

MUSIC GAZETTE

Pomona College Music Department *Fall 2023*

vol. 32/no. 1

Department News

Fall semester 2023 is well under way, and our Music Department is humming with activity. This past summer was a time to practice, rest, research, perform, and prepare for the academic year. We said goodbye to **Natasha Khamas** (we'll miss you, Natasha!), while welcoming three new members of the department: **Marissa Plati**, Music Librarian; **Weicheng Zhao**, Lecturer in Music and College Organist; and **Lori Quick**, Academic Coordinator. The full-time faculty held a two-day retreat in August to work on revising the music curriculum, and throughout the summer, the department continued our attempts to revise and reinvigorate our music facilities. In response to student demand for music lessons, we have expanded our practice room spaces and plan on further doing so this fall with additional rooms in the Montgomery Building. Thanks to **Carol Herman**'s generosity, we were able to acquire more than a dozen instruments for students to use in lessons and ensembles.

The semester began with a long-overdue celebration for **Bobby Bradford**, **Cathy Endress**, **Jack Sanders**, and **David Vanderlip**, each of whom spent decades bringing wisdom, joy, expertise, ingenuity, and wonderful music to the department and college. We missed each other over the pandemic but were glad to make up for lost time by gathering early this September. Celliola kicked off our concert series in Bridges Hall of Music, and with this being **Tom Flaherty**'s last year before retirement, the concert was one of many opportunities we'll have to applaud him and his music. More exciting concerts await this fall, including visits by both the principal cellist and the principal concertmaster of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, each of whom will be collaborating with Genevieve Feiwen Lee. I hope those of you reading this Gazette get the chance to hear the music sounding out from Thatcher, Little Bridges, and across the wider Pomona musical community.

– Joti Rockwell, Department Chair

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Mario Champagne '85



Department Celebration, August 2023 [photo by G. Lee]

Of Special Note

The Music Department salutes alumna **CAROL HERMAN '51** for her significant gift in support of new loaner instruments for students taking music lessons and playing in ensembles. Pomona and 7C students, many of whom are taking music lessons for the first time, will benefit from these instruments for years to come. Sixteen instruments have already been purchased. In addition, Carol has established The Carol and Robert Herman '51 Performance Endowment honoring her late husband, an alumnus and long-serving beloved sociology professor. Their involvement with treasured Little Bridges has been a constant.



[photo by E. Champion]

LORI QUICK began the role of Academic Coordinator in Music on August 28th. Lori has a background in higher education and wide-ranging experience in music, having led a variety of worship services and having sung in numerous choirs in Southern California and Chicago. She comes to Pomona College with a B.A. in Music from Azusa Pacific University and an M.A. in Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary, and most recently managed a busy pediatric therapy practice. She is also a certified yoga instructor. The department has already benefited greatly from her ability

to immediately learn and synthesize the many facets of the Music Department and college. Welcome Lori!

We're excited to have **WEICHENG ZHAO** join the Music Department faculty as Lecturer in Music and College Organist. Originally from Tianjin, China, he came to the United States in 2009 to pursue study of the pipe organ—a new instrument for him at the time. He is the first Chinese native to win top prizes in international and US national pipe organ competitions. He has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, appearing in concerts conducted by Gustavo Dudamel, Zubin Mehta, Esa-Pekka Salonen, and others. He holds a D.M.A. in organ performance from USC, and currently serves as Director of Music, Organist/Choirmaster at All Saints Church, Pasadena, CA where he plays organ and conducts two 45-voice adult choirs. In addition to teaching organ lessons at Pomona this semester, he will be performing on the Fisk organ as part of the Pomona College Choir's December concerts.

The department is pleased to have **RUSS KNIGHT** and **KRISTI BROWN-MONTESANO** on campus as visiting lecturers this fall. Russ is teaching "Materials of Music," a music theory course, while Kristi is offering Music 122, a music history and literature seminar focusing on music from between 1750 and 1920.

Regular readers of the Gazette know that the Music Department's Victor Montgomery Music Library recently received a full renovation. In related news, the department now has a dedicated half-time librarian. **MARISSA PLATI** holds degrees in voice with coursework in musicology from Boston University and Ithaca College. She has worked in the Boston University Music Library, numerous music stores, and the Boulanger Initiative, where she helped develop an

online searchable database of music by women and gender-marginalized composers. She currently also works as librarian for the Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles and as an editorial assistant for *Journal of Musicology*. In addition, Marissa sings professionally and teaches voice.

Marissa joined the department in mid-May and hit the ground running. In just her first few months, she and Matthew Cook '20 have already digitally cataloged the majority of the collections' print materials. We're delighted to welcome her.

Nina Rota, the daughter of Nino Rota—whose *Quintet* was performed by Rachel Rudich (flute), Maggie Parkins (cello), Cynthia Fogg (violin), Francisco Castillo (oboe), and Alison Bjorkedal (harp)—was a surprise and very welcomed guest at September's Fête musicale concert.



Nina Rota, fourth from left, with the performers [photo by T. Flaherty]

Performing Ensembles

The **POMONA COLLEGE BAND**, conducted by **Graydon Beeks**, is scheduled to perform concerts on November 10 and 12. The program will feature *Variations on a Theme of Glinka* by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov with Francisco Castillo as oboe soloist, and *When Time was Young* by Tom Flaherty with Melissa Givens as soprano soloist. Works by Burkhart, Europe, Grainger, Sparke, and Tailleferre will also be heard.

In honor of Professor Tom Flaherty's retirement at the end of this academic year, the **POMONA COLLEGE CHOIR**, **Donna M. Di Grazia** conductor, will offer the second performance of his anthem, *This is the Day*, in its end-of-semester concerts (December 1 and 3). Originally written in Fall 2011 for the Glee Club's tour the following May, *This is the Day* received its premiere in October 2013 by the Millennium Consort Singers under the direction of Martin Neary. Earlier this fall, Flaherty

revised the work for the Pomona College Choir with organ accompaniment. The ensemble is pleased to be collaborating on the work with our new College Organist, Weicheng Zhao. Other pieces on the Choir's fall program will include Morten Lauridsen's *Lux aeterna* (also with Dr. Zhao), Franz Biebl's *Ave Maria*, and Adolphus Hailstork's *Arise, my beloved*.

The **POMONA COLLEGE GLEE CLUB**'s 2023 tour to England and Scotland was a rousing success both musically and philanthropically, raising money for several local charities including the Otakar Kraus Music Trust, which supports music therapy for persons with special needs in Richmond and surrounding areas in South-West London; "Restore York," an organization that provides assistance to people in York experiencing homelessness; and the County Durham Community Foundation's "Poverty Hurts" appeal, which supports grants to local community projects that help people across County Durham facing hardship due to the cost of living crisis. In addition to offering five outstanding performances led by conductor **Donna M. Di Grazia**, the Glee Club also served as the choir for the Sunday morning service at Trinity College, Cambridge. Attendees at the ensemble's concerts were unanimous in their enthusiastic praise of their performances, calling them "enchanting" and "moving," and noting the "imaginative programme and high calibre of singing," which one writer described as "sublime, and at times heavenly." [Listen to their London Lunchtime recital.](#)



St. Giles, Edinburgh, Scotland [photo by E. Champion]

On Nov. 14, 2023, the **POMONA COLLEGE JAZZ ENSEMBLE**, led by **Barb Catlin**, will celebrate the centennial birth of trumpeter Thaddeus Joseph, otherwise known as



Cornucopia Concert L-R: Sherrill Herring, Alfred Cramer, Graydon Beeks, Roger Lebow, Jason Yoshida, Carolyn Beck, Aki Nishiguchi [photo by E. Champion]

Thad Jones, who was the co-founder and arranger of the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. Jones came from a dynasty jazz family. His brothers were drummer Elvin Jones (who played in John Coltrane's quartet) and pianist Hank Jones. Thad Jones was a member of the "New Testament" Count Basie Band from 1954 to 1963 and arranged over 25 charts that captured Basie's classic sound.

While **Eric Lindholm** is on sabbatical this fall, the **POMONA COLLEGE ORCHESTRA** is being led by **Tony Rowe**. The ensemble's October program included music by Barber, Liszt, Mozart, and Wagner. The November concert set will feature the winner of the 2023 Concerto Competition winner, Ethan Lee '24, violin, in Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 1, in F-sharp Minor, op. 14. Also on the program is Dvořák's Symphony No. 9 in E Minor, op. 95 "From the New World."

POMONA COLLEGE BALINESE GAMELAN ENSEMBLE GIRI KUSUMA, under the leadership of directors **I Nyoman** and **Nanik Wenten**, will offer their fall performance on Monday, December 4 in Bridges Hall of Music.

POMONA COLLEGE WEST-AFRICAN MUSIC ENSEMBLE, **Nani Agbeli**, director, is teaching students about the music and dance traditions of Ghana and the region as they prepare for their November 27 performance.

Faculty News

Music theorist and Associate Professor **Alfred Cramer** completed his term as Department Chair over the summer. He now has more time to move forward with his research on

music's structural and cognitive relationships to language, which he is exploring in contexts ranging from the melodic codes of nineteenth-century Romanticism to early twentieth-century Expressionism to the twentieth-century Folk Music revival. As a violinist, he gave two concerts in September: a Friday Noon concert celebrating the (approximate) centennial of Schoenberg's 12-tone system with colleagues Gayle Blankenburg (celesta) and Connie Sheu (guitar), and a performance of works by Telemann and Boismortier with Pomona colleagues in the Cornucopia Baroque Ensemble.

Assistant Professor **Malachai Komanoff Bandy** is joyfully beginning his second year on the full-time faculty, and he is thrilled to announce the recent publication of the chapter "Im Himmel und auf Erden': Geometry, Alchemy, and Rosicrucian Symbol in Buxtehude's *Herr, wenn ich nur Dich hab'* (BuxWV 38)" in [Explorations in Music and Esotericism](#) (University of Rochester Press). As a '23/24 Pomona



College Humanities Studio Fellow, Malachai is now focusing his research on Buxtehude's *Membra Jesu nostri* (1680), toward a project examining the cycle through an esoteric and queer theoretical lens. In his performing career, Malachai joined the Los Angeles Master Chorale in opening the 2023 [Salzburger Festspiele](#) in July, as violist da gamba in Heinrich Schütz's *Musikalische Exequien*, directed by Peter Sellars. He looks forward to performing a French Baroque program as director of Artifex Consort on the department's series (October 22nd), followed by appearances with [Con Gioia](#) and Tesserae Baroque. In educational communities beyond the college, Malachai served on faculty at the [Viols West](#)

workshop (San Luis Obispo) in August and at [Viol Sphere 2](#) (Oracle, AZ) in October. He is currently having a fabulous time working with students from all 5Cs in *Engaging Music* and *Queer Voices in Music* and in reprising the department's Writing Group, an intentional space for student-faculty community. The group meets Fridays at 3:30 p.m. in the Victor Montgomery Music Library. All are welcome!

Professor **Donna M. Di Grazia** continues to work with her PRISM co-directors on their next series of concerts. On September 30th, the choral ensemble performed a program in Los Angeles featuring the music of William Byrd and Thomas Weelkes (among others), commemorating the 400th anniversary of each composer's death. The ensemble's next appearance will be on Sunday afternoon, March 3rd at the college with Professor Malachai Bandy's viol ensemble, Artifex Consort. More at www.prismensemble.org.

Over the summer, Professor **Tom Flaherty's** work *Goal Mining* was performed by pianist Nadia Shpachenko at New Music Gathering 2023 (Portland, Oregon), and violinist Karen Bentley Pollick performed *Aftermath* in San Pancho, Mexico. This fall Celliola included the premiere of his *Phoney Business*—text by Cynthia Fogg—performed by Melissa Givens, soprano; Luc Kleiner, baritone; Joti Rockwell, mandola; Cynthia Fogg, viola; Tom Flaherty, cello; and Genevieve Feiwen Lee, piano. The program also included *Prelude* and *Country Waltz* with Joti Rockwell, mandola and Cynthia Fogg, viola; as well as songs *If truth in hearts that perish* and *Music I Heard With You* performed by Professors Givens and Lee.

Later in the semester, Genevieve's recital with cellist Robert deMaine features Tom's Cello Concerto and *Aftermath* arranged for solo cello; plus the Pomona College Band will perform *When Time Was Young* with Melissa Givens, soprano.

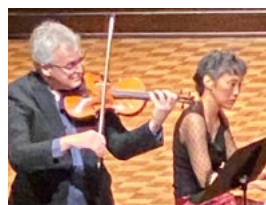
When not teaching, Tom is working on a new piece for bassoon and electric guitar to be premiered by Neil Fairbairn, bassoon and Giacomo Fiore, guitar this November in Santa Cruz, CA and a piece for piano and electronics for Kathy Supové '73 to be premiered in New York this Spring 2024.

Assistant Professor **Melissa Givens** enjoyed a restorative summer of bird and deer watching with her family in Western New York. Musically, she is celebrating the release of *Conspirare's* 15th studio album on September 8. *House of*

Belonging, from Delos Music, is available on all streaming platforms and where CDs are sold. On campus she opened the department's concert season with Celliola and Friends reprising a portion of Tom Flaherty's *Die Schöne Mullerin Report*, two other songs, and the premiere of *Phoney Business*. Written as a commentary on our modern obsession with our devices, it could be her autobiography! Lastly, Melissa and Genevieve Feiwen Lee gave a recital for the residents of Mt. San Antonio Gardens on September 12, featuring another Flaherty work—*The Song of One Who Loves*—as well as Respighi's *Deita Silvane* and songs from the movies.

Last April was a busy month for **Genevieve Feiwen Lee** as she joined the Pressenda Chamber Players in presenting a concert of piano quartets at the Washington Conservatory of Music at Glen Echo (Maryland). In the Los Angeles area, she participated in the 12th annual [Hear Now Music Festival](#) performing Dante de Silva's *Mr. Distinguished* and played harpsichord in Gabriella Smith's *Brandenburg Interstices* on the [Jacaranda](#) music series in Santa Monica.

Over the summer, Genevieve returned to the Chamber Music Conference hosted by Colgate University, where she coached amateur musicians and performed in faculty concerts. She was featured in Leoš Janáček's *Concertino* and a piano trio by Cécile Chaminade. During the last week of August, Lee was a guest artist at the [Garth Newel Music Center Summer Festival](#) in Warm Springs, Virginia where she performed four-hand, two-piano and eight-hand works of Schubert, Liszt, Grainger, and Saint-Saëns.



Chalifour and Lee

This fall, she collaborated with department colleagues on the annual Celliola concert featuring the music of Tom Flaherty. She is giving a recital with the principal cellist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Robert deMaine, that includes Flaherty's Cello Concerto, recently recorded for an upcoming album of Flaherty's cello works. She also continues her Beethoven piano and violin sonatas project with the Los Angeles Philharmonic's principal concertmaster Martin Chalifour and Fritz Gearhart.

Professor **Eric Lindholm** is on sabbatical in the Fall 2023 semester. He is orchestrating more songs by Florence

Price, and will be traveling to the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville to view the original materials that are held there. He also intends to finish up his project on the 1960 radio series “Composers on Composers,” by creating a website with discussion of the transcriptions and inviting similarly themed submissions on the music of current-day composers. Additionally, Prof. Lindholm is involved in planning for the Music Department’s presentation of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9 in February, which will include the Pomona College Choir and Orchestra, numerous guests drawn from the ranks of the Los Angeles Master Chorale, and a quartet of internationally acclaimed soloists consisting of Julie Adams, Kelly Guerra, Rodell Rosel, and Nmon Ford.

Joti Rockwell, Associate Professor and now the Chair of the Music Department, is coming off of a sabbatical this past spring, during which he gave concerts, recorded, presented talks, and worked on articles. He continues to perform as a multi-instrumentalist for Peter Harper, including a benefit concert at the Laguna Beach Cultural Arts Center in March and a taping for KLCS PBS’s “Everybody with Angela Williamson” in June. In April, he joined Nadia Shpachenko for her San Bernardino Symphony Series recital, playing mandolin on Lewis Spratlan’s chamber work entitled *Invasion*. In May, he gave a paper at Harvard University as part of the conference *Instruments, Interfaces, Infrastructures: An Interdisciplinary Conference on Musical Media*. Titled “Plucked on Bach: Studying the Instrumental Idioms of the BMG Family,” the presentation featured clips of performances on a newly-built, Pomona College experimental 12-string pedal steel guitar, along with live demonstration on mandola. The conference reception was held at the university’s Queen’s Head Pub, which has a framed poster on the wall from 1900 recruiting for Harvard’s Varsity Mandolin Club (see photo). “Every one playing the mandola or flute is urged to try,” it says. This fall, Joti has a book review involving American roots music slated for publication in the *Journal of Music Theory*, and several performances booked, including the Celliola concert,



a gig in Claremont’s Laemmle Plaza with Cougar Estrada on September 22, and an October 27 reunion of his jazz quartet from last spring’s Lyman concert for a Family Weekend performance on Marston Quad.

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 is published in this Fall’s 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 will additionally present a workshop on singing chanties at the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology in October.

Emeritus Faculty

Graydon Beeks read a paper on “The Use of Cannons Material in Handel’s Op.2 Trio Sonatas” at the American Handel Society Conference in Bloomington, Indiana. In March he gave a lecture on “Music at Cannons” as part of the London Handel Festival, and joined his Cornucopia Baroque Ensemble colleagues violinist Alfred Cramer and cellist Roger Lebow as harpsichordist in a program of music by Boismortier, Handel, and Locatelli on the Friday Noon Concert series. In May he attended the annual Handel Festival in Halle, Germany where he read the paper “Coriolano Transformed: The Early History of Ariosti’s First Royal Academy Opera,” participated in the Editorial Board Meeting of the *Hallische-Händel-Ausgabe*, and was chosen to serve as one of the three vice presidents of the International Georg-Friedrich-Händel Gesellschaft. His article “The Pre-Publication Circulation and Scoring of Handel’s Op.2 Trio Sonatas” was published in the 2023 *Händel-Jahrbuch*.

William Peterson will present an organ recital in October performing the music of J.S. Bach and Buxtehude.

Alumni Spotlight

Raj Bhimani '82 is no stranger to premiering new music—last September, he presented Germaine Tailleferre's previously unpublished piano pieces to a reverent crowd at the Lincoln Center, adding to a celebrated history of performances in Paris, Mumbai, and Lisbon, among others. The Tailleferre estate has chosen Raj to debut this collection, supported by his 25-year collaboration with another esteemed French composer, Thérèse Brenet, who has written multiple pieces for him.

We spoke to Raj about the Tailleferre project, his time at Pomona, and upcoming plans.

The following interview has been edited and condensed.

You're bringing previously unknown music from Germaine Tailleferre to the world through your extraordinary project. Can you share your thoughts on being the first pianist entrusted with these works?

It's a tremendous honor and responsibility. I've had to approach them as I would any music I'd never heard before, searching the scores for every clue about character, tempo, color, etc. Every possibility is available, but decisions ultimately have to be made. I'm looking forward to the day when numerous pianists play these works and we can discuss different approaches to each one. It's been heartening to see how immediately audiences have responded to this music. The response at Lincoln Center was overwhelming.

How has your Pomona music experience informed your musical journey?

Studying music at Pomona was perhaps the most concentrated and formative period in all my training. I knew before arriving that I wanted to make a life in music, but I had no idea how much there was to learn. My early teaching was very weak, and when I arrived at Pomona I had to start all over again. I've been grateful to John Steele Ritter for having the patience and knowledge to put me on the right track. The theory and history classes were all revelations for

me, particularly the classes with Karl Kohn. Singing in chorus with [William] Russell taught me musical skills I never knew I'd use every day of my life, and the quality of performances I got to hear in both Little and Big Bridges was as high as anywhere I've lived since. I was hearing and learning from the finest musicians who demonstrated what dedication to the craft of music meant. Starting my musical journey there was one of the best decisions I've ever made.

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Alongside his solo accomplishments, Raj is a prolific chamber musician with his trio, SYRINX: XXII (with Katharine Rawdon '82, and António Carrilho) and coveted for his pedagogy, where he works with pupils of all ages but remains committed to guiding beginners through first steps. In addition to the Tailleferre recordings, an album featuring two of the three final Schubert sonatas will be released shortly. You can learn more about Raj's projects at rajbhimani.com.

—Ashley Cheng '22

Alumni News

Erin Tallman '22 has begun the year-long Professional Apprentice Program in Arts Administration at the Juilliard School in New York. This semester she is engaged in an apprenticeship with their Historical Performance program.

Matthew Cook '20 continues to work in the Montgomery Music Library processing and cataloging books and sheet music under the supervision of Music Department Librarian Marissa Plati. He has accepted a position as an Apprentice Artist with the Sarasota Opera for their 2024 winter season.

Margaret Hunter '00 is one of two soprano soloists on the recording *Monteverdi Memories* by Capella de la Torre that received the Opus Klassik 2023 award for best Choral Performance.

Eleen Hsu-Wentlandt '00 conducted a graduate recital of music by Zanaida Robles, Jasper Randall, and Shawn Kirchner at San Marino Community Church in June 2023 as part of her M.A. degree in Choral Conducting from California State University, Los Angeles. In September she undertook the role of Gwendolyn Fairfax in the musical *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Bret Simonds and David Howard at the Whittier Community Theater.

Will Giammona '97 played the role of Frank in Stephen Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* in March 2023 and Steven Kodaly in *She Loves Me* by Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick in June 2023, both at 42nd Street Moon Theatre in San Francisco.

Mario Champagne '85, has retired from being Director of Finance and Operations for the Department of Music at Stanford University for the last 24 years and has been granted emeritus status. He and his husband, Dirk Nettles, will be moving to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, in September 2023 to enjoy a slower pace of life and better weather. He plans to continue to play the organ, write a few musicological articles, and find a new home for singing after more than 20 years with the award-winning Golden Gate Men's Chorus.



Pomona musicians Ethan Lee '24 (violin, far left) Hana Burgess '22 Scripps (violin, 2nd from left) Eric Zhu '22 (viola, 4th from left), Kat Burgstahler '22 (cello, far right), and friends, played chamber music together this summer on Lopez Island, Washington.

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



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