Department News

The end of August brought the pleasure of reconnecting with returning students, the excitement of meeting new ones, and the flurry of auditions and lesson signups, along with a sweltering heat wave. Now it’s October and temperatures are cooler, classes are in full swing, and at last the Music Department’s goings-on are no longer governed by the pandemic. To be sure, singing and wind-playing happen here, so we are still taking precautions including masks and testing. But our students and faculty are making music together, not six feet apart! And, as you will see at the end of this Gazette, the newly renovated Victor Montgomery Music Library is stocked with books and scores. We are so grateful to recently retired Claremont Colleges Performing Arts librarian Holly Gardinier for her expert guidance and hard work on this project. The library now serves as a welcoming space for study.

With the new year we see new faculty faces and miss some old ones. Jack Sanders has moved on after 40-plus years teaching guitar, and Gregory Geiger after 19 years teaching voice. Both leave big shoes to fill, but we are delighted to welcome Connie Sheu and Alina Roitstein as lecturers in guitar and voice, respectively. Dhiren Panniker is teaching ethnomusicology in a visiting capacity while Gibb Schreffler is on sabbatical, and Rachel Beetz returns to teach electronic music while Tom Flaherty is away. Malachai Bandy, a superb scholar and musician, is now Assistant Professor of Music, after teaching a variety of courses here in the past few years.

The Pomona Music Department is very proud of its students and alumni—music majors, music minors, and music students of many other descriptions. I hope you will enjoy reading about our extended community.

– Alfred Cramer, Department Chair

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Of Special Note

Spring 2022 marked the final teaching semester for guitarist **JACK SANDERS**, a fixture within the Music Department for 42 years. Jack’s hundreds of guitar students include Scott Pauley ’87, a member of the celebrated Pittsburgh-based early music ensemble Chatham Baroque; Lucas Harris ’96, who performs regularly on lute and baroque guitar with Tafelmusik and is the Artistic Director and conductor of the Toronto Chamber Choir; and Brooklyn-based guitarist and composer Brendon Randall-Myers ’09, whose music is described as “fiercely aggressive but endlessly compelling.”

At Pomona, Jack was expert at teaching students of all levels, and he continues to maintain a private studio. He is especially insightful on kinesiological issues, helping students understand how subtle changes in the mechanics of addressing the instrument can have a profound impact on the reliability of performance technique, the quality of sound produced, and the elimination of stress on muscles and joints. Jack is also an extremely accomplished luthier, and twice offered an instrument-building course at Pomona. He builds classical and flamenco guitars, as well as historic reproductions of vihuelas and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century instruments, working on commissions from performers, scholars, and museums.

Jack appeared regularly in solo and chamber music recitals in Bridges Hall of Music, on the Friday Noon Concert Series in Balch Auditorium on the Scripps campus, for special college-wide events including Convocation, and occasionally as a soloist with larger departmental ensembles, most recently in Takemitsu’s *To the Edge of Dream* with the Pomona College Orchestra. Continuing as a touring artist for the Piatigorsky Foundation since 2005, he has concertized throughout the United States, and his international performances include appearances in China and Costa Rica. He has been featured on National Public Radio and is heard on releases by the Centaur, TownHall, Crystal, and Bridge Records labels, most recently with Pomona faculty flute instructor Rachel Rudich on her two-disc album dedicated to the music of Karl Kohn. Jack was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the American Guitar Society in 2013.

Student tributes to Jack are numerous and powerful. Examples include, “I can’t thank you enough for being such an amazing teacher and mentor to me,” “You taught me to play music from the ground up,” “All of us who studied with you are so very lucky,” and “I am grateful beyond words for all that you have given me.” We are sad to see Jack go, but enthusiastically honor his immense contributions to our program.

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It isn’t every day that an academic department can announce the arrival of a new tenure-track faculty member, but such is the case this semester. We are delighted to officially welcome **MALACHAI KOMANOFF BANDY** as our newest colleague. Professor Bandy complements our existing faculty, bringing expertise both as a historical musicologist and as an experienced professional performer on a wide range of early music instruments including viola da gamba, violone, and several dozen Renaissance double-reed instruments.

Malachai’s musicological work centers on North-German Baroque numerology, symbolism, and mathematical theology (including but not limited to the basso continuo psalm settings by Dieterich Buxtehude), but his research and teaching interests stretch well beyond that area to include such fascinating topics as esotericism, alchemy, seventeenth-century occult philosophy, early modern sexuality, and
LGBTQIA+ expression in Western musical culture. As a performer, Malachai maintains a vibrant presence both in early music circles and beyond, with an impressive array of live performances, professional recordings, and studio work for film and television. In addition to his prolific musical creations, he has a passion for all things fermented, from bread and beer to hot sauces—“It’s alchemy you can taste!” he proclaims with much glee. (His first offering to us, a wonderful pepper sauce, made with jalapeños from Professor Lee’s garden, charred pineapple, and a variety of other ingredients, was outstanding—and definitely spicy!)

Having fully inhabited Thatcher Music Building now, Malachai’s enthusiasm for teaching, writing, research, and performance is both palpable and infectious, and his classes are attracting large numbers of students from across the 5Cs. As the department looks to the future, we are confident that the history and performance of early music will remain an exciting part of our curriculum for many years to come.

*Bobby Bradford*, retired Pomona College lecturer in jazz, was awarded the Los Angeles Treasure Award by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) and the Los Angeles Jazz Society for his role in the Los Angeles Avant Garde of the 1950s and his contributions to education for over 50 years. Bobby’s historic career included tours with Ornette Coleman and John Carter followed by work with Eric Dolphy, Charlie Haden, Vinny Golia, and David Murray. Last year, Bobby became the second recipient of the Festival of New Trumpet Music’s Award of Recognition.

**Performing Ensembles**

The *Pomona College Band*, under the direction of Graydon Beeks, is scheduled to perform concerts on November 11 and 13. The program will feature *Heart on Fire*, a newly commissioned piece by Vietnamese-American composer Viet Cuong. Works by William Latham, Alex Shapiro, Percy Grainger, and Gustav Holst will also be heard.

This fall the 76-voice *Pomona College Choir*, led by Donna M. Di Grazia, will feature original compositions and spiritual arrangements by four African-American composers: R. Nathaniel Dett, William Dawson, Ulysses Kay, and L.A. Marques Garrett. Also included on the program will be Leonard Bernstein’s *Chichester Psalms* as arranged by the composer for harp, organ, and percussion.

**Pomona College Jazz Ensemble**, directed by Barb Catlin, presents their fall concert, *Basie to Brazil*, on Tuesday, November 15 in Lyman Hall with music by Duke Ellington, Sammy Nestico, and Rebeca Mauleón, and a special dedication to Charles Mingus on his 100th year.

The *Pomona College Orchestra*, Eric Lindholm conductor, returns this semester to an (almost) normal configuration in its traditional home, Bridges Hall of Music. The Orchestra’s October program consists of five pieces by composers of Latin American descent, including rarely heard works by Brazil’s Camargo Guarnieri and the Peruvian-American composer Gabriela Lena Frank. In November, the Orchestra will present a new piece by Oliver Dubon ’20; the recent (2020) Cello Concerto by Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Music; and Beethoven’s Symphony No. 4. Last academic year forced the Orchestra into a variety of unusual adaptations, including one program with the woodwinds on the Little Bridges floor, following the conductor through video monitors. Nonetheless, the ensemble gave triumphant performances. In April a subset of the orchestra joined with the Pomona College Choir to present the Fauré Requiem in the first collaboration between the two ensembles since 2019.

**Giri Kusuma**, under the leadership of directors I Nyoman and Nanik Wenten, will offer their fall performance on Monday, December 5 in Bridges Hall of Music.

The *West-African Music Ensemble* has returned to work under the direction of Nani Agbeli. Over the summer, Agbeli coordinated the purchase of new instruments and dress from Ghana, which will allow the ensemble to expand its repertoire. The group will appear in concert on November 28.

**Faculty News**

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**Pomona College Balinese Gamelan Ensemble**, under the leadership of directors I Nyoman and Nanik Wenten, will offer their fall performance on Monday, December 5 in Bridges Hall of Music.

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**Facility News**

This year, Associate Professor and music theorist Alfred Cramer moves into the position of Chair of the Music Department, having served for the past two years as the Department’s inaugural Coordinator for Applied Music. While
chair he plans to move forward in small ways on a major research project on Woody Guthrie’s *This Land Is Your Land.* Other projects in the hopper include work on the Romantic melodic code to Schoenbergsian expressionism. What all of this scholarship has in common is its emphasis on music’s structural and cognitive relationships to language. Alfred is also a violinist and baroque violinist. His last performance was in early March, 2020, the week before lockdown, so he is very much looking forward to November 18, when he will join with colleagues in the Cornucopia Baroque Ensemble for a Friday Noon Concert.

Having defended his dissertation in June and moved to Claremont in August, **Malachai Bandy** is happily and busily settling into life as a new Assistant Professor. When not in class learning from his students, Malachai has been hard at work on various projects, including preparing for his October concert with Tesserae Baroque. After this comes his on-campus debut with Caramella, with whom he will play multiple Renaissance string and double-reed instruments alongside his USC mentors Adam and Rotem Gilbert, Pomona colleague Jason Yoshida, and friends. In November, Malachai will join Cornucopia Baroque Ensemble as guest violist da gamba for a piece on their noontime concert.

Between performances, Malachai will present a paper in November at the American Musicological Society meeting in New Orleans: “Trinitatis unitas”: Stars, Alchemy, and Geometrical *Unio Mystica* Desire in Buxtehude’s *Quemadmodum desiderat cervus.*” In it, Malachai connects the numerical dimensions of Buxtehude’s setting of Psalm 42 with the star-shaped alchemical symbol for ethyl alcohol—also called “aqua vitae” in seventeenth-century alchemical tracts known to the composer’s friends—which features prominently in the work’s text as a symbol for mystical union with the divine.

Over the first month of the semester, Malachai enjoyed packing his new office full of historical instruments, all of which are as friendly as their caretaker and adore meeting new people. Please do stop by Thatcher 214 to say hello and perhaps take a hurdy-gurdy for a spin (pun intended). He could not be more thrilled to join the department and community; it is a privilege to work with such remarkable students and colleagues, and to be able to share with them the music about which he is so impassioned.

Professor **Donna M. Di Grazia** performed Josquin des Prez’s infrequently heard *Missa Pange lingua*, Eric Whitacre’s *Sainte-Chapelle*, and other selections in Los Angeles on September 17 with the eight other singers that comprise the choral ensemble **PRISM**, four of whom also have connections to the Music Department and the College: Luc Kleiner, Scott Graff, Hayden Eberhart ’07, and Adrien Redford ’14; also singing were Dermot Kiernan, Andrea Zomorodian, Ben Lin, and Callie Hoffman Campbell. The concert was made possible with a grant from the Sparkplug Foundation (New York) and with generous support from a Pomona College Sontag Research Fellowship. Their next concert will be sometime in spring or summer 2023.

Professor **Tom Flaherty**’s new album **Mixed Messages** was released on June 10 by New Focus Recordings. With the return this fall of Celliola, the program featured 2 premieres and a couple of older works by Tom with performers Melissa Givens, Scott Graff, Joti Rockwell, Cynthia
Fogg, Genevieve Feiwen Lee, Peter Yates, Yuri Inoo, and Rachel Huang. Tom’s “Steps and Leaps” is being played by guitarist Aaron Larget-Caplan this fall in concerts in Boston and Claremont; and his “Goal Mining,” performed by pianist Nadia Shpachenko, has three fall performances followed by a commercial recording in January.

Assistant Professor Melissa Givens’s album, The Artist at Fifty, was released by Centaur Records in August, and is available on all major streaming and purchase platforms. Composer Daron Aric Hagen noted the recording of his song “Anacrusis,” and called it “smashing,” and the rest of the recording “terrific!” Genevieve Feiwen Lee and Melissa have recently finished recording Songs for the People, an album of songs by Black composers that will also be released by Centaur. Additionally, she recently made her debut with Vocal Arts Ensemble of Cincinnati, Ohio in the first of two performances with them this season. In October, Melissa attended the Conference of the African American Art Song Alliance at the University of California, Irvine, and later in the month she will collaborate with noted mathematician and pianist Eugenia Cheng to present a lecture-recital of Cheng’s re-texting of Robert Schumann’s Frauenliebe und -leben (Woman’s Love and Life). Cheng is coming to campus—sponsored by Edray Goins and the Mathematics Department—to talk about her upcoming book.

In May, Professor Genevieve Feiwen Lee joined soprano Melissa Givens to perform songs by Byron Adams as part of UC Riverside’s Florence Bays Music Series in honor of his retirement. In June they presented a program of art songs by Black composers as part of the concert season at All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills sponsored by the church’s Music Guild. In the same month she joined Brightwork Ensemble for the world premiere of Vera Ivanova’s opera The Double at Boston Court in Pasadena.

Last summer also saw Genevieve coaching amateur musicians at the Chamber Music Conference at Colgate University where she also performed in faculty concerts including the world premiere of a septet by Elizabeth Ogonek. She was also a guest artist at the Garth Newel Music Center Summer Festival in Warm Springs, Virginia where she performed works of Gabriela Lena Frank, Gao Ping, Errollyn Wallen, J. S. Bach, and Bedrich Smetana. The summer release of two new albums—on which she appears—includes Tom Flaherty’s Mixed Messages and Allen Shawn’s In Memory Of.

This fall she is happy to be collaborating with numerous colleagues in four different campus programs, and in early October she gave a solo recital at Mills College for their annual Darius Milhaud concert series.

Professor Eric Lindholm orchestrated a set of eight songs by the mid-twentieth-century Black American composer Florence Price, on texts by Paul Lawrence Dunbar and others. These songs were presented by Melissa Givens and the Pomona College Orchestra last March, and the scoring is for seven woodwinds, four brass, percussion, harp, and strings. On the same program, he conducted the premiere performances of Tom Flaherty’s Social Harmony. Later in the spring semester, he created a new edition of Vaughan Williams’s Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis, providing a substantial improvement in legibility and clarity over the original handwritten parts of a century ago. During the summer, Eric researched Latin American orchestral music, including some pieces that will be featured in the Orchestra’s fall programming. The Manzanita Piano Quartet, with Eric as cellist, presented a program of music by Frank Bridge, Gernot Wolfgang, and Gabriel Fauré on the University of Redlands and Pomona College campuses in September.

For the college as a whole, he returns to service on the seven-person Faculty Executive Committee, which meets regularly with the President and Academic Dean strategizing on a wide range of issues that concern the academic life of the institution.

Joti Rockwell, Associate Professor, joined pianist Nadia Shpachenko in April for a concert premiering Lewis Spratlan’s Invasion, a chamber work about the war in Ukraine. The ensemble featured Anthony Parnther, conductor; Pat Posey, saxophone; Aija Mattson-Jovel, horn; Phil Keen, trombone; Yuri Inoo, percussion; and Joti on mandolin. They recorded the piece at Silent Zoo studios in Glendale in May for inclusion on Shpachenko’s album Invasion: Art and Music for Ukraine, which has been released on Reference Recordings. All the proceeds of the album benefit Ukrainian people affected by the war. In June, Joti accompanied Peter Harper for two weeks of performances in venues throughout France,
playing mandolin, guitar, keyboard, and theremin. This fall, he joined Celliola and played Bach on mandolin-family instruments in a Friday Noon Concert.

Associate Professor Gibb Schreffler is on sabbatical in the fall, during which he is working on a research project to investigate how maritime technology interacted with the development of sailors’ work-songs (chanties). The project involves sailing in the historic barkentine Gazela out of Philadelphia with Gibb leading the ship’s crew in an experiment with the vessel’s vintage windlass. The windlass, of which this is one of few still in existence, was a type of heavy, manually-operated winch that was used to raise anchor in the mid-nineteenth century. Gibb has recovered the particular style and repertoire of songs once sung while operating the windlass, which participants will sing while working to gain experiential insight. A film crew will document the event to produce a video for use in educational institutions.

In June, Gibb presented at the Symposium on the Music of the Sea at the Connecticut Sea Music Festival in Essex, CT. His talk, “Reclaiming ‘Shenandoah’,” combined musicological analysis with historiography of shipboard working methods to recover the forgotten, original rhythm of the well-known song “Oh Shenandoah,” which, before its early-twentieth-century transformation by concert choirs and folk singers, had exclusively coordinated group-work tasks aboard ships.

Emeritus Faculty

Graydon Beeks conducted the Pomona College Band in a pair of outdoor concerts in April 2022 featuring Another Essay for Concert Band, a new work by professor emeritus Karl Kohn, and music by Cabezón, Holst, Mozart and Schumann. In June he presented a paper titled “The Pre-Publication Circulation and Scoring of Handel’s Op.2 Trio Sonatas” at the conference Orlando and the History of Handel’s Operas in the 20th and 21st Centuries sponsored by the Georg Friedrich Händel Gesellschaft and held in conjunction with the annual Handel Festival in Halle, Germany.

The released recording, Karl Kohn Encounters with music by Karl Kohn and spearheaded by flutist Rachel Rudich, received a nice review from Gramophone writing, “Rudich brings authority to the entire corpus [with] subtle nuance of her immaculate technique . . . There are gems to be found at many turns.”

William Peterson was one of several organists heard in the “Pipedreams” program for the week of June 26, 2022, on American Public Media. “Hour 1” of the program titled “All Around America” included “Fanfares” by Tom Flaherty, from the album Recital at Bridges Hall, Pomona College, William J. Peterson, Organ (Loft Recordings, 2018). He will be heard in an all-Bach recital in late October celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Hill Memorial Organ’s inaugural concert.

Student Happenings

Members of Malachai Bandy’s classes LISTENING TO QUEER VOICES: RADICAL IDENTITIES, PERFORMANCE, AND TRANSGRESSION IN MUSIC, FROM HILDEGARD TO HOUSE and ENGAGING MUSIC traveled to the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to experience Los Angeles Opera’s production of Donizetti’s Lucia di Lammermoor. In addition to enjoying the performance, the students were introduced to a few members of the LA Opera artistic staff during dinner on the plaza.

Rosy Falzon ’23 studied studio production at Berklee College of Music over the summer with support from a Department of Music McCord Grant.

Alumni Spotlight

Last June, Wesleyan University Press published Seeding the Tradition: Musical Creativity in Southern Vietnam by Alexander Cannon ’05. Alex is an Associate Professor of Music at the University of Birmingham (England), where he has taught
since 2017. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. His book explores conflicting creativities in the traditional music in Hồ Chí Minh City, the Mekong Delta, and the Vietnamese diaspora, and how those creativities influence contemporary southern Vietnamese culture. Alex is the co-editor for *Ethnomusicology Forum* and has published in scholarly journals, edited collections, and the popular media. He primarily studies the genre đờn ca tài tử, known as the “music of talented amateurs,” and his future research plans include examining the impact of climate change on musical practice in the Mekong Delta.

Alex spent 15 months in Vietnam during 2008 and 2009, and since then has returned for about one month each year. As an ethnomusicologist, his research involves ethnographic methods of asking questions, listening to musicians speak about music, and trying to understand why musicians practice the way that they do. To better study the creativity of musicians, Alex has spent the last 15 years learning how to play the đàn tranh 17-stringed zither, the đàn kím moon-shaped lute, and the đàn sên, the plum blossom flower lute, so that he can perform in music clubs and in one-on-one settings with experts.

Alex’s interest in Vietnamese music started with a course he took as a Pomona College sophomore, taught by Christi-Anne Castro, who is now at the University of Michigan. Upon encountering a loud and energetic piece called “Mả Vư,” meaning “Dance of the Horse,” he recalls, “I couldn’t reconcile my preexisting notion of what ‘court music’ was supposed to be—namely, stately and stoic—and this bright and energetic piece that I heard.” Although an accomplished classical flute player, Alex began to feel that “I really knew very little about the music in the world.” This realization set him on a path of exploration that has included becoming fluent in the Vietnamese language.

As a music and economics double major at Pomona, Alex was particularly inspired by his interactions with other students, through the way that they “gave critical feedback to each other and supported one another out of a genuine desire to see everyone succeed.” He started to seriously consider a career in teaching through the careful preparation and attention to detail he brought to class presentations, and the satisfaction he derived from doing them well. In addition to his performance work on the flute, Alex participated in the Balinese Gamelan Ensemble and the Bulgarian Music Ensemble. He is particularly grateful for the opportunity to have studied with the late Katherine Hagedorn, who “continued to counsel and guide me through the vagaries of an academic career.” Current Pomona faculty remember Alex’s open mind, strong work ethic, and creative thinking, and we are delighted to see how far he has come.

## Alumni News

**Stephen Cera** ’72 celebrates the career of the Austrian-born and naturalized-American pianist Artur Schnabel (1891–1951) in an article published in the August 2022 issue of *Gramophone*. Schnabel was the first to record Beethoven’s complete piano sonatas and published a famous edition of them in 1935; he was also renowned as a teacher. Cera, who is based in Toronto, is active as a pianist and a writer on music, and has also worked as a record producer, concert programmer and artistic director for a number of distinguished music festivals.

**Nathan Wang** ’79, who is serving as the 2022–23 Cheng Family Foundation Visiting Artist at the Chinese Garden of The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, conducted eight outdoor performances of his opera *On Gold Mountain* in the Chinese Garden during May 2022. The work, which was commissioned by LA Opera as part of its “Voices of California” series and first performed in 2000, is based on the book of the same name by Lisa See, who served as librettist.

**Geri DeMasi** ’81 had his *Pandemic Requiem* for soloists, chorus and organ performed on Palm Sunday 2022 at the Claremont Presbyterian Church where he has long-served as Director of Music. The church commissioned the work to commemorate the COVID-19 pandemic. The Sanctuary Choir, assisted by other singers, was conducted by Dr. Ruth Charloff and DeMasi played the organ part.
Katharine Rawdon ’82 and three colleagues are recording an album of music by contemporary Portuguese composers and composers active in Portugal. Titled (flut)uoções, it will consist of works written for various combinations of flutes, percussion and cello. Her article describing the project, originally written for Serenade magazine, has been reprinted in the Flute Journal.

Mark Morouse ’85 sang the role of the Emperor in Bonn Opera’s June 2022 revival of the opera Li-Tai-Pe by Clemens Erwein Georg Heinrich Bonaventura von und zu Franckenstein (1875–1942). The opera was a success following its 1920 premiere but had not been heard since 1944.

Evelyn Saylor ’13 provided the music for Das Wirkliche Leben, based on the 2018 novel La vraie vie (“Real Life”) by the Belgian writer Adeline Dieudonné, and had its world premiere at the Niedersächsische Staatstheater Hannover in May 2022. Active as both a composer of electro-acoustic music and a multifaceted performer, she received her master’s degree from the Universität der Künste Berlin, where she currently teaches.

Eron Smith ’16 has published a video-article titled “Flat 2 as Hotness in Post-Millennial Pop” in SMT-V, a peer-reviewed journal affiliated with the Society for Music Theory. The editor of SMT-V is Megan Kaes Long ’08.

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.