April 28, 2020

For over one hundred years, students have come to the University of Memphis to study music. The generations have seen wonders and war, triumph and tragedy. You, the alumni, donors, audiences and friends of the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music, have lived through these events with us. Your dedicated involvement with the School of Music gives us strength and we want to stay in touch with you during the extraordinary times we are now facing.

In recent weeks, our students and faculty have committed themselves to the continued pursuit of learning, performing and contributing to the arts and we have created an environment that makes this possible. To ensure the safety individuals and the community, the University made the decision to move to remote learning. Both students and faculty have embraced the change with online classes, lessons, masterclasses and even live streaming recitals.

Using Facebook, YouTube and other social media formats, our community is staying in touch by sharing their experience. Take a look at how Professor Sam Shoup is instructing his class in jazz arranging, or see the way students are experiencing a masterclass. Our students are sharing their art and speaking out about the School of Music as Jorge Andrés Ossa did in his video post. You will want to read about how the School and our partner Circle Music delivered pianos to students who didn’t have one at home. Our newest faculty member, Dr. Jonathan Tsay, is continuing to make music with others across the globe. In this recent video you can see him collaborating with musicians in Dallas and Hong Kong. We also want to share the story, reported by WMC-TV, of our alumni Kevin Carpenter, who created a virtual choir of Memphis area middle and high school students.

The circumstances of America’s current health crisis change daily but one thing we know for certain. The community of Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music will continue to bring the gift of music throughout the Mid-South and beyond. We believe music is an indispensable part of life and so we continue to learn, perform and give back to our world. These times have brought out the best of our students and faculty and we are full of pride in their determination.

Thank you for being a part of music-making at the School of Music. Your support and encouragement make our efforts possible. We wish you good health and look forward to seeing you again soon.

Dr. Kevin Sanders
Director of the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music.