

Newsletter


December 2023



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

A Message From the Department Head

Greystone Singers



Welcome to our fall 2023 newsletter! Our department has been bustling with activity this fall in exciting and inspiring ways. Our faculty, students and sessionals have been busy with their teaching, learning and with an assortment of scholarly and artistic pursuits. Having read through the content of this newsletter (to help me prepare my opening remarks), I am struck by the commitment and determination that is constantly demonstrated by so many members of our department. The

people within our department have worked so very hard at their passions as they seek to create new knowledge and new art music. I am once again struck by how connected we are to our community, and vice versa when I witness first hand all the connections between our departmental activities and what goes on in our local, regional, and national music and music education communities.

I will close with a heartfelt thanks to all those in our department, college and university for doing their part so that we, the University of Saskatchewan, can *Be What The World Needs*.

Prof. Dean McNeill

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS


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Fall Convocation



Prof. Jennifer Lang with Matthew Praksas (left) and Stacey Mortenson-Spokes (right) at Fall Convocation



Congratulations to our Department of Music Fall 2023 graduating class!

Bachelor of Music Honours (Music Education)

Chelsey White

Master of Music (Music Education)

Stacey Mortenson-Spokes

Master of Music (Performance: Choral Conducting)

Matthew Praksas

Student Spotlight



Samuel Dmyterko (he/him) was recently accepted into the Master of Music/Performance: Orchestral Artistry Program at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, UK. The program is delivered alongside the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) to train and develop the future generation of orchestral performers. This has been Samuel's biggest accomplishment as a musician, and he attributes his success to the faculty, sessional lecturers, and students within the Department of Music. Each and every one of them were

all huge supporters in his musical journey and would like to thank all of them for their kindness, encouragement, and support. Samuel cannot wait to embark on this new chapter of his life both personally and professionally.



Hanna Hashi was awarded first place in the Brass Performance category (22 years & under) at the Canada West Performing Arts Festival in Edmonton this past July. Hanna was also the recipient of an Undergraduate Summer Research Assistantship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council to work with Dr. Amanda Lalonde. Part of her work included designing her own research project, which focused on the music of twentieth-century African-American composer Julia Perry.



USask Music at the Saskatchewan Music Conference

Faculty and students of the Department of Music were active participants at SMC, held in Regina in October. The University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina Jazz Ensembles collaborated to present a performance several works, including *Middle of Somewhere* by Paul Suchan, an alumnus of the department and current sessional lecturer. The piece commemorates the passing of well-known music educator Steve Mealy, and the performance featured one of his former students, Dr. Vanessa Klassen, as the solo clarinetist. The group was conducted by Dean McNeill and University of Regina Dean of Media Art and Performance, Dr. David Dick.

Dr. Jennifer Lang was featured in a panel discussion titled Choral Curriculum Renewal.

Three undergraduate music students presented research posters that underwent a peer-review process. Daly Haas presented "The Show Must Go On: How Injury Prevention and Health Promotion Can Change the State of Playing-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders for Post-Secondary Musicians"; Hanna Hashi presented "Rediscovering Julia Perry's Compositions for Wind Instrumentation"; and Andrea Johnson presented "Intergenerational Music Participation: a Multifaceted Contributor to the Wellbeing of Aging Populations."



Andrea Johnson



Daly Haas



Hanna Hashi

Sessional Showcase

Darrell Bueckert spent a full day in the anechoic chamber in the engineering building recording the bell plates he made. He will be analyzing the waveforms to determine the effects of strike-points and beater-characteristics on the sound produced. He will be presenting his findings at the Canadian Percussion Network conference "The Space Between" at McGill University in January 2024.



Stacey Mortenson-Spokes won the Canadian Music Educators' Association essay competition for her article "Jazz and the Gender Gap," which was published in *Canadian Music Educator* 26, no. 1 (2023). Ms. Mortenson-Spokes is not only a sessional lecturer in the Department of Music, but also a recent graduate of the department's Master of Music Education program.



Alumni News



Kendra Harder (B.Mus, 2018) was awarded the Canadian Art Song Project (CASP) 2023 Chung-Wai Chow and John Wright Art Song Mentorship Program. Through this mentorship program, Kendra will be working with Canadian composer, Cecilia Livingston, on a collection of art songs for contralto and piano entitled *Newly Out*. These songs are about Kendra's own experience on being a newly out queer woman. They are set to be premiered in the Spring 2024.

Beyond composing, Kendra is also working on creating an online resource called the Feminist Open Access Library. The goal of this library is to create and supply resources free of charge to music educators for use in their band programs with the ultimate goal of diversifying the music curriculum. Supported by the Canada Council for the Arts, Kendra is commissioning five composers to arrange music by historically marginalized composers for elementary and high school wind band. These arrangements will create the starting base for this library. The library is planned to be launched in 2024.

Faculty Focus

Welcome to Dr. Mark Tse!



Dr. Mark Tse joined the music department for a three-year term as Assistant Professor of Instrumental Music Education this past summer. He conducts the University's Symphony Orchestra and teaches courses on conducting, instrumental music teaching in secondary schools, musicianship, and guitar pedagogy.

Dr. Tse holds a DMA in Wind Ensemble Conducting from the University of Washington. Prior to his graduate studies, he taught instrumental high school music for eleven years in his home city of Toronto.

Before coming to Saskatoon, Dr. Tse taught at the Suffolk County Community College, which is part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system.

Dr. Glen Gillis received a nomination from the 2023 Western Canadian Music Awards in the Instrumental Artist of the Year category for his latest SaxSpectrum 3 Double Album, New Music for Alto and Soprano Saxophone (MSR Classics). This nomination was the 2nd he received from this organization; the first came in 2015 for SaxSpectrum 2. Dr. Gillis was in attendance for the conference and ceremonies last October in Kelowna, BC.

In late July and early August, Dr. Glen Gillis was invited to be on a panel of adjudicators for The Federation of Canadian Music Festivals (virtual). Over a 10-day period, Dr. Gillis adjudicated all the Woodwind Artist Stream entries, provided a three-hour masterclass for the woodwind participants, and was part of the finalist adjudication panel for all Artist Stream categories.



Dr. Jennifer Lang developed and facilitated the intergenerational choral program called Timeless Voices that unites seniors in a long-term care facility with high school students. Dr. Lang gave a presentation about this project at the Rural Dementia Action Research Online Summit in November.

Faculty Focus

Dr. Amanda Lalonde was awarded three grants from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) that will support research on understudied women musicians. Along with a team of student research assistants, Dr. Lalonde is beginning new projects on Juliette Dillon, a nineteenth-century French keyboardist, composer, and music critic who was known for giving fully improvised concerts and founding two music journals; and Julie Baroni-Cavalcabò, a composer and pianist whose work was admired by Robert Schumann. The grants also allowed her to develop her work on the virtuoso pianist and composer Delphine von Schauroth and to supervise undergraduate research assistant Hanna Hashi in her project on Julia Perry this past summer.



Prof. Dean McNeill composed and took part in a performance of *Inventio Fanfare* at an event hosted by Vice President Research Baljit Singh celebrating Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work in Convocation Hall this September (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GX3T8lqa3dM>). In November, Prof. McNeill performed with Paul Suchan at the Saskatchewan Legislative Building in Regina at the unveiling of the official portrait of former University of Saskatchewan Chancellor and Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan Thomas Molloy, who passed away in 2019.

Prof. Kathleen Solose, piano faculty, was invited to the jury of the 5th “Laszlo Spezzaferri” International Music Prize in Verona, Italy in May as well as to the jury of the national Hnatyshyn Foundation Developing Artist Grant competition. In July, Prof. Solose taught a week of Master Classes at the Victoria Conservatory Piano Intensive and a Master Class at the Dio Piano School in Vancouver. As Artistic Director of the Elixir Chamber Ensemble, she again received a SKArts grant for Elixir’s 2023-24 season in Saskatoon. More info on the upcoming Elixir concerts can be found at <http://www.elixirensemble.com>.



Ensemble Events

In October, the **Wind Orchestra**, **Greystone Singers**, and **Jazz Ensemble** collaborated to produce the Play it Forward concert.

The University of Saskatchewan Wind Orchestra embarked on a Fall Tour from October 19-21. The ensemble performed school concerts in Kindersley, Calgary and Canmore. The group also performed at the University of Saskatchewan Hub in downtown Calgary as part of an event that introduced the new Dean of College of Arts and Science, Dr. Brooke Milne, to a local audience of alumni and donors. The event space at the Winter Garden in downtown Calgary was a unique and impressive performance venue - the group hopes it can return for other performances in the future.

On November 24 the USWO performed their semester-end concert at Castle Theatre, with a theme of "Connections." The concert included a guest performance by the USask Wind Quintet, made up of undergraduate music majors, as well as guest conductor Britni Shingoose, who is currently enrolled in the Master of Music program in Conducting. Repertoire included works by Alfred Reed, Charles Ives, Richard Hayward, J.J. Gagnier, Kenley Kristofferson and others. The next USWO concert will be held on March 15 at Centennial Collegiate, and the theme will be "Northern Reflections" - a concert featuring exclusively Canadian repertoire.



Sanjana Brijlall with the Jazz Ensemble at the Play It Forward concert



University of Saskatchewan
Concert Band 2023 - 2024

The **U of S Concert Band**, now in its 62nd season, presented its *Reflecting Back & Visioning Forward* concert on December 1st. The ensemble performed a variety of traditional and new repertoire that included two 2023 works, one by Paul Suchan and one by Glen Gillis. The program featured an Indigenous work by Andrew Balfour called *Vision Chant*. The concert was also led by guest conductor and new Department of Music faculty member Dr. Mark Tse.



The University of Saskatchewan Music Theatre Ensemble had a busy fall semester. Under the direction of Kerry Agnew, the group took on many new styles of opera that culminated in a final performance showcasing over 300 years of operatic duets, trios, and ensembles. Next semester, they are excited to tackle two short musicals in addition to a collection of ensemble numbers from Musicals of the Golden Age to Contemporary.

Ensemble Events



The Symphony Orchestra performed on Wednesday, December 6th with their new conductor, Dr. Mark Tse. Dr. Véronique Mathieu was featured as a soloist on Morricone's *Love Theme* from "Cinema Paradiso." The ensemble almost doubled in size within the semester from 15 to 27 members and is likely to take on a few new players next semester.



The Greystone Singers had a busy fall season. In addition to their ensemble concerts, on September 26th, a number of singers opened the ceremony for the University of Saskatchewan's naming of the Canadian Centre for Rural and Agricultural Health. (pictured top left)

The Greystone Singers, University Chorus, and Aurora Voce (Greystone Singer Alumni choir) were invited guests at the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra's Moon installation at St. John's Cathedral. For this event of September 20th, they performed a number of "Moon" inspired songs to a sold-out audience. (pictured middle left)



The University of Saskatchewan Jazz Ensemble (pictured bottom left) had another busy and productive Fall term presenting concerts at the Bassment (November 17), in Quance Theatre (December 2) and jointly, with the Greystone Singers and the UofS Wind Orchestra (performing their annual *Play It Forward* term start up concert). It was a treat to include these concerts guest conductor Dr. Mark Tse, guest saxophonist Aaron Salkeld, the Marion Graham Jazz Ensemble under the director of Sarah Suchan and the Saskatoon Youth Jazz Orchestra conducted by Nick Fanner. The Winter 2024 term for the UofS Jazz Ensemble will include a performance at the Broadway Theatre's *Winteruption* festival (January 28) performing alongside the SJO, Stone Frigate Big Band and the Footnotes Big Band. UofS Jazz Ensemble students will be getting some real-world commercial experience performing an annual big band dance at the Manhattan Ballroom on February 3. This ensemble's Winter 2024 term end concert will feature award winning trombonist [Alastair Kay](#).



Amati Concert Series

The Amati String Instruments are showcased in a concert series featuring exciting guest artists. Two concerts took place this fall: *The Voice of the Cello*, featuring Stéphane Tétreault (cello) and Sandra Murray (piano) and *In Perfect Harmony*, featuring the Penderecki String Quartet.

There are two upcoming concerts in 2024:

- Echoes of the Baroque, featuring cellist André Micheletti & friends on February 18th at 3:00pm
- Rawlins Piano Trio, featuring Ioana Galu, violin; Sonja Kraus, cello; and Susan Keith Gray, piano on April 21st at 3:00pm

Additional information and tickets are available here: <https://leadership.usask.ca/unit/amati.php#202324AmatiConcertSeries>

The series has been curated by Dr. Véronique Mathieu (D.Mus), associate professor of Violin and the David L. Kaplan Chair in Music, a position made possible by a \$2-million donation from USask alumni Xiaoping (Bob) Xu (MA'92, LLB'17) and Ling Chen (MA'90).



Fine Arts Research Lecture Series



The FARLS season this fall featured three varied and compelling presentations. Darren Miller presented on his artistic work, concurrently featured at the Remai Modern, in "A 3427.5-Hour-Long String Quartet: Why, How, and Why Again?" Meagan Milatz gave a thorough and compelling lecture recital titled "The Keys to Translation: From Fortepiano to Modern Piano." Sofia Mycyk blended historical knowledge and performance experience in the lecture-recital "An Inquiry into Ukrainian Classical Music."

There will be two additional presentations in the new year. On Friday, January 12th at 12:30 p.m., Shah Sadikov will present "A.I. the Artist," and on Thursday, February 1st at 7:30 p.m., Hussein Janmohamed will present "Music Making and Muslim Belonging in Canada."

All FARLS events are free and open to the public and take place in Quance Theatre. Further information can be found here: <https://artsandscience.usask.ca/music/news/farls.php#20232024>.

Connecting with the Community



The North Saskatchewan Wind Symphony, under the direction of Dr. Glen Gillis, presented their 18th summer concert *Spirit of the Earth* on August 27th. The repertoire included a variety of styles and representation, while highlighting Canadian and Saskatchewan composers: Andrew Balfour, Elizabeth Raum, Cait Nishimura, Colleen Ostoforoff, Paul Suchan, and Glen Gillis. The concert also highlighted guest conductors Shaun Bzdel (St. Joseph High School Music Director), Paul Suchan (Department of Music Sessional), and our newly appointed Department of Music faculty member, Dr. Mark Tse.



The uSing uSask Choral Festival, organised by Dr. Jennifer Lang, hosted 11 school and community choirs in October. This annual event welcomed over 500 singers from across Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and Yorkton, who benefitted from performances, clinics, and concert celebrations with invited clinical Dr. Rachel Rensink-Hoff.



The High School Select Jazz Program welcomed forty-five students this November. This program offers an opportunity for some of our province's most promising high school-age jazz talent to work with outstanding instructors in an intensive and hands-on educational environment culminating in a performance at Quance Theatre. The program featured session by the following musicians and educators: Dean McNeill, Dr. Mark Tse, Paul Suchan, Graham Pritchard, Emmett Fortosky, Chris Wallace, Tiess McKenzie and Nick Fanner.

UNIFEST 2023. On November 6 and 7 the Department of Music hosted UNIFEST 2023 - an opportunity for students and music educators to participate in a development festival setting early in the school year. After a four-year hiatus, the festival welcomed 7 music educators and 400 students from schools in Saskatoon and Lloydminster. Our guest facilitator was Dr. Tom Davoren from Benedictine College in Kansas. Along with local facilitators Dr. Mark Tse, Dr. Glen Gillis, Dr. Darrin Oehlerking and Mr. Nick Fanner, bands performed and received workshops on their pieces. Students also received an instruments-specific masterclass. Special thanks to the Saskatchewan Band

In a **Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra** concert in November, Dr. Gillis was a part of a 6-piece saxophone ensemble that was featured, collaborating with Dr. Tim McAllister, professor of saxophone from the University of Michigan. Soloist Dr. McAllister performed a new Canadian composition, Vincent Ho's *Whimsical Concerto of Fanciful Birds*.

Connecting with the Community



The Saskatoon Jazz Orchestra, under the direction of Dean McNeill, have had a busy season. In July, they collaborated with the Foot Notes Big Band, comprised of USask Jazz Ensemble alumni, to perform at the SaskTel Jazz Festival. At this concert, the SJO was given the jazz festival's Special Recognition Award. In the [concert and lecture](#) "Math + Jazz: Sounds from a Quantum Future," which took place in September, the Hyperbolic Band (featuring members of the SJO as well as other musicians including Dr. Glen Gillis) debuted new music by Canadian composer Jeff Presslaff, based on the work of USask quantum science researcher Dr. Steven Rayan. In October, the SJO collaborated with vocalist Dee Daniels and Aurora Voce, a choir featuring Greystone Singers alumni and conducted by Dr. Jennifer Lang to present a [concert](#) of Duke Ellington's sacred music. This event was supported by Gail Appel, whose generous funding brought Dee Daniels to USask as the [2023 Appel Speaker](#).

Audition Dates

Interested in becoming a music student? We'd love to hear you make music! Our upcoming audition dates are:

- February 3, 2024 (Early Bird Scholarship Date)
- March 9, 2024
- April 6, 2024

More information about the audition process can be found here: <https://artsandscience.usask.ca/music/undergraduate/audition.php#Information>.

Department of Music Events

From ensemble showcases and student recitals to scholarly lectures and guest artist concerts, there is always something going on at the Department of Music!

A full listing of our events can be found here:

<https://artsandscience.usask.ca/music/news/events.php>.