

BLAIR

# Quarter Note

Vanderbilt University



**Understanding  
Chamber Music**  
with John Kochanowski  
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SUMMER 2007

# From the *Dean*

Cover photo of John Kochanowski by Daniel DuBois

The BLAIR QUARTER NOTE, the newsletter of the Blair School of Music, is published twice a year in cooperation with the Office of Advancement Communications for alumni, current students, and other friends of the School.

The BLAIR QUARTER NOTE, Volume 31, Number 2, Summer 2007  
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In recent years, you have heard much about the decline of art music (that is, “classical” music) in our society. There is some validity in these reports, but there are also emerging trends that attest to the health of art music. I refer especially to the increase of chamber music.

In the past 20 years, chamber music has found a new audience. While many symphony orchestras are experiencing financial challenges and dwindling audiences (though not, fortunately, in Nashville), chamber music societies are thriving. Audiences are clearly responding to the intimacy of expression that chamber music affords. Watching and hearing a performer—alternately lyrical and virtuosic—still means something.

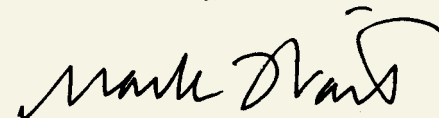
There are more outstanding groups of young chamber musicians now than at any time in the past 50 years. Some of these groups, such as Eighth Blackbird, specialize in modern music. The string quartets Kronos and Ethel have commissioned many works that have carried the idiom of the string quartet forward into the 21st century. Other string quartets, such as the Pacifica and St. Lawrence, play a broad range of music that emphasizes the continuity of the form throughout the past two centuries—from Haydn through Elliott Carter and György Kurtág.

There are also many woodwind quintets, brass quintets and other groups that represent the thriving, vital world of chamber music. Taken together, these ensembles attest to the important place that art music still holds in contemporary culture and society. Thanks to their imaginative programming and their willingness to commission new music, they exhibit a vitality that continues to enlarge the possibilities of human expression.

At the Blair School of Music, chamber music has been a hallmark of excellence for the past 40 years. In 1967, the Blair String Quartet was established, soon to be followed by the Blair Woodwind Quintet and, more recently, the Blair Brass Quintet and Blakemore Trio. All of these groups perform frequently, and their audiences have grown dramatically. And, as you have already read in THE QUARTER NOTE, within the next few years they will introduce new works by Peter Schickele, Susan Botti and György Kurtág.

The Blair School's commitment to chamber music, and to art music generally, continues to energize our faculty, students and audiences. It is an integral part of our allegiance to our art and to our community.

Cordially,



DANIEL DUBOIS



DANIEL DUBOIS

## breathing as one

Chamber Music with John Kochanowski By Lisa A. DuBois

For violist John Kochanowski, performing chamber music is about finding those rare transcending moments when a small group of musicians are physically moving as one—where every rhythmic inflection, every pause, and even every breath is synchronized into a unified ebb and flow with the music.

"Some of the greatest moments I've experienced in the past 35 years of playing in a string quartet have been sharing the breath of my colleagues," Kochanowski says. "You may be playing a piece that you've worked on for hundreds of hours, and suddenly you reach a point where you're able to communicate so closely that you're all breathing the same way. You walk off the stage and you say, 'My god, that was something unique.'"

As a long-time member of the Blair String Quartet (whose other members include first violinist Christian Teal, second violinist Cornelia Heard, and cellist Felix Wang), Kochanowski understands that to make a particular piece of music work, to reach a common insight, each performer must delve into the deepest emotional feelings that he or she has about that piece, and they must be profoundly open with one another. Adults often find it difficult to speak so honestly about their emotions. For college students, it's even tougher.

But that's exactly what Kochanowski expects his students to do. In his role as associate professor of viola and coordinator of string chamber music at Blair he asks talented 18- to 22-year-olds to go beyond playing the notes on the page, which they're more than capable of doing, and to actually talk about the complex meanings behind the sounds. This is a whole new ballgame for many of them, particularly for freshmen. Typically, their high school teachers concentrated on helping them discover the technical nuances of the music—the soft sounds, the medium soft, the loud and the medium loud—and they didn't dwell on an individual's internal, even visceral, response to the notes. All that changes once these students arrive at Vanderbilt.

"So, four people come into my studio and suddenly they have to put these sounds into emotional terms understood by each other, with dialogues and conversations and climaxes and all those things that go into making great music," Kochanowski says. "It doesn't matter if it's a piano trio or a string quartet or anything else, my greatest challenge has been to get them to open up their expressivity in a way that they can then translate into their instruments. What I love about Blair is that these students have excellent verbal skills, if I can just get it out of them."

Famed violinist Robert Mann, who was Kochanowski's mentor at the Juilliard School of Music and who found-

ed the Juilliard String Quartet in 1946, once quipped, "A string quartet is like a marriage—without any of the benefits."

Although Kochanowski appreciates his mentor's perspective, he views a string quartet as more like a little democracy in the works. His approach to chamber music is that every player is also a conductor, each one is conducting the other three. Yet at the same time, he adds, "They have to make their own statement. And everybody is equal. The first violin may have the melody 80 percent of the time, but the other three players are changing the first violinist's way of playing the melody."

At any given moment and on every given page, all four of the players may be processing 100 different decisions that will ultimately make the music sound simple, loving, dark or romantic to their listeners.

One of Kochanowski's greatest passions is helping his chamber music groups gain confidence as a foursome, an entity, so that they can begin thinking outside the box, beyond what's on paper. A chamber piece, he explains to his protégés, is akin to a sculpture or a painting, because each is capable of generating an emotional response simply by being unveiled before an audience. In addition, every work of art is open to various interpretations.

Kochanowski draws an analogy to the classic country song, "Crazy," which was recorded by both Patsy Cline and Willie Nelson. The singers started with the same words and melodies, but the beats, phrasings, gaps and accents were completely different—and both interpretations were wonderful. "I always try to get my chamber music people to understand how rhythm affects the emotion of a piece," he says. "If you have that range of speeding up and slowing down, how does that affect our response to that work?"

Recently, one of his student groups was working on Anton Webern's chamber piece, *Six Bagatelles*. Kochanowski asked them to compare it to a page of music by Franz Joseph Haydn. Webern's score was saturated with markings—hairpins, dots and dashes—as many as 150 markings for each player's page, whereas Haydn, offering an equally complicated score, had only four or five markings on a page. Kochanowski asked his students what Webern's abundance of notations meant to them.

"It looks like he didn't want us to be able to do any-



John Kochanowski

thing," they responded. And indeed, the composer certainly appeared to be exerting complete control over his music, leaving no room for variation. Kochanowski then had his students play *Six Bagatelles* and recorded their performance. Later he brought in recordings of the same piece by two different professional string quartets. To the students' shock, the professional interpretations sounded nothing alike, nor did they sound anything like the one they themselves had just recorded.

Kochanowski says, "The students liked their performance better than the other two I'd brought in. What was spectacular was that they liked their own performance for all the right reasons. They thought the way they'd interacted with each other was more profound than what these other quartets had done."

Which, he adds, harks back to the notion that what appears on the page is not really on the page. "What you see there is actually what your emotional, psychological and intellectual makeup brings to it," he says. "That's entertainment!"

Because Vanderbilt students have such tremendous

academic acumen, as well as musical talent, he believes that the education offered at Blair is unequalled across the country. A person could go to a music conservatory and study viola for four years, he cites as an example, and then get a master's degree in viola, and then maybe continue on for a doctorate. That person might be a brilliant musician at the end of all that training, but also might have a very singular, select way of approaching a work of music—and life.

"I love the idea that here we're giving students a foundation and a great opportunity for flexibility," he says. "This combination (that Blair students must double-major in music and another non-music academic subject) gives them four years of freedom to see where their passions are going to wind up. Their peers at Blair, who are not only great musicians but also great poets, biochemists and microbiologists, are going to question them in all kinds of ways. The beauty of a Blair education is that even those people who know that they will be going into other professions after they graduate still feel impassioned about their music."

## The Blakemore Trio

The Blakemore Trio is the newest addition to the Blair School of Music's resident professional chamber music ensembles. Founded in 2003 by pianist Amy Dorfman and husband and wife team, cellist Felix Wang and violinist Carolyn Huebl, the Blakemore Trio provides another dimension to the cultural life of Vanderbilt and the surrounding community.

The addition of the piano to a string ensemble brings a symphonic element to chamber music, while still allowing for unadorned, lyrical playing as well. "It's more than coincidence that some of the world's best composers—Brahms, Schumann, Beethoven and Mendelssohn, for example—were pianists, and used the piano trio as a vehicle for their own performances," says Wang, who is also cellist for the Blair String Quartet. "What better way to honor a work of music than to have a genius composer writing for his own instrument?"

Huebl adds that unlike in a string trio, quartet or quintet, the presence of the piano in a work of chamber music adds a different quality to the timbre of the piece. "It's a different experience for the listener, too, to hear the color and contrast," she



The Blakemore Trio: cellist Felix Wang, violinist Carolyn Huebl, and pianist Amy Dorfman

says. "It gives the composer an unusual breadth of possibilities."

One of the Blakemore Trio's goals is to commission a new work by a contemporary composer every year and expand the repertoire of modern chamber music. In 2005, the ensemble premiered a piece by Tennessee composer Paul Osterfield, and the group is currently working with soprano/composer Susan Botti on a new commission made possible by a grant from Turner New Commissions Fund—a triptych that includes one piece for trio, one for violin and piano, and one for trio and voice.

The energy generated by so many opportunities for chamber music has created a fresh dynamism in the city. Says pianist Dorfman, "It's been exciting in the last couple of years to also see student groups blossom—both college and precollege chamber music groups. They're coming to our concerts and they're playing in their own concerts. Students are discovering this whole joy of making music together—and it's contagious."

—Lisa DuBois



# Better and Better

*Precollegiate students at Blair score a spring full of milestones*

BY KAMI RICE

Precollegiate violist and soon-to-be Blair School freshman Christopher Lowry

PHOTOS BY DANIEL DUBOIS

**T**hough students in Blair's precollege program don't go around wearing lists of their accomplishments on their sleeves, they could. And if they did, their sleeves would be very long indeed.

Perhaps part of the reason no one has a complete list of all the honors collected by precollege students is found in a comment by Pam Schneller, the Blair assistant dean who oversees the precollege program. "We don't foster a particularly competitive atmosphere here. That's not what music is about. Our goal is not to create winners, but to help students become skilled, articulate and expressive interpreters of music. We strive to give them the skills, tools and opportunities to be the best musicians they can be." Schneller further explains, "These students hear one another, and it inspires them to do better and grow. What a great thing it is to be surrounded by other people doing what you want to do."

*"These students hear one another, and it inspires them to do better and grow. What a great thing it is to be surrounded by other people doing what you want to do."*

—Pam Schneller  
Blair Assistant Dean

The precollege program's vibrancy also extends to its various ensembles. Many of them have taken domestic concert tours, and several have taken international performing tours as well. The Concert Choir of the Blair Children's Chorus is performed in Ireland this summer, and three of the other Blair Children's Chorus choirs have taken domestic tours. In June the Curb Youth Symphony played for the American Symphony Orchestra League's national conference.

Better and better is just what students like Linnaea Brophy, Nathan Chism, Austin Hoke, Henna Jurca and Derek Shyr, Ju Young Lee, Christina Ramsey and Christopher Lowry have been doing. Yet, Schneller stresses that the accomplishments of these students are a representative sampling of the successes of students in the precollege program. A list of these accomplishments includes:

Brophy, a 9th grade violinist who won the 2007 Curb Records Young Musicians Concerto Competition, the concerto com-

petitions of the Alabama Symphony and Memphis Youth Symphony, and at the invitation of Itzhak Perlman, played two recitals in New York in April;

Chism, an 11th grade guitarist and singer, who took third place this spring in the high school men's division at the Mid-South National Association of Teachers of Singing regional student auditions;

Hoke, an 11th grade cellist, who placed second in the Southern Region of the Music Teachers National Association high school string competition held at Florida State University;

Tenth-grader Jurca and eighth-grader Shyr, both pianists, who performed Saint-Saens' *Carnival of the Animals* with the Nashville Symphony last October (Jurca traveled to China this summer to spend 10 days at the Chinese-American International Piano Institute before returning to the States for the Aspen Music Festival);



Christopher Lowry working with Kathryn Plummer, professor of viola

Lee, a high school senior and cellist, who placed runner-up in the Curb Records/Nashville Symphony Concerto Competition (he will attend the Juilliard School in the fall);

Ramsey, a seventh grade pianist, who was one of this year's winners of the Curb Youth Symphony Concerto Competition;

And Lowry, a high school senior who will be a freshman at Blair in the fall, is a violist, violinist and composer. He will continue his viola studies at Blair, but his violin solo this past May with the Curb Youth Symphony, after winning the Curb Youth Symphony Concerto Competition with Ramsey, was his violin swan song.

One of Lowry's biggest accomplishments is winning first place in March in junior division viola at the American String Teachers Association's National Solo Competition. The previous July he won the concerto competition at the Eastern Music Festival. He was the first violist to win in 10 years. Additionally, Lowry wrote a composition that was performed by the

# 2007 Commencement Honors and Awards

Curb Youth Symphony at their holiday concert last December and by the Nashville Symphony Orchestra with the Curb Youth Symphony during their May Side-by-Side concert.

Lowry began studying Suzuki violin with Mary Helen Law when he was four years old. He eventually switched to studying viola with her but continued violin studies with Nashville Symphony members and Blair faculty Gerald Greer and Erin Hall. In fall 2005, he won a scholarship to study viola with Kathryn Plummer, professor of viola. He will continue studying with Plummer when he enters Blair in the fall.

When he began his music studies, Lowry says, "I know for a fact I was not begging my parents." He mostly did it because his parents made him. He liked it, but it wasn't his passion. Then when he was 12 years old, he entered what he calls his "rebellion against classical music stage." "Now," he explains, "it

worship team. "Ever since then I've loved the variety that percussion has," he says.

This fun love of percussion has made an impact on his compositions. "It's definitely helped me know the variety of instruments I can compose for." From adding sirens or police whistles to scraping rather than banging cymbals, "being able to play has helped me know these are the techniques I can write for," he explains. "It's endless. That's one thing I love about it." In terms of performance, playing percussion has given him more rhythmic solidity.

Plummer says Lowry "is a born performer. He has such passion in his playing." Yet, he also has a very vivid imagination and sense of humor that make teaching him fun. Those traits work into his compositions, too.

"He's very imaginative with bow strokes, too," she explains.



The Curb Youth Symphony (left) played for the American Symphony Orchestra League's national conference in June. The Concert Choir of the Blair Children's Chorus (above) toured Ireland this Summer.

feels like the only reason I'm alive."

Of his transition from violin to viola, Lowry says viola "feels unique. I enjoy the way it sounds more. Plus, it's bigger." He says he can have a tension problem when he's playing, so the larger instrument feels more relaxed.

Plummer was able to accompany Lowry's family to the ASTA competition in Detroit. "It was one of my happiest times, being in Detroit with Chris and his family," she says. "It was just such a high for everybody to see him play so beautifully. It couldn't have gone better."

Plummer says that Lowry is both intuitive and analytical. He learns quickly and is able to grasp ideas, demonstrate the concept and come back the next week with it ingrained. Part of the reason it's so intuitive for him is that he hears so deeply and is so attuned to sound quality and pitch.

During Lowry's rebellious teenager stage, he began watching people at church playing percussion and from that he learned to play drums and soon began playing with the church

"He doesn't wait to be told to do a martelé here or détaché or staccato. He just experiments and that's part of his gift."

Lowry describes the two different sides of his musician self—the composer and the performer—and says they meet in the middle somewhere. When he sits with his viola or violin and improvises, he can sometimes work that improvisation into longer themes.

"He's a composer," says Plummer. "That separate mode of creativity is unique. Most people end up being recognized as one or the other, a player or a composer. Christopher, I think, has the ability to be in both worlds. The great thing about Vanderbilt is that he's going to be able to develop both those skills and more."

For his part, Lowry is excited to be at Blair in the fall. "I look forward to becoming a better musician, to four more years with Ms. Plummer and to seeing what happens after that."



Founder's Medal: **Peter Cain**  
Alma Mater Vocalist: **Regan Lackey**  
Student Marshals: **Anna (Ania) Lipowska** and **Neala Swaminatha**  
Banner Bearer: **Tara Burns**

## AWARDS

Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI) College Honor Award: **Abigail Wilensky**, senior violinist

SAI Scholastic Award: **Anna Caravella**, senior percussionist

Alpha Lambda Delta Senior Certificates Class of 2007:

**Tara Burns**  
**Peter Cain**  
**Regan Lackey**  
**Anna (Ania) Lipowska**  
**Ellen McSweeney**  
**Matthew Quick**  
**Neala Swaminatha**

Class of 2008:

**Daniel Jansen**  
**Robert Tiedemann**  
**Tim Strang**

The MTNA Student Achievement Recognition Award: **Ellen McSweeney**, senior violinist

Martin Williams Award for most outstanding paper: **Laura Richardson**, senior

The Richard C. Cooper Award for campus-wide leadership in music: **John Ballard**, senior clarinetist

L. Howard "Zeke" Nicar Award for most outstanding woodwind or brass student: **Neala Swaminatha**, senior flutist

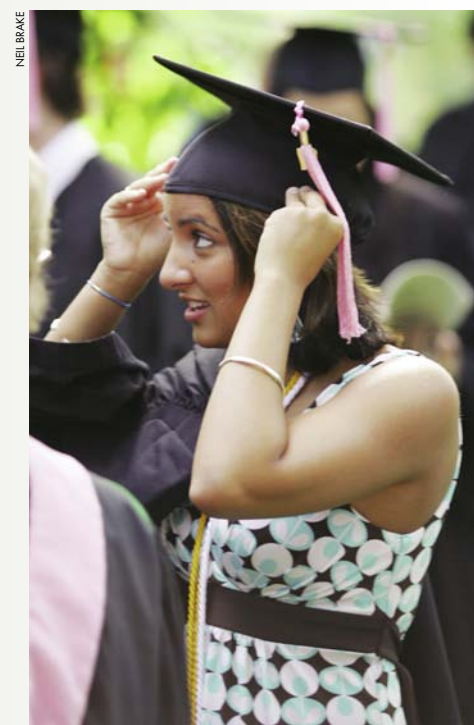
The Robin Dickerson Award to an outstanding voice major, for excellence in performance and scholarship: **Jena Carpenter**, sophomore soprano

Delene Laubenheim McClure Memorial Prize to a voice major for excellence in opera performance: **Tara Burns**, senior soprano

Blair Composition Competition Prize: **Kathryn Moreadith**, sophomore composition/theory major

The Sue Brewer Award for excellence in guitar or composition/theory: **Tyler True**, senior composition major

The Jean Keller Heard Prize for excellence in strings:  
**Micah Claffey**, junior cellist  
**Tim Strang**, junior cellist  
**Ellen McSweeney**, senior violinist  
**Christian Marshall**, senior violist



The Elliot and Ailsa Newman Prize to a clarinet student for excellence in performance: **Peter Cain**, senior

The Confroy-Lijoi Jazz Award for excellence in jazz performance: **Lindsey Williams**, senior saxophonist

The S. S. and I. M. F. Marsden Award in Musical Scholarship for the most outstanding major paper: **Jeff Benedict**, Arts & Science senior



The David Rabin Prize for excellence in musical performance: **Matthew Quick**, senior pianist and **Neala Swaminatha**, senior flutist

The Margaret Branscomb Prize to the freshman who best exemplifies the spirit and standards of the Blair School: **Benjamin Hart**, violin performance major and **Jordan Holland**, voice and saxophone major

The Presser Scholarship to a junior excelling in both performance and scholarship: **Robert Tiedemann**

Top left: Dean Mark Wait awards this year's Founder's Medal to Peter Cain. Center: Neala Swaminatha, winner of the Nicar Award and co-winner of the David Rabin Prize with Matthew Quick, adjusts her mortarboard. Right: Rachel Diefenbacher, Josh Davis, Matthew Crawford and Anna Caravella await the awarding of diplomas.

# 2007 Fall Concert Season

Fall 2007 promises to be an exciting concert season at Blair, with a host of student and faculty concerts, as well as special collaborations with noted performers from across the musical spectrum. Here's a quick glance at just a few of the events offered:

The **BLAIR SIGNATURE SERIES** focuses on our celebrated faculty performers performing at the height of their powers:

**October 6**  
Pianist **Craig Nies** continues with his "marathon" series of eight solo performances, begun in spring 2007, focused on the complete 48 Preludes and Fugues of J.S. Bach's Well Tempered Clavier.

*Sponsored by the Martin Foundation*

**October 12**  
The **Blair String Quartet** presents their fall concert program, with works by Beethoven, Ives and Brahms. *Sponsored by AT&T Tennessee*

**October 29**  
The **Blair Woodwind Quintet** returns with another of their always unexpected and entertaining programs. *Sponsored by the Sartain Lanier Family Foundation, Inc.*

**November 9 and 11**  
The **Vanderbilt Opera Theatre** presents Mozart's *The Magic Flute*—fully staged, orchestrated and costumed. *Sponsored by Joanne and Mike Hayes in memory of Mary Corther Ragland*

The **BLAIR PRESENTS SERIES** is host to three special **ticketed** events this season, all featuring guest artists and special "one time only" collaborations:

**September 28**  
BMI President Del Bryant invites you to help celebrate the music of his legendary parents, **Felice and Boudleaux Bryant**, on the 50th anniversary of their hit songs "Bye Bye Love" and "Wake Up Little Susie." The guest artist list is still a secret, but popular, country, and classical artists who plan to perform will be sure to dazzle the audience! (This concert is free—but will have limited seating and will REQUIRE a ticket. For more information on ticket availability, contact the Blair office at 322-7656.)

**November 15 and 16**  
Blair joins once again with the Nashville Ballet for **EMERGENCE III**—a special presentation of original dance and music happening every two years. Three choreographers—James Canfield, Thaddeus Davis, and Kimberly Ratcliffe—are paired with Blair School of Music composers Michael Kurek, Michael Slayton, and Stan Link to create three exceptional new ballets to enjoy at the unbelievable price of only \$10.00 per person (\$5 for VU students with ID). Tickets will be on sale at the Ballet office and the Blair main desk after September 15.

**December 1**  
Blair joins with the Country Music Hall of Fame to celebrate the holidays with a special concert in honor of the music of Ray Charles, as part of the "I Can't Stop Loving You: Ray Charles and Country

Music" exhibition at CMHF. David "Fathead" Newman, star tenor saxophone soloist for more than a dozen years with the Ray Charles Band, will join in a very special guest appearance with Blair's resident professional jazz repertory ensemble, the Nashville Jazz Orchestra, for a sizzling hot concert that will also feature Blair's own Big Band Orchestra. (Tickets are General Admission: \$15 adults/\$10 VU faculty/\$5 VU students with ID). For ticket information, contact Cindy Steine at 322-7651.

*Sponsored by Susan and Frank Genovese*

The **GLOBAL MUSIC SERIES** continues for its second year, and this season, the concerts will be offered free to all audiences.

On **September 15** guest Iranian guitarist and head of the University of Memphis guitar program **Lily Afshar** appears in a solo performance. Public Radio International claims Ms. Afshar as "one of the world's foremost classical guitarists." Her most recent CD, *Hemispheres*, was one of Billboard Magazine's top classical recordings of 2006 and was featured on NPR's *All Things Considered* last year.

**October 5** is the date for the second GLOBAL offering, by the Vanderbilt Wind Symphony, Chamber Players and String Orchestras in conjunction with the Nashville Chinese Arts Alliance (CAAN) and the Chinese Musicians Association of Beijing. "**Gon xiang Ren Jian**" (**Share the World**) is an ambitious project that will feature world premieres of works by visiting percussionist and composer Ronald Chin and by composer Chen Qian, along with choreography arranged by CAAN director Jen-Jen Lin.

The **NIGHTCAP SERIES** continues for its third season with talks and one-hour short programs, complete with coffee and desserts:

**September 17**  
Pianist Mark Wait and violinist Carolyn Huebl. *Sponsored by Wilma Ward in memory of Anne Potter Wilson and David K. Wilson*

**October 15**  
Allan Cox, trumpet, with talk by Jim Lovensheimer

**November 8**  
Mark Wait, piano solo program

And that's not all! Blair is host to a wide array of lectures, master classes, Vanderbilt's Great Performances, the VU Chancellor's Lecture Series, and Blair's own faculty and students in solo and chamber music recitals throughout the year. For more information on the full roster of events, visit the VU Calendar of Events at [www.calendar.vanderbilt.edu](http://www.calendar.vanderbilt.edu) or the Blair Web page at [www.vanderbilt.edu/blair](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/blair).

# Hardie Traveler

Profile: Alyssa Hardie, BMus '05

Alyssa Hardie has had plenty to write home about since her 2005 graduation from Vanderbilt. Enrolled this year in graduate school at Boston University, she spent the previous year in Switzerland studying with world-renowned violist Bruno Giuranna at the Swiss Italian Conservatory in Lugano.

Hardie says it was an honor to study with Giuranna. "He's an incredible pedagogue. His knowledge of the viola repertoire is amazing." Now in his 80s, Giuranna is still a master player and teacher.

"His approach to technique and his knowledge of the instrument have raised my standard of what I can do for myself and how I want to teach," she says.

While studying in Lugano, Hardie was able to travel all around Switzerland, Italy and other parts of Europe. She also learned to speak Italian quite well, being immersed in the language for a year. Additionally, Hardie had a 14-year-old Suzuki student, an American violist, whose parents worked in Switzerland.

Now back in the States, she has been commuting once a week from Boston to the Greenwich Suzuki Academy in Connecticut to teach some beginning violists and a few young violinists. She's enjoyed the chance to have a studio of violists because so often "as a Suzuki teacher of viola, you end up teaching violinists because that's more popular."

Hardie has relished living in the vibrant music culture of Boston and the Northeast. "There's so much music going on," she says. Living in Boston has allowed her to perform with chamber ensembles beyond those that are part of her graduate curriculum.

While she loves performing in orchestra, Hardie is particularly passionate about chamber music. "There's nothing quite like chamber music for sharing music with an audience in a direct way."

Upon returning to America following her time in Europe, which was preceded by a Latin American tour with the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, Hardie says she's noticed even more how the general American public views classical music. With music education in schools declining, she says, "we're going to have to start reaching out for a public audience in a more active way."

She believes chamber music is one of the more effective means for teaching music history to audiences and for helping audiences experience classical music less passively.

Besides, she notes, playing chamber music with its great melodic lines is "a lot of fun for musicians."

—Kami Rice



*"There's nothing quite like chamber music for sharing music with an audience in a direct way."*

—Alyssa Hardie  
BMus '05

# Blair School benefactor, Vanderbilt trustee David K. "Pat" Wilson dies

David K. "Pat" Wilson, former chairman and life member of the Vanderbilt University Board of Trust whose personal and family influence and generosity are evidenced in nearly all areas of the university including the Blair School of Music, died Sunday, May 20, at home. He was 87.

"Pat Wilson was a towering leader in our city," said Martha R. Ingram, chairman of the Vanderbilt Board of Trust. "He was one of the founders of the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, and he loved Vanderbilt University with all his heart."

Mark Wait, Dean of the Blair School, noted, "The Blair School owes its very existence to the dedication of Pat and Anne Potter Wilson. Their inspiration, friendship and support have been essential to Blair's success, and they will continue to inspire musicians and music-lovers for generations to come."

Wilson, a 1941 graduate of Vanderbilt, was elected to the Board of Trust in 1963 and served as its chairman from 1981 to 1991 at a time when Vanderbilt achieved significant growth.

"It would be impossible to overstate Pat Wilson's impact on Vanderbilt and on Nashville," said Chancellor Gordon Gee. "His commitment to the university touched, literally, every corner and every aspect of this campus, from buildings to scholarships to faculty chairs."

"Pat Wilson's leadership and wisdom made possible the Vanderbilt of today, and will ensure our continued success for generations to come."

After graduating from Vanderbilt, Wilson, the son of a partner in Nashville's Fletcher-Wilson Coffee Company, attended Harvard Business School

before volunteering a year later for the U.S. Navy during World War II. He served in the Pacific theater in the Naval Construction Battalion.

He returned to Nashville in 1946 and co-founded Cherokee Insurance Company, which evolved into Cherokee Equity Corp. He served as its chairman until his death.



David K. "Pat" Wilson

A week before his commissioning by the Navy in 1942, Wilson married Anne Potter, daughter of a distinguished Nashville couple, Justin and Valere Potter. Upon the death of Justin Potter in 1961, half of his substantial estate was used to establish the Justin and Valere Potter Foundation, which over the years has benefited countless charities and organizations, not the least of which has been the Blair School.

Through the Potter Foundation, of which Wilson was a trustee, Blair Acad-

emy was established in 1964 and named in honor of Anne Potter's mother—first as the precollege music division of George Peabody College and later becoming the 10th school of Vanderbilt University. In addition, Wilson, the Wilson family and the Potter Foundation have endowed faculty chairs in the Medical School, Law School, Divinity School, College of Arts and Science, Owen School of Management and School of Nursing. In 1997, Wilson added \$1 million to monies he had already given to create the Harvie Branscomb Distinguished Visiting Scholar chair in honor of Vanderbilt's fourth chancellor.

One of Wilson's most recent Vanderbilt endowments was a chair in the Vanderbilt-Ingram Cancer Center in memory of his first wife, who died in 1986.

In addition to chairing the Board of Trust for 10 years, Wilson served as a member of the Vanderbilt Alumni Association Board of Directors and chairman of the Medical Center Board and the Board of Trust Management Committee.

"He gave wise counsel to generations of Vanderbilt chancellors and board chairmen," Ingram said. "He connected Vanderbilt with the community, and the community with Vanderbilt. His fingerprints are all over the campus—from the Law School to the Blair School of Music. He was passionate in supporting both students and faculty, in the college as well as the graduate schools."

Survivors include his wife, Paula R. Wilson; and three sons, Justin Wilson, William Wilson and Blair Wilson, all of Nashville.

—Jim Patterson

STUDENTS

PLEASE NOTE: CLASS NOTES  
APPEAR ONLY IN THE PRINTED  
VERSION OF THIS PUBLICATION

*Tutti*



The Blair Big Band, one of only 20 bands selected nationally to perform at the North Texas Jazz Festival, received the highest possible score.



Vanderbilt Opera Theatre presented *Tartuffe* as their spring semester production. Justin Emmert, voice major at Blair, is pictured playing the role of Valere.



Amy Dorfman and Amy Leventhal, guest violist, in rehearsal for their May chamber music recital in Turner Hall.

## FACULTY

The **Blair String Quartet** was presented in concert at a number of venues this past season, including those at Interlochen in Michigan, Carson Newman College, Middle Tennessee State University and Memphis Chamber Music Society, as well as locally at Christ Church Cathedral, Saint Anne's Episcopal Church, radio station WPLN and at Ingram Hall. The Quartet had a two-day residency at Interlochen where they presented master classes and taught privately, in addition to their performance.

**Gregory Barz**, associate professor of musicology (ethnomusicology), has been invited to join the editorial boards of *African Music*, the journal of the International Library of African Music in South Africa, and *Ethnomusicology Forum*, the British journal of ethnomusicology.

**Alison Brown**, adjunct instructor of banjo, gave birth to Brendan Brown West on April 10, 2007.

Associate Professor of Musicology **Joy Calico's** work on Hanns Eisler's *Neue deutsche Volkslieder* was published in the collection *Musical Childhoods and the Cultures of Youth* (Wesleyan University Press, 2006). In 2006 she presented papers at international meetings of the Diva Network (Leeds, U.K.) and the International Federation for Theatre Research (Helsinki), and national meetings of the American Musicology Society and the German Studies Association. This spring she gave invited colloquia at Belmont University and Davidson College, and this summer she presented a paper at the International Musicological Society (Zurich), conducted research in Berlin and Dresden, and participated in a Wagner seminar led by William Kinderman at Bayreuth.

**Kirsten Cassel**, adjunct artist teacher of cello, with **Seanad Dunigan Chang**, adjunct artist teacher of violin/viola, and **Wei Tsun Chang**, adjunct associate professor of violin, performed in Paris at San Marie Cathedral and American Cathedral in May.

**Dale Cockrell**, professor of musicology, gave the final lecture for the Samuel Shannon Lecture Series at Tennessee State University in April in addition to making several public presentations with the new "faces" of the characters from the Little House books.

**Amy Dorfman**, associate professor of piano, presented a master class entitled "Works for Piano Plus" at the University of Chicago last fall. She also performed a solo program for the Humanities Outreach of Tennessee 2006-07 season. In November she joined the **Blair String Quartet** in a performance at the Memphis Chamber Music Society. In March she was the featured soloist in a performance of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* with the Nashville Chamber Orchestra at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center. This summer she returns for a third season to the Tennessee Governor's School for the Arts as a guest artist and teacher.

**Jim Foglesong**, adjunct professor of music business, was recognized by the University of Charleston, Charleston, W.Va., with an Honorary Doctor of Music degree during their commencement ceremony, May 6.

**Robin Fountain**, professor of conducting, won Vanderbilt's Madison Sarratt Prize for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching this year. He is the third Blair faculty member to receive one of the University's two highest teaching awards.

**Jen Gunderman**, senior lecturer in music history and literature, played the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in Washington D.C., as well as a series of concerts, in tribute to jazz composer Vince Guaraldi in December. This winter she hosted the first ever *OnStage at the Schermerhorn* event at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center, featuring composer Gabriela Lena Frank. In the spring she was given the Kappa Alpha Faculty Book Award. Recent concerts have included performances with "Freedom Sings," a multi-media show organized by Vanderbilt University's First Amendment Center; an appearance at the Tin Pan South songwriters' convention in

Nashville; concerts in Louisiana and Texas in March; and several shows with the band Last Train Home at the Iota Club in Arlington, Va., which were recorded for release as a live album and DVD. This summer she will be occupied with recording session and concert work, including shows at NYC's Knitting Factory and Nashville's Ryman Auditorium.

**Charlene Harb**, senior lecturer in music theory, returned this summer to Graz, Austria, where she is the piano coordinator for the AIMS summer program. In the fall she will be on leave from the Blair School and teaching in Vienna, Austria, with the IES music program, where she will be a vocal and instrumental coach and piano instructor.

**Connie Heard**, professor of violin, traveled to Irvine, Calif., in January to give a violin and chamber music master class and to Cincinnati in February to judge the Aspen Auditions. She returned as an artist faculty member to the Aspen Music Festival this summer and performed on the July 7th recital of Russian pianist Vladimir Feltsman in a piano quintet by Alfred Schnittke. In April, she and pianist **Amy Dorfman** were featured in recital at the Women's Club of Nashville.

**Carolyn Huebl**, assistant professor of violin, was a guest artist with the ALIAS Chamber ensemble this spring, performing Gabriela Lena Frank's string quartet *Leyendes: An Andean Walkabout*. The quartet was performed at Schermerhorn Hall with the composer present, as well as at the Blair School. Carolyn was soloist with the IRIS Chamber Orchestra in March. This summer she joined the faculty of the Intermountain Suzuki Institute in Utah, and also taught and played chamber music at the Rocky Mountain Summer Conservatory in Steamboat Springs, Colo.

**John Johns**, associate professor of guitar, recently presented a solo recital at the Kemp Center for the Arts in Wichita Falls, Texas. While there he conducted a master class for the guitar students at Midwestern State University. He also presented recitals at Second Presbyterian

Church, Nashville, and at St. Paul's Episcopal Church Spring Concert Series in Franklin, Tenn. Johns also provided music for the soundtrack to Curt Hahn's film, *Sylvia Hyman: Eternal Wonder*. The film was given its world premier in April as part of the Nashville Film Festival and is scheduled to be shown at film festivals in China and Paris, France.

**Enid Katahn**, professor of piano, emerita, made several trips this spring to Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., where she conducted two master classes each time and did additional private teaching.

**Karen Ann Krieger**, associate professor of piano and piano pedagogy, played at the Schermerhorn Symphony Center with the Nashville Chamber Orchestra in March on Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

**Michael Kurek**, associate professor of composition, is currently working on a

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ballet version of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* for the Nashville Ballet and Nashville Symphony, for premiere during fall 2009. His Trio for Violin, Cello and Piano, Mvt. 1, was performed by pianist **Melissa Rose**, violinist **Carolyn Huebl**, and cellist **Felix Wang** in February at Tennessee Performing Arts Center with choreography by the Nashville Ballet. Kurek has completed a setting of the children's book *Goodnight Moon* for soprano and chamber ensemble for premiere by the Nashville Ballet in November, along with the choreographic premiere of the *Elegy* movement from his piano trio by Portland, Oregon-based choreographer James Canfield. Kurek has also accepted a commission to compose a new work for wind ensemble to be premiered by the Jackson Symphony Winds in January 2008. His *Matisse Impressions* will be performed this summer by the Ensemble Midt Vest in Denmark. The Scheidmeyer Celestaban company in Stuttgart, Germany, has released a promotional symphonic recording of Kurek's Concertino for Celesta and Orchestra and distributed it to all the orchestras represented at the American Symphony Orchestra League national conference in June, and is currently distributing it to orchestras worldwide. In March, Kurek served as a panelist at the Vanderbilt Law School to discuss "International Property Rights in the Age of Digital Download," and launched a new Web site at [www.michaelkurek.com](http://www.michaelkurek.com). In May he was granted tenure from Vanderbilt.

**Zada Law**, adjunct artist teacher of dulcimer, reports that the dulcimer program at Blair hosted their first visiting artist workshop and concert by California dulcimer builder and performer Janita Baker in March. Later, she performed in concert at Turner Recital Hall. **Lee Rowe** opened the concert, and Blair scholarship student **Sarah Musgrave** performed with Ms. Baker. The workshop and concert was the initial project sponsored by the David Schnauffer Fund, a contribution-funded endowment established at Blair to enrich the dulcimer program and provide special programs and outreach. Nashville's 9th annual Grand Old



The Blair Harp Ensemble performed their spring concert at Turner Recital Hall in April.

Dulcimer Day, on May 20 at Two Rivers Mansion, was dedicated to the life and music of Blair's first dulcimer professor, **David Schnauffer**.

**Douglas Lee**, professor of musicology, emeritus, has completed a second volume as contributing editor in the series *Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach: The Collected Works*, published by the Packard Humanities Institute. This most recent volume, a companion to his earlier volume of six concertos for keyboard and orchestra (published 2005), consists of seven concertos for solo (unaccompanied) keyboard, based on manuscripts in the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. A third volume of keyboard concertos to be based on Emanuel Bach's autographs located in Berlin and in Brussels is in the works.

Associate Professor of Musicology **Melanie Lowe**'s book, *Pleasure and Meaning in the Classical Symphony*, was published this spring by Indiana University Press. She was elected vice-president of the American Musicological Society South Central Chapter and has been selected to chair the program committee for the 2008 annual meeting of the American Musicological Society South Central Chapter.

**Jonathan Retzlaff**, associate professor of voice, and **Enid Katahn** gave concerts in Chambersburg, Penn. in October and at Blair in January featuring the music of

Schubert, Debussy, Rachmaninoff, Fats Waller, Vernon Duke, Gershwin and Cole Porter. Retzlaff and Katahn will next be seen in recital at The Ohio State University. Retzlaff was also featured in March on the BMI Composer Series Concert singing the cycle *The Moon is a Mirror* by guest composer Jake Heggie.

**Lee Rowe**, adjunct artist teacher of dulcimer, taught a mountain workshop on the songs of **David Schnauffer** on May 19 prior to the Grand Old Dulcimer Day Festival.

**Marian Shaffer**, adjunct professor of harp, traveled to China in May, performing chamber music and giving master classes in Beijing and Shanghai. She also taught and performed at the Sewanee Summer Music Festival in June.

**Sarah Page Summar**, lecturer in aural studies, has been awarded the Priddy Fellowship in Arts Leadership at the University of North Texas where she will begin work on her D.M.A. in composition next fall. She earned her B.Mus. from Blair in 1995 and studied violin with **Chris Teal**, Joseph Joachim Professor of Violin, and composition with **Michael Kurek**.

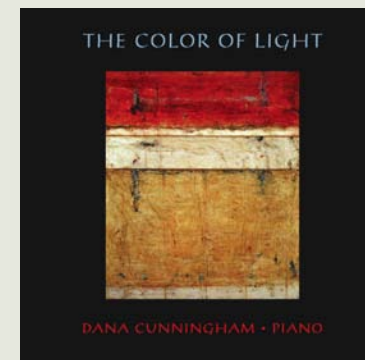
**Thomas Verrier**, associate professor of wind studies, traveled to Spain in March to serve on the judging panel of the Concurso de Solistas del Centro

## Recent Releases by Blair Faculty and Alums

*Singing for Life: Songs of Hope, Healing and HIV/AIDS in Uganda* (Smithsonian Folkways) compiled by **Greg Barz**, associate professor of musicology (ethnomusicology), features uplifting music from Uganda as part of the effort to combat HIV/AIDS.



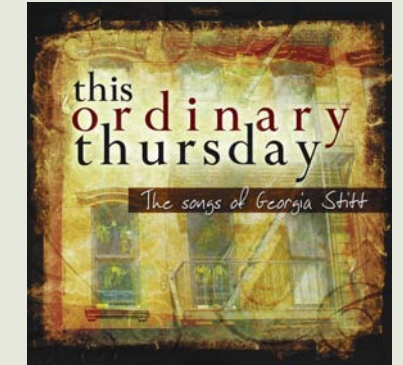
*White Christmas* (Green Hill Productions) by **Matt Belsante**, BS'06, features the former vocalist for the **Blair Big Band** on his debut release of swinging holiday songs. Coming in September.



*The Color of Light* (Windham Hill) features **Dana Cunningham**, BS'84, on piano, joined by Will Ackerman on guitar and Eugene Friesen on cello, among others. Cunningham studied piano, voice and guitar at Blair in the early '80s.

*Pete Christlieb with the Lori Mechem Quartet—Live at the Jazz Cave* (Cognito Music) produced by **Roger Spencer**, adjunct artist teacher of jazz ensembles, and recorded at the Nashville Jazz Workshop showcases Mechem's quar-

tet with Lori Mechem on piano, Spencer on bass, Andy Reiss on guitar, Chris Brown on drums and West Coast jazz legend Pete Christlieb on tenor sax.



*This Ordinary Thursday* (PS Classics), the debut album of songs by composer/lyricist **Georgia Stitt**, BMus'94, features vocals by some of Broadway's brightest stars, including Faith Prince, Sara Ramirez and Susan Egan.

### DEATHS

**Winifred (Winnie) Davis Smith Breast**, BA'52 (Peabody), of Nashville, died Dec. 5, 2006. Winnie taught voice at the Blair School from 1978 to 1988, following a 20+ year career in Nashville's recording studios, including membership in the famed Anita Kerr Singers and solo performances on radio and television (with Arthur Godfrey, for one). She also played zither and was a particular champion of folk songs and carols and the music of Charles Bryan, her mentor in collecting and studying this repertoire. One of her recordings, *A Christmas Delight*, is a unique album of exceptional arrangements (and featured such chamber musicians as the late **Stephen Sefsik**, clarinet, also a former Blair School faculty member, and Rufus Long, flute, father of **Gil Long**.) After joining the Blair faculty, Winnie performed for a number of years with **Jane Kirchner** and **John Johns** as the WindStrum Trio.



Members of the Nashville Mandolin Ensemble play in April's Appalachian Celebration at Ingram Hall. This year's concert celebrated the life and art of David Schnauffer, dulcimer artist and Blair professor, who passed away in August 2006.



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