

MUSIC GAZETTE

Pomona College Music Department *Spring 2024*
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Department News

I had a moment while doing some department chair work the other day. I got on the phone with Human Resources at Pomona College, and the hold music was (. . .wait . . .) the second movement of Beethoven's 9th Symphony. I couldn't help but contemplate just how many ears this music has gone into over the years, and just how many ways in which this music has been put to use. This experience also reminded me of what a difference there is between recorded music coming out of a small speaker and live music emanating from a large community of people, performing together with a shared goal of creating something beautiful in the moment. I'm thrilled that Pomona College was able to offer two public performances of this monumental work this semester.

There are more things to report from our Music Department than can fit in the pages of this Gazette. You'll read about many achievements and events to celebrate here. We continue to try to reinvigorate our facilities, with three new practice modules in the Montgomery building being one of

the most encouraging developments. Bridges Hall of Music and Lyman Hall have a few new touches as well. The music curriculum is likewise undergoing a process of remodeling, and we anticipate some changes to the music major and minor as soon as next academic year. Our dear colleague **Tom Flaherty** is retiring at the end of the spring semester—what are we supposed to do?!? To start, we clapped loudly at the always-electrifying Ussachevsky Memorial Festival, and then we will stay tuned for the music of a special class co-taught with Genevieve Lee entitled Music for Composers and Performers.

Concerts and gatherings abound this semester, involving student ensemble classes, outside artists, and professional collaborations involving Pomona faculty. Repertoire ranges from contemporary music by Californians to seventeenth-century ensemble pieces by Monteverdi to Beethoven's piano-violin sonatas, Balinese gamelan music, English consort songs, jazz, WWI-era organ works, African American

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spirituals, and music by composers including Takemitsu, Sibelius, Brahms, Nino Rota, Chen Yi, and Flaherty. A hurdy-gurdy will make an appearance. We were pleased to host the 65th Annual Meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology, Southern California and Hawai'i Chapter, in early March. We hope to see you if you're able to make a visit here this semester.

- Joti Rockwell, Department Chair

Of Special Note

Tom Craig (1909–69) graduated from Pomona in 1934 with a degree in botany, but while he was a student he discovered a vocation for painting. In the 1930s, Craig gained a national reputation for his influential watercolor paintings of California mining towns and landscapes. In the early 1940s he shifted toward portraying people of all origins and walks of life, depicting them in what the *Los Angeles Times* called “subtly luminous oils.” One of these luminous works has a place of honor in the Thatcher Music Building.



In 1976, Craig's widow Frances gave his 12-by-16-inch portrait of the composer William Grant Still, painted in 1940, to the Music Department. For many years it hung in Professor Gwendolyn Lytle's voice studio. In 2022, Pomona's Benton Museum catalogued it, and it is now displayed in the Music Library Seminar Room. This portrait of

Still looking off into the distance was shown at a 1943 Los Angeles Art Association exhibit of “Romantic” paintings,

although the *Times* art critic Arthur Millier responded to it by saying, “Craig is no romantic. He is a realist with rich color and a fine eye for degrees of light and dark.”

Still (1895–1978) was a prolific composer of operas, ballets, symphonies, and other orchestral works, choral music, and songs. In 1940 he was already recognized as a major composer. In recent years his music has been given more of the hearings it richly deserves. I find it especially fitting to have Still represented by an inspiring artwork in our building. A few years ago I had the pleasure of performing Still's 1943 Suite for violin and piano, each of whose three movements was suggested by a sculpture associated with the Harlem Renaissance.

- Alfred Cramer

Special Events

On February 23 and 25, the Music Department presented **Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, op. 125**, for the first time in more than half a century. The performances marked the 200th anniversary year of the piece's May 1824 premiere at the Theater am Kärntnertor in Vienna. The installation of additional platforms extended the depth of the stage by 16 feet, and the department engaged the services of Shutter Cut Lighting Design in Los Angeles to provide supplementary lighting for the unusual configuration. The normal forces of the Pomona College Orchestra and Choir were joined by a host of professional instrumentalists and singers from the greater Los Angeles area, and more than a dozen members of the department's full- and part-time faculty. The vocal soloists were soprano Julie Adams, mezzo-soprano Kelly Guerra, tenor Rodell Rosel, and baritone Nmon Ford, all of whom enjoy busy careers in the opera world. Planning



Soloists: Julie Adams, Rodell Rosel, Nmon Ford, and Kelly Guerra,

for the project began in May 2023 and involved the entire department, as well as the College’s Office of Advancement, which assisted greatly by soliciting a targeted gift from a generous anonymous donor for specialized lighting.

The Italian baroque ensemble **Opera Prima**, directed by violist da gamba Cristiano Contadin, visited on February 7. In addition to presenting “Tormento Seicento,” a stunning program of Italian baroque works featuring soprano Amanda Forsythe, Contadin met with students from Music 121 and Music 51 before the concert to answer questions and to discuss the repertoire, his path to early music, and unique challenges and rewards of engaging with historical performance.

Performing Ensembles

The **POMONA COLLEGE BAND**, conducted by **Graydon Beeks**, will perform concerts on April 19 and 21. The program will feature the *Variations on a Theme of Glinka* by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov with Francisco Castillo as oboe soloist and works by Carolyn Bremer, Robert Russell Bennett, Harry Berman (PO ’24), Ron Nelson, William Grant Still, and Chen Yi. Rehearsals are Mondays and Wednesdays 6:30-7:55 p.m.

For the first time in memory, the **POMONA COLLEGE CHOIR**, led by Professor **Donna M. Di Grazia**, prepared two different programs this spring, both in collaboration with the Pomona College Orchestra. The first program, in February, consisted of Beethoven’s 9th Symphony, first performed at Pomona College in 1970. Later in the semester, the two ensembles will perform together a second time, featuring Brahms’s *Nänie*, Sibelius’s *Finlandia* (with chorus), and Vaughan Williams’s rarely performed *Toward the Unknown Region*.

The **POMONA COLLEGE GLEE CLUB**, under the leadership of Professor **Donna M. Di Grazia**, is back to work this semester investigating a varied program including works by Williametta Spencer (*At the Round Earth’s Imagined Corners*), Heinrich Schütz (*Selig sind die Toten*), Johann Christian Bach (*Es ist nun aus mit meinem Leben*), Will Todd (*In this place*), and Paul Mealor (*She walks in beauty*). It will also feature Handel’s exuberant *Dixit Dominus*, for which the singers will be joined by a group of period-instrument specialists including Professor Malachai Komanoff Bandy (violone), Eva Lymenstull (baroque cello), and others. It is a rare opportunity for the students to perform this music with such high-level players, and all are very excited. After their usual series of concerts on-campus, the ensemble will embark on its annual tour, this year to the San Francisco Bay Area and Pacific Northwest.

POMONA COLLEGE JAZZ ENSEMBLE, led by **Barb Catlin**, offers two spring concerts. The March program features a program of music by female composers with original works by student members of the ensemble. The April concert will feature the music of Duke Ellington.

The **POMONA COLLEGE ORCHESTRA** had a triumphant Fall 2023 semester working with guest conductor Tony Rowe. Their repertoire included Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9, “From the New World,” along with music by Mozart, Liszt, Wagner, Wieniawski (Violin Concerto No. 1 with Ethan Lee ’24), and Barber. This spring, besides Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 in February, the orchestra will play music by Johannes Brahms, Jean Sibelius, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Florence Price. More than 150 applicants to Pomona College’s Class of 2028 demonstrated their skill and achievement as orchestral instrumentalists by submitting music supplements, all of which have been carefully evaluated by the orchestra’s conductor, **Eric Lindholm**.



[photo by: E. Fang]

POMONA COLLEGE BALINESE GAMELAN ENSEMBLE GIRI KUSUMA, under the leadership of directors **I Nyoman** and **Nanik Wenten**, will offer their spring performance on Monday, April 29 in Bridges Hall of Music.



POMONA COLLEGE AFRO-CUBAN MUSIC ENSEMBLE, **Joe Addington**, director, has been busy with rehearsals preparing for their 8:15 p.m. April 22 performance.

Faculty News

Assistant Professor **Malachai Komanoff Bandy** is currently teaching the Music 121 seminar, Sound and Symbol: Case Studies in Music and Meaning from Machaut to Bach, which invites students into deep conversation and collaboration with composers of the past. He is grateful for new collaborations with colleagues of this century, too: after joining the PCC for the department's Beethoven's 9th project, Malachai and Professor Di Grazia co-directed a program of English music for voices and viols, a joint venture between PRISM Choral Ensemble and Artifex Consort, in March. He then played with Ciaramella in three Bay Area performances for the San Francisco Early Music Society, before rallying a baroque string band for Handel's *Dixit Dominus* for the Glee Club's spring project and tour.

This semester, Malachai presented three papers based on his work as a [Pomona College Humanities Studio](#) fellow: "Didactics Beyond Depiction: Jesuit Dialectic in Heinrich Biber's *Mystery Sonatas*" (conference to honor Anne Schnobelen, Rice University), "Through All Eternity: Clockwork, Memory, and Temporality in Dieterich Buxtehude's *Jesu dulcis memoria*" (Society for Christian Scholarship in Music, Wheaton College), and "Instruments of 'Torture': Viols, Dismemberment, and Transfiguration in

German Baroque Passion Meditations" (the Spirit of Gambo: The State of Viol Research conference, UC Berkeley).

Music theorist **Alfred Cramer**, Associate Professor, is on sabbatical during the spring semester and is moving forward with his research on music's structural and cognitive relationships to language, which he explores in contexts ranging from the melodic codes of nineteenth-century Romanticism to the twentieth-century Folk Music revival to the study of linguistic intonation. He is currently writing about the music of Woody Guthrie in the hope of finding ways to improve political discourse. As a baroque violinist, this semester he performs with Pomona colleagues in the Cornucopia Baroque Ensemble and with the Pomona College Glee Club, as well as with the Con Gioia early music ensemble.

In October, Professor **Donna M. Di Grazia** was named the 2023 recipient of Pomona College's Faculty Alumni Service Award, which honors faculty "in recognition of their exemplary service to the alumni association over a period of years." Her professional performance work continues through [PRISM Choral Ensemble](#), which gave two performances of a program celebrating the sacred works of William Byrd and Thomas Weelkes, the first in Los Angeles and the second in San Marino. In March, they offered a concert of seventeenth-century English music for church and chamber with Artifex Consort, a professional viol ensemble led by Professor Malachai Komanoff Bandy.

As Professor **Tom Flaherty** looks toward his retirement from Pomona College after 34 years of teaching in the

Music Department, he continues to perform, compose, and organize performances at a stunning rate. This spring semester he hosted the 32nd Ussachevsky Memorial Festival of Electroacoustic Music, bringing in guest composer and alumnus Ted Apel (PO '90). Flaherty's works are being performed from Bridges Hall of Music to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico and Santa Cruz to New York City by performers including



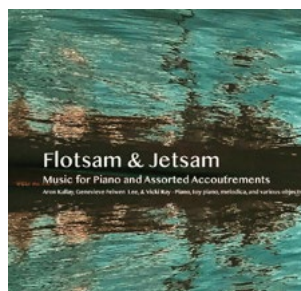
Apel and Flaherty

Neil Fairbairn and Giacomo Fiore, Aron Kallay and Nick Terry, Jennie Jung, The Pomona College Choir, Karen Bentley Pollick, and Nadia Shpachenko to name a few.

Assistant Professor **Melissa Givens** is still celebrating her promotion and tenure, affirmed and announced in December. In January, she and colleague Genevieve Feiwen Lee were among a handful of musicians around the country privileged to perform the premieres of several recently rediscovered works by noted African American composer Florence Beatrice Price. The duo recorded *Lullaby (for a Black Mother)*, with a text by Langston Hughes, from *Seven Songs on Texts of African American Poets*, edited by John Michael Cooper, Ph.D., and published in January by Clar-Nan Editions and Classical Vocal Reprints. The video is available on YouTube. This March she is performing a recital of spirituals with Dr. Shannon Hesse in Houston, and reprises it at Pomona College later in the month.

Last fall Professor **Genevieve Feiwen Lee** performed a chamber version of Mahler's Symphony No. 4 on the Jacaranda music series in Santa Monica, and was featured, with colleague Aron Kallay, on Microfest Records's newly-released *Flotsam and Jetsam*. The duo performed the premiere recording of Kurt Rohde's *Altromondo* scored for piano, melodicas, harmonicas, triangle, Chinese paper accordions, and antique cymbals.

This year she presented four concerts with violinist Fritz Gearhart and cellist Andrew Smith as the Redfish Piano Trio in the Oregon-based off-



season Redfish Music Festival. February concert appearances included Khachaturian's Trio with Cal State University, Northridge faculty members as part of their ChamberFest 2024, and taking part in Pomona Music's 32nd annual Ussachevsky Festival.

This semester she also concluded her series of performing all ten Beethoven piano and violin sonatas. The series's final concert welcomed USC faculty member and violinist Lina Bahn to perform with Lee. An especially rewarding project, Lee's programming paired under-heard works with Beethoven's sonatas, and the final concert included toy piano and hurdy-gurdy. In March she performed on Los Angeles's new music series, *Piano Spheres*. Her concert featured works for keyboard and speaking/singing (in four languages) with Kurt Rohde's *Famous Last Words* and Gao Ping's *Daydreams* along with two world premieres by Chris Castro and Livia Malossi Bottignole, commissioned with support from a Pomona faculty research grant.

During his fall sabbatical, Professor **Eric Lindholm** did more work on the songs of Florence Price, including making a trip to Arkansas to view some of the composer's original manuscripts. He identified errors in the editions that are currently available for some of Price's songs and also unearthed a forgotten effort, *Ships that Pass in the Night*, that in all likelihood has never been performed. He prepared orchestral versions of that song and two others, and relied on the original sources to make corrections in a different set of songs he had orchestrated a few years ago. Professor Melissa Givens will perform the new set of songs with the Pomona College Orchestra in April. Additionally, Professor Lindholm was immersed in preparations for the department's production of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, including selecting soloists, engaging the services of an outside lighting team, and strategizing with Professor Donna M. Di Grazia about how best to create a workable stage configuration. This spring, he is teaching Music Theory I (Music 80) for the first time and finishing his second two-year term on the College's Faculty Executive Committee.

Joti Rockwell, Associate Professor, ended last semester with a performance of a new piece by I Nyoman Wenten entitled "Fantasy," which included improvisations on a custom-built Balinese bamboo slide guitar. He sang in the Beethoven 9th

performances in February, and played *gendér* in the Gamelan Merdu Kumala concert in March. In April he'll perform with Peter Harper in back-to-back concerts at Claremont's Folk Music Center, and play mariachi music in a concert at Scripps in May. He is teaching a newly-configured course entitled "American Roots Music: Listening, Studying, Performing" (Music 68) and is working on a keynote address to be given at the joint meeting of the Pacific-Southwest Chapter of the American Musicological Society and the West Coast Conference for Music Theory and Analysis in May. Also on the drafting table is an entry related to the mandolinist Carlos Curti for a collaborative project entitled *New Source Readings in the History of Music Theory*.

Associate Professor **Gibb Schreffler** produced, wrote, and directed the documentary [Songs of the Windlass: Singing Chanties on Gazela](#). Filmed on location in Philadelphia in October 2022 and premiered at the Connecticut Sea Music



Festival in June 2023, the half-hour movie illustrates the relationship between nineteenth-century sailing ships' anchor-

raising technologies and the concurrent development of sailors' work-songs. Schreffler subsequently prepared the manuscript for an accompanying journal article that provides the evidentiary support for the movie's historical narratives. His work on an earlier chapter of these songs' history was published in the Fall 2023 issue of [Journal of the Society for American Music](#) as "Remembering the Cotton Screwmen: Inter-racial Waterfront Labor and the Development of Sailors' Chanties." Schreffler presented a workshop on singing chanties at the annual meeting of the [Society for Ethnomusicology](#) in October.

In March, he began his first term of service as President of our region's chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology. He worked on arranging the organization's conference, held this spring at Pomona College, to revitalize membership after a period of decreased activity during the coronavirus pandemic.

Additionally, the department is grateful to have **Russ Knight** and **Pedro Garcia López de la Osa** at Pomona College as visiting lecturers this semester. They are teaching music theory and history courses: "Materials of Music" and

"Engaging Music." We are also pleased to have **Scott Graff** returning to the fold to teach voice this spring.

Emeritus Faculty

In addition to conducting the Pomona College Band, in September **Graydon Beeks** joined his Pomona colleagues in the Cornucopia Baroque Ensemble in a program of music by Boismortier, Geminiani, and Telemann in Bridges Hall of Music. In November he attended the Handel Institute Conference in London where he read the paper "Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, 4th Bart., as a Collector of Handel's Music" and participated in the Editorial Board Meeting of the *Hallsche-Händel-Ausgabe*.

William Peterson has co-authored the book, [Political Dreams and Musical Themes in the 1848-1922 Formation of Czechoslovakia: Interaction of National and Global Forces](#), with his brother James W. Peterson, that was published by Lexington Books (2023).

Student Happenings

Ethan Lee (PO '24) is the Pomona College Orchestra's 2023 Concerto Competition winner.



[Photo by E. Champion]

A violin student of **Todor Pelev**, the senior majoring in computer science and astronomy performed Henryk Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp Minor, op.14 with the ensemble last November, Tony Rowe, conducting.

Alumni Spotlight

What can one do with a degree in music? In the case of Zack Freiman '20, he applies the skills and experiences he learned as a Pomona music major both in his work on Capitol Hill as well as in his personal life.

A double major in music and public policy analysis, Zack is starting his third year as Legislative Assistant for

Representative Shontel Brown (D-Ohio), serving the 11th Congressional District, which includes Cleveland and the northeastern portion of Ohio. Zack's responsibilities in



Representative Brown's office include supporting her work on the House Oversight Committee and on the Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, writing legislation, staffing meetings, and providing voting recommendations for Rep. Brown. Gun violence prevention, national defense

and veterans' issues, and foreign affairs are also part of his legislative portfolio.

At the same time, Zack has just started graduate school at Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service pursuing a master of arts degree in security studies. "I chose to take up an M.A. in Security Studies rather than following a track more directly leading to a career in the foreign service," he said, "because it has wider application career-wise, in addition to being especially timely."

Despite his busy schedule on the Hill, Zack has remained active as a musician since graduating from Pomona, currently as a member of the 160-voice Washington Chorus. (Zack credits his learning about the ensemble through another Pomona Music Department alumnus, Matthew Brown '20, who was working as an intern there while completing his own master's degree in composition at Catholic University.) As a member of the chorus, Zack has performed a variety of works, including several that he first performed at Pomona.

Zack is quick to credit his Pomona Music Department experiences as central to his successful career. "The need to collaborate as an ensemble performer, to adapt to different learning approaches in the classroom, and the opportunity to acquire strong research skills all along the way, are all at the center of what I do every day," Zack says. "Both of my major programs, Music and PPA, taught me how to be effective, to read critically, to listen, and to write, but each of them did so in different ways, all of which have supported my various

post-graduate experiences. And having to balance my work and my commitment to other things such as my involvement in the Washington Chorus has come more naturally to me than it has to many of my Capitol Hill colleagues because I had to balance these same things as a Pomona student."

Although Zack's experience with numerous internships and political campaigns during his undergraduate years certainly served him well early in his career, he notes that these opportunities can be traced directly back to his experiences as a music major. "I don't think I would necessarily have needed my PPA major to get those early internship opportunities. In fact, in Washington D.C. I think having a degree outside the "norm" is more interesting and more attractive to people. . . . It has been about the skills I bring to the table, my experiences and recommendations—and grades and test scores!"

Zack Freiman hails from Sleepy Hollow, New York; he currently lives in Washington, D.C.

Alumni News

Annika Hoseth ('23), through a competitive interview process, secured and is currently pursuing a three-month internship as a scoring assistant at Sparks & Shadows, the production company and record label of Emmy-winning TV/Film and video game composer Bear McCreary.

Kate Bolonnikova ('21) is pursuing an MFA in the Performer-Composer program at CalArts, where she studies piano with Vicki Ray/Jack Dettling and recording with John Baffa. You can view her [March recital](#).

Lydia Saylor ('18) sang the role of Morgana in G.F. Handel's opera *Alcina* for Queen's College Opera Studio in November 2023, and in April 2024 she will sing the role of Gretel in Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel*. Lydia is a graduate student in vocal performance at Queen's College, New York. In 2023 she also performed in *Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird* by Lucas Foss and Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, and premiered works by David Briggs and Bruce Saylor.

Megan Kaes Long ('08), Associate Professor of Music Theory at Oberlin Conservatory, was one of six recipients of the [2021-22 Excellence in Teaching Award](#), which recognizes Oberlin College and Conservatory faculty who have "demonstrated sustained and distinctive excellence in their teaching."



Margaret Hunter ('00) appears as soprano soloist with Capella de la Torre under the direction of Katharina Bäuml on the album *Capriccio pastorale*, a program of Christmas music from Italy, on the Deutsche Harmonia Mundi label.

Raj Bhimani ('82) will perform a solo piano recital including Maurice Ravel's *Sonatine*, Frédéric Chopin's 24 Preludes, and the Overture and three pieces from the opera *Il étair un Petit Navire* by Germaine Tailleferre on March 16, 2024 in the Ethical Cultural Society Auditorium in New York City.

Stephen Cera ('72) continued his series of portraits of great pianists in *Gramophone* magazine with articles on Edwin Fischer in January 2023 and Joseph Lhevinne in December 2023.



Anthony Burr (L) and Ted Apel (R) perform at the Ussachevsky Festival
[Photo by E. Champion]



Editor: Elizabeth D. Champion
 Alumni Section: Prof. Emeritus Graydon Beeks
 Alumni Spotlight: Prof. Donna M. Di Grazia
 Proofing Services: Hayden Eberhart

We hope you will share your music-specific happenings with us for our next Music Gazette. Please submit to: edc04747@pomona.edu
 Please email broader life submissions to the PC Magazine at: pcmnotes@pomona.edu.