vice president for education outreach and executive director of City Music, and then Berklee's associate vice president for community and government relations.

In retirement, Warner plans to play drums again (he's already done two gigs). Of Warner's legacy with City Music, Krystal Banfield, associate vice president, education outreach and social entrepreneurship says, "There are few people I know who have an unconditional compassion for people, particularly young people, and help those who need a leg up to have an opportunity and have a voice."

Kari Juusela retired from his position as a division dean at Berklee in August after 14 years of service. He will, however, continue to teach for Berklee online. A Berklee graduate, Juusela earned a diploma and a bachelor of music degree in performance in 1977 and 1986 respectively. He also later earned a master of music degree in composition from Georgia State University in 1988, and a doctor of music degree in composition from the

Kelly Davidson



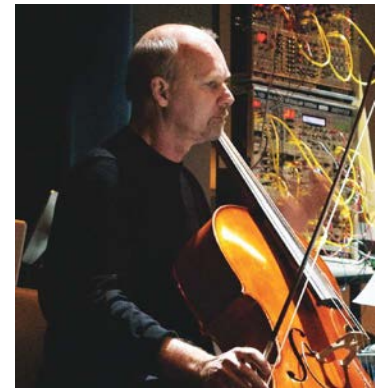
J. Curtis Warner Jr. '76

University of Maryland in 1992.

In 2004, Juusela left his position as the associate dean at Stetson University School of Music in Deland, Florida to return to Berklee as the dean of the Professional Writing Division. When the professional writing and music technology divisions merged around 2014, Juusela oversaw the new combined division.

When asked about accomplishments during his tenure at Berklee, Juusela states that he is pleased that the electronic digital instrument will be a principal instrument next year. "Stephen Croes [former dean of the Music Technology Division] and I talked about this a lot and it took years of collaboration with Michael Bierylo, Ron Savage, and others to come to fruition," he says. "I think that will be big because it's the direction in which music is going."

He also cites his collaborative work leading to the development of programs and hiring faculty members and chairs for video game scoring, contemporary conducting, composition, film



Kari Juusela '86

scoring, songwriting, music theater, production, and more. "My role was to throw in a few ingredients, stir the pot, and then try to stay out of the way," Juusela says. "I loved working at Berklee because people were willing to take a risk on things that other schools would not risk."

Juusela has a deep catalog of orchestral and chamber ensemble and works for solo instruments and his music has appeared on seven albums. His future plans include more composing as well as performing on acoustic and electric cello. He plans to continue writing electronic music to perform with professors Richard Boulanger and Michael Bierylo. The trio has previously performed internationally in Krakow, Poland, Shanghai, China, St. Petersburg, Russia, and in America.

Juusela also plans to increase the number of classes he has been teaching for Berklee Online. "I am really excited to be teaching again—especially online," he says. "It's amazing to have students from Iran, Egypt, and Singapore. I am stunned by the talent out there."

## City Music Scholars Announced

By Tori Donahue

Seven young musicians from underserved communities in Boston and across the United States were awarded four-year, full-tuition scholarships to attend Berklee during an emotional presentation at the Berklee Performance Center on August 7.

Emceed by Berklee professor and acclaimed jazz saxophonist Tia Fuller, the scholarship presentation came at the end of Berklee's Five-Week Summer Performance Program, which included 90 teens who attended on Berklee City Music Summer Scholarships.

Scholarship recipients were welcomed to the stage by Fuller, Berklee vice president for academic affairs and provost Larry Simpson, and associate vice president for the Office of Education Outreach

and Social Entrepreneurship Krystal Banfield. The concert showcased the talents of Berklee City Music students performing in big band, pop-rock, pop/R&B, and jazz ensembles.

Scholarship recipients were all participants in Berklee City Music®, a nonprofit organization that delivers high-quality contemporary music education instruction to youth from underserved communities at no or low cost. The Berklee City Music Network® is an association of 40 community organizations that serve more than 46,000 students in the United States, Canada, and Latin America each year. Since its inception, Berklee City Music has awarded 258 four-year, full-tuition scholarships totaling more than \$2 million.

Kelly Davidson



Krystal Banfield (far left) and Larry Simpson (far right) celebrate with the seven recipients of Berklee City Music Scholarships. From left: Trevon Sullen-Trotter, Zalissa Stewart, Noah Rowe-Gaddis, Morgan MacNeil-Barry, Azana Hightower, Nia Harris, and Diamonte Darbouze.

### Where the Scholarship Recipients Are From

Diamonte Darbouze, Roslindale, MA  
Nia Harris, Newark, NJ  
Azana Hightower, Hyde Park, MA  
Morgan MacNeil-Barry, Abington, MA

Noah Rowe-Gaddis, Glenwood Springs, CO  
Zalissa Stewart, Memphis, TN  
Trevon Sullen-Trotter, New Orleans, LA



## Kathryn Bostic Selected for Film Scoring Residency

By Margot Edwards

Kathryn Bostic, a composer, singer/songwriter, pianist, and vocalist known for her work in film, TV, and live theater, has been named Berklee's 2018–2019 Film Scoring Artist in Residence. Bostic is the first female African American film composer to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. She is also a member of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences and vice president of the Alliance for Women Film Composers. Bostic has composed for films and television shows including *Dear White People*, *American Masters* episode "August Wilson: The Ground on Which I Stand," *Middle of Nowhere*, and *Surviving Compton: Dre, Suge & Michelle*. Bostic has also written music for several August Wilson plays.

The Film Scoring Artist in Residence Program was made possible through a 2018 FilmCraft grant from the Academy Foundation of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and

Sciences. The aim is to support the careers of practicing film composers, prepare students as film scoring professionals, diversify the pipeline of talent to the film industry, and increase public awareness of the significance of the film scoring craft.

This issue of *Berklee today* went to press before Bostic's residence started in the first week of October. She is scheduled to work closely with film scoring students through clinics, lectures, and workshops, including a special clinic for seniors in the major. Her participation in a demo orchestral recording session for film scoring students on the Shames Family Scoring Stage is also planned. Additionally, she will deliver a public keynote discussing inclusion, individuality, and imagination.

For the first time, Berklee's film scoring residency will engage with high-school students participating in the Berklee City Music Program, an initiative that provides high-quality

contemporary music education, mentoring, and scholarship opportunities to youth from underserved communities at no or low cost. Bostic will spend a day with City Music students at the Boston Arts Academy, exploring film scoring as a career and discussing educational pathways that can lead to success in the field. City Music students will also have the opportunity to receive mentorship from Berklee film scoring students after the clinic.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Academy Foundation for its continued support of our Film Scoring Artist in Residence Program and we could not be more excited to welcome Kathryn Bostic," said Alison Plante, chair of Berklee's Film Scoring Department. "Kathryn has local roots, having studied music at Tufts University and the New England Conservatory of Music. She is accomplished in a range of styles, which I think our students will relate to. She is excited to engage



Kathryn Bostic

with our students and with the young people in the City Music program. We look forward to a rewarding experience for all."

The academy's FilmCraft grants were established to identify and empower future filmmakers from non-traditional backgrounds, cultivate new and diverse talent, promote motion pictures as an art form, and provide a platform for underrepresented artists. Previous grants from the Academy Foundation have enabled Berklee to bring several leading film composers to campus for multi-day residencies, including *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* composer Patrick Doyle in 2016.

## Pictures and Tunes from Travelers

By Tori Donahue

Royal Caribbean, the global cruise line, teamed up with experts from Berklee and technologists from around the world to create SoundSeeker. This first-of-its-kind tool that transforms travelers' most memorable photos into an original, shareable soundtrack with a video to match. More than a year in the making, SoundSeeker is a patent-pending digital experience powered by artificial intelligence (AI). The tool is specifically designed to use machine learning to seamlessly create original soundtracks based on the content of each photograph.

By visiting the SoundSeeker website, users can upload three photos, which are analyzed with AI based on color, landscape, backdrop, emotion, body language, and facial expression. SoundSeeker then turns them into a shareable and one-of-a-kind soundtrack—virtually DJ-ing life's most brag-worthy moments. Fans can follow along on Royal Caribbean's social channels, and by searching #SoundSeeker.

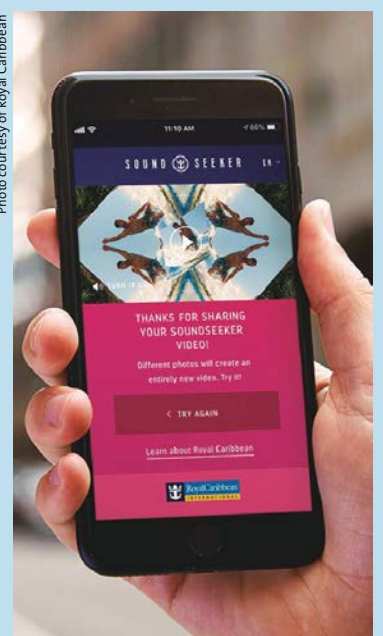
The contributors from Berklee's Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship (BerkleeICE), an on-campus initiative that promotes entrepreneurialism, included Electronic Production and Design chair Michael Bierylo, associate professors Ben Houge and Michael Sweet, and assistant professor Jean-Luc Sinclair.

SoundSeeker uses machine learning, an AI technique that enables computers to simulate human intelligence and make decisions on their own without explicit instructions. The learning process entailed more than 600 hours in which Royal Caribbean and a team of musicians and technologists reviewed hundreds of music tracks along with 10,000 photos, matching each of the 2.5 million combinations to one of 10 moods.

SoundSeeker AI uses Google Cloud Vision to identify objects, facial expressions, and colors in a user's photo by referencing the roadmap developed by the Berklee participants.

SoundSeeker then finds the musical elements corresponding to each mood in the photo to compose a genuinely distinct audio and visual photo album. The tool is equipped to generate over one million unique tracks, based on custom base tracks, composed exclusively for Royal Caribbean. The customized tracks draw inspiration from a wide variety of music, including 1990s-era hip-hop, rock, modern, and electronic dance music.

"SoundSeeker is the latest proof point of Royal Caribbean innovation and how we focus it on delivering unexpected, memorable experiences," said Jim Berra, chief marketing officer, Royal Caribbean International. "People of all ages crave new ways to share their best experiences on social media," Berra continues. "This unprecedented tool allows you to put a completely unique, multisensory spin on sharing those memories. Now friends and followers can see and hear your life's adventures."



SoundSeeker app on a handheld device




# BERKLEE GLOBAL CAREER SUMMIT

at Berklee's Campus in Valencia, Spain


Boost your skills and achieve your professional goals with this three-day intensive career bootcamp.

- > Full access to all keynotes and talks with 20+ industry experts
- > One individual mentoring session with an industry expert
- > Access to 15 hands-on career workshops at the basic, advanced, and expert levels
- > Open recording sessions with renowned producers
- > Mixers with speakers and Valencia campus students, staff, and faculty
- > Eligibility to apply to perform at the Berklee Showcase concert, with select artists receiving feedback from industry experts

**Spots are limited, so register now.**

 January 15–17, 2019

 **Early bird fee** of \$299 if you register by November 1, 2019

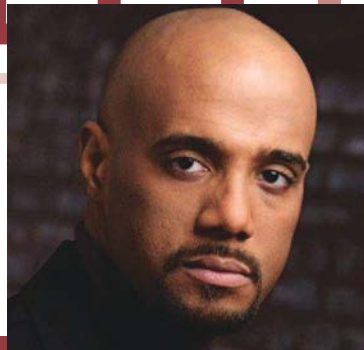
 **Send an email to** [internationalcareers@berklee.edu](mailto:internationalcareers@berklee.edu) to get your discount code

 **Register at** [goo.gl/8iDNb5](https://goo.gl/8iDNb5)

# FACULTY NOTES



Geneviève Leclair



Duane Moody



Ana Guigui



Laszlo Gardony

Boston Conservatory at Berklee assistant professor and trombonist **Marshall Gilkes** released the album *Always Forward* with Germany's WDR Big Band.

On October 12, professor **Darrell Katz** will release *Rats Live on No Evil Star* with the 20-piece Jazz Composers Alliance Orchestra. The album is the 10th recording released by JCA.

Professor **Barbara LaFitte** played woodwinds for a three-week run of Disney's *Aladdin* at the Boston Opera House. She also played with the Boston Pops Orchestra for the July 4 fireworks spectacular and for the Tanglewood performance of *Tommy* with Roger Daltrey.

Assistant professor **Alonzo Harris** served as the musical director and arranger for r&b singer H.E.R.'s BET awards performance and for her tour as an opening act for Chris Brown. Harris also toured with Teyana Taylor.

Associate professor **James Donahue** built a Dolby Atmos mixing room over the summer. An album of Baroque music that he mixed for cellist Phoebe Carrai was released in September.

Professor **Lauren Passarelli** released the album *Midnight Sun* and her *Guitar Insights* series of e-books was released in paperback. *College* magazine named Passarelli one of the country's 10 most inspiring woman music professors in 2017.

**Andrea Pejrolo**, chair of Contemporary Writing and Production, gave four days of master classes on music production, digital orchestration, and scoring in advertising at Italy's prestigious Conservatorio di Musica Pescara in July.

Professor **Tom Stein** traveled to Serbia for the second time as a Fulbright Specialist. He worked with universities, non-gov-

ernmental organizations, cultural organizations, industry, and government to promote music as a tool for public diplomacy and economic development for the Balkan region.

Associate professor **Mark Polanzak** won the BOA Editions Short Fiction Prize for his collection of stories titled *The OK End of Funny Town*. His work will be published at [boaeditions.org](http://boaeditions.org) in 2020.

Assistant professor and bassist **Susan Hagen** taught at the Rochester Bass Retreat in August where she also gave the American premiere of David Heyes's piece for solo double bass "Seven Last Words."

Professor **Francine Trester** heard her song cycle "An Oman Odyssey" premiered in Lincoln Center at the Bruno Walter Auditorium. The work was commissioned by Mirror Visions Ensemble and was later performed at the Louvre in Paris.

In August, professor **Oscar Stagnaro** gave a series of master classes in Peru. He presented his program Bass en Vivo and performed with a big band in Lima, Arequipa, and Trujillo.

In October, professor **Kris Adams** will release the CD *We Should Have Danced* featuring music by Steve Prosser and her lyrics. **Tim Ray**, **Paul Del Nero**, and **Fernando Brandão** played on the album.

Conservatory professor **Mary Wolff** attended a workshop with dance artists Itsván Kiss and Erika Kiss Demeter studying improvisational couple dance forms from the Kalotaszeg region of Transylvania and the Hungarian Mezőföld region.

Professor **Bruno Råberg** released *Tailwind*, his 11th recording as a leader, on Red Piano Records. Råberg's trio includes pianist Bruce Barth and drummer Adam Cruz. Visit [www.brunoraberg.com](http://www.brunoraberg.com).

Professor **Mark Walker** recorded with members of the band Chicago for a new album by French singer Jj Chardeau. He also completed a CD with Japanese guitarist Akio Sasajima and will tour Japan with Sasajima and the Randy Brecker Quartet in September.

In June, professor **John Baboian** played "West Side Story in Concert" with the Boston Pops Orchestra. In August, he taught for a week at the Halewyn Jazz Camp in Brussels, Belgium.

Professor **Bill Banfield** had a series of premieres of his symphonic works and his string quartet in Detroit, Minneapolis, Cape Cod, and Arlington, MA. He also published the novel *Cedric's Truth*.

Associate Professor **Amanda Monaco** performed with her quartet at the 2018 Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival and the 2018 Iowa City Jazz Festival.

Professor **Jason Palmer** taught at five summer camps, including those at Banff and Newport. His quintet joined the Celebrity Series of Boston's Neighborhood Arts roster and headlined the Berklee Beantown Jazz Festival.

Professor **Laszlo Gardony** is a featured soloist on the album *Our Story* by New York-based flutist and composer, Christian Artmann. ShapeShifter Lab filmed a solo piano performance by Gardony and posted it on YouTube.

Associate professor **Ana Guigui** played keyboards, coproduced, and sang the duet "Abro Mi Ventana" ("Open Up My Window") with Christopher Cross on his EP that will be released this fall.

Professors **Jeannie Gagné** and **Prince Charles Alexander** traveled to Kenya with Global Youth Groove in June to teach and perform.

Professor **John Funkhouser** and associate professor **Jerry Leake** perform as the duo Piandia playing North Indian (Hindustani) classical music on piano and tabla. They performed at Berklee on September 11.

Conservatory assistant professor **C. Robin Marcotte** created and performed his physical theater show *Shadows* at Seacoast Repertory Theatre in Portsmouth, NH, in August.

On October 25, associate professor **Duane Moody** will sing the role of Nat Turner in the musical, *Brother Nat*, at Emerson College's Paramount Center. The production chronicles the slave rebellion led by Turner in 1861.

Assistant professor **Geneviève Leclair** will make her U.K. debut in the fall with the Northern Ballet in Leeds for the company's annual production of Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*.

Assistant professor **Chrissy Tignor** helped build a recording facility at El Conservatorio Nacional de Música in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. She also created curriculum for the school's recording department.

In September, summer programs instructor **Gabriela Martina** performed at Club Bonafide in New York City debuting material from her album *Hommage to Gråmlis*.

Professor **Deborah J. Bennett** placed a story in the NPR podcast *Only a Game*, in which she considers how gender affected her path as an athlete.

Conservatory assistant professor **Larry Sousa** directed two original musicals for the international entertainment company Creativiva. The shows were rehearsed in Toronto and are currently running in the Caribbean islands of Turks and Caicos.

## faculty profiles

### Panagiotis Liaropoulos Preserving Cultural Traditions

by Mark Small



Panagiotis Liaropoulos

*Vidimus Stellam*, a cantata for choir and brass quintet by professor **Kevin Siegfried**, was published by E. C. Schirmer.

Associate professor **Nando Michelin** released the album *Engenheiros*, which features Ebinho Cardoso, Tiago Michelin '15, Rogério Bocato, Tucker Antell, and assistant professor **Yulia Musayelyan**.

Summer programs instructor **Hendrik Meurkens** released the album *Cabin in the Sky* with pianist Bill Cunliffe and recorded an organ album with Mike LeDonne, Peter Bernstein, and Jimmy Cobb, which will be released next spring.

Associate professor **Ben Houge** went to San Sebastián, Spain, to collaborate with chef Andoni Luis Aduriz on a special musical dish served on a smart plate with embedded sensors and speakers to alter the music when diners touched the food.

Assistant professor **Peter Bell** and David Mash '76 formed a production partnership. Recent projects include the Mashine Music album *Chapters*, as well as projects for Libby Johnson '18 and James Nifong '22.

In July, chair of the Music Education Department **Cecil Adderley**, Debbie Lynn Wolf (Cairn University), and Karlin G. Love (University of Queensland, Australia), gave a presentation in Baku, Azerbaijan, comparing music teacher motivation and satisfaction in Australia and America.

Conservatory professor **Rhonda Rider** recently taught and played cello at the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival, the Harvard Chamber Music Festival, the Cello Seminar, and with the Asian Youth Orchestra in Hong Kong.

The book *Red-Green Revolution: The Politics and Technology of Ecosocialism* by professor **Victor Wallis** was recently published by Political Animal Press.

*Factor Fiction* by professor **Beth Denisch** was premiered by the Calyx Piano Trio at the Cathy French & Friends Concert in Lenox, MA, on July 17 with Jennifer Lucht (cello) and Nina Ferrigno (piano).

In August professor **Neil Leonard** created a quadrasonic sound installation made in response to Fujiko Nakaya's site-specific fog sculpture for Franklin Park's Overlook Shelter Ruins. The sound can be heard weekends at sunset.

Associate professor **Brian McGinnis** received a Faculty Development Fellowship and a Faculty Development Travel Grant to travel to Tel Aviv, Israel, to study Gaga Dance Technique with the Batsheva Dance Company.

In June, Conservatory associate professor **Maggy Gorill** taught a second-grade movement residency at the Hood Elementary School in Lynn, MA, with funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

In July, associate professor of composition Panagiotis Liaropoulos left Boston to begin his work as a Fulbright Fellow in the Small Cyclades, a group of islands in the Aegean Sea southeast of the Greek mainland. Liaropoulos has made his home in America for more than two decades. But he continues to mine the music of Greece, his homeland, for inspiration in his own compositions.

His Fulbright work aims to preserve a very specific variety of traditional Greek music. The project will include making field recordings and transcriptions of local performers playing folk music and instruments unique to the Cyclades as well teaching at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (usually abbreviated to University of Athens), and doing research and creating a cultural archive at the university.

"In Greece, there has been no organized effort to preserve these musical traditions," Liaropoulos says. "There is no state archive where someone can go to hear recordings or see transcriptions. I am hoping that the archive I am helping to establish at the university will grow and that others will add to it."

Time is of the essence for the preservation work as a number of the performers Liaropoulos hopes to record are elderly. "The older generation of musicians is dying off," Liaropoulos says. "When they pass away, we lose what they did. I plan to make field recordings of three generations: people in their eighties, sixties, and forties. But I am mostly interested in the stylistic aspects of the older ways of playing the music. The older two groups of musicians carry all the nuances and tradition as it used to be." Liaropoulos will also make videos of the dances associated with the music of the Small Cyclades and chronicle information about the dominant instruments used. Those instruments include violin, a form of the lute, percussion instruments such as the santur, and others in accompanying singers and dancers.

Liaropoulos grew up in Athens

and began visiting the remote Cyclades Islands in his youth. "I've been going there since I was 17," he says. "It's eight to nine hours by boat to the islands. When I started going there, there were no ports. It wasn't until the late 1980s that ports were built. Before that, the ferry would pull in and you'd have to jump to a smaller boat to get to the shore. So not many tourists went there. That's one reason why the old way of life, the music, and the food on these islands are still present. I am interested in the whole culture, not just the music."

In addition to his Fulbright work this fall, Liaropoulos will also focus on his own compositional goals. His catalog includes works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles, chorus, and orchestra works such as a flute concerto and piece titled *Ode: Moments in the Life of Orpheus*. He has also undertaken a new challenge.

"I'm composing a one-act opera," he says. "I've been working on it for several months and it's the most challenging thing I've ever done. It was commissioned by the Greek National Opera with an English libretto written by a Greek dramatist. I plan to finish it by the end of this year." The opera will have 12 scenes and a running time of about an hour and 15 minutes. Liaropoulos anticipates that the premiere will take place in 2019 and is planning to present a concertante or partially staged version of his opera in Boston.

After completing his university studies in Athens, Liaropoulos was awarded a scholarship from the Fulbright Foundation in 1997 to study at Boston University where, he earned his doctorate in composition in 2001. "I studied with Lukas Foss and [Greek composer] Theodore Antoniou," Liaropoulos says. "I came especially to study with Antoniou. He was a great influence regarding my approach to tradition. He stressed that music should somehow represent your national identity. Not in a strictly nationalistic way, but through seeking out resources in the music of your motherland in a creative way."

Although he is a bit reluctant to talk about his own music, Liaropoulos characterizes what he writes as contemporary classical music, but his interest in traditional Greek folk and Byzantine music clearly comes through. "The Greek folk tradition is very related to the Byzantine tradition; monophony, the modes," he says. "There is cross-fertilization between the two styles. Although the idiom I write in is more contemporary, one can still find the influence from both traditions in my music. It's a meeting of the Western and Eastern traditions."

Liaropoulos joined the Berklee faculty in 2010 and teaches core music courses including tonal harmony and counterpoint, in addition to upper-semester music theory classes and directed composition studies. He is also sharing the influence of his Greek homeland with his students.

For the past four years, with the support of the composition department and the writing division, Liaropoulos has taken a group of directed-study students to Greece in June where they concentrate on writing a string quartet.

"I have composition students, film scoring majors, and other students who want to do this," he says. "For most of them, it is the first major work they will write that is not related to a class project. They work on composing their string quartet in Athens and then we all go to the Cyclades island of Amorgos where they continue writing. During the last week of the program, we do a workshop with a string quartet. The highlight is a concert of all the pieces held on the last day. The participants get to use both the piece and a recorded performance of it in their portfolios. It's my hope that spending a month in Greece will be life-changing for these students."



Rebecca Shrimpton

Conservatory associate professor **Joy Davis** received the Bessie Schonberg Boston Choreography Residency at the Yard on Martha's Vineyard with collaborator Alex Davis. The Davis Sisters premiered their dance theater work *Junk Drawer* in September.

Associate professor **Libby Allison** conducted a workshop and professional development sessions with music educators from Mexico, Venezuela, and Columbia at Novo Tempo music school in Guadalajara, Mexico, in June.

Assistant professor **Nicholas Urie** wrote arrangements of music by Ludovico Einaudi for the Metropole Orchestra of Amsterdam and arranged a tribute to the Beatles for the Boston Pops Orchestra.

Since January, assistant professor and pianist **Kevin Harris** has performed and given clinics in China, South Korea, Panama, Israel, Peru, Italy, and Poland.

Assistant professor **Orlando Cela** performed in a silent opera with performance artist Li-E Chen at the Place in London, England, August 16 through 18.

In the summer, Conservatory assistant professor **Paul D'Agostino** taught voice and speech for the Commonwealth Shakespeare Apprentice Company, Boston University Summer Theatre Institute, and Boston Conservatory graduate students.

In the summer, associate professor **Cindy Scott** performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, New York City's Birdland, and in Kansas City, Vancouver, Ann Arbor, Seattle, and Portland.

Professor **Craig Hlady** released the CD *Twisted*, featuring nine original compositions. It features professor **Oscar Stagnaro**, associate professor **Ricardo Monzon**, David Ramsay, and Alan Hall.

This fall, assistant professor **Matt Jensen** is touring throughout Europe with the renowned reggae band Groundation.

Conservatory assistant professor **Bryn Austin** appeared in *Love and Information* with Apron Theater Company at Next Stage Arts in Putney, VT.

In August, assistant professor **Rebecca Shrimpton** was the headlining vocalist and clinician at FIJAZZ: Costa Rica. Assistant professor **Lihi Haruvi** also made an appearance.

In March, assistant professor **Amy Bellamy** and her husband Aaron Bellamy released their second studio album, *Say Goodbye*, which reflects the influences of Afro beat, jazz, funk, and hip-hop.

Conservatory associate professor **David R. Gammons** will direct Nick Dear's stage adaptation of *Frankenstein* at the Central Square Theatre. The production runs October 4–November 4, 2018.

Associate professor **Henrique De Almeida** published a drum book entitled *The Ultimate Hand Technique Workshop*.

In the summer, professor **Peter Cokkinias** and **Ana Guigui** produced "Theater at Noon" with 50 Berklee student musicians and sound engineers. Cokkinias also played with the Boston Symphony Orchestra at Tanglewood in a concert marking the centenary of Leonard Bernstein's birth.

In September, Conservatory associate professor **Nathan Troup** directed the New York premiere of Missy Mazzoli's opera *Proving Up* presented by Miller Theater at

Columbia University, and featuring the International Contemporary Ensemble.

In the summer, the Conservatory's head of the piano department **Max Levinson** performed at the Seattle Chamber Music Festival, Borromeo Music Festival (Switzerland), MusicFest Perugia (Italy), and San Juan Chamber Music Festival (Colorado).

Pianist and associate professor **Francesca Tanksley** appears on *London Live* with the Jeff "Siege" Siegel Quartet. It was recorded at London's Pizza Express Jazz Club. Visit [www.jeffsiegeljazz.com](http://www.jeffsiegeljazz.com).

## Olga Román A Gift in Giving Back

By *Lucía Burbano*

After teaching at various Spanish educational institutions, **Olga Román** B.M. '87 joined the Berklee Valencia faculty in Valencia, Spain, in 2015 as a voice instructor in the Master of Music in Contemporary Performance program (production concentration). "Teaching is something I have always enjoyed," she says. "I take pleasure in helping others develop their musical skills and feel it's a gift to see them improve. I feel a sense of duty to give back some of what I have received."

Román's approach to teaching stresses technique and ear training. She helps her students gain these skills through improvisation. In Román's view, improvisation instills confidence and self-expression. "Singers usually lead projects," Román shares. "The more they expand their musical abilities and the harder they work, the more self-assured they will become." She also guides her students in the search for their own unique voice. "We all have an individual personality, and everything that happens to us is usually reflected in our voice and the way we sing," she adds.

Román's own distinctive voice is familiar to Spanish and Latin American audiences. She first gained recognition singing alongside established songwriters such as Joaquín Sabina, Luis Eduardo Aute, Jorge Drexler, Pedro Guerra, Fito & Fitipaldis, Pablo Guerrero, and Ismael Serrano in the 1980s and 1990s. "Being part of someone else's project means that you have to be able to blend with the other person's singing, phrasing, interpretation, and emotion," she states. "Forget about

yourself and just flow with the other, as if you were part of his or her voice."

In 2001 she released her first solo album, entitled *Vueltas y Vueltas*. Being the artist was a completely new role for her that involved leading and taking responsibility for the outcome of the project. "You feel much more vulnerable and exposed as you reveal yourself through your compositions," she says. Since then, Román has issued three more albums, including her most recent; *De Agua y Laurel* (2012), a tribute to Argentinian composer Gustavo "Cuchi" Leguizamón.

Román says that the professional success she's enjoyed is partly due to her Berklee studies, which she undertook with the help of a scholarship and a Fulbright grant. "Berklee's methodology helped me to understand music much better and gave me tools and opportunities to develop my professional career," she shares. "It also enabled me to get in touch with wonderful musicians from all over the world, learn about genres from different cultures, and to become part of a community." She remained in Boston for eight years before returning to Spain in 1993. A highlight of her Boston years was forming a Brazilian-jazz band that performed at the Montreal Jazz Festival, Quebec Jazz Festival, and Boston Globe Jazz Festival.

Román recently became a member of the Berklee Valencia Faculty All-Stars, a group with fellow instructors from the contemporary performance program. The ensemble's inaugural gig was at the Festival de Jazz de Valencia in July. The experience offered the



Olga Román

group the opportunity to collaborate and then take its music to an audience beyond the Valencia campus.

Román combines her teaching and performing careers with other ventures. For three years she hosted the show *Madrid a otro ritmo* at Spain's Cadena SER radio station. She also wrote and recorded a song to support Fundación Theodora—a nonprofit organization that brings entertainment to children in hospitals through a campaign called Felices Por Narices (Happy, No Matter What). She also works with Fernando Botella, the CEO of Think & Action, on a project called Growing Harmonically. Botella offers business coaching as Román and her band perform to support and enhance his message.

Román is a believer in hard work, and encourages her students to actively search for a comfortable environment in which to release their creativity, find their voice, and take risks. "This path is not easy," she says. "It took me years to start writing my own songs and record my first solo album. Success has many faces, but to me it means that you are fully in charge of your professional decisions and have developed a career that enables you to make your living at it."

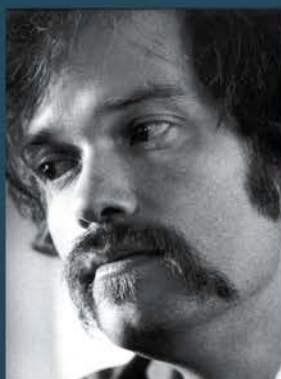
# Berklee Signature Series



## The Art of the Tenor: Celebrating Bill Pierce

September 26, 8:00 p.m.

This concert will pay tribute to the musical legacy of renowned saxophonist and educator **Bill Pierce**. Chair emeritus of Berklee's Woodwinds Department and a Berklee graduate, Pierce has performed with masters including Freddie Hubbard, Marvin Gaye, Tony Williams, Hank Jones, and Stevie Wonder. The concert, produced by Grammy-winning drummer, composer, and bandleader Terri Lyne Carrington, will feature compositions by Art Blakey and Tony Williams, Pierce originals, and more. Pierce's former students Javon Jackson, Mark Turner, Antonio Hart, and Melissa Aldana will perform the first section with pianist Lawrence Fields, bassist John Lockwood, guitarist David Gilmore, and drummer Ron Savage. Pierce will lead the second section with longtime collaborators including guitarist Kevin Eubanks, organist Jake Sherman, drummer Carrington, and a host of special guests.



## John Abercrombie: Timeless: A Memorial Tribute Concert

October 10, 8:00 p.m.

In honor of late guitar virtuoso **John Abercrombie**, the Berklee Guitar Department pays tribute to his life and music with friends and longtime collaborators. Described by Pat Metheny as "a guitarist who excels at everything he does," Abercrombie has worked with a range of collaborators including Jack DeJohnette, Ralph Towner, John Scofield, Dave Holland, Kenny Wheeler, Marc Copland, and Richie Beirach. His seminal recordings were among the first to blend rock, folk, and world music with jazz. The concert, produced by Professor Rick Peckham, will feature performances by faculty members Tim Miller and Bruce Saunders, along with students, guest artists Joe Lovano, Joey Baron, Ben Street, and Lage Lund, and remarks from Professor Mick Goodrick.



## Innovate: The Berklee Electronic Digital Instrument

October 30, 8:00 p.m.

The **Electronic Production and Design Department** will celebrate some of Berklee's finest student electronic digital instrument (EDI) performers along with special guests Rachel Z, Thavius Beck, Laura Escude, Dan Freeman, Moldover, and dolltr!ck. The concert will showcase the instrument in a wide variety of musical settings covering the breadth of its artistic applications. EPD students and alumni will design and produce video environments for each of the pieces in the show.



## Berta Rojas and Paquito D'Rivera Meet Berklee: The Music of Barrios Mangoré

November 15, 8:00 p.m.

Grammy Award-winning Cuban musician and composer **Paquito D'Rivera** and acclaimed Paraguayan guitarist **Berta Rojas** will perform music from their recent release *Día y Medio*. Featuring a large ensemble of Berklee students, the concert will include music by celebrated composer Agustín Pio Barrios Mangoré and traditional Paraguayan songs arranged by Berklee students. The concert is produced by faculty member Oscar Stagnaro and Matthew Nicholl, associate vice president of Global Initiatives.



## Kailash Kher Meets Berklee

December 15, 8:00 p.m.

Indian artist **Kailash Kher** is famous for his powerful voice, and for his unique style influenced by Indian folk and Sufi music. Kher is a prominent singer in several languages, and his band Kailasa has received widespread international acclaim. He has also performed more than 700 songs for films and received two Filmfare Awards for Best Male Playback Singer. A. R. Rahman has praised Kher's voice as possessing "something that had been lacking [in the industry]—pure soul!" In this spirited and uplifting concert, Kher will perform with the Berklee Indian Ensemble, which is renowned for its performances in India and Boston, and whose YouTube videos have been viewed more than 80 million times. This concert is produced by the Berklee India Exchange team, including Clint Valladares, Annette Philip, Rohith Jayaraman, and Lydia Renold.

**20** SIGNATURE  
**18** SERIES at Berklee

## Pioneering Music Therapy Internships

By Cindy Albert-Link and Jessica Halton



Administrators at *Clínica de la Mujer* and Berklee representatives recently met in Bogotá, Colombia. From the left: Dr. Monica Cuevas, Dr. Henry Sanchez, Berklee professor Karen Wacks, Dr. Santiago Huertas, Berklee music therapy intern Esteban Roa Fuentes, Dr. Mark Ettenberger, and Berklee senior vice president Cindy Albert-Link.

Thanks to generous philanthropic support, the college has opportunities to create one-of-a-kind learning experiences for students. Music therapy major Esteban Roa Fuentes has benefited from such an opportunity through a nine-month internship in Bogotá, Colombia, thanks to the Zunz Family Music Therapy Global Outreach Fund.

Sisters Sharyn and Gail Zunz established the Zunz Family Music Therapy Global Outreach Fund with hopes of creating experiential learning opportunities for music therapy students abroad, recognizing the impact of such an experience on the student as well as the communities they work in. Because of the financial, logistical, and quality-control challenges involved, the college had not been able to implement an accredited music therapy internship in another country prior to receiving this meaningful support.

Roa will complete 1,040 hours of service under the supervision of Dr. Mark Ettenberger, founder and director of SONO—Centro de Musicoterapia in Bogotá. The internship is primarily structured in the neonatal intensive care unit in two different medical settings: Fundación Santa Fe de Bogotá, and Clínica de la Mujer.

In July, senior vice president for institutional advancement Cindy Albert-Link and music therapy professor Karen Wacks traveled to

Bogotá to observe how Roa's internship was unfolding and to determine if this internship model could be replicated in other places around the world—a primary goal of the project.

During their visit, Albert-Link and Wacks identified several factors that will be necessary to replicate the music therapy internship model. These include local recognition of and respect for the Berklee brand; having a reputable, reliable, licensed music therapist to supervise interns; securing philanthropic funds to cover expenses, including supervisory hours, student housing, travel, and living expenses; ensuring that the staff and administrators at the internship site are strong advocates who value and embrace the benefits of music therapy; and supporting the student via regular check-ins with their music therapy faculty and ensuring he or she has plenty of opportunities for self-care.

Just four months in, this pilot internship program is a resounding success. Roa has benefited from the experience in ways that exceed expectations and the hosting clinics greatly value his efforts. Working alongside Dr. Ettenberger, he is exposed to solid qualitative and quantitative research opportunities that support his learning, which is rare for similar internships in the United States.

Ultimately, the goal of taking the music therapy internship abroad is for students to learn to work across

## Mike Gordon Scholarship Continues to Grow

By Davis Wimberly and Nick Balkin



From the left: Kevin Beatty, Paul Gordon, Mike Gordon, and Jordan Bertier

In the spring, Berklee announced a new scholarship created in honor of Phish cofounder Mike Gordon. The Mike Gordon Endowed Scholarship continues to grow and will support Berklee students studying bass who are also well-rounded artists with skills in such areas as songwriting, production, arranging, or creative entrepreneurship. An initial group of Berklee supporters pooled funds to establish the scholarship in honor of Gordon. Thus far, donors to the endowed fund include Kevin Beatty (Berklee Presidential Advisory Council member) and his wife Kathleen, Claire Newton and Ted Maloney (Berklee friends and regular Encore Gala supporters), Vicki and Hank Hodges (Berklee parents), and Doris and Bob Gordon (Mike Gordon's parents).

An influential bassist and vocalist, Gordon drew a crowd of Berklee students, faculty, and staff members to his March 30 seminar at Cafe 939. Gordon spoke on a range of topics including music as meditation. "We have an exercise [in my solo band] where we play the same pattern as long as we can without changing it," Gordon told the crowd. "You're focusing on your

breath and it always leads to a new song idea." He also shared insights about the band's longevity. "It's about being open, and being able to say when we don't like something and finding compromise despite the differences," he stated.

The event was moderated by Berklee associate professor Loudon Stearns, who is a longtime friend and a former teacher to Gordon. Stearns was also instrumental in the creation of REEL, a crowd-surfing keyboard that allows fans to interact with Gordon during his live solo concerts.

While Gordon isn't a Berklee alumnus, he has studied privately with Berklee faculty members. In addition to Stearns, other members of his "cabinet of Berklee teachers" who turned out for the seminar included professor Pat Pattison, whom Gordon cited as an influence in his songwriting. Associate professor Linda Balliro, Gordon's vocal coach for the past five years, also attended.

Anyone wishing to help further grow the Mike Gordon Endowed Scholarship should contact Davis Wimberly at [dwimberly@berklee.edu](mailto:dwimberly@berklee.edu).

disciplinary lines while developing cultural competence and humility. At the end of their experience, interns will ideally develop the skills required to pioneer music therapy in medical settings internationally.

Berklee thanks the Zunz Family and feels optimistic about continuing

our partnerships in Bogotá. We hope to explore the feasibility of implementing similar accredited music therapy internships around the globe.

Anyone wishing to join the Zunz Family in supporting these efforts, can contact Cindy Albert-Link at 617-747-3096.

## Music and Health Institute Takes Shape

By Mary Giurleo and Danielle Parillo

On June 29, with support from the Barr Foundation, the Berklee Music and Health Institute held its inaugural event, “Crossroads of Music and Medicine,” in the David Friend Recital Hall. More than 100 participants from the academic, medical, healthcare, biotech, pharmaceutical, music, and civic sectors gathered for a full day of exploration of the intersections of music and medicine, with a focus on pain, trauma, and addiction. The response and turnout for this first exchange event far exceeded expectations, indicating tremendous cross-sector interest in this breakthrough area of music and health.

Marty Martinez, Boston’s chief of Health and Human Services Cabinet, offered inspiring opening remarks that were followed by presentations from some of the top researchers and practitioners in the field. Presenters included Dr. David Silbersweig, chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and codirector for the Institute for the Neurosciences, Brigham and Women’s Hospital; Dr. Robert Sheridan, burn service medical director at Shriners Hospital for Children—Boston; Dr.

Douglas Brandoff, pianist and director of opioid safety at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute; and Susan Bakouros, a music therapist who works in the neonatal intensive care unit at PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center.

The purpose of the Berklee Music and Health Exchange series is to spotlight key issues, convene experts and leaders, and provide a forum for sharing ideas. The next exchange, “Crossroads of Music and Technology,” will take place on October 25, in the David Friend Recital Hall and Cafe 939. It will explore the impact of the convergence of music and technology on individual and community health outcomes with presentations that focus on accessibility, digital therapeutics/big data, and social impact.

The Berklee Music and Health Institute also welcomes MilliporeSigma as a new corporate partner supporting the institute’s upcoming Music and Health Hackathon. Planned for spring 2019, the event will engage Boston’s innovation community, bringing together computer programmers, interface designers, music



Dr. David Silbersweig, chair of psychiatry and codirector for the Institute for the Neurosciences, Brigham and Women’s Hospital



Jasmine Edwards (left) and Susan Bakouros discussed the impact of music therapy on infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome.

therapists, data scientists, and subject-matter experts to collaborate on a health-related challenge. The hackathon will build on Berklee’s past collaborations with MIT and other partners, and will leverage the Music Therapy Department’s prior experience hosting technology hacks.

“Music and life science are inextricably linked,” Renee Connolly, MilliporeSigma Global Head of Communications and Corporate Responsibility, says. “We are excited about the promise this new initiative holds. We believe impactful new answers can be found when we foster collaboration and curiosity among the world-class innovators who live and work in the vibrant Boston community.”

“Having MilliporeSigma, a world-leading life science company in the

Boston area, join the Barr Foundation as a lead partner in the Music and Health Institute has elevated the possibilities of what we can accomplish,” says Joy Allen, Berklee’s Music Therapy chair.

“We are excited to work together with both of them and with our hackathon participants to achieve real impact on the health of individuals and communities.” With input from Berklee faculty, students, MilliporeSigma, and other external partners, a specific hackathon brief will be developed. Details will be released later this fall.

The Berklee Music and Health Institute is being incubated within the Professional Education Division under the leadership of division dean Darla Hanley and Joy Allen. For information about upcoming Music and Health Institute events, visit [berklee.edu/music-health-institute](http://berklee.edu/music-health-institute).

## Gary Slight Honored in Toronto



From the left: Berklee president Roger H. Brown, Gary Slight, and Joe Bennett, Berklee’s vice president for academic affairs strategic initiatives. Slight is a Canadian Music Hall of Fame inductee, philanthropist, member of the Order of Canada, and former Berklee trustee who received a Berklee honorary doctorate on August 27 in Toronto, Canada. For more than a decade, the Slight Family Scholarship has offered full tuition and room and board to talented Canadian students. Slight has also been a key supporter of Berklee’s Reach Out Program, which assists students in difficult life situations.

## A Decade of Roots House Concerts

By Ginny Fordham ’80

When Berklee’s American Roots Music Program was founded 10 years ago, Bob Davoli and his wife Eileen McDonagh offered their home for a house concert to launch the initiative led by artistic director Matt Glaser.

At that time, no one imagined the first-time concert would become an annual event to raise funds for and thank those who generously support the program. From its humble beginnings as a homegrown hootenanny, the event has become an elegant dinner featuring over-the-moon performances by students and faculty involved in Berklee’s American Roots Music Program.

Over the past decade, many students and faculty have performed at this unique modern home, including current *Berklee Today* cover artists Sierra Hull ’11 and Molly Tuttle ’14. Other up-and-coming Berklee Roots alumni who’ve played at the Davoli-McDonagh home include Courtney Hartman ’12


of Della Mae, Carolyn Kendrick ’16 and Jake Howard ’17 of the Page Turners, Joe Walsh ’06 (formerly of the Gibson Brothers), and Julian Lage ’09 and Charlie Worsham ’06.

Adding to this event’s tradition of roof-raising music, the past few years have featured the added element of Donna McElroy’s Jubilee Spirit Ensemble performing American Negro spirituals. In the spring, they ended the evening with a moving rendition of “My Lord, What a Morning” leaving guests exclaiming, “My Lord, what a party”!

Berklee is grateful to Davoli and McDonagh, not just for their role as founding partners of the Roots program by establishing support for country blues visiting artists Woody Mann and Paul Rishell, but also for opening their home for an annual Berklee American Roots house concert.



# Young Bluegrass Virtuosos



Mandolinist Sierra Hull and guitarist Molly Tuttle are honoring traditional music while following divergent paths with their original songs.

By Mark Small '73



**It was** raining when guitarist Molly Tuttle '14 took the stage at the late-August Green Mountain Bluegrass & Roots Festival in Manchester, VT. She fronted the all-Berklee alumnae bluegrass quartet the Goodbye Girls (including Lena Jonsson '14 on fiddle, Allison de Groot '13 on clawhammer banjo, and Brittany Karlson '16 on bass). The vagaries of Vermont's summer weather did little to dampen the crowd's enthusiastic response to the group's set—a mix of original songs and American and Swedish traditional tunes. The number of umbrellas and tents visible around the grounds signaled that the crowd came determined to hear the roster of predominantly young bluegrass artists singing that “high lonesome sound” and showcasing the flashy finger work bluegrass is known for.

Tuttle played again later in the afternoon (after the sun emerged) with her own band featuring bass (Max Johnson), banjo (Wes Corbett), and fiddle (Tatiana Hargreaves). Her setlist included her original songs as well as a few of her trademark uptempo, barn-burning covers. She cut loose on the guitar to the delight of the crowd on “White Freightliner Blues” and “Gentle on My Mind.” The latter can be found in several live YouTube videos, each averaging around 200,000 views.

Mandolinist Sierra Hull '11 took the stage the following night with her own band. Her set showcased her soprano voice in her somewhat introspective songs with remarkably intricate mandolin parts. Her band also included bassist Ethan Jodziewicz, electric guitarist Mike Seal, and fiddler Christian Sedelmyer. The material, instrumentation, and the way each player fit into the musical mosaic departed from the more traditional sounds at the festival. But she had the audience from the first notes. Hull later made a cameo appearance on two songs in a tribute to songwriter John Hartford. In bluegrass fashion, all soloists stepped up to the mic for their solo. Hull's lightning-fast fretwork drew enthusiastic applause and hoots from the crowd.

Tuttle and Hull have long been known in bluegrass circles for their awe-inspiring virtuosity. Each was a child prodigy playing at festivals since grade school. Both received support from their families. Molly's father Jack Tuttle, a teacher at Gryphon Stringed Instruments in their hometown of Palo Alto, CA, schooled Molly and her brothers

Sullivan and Michael in bluegrass repertoire and technique. All three became virtuosos. For years Jack, a multi-instrumentalist, led the family band (The Tutttles) at festivals and on the NPR radio show *A Prairie Home Companion* among other appearances.

Hull grew up in tiny Byrdstown, TN, 120 miles north-east of Nashville. Her father, Stacy Hull, became interested in playing the mandolin as an adult, and shared what he learned with young Sierra and took her with him to picking



Kaitlyn Raitz

Molly Tuttle

parties and jam sessions. He later drove her to weekly lessons with a mandolinist who had played with bluegrass artist Larry Sparks. Sierra's prodigious talent was immediately apparent. Alison Krauss invited Hull to sit in with her band at the Grand Ole Opry when she was only 11. Krauss remains a mentor and friend and sang at Hull's 2017 wedding.

Tuttle and Hull have won prestigious awards for their playing as well as songwriting. Both were named player of the year on their instruments by the International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA). They perform together with the group First Ladies of Bluegrass that includes bassist Missy Raines, banjoist Alison Brown, and fiddler Becky Buller. Each member was the first woman to be named IBMA's player of the year on their respective instruments. Hull was honored with a proclamation from the Tennessee House of Representatives in March, and her *Weighted Mind* album received a Grammy nomination for Best Folk Album for 2017. In addition to her IBMA award, Tuttle was honored in February with a Whippoorwill Arts/FreshGrass Artist Award, a grant of \$25,000, and her song "You Didn't Call My Name" was named song of the year at the International Folk Music Awards. Fittingly, Hull and Tuttle are featured together in a 2018 Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum exhibit.

Hull and Tuttle are members of a highly visible wave of accomplished women musicians rightfully receiving accolades as they share their talent with the world. If there ever was a glass ceiling in bluegrass, it's now shattered.

### **Did you two meet at Berklee?**

**Molly Tuttle:** Actually, we met when we were really young on a Kids on Bluegrass program at the International Bluegrass Music Association. I was 11 or 12 and she's a year or two older than me. After that, I would see her at other bluegrass events. I remember thinking how amazing her playing was when she was 12 or 13. I was inspired by that and it made me want to practice really hard. She was at Berklee a little before I got there. Now that we both live in Nashville we see each other a lot.

### **What approach did you take to learning your instruments that enabled you to advance so quickly when you were so young?**

**MT:** I just started by learning songs, licks, and jamming. I went to a lot of jams with my dad and to festivals like the Father's Day Bluegrass Festival put on by the California Bluegrass Association. I learned a lot of repertoire that way. I worked hard on my cross-picking as a teenager. By playing the same tunes over and over and coming up with little variations I learned to improvise. Sometimes I would work out solos and that would help me build up ideas.

**Sierra Hull:** I started by learning fiddle tunes. Bluegrass is a wonderful music for building a foundation on your instrument through the traditional music that everybody knows, like "Red Haired Boy," "Salt Creek," or "Old Joe Clark." There are hundreds of tunes that bluegrass musicians know no matter where they grew up. Learning to play this way is a very organic process. You end up playing the songs over and over and go to festivals and jam with people who may show you a tune you didn't know. I also learned a lot by sitting down with CDs by mandolin players and learning their original songs and the others they played.

### **What prompted you to enroll at Berklee?**

**MT:** When I was in high school and starting to think about college, I was getting into music more and more. Every weekend I was doing shows. English was one of my favorite subjects in school, so I became really interested in songwriting. Gradually I decided I wanted to pursue performing and wanted to learn as much as I could about music. I had gone to a camp in Mount Shasta in California and met a bunch of Berklee students there and we talked about the school. Of all the music schools I looked at, Berklee seemed to offer more styles than the others and had the amazing American Roots program. It seemed to me that going there would expand the way I thought about music and open my ears to other styles.

**SH:** I didn't know much about Berklee growing up. When I was in high school, I got a Myspace message from John McGann, who was later my mandolin teacher at Berklee. He had seen a YouTube video of me and wrote, "If you are considering music school we'd love for you to think about coming to Berklee." I'd already had opportunities to make a record and tour early on and doing that for a living was my dream. I always tried to be a great student in school, but I couldn't wait to be done and get on with what I'd wanted to do since I was eight years old. So the thought of going to music school meant putting those things off for four years. At first I thought I'd wouldn't go to Berklee.

Alison Krauss has been my biggest hero since I was a child and has been a mentor to me for many years. I told her I'd gotten a message from someone at Berklee and she said it was a great school and encouraged me to visit and check it out. When I got there, I thought it was really cool. I was told about the presidential scholarship that covered tuition, room, and board, but thought there was no way I'd get that. I told myself that if by some crazy chance I got the presidential scholarship, I couldn't turn it down. I got a letter offering me something different, a full-tuition scholarship that I would be allowed to defer for a year. I thought I'd defer because I had tour dates already booked with the Dixie Bee-Liners and the band Uncle Earl. The day that I decided I'd call back to defer, I got a phone message to call Berklee.

When I called they told me that I'd just been awarded the presidential scholarship and I couldn't defer it. I would be the first bluegrass musician to get this award. I couldn't say no to that!

**Were there courses or faculty members who were particularly influential on you?**

**MT:** I studied guitar with Dave Tronzo and he was really amazing. He opened my mind to the possibilities on the fingerboard. I also took private lessons with Abigail Zocher and was in her Joni Mitchell class. Kevin Barry was great too. All of the things I had to learn about triads and scales for the proficiency tests were great. I took a lot of songwriting classes as well. Mark Simos and Pat Pattison taught me a lot about writing songs.

**SH:** After my first semester I was on track to do four years, but I'd missed a lot because of the tours. Matt Glaser [artistic director of the Center for American Roots Music] advised me to do the two-year professional diploma. In the long run that made more sense for me because of the opportunities coming my way. Matt, Melissa Howe [chair of the string department at the time], and I would meet and discuss the best courses for me to take during those two years. This approach enabled me to take voice lessons even though mandolin was my principal instrument. I took things like a songwriting class with Mark Simos, a business class with John Kellogg, an MP&E class with Stephen Webber. I joined Eugene Friesen's Berklee World Strings because I'd never gotten to play in an orchestra. So I had a really broad experience with things I was interested in.

**Sierra, your early albums are pretty much straight bluegrass. Can you describe the genesis of your recording work?**

**SH:** I signed a contract with Rounder Records when I was 13, but didn't start working on a record until two years later. Alison suggested that I work with Ron Block, a member of her band. He was actually the person who originally told her about me before she called me out of the blue to come and play with her at the Grand Ole Opry when I was 11. She was too busy to produce my first record, but she gave a lot of input and helped me find the songs. I worked with Ron and members of Alison's band on that one. On the second album I got to work with some of my other heroes.

**Molly, your first recording as a solo artist was the EP *Rise* in 2017, which was rereleased on Compass Records. Can you talk about your next Compass album?**

**MT:** It's recorded, mixed, and mastered. We are working to get all of the other pieces put together before we release it in 2019. Some of the songs on it are similar to the more contemporary ones on *Rise*—like "You Didn't

Call My Name." There's hardly any bluegrass instrumentation. Sierra played on a couple of songs. So the album will be more Americana and indie sounding, but there is some bluegrass influence on it.

**Are you thinking about how you'll harmonize the reputation you've established in bluegrass with the music you are writing, which is a bit different?**

**MT:** I want to try to integrate both styles by incorporating interesting guitar parts. Sometimes a song will start out as a guitar part and then I will write lyrics. Other times I will just be strumming as I make up a song and I will go back later to figure out an interesting guitar accompaniment. So there is a lot of interesting guitar playing on the new album, but the focus is the songwriting.

**Sierra, for your *Weighed Mind* album in 2016, you self-produced some tracks and then decided to start over. Could you talk about that?**

**SH:** I went into the studio and recorded six tracks—some with drums. I was hardly playing any mandolin, I kind of produced myself out of it because I liked what everyone else was playing so much. I worked with great musicians and engineers and the tracks sounded good. We did "Weighted Mind," "Compass," "Wings of the Dawn," "I'll Be Fine," and others that I ended up redoing. I self-produced it because I couldn't think of the magical person to work with. At the time, my label and management were encouraging, but they were also questioning me and wanting to hear what I was doing. Sometimes there can be too many cooks in the kitchen. You want to protect yourself. I felt so vulnerable writing music that wasn't bluegrass and I wasn't a good judge of my own work.

**Was the label concerned because you'd done so well in bluegrass and that your own songs were going in a different direction?**

**SH:** I wasn't playing as much mandolin and some of the songs were a bit moody. I talked to Alison and told her I didn't know if I loved or hated what I was working on, but I felt a pull to do it. This was not going to be a "Sierra shreds mandolin" record, and I didn't want to be the producer. Alison suggested Béla Fleck as a producer. She said that there's nothing musically that he doesn't understand and that he'd be a great vocal producer. I've been a huge Béla fan since I was a kid. I'd played with him a time or two at festivals and connected with him when he came to Berklee while I was a student. Two months later, I ran into Béla and his wife, Abigail [Washburn] at an IBMA awards show. I told him I'd been wanting to get in touch about my project and play him some of the songs. The next day, I went to his house and played some of what we'd recorded. He said he missed really hearing me in those tracks.



Sierra Hull



Mark Small

part of things and play as well as anybody. Maybe more guys were interested in playing before, but now a lot of young females are interested.

**MT:** I am excited for the generation of girls coming up. I meet a lot who are younger than me and really working on their instruments. Having more women out there doing this will inspire others. That's how it was for me. I think it will keep growing. When I was at Berklee, I didn't have women in any of my guitar classes. But I think there will be a lot more women playing guitar. I hope to inspire young girls to play.

**Can each of you see down the road to where your career will reflect a balance between being an instrumental virtuoso and a songwriter sharing her inner feelings with the audience?**

**SH:** As I get older, I realize that if someone had told me I'd make a record like *Weighted Mind*, I would have said, "What? Make an album with just mandolin and bass?" This year I've taken on tour ensembles with electric guitar or saxophone, piano, and different configurations to play with me. I want to stay inspired and find new ways to hear the music I'm making. I wouldn't have foreseen this a few years ago. I've learned now that I have no idea what I'm going to be doing in the future.

**MT:** What I love the most is writing songs and recording, and of course I love performing. I'm just going to keep doing what I'm doing in different combinations. Nashville is an exciting place to be because there are so many people to collaborate with here. I also like playing on other people's albums. I really like teaching too. I hope to incorporate more of that, whether it is teaching online or giving group and private lessons.

**SH:** The people who inspire me the most are those like Béla Fleck and Chris Thile. Béla is a good example of someone who took the banjo and did so much with it in many different genres. Chris Thile has done that with the mandolin. They're not just traditional musicians; they have a lot of different projects going on. Béla is someone who is always searching for inspiration, something new.

The longer I do this, the more I see that as my ultimate aspiration. I want to do a lot of collaborative things. I used to think that I had to have an ensemble with banjo, fiddle, bass, and guitar because that's the instrumentation you need to play traditional bluegrass. Instead, I've been telling myself that I want to find the musicians who inspire me no matter what instruments they play. That will be my compass for where I land next. I feel that the *Weighted Mind* album helped me to be seen in a different light. I don't think whatever I do next will be terribly surprising [to my followers]. I think people will be able to accept me as just a musician rather than a particular type of musician. We'll see where the wind blows. [@](#)

Nashville's Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum created an exhibit celebrating Sierra Hull and Molly Tuttle both winning instrumentalist of the year awards in 2017 from the International Bluegrass Music Association. Hull was the first woman ever to win the award on mandolin in 2016 at 25. Tuttle was the first woman to win on guitar in 2017 at 24. Hull went to the winners circle again with Tuttle 2017.

Then he asked me to just sing the songs accompanying myself on the mandolin. He felt that was more interesting because he was hearing me in a way that people hadn't heard me before. That was a lightbulb moment for me. I feel forever changed by hearing someone say, "Maybe just you is enough." I hadn't looked at myself that way, I've always played with other musicians. This made me approach my instrument differently and I started rethinking those songs.

**Are there more women today who are really interested in becoming virtuosic on their instruments, and do you think there are more opportunities for women?**

**SH:** There were women out there doing this before, but today, there are more than ever. I meet little girls who come up to me at festivals and tell me they are learning the mandolin or the fiddle and they're excited about it. Alison was always a hero to me because she was an awesome fiddle player and singer. When I was growing up, all of my mandolin heroes were men. But I remember seeing an album by Rhonda Vincent in a store when I was about nine and thinking, "Whoa, it's a woman holding a mandolin!" I thought, "Maybe that will be me someday." It was rare to see that back then, but now all these young gals like Molly, Sarah Jarosz, Sarah Watkins, and Aoife O'Donovan are coming out to play. They are really inspiring a lot of people. A shift is happening and more women are realizing that they can be

# Night School at Wally's

*Three generations of Berklee musicians have learned invaluable lessons after school hours at Wally's Café Jazz Club.*

*By Rob Hochschild*

Berklee boasts several excellent performance spaces, but there's a small nightclub a few blocks from campus that provides a brand of music education that no school can. "I call it Wally's University," drummer Nikki Glaspie '04 says, whose credits include gigs with Beyoncé and Kanye West. "I had two different lives: the day job and the night shift. It allowed me to take what I was learning during the day and see how it worked, how it translated."

Founded in 1947, Wally's Café Jazz Club is nearly the same age as Berklee, and has, throughout its history, acted as a proving ground for young musicians; a steady gig for students, teachers, and locals; and a hideaway where legendary artists—such as Coleman Hawkins, Sarah Vaughan, and Oscar Peterson—would sit in late at night after performing in nearby concert halls.

Wally's, which hasn't changed much since its early days, continues to be a critical resource for serious musicians. The nightclub draws passionate and appreciative live music fans who show up every night to listen and encourage artists to make music that everyone in the room will feel compelled to talk about the next day.

"When you get on that bandstand, you start figuring out how things are supposed to feel," says New Orleans jazz luminary Donald Harrison '81, who at one point led four Wally's sessions per week. "You pay attention to the audience and start to figure out how you become one with an audience. That's the main thing that musicians need to have besides learning the music. We're all in this thing together."

The mentorship model has always been at the heart of a Berklee education, and Wally's has consistently extended that approach, but with a twist. Students who are old enough to be admitted (everyone must show ID to be admitted) may get to hear their professors perform, but they'll also take in some of the best veteran players in the Boston area. Many alumni reported being most inspired by Berklee students or alumni who were just a year or two older than them.

## "They're Here!"

Adam Deitch '98, cofounder of the adventurous funk band Lettuce and an acclaimed drummer and producer, spoke with reverence about slightly older Berklee students he heard at Wally's during the mid-1990s. They included bassists Reuben Rogers '94 and Chris Loftlin '92.

"We would freak out. 'Oh my God, they're here!' It felt like Miles Davis and Charles Mingus had just walked in," says Deitch of Rogers, Loftlin, and their bandmates. "We would go to Wally's and literally study for five hours watching their bands. They were going for broke, trying to break through to another level. If you missed it, you felt sick."

Within a year or two, others would say the same about Deitch and his Lettuce bandmates, whose original members met at Berklee and built their sound and fanbase with a Wally's gig that ran for several years. Deitch also spoke highly about the influence and inspiration of other musicians, including the late Berklee faculty bassist Lenny Stallworth '87, as well as guitarist Jeff Lockhart, who joined the faculty seven years ago. Stallworth and Lockhart, along with Craig "Butta" Glanville '89, were three performers at the core of Wally's move to feature funk on a regular basis. That later led to booking blues and Latin music on alternate nights. Glanville, whose uncle was Dizzy Gillespie, was the "designer" of funk night, according to Lockhart.

Offering an eclectic range of music wasn't new for Wally's late founder, Joseph "Wally" Walcott, who showcased a range of performers in the club's early days, including many of that era's popular chitlin circuit acts.

Walcott was a forward-thinking club owner who sought to treat musicians fairly and to provide a place for anyone in the community to go, whether as a listener or performer.

"In that time period you had clubs that were segregated," says Paul Poindexter, one of Walcott's grandsons, and currently one of the club's managers. "My grandfather created a spot where everyone could come. It didn't matter



Joseph "Wally" Walcott

Photo courtesy of Elynor L. Walcott



*Faculty trumpeter Jason Palmer leads his band on Friday and Saturday nights and has recorded two live albums at Wally's.*

what color you were." Wally's was Boston's first nightclub licensed to an African American. "Another thing he taught me back in the day was that he always paid his musicians," Poindexter says. "My grandfather had a reputation for that. If the place was empty, the musicians still got paid."

Being a family business has provided Wally's not only with a continuity in business philosophy, it has fostered a family feeling among club management, performers, and regulars. Several former Berklee students cite Poindexter, as well as his brothers Frank and Lloyd, and their mother Elynor, as supportive and nurturing figures who always sought to provide an environment where musicians could experiment and grow.

One alumnus, Neil Jacobson '99, now president of Geffen Records, cites Poindexter as a highly influential mentor. Jacobson was also one of several alumni who said that one of the club's most important elements was the flip side of nurturing. If you weren't prepared as a performer, Jacobson shares, you didn't last long. He told a story about one Berklee drummer and bandleader who would interrupt his band at Wally's if a player was off his or her game.

"I would watch [this drummer] tear up his own musicians if they messed up," Jacobson says. "He would stop, put his sticks down, turn to the bass player, and say, 'What in the hell are you doing?' It was crazy. So you had to be on it. Because of that pressure, there was this feeling when you were at Wally's you were watching the best of the best."

The Wally's ethos of excellence raised Jacobson's standards for evaluating musicianship, a valuable asset in his career as a record executive. And it might also explain why so many Berklee alumni who combined their classroom work with the demands of steady gigging at Wally's have gone on to successful careers. Other than the musicians mentioned here, the list also includes acclaimed saxophonist Branford

Marsalis '80, Louis Cato '04 (a member of the house band for the *Late Show* with *Stephen Colbert*), Jeff Bhasker '99 (Grammy-winning record producer), Mark Kelley '02 (bassist for the Roots), and countless others.

One of the most widely admired bandleaders on the current Wally's roster is Berklee assistant professor of ensembles and trumpeter Jason Palmer. His residency on Friday and Saturday nights has become one of the most popular jazz hangs in Boston. Palmer, who recently released two volumes of live Wally's recordings, credits the venue with providing a strong network of musicians, a place to air out new compositions, and an opportunity to develop as a bandleader.

### **Wally's Playlists**

"The repertoire makes the biggest difference," Palmer says when asked about his approach to leading a band. "It's about the flow of songs in a set. Showing that you're having fun on stage makes everything worth it. The tunes have a lot to do with it. You want to highlight the players' strengths. What key is best for the tenor player? What tempo makes the drummer sound best?"

Several alumni spoke with passion about Wally's set lists, stating that the songs and arrangements one hears at the club are so distinctive that musicians use them as a way of connecting when they're far from Boston. "I was at Jazz Fest in New Orleans a couple months ago, and there were lots of musicians there who have been in Boston or went to Berklee," says Amy Bellamy, assistant professor of harmony and coleader of the Tuesday night funk sessions at Wally's. "We're like, 'Let's play a Wally's set.' It's become a genre. The playlist is very specific," she states before mentioning a few tunes, such as Marcus Miller's "Panther," Herbie Hancock's "Hang Up Your Hang Ups," Adam Smirnoff's "Flu the Coop," and War's "World Is a Ghetto."

Saxophonist Neta Raanan '16M said that her band often tackles "rare gems" composed by greats like Jackie McLean, Ornette Coleman, and Thelonious Monk. Her repertoire choices were influenced by Palmer and by trumpeter Cosimo Bono '18M, '17, who led the early Friday night jazz session for five years before handing it off to Raanan in the spring of 2018, she says.

Bono's invitation to Raanan to become leader of the session is typical of how transitions occur at Wally's. Several of the musicians interviewed for this article gave examples of how it was a young bandleader rather than the club manager who typically selected a new musician to whom to hand off one of the coveted slots as a night's session leader. In many cases, the incoming or outgoing bandleader, or both, would be a current or former Berklee student. For several alumni, earning the opportunity to take control of a night proved to be a pivotal moment in their developing careers.

### **Learning to Lead**

Vibraphonist and former faculty member Cecilia Smith '84 was one of the first female musicians to assume control of a night at Wally's. Her era was during the early to mid-1980s,



*Weekend nights at Wally's draw capacity crowds*



Photo courtesy of Amy Bellamy

*Assistant professor Amy Bellamy (pictured center, left) on a memorable night when members of Stevie Wonder's back up band showed up to jam at Wally's.*

a time when Wally's was a smoke-filled bar and the neighborhood was rougher than it is today. "It could get really wild there," Smith recalls. "There was a little edge, but it was good. I loved that. I was pretty green, from the suburbs of Cleveland."

She adds that club matriarch Elynor Poindexter helped pave the way for her evolution. "I got tired of guys not letting me play," Smith said. "It taught me a lot about the politics of men and being able to play and hang with them on a certain level." After Elynor gave her Thursday nights, Smith not only developed her command in leading a band composed mostly of men, she worked hard to strengthen Boston's music-making community by teaching music for public schools and nonprofits, and finding an affordable Mission Hill apartment where she and several other musicians lived.

But for Smith, as for others, the benefits of playing at Wally's always came back to the music. "I was very young but had a place to play and work out stuff and build a reputation," she says. "Improvisation is about executing ideas and telling real stories as an instrumentalist. I wouldn't be the player I am if it weren't for working out ideas as an improviser there with people that play well."

One of Smith's bandmates during the early 1980s was drummer Ron Savage '85, who is now dean of Berklee's Professional Performance Division, a position that gives him particular authority on the Wally's effect. "Having an impact on audiences is one of the hardest things to teach at music school," Savage says. "It's so intangible. There's nothing in your scale book or theory classes that tells you how that's supposed to happen."


After first learning about connecting with audiences as a young r&b drummer in the rural South, Savage says that his Wally's experiences solidified and deepened his capacity

for connection. "Playing there helped me learn that being an effective musician is about living as a good person and member of a community," Savage opines. "I play music out of my life to connect with people through their lives. While I was playing [at Wally's], life was playing out in front of me. You felt their pain, their happiness, their relationships."

Such spiritual benefits notwithstanding, guitarist Angie Swan '05 cited a number of practical lessons she learned when she started playing at Wally's in 2003. "It was one of my first paying gigs," Swan states. "You learn how to how to set up for a gig, deal with stage fright and get past it, and collect your money at the end of the night. Playing with people who are way more advanced than you, you'd get your butt kicked there. It forced you to shed and play better." Notably, Swan played a tune on the Wally's stage during her student days with famed bassist Meshell Ndegeocello.

On a Tuesday night in late July 2018, Swan went to Wally's, just after playing at the Blue Hills Bank Pavilion with former Talking Heads frontman David Byrne. Upon hearing about Wally's from Swan, Byrne rode his bicycle from the Boston waterfront venue all the way to the South End to hear Swan sit in with Amy Bellamy's band.

"He thought it was a pretty cool place," Swan said. "I showed him the pictures on the walls, and he sat and listened. We played three tunes. He had a good time." And then Byrne rode his bike from Wally's back to his hotel.

People who were there that night will remember hearing music made by stage-tested musicians while one of the most famous artists on the planet took it all in. Decades ago, it might have been Roy Haynes or Billie Holiday watching from a Wally's chair. In July, it was Byrne. On other nights, it might be simply a few people from the neighborhood. Regardless, there likely will be Berklee musicians on stage, experimenting, improvising, and taking that brave step from practice room to stage. 



# Fostering Jazz in Dublin

*Bassist Ronan Guilfoyle is a champion of jazz education in Ireland and the point man at Dublin City University, a Berklee Global Partner.*

By Mark Small



Ronan Guilfoyle

Ronan Guilfoyle, the director of the Centre for Jazz Performance Studies at Ireland's Dublin City University (DCU), is numbered among the Emerald Isle's top jazz musicians. His distinctive left-handed fretless acoustic bass guitar style has placed him in demand for live work and recording, and he has released some dozen albums under his own name. A prolific composer, Guilfoyle has penned numerous works in the jazz and classical genres with notable commissions from the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Ireland's top orchestra. But he's perhaps best known as a champion for jazz education who founded the first program in Ireland accredited to grant a bachelor's degree in jazz performance. His résumé is all the more impressive considering that he is a self-taught musician.

"I am an autodidact," Guilfoyle said during an interview in an ensemble room in the music wing of DCU's St. Patrick campus. "As someone who was largely self-taught, I had to struggle hard to get what knowledge I've gotten." He credits his father with helping to develop his ear and musical aesthetics by playing classical and jazz music around their home.

"He had very specific tastes in classical music from 1880 forward, and in jazz from 1945 onward," Guilfoyle says. "He had speakers in all the downstairs rooms of the house and when he played records or the radio, you couldn't escape it. My siblings and I were raised hearing Bartok, Stravinsky, Ravel, and Debussy as well as Charlie Parker, Erroll Garner, and Miles Davis. I have three brothers and four sisters, and my father invented games that gave us a bit of a music education. He would bring us into the room and tell us, 'You are the oboe, you're the French horn,' and so forth. He would put on a symphonic LP and when we heard our instrument, we had to stand up. By the time I was eight or nine, I could identify any instrument in the orchestra."

The senior Guilfoyle was also an evangelist for great literature and films as well as music. In Ireland during the late 1960s, that was rare. "Ireland was a small, conservative place back then with a lot of agriculture and a lot of poor," Ronan Guilfoyle says. "You wouldn't often hear Mingus and Stravinsky in the same house."

He took up the electric bass at 18 and formed a jazz-rock band with his brother Connor playing drums and a friend on guitar. He progressed quickly and was playing bass professionally in Dublin's jazz scene within two years. "I didn't know the technicalities of the music," he says, "but I had taken a lot in by osmosis growing up."

A light went on when, at 28, Guilfoyle attended the Banff International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music in Alberta, Canada. "I sat in a room with bassist Dave Holland as he taught four or five bass students together," he recalls. "I was a little older than the other students who had come from jazz schools in the States. In talking with them, I realized they were studying with the people I had heard on record—like Miroslav Vitous. There was nothing like that in Ireland, and this was the germ for me starting a program for students back home."

In 1979, the Newpark Music Centre in South County Dublin opened its doors to teach classical piano, flute, voice, and more. The school's administrators were receptive when Guilfoyle proposed that he, his brother Connor, and a guitarist teach improvisation classes. "We started holding them on Saturday mornings,

charging the students £2 for the day," Guilfoyle says. "At the end of the day, the three of us would split the money." From those humble beginnings in 1987, Guilfoyle developed a jazz studies program and began attracting local and international students. A break came in 1991 when the newly-formed International Association of Schools of Jazz (IASJ), held its second annual meeting at Newpark. Tom Riley (now senior vice president for external relations), attended on behalf of Berklee. He saw Guilfoyle's group do a master class on some of the unusual rhythmic ideas the trio had been working on and suggested that the group give a master class at Berklee. After returning to Boston, Riley and others connected the dots to bring Guilfoyle's trio to the college.

The group visited Boston in 1993 and presented a master class and performed at Berklee and Tufts University. In the process they befriended many Berklee faculty members, including guitarist Rick Peckham, who later recorded and performed with Guilfoyle and was the featured soloist with the RTÉ orchestra in Guilfoyle's concerto for electric guitar. In 1995, Larry Monroe (Berklee's former vice president for academic affairs) visited Dublin and offered plans for a group of faculty members to present a Berklee on the Road program at Newpark the following year. That was the first formal connection between the two schools. In 2004, the Berklee International Network (renamed Berklee Global Partners in 2017) had an opening for another school and Monroe met with Guilfoyle and proposed that Newpark join the network.

There was work to be done before a formal articulation could be signed by the two schools. Greg Badolato, Berklee's assistant vice president for international programs, audited Newpark's core curriculum classes in ear training, arranging, and music theory to ensure that they were compatible with Berklee's. "Because Berklee is such a major figure in the development of jazz education in an institutional setting, it wasn't too hard to align our curriculum with the Berklee's," Guilfoyle says. "Schools in Germany, Sweden, and Japan are teaching things like ear training in a similar way because Berklee was the original."

In addition to his unusual approach to the bass, Guilfoyle had become notable in jazz circles for his groundbreaking take on rhythm. He developed a method for teaching odd meters and metric modulation in a way that wasn't being done elsewhere at that time. He published a book on the subject titled *Creative Rhythm Concepts for Jazz Improvisation*. "I'd gotten a reputation for this rhythmic thing," he says. "It was something that had not been done in that way before. I was able to energize and affect students with these ideas in a positive way." It also brought invitations for him to travel to share his method at 70 music schools around the world. "As a result, I've gotten to see other systems of education and gotten a sense for the different approaches others are taking in teaching improvisation," he says.

In 2006, Guilfoyle undertook the process for Newpark to become accredited to award a bachelor of arts degree in jazz performance. "Before that, you couldn't get a jazz degree in Ireland," he says. "All third-level education was focused on classical music. At that time, Ireland was booming economically and the government realized they needed to stimulate third-level education outside the university system. This was to give vali-



dation to degrees from colleges in [academic] areas that were not taught in the universities. We saw an opportunity and met with the Higher Education and Training Awards Council and told them we wanted to offer a degree in jazz performance. We were approved to do that in 2006.”

Two years later, Newpark signed a Berklee track agreement, which enabled students to transfer credits from Newpark and apply them toward a degree at Berklee. “When I think about it, in our last year [as part of Newpark] we had 100 students from 27 different countries,” Guilfoyle says. “We had come a long way from charging £2 for Saturday classes in 1987.”

As of 2017, what had begun as a one-off jazz program became an official part of Dublin City University, the third-largest university in Ireland. And the Berklee track agreement is part of the program. Students at DCU now can earn a bachelor of arts degree in jazz and contemporary music performance, or transfer credits from their first two years of study and earn their degree at Berklee.


“Under Ronan Guilfoyle’s leadership, Newpark established the very first bachelor of music degree in jazz performance in Ireland,” says Damien Bracken, Berklee’s dean of admissions, “and now this merger with DCU is a natural fit. The Centre for Jazz Performance Studies at DCU is very much aligned with Berklee’s global reputation and leadership in contemporary music education. We are excited about the collaborations we will explore in the future.”

DCU is the youngest of the three universities in Dublin. In contrast to Trinity College, which was founded in 1592, and University College, Dublin, founded in 1854; DCU was founded in the 1980s. “It’s an entrepreneurial and innovative university,” Guilfoyle says. “The fact that our contemporary music program was invited to be part of DCU underscores the fact that they are forward looking.”

Being part of DCU also means that students from Ireland and countries in the European Union pay only fees (to-

talting €3,043), but no tuition. The Jazz Centre’s curriculum prepares graduates for careers as arrangers, composers, producers, music educators, and performing and recording artists. Currently, the centre has 100 students and plans to double that number over next five years. In a step toward that goal, DCU recently hosted a summer program called Groove School, part of the Berklee on the Road programs, which attracted many Irish high school students. [See the “Finding the Groove at DCU” below.]

“I think that program will have a major impact on recruitment,” Guilfoyle says. “We will also continue to draw international students. Our program is very attractive for someone who wants to study jazz at an English-speaking university. Those students could choose to study in America or England instead, but both are very expensive.”

Guilfoyle has deeply-held feelings about the value of a jazz or contemporary music education. Getting philosophical, he says: “I believe that what’s going on in any jazz school is more important than it’s ever been. I know there are arguments about there being few jobs in the field. But generally, what is going on in the rest of the world is the antithesis of what improvised music is about. Jazz is about community, communication, and creativity. It’s also about being an individual while working as a member of a team. These are fantastic values for young people to deal with. My hope is that our students will go out into the world and put a little drop in the bucket of creative positivity—just a little drop. As soon as the kids walk through the door here, they are already different and deserve praise—before they play a note—just because they chose this. Wanting to do this makes them different from 90 percent of the people they went to school with. Musicians can positively influence the lives of many people they will never meet. We do an important job in schools that teach music as a serious endeavor. We have a role to play in presenting an alternative view of what life is about.” 

## Finding the Groove at DCU



Ron Savage (center) with students Hugh Clero (left) and Jessica Duberry



Student performers put it out there during the concert finale.

The Berklee Groove Sessions, held at DCU August 1 through 3, drew 85 students seeking to bump their playing up a notch. Faculty members from both Berklee and DCU coached the students in instrument-specific group lessons and ensemble rehearsals to prepare them for a public performance.

Beginning her session on guitar technique, professor Sheryl Bailey said, “My first bit of advice is to always be curious. Second, be fearless in the pursuit of what you are curious about. Third, don’t be afraid to ask questions.” She then went around the room and asked how long each student had been playing and what they hoped to learn during the sessions. Most wanted to know more about sight-reading, scales, chord voicings, and improvisation. Then, guitar in hand, Bailey began digging in. “We’ll start by talking about the blues scale, major scales, and the modes of the major scale,” she said. After a brief overview of the basics of diatonic triadic harmony, she continued with a handout on her specialty: fretboard harmony.

In his class Ron Savage, the dean of Berklee’s Professional Performance Division, began by demonstrating to drummers the ergonomics of stick control and the proper grip for playing the ride cymbal without tension. He stressed that when learning a groove on the drum kit, the students needed to break it down to understand the rhythm each limb will play before adding other parts of the drum set. He explained two ways to play the bass drum. “Keep the heel down for a softer attack and heel up for more forceful attack,” Savage said. “Learn to integrate both for a dynamic approach.” Savage also advised the students to devise a strategy for a practice routine with specific goals for consistent improvement.

During the ensemble sessions, associate professor David Limina directed a group with three string players, two horns, three guitarists, keyboards, bass, and drums. The class began learning to play Sly Stone’s “If You Want Me to Stay” as an instrumental. After getting the guitarists and keyboardist aligned on the chord progression, he tightened up the rhythm section, then added the strings and horns on the melody. “For this kind of music every single eighth note has to feel right,” Limina said. “It’s not just the drummer who is the timekeeper; everyone is the timekeeper.” After a little practice, the students were confidently trading solos.

Associate professor Christiane Karam led an ensemble with several vocalists and a rhythm section of piano, guitars, bass, and drums. She helped them prepare for their performance of “Valerie” by the Zutons, “If I Ain’t Got You” by Alicia Keys, and “Hotel California” by the Eagles. In a room a few doors down, Guilfoyle led a large ensemble with a horn section in a sophisticated arrangement of Kenny Dorham’s “Blue Bossa” that featured harmony and counterlines around the melody and as well as plenty of solo space.

By Friday, August 3, the ensembles were ready. They took the stage and played before an enthusiastic crowd of family, friends, and fellow students.

“Groove School was an ideal opportunity to bring together young, Irish musicians and connect them to the common teaching methods offered by Berklee and our global partner, DCU,” said Jason Camello, Berklee’s director of global Initiatives.

“Many of these musicians were studying and performing together here for the very first time. They had only three days to go from zero to the stage playing together for an audience. And they did a fantastic job. These young people formed some lasting bonds here this week. I expect that we will see them in future programs and later as full-time students who go on to successful careers.”

## Remembering a Guitar Giant

John Abercrombie '67 is esteemed for his musical legacy and humanity.

By Mark Small

August 22, 2018, marked one year since the passing of jazz guitar great John Abercrombie (1944–2017). For many Berklee musicians, his career is a model worth emulating. While his prodigious output and substantial accomplishments didn't bring him the larger audiences or record sales that John Coltrane, Miles Davis, or Pat Metheny achieved, Abercrombie nonetheless built a legacy of contributions to jazz through his playing style, compositions, live performances, and appearances on more than 50 recordings.

Guitar professor Mick Goodrick '67 remembers meeting Abercrombie in 1963, when they were both Berklee students. Goodrick says that, at that time, the number of guitarists enrolled was barely two dozen. "John got here the year before I did," Goodrick says. "He was the first real friend I made at Berklee. We were both studying with Jack Petersen, the guitar instructor here at the time." The two remained fast friends for the remainder of Abercrombie's life. "I used to call him every year on his birthday," Goodrick recalls. "He had the same birthday as Beethoven: December 16."

Abercrombie grew up in Greenwich, CT, and is the son of Scottish immigrants. His home wasn't musical, and he discovered the guitar on his own as a teenager after hearing the early rock 'n' roll of Chuck Berry and others. He stated in numerous interviews that the guitar—specifically electric guitar—had an instant effect on him.

In the 2017 documentary on his life, *Open Land* by Arno Oehri and Oliver Primus, Abercrombie shares his progression from being a fan of rock 'n' roll to discovering jazz guitar after hearing a recording of Barney Kessel to getting deeper into jazz through the Dave Brubeck Quartet and others. When his guitar teacher played him a Miles Davis album, Abercrombie says "light bulbs went off." He later became entranced by recordings by Jim Hall, Wes Montgomery, and many other jazz instrumentalists.

When Abercrombie wanted more musical knowledge, Berklee was the only institution offering formal jazz studies. He was pleasantly surprised when his parents supported his choice. Abercrombie studied at Berklee for four years and then stayed in Boston for another four. He frequently worked at Paul's Mall, one of a pair of nightclubs at 733 Boylston Street that included the famous Jazz Workshop. Abercrombie backed various artists at Paul's Mall and on his breaks would listen to artists in the Jazz Workshop. (Both clubs closed in 1978.) He got to hear sets by Miles Davis, Bill Evans, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, and others.

In *Open Land*, he speaks of meeting many top musicians during that period. He recalls a humorous encounter in the alley behind the club where he and his bandmates were smoking pot. Monk, who was playing at the Jazz Workshop that night, came upon them in the alley and stood by watching. Abercrombie gestured, offering Monk a puff. He says that the pianist accepted wordlessly and then proceeded to smoke the rest of the joint himself. He smiled, handed the stub back to Abercrombie, and returned to the bandstand.



John Abercrombie

The first recording the guitarist played on was the record *Nasty!* with organist Johnny Hammond Smith, drummer Grady Tate, and saxophonist Houston Person in 1968. George Benson was slated to be the guitarist on the date, but when he couldn't make it, Smith asked Abercrombie to fill in. "It was funny because I was a young, white guitarist with no reputation," Abercrombie said, "and I was the sub for George Benson! Here I was in a recording studio with real jazz musicians making my first jazz recording at 21. I was scared, but trying not to show it." During a playback, Tate, a veteran jazz drummer, turned to Abercrombie and told him he sounded good. That was just the boost he needed to relax and play confidently on the rest of the tracks.

After Abercrombie left Boston for New York City, he became a founding member of the early jazz-rock fusion band Dreams, with Michael and Randy Brecker and Billy Cobham. The band is not remembered as much for their songs as for the above-mentioned members who later found success with other groups as studio musicians and solo artists. Abercrombie soon received multiple requests for recording sessions with such artists as Gil Evans, Gato Barbieri, Barry Miles, and more.

By this time, the fusion movement was in full swing. Cobham had made a name with John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra, and released his first solo album, *Spectrum*, in 1973. Guitarists Tommy Bolin and John Tropea played on the record, but Abercrombie played the live dates. On Cobham's second album, *Crosswinds*, Abercrombie was a featured soloist on the funk jam "Crosswind." It was a great showcase of his formidable fusion chops, and a wider audience took note of him.

But Abercrombie was moving toward the jazz genre, and a key figure in his transition was drummer Jack DeJohnette. "Meeting him was one of the turning points in my life," Abercrombie said in a 2010 *Guitar Player* magazine interview. "We played everything. We played the space-rock that he had invented with Miles, along with swing and standards. In addition to playing with a great drummer, I was playing music that I really wanted to play."

Abercrombie later met Manfred Eicher, the founder and producer for the German Euro-jazz label ECM. Eicher invited him to record for the label. It was the impetus for Abercrombie to begin composing his own material. In 1974, Abercrombie came to the studio with keyboardist Jan Hammer (formerly of Mahavishnu Orchestra) and DeJohnette. The resulting album, *Timeless*, was a watershed LP with music that covered a range of influences. Hammer's "Red and Orange" and Abercrombie's "Ralph's Piano Waltz" offer a take on the jazz organ trio sound with a dose of fusion energy. "Ralph's Piano Waltz" was a piece Abercrombie

played throughout his career and even revised and titled “Another Ralph’s” for his 2013 ECM release *39 Steps*. Other tracks on *Timeless*, such as “Love Song” and the title track, were more introspective with a quiet intensity.

Abercrombie enjoyed a long affiliation with the ECM label, from 1974 to his final album, *Up and Coming*, recorded in 2016. “What tied me in with Manfred Eicher and a lot of the other musicians that worked for ECM,” Abercrombie explained, “was that we liked a certain aesthetic or feeling in music which has to do with being a little melancholy, a little sad, not so in your face, and a little mysterious.” All of those qualities can be heard on *Timeless*.

“That album was probably the most successful recording I’ve ever done,” he shared in the documentary. “The record sold well and put me out there in the world as a leader, not just a sideman. I had an identity. I got to be a leader and go around the world playing my own music. I am really indebted to ECM for doing this project. It was my ‘hit.’”

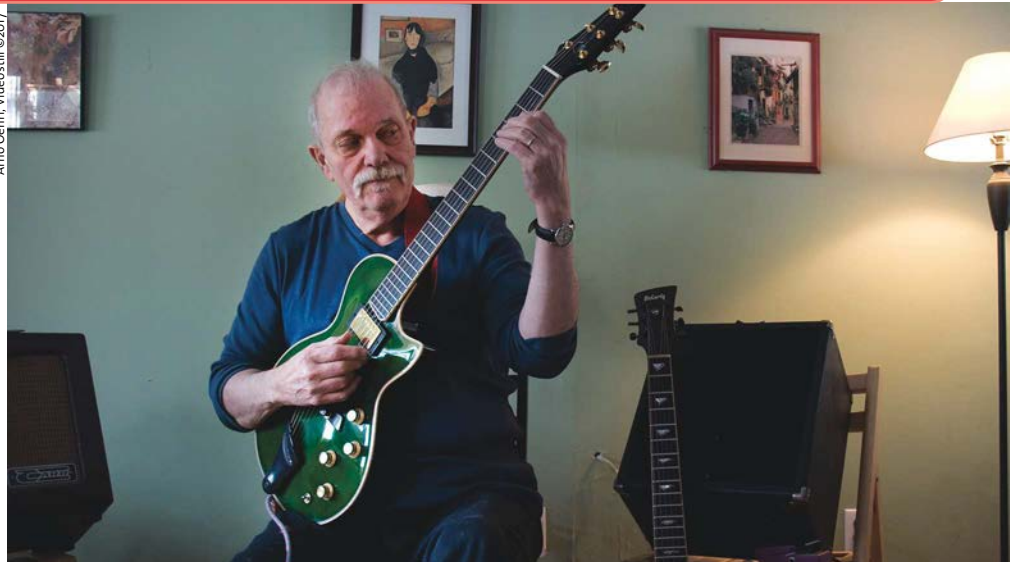
Abercrombie had fruitful musical relationships with other artists on the ECM roster, including Jan Garbarek, John Surman, Kenny Wheeler, Enrico Rava, and many more. Fellow guitarist Ralph Towner was another, and as a duo, Towner and Abercrombie appeared in concert playing an array of instruments, from Towner’s classical and 12-string guitars and piano to Abercrombie’s six-string acoustic and electric guitars and electric mandolin. Their attractive impressionistic soundscapes were captured on their *Sargasso Sea* and *Five Years Later* albums released in 1976 and 1982, respectively.

Abercrombie’s other recording and touring projects included critically hailed bands with DeJohnette, such as Gateway Trio (Abercrombie, DeJohnette, and bassist Dave Holland) and New Directions (Abercrombie, DeJohnette, bassist Eddie Gomez and trumpeter Lester Bowie). “The Gateway Trio with John and Dave Holland was a very special group,” DeJohnette says. “We made some great records and did a lot of concerts. The last project I did with John was a reunion concert with Gateway Trio in Chicago a few years before he passed. It was really a joy playing with them.”

Additionally, Abercrombie formed a notable quartet featuring pianist Richie Beirach, bassist George Mraz ’70, and drummer Peter Donald. Throughout his career, Abercrombie worked with many more band configurations and collaborators than can be adequately chronicled here.

One of his musical compadres, saxophonist Joe Lovano, offered a few words of tribute for this article. “Some of the most beautiful, poetic moments of music in my lifetime came from shaping melodies with John,” Lovano says. “His free-flowing ap-

Arno Oehri, Videostill ©2017



**Abercrombie plays the Albion model guitar built for him by luthier Ric McCurdy.**

proach and constant development of ideas were personal and expressive within whatever music we were playing. He had a way of being in the rhythm section and the front line simultaneously, which would fuel everyone’s ideas in the ensemble. John set the pace on the scene since his first emergence, and his contribution will forever be ‘timeless.’ He was also one of the kindest, funniest, and loving people you could know.”

Many others have praised Abercrombie for his lyrical improvisations. After years of playing with a pick, sometime during the 1990s he began articulating notes and chords with his right-hand thumb only. He sought a refinement of his sound and feel on the instrument. In a 2004 *JazzTimes* article, David R. Adler observed that Abercrombie had “sacrificed some velocity and fluidity for increased body, and his electric sound, once distant, harder to follow, now has more texture and substance.” Abercrombie reflected on his evolution as well, “I think my time improved. I feel more connected to the rhythm of what I play. I’m able to be more melodic.”

Abercrombie passed away from heart failure in 2017, surrounded by those closest to him, including Lisa, his devoted wife of three decades. Many have offered props to Abercrombie, including luthier Ric McCurdy, who built four guitars for him. “I hear all the great guitar players here in New York, but you could tell it was John in a few notes,” McCurdy says. “He had a true identity, which has to be the hardest thing to develop in jazz.”

Many who knew him speak of his personal warmth and sense of humor as well as his musical talent. “John left a great legacy in his music,” DeJohnette says. “But he was also one of the most caring and loving people that I’ve known. I miss him dearly.”

It was especially meaningful to hear accolades from one non-musician. In *Open Land*, Abercrombie said of his father, “[He] wound up being proud of what I was doing, even though he didn’t understand what I wanted to do in jazz—especially when I became well-known and was recording and appearing in magazines. He actually told me he liked a couple of records I did.” When pressed for the specific albums he liked, the senior Abercrombie mentioned John’s first recording with organist Johnny Hammond Smith. “He said he liked it because it ‘really sounded like jazz,’” John shared. This seemed an unusual choice from someone who didn’t know much about music, and after the many albums the guitarist had made by that point. Abercrombie’s demeanor in the documentary appears to reveal that it was reassuring to receive validation from his father.

In a quote from the guitarist himself on the ECM website, he said, “I’d like people to perceive me as having a direct connection to the history of jazz guitar, while expanding some musical boundaries.” Mission accomplished, John. Rest in peace.



**From the left: Eddie Gomez, John Abercrombie, Jack DeJohnette, and Lester Bowie on the cover of the 1978 ECM album *New Directions*.**

# THE WOODSHED

## Writing String Pads

By Mimi Rabson

*The following is adapted from the book Arranging for Strings (Berklee Press) authored by Mimi Rabson.*

My book explores the different roles strings can play in an ensemble. Strings can play the melody, add a countermelody, insert fills between melodic phrases, hold the harmony together with pads, comp with the rhythm section, and more. For this Woodshed session we will focus only on writing string pads.

String pads, the long notes or “goose eggs” that strings often play, can be the glue that gives an arrangement cohesion because strings can hold notes forever. Since they have infinite sustain, string sections are wonderful for presenting the harmonic content without interfering with the rhythmic or melodic content.

For the smoothest possible pads, ask your string players to stagger their bowing—i.e., make a point of changing bow direction at different times. With this technique, you won’t hear the interruption in sound that you would get when all the bows change direction at the same time. Include a down-bow mark and an up-bow mark next to each other to signify this for the players. Example 1 on page 27 shows how to indicate staggered bowing.

When choosing pitches for your pads, the sky is the limit. Clusters work, open voicings are also great, and parallel harmony is fantastic. Strings blend as beautifully as voices and S-A-T-B parts can be converted to violin 1, violin 2, viola, and cello. A string quartet can hold down the entire harmonic palette and a bass can be added to ground the low end.

If you have only one string player to work with, write a line that adds harmony using chord tones. In example 2, the top line is the melody, and a harmony line could be played by a single violin, viola, or cello. Be sure your line has proper voice leading and can stand alone as an interesting melody. I should add the good voice leading is always important. Your musicians will play better and your writing will sound stronger if every line you write is singable and resolves properly.

If you’ve got two players accompanying a melody, have the strings play the

guide tones. These notes, usually the third and seventh of the chord, give the chord its color and flavor.

Example 3 is written for two accompaniment players. Once again, good voice leading makes a huge difference and is more important than making sure every guide tone is covered. In the second measure, note that I chose to leave out the ninth of the chord because there was no way to include it and achieve smooth voice leading. If I put the ninth in the lower part, the next interval skip would be a fourth. That’s not quite as elegant as the third, which was the interval skip in the first measure of the same part.

If the guide tones are played by other instruments or not required, you can use the strings to add tension notes outside the chord (the 9, 11, and 13) that can build the drama in your arrangement. Avoid voicing tensions and guide tones too low. It’s best to keep the tension notes above the G below middle C. The third of a chord can go as low as the E below middle C.

The way you voice your pads adds a lot to the arrangement. The octave surrounding middle C is neutral territory for voicing. It’s in the vocal range, and using tensions in this register is fine. Keeping the voicings close (within the span of an octave) is also somewhat neutral. Close voicings enable the listener to hear the color of the chord but not be distracted by it. This approach helps the melodic line come out. Example 4 shows string voicings for three accompaniment players.

As you move higher in pitch, the timbre of the strings adds more drama. Pads using the high notes of the violins tend to give the listener the feeling that they are suspended from above. But pads in the high register can also draw attention away from the melody. Careful use of dynamics can mitigate the potential problem. The lower registers of the viola and cello offer a more grounded, rooted sound.

Using wide voicings with a span of more than a tenth between the cello and the first violin is a great way to broaden the soundscape of your arrangement. Example 5 shows open voicings notated

on a grand staff. The first three measures show close voicing and measures 4 to 6 show a wide range.

Example 6 shows the same passage in score form with violin 1 playing the melodic line. In measures 4 to 6, you can see that the upper voices are following the ascent of the melodic line to strengthen that motion. Note that the bass is always sounding the root. The viola plays double stops in bars 6 and 7. Sixth intervals are generally easy for string players to execute and keep in tune. If you have a large orchestra, you might want to mark the viola double stop *divisi*. That indicates that the violists should each take one of the notes.

When writing pads, it’s useful to think about how and when you want the players to use vibrato. Example 7 shows the way to indicate the way you want the players to use vibrato. To add drama, you might begin without vibrato (using the *non vib* notation) and then add vibrato gradually to enhance the peak of the story the music is telling. This idea may take some work in rehearsal since it’s not a common practice for classical string players.

Be sure to orchestrate so that the important parts of your arrangement will be heard. Sometimes orchestration is more effective than dynamics. Haydn rarely used dynamics in his string quartets because he didn’t need them. His orchestration is so brilliant, there is never any confusion about which part is in the forefront.

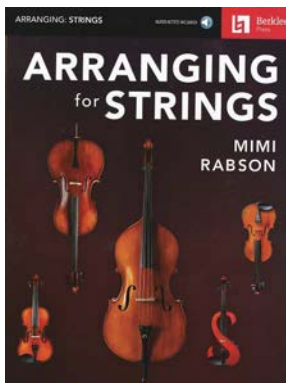
Careful use of dynamics with pads is a way to make sure the contour of your line goes as you want it to. Small hairpin dynamic markings as seen in example 8 can breathe life into a static line.

In the 1970s, the advent of polyphonic synthesizers made it possible for a keyboardist to play string pads in imitation of a string section. While synthesizers have improved since then, having live string players will always bring more excitement and musicality to any performance.

We’ve just covered the basics of string pads. The deeper you get into writing for strings, the more expressive devices you will discover that can enhance your music.



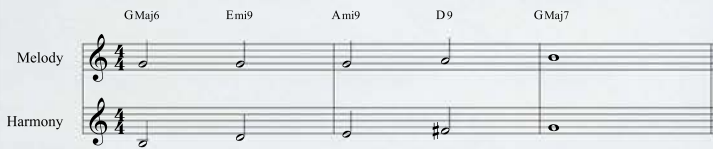
Mimi Rabson plays violin and viola and is a professor in the Strings Department. She has toured with Itzhak Perlman’s klezmer project and leads the Really Eclectic String Quartet.



**Example 1 Staggered bowing**



**Example 2 Single harmony line with chord tones**



**Example 3 String voicings for two accompanists**



**Example 4 String voicings for three accompanists**



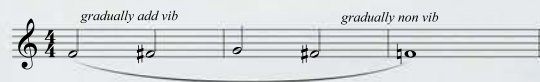
**Example 5 String voicings in grand staff notation**



**Example 6 String voicings in score notation**



**Example 7 Variations in vibrato**



**Example 8 Variations in dynamics**



# Tell a friend...

Virtual subscriptions to *Berklee today* are now available for free to Berklee alumni and all other interested parties.

Visit [www.berklee.edu/bt/subscribe](http://www.berklee.edu/bt/subscribe) and sign up to receive an e-mail when each new issue is published.

To see past editions of *Berklee today*, visit [berklee.edu/berklee-today/archives](http://berklee.edu/berklee-today/archives).



**B3**

JOIN US FOR DINNER & DRINKS BEFORE OR AFTER YOUR NEXT CONCERT AT BERKLEE OR SYMPHONY HALL.

LIVE MUSIC PERFORMED BY BERKLEE STUDENTS & ALUMNI NIGHTLY & SUNDAY BRUNCH!

160 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE  
BOSTON, MA 02115  
617.997.0211  
B3RESTAURANT.COM

f B3 Restaurant and Bar @b3restaurant

# EXPERT TESTIMONY

## Renowned acoustic bass luthier Bruno Destrez '89 explains to *Berklee Today's* Mark Small how to improve any bass.

Bruno Destrez is responsible for improving the playing of countless acoustic bassists—students and top professionals alike—without giving a single music lesson. Destrez, a bass luthier, is sought after by jazz and classical bassists alike for his ability to improve the sound and playability of any bass—whether it's a 300-year-old European-built vintage instrument or a new and inexpensive plywood bass.

Destrez, who grew up in Saint-Raphael on the French Riviera, began playing the bass after hearing a jazz record featuring Dave Holland, John Abercrombie, and Jack DeJohnette. He transferred from a school of fine arts to the conservatory in Nice to study bass. After completing his studies there, he received a scholarship from the French government to study at Berklee in 1982. During his Berklee years, he began touring as a leader and sideman with such artists as Mick Goodrick, John Abercrombie, David "Fathead" Newman, Marlena Shaw, Dewey Redman, and others. When playing in major cities, Destrez would meet with bass luthiers. When the tours concluded, he would return and learn from the best luthiers.

Destrez explains that the templates and methods for building violins and cellos have been standardized for hundreds of years, but not for the bass. He found no consensus on bass specs and restoration techniques, nor established schools for bass building like those in Cremona, Italy, for violin and cello making. With his own playing experience and feedback from other bassists, Destrez undertook a study of the physics of the instrument, built models to understand how the bass worked, and analyzed common problems. He discovered techniques for set up that made the instruments sound and play better. The basses he has worked on minimize physical strain on the player and make available techniques for solo classical repertoire that bassists hadn't considered possible before.

Destrez turned his full attention to luthiery nearly 40 years ago and is considered an international authority on bass maintenance and restoration. He works on the basses of jazz giants such as Ron Carter, Richard Davis, Ben Street, James Genus, and many more. Classical bassists from top orchestras in America, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere are also among his clients.

For years, Destrez has traveled the world tutoring professional luthiers and working with players in various locales to optimize their instruments. He has taught luthiery and the physics of the bass at the Milt Hinton Institute at Oberlin Conservatory and given masterclasses in cities across Japan, Europe, America, Puerto Rico, and Argentina. At this point in his career he is establishing schools in various countries to pass on to young luthiers techniques that he formerly held close to the vest.



Scott Sternbach  
Bruno Destrez '89

### **How did you become interested in bass maintenance and restoration?**

When I was at the conservatory in Nice, I couldn't believe how different all the instruments were and how many students were complaining that they were difficult to play. We didn't know if it was us or the instruments. My father was an engineer and since I was four years old, I had been building things. So I wanted to figure out what was wrong with the basses. I started by working on my own instruments and people kept asking who was taking care of my bass. I told them I was doing it myself and that is how this all started.

### **Have you found that a lot of bassists didn't understand that their basses could play better and just accepted that the instrument was hard to play?**

That's the situation exactly. I'm now working at universities with students who are having trouble playing at a high level. Two years ago, I met the principal bassists of the Cleveland Orchestra, Maximilian Dimoff and Scott Haigh. They had heard of my work and came to Oberlin Conservatory, where I go to teach for 10 days at a time. They visited and asked me to work on their basses. I changed things about their instruments and they couldn't believe how much easier they were to play and they were experiencing less pain. Now their repertoire is much larger, they can more easily approach violin and cello music. In a way, this is a revolution and most people are not aware of it because there is nowhere to get the information.

### **You have said that most problems with basses come from being poorly set up and the effects of the hygrometry in different climates.**

In the Northeast of America, we have cold, dry, arctic weather in the winter and tropical weather in the summer that's hot and humid. The height of the strings can move up or down as much as half an inch in different seasons. The entire instrument is moving and the sound post inside the instrument needs to be a different length for each season. A player like Marc Johnson has four or five sound posts for each of his basses for different types of weather. The top of the bass is like the membrane of a speaker that floats moving back and forth in a magnetic field. The bass top also floats and goes up and down.

A sound post needs to be longer for the summer when the instrument is at its biggest. When it contracts in the winter, the summer sound post pushes against the top and it can't move down. That stops some frequencies. Most bass players know that, for half of the year, their instrument feels impossible to play, and then for the other half it feels good, but they don't know why. In Paris, London, or Italy, where a lot of older instruments were built, the humidity used to be more constant. So many basses were made in Europe and

builders were not concerned with variations of humidity. In places like America, Japan, and Korea, you have a season of tropical weather and the instruments move a lot. All the restoration techniques that people learn in violin-making schools don't work in countries where there are big changes in hygrometry. We have had to invent new techniques to keep the instruments sounding great.

**Do you set up basses differently for classical players and jazz players?**

Absolutely. I also work in Buenos Aires with tango players who have a playing technique that's totally different from classical and jazz bassists. Each musical style has a different setup. The setup is everything and we have discovered so many things. I work with some of the best bassists and spend weeks with them to see if the neck angle is right for them and figure new ways to make their instruments easier to play.

When Ron Carter came to me for the first time, I had him play pizzicato at a medium tempo, then louder, softer, and a fast tempo, then I asked him to solo. I watched the angle of his hands as he moved around the bass. I can change things to make it comfortable for the player without permanently altering the bass. I don't believe that the work should be irreversible. Before he passed away, Dennis Irwin had been coming to me for 20 years. He played with gut strings and liked very high action. George Mraz [70] likes very low action. Those two guys were asking for totally different setups that would help their phrasing. George wants to phrase like a saxophonist, so I would work to get more sustain on the fingerboard and very low action. Dennis wanted a thump, high action—a sound that drove very strongly with the focus in the center of the note. We can do this with the sound post; it acts like an equalizer. You can make the response of the instrument quicker or slower and get more highs and lows, and have more or less focus. Very few bass luthiers know about these things.

**What are you teaching when you give masterclasses at violin luthier schools?**

There is no established school of bass making. People have been building cellos and violins the same way for 300 or 400 years. They use all the same templates and measurements. Bass makers are applying what they learned about violin making to basses and that's the problem. In the classes I explain that they can't use numbers and templates, they have to understand the principles and adapt to each instrument. It's like a doctor working with human beings, no two are the same. A good doctor will look into your life and not just rely on a computer analysis of your blood. I teach them to feel the instrument and use their instincts. Luthiers need to learn to play the bass so they can really understand the instrument. Most of the information about a problem comes from feeling the vibration of the string under your finger rather than from just hearing the sound.

I am organizing an international meeting in the south of France for next year for teachers to meet and exchange ideas. I also work with the conservatory in Milano [Italy] and will invite teachers from Oberlin to go there for two weeks, and I'll show them different techniques. This instrument is unbelievable but players have suffered to play it for years. I want bass players to be at the same level as violin and cello soloists. I would like to see composers writing new concertos for the bass.

**Do you plan to write a book about your discoveries?**

Yes. I kept these things to myself for a long while because it was how I made my living. Now, as I get older, I don't feel the need to protect my secrets anymore. I want to pass them on. All basses should feel good to play, and currently 90 percent of them don't. I don't want to build basses. My goal is to open bass luthier schools and to bring all the existing basses into good playing condition. The good thing about bass luthiery is that we can make any bass feel extremely comfortable.



**Your Gift Will Change Lives.**

The demand for scholarships grows each year. Your gift will ensure that nothing stands in the way of young artists pursuing their dreams and transforming our world.

Make your gift online at [berklee.edu/give-today](http://berklee.edu/give-today)



**Berklee**

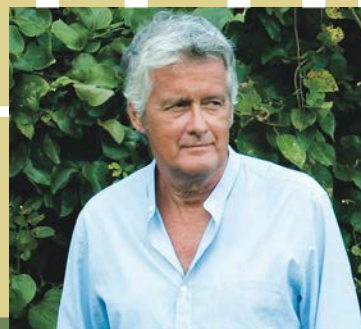


# ALUM NOTES

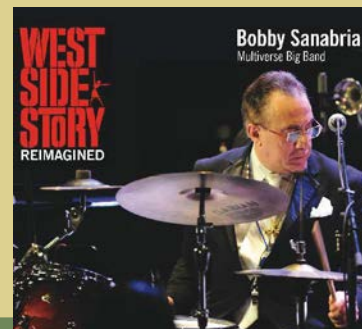
Compiled by  
Rena Farkas '21



Marlène Desbiens Tachoir '77 and  
Jerry Tachoir '76



Rob Mounsey '75



Bobby Sanabria '79

1969

**James (Jamie) Murphy** of Watertown, MA, has released his latest single “Happy Just to Be Me.” The “old-time country-style song” is about accepting yourself as you are. Visit [jamiemurphy.hearnow.com](http://jamiemurphy.hearnow.com).

1970

Baritone saxophonist **Tony Jordan** of Alexandria, VA, is a performer, manager, and personnel director of Bob Gibson Big Band as well as a performer and assistant manager of Big Band Tradition. Visit [bobgibsonbigband.com](http://bobgibsonbigband.com), [bigbandtradition.com](http://bigbandtradition.com).

1971

Saxophonist **Steve Sechi** of Danbury, CT, released the '70s-style *Fox Force 5: The Original Motion Picture Soundtrack Album* for Brotherman Records in July. The album was composed, arranged, and coproduced by Sechi and Joel Rosenblatt.

1973

Pianist **John Harrison** of New Bedford, MA, released the live album *Stagedoor Live!*, featuring vocalist Dori Rubbico, bassist Bill Miele, guitarist Donn Legge, saxophonist Bryan Steele, cellist **Ian Rubbico Legge** '13, and assistant chair of percussion Yoron Israel.

1974

**Stan Schertzer** of Webster, MA, has released the choral piece “Life Is a Journey,” published by Renforth Music. Schertzer also plays keyboards with his son, Adam, in the four-piece SMS Jazz Project. Visit [pianostylingsbystan.com](http://pianostylingsbystan.com).

**Walter Guthrie** of Sarasota, FL, works in telecommunications management and plays professionally. He has shared the stage with Donald Byrd, Dexter Gordon, Lou Donaldson, Ramsey Lewis, Pieces of a Dream, Peabo Bryson, and others.

1975

**Rob Mounsey** of Brooklyn, NY, coproduced, arranged, and conducted tracks for the deluxe edition of Brett Eldredge’s holiday album *Glow*. He is also producing singer/songwriter Kate Shutt, and has written arrangements for singers Terje Nilsen and Bryn Terfel. Visit [robmounsey.com](http://robmounsey.com).

**Alan Tauber** of Arlington, MA, owns the 31-year-old percussion school DrumConnection. The school closed its retail shop in July, but continues to hold classes for kids and adults. Visit [drumconnection.com](http://drumconnection.com).

1976

Vibraphonist **Jerry Tachoir** of Hendersonville, TN, and his wife **Marlène Desbiens Tachoir** '77 premiered “Reflections,” a jazz suite Marlène wrote for vibraphone and

piano, at the Nashville Jazz Workshop. Visit [tachoir.com](http://tachoir.com), [marlenetachoir.com](http://marlenetachoir.com).

**Edward M. Michalik** of Shenandoah, PA, recently retired to pursue various music projects including the Funky Rooster Band and the Wingmasters Polka Band.

1977

**Tony Corman** of Berkeley, CA, is the director and arranger for Tony Corman’s Morchestra Jazz Orchestra, which has recently played concerts at Bay Area venues. Visit [tonycorman.com](http://tonycorman.com).

**Steven Saltzman** of Los Angeles, CA, became a new member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Visit [saltzmanmusic.com](http://saltzmanmusic.com).

1978

Guitarist **Mark Elias** of Closter, NJ, is founder and president of Elegant Music Group, which provides ceremony and cocktail musicians, bands, and DJs. Elias also leads the Savory Stompers. Visit [elegantmusicgroup.com](http://elegantmusicgroup.com).

1979

Trumpeter **Jonathan Lax** of Summit, NJ, performed in June at the Alamo under the baton of Doc Severinsen. Lax also performed at the International Trumpet Guild Conference in San Antonio, TX.

Guitarist **Carl Michel** of Ann Arbor, MI, has released *Music in Motian (The Compositions of Paul Motian)*, featuring 10 of Motian’s compositions. Visit [carlmichel.com](http://carlmichel.com).

**Daniel O’Donnell** of Merrimack, NH, retired in 2015 after working for 40 years as the music director and high school administrator in Nashua, NH. He is now a realtor at Keller Williams Realty and still plays and teaches music. Visit [DanODonnell.kw.com](http://DanODonnell.kw.com).

Drummer and percussionist **Bobby Sanabria** of Bronx, NY, is a Grammy-nominated bandleader, composer, arranger, educator, and documentary filmmaker. In January, Sanabria received the Jazz Education Network’s Lifetime Achievement Award. He recently released the double album *West Side Story Reimagined*, a Latin jazz reworking of *West Side Story*. Visit [bobbysanabria.com](http://bobbysanabria.com).

1981

**Dave Hammond** of Denver, CO, completed his 25th year as director of bands at Denver School of the Arts (DSA). This year DSA bands and ensembles won two *DownBeat* Awards and gained accolades at the Mingus High School Competition, the National Concert Band Festival, and the National Orchestra Cup competition.

**Ronald Hartwell** of Dayton, OH, is the CEE of Different Hats Music and participates in a range of services including performance, promotion, production, composition, arranging, and education. Visit [differenthatsmusic.com](http://differenthatsmusic.com).

## alumni profile

### Ishaan Chhabra '10

## Boston to Bollywood

By Kim Ashton



From the left: Dave Mercure '81, Yamaki Mercure '13, and Mark Fairweather '88

Bassist **Dave Mercure** of North Andover, MA, released *Gravity* with his trio, TRlchrO, featuring drummer **Mark Fairweather** '88 and pianist **Eriko Yamaki Mercure** '13. The album includes original compositions by Mercure, and is available on major digital platforms. Visit [eastwestpianotrio.com](http://eastwestpianotrio.com).

### 1982

**Mark Buselli** of Indianapolis, IN, is currently the director of jazz studies at Ball State University and was recently inducted into the Indianapolis Jazz Foundation Hall of Fame.

### 1984

**Fernando González** of Miami Beach, FL, is the international editor of *JAZZIZ* magazine, writer for *Artburst Miami*, editor of the music blog *Jazz With an Accent*, and associate editor for print & special projects for the Latin Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences. He won an Emmy as an editor and writer for the WGBH documentary *Notes from the Mambo Inn: The Story of Mario Bauzá*. He is an active producer, educator, radio host, and arts administrator. Visit [fernandogonzalezwords.com](http://fernandogonzalezwords.com).

**Peter Scott** of Yardley, PA, has launched a high-tech drum teaching and recording studio, Gregory Tech Drum Center. He has performed with **Richie Cole** '67 and Nelson Rangell, and for productions at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. Visit [gregorytechdrumcenter.com](http://gregorytechdrumcenter.com).

Ishaan Chhabra was three years old when he heard something so wonderful that it stamped the first indelible imprint on his memory. It was the industry-changing soundtrack to the 1992 Indian blockbuster *Roja* that had made composer A. R. Rahman a household name across India.

"I just felt some sort of connect," Chhabra said. "I hadn't heard anything like that before." At the time, Southern Indian films rarely made it to New Delhi, where Chhabra's family lived. But by fusing southern and northern Indian genres, Rahman crossed over and created a sound that felt familiar to Indians from Chennai to Mumbai to Kolkata. It was like a polestar to Chhabra, leading him to a career in film music, with Rahman himself a guiding force.

Today Chhabra, who graduated from Berklee as an electronic production and design (EPD) major in 2010, is one of Rahman's core music producers, having worked on more than 20 films with him over the course of the past five years, in addition to having forged an independent scoring career.

Chhabra's talent for music was clear to his family since he was small. An uncle who played bass for an Indian classic rock band bought Chhabra a drum set when he was four years old. On his sixth birthday, he got a keyboard, and within minutes of touching it, he played the Indian national anthem. His parents hired an instructor right away. By the time Chhabra was 10, he attended the Delhi School of Music for weekly lessons.

At the same time, Chhabra would hang out backstage at his uncle's concerts, including one in which the percussionist Sivamani—a longtime friend and associate of Rahman's—was on the bill. Chhabra, then 13, told Sivamani that he was a keyboardist and would love to meet Rahman someday.

#### A Random Kid from Delhi

Sivamani remembered, and two years later called Chhabra to ask if he would like to come to Chennai, where Rahman is based. Chhabra didn't hesi-

tate. Though the meeting only lasted a few minutes, it "meant the world" to the teenager. Rahman gave him his email address, and every few months thereafter Chhabra would drop him a line, asking him about his latest production, about the instruments and techniques he used. "And he was kind enough to reply every time in spite of being who he is. I was just this random kid from Delhi."

During that brief meeting, Rahman again altered the course of Chhabra's life. "He was the one who told me about there's this place in Boston called Berklee, [and said], 'You should check it out,'" Chhabra recalls.

By the time he arrived on campus, he knew he wanted to be a film composer, but decided to major in EPD while taking film scoring electives. In addition to giving him technical chops, Berklee widened Chhabra's musical vocabulary. He learned, for example, to appreciate jazz for the first time, and his overall sonic worldview expanded. "Being in India, you were not exposed to all these top-notch faculty or even top-notch students," he says.

His production skills led him to an internship at Sonivox that turned into a full-time job as an instrument sound designer for a percussion library, developing presets and sound palettes, and making demos for the company's marketing department.

#### Uncanny Luck

In 2013, two years into the job at Sonivox, Chhabra heard from a friend at home who was writing songs for the feature film *Children of War*. The film needed a score, and he wanted to know if Chhabra would be interested in writing it.

Chhabra took a 10-day leave from his work at Sonivox and flew to Delhi. Shortly after he arrived, he got another call. It was Rahman's sound engineer, asking him to come to Chennai.

"It was really uncanny," Chhabra says of the back-to-back opportunities. Once in Chennai, he talked to Rahman for about five minutes. "It was kind of a blur because I was in



Ishaan Chhabra

disbelief the whole time," he says. Rahman wanted him to write a two-minute piece to open his upcoming concert—something cinematic, electronic, with strong sound design.

But Chhabra needed to be in Mumbai for his *Children of War* gig. That was fine with Rahman who said Chhabra could work remotely from Mumbai. Chhabra gave Sonivox his notice and has been in India since.

#### Score by Score

The initial commission led to an offer to do music programming and additional music production for the Disney movie *Million Dollar Arm*, a months-long gig during which he worked closely with Rahman. Score by score, Chhabra became one of Rahman's core music producers. As such, he takes a line that Rahman hums or plays on the piano and turns it into a fully produced track, often under Rahman's guidance.

Chhabra's specialty on the team is creating scores that blend orchestral and electronic sounds. Rahman has asked him to work on several international productions, including the 2017 British film *Viceroy's House*, and on Hollywood and Hindi films.

In August, Chhabra was working closely with Rahman to put the final touches on an Amazon Prime series called *Harmony with A. R. Rahman*, a series about the virtuoso's travels to remote parts of India to find and play rare instruments.

Alongside Chhabra's projects with Rahman, he has gradually built a body of work. In addition to *Children of War*, he has scored the films: *Budhia Singh: Born to Run* and *Omerta*. The *Hollywood Reporter* called the score to the latter "thrilling and portentous." Another film he scored, the National Geographic documentary *The President's Bodyguard*, was screened at the Indian president's home in Delhi on August 15.

"It's been quite a ride," Chhabra says. "Doing this you don't realize how fortunate you are to be in this position. But I do feel fortunate to be doing what I want to do."



Chris Kase '85



Sam Anstice Brown '86



Patrick L. Smith '87



Christian Le Délézir '89

## 1985

**Eric Gross** of Freehold, NJ, has received the 2018 Monmouth County Arts Education award for Outstanding Educator in the Performing Arts.

**Alun Harries** of Swansea, UK, has played with the Capital City Jazz Orchestra in Cardiff, Wales, and is music director for the Lisa Kwei Band. He teaches in London and elsewhere, and drums for the Symphonic Brass of London. He recently relocated to South Wales and established a drum teaching studio. He and his wife, Lisa Kwei, are expecting a baby in November. Visit [facebook.com/alunharriesdrummer](https://facebook.com/alunharriesdrummer).

**Chris Kase** of Morzarzal, Spain, has released the book *Trumpet Methods*, published by Mountain Peak Music. His quartet's new album, *Let Go*, was released on Errabal Jazz. Visit [www.chriskase.com](http://www.chriskase.com).

**Anron Palty** of Haifa, Israel, is a senior lecturer at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. He penned the book *Connecting Points in Jazz Dialects: The Methamorphic Process*, published by Ono Academic College of Music Press.

## 1986

Percussionist **Sam Anstice Brown** of Breakish, Scotland, has specialized in hypnosis for musicians since 1999. Brown is currently treating those suffering with focal dystonia. Visit [musicianshypnosis.com](http://musicianshypnosis.com).

Drummer **James T. Callahan** of Hillsborough, NJ, works as a photographer and also posts YouTube videos of his drumming. Visit [jamestcallahan-photographer.com](http://jamestcallahan-photographer.com).

Saxophonist **Tommy Smith** of Larkhall, Scotland, directed the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra in *Sweet Sister Suite*, a new recording showcasing works by the late jazz composer Kenny Wheeler. Smith among the album's soloists. Visit [spartacusrecords.com](http://spartacusrecords.com).

## 1987

**Patrick L. Smith** of Jersey City, NJ, a six-time Emmy nominee, recently won in the Outstanding Live and Direct to Tape Sound category for his work on *The Harry Show*. He was also nominated for Outstanding Sound Mixing for a Variety Series or Special for *Last Week Tonight with Jon Oliver*. Visit [linkedin.com/in/patrick-smith-906262a](https://linkedin.com/in/patrick-smith-906262a).

## 1988

Flutist **Gina Seraichyk** of Jamestown, RI, is a freelance performer and flute teacher at Roberts Music in RI. She can be heard on the PBS documentary *Ida Lewis, Keeper of the Light*. Visit [gigmas-ters.com/flute/gina-seraichyk-flutist](http://gigmas-ters.com/flute/gina-seraichyk-flutist).

## 1989

**Eric Stengaard Hansen** of Hellerup, Denmark, works as a train engineer at Lokaltog A/S Hillerød.

**Rodrigo de Castro Lopes** of São Paulo, Brazil, twice nominated for Best Engineering at the Latin Grammys, won a Latin Grammy in 2017 for the album *Dance of Time* by Eliane Elias. He and Elias won a Grammy in 2015 for *Made in Brazil*. Visit [rodrigodecastro-lopes.com.br](http://rodrigodecastro-lopes.com.br).

**Christian Le Délézir** of Brec'h, France, did a summer tour playing solo flute. His piece *Voyage en Exatonie* has been performed more than 200 times across Europe. Since 2015, Délézir has also exhibited his collection of drawings and photographs called Photochromies. Visit [christianledelezir.com](http://christianledelezir.com).

Vocalist and bassist **Kurt Ribak** of Berkeley, CA, released *ONWARD*, his fifth album of jazz originals. *ONWARD* and Ribak's previous album both feature **Alan Hall '79** on drums. After reconstructive surgery on his left hand suffered in a car wreck, Ribak still plays the bass. Visit [ribak.com](http://ribak.com).

## 1991

**Marie (Nanette) Perrotte** of Greenfield, NH, is founder of LUX Lifestyle, a lifestyle company for creative entrepreneurs. Perrotte lectures nationwide on Ella Fitzgerald, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Josephine Baker, and bebop. She gigs as a jazz vocalist. Visit [nanetteperrotte.com](http://nanetteperrotte.com).

Pianist **Thomas Snow** of Yarmouth, ME, has toured and recorded with folk legend Jonathan Edwards for eight years and recently directed Edwards's new live DVD with Berklee professor Livingston Taylor. Snow launched an online instructional platform for piano studies this fall. Visit [tomsnow.com](http://tomsnow.com).

## 1992

**Jay Jennings** of Burbank, CA, was accepted into the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. He serves as supervising sound designer for Birdhouse Sound. Visit [birdhouseound.com](http://birdhouseound.com).

**Gene Kelly** of Watertown, MA, teaches private piano and voice lessons in the Greater Boston area. Visit [kellymusicworks.com](http://kellymusicworks.com).

## 1993

**Jared Faber** of Los Angeles, CA, composed the music for *Teen Titans GO! to the Movies*. Farber is also the composer for ABC's *Splitting Up Together* and DreamWorks' *The Epic Tale of Captain Underpants*, and he wrote the theme for the Netflix series *The Boss Baby: Back in Business*. Visit [www.jaredfaber.com](http://www.jaredfaber.com).

**Joe Sweet** of Chicago, IL, recently created a promotional video with Joe Shadid for Reverb Gives, which donates to underserved school music programs. Sweet worked as a public-school music educator for 24 years and developed the guitar program at Lane Tech College Prep School.

# Nashville Pros

## Greg Becker '95

by David Petrelli '05

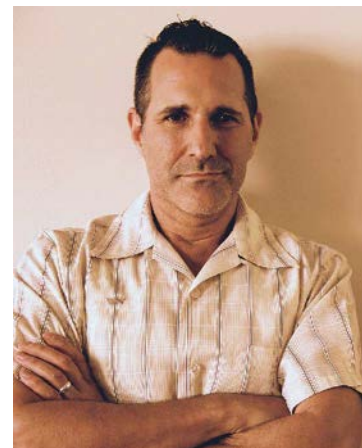
"If money were the most important thing, I would've stayed at MIT," Greg Becker states. In that one sentence he separates himself from your average songwriter. A product of Boston, Becker attended high school in the shadow of Berklee's campus, but graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a degree in neuropsychology. From there, he took a lab job at MIT. But after enrolling at Berklee, Becker changed the trajectory of a career path in the sciences to music.

Since arriving in Nashville in 1995, Becker has still made his living by getting inside people's heads. But instead of doing so as a doctor, he's been doing it as one of the more successful songwriters in Nashville. In a town where publishing deals are few and far between, Becker has had eight publishing deals and penned songs that have sold more than 20 million units. Some of the biggest names in country music have sung his words, including Carrie Underwood, Tim McGraw, Rascal Flatts, Alan Jackson, Brett Eldredge, and LeAnn Rimes. His songs have been in movies such as *Country Strong*.

"I came to Nashville because I have passion for lyrics," Becker shares. "When I got here, everyone was complaining that the industry was dying, writers couldn't get deals, no outside songs were being recorded, etc. It's the same thing people are saying about today's Nashville. But I just keep writing."

Becker follows a strict, daily routine that's been key to his sustained success. "Every morning I go into my space, do some writing exercises, and then get to work," he says. He makes it a point to never be out of reach of a pen and paper in case inspiration may strike. It's all about the craft rather than the business of songwriting for Becker. He explains, "As writers, we don't need publishing deals or royalty checks to do our job. Just a pen and maybe some coffee." It's an approach that has served him well for more than two decades.

Recently, Becker became focused on a different medium. "The two genres I've found that appreciate a great lyric are country and musical theater," he says. "I did country first,



Greg Becker '95

and now I'm doing musical theater." Becker's current passion is a musical he's written titled *Wonder Women*. It's the crazy, yet true story of the origins of the *Wonder Woman* comic book character. The back story is as fantastic as any invisible plane.

Becker describes his show this way: "It's a golden-age, jazz-style musical about three women who lived with William Marston, the inventor of the lie detector test, and how they combined their passions for early feminism with his propensity for BDSM [bondage, dominance, sadomasochism] fetish to create *Wonder Woman*." It took Becker four years to research and write the book, music, and lyrics. He has worked on the script with dramaturgs from the Guthrie Theater and the Nashville Repertory Theatre.

*Wonder Women* had its first reading in August at the Atlanta Musical Theatre Festival and has been named an official selection for the 2019 Chicago Musical Festival. He's also preparing to bring it to the Big Apple for the 2019 New York Musical Festival next summer and the National Alliance for Musical Theatre next fall.

Whether because of his grounded personality or disciplined work ethic, the changing landscape of the current industry hasn't fazed Becker. "When my royalty checks started drying up—thanks to online streaming—I never paid a lot of attention to it," he admits. "I just always keep trying to write better songs and find better ideas. No matter how the money is collected, the world still needs great songs. I never did this for the money." Imagine a world where more people had that view.



Fred Eltringham '94



Bryan Cook '98

## 1994

Drummer **Fred Eltringham** of Nashville, TN, has played with Sheryl Crow for six years and appears on her latest album, *Be Myself*. He has also played with artists including the Dixie Chicks, and kd lang. He was named Academy of Country Music Drummer of the Year for 2018. Visit [fredeltringhamdrummer.com](http://fredeltringhamdrummer.com).

**Glenn (Casey) Mallow** of Elmira Heights, NY, is a professional musician, teacher, and arts coordinator for the Arc of Schuyler, where he provides music programs for adults with developmental disabilities.

## 1995

**Carlos DeSoto** of Altamonte Springs, FL, owns the online music lesson company Museum Park Music and is developing an ear training and sight-singing app. DeSoto earned a master's in jazz performance from the University of Miami. His band, Estate Sale Boat, released *Coast* in January. Visit [instagram.com/museumparkmusic](http://instagram.com/museumparkmusic).

This fall, **Juan Gomez** of Kitchener, Canada, launched DXtreme Music Studio with a new album and videos. Visit [www.revernation.com/dogsface](http://www.revernation.com/dogsface).

**Jen Chapin** of Brooklyn, NY, spent the last five years touring, earning a master's degree in education, and teaching high school social studies. She is recording her next album with the Jen Chapin Trio, featuring guitarist Jamie

Fox and bassist Stephan Crump. Visit [jenchapin.com](http://jenchapin.com).

## 1997

Bassist and composer **Paco Charlin** of Pontevedra, Spain, released the album *Nomads*, featuring saxophonist **Dayna Stephens** '01, trumpeter Philip Dizack, pianist Xan Campos, drummer Kyle Poole, and poet Kevin Weatherill. Visit [www.pacocharlin.com](http://www.pacocharlin.com).

**Steve Thibideau** of Commerce Township, MI, recently joined modern Italian music group *Viaggio Italiano*. Thibideau recently performed with two big bands and a jazz quintet in the Detroit area.

## 1998

**Bryan Cook** of Los Angeles, CA, has mixed songs for One Republic, and recently mixed U2's "Lights of Home (St. Peter's String Version)." Cook also recorded Billy Corgan's acoustic set *'Neath the Darkest Eves*. Visit [bryancookmixer.com](http://bryancookmixer.com).

## 1999

**Maylyn Murphy (Atkinson)** founded Music Nation Academy in 2012. The academy offers music lessons in voice, piano, guitar, violin, ukulele, and percussion, as well as classes in performance and musical theater. Visit [musicnationacademy.com](http://musicnationacademy.com).

**Nick LaPointe** of Encino, CA, works as director of rights management at



Nick LaPointe '99



Christine Aufderhaar '01



Nikki DePasquale-Gauvin '03



Arielle Silver '05

AdRev, helping artists and writers monetize their music on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and other online platforms.

## 2001

**Christine Aufderhaar** of Berlin, Germany, will have her music performed by the Tonhalle Orchester at the Zurich Film Festival, and participate in a panel discussion at the Cannes Film Festival. She is a jurist for many film music competitions, and is currently working on two feature film projects. Visit [aufderhaar.com](http://aufderhaar.com).

**Issa A. Bibbins** of Dorchester, MA, released the single "Undiagnosed" from his project *The Treatment*. The National Alliance on Mental Illness partnered with Pearl for the World for this release. Visit [pearlfortheworld.com](http://pearlfortheworld.com).

**Sly de Moya** of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, founded Escuela de Música at the University Nacional Pedro Hernández Ureña with his father and **Corey Allen '78**. de Moya has played percussion with saxophonist Ed Calle, bassist Oscar Stagnaro, singer Carol Welsman, and others.

**Paloma Duenas** of Miami, FL, works in music therapy, specializing in autism and sensory integration disorders. Through her company palomARTS Duenas offers OHM Sessions that use sound vibrations to reduce stress and realign a patient's energy. Visit [palomarts.com](http://palomarts.com).

**Brian Sturges** of Los Angeles wrote, directed, and scored the slapstick feature film *Wall of Flesh: A Vintage*

*Comedy*. Visit [wallofflesh.com](http://wallofflesh.com) or [briansturges.com](http://briansturges.com).

**Elan Trotman** of Hyde Park, MA, has released *Incomparable*, available for download on all major platforms. The album's island-pop instrumental songs include the single "Carnival Fever." Visit [elantrotman.com](http://elantrotman.com).

## 2002

**Rashida Burch-Washington** of Rochester, NY, serves as program director for Rochester's urban alternative station 100.9 FM WXIR, focusing on independent music and community talk programming. Visit [1009wxir.com](http://1009wxir.com) or [rctvmediacenter.org](http://rctvmediacenter.org).

Bassist and vocalist **Jeff Denson** of Berkeley, CA, released the album *Outside My Window*, featuring originals and covers of songs by Jeff Buckley, Peter Gabriel, and others. Backing musicians include saxophonist **Dayna Stephens '01**, drummer **Ronen Itzik '03**, and pianist Kari Ikonen. Visit [jeffdenson.com](http://jeffdenson.com).

**Josefin Holmberg** of London, England, worked as a professional musician for 10 years before becoming a partner at True Search. She remains an active member of the London Symphony Chorus. Visit [linkedin.com/in/josefinholmberg](http://linkedin.com/in/josefinholmberg).

## 2003

**Lefteris Carvelas (Ioannou)** of Athens, Greece, recently signed to

Universal Music and released his first orchestral concept album, *1+1=ENA (1+1=ONE)* in collaboration with artist Vasiliki Sofianou. Visit [youtube.com/watch?v=38VgY3xSBJc](http://youtube.com/watch?v=38VgY3xSBJc).

**Chris Clapp** of Nashville, TN, has reentered the music industry as an administrator at Universal Music Publishing Group. Clapp formerly worked at the artist management firm Vector Management until pivoting to the financial services industry in 2006.

**Nikki DePasquale-Gauvin** of Lexington, MA, is founder and owner of Music & Motion Studios, and has provided promotional video and music services for five years. Visit [musicandmotionstudios.com](http://musicandmotionstudios.com).

Singer/songwriter **Gemma Genazzano (Dayton)** of Barcelona, Spain, is collaborating with multi-instrumentalist Joe Scott for her new album. Her singles "Fire" and "Heaven" were released last spring. Genazzano's music has been featured on *Today* and performed at prestigious venues worldwide. Visit [gemma-genazzano.com](http://gemma-genazzano.com).

**Ryan David Green** of Tucson, AZ, was featured with his acoustic duo Ryanhood in the September issue of *Acoustic Guitar*. The duo was recently named "Discovery of the Year" by WFUV NYC and was voted Most Wanted Artist at the Falcon Ridge Folk Festival. Visit [ryanhood.com](http://ryanhood.com).

## 2004

**Gennaro Ammendola Delgado** of Mexico City, Mexico, released a self-titled debut album with metal band Black Trip. The band has opened for Bad Arolsen, Exodus, Overkill, Sepultura, Anthrax, and many others. Visit [blacktripmetal.com](http://blacktripmetal.com).

**Shawn Kmon** of Waitsfield, VT, is a claims adjuster at Union Mutual Insurance.

## 2005

**Timothy Driscoll** of Austin, TX, is a member of the band Runescarred, which recently released the album, *We Are*. The band will tour throughout 2018. Visit [runescarred.com](http://runescarred.com).

Guitarist **Tom Maroon** of Medford, MA, is a production manager at WEMF Radio and teaches guitar at Noteworthy Experiences Music Studio.

**Arielle Silver** of North Hollywood, CA, celebrated a decade at Megatrax Production Music. Silver moonlights at Antioch University Los Angeles, where she earned her MFA. Her writing has appeared in various publications and her songs have been licensed for film and TV. She also leads yoga and creativity retreats. Visit [ariellesilver.com](http://ariellesilver.com).

## 2006

**Courtney Cooper** of Brooklyn, NY, released her sophomore album, *Waves*, now available on all platforms.

## West Coast News

# Happy on the Sidelines

By Danielle Dreilinger

Growing up in rural Wisconsin, **Neara Russell** '10 played piano, wrote classical music and pop songs and dreamed of being Sheryl Crow. And now? It's not all that far off, though she's not center stage. She now lives in Los Angeles and spent the summer backing Hayley Kiyoko, a breakout pop star fans call "Lesbian Jesus." Along with playing keyboards, singing and looking cool at sold-out arenas—a tough enough job to get—she's leading the band, armed with three laptops and iron concentration.

By the time Russell arrived at Berklee on a full-ride Presidential Scholarship, she'd already appeared on the NPR music show *From the Top* and taken a master class with classical composer John Corigliano. At Berklee, she studied composition techniques, songwriting, keyboard, voice, and digital production.

Russell credits Berklee with the chops and the connections that gave her a crucial solid base. "I always felt so supported," she says. "My skills have gotten me where I am."

She was less ready for Los Angeles's intense focus on image though. Booked for her first big pop music job, "I was just so nervous about providing my worth as a musician, and [then] I spent the entire day sitting in a chair getting a haircut," she says. "They cut 10 inches of my hair and dyed it blonde." The lowest point was a gig playing "Pour Some Sugar on Me" on a grand piano at a corporate awards ceremony while wearing a spangled bikini. "That was just a value system I hadn't prepared for," she says.

Fortunately, she's playing a better gigs now. As befits a nature lover, she's climbed. In addition to being Kiyoko's bandleader, Russell serves as the music director for both Skylar Grey and Bonnie McKee.

In the pop music world, the music director (MD) has the role of translating the artist's vision into notes and bytes. It's a fluid role, according to Russell, but typically the MD hires and negotiates salaries with the band, creates arrangements, rehearses the band, and when needed, hires an on-tour bandleader. The MD also programs the all-important playback sessions. Those are the computer tracks that not only augment the live band (sorry, kids), but also cue lights, keyboard patch changes, and run the click



Neara Russell '10

track to the players' earphones. "It's all set to keep the band together and keep the show moving and consistent," Russell says. "The whole show is hinging on that session." Which is why she has a second laptop on stage loaded with the exact same tracks, just in case.

Few music directors or audio engineers are women. "It's been an uphill battle," Russell says. "I've had a few advocates who have really given me a leg up," particularly former classmate **Drew Taubenfeld** '06. "Sometimes it's hard to be taken seriously."

The role can be bittersweet—like when she stood at midnight in Times Square with Hayley Kiyoko and watched the Spotify billboard change to Kiyoko's face. "I share these incredibly unique experiences, but I'm on the right side of the stage or the left side of the stage. I'm not in the center," Russell says.

But generally, Russell's happy with the balance she's struck. She enjoys working with other people's music—the technicality "really appeals to my classical background," she says. She gets some respite from stage fright. And being so close to stardom, she sees its downsides. "The percentage of their day that actually goes into creating or being a musician is so slight," she says. "In some ways it's a disadvantage to have the fame."

At home in Los Angeles, Russell writes and produces with indie artists such as songstress Monogem (a.k.a. **Jen Hirsh** '08). She's germinating ideas for her next solo album. "I don't feel fulfilled as a musician if I'm not creating at least part of the time," she says.

These days, a lot of that writing is collaborative, versus her earlier do-it-yourself practice. She feels that people connect more easily to music created by more than one person. And it's no longer so much about her. When Russell writes songs these days, she thinks about the listeners: What do they need? How can she best serve them? "I no longer have to be the one to say everything," she says.

## New to the Berklee Center in L.A.



Caitlin St. Laurent

**Caitlin St. Laurent** recently joined the Berklee team in Los Angeles as West Coast Advancement Officer. In this role, she will build relationships with donors throughout California and the Pacific Northwest to support the College's operations and future plans. St. Laurent is also no stranger to the Berklee family; her husband, Matthew St. Laurent '05, is a film composer who has worked in the industry for the past 10 years.

She has extensive experience in the field of advancement, working previously at LA Opera, UCLA, and UC Irvine. She comes most recently from the Nature Conservancy, where she worked with Southern California patrons to facilitate major gifts in support of environmental conservation. She is eager to



Dana James

connect with alumni, students, families, and friends of the college. She can be reached at [cstlaurent@berklee.edu](mailto:cstlaurent@berklee.edu).

**Dana James** B.M.'09 has been named the associate director for Alumni Affairs for Berklee's Los Angeles office. A vocal performance alumna, James returns to Berklee after working as an information and systems specialist for the Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles County.

She started her Berklee journey in a quest to take her operatic background toward a pop and r&b sound. In her new position, James will focus on expanding the strategic outreach to the Berklee alumni community on the West Coast.

## Luciana Sousa's Songs of Longing

On her latest album, *The Book of Longing*, Los Angeles alumna **Luciana Sousa** '88 sings the poetry of Leonard Cohen, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Emily Dickinson, Christina Rossetti, and herself in settings she composed. The album was produced by veteran music executive Larry Klein (Sousa's husband) with instrumentation that features bass (played by Scott Colley), acoustic and electric guitars (by Chico Pinheiro), and percussion overdubs by Sousa.

Of the album, the Brazil-born vocalist says, "It became clear to me that I wanted this recording to be about words and how they make me feel. How a set of ideas can take me places, reveal things I didn't know, or even know that I needed to know." Sousa wanted the words of the poems to be heard, but "not necessarily defined." "To me, the stringed instruments offer the best



Luciana Sousa '88

canvas for these songs," she says. *The Book of Longing* is Sousa's 12th album as a leader and her 10th for the Sunnyside label. In November and December, Sousa and her trio will complete tour dates across America, including an appearance at the Berklee Performance Center on November 9th.



Courtney Cooper '06



Billy Herron '07



Zoe Evans '09



Moana Avvenenti '11

She appeared on the August cover of *Avante*, and has been interviewed for Dash Radio, Noctis, and axs.com. Visit [courtneycopermusic.com](http://courtneycopermusic.com).

Drummer **Jarred Grant** of Belmont, MA, recently released the album *Not My Soul* with his blues/rock/pirate-folk trio, Spirit Label. The album is available digitally on all major platforms and at [waynewildermusic.com](http://waynewildermusic.com). Visit [jarredgrant.net](http://jarredgrant.net).

**Jobeth Umali** of Boston, MA, recorded the album *Resiliencia* and is touring with Taina Asili y la Banda Rebelde. She is also on the committee for Women in Music Boston. Visit [jobethumali.com](http://jobethumali.com).

Drummer **Jon Epcar** of New York City was featured in the January issue of *Modern Drummer*. He has worked with Bono, Justin Timberlake, Rihanna, and many others; played on the Tony Awards, on Broadway, and on the *Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*; and cofounded the band Carney. He currently drums for Mean Girls. Epcar's album *Morning Drone* was released in 2017. Visit [jonepcar.org](http://jonepcar.org).

## 2007

**Eli Harrison** of San Francisco, CA, develops the Klangfarben Fretboard, a web app for visualizing the guitar fretboard. Visit [klangfarbenfretboard.com](http://klangfarbenfretboard.com) or [eliharrison.com](http://eliharrison.com).

**Billy Herron** of Panama City, Panama, produced the album *Cincuenta* by legendary Panamanian group the

Beachers. Herron also received funding from the United Nations Development Program to preserve Panamanian calypso music through research, education, and recording. Visit [nuestrossonidos.com](http://nuestrossonidos.com).

**Jacob Hertzog** of Fayetteville, AR, released the book *Guitar Sound Effects*, published by Hal Leonard. The instructional book, written with Ueli Dörig, ranges from technique to electronic and studio effects. Visit [jakehertzog.com](http://jakehertzog.com).

Pianist **Juan Andrés Ospina** of Bogotá, Colombia, is composer and leads the Juan Andrés Ospina Big Band. The band's debut album *Tramontana* features Paquito D'Rivera and Lucia Pulido. Ospina's previous work as a performer and producer received widespread acclaim, and his musical comedy duo Inténtalo Carito has garnered more than 22 million YouTube views. Visit [jaospina.com](http://jaospina.com).

**Ana Lisa Portillo** of El Paso, TX, is a public-school orchestra director. She also founded an after-school fiddle club, which represented West Texas at the 2017 Festival of Texas Fiddling. Portillo also performs with various mariachi groups.

**Jonathan Schmidt** of Glendale, CA, is the manager of new films/allocations for the Film Musicians Secondary Markets Fund.

## 2008

**Naoto Kubo** of Tokyo, Japan, is a composer at Nintendo.

**Jenna Hardy Pedersen** of Spirit Lake, IA, cofounded JJ School of Music in Spirit Lake, offering group classes, ensembles, master classes, and advanced private lessons to students ages six and up. Visit [jjschoolofmusic.weebly.com](http://jjschoolofmusic.weebly.com).

**John Perkins** of San Diego, CA owns the entertainment company Retro Hits Tributes. Visit [retrohitstributes.com](http://retrohitstributes.com).

**Joe Tasker III** of Tucson, AZ, is operations director for the Tucson Jazz Festival.

**John Wylie** of Las Vegas, NV, has worked for the past five years as senior programmer and composer for Scientific Games. Recently, Wylie completed the digital editing for Todd Rundgren's Utopia reunion tour.

## 2009

**Chris Coniglio** of Lafayette, NJ, is a sales associate and special and corporate events coordinator at Shore Bets.

**Zoë Evans** of Linden, NJ, released the single "Again." Her previous release, "These Dreams," received major radio play. She currently performs in and around New York City. Visit [smarturl.it/againzoeevans](http://smarturl.it/againzoeevans).

**Theodore (Ted) Hedges** of New York City is a mechanical design engineer at Aspec Inc. He earned an A.A. in Engineering Science and is pursuing a master's in computer science at Columbia University. Visit [tedhedges.com](http://tedhedges.com).

## 2011

Last summer, **Moana Avvenenti** of North Hollywood, CA, taught at Swarnabhoomi Academy of Music in India. Visit [moanaa.com](http://moanaa.com).

**Rick Cody** of Norwood, MA, recently celebrated his three-year anniversary working in audio quality assurance and music product design at Harmonix Music Systems.

Vocalist and multi-instrumentalist **Miring'u James Kamwati** of Nairobi, Kenya, is directing a fundraising concert featuring 35 performers and preparing curricula for music learners of all ages. Visit [soundsofinfinity.co.ke](http://soundsofinfinity.co.ke).

**Zoe Lowry (Hillengas)** of Philadelphia, PA, had her composition "Obsessive" selected for the first volume of the *Philadelphia Real Book Project*. The piece has been performed and recorded multiple times by jazz artists in Philadelphia. Visit [zoelowry.com](http://zoelowry.com) or [philarealbook.org](http://philarealbook.org).

**Kelsey Michaelson** of Los Angeles is an executive assistant at AEG, a sports and live entertainment company.

**Jie Wang** of Shanghai, China, played the role of Mother Abbess for the national tour of the Chinese version of *The Sound of Music*. Wang is also an assistant professor at New York University Shanghai.

## Alumni Happenings



Darragh Dandurand

On June 14, Ingrid Jensen '89 engaged in a discussion with Berklee Today editor Mark Small '73 before a gathering of alumni at a reception at Power Station at BerkleeNYC. The reception marked Jensen's appearance on the cover of the summer issue of Berklee Today. She later took out her trumpet and played a few duets for the crowd with her husband, drummer Jon Wikan.



Paoline Farina

From the left: Marchánt Davis '13, Ebony Williams '05, Jemila Dunham '13, and Kevin Ross '09 were members of an alumni panel discussion for the 2018 edition of the Berklee Summer Initiative.

BSI was launched in the summer of 2017 to foster a strong sense of African-American community, support, and cultural history on campus for entering students of color. The week-long, early orientation program brings alumni back to campus for interviews, small group sessions, and a 90-minute panel discussion. This year's program featured four alumni panelists, two alumni from Berklee and two from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee. The panelists shared stories and insights about their student experience and career paths and offered words of encouragement to the entering students.



Vidane Visuals

Singer Kiersten Kelly '19 and guitarist Evan Tamagni '21 performed at the August Berklee Night showcase at Bar Lubitsch in Los Angeles. Berklee Night features five alumni acts each month and has become a well-established and inspiring home for the local Berklee community. The showcase is hosted by Meg Porter '12.



Fariide Blanco

After 13 years of service in the Alumni Affairs office, Karen Bell '90 left her position as senior alumni officer for a different role at Berklee. On September 10, she became the associate academic assistant and performance major advisor in the Professional Performance Division. In her new job, Bell will be the primary advisor to performance majors, students enrolled in performance studies classes, and students enrolled in the Performance Division Institutes (the Global Jazz and Effortless Mastery institutes, and the newly launched Jazz and Gender Justice Institute). Additionally, Bell will work with students in such programs as American Roots Music, Theater Arts Collaborative, and Latin Music Studies. Through the years, Bell worked tirelessly on a range of alumni initiatives and is a friend to countless members of the alumni community. Her replacement will be named soon.





Pär Martin Svensson '12



Eva Gertz '15



Layth Sidiq '16



Gaia Petreill Wilmer '16

## 2012

**Shaun Beacham** of Woburn, MA, launched the podcast *Wanted by None*. His role as cohost, engineer, and producer keeps his technical skills fresh. Visit [anchor.fm/wantedbynone](http://anchor.fm/wantedbynone).

Guitarist **Pär Martin Svensson** of Johnston, IA, is a freelance composer. He recently scored the acclaimed game *Oddmar*, featuring 120 minutes of music inspired by traditional Swedish music. Visit [parsvensson.com](http://parsvensson.com).

**Patrick McArthur** of San Pedro, CA, is a staff composer for Elias Arts in Santa Monica, and composes for the music agency MassiveMusic. He has created soundtracks for BMW, Proctor & Gamble, Honda, and others. His music appears in films including *License to Operate* and *The Peace Inside*. Visit [massivemusic.com/en/contact/massivemusic-los-angeles](http://massivemusic.com/en/contact/massivemusic-los-angeles).

**Benjamin Zoleski** of Schenectady, NY, has toured for the past year as children's musical director for *School of Rock: The Musical*. The tour concludes June of 2019.

## 2013

Guitarist **Sam Davis** of Nashville, TN, is the lead guitarist for Brett Young, who was named the Academy of Country Music's 2018 New Male Vocalist of the Year. Davis recently played to a crowd of more than 50,000 in Nashville. Visit

[hooversmagazine.com/hoovers-sam-davis-discusses-joining-country-music-star-brett-young](http://hooversmagazine.com/hoovers-sam-davis-discusses-joining-country-music-star-brett-young).

## 2014

Guitarist **Joseph Adams** of Allston, MA, is a member of death metal band Bacterial Husk and a graduate student at Harvard University. Visit [bacterial-husk.com](http://bacterial-husk.com).

## 2015

**Felix Carcone** of Soisy-sur-Seine, France, is a composer, producer, manager, and cofounder of Borderlive Concepts, whose murder-mystery show, *The Live Thriller*, opened to critical acclaim in Paris last spring. The performance features film sequences shot and scored by Carcone. Visit [thelivethriller.com/en](http://thelivethriller.com/en), [soundcloud.com/felix-carcone](http://soundcloud.com/felix-carcone).

**Lauren George** of Nashville, TN, works as an income-tracking administrator.

**Eva Gertz** of New York City released her debut album, *When I Paint This Town*, last spring. The eclectic album features more than 10 Berklee alumni. Gertz also performs aboard Holland America's Nieuw Amsterdam. Visit [evagertz.com](http://evagertz.com).

## 2016

Bassist **Christopher Bolte** of Boston, MA, is a producer, performer, and engineer. His self-produced debut album is titled *The Push*. Visit [christopherbolte.com](http://christopherbolte.com).

**Tobias Dibiase** of Columbus, OH, recently became a board operator at Radio One in Columbus, where he manages recording sessions and produces commercials.

**Kristoffer Fossheim Håvik** of Blommenholm, Norway, co-founded OKOS, an Oslo-based orchestra featuring 16 early-career jazz musicians. OKOS will regularly perform new music composed by its members.

**Layth Sidiq** of Brighton, MA, was awarded second place at the Zbigniew Seifert Jazz Violin Competition in Poland. Visit [instagram.com/laythsidiq](http://instagram.com/laythsidiq).

**Dallas Thornton** of Denver, CO, traveled across Europe filming *My Key to Happy*, a documentary film inspired by a Berklee class assignment. Thornton recently released the self-produced album *Talking to Myself*. Visit [whoisdallasthornton.com](http://whoisdallasthornton.com).

Saxophonist and composer **Gaia Petreill Wilmer** of Florianopolis, Brazil, and her large ensemble paid tribute to Egberto Gismonti with a summer tour of Brazil, playing her arrangements of Gismonti's music with Gismonti, his son and daughter, and guest artists. She recently recorded albums with her large ensemble and her trio. Visit [gaiawilmer.com](http://gaiawilmer.com).

## 2017

Singer **Hannah Crowley** of Los Angeles is part of the Irish music duo Buska and a backing bandmember for MAWD. She recently performed at SXSW in Austin,

TX. Crowley is also an actress in the film *Damo & Ivor: The Movie*.

**Kaitlin MacLean Daley** of Los Angeles is the coordinator of music sampling for Universal Music Publishing Group.

Guitarist **Shani Kimelman** of North Hollywood, CA, has released her debut EP, *Escape Velocity*, which is available on all major digital platforms. Visit [cdbaby.com/cd/shanikimelman](http://cdbaby.com/cd/shanikimelman).

**Esteban Andrés Gómez Mellado** of Valencia, Chile, is currently working as a 3D audio tools designer at Intorno Labs. He also offers Max/MSP lessons to composers and audiovisual artists. Visit [estebangomez.cl](http://estebangomez.cl) or [intorno.xyz](http://intorno.xyz).

**Trevor Mooney** of Antioch, IL, with bandmates **Josey Rosales '17** and **Zack Weinstein '17** of the jam band Earthmother, released their self-titled debut album. Visit [earthmothertheband.com](http://earthmothertheband.com).

**Guy Schneider** of Les Acacias, Switzerland, is a self-employed entrepreneur.

## 2018

**Gregory Nathaniel Fisher** of Sherman Oaks, CA, is a composer and recording engineer at An Evening In Studios.

# FINAL CADENCE

**Robert Denaro** '50 of Mashpee, MA, died on September 9, 2017, after a long illness. Denaro earned his Berklee diploma in composition and arranging, making use of funds from the GI Bill. He later operated teaching studios in Lexington and Waltham, MA. He leaves his wife, Leonora; two sons and two daughters; 14 grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

**Richard Wright** '60 of Indianapolis, IN, died August 17 after a battle with multiple myeloma. He was 83. After earning his diploma at Berklee, Wright joined the faculty and later moved to Las Vegas, where, he taught music and performed with and arranged for top artists on the Las Vegas Strip. He leaves five children and 11 grandchildren.

**Gil Small** '87 of Bronx, NY, passed away on July 22 after battling cancer. He was 53. After graduating from Berklee, he worked as a studio engineer and producer, and operated Groove City

Entertainment. He produced a range of artists and released albums featuring his wife, vocalist Robin Small '89. Their son, Amir Small '16, is a professional pianist.

**Max Frederick Wolff** '91 of Tempe, AZ, died on November 15, 2016. He was 46. A career musician, Wolff played drums on an album released internationally on Metal Blade Records titled *Front Towards Enemy* with his band the Fallen. He is survived by his mother, Susan Wolff, and brother, Michael Wolff.

Associate professor **John Marasco** '84 died on September 11 after a valiant fight with lymphoma. He was 65. Marasco began playing the guitar at eight years old. After graduating from Berklee, he joined the Guitar Department faculty, where he taught for 34 years. An active performer, Marasco backed such artists as the Lettermen, Joan Rivers, and



John Marasco

the White Heat Orchestra, to name a few. For 28 years, he played with the faculty ensemble BeBop Guitars. He leaves his wife of 32 years, Connie (Jordan) Marasco.

Associate professor **Mike Deneen** of Watertown, MA, passed away on July 10 after a struggle with cancer. He was 54. Deneen was a graduate of Milton Academy and earned his B.A. from Yale University in 1985, cum laude, with a major in political science and a minor in music. He joined the MP&E Department faculty in 2011. Deneen and Jon Lupfer cofounded Q Division Studios in 1995 and Q Division



Mike Deneen

Records in 2000. Deneen was a five-time Boston Music Award winner in the best producer category and had worked with Aimee Mann '80, Morphine, Letters to Cleo, the Click Five, and Guster, among countless others. He leaves his wife, Jen Trynin.

Retired Berklee faculty member and chief engineer **Bill Gitt** passed away on June 8. He was 86. Gitt designed and supervised the installation of nearly all the studio wiring and equipment in Berklee's first studios and maintained the equipment until his retirement eight years ago.

## Thinking about Returning to Berklee?

- ▶▶ Finish your degree (on campus, online, or both).
- ▶▶ Turn your diploma into a degree.
- ▶▶ Earn a master's degree at Berklee's campus in Boston, Massachusetts, or Valencia, Spain.

Returning to Berklee is easy. You do not need to reapply for admission, and you may return at any time. Financial assistance may be available.

LEARN MORE  
[berklee.edu/registrar/returning-student-information](http://berklee.edu/registrar/returning-student-information)



Over 300 alumni return to Berklee each year.  
 Are you ready to come back?

## What's your story?

Share it with everyone in Alum Notes via e-mail at [alumnotes@berklee.edu](mailto:alumnotes@berklee.edu) or by filling out and mailing in this form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Last year you attended Berklee  Degree  Diploma

Email \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate sheet, provide details of the newsworthy milestones that you would like the Berklee community to know about. Entries will be edited. To include photos, CDs, or items of interest, mail to:

**Berklee today**  
**Berklee College of Music**  
**1140 Boylston Street**  
**Boston, MA 02215-3693**

## What Is an Arrangement Anyway?

By Richard Niles and Mark Small

Since Berklee's earliest days, courses in arranging have been staples of the curriculum. Through the years, students came to Berklee seeking the skills to arrange for big band, orchestra, small ensemble, and even solo instruments. Many have parlayed their arranging skills into successful careers penning charts for top artists and pops orchestras. Countless music education graduates have written copious arrangements for their school stage, marching, and concert bands, as well as choirs. A recent trend among third-party licensing agents and music publishers places those actions and more in legal jeopardy.

Venues and artists have long paid performing rights organizations like ASCAP and BMI for licenses to publicly perform music. But now, some publishers are demanding a second license for each arrangement performed.

These publishers have taken the position that every song performed live needs advance approval from the publisher to perform that specific arrangement. That includes the notes, rhythms, tempos, and instruments involved. If carried to the extreme, this stance could end live jazz and rock as we know it.

### New Licenses and Fees

Arrangers are already struggling in the marketplace as the website [www.peopleforfairmusiclicensing.com](http://www.peopleforfairmusiclicensing.com) describes. "After over 80 years of an established course of dealing, some publishers are now requiring that print licenses be acquired and fees be paid for the creation and use of an arrangement of a song. This fee must then be paid for every performance of that song. This fee is often in addition to procuring a mechanical license and the fees paid to performing rights organizations (BMI, ASCAP, SESAC and others).

"These fees are not fair, reasonable, predictable, or transparent. Nor is the granting of the print license compulsory, as with a mechanical license. In a day when arts programs and funding are cut and symphony orchestras cling to life, the exorbitant fees being charged by the publishers are having a devastating impact on choirs, bands, orchestras, drum and bugle corps, arrangers, artists, and others who work in the performing arts community."

Under the U.S. Copyright Act, copyright in a composition is determined by two components: melody and lyric. There are, however, innumerable ways

that a composition can be performed. Tempo, melodic rhythms, key, harmony, genre, groove, form, and instrumentation, are all elements of arrangement: choices made by one person or a group of people. Whether the song is presented by a solo singer or didgeridoo player, the choice to do so constitutes an "arrangement."

If the original composition is changed for a live or recorded performance—whether unconsciously or in a spur-of-the-moment improvisation—the resulting changes constitute a new arrangement.

### You Say You Want a Convolution

The demand for an arranging license goes as far as threatening even those bands that attempt to precisely recreate covers of existing recordings. A case involving the Beatles tribute band Classical Mystery Tour shows how convoluted this issue can get. For 22 years, the group has performed Beatles songs with orchestras across America in absolutely faithful transcriptions of the band parts and original orchestrations from Beatles recordings.

Classical Mystery Tour leader, James Owen, received written confirmation from Sony/ATV that since there were no fundamental changes to the songs and the show was a concert rather than a theatrical production, the band's use of the Beatles material was covered under the performance licenses. These are licenses the venues have with ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC that musicians have long believed allowed them to perform cover songs. In a lawsuit against SONY/ATV, Tresóna Multimedia, LLC, and other defendants, Owens claims that his business is being harmed.

According to a suit filed in the Central District of California, the company Tresóna, seeking fees for music copyright holders, contacted orchestras with which Owens's band was booked to perform. They stated that Owens and company would be playing unlicensed arrangements, and that the orchestra would owe fees of \$2,200 for each performance of the Classical Mystery transcriptions.

The documents in the suit contain Tresóna's claim that "only the exclusive owner of a musical composition has the authority to license the creation of a *derivative* work incorporating a preexisting musical composition" [emphasis added]. But the arrangements Classical



Mystery Tour performs with orchestras are not "derivative works," they are the originals. In a counterclaim, Sony lawyers pushed back against Owen, stating, "Sony explicitly takes the position that the right to publicly perform the Beatles' works does NOT include the right to transcribe the EXISTING arrangements on the Sound Recordings."

This raises the question: if venues pay the license fee for public performances of copyrighted music, can the artists perform the music in their own or the original artist's style? According to SONY and Tresóna, the answer is no.

This issue is not limited to professionals in large venues. Students are being targeted as well. Tresóna filed lawsuits against school music directors for the use of arrangements of pop songs by student bands and choirs. A case brought by Tresóna Multimedia, LLC against Brett Carroll (Burbank, CA, high-school choir director) and the Burbank High School Vocal Music Association was heard by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

In short, Tresóna sued the defendants for performances at vocal competitions and choir fundraisers of the songs "(I've Had) the Time of My Life" and "Hotel California," arranged by Josh Greene. Tresóna lost the case, but only on a technicality: they were found to lack standing to bring the lawsuit. Carroll fought back and prevailed, but at what cost? Attorneys fees in such cases can easily exceed \$100,000. Other parties, unable to pay such legal fees, have not fought as Carroll did. School and community ensembles are worried. And rightly so.

A May 4, 2018 story in *The Morning Call* newspaper of the Lehigh Valley, PA, detailed the cancellation of a concert tribute to David Bowie by the Allentown Symphony Orchestra after a press release from orchestra representatives stated that Tresóna "questioned the rights of the show's promoter regarding Bowie's music." The orchestra's interim executive director is quoted as saying that the concert promoter "initially said there was no issue with using that music in the show." The article later states that

the concert promoter "declined to say whether Tresóna had contacted him," and a Tresóna representative is quoted as saying his organization had "no contact with the promoter about the Allentown concert."

What really happened is unclear, but for high school, community, and professional performing organizations, the economic margins are small and many perform without profit, merely for the love of being creative. Amateur or student status is not a legal defense.

Professional arrangers creating charts for various ensembles are at risk too. They are at risk of being accused of infringing the rights of publishing companies who negotiated exclusive rights to sell the sheet music.

Unless the law is clarified, an arranger could have to pay a licensing fee before writing a chart. As well, a performing organization would pay the arranger, plus a fee to perform each chart, plus licensing fees to performing rights organizations. For some organizations, this could make the cost of presenting live performances prohibitive.

### Congressional Action Is Needed

Attorney Jonathan Minkoff contends that the answer is to make arrangements fall under a compulsory license. "Congress understood that there is no real right to record a song without also making an arrangement," Minkoff says. "Live performers need that same protection. Congress did not mean to make all improvisation in cover songs illegal. The right to perform has always included an implied right to arrange.

"Now that right is under threat, so Congress needs to make it explicit in the law. Currently, every band and every choir is potentially at risk. Congress should do two simple things: first, clarify that performing includes arranging; and second, create a compulsory musical arranging right that matches the existing compulsory recording right.

"By creating an all-uses compulsory license, composers and publishers would get a new source of income and arrangers could come out from the shadows and get legal. Everyone would win."

# Your Graduate Degree Awaits.

The moment is right. You're ready. And the graduate program you've been looking for is within reach. With Berklee's graduate programs in music performance, business, production, education, film scoring, and musical theater, you'll have everything you need to advance your arts career and show the world what you're made of.

## BOSTON CAMPUS

Master of Music in Contemporary Performance (Global Jazz Concentration)

## VALENCIA, SPAIN CAMPUS

Master of Music in Contemporary Performance (Production Concentration)

Master of Music in Music Production, Technology, and Innovation

Master of Arts in Global Entertainment and Music Business

Master of Music in Scoring for Film, Television, and Video Games

## BERKLEE ONLINE

Master of Arts in Music Business

Master of Music in Music Production

## BOSTON CONSERVATORY AT BERKLEE

### MUSIC

Master of Music (various concentrations)

Graduate Performance Diploma

Professional Studies Certificate

Graduate Certificate in Music Education and Autism

### MUSICAL THEATER

Master of Fine Arts



**Berklee**

Learn more at [berklee.edu/graduate](https://berklee.edu/graduate)

# ATTENTION MUSICIANS:

Win Awards: Best Male Artist,  
Best Female Artist, Group...

Music Industry Exposure,  
Radio Airplay, Hit The Charts  
Like Our Past Winner  
**MEGHAN TRAINOR** 



Platinum Sponsors:



Sponsors:



## What Others Are Saying:

"I am very excited and surprised to win" –*Meghan Trainor, 6th Annual IAMA Best Female Artist Winner.*

"Thank you for recognizing my music with your awards. It means a lot to be appreciated after so many years of writing and playing music for a living" –*AJ Croce, 9th Annual IAMA Top Winner*

"I have felt more connected with International Music Acoustic Awards far more than any other music award competitions or musician awards" –*Amanda Grace, singer-songwriter.*

"This is an excellent achievement for you & your winners. It also shows what a great competition the International Acoustic Music Awards is" –*Cameron Ingram, singer-songwriter*

## HURRY, ENTER AT:



[www.inAcoustic.com/bk](http://www.inAcoustic.com/bk)