New Music Center Set to Begin Construction

The long-awaited Scheidt Family Music Center will start going up across the street from the current music building during 2019, with a completion date scheduled for Dec 2020. The new building will house a stunningly original 900-seat performance hall, equally fitting for concerts or opera, in addition to three large rehearsal rooms and two state-of-the-art recording studios. Practice rooms for students and teaching studios for faculty will also be included.

The concert hall is being designed by the world-renowned firm of Schuler Shook from Chicago, Jack Hagler, principal, in charge of the project, and Acoustic Distinctions from New York, David Kahn, principal, leading the acoustical consulting team. The building design has been realized by local firms archimania and Fleming Architects.

The Scheidt Family Music Center will be a stellar addition to the Memphis community, providing a first-class performance space for the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music and its many musical partners, while anchoring the developing Central Avenue Arts Corridor. With a world-class concert hall, an art museum and a theatre all within a short walk of each other, the University of Memphis is creating the newest thriving arts destination in the Mid-South.

The Scheidt Family Music Center will become a reality, first and foremost, through the support of Honey and Rudi Scheidt and their entire family. Their vision for the School of Music is born of their love of music and their desire to provide a facility in which students can realize their dream of a career in music. Their gift enhances the School of Music, the University of Memphis and the entire Memphis community, and our thanks for their generosity and support can never adequately be expressed. We also thank the Assisi, Plough and Hardin Foundations for their generous support, along with the many individuals who have given so generously to sponsor spaces within the Music Center.

Many supporters of the School of Music have already dedicated seats in the new concert hall. I encourage you to add your support to theirs by naming a seat as a lasting legacy to family and friends and to the future of music in Memphis. Contact Wesley LaRue Tomlinson at 901.678.3468 to reserve your place in Memphis music history.

The Scheidt Family Music Center, coming soon to a great University near you!

John Chiego, Director
Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music
Performing Makes Wilson a Better Teacher

Mary Wilson, associate professor of voice, is this year’s winner of the Dean’s Creative Achievement Award. This award recognizes professional accomplishment beyond the level routinely expected of college faculty and of such excellence that credit accrues to the department, college and University, as well as to the faculty member. Given her accomplishments and ongoing endeavors, it is no surprise she has been so honored.

Last season, Wilson made her debut with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, performing Bernstein’s Symphony No. 3, Kaddish. She had previously sung the work with Robert Moody (conductor of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra) in Maine. “It was amazing to stand in Boston Symphony Hall with the Tanglewood Chorus and the BSO behind me,” she said. This season, she will perform the Kaddish again with the Nashville Symphony, Giancarlo Guerrero, conductor and Lila Robbins, a New York-based actress.

Wilson celebrated New Year’s Eve by performing at an opera gala in San Francisco with the American Bach Soloists and countertenor Aryeh Nussbaum Cohen. Conductor Jeffrey Thomas thought Cohen and Wilson’s voices were a perfect pairing. According to Wilson, it was an entertaining evening, with “lots of fast baroque works … fireworks, coloratura stuff!”

Also this season, she will perform with the Rhode Island Philharmonic, the Delaware Symphony Boulder Philharmonic, the Santa Fe Symphony and the Colorado Symphony.

Wilson believes her performance career makes her a better teacher at the School of Music. She says, “Going out performing and auditioning allows me to give my students a real-world, real-time picture of the music business. It is important that students know what they are getting into.” Wilson feels a real sense of responsibility to represent the School wherever she goes. Most performances are combined with an opportunity to speak with or teach students. She is always working to get the word out that the UofM has a great vocal department. “There is such good teaching going on here. I am in awe of my colleagues and work hard to keep up with them.”
Lambuth Students Produce Awards Show

Last year, Dr. Jeremy Tubbs helped launch the annual Tennessee Music Awards. Tubbs is the director of music and entertainment at the University of Memphis, Lambuth campus. He teaches music history and theory, music technology, performance practices and music business. In the fall, the awards staged their second ceremony.

The event drew an audience of 400 music lovers. Tubbs and UofM Lambuth students produced the show. According to Tubbs, “The music and entertainment students learned to work as a team. Some got a chance to perform on stage, but everyone had a role and position to play. The students did all the production for the entire show, which included audio, lighting, back-lining, networking with performers and guests and promotion. They applied what they have been learning in class to this one event.”

Students were equally pleased with the experience and what they learned. Joseph Kyle said, “You have to exercise patience as well as trusting the people who are working with you to do an excellent job.” Another student, Riley Hawk, learned to, “Be on time, respect the people in charge and be ready for anything. Be prepared to adapt and react appropriately to whatever is thrown at you in the moment.”

The 30 awards given at the event included lifetime achievement awards for Carl Perkins and W.S. Holland, Johnny Cash’s drummer. Selection of this award’s recipients was social media driven and fan voted. Organizers received more than 75,000 nominations and votes.

Born in Tiptonville, Tenn., Perkins’s songs were recorded by artists (and friends) as influential as Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Jimi Hendrix and Johnny Cash, which further established his place in the history of popular music. Paul McCartney claimed, "If there were no Carl Perkins, there would be no Beatles."

W.S. “Fluke” Holland was born in Salttillo, Tenn. He notably played drums on the 1955 Sun Records recording of “Blue Suede Shoes” and performed on the “Million Dollar Quartet” session that featured Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash.
Partnership Reaps Benefits for Students

When the University of Memphis announced its partnership with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra in May 2016, one of the main goals was to collaborate in ways that benefited a multitude of constituencies. Nearly three years later, the relationship is yielding benefits for School of Music students, the University and the greater Mid-South community.

Within the symphony itself, the School of Music is making its mark. Elise Blatchford, assistant professor of flute, is a regular substitute musician. “The orchestra knows me well and Bob Moody asked me to step in as interim principal flute for the 2018-19 season,” she says. In addition, the rest of the flute section is comprised of School of Music students and alumnae. Two alumnae, Delara Hashemi (MM ’16) and Kelly Herrmann (MM ’18) are playing full time. Shannon Moore, a current DMA flute student, will occasionally play as a substitute, too. “That’s quite a coup for our school and a great benefit for our students here,” says Blatchford.

Kaleb Collins, bass, is another current student currently performing with the symphony. “The symphony was in need of a substitute bassist in the area, so I collected some standard orchestra audition excerpts to play for Robert Moody and the principal and assistant principal bassists, Scott Best and Chris Butler. They gave me some great advice on my playing and allowed me to join as a substitute,” Collins says.

For Collins, performing with the MSO is like a dream come true. “It is such an incredible honor to share the stage with so many talented musicians,” he says. Collins praises the powerful, singular sound of the bass section and says it keeps him totally absorbed and inspired. “A main goal in my life is to become a full-time member of a professional orchestra, so getting a taste of it now keeps my hopes high and is an excellent reminder for me to stay focused.”

The Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music was very fortunate to present a violin masterclass through its partnership with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra featuring guest soloist, Tai Murray. Murray worked with School of Music students Daniel Parker, Mitchell Cloutier and Kailee McGillis, giving them invaluable comments about their repertoire.

In addition to our students, School of Music faculty are making a big impact with the symphony. Marcin Arendt, violin, was their guest artist in September, and Kimberly Patterson, cello, will perform with them in March. Arendt performed Chris Brubeck’s Interplay for Three Violins and Orchestra alongside Murray (the featured soloist who also played the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto) and Barrie Cooper, the concertmaster of the MSO, at their season opening weekend concerts.

This spring, Kimberly Patterson will perform the David Ott Double Cello Concerto with Ruth Valente Burgess, principal cellist of the MSO. The Ott Concerto was commissioned in early 1990’s by cellists in the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington DC. As an added bonus, the concert will be performed in the School’s Harris Concert Hall. Continuing to have an active performance career allows our faculty to bring new experiences and insights to their students.
Peter Colin Jr. Returns to Music

A career that started at the School of Music has taken Peter Colin Jr. (BM '09) from high school choirs and bands to the law and back to music again. While at the School, he studied trombone with associate professor John Mueller and says that he taught him both music and pragmatism. Through Mueller’s connections, Colin got a job playing with Gary Beard at Theater Memphis for six seasons. He also studied conducting with Albert Nguyen and Nick Holland, who “Generously gave me time to fail in front of their ensembles. I made fewer mistakes with my own students because of those lessons,” he says.

The most important thing he learned at the School was the value of versatility. By participating in numerous ensembles, embracing technology and taking an internship in a finance-related area, Colin gained a diverse skillset that has served him well.

After graduation, Colin became the choir director and assistant band director at Munford High School for five years. During his tenure there, choir enrollment tripled and the advanced choir sang in Carnegie Hall. The marching band won the USBands National Championship and the Memphis Bandmasters Championship. He reflects, “I was very fortunate to teach at a time when my students were willing to tackle big things.”

Colin began to wonder if he could undertake challenges outside what was a relative comfort zone for him. He realized his existing skills and knowledge from teaching and playing music would have value in the law. He enrolled at Northeastern University in Boston and graduated in 2017. Colin summered with Jackson, Shields, Yaiser & Holt in Memphis, working in their education and employment practice areas. Colin also interned with the Office of the New York Attorney General's Investor Protection Bureau and was a law clerk for the legal department at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

Eventually, Colin took a position with Thomson Reuters in their legal area. He currently goes to other law firms to provide consulting and to give classes on topics like GDPR, artificial intelligence and emerging technology trends like blockchain and cryptocurrencies. He says, “As a musician, you know how to read music and play your horn. You just apply that to the gig, the repertoire, the genre at hand. Similarly, as a lawyer, you learn how to analyze law and create compelling arguments. You then apply that knowledge set to the practice area at hand. I never took a technology law class in school, but here I am.”

After working as a clerk at Jazz at Lincoln Center and after interviewing at Reuters, a former coworker passed along that Jazz was hiring an assistant band director in their Bronx campus at Lehman College. Colin applied and was hired. Jazz at Lincoln Center has an entire education department, offering classes and programs for all ages from the very young to adults. Among these programs is their Middle School Jazz Academy. This is a weekly tuition-free program for NYC area middle school kids to learn how to play jazz. Every Saturday during the school year, students meet for five hours of instruction, separate from their included lessons. The day starts with warm-ups and group fundamentals training, followed by 60-90 minutes of jazz language.

In discussing his plans for the future, Colin says he will keep practicing law, teaching jazz, playing around the city and judging marching band competitions. He always assumed he would jump from Reuters to the traditional law firm environment in New York or in Tennessee. However, technology is changing how legal services are rendered, and that has an impact on how law firms are operating. When it is time for him to move on from Thomson Reuters, his plan is to look for firm opportunities while staying versatile and open. He also plans to get tickets for Penny Hardaway’s first Final Four appearance as Tigers coach, “because we all know that's happening.”
PIANO FESTIVAL HITS THE RIGHT NOTES

The Memphis International Piano Festival and Competition (MIPFC) celebrated its third year in October. The primary goals of the event were to engage with the community, to enhance the reputation of the School of Music piano program, to inspire young pianists and to identify students for recruitment.

In addition to 65 competitors age 6-32, the MIPFC hosted three guest artists plus the piano faculty at the School, Dr. Cathal Breslin and Dr. Artina McCain. Drawing from around the world, guests included Kiu Tung Poon from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Ana Orduz from the Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia, and David Berry of Eastern Mennonite University. The three were colleagues of the School’s faculty with distinguished careers. “We wanted people of international stature who could perform and also serve as judges for the competition. We were looking for a good balance,” says Breslin.

For the competitions, the entrants were of an extremely high quality, even from the youngest ages. Over the years, college entrants have included students from Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Juilliard, the Manhattan School of Music and Indiana University. The students were attracted by the chance to compete, a mini-vacation in Memphis, the opportunity to experience other pianists and to make friends. There were cash prizes, provided by Circle Music, in every age group.

One of the hallmarks of the festival are the Extravaganza Concerts presented on two nights. The performances featured all five of the professional pianists and were designed with lighthearted fun in mind. The concerts traditionally feature several works written for two pianos or for multiple players on a single instrument. Pianists do not often have a chance for this type of performance because it requires two high-quality pianos.

Plans are to stage the festival and competition next year, with the possibility of expanding it. The 65 competitors meant day-long competition hearings that left room for little else, including lectures and masterclasses. School of Music faculty is considering making it a three-day event for 2019.
STRING FESTIVAL BROADENS STUDENTS’ HORIZONS

This fall, the School of Music produced the second annual Honor Strings Festival. The event was designed to introduce the School to the strings community in Memphis and throughout the state. According to Kimberly Patterson, assistant professor of cello and co-director of the event with Marcin Arendt, “We wanted to give high school students who were serious about their music the chance to broaden their horizons, provide extra opportunities and more education.”

In addition to Patterson, the faculty included Arendt, violin; Tim Shiu, violin; Lenny Schranze, viola; John Chiego, bass; and UofM Symphony Orchestra conductor Harvey Felder.

Students enrolled in the festival via a nomination process, recommended by their school or private teachers. This gave the faculty assurance that the participants were already performing at a high level and that they were interested in going even further. This year 90 young musicians were nominated and 75 participated in the festival.

The event began with a performance by the UMSO in Harris Concert Hall. The theme for the evening was American music. The program included familiar composers like Bernstein as well as new music composers. Patterson, Arendt and Felder commissioned a special work by Mark Nowakoski for the concert.

The following day, the strings faculty led the students in sectionals and masterclasses, making sure each received personal attention. The sessions gave the musicians the fundamentals of their instruments, such as concepts and techniques.

On Saturday, the students enjoyed a banquet dinner and were treated to concert tickets from the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. The MSO’s concert, titled Cirque de la Symphonie, featured aerialists, acrobats and jugglers. In addition, Amro Music gave each student free rosin and cleaning cloths.

Throughout the festival, Felder led the student orchestra in rehearsals for a final concert. Patterson declared the concert “fantastic.” The program spanned different genres and periods from Baroque to the Blues to Stravinsky.

According to the faculty, the main thing the students took away from the festival was a better understanding of the inclusivity of music – that together they could create more than they ever could alone. Some participants from last year have since enrolled at the UofM.

Looking back, Patterson says, “We’ve started something really great and need to see it grow. It can be bigger and even better. We owe it to this community to provide something for kids interested in studying music.”
Molly Wilkens-Reed (BM double major in Viola Performance and Music Education '16 - from UofM and MM '18, Viola Performance/Pedagogy from Peabody) has accepted a job with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University as director of the Virginia Tech String Project and Music Elective Instructor. Wilkens-Reed studied with Lenny Schranze.

Susan Owen-Leinert has been awarded the Pearl Wales Professorship for the next three years. Janet Page was the original recipient of this award, which is carried for three years by a faculty member of the School of Music.

The Delta Beta Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota is joining forces with the Memphis Alumnae Chapter to bring musical knowledge to the Raleigh branch of the Memphis Public Library system. The Alumnae Chapter is continuing its award-winning service project from last academic year, and on Nov. 3 the UofM Collegiate Chapter provided the “instrument petting zoo” portion of the program that introduces kids to the orchestra and how it works.

Marcus King (MM ’10) sang the role of Don Giovanni in Mozart’s opera with New York Lyric Opera in February at the Opera America National Opera Center.

Current University of Memphis Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music student Andrew Crutcher won a Silver Award in the Rock and Pop category of the Student Recording Competition at this year’s Audio Engineering Society (AES) 145th International Convention in New York. Crutcher, who is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in the School’s music industry division, received a bundle of digital audio plug-ins from AES sponsors for his recording of The Space Between by music industry alumni Aaron James.