

# DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE



## Congratulations to the Department of Music Spring 2024 Graduating Class!

SARAH ANDERSON  
MASON BURROWS  
CELESTINO DE PEDRO  
SAMUEL DMYTERKO  
TRINITY FUSICK  
LAUREN HOPE  
ANDREA JOHNSON  
MORGAN LAYTON  
KYLEN RIOUX  
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PIPER VAN BEEK



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## A Message from the Department Head:

BY DEAN MCNEILL

The past four academic years have been filled with many highlights and with significant challenges. As I conclude my 9th and final year as Department Head I'm struck by how far we have come. I would like to take this opportunity to say that it has been a privilege to serve the musical community on and off our campus in this headship role.

I've always thought that ours is an exciting, busy and bustling department doing important work in community and on our campus. I am certain this will remain so moving forward for many years to come and I look forward to what comes next for all in our department. I'd like to take this Spring 2024 Dept. of Music (DoM) newsletter opportunity to share with the reader a few thoughts and reflections of mine. To do this I thought that it might work best to explore a few related themes

### THE PLACE:

Award-winning sessional instructor Nick Fanner once said to me 'If you always do what you've already done, you'll always get what you've already got.'... With a lot of excitement and related planning July 1, 2024 marks the launch of the USASK School for the Arts within which all fine arts faculty, students, sessionals, degrees, certificates, courses and facilities will be placed. Administration has assured us all that this new governance structure will benefit all three current fine arts departments in new and exciting ways and we as a music community look forward to exploring this new path together under one unit. All activities and all music degrees and certificates will remain intact moving forward.

This term we were able to significantly upgrade our 1038 and 1046 classrooms with new AV stations in an effort to help create more engaging seminar learning spaces (e.g. in service to our quickly expanding graduate programs in music).

I am also delighted to share with you the creation of two significant new student awards. We awarded for the first time this Spring the *Angela Heigham Gillis Memorial Scholarship*. For more about this scholarship and the life and legacy of Angela Heigham Gillis, please see [this link](#). Next Fall, all music students within the school can apply for the *Irene McEwan Travel Award for Music Students*. This award is designed to allow music students to attend special events such as conferences. These are significant awards made possible through the generosity of the Gillis and McEwan families. We are so very appreciative of the opportunities and experiences that these two new awards will allow for generations of students to come as these are new *annual* music awards.

### THE PEOPLE:

People are what makes this place work, important, and, worthwhile. There is a lot of news to cover within this topic this term in particular. *(continued on next page)*

"If you always  
do what you've  
already done,  
you'll always  
get what you've  
already got."

NICK FANNER



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>

We are excited to be welcoming to our faculty ranks tenure-track voice professor Dr. Betty Allison and term brass/jazz professor Dr. Kayla Solomon. We recently welcomed our new Music Office Coordinator Aiden McRorie Wilson and we welcome back next Fall our valued sessionals, including returning people such as our applied flute sessional instructor Allison Miller. We thank long time members of our community who are stepping way from sessional teaching after a lifetime of service, such as our wonderful Clarinet instructor Margaret Wilson, and, we congratulate Dr. Jennifer Lang on her Acting Vice Dean appointment undertaken this term; I'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank so very much all the long time and short-term sessional instructors who have given so very generously of their many talents and time in service to our students and department. Thank you all, for all that you have shared with us, and for all that you have done for us.

As well, our entire A&S fine arts faculty continues the search process to identify our inaugural Director of the USASK School for the Arts and we look forward to announcing and welcoming that person into our community when the time is right.

I'd like to thank all of our incredibly hardworking, talented and thoughtful (and thought filled!) music faculty for all that they have given and accomplished since the publishing of our Fall 2023 DoM newsletter. The faculty's ongoing and evolving teaching, administration and RSAW (i.e. Research Scholarly and Artistic Work) often galvanize and even serve to define and refine the 'personality' of a department like ours.

In particular I'd like to extend a very special thank you and congratulations on behalf of the entire department to our long serving Music Theorist and past Department Head Dr. Greg Marion, for his incredible 18 years of dedicated service to our department, college and university. Thank you, Dr. Marion for all that you have contributed and very best wishes on your retirement.

Congratulations as well to all the music students who worked so hard within our classroom courses, ensembles, applied lessons, and a special congratulations to the music students who did so well at the Saskatoon Music Festival this Spring.

With the passage of time also comes change and for many in our department, this has been a term of significant change and personal loss. A few of our students have lost close friends and immediate family, and we as a department lost very unexpectedly an outstanding teaching/mentor and friend through the passing of sessional instructor Angela Gillis. Our hearts and sympathetic thoughts continue to go out to Angela's family and indeed to all in our community who have experienced significant loss during this semester. Please remember that you do not need to walk these journeys alone.

### THE WORK:

Through reading this newsletter you will be struck I am certain by the many and varied accomplishments of our faculty, sessionals, students and alumni. Congratulations and thank you to all, on all that you have accomplished this term and, for all that you do on an off our campus.

Best of luck Greystone Singers & Dr. Lang on your trip to Carnegie Hall in NY this Spring and congratulations to all of our B.Mus., B.A. (Music) and Music Master's degree graduates who are convocating this Spring. Please(!), keep in touch and let us know where your musical journeys will take you next.

Thank you all again.  
Onwards!



Dean McNeill  
Head, Department of Music



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

**Samuel Dmyterko** (B.Mus. Individualized - pictured top right) was the recipient of the University of Saskatchewan Film Society Prize, the Arthur Collingwood Prize in Music, and the prestigious Haslam Medal at the Spring Convocation in 2024. He attributes all of his academic and professional success to the supportive and welcoming environment created by the faculty, sessional lecturers, and the student body found within the Department of Music. Samuel will be pursuing a Master of Music in Orchestral Instruments at McGill University in the Fall of 2024 and cannot wait to start this next chapter in his life. This year, Samuel had the opportunity to have two of his compositions premiered by University of Saskatchewan ensembles at their respective term-end concerts in 2024. The first was *Clover Creek*, which was dedicated to the U of S Wind Orchestra for playing such a pivotal role in Samuel's musical life. The Second was *Remember*, which was dedicated to the loving memory of Angela Gillis, wife of Department of Music faculty member Dr. Glen Gillis.

B. Mus. student **Rochelle Wright** (pictured middle right) was a member of the Royal Conservatory of Music 2023 Graduating Class, having completed an Associate Diploma in Piano Performance. Upon graduation, Rochelle was awarded a National Diploma Gold Medal for Music Theory. National Diploma Gold Medals are awarded annually to students who have earned the highest mark on their examination for their discipline across the country. Being awarded the National Diploma Gold Medal for Music Theory recognizes Rochelle as the highest achiever in Music Theory of all the 2023 ARCT Performance Graduates in Canada.

Jazz Certificate graduate **Jessi Lipoth** (she/they - pictured bottom right) is a queer, disabled woman with a knack for doing things differently. She took seven years to complete her Bachelor of Computer Engineering at the U of S – but is convocating this spring with great distinction and four published research papers to her name. During her degree, Jessi was a trombonist with the U of S Jazz Ensemble, which ultimately inspired her to make space for taking formal jazz classes. This past semester she completed the jazz capstone course, earning a Certificate in Jazz alongside her engineering degree. Jessi is fortunate to have been a recipient of the Best and Brightest scholarship, which has helped to fund her peculiar education journey.





## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT (CONTINUED):

M.Mus. Music Education student **David Ohene-Amoako** (pictured on the right) was voted president of the Graduate Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan. Congratulations, David!

Recent Bachelor of Music graduate **Andrea Johnson** is thrilled to have had the chance to earn the new certificate in Music and Wellbeing (and was the first student to do so). Completing the certificate has provided her with a valuable experience, which has further equipped both her research and work in this growing field.

**Dmitri Masich** (pictured below), a third-year performance major in percussion studying under Darrel Bueckert, was awarded first place in the Kinsmen Competition (instrumental division) in the Saskatoon Music Festival this May



...TOGETHER WE BUILD GSA  
VOTE ON THE 17TH -21ST APRIL, 2024

## SESSIONAL SHOWCASE:

In 2022 The Saskatoon Symphony orchestra, led by Mark Turner, commissioned sessional instructor Paul Suchan to arrange or re-imagine twelve jazz standards for chamber orchestra. These arrangements were first premiered by soprano Julie Nesrallah and conductor Jana Sailor in May 2022 and later recorded in studio in September 2022. A full-length album featuring the arrangements will be released in 2024.

## ALUMNI NEWS:

Building on the success of a Canada-wide remote recording project during the pandemic, sessional lecturer and alumnus **Paul Suchan** and alumnus **Silas Friesen** combined forces to create *Cloudburst*, an eclectic album for large jazz ensemble that was released January 13th, 2024 at the Bassment, with the Saskatoon Jazz Orchestra, led by Dean McNeill. The album is rooted in the big band tradition and influenced by the "though composed" tradition, alt-rock, and modern jazz.





## FACULTY FOCUS:

Dr. Glen Gillis and Dr. James Cunningham were featured performers at Florida Atlantic University's Record Label, Hoot/Wisdom Recordings 20th Anniversary Gala Concert, April 6, 2024, in Boca Raton.

Dr. Amanda Lalonde (pictured top right) presented new research on the nineteenth-century composer, pianist, and music critic Juliette Dillon at the International Nineteenth-Century Studies Conference and at the MusCan conference. Her article "Delphine von Schauroth, Corinna-Sister" was published in *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* this spring.

Dr. Jennifer Lang (pictured bottom right) has been serving as the Acting Vice-Dean Academic for the College of Arts & Science this term, however, she has been very active leading the Greystone Singers in all of their events, including performing at Carnegie Hall on June 1. She has also spent considerable travelling to adjudicate at numerous music festivals including: the Vancouver Kiwanis Festival; Edmonton Choral and Speech Arts Festival; Cantando Whistler Music Festival, Moose Jaw Band and Choral Festival; Medicine Hat Kiwanis Festival. Dr. Lang has been active with the research projects exploring Newcomer Youth Engagement Music programs and Intergenerational Choral programs organizing a Research Intersections event on the importance of fine arts in health care as a co-lead of the University's Health and Wellness Signature Area, all of which earned her the University's prestigious Publicly Engaged Scholarship Team Award.

Professor Dean McNeill conducted the Alberta Honour Jazz Ensemble and the Saskatchewan Honour Jazz Ensemble, gave masterclasses and/or performances at Brandon University, the Yardbird Suite (i.e. Jazz Works music festival), Moose Jaw Music Festival (with Regina Jazz Orchestra), and he performed lead trumpet within the Edmonton Jazz Orchestra (co performance with Edmonton Symphony Orchestra) and the Calgary-based Musicconnect Chamber Orchestra (featuring vocalist Dee Daniels) during the Winter semester. In his capacity as Artistic Director of the Saskatoon Jazz Orchestra (SJO) Dean led the SJO through the last 3 performances in their 10th anniversary season. In order, these SJO's Broadway Theatre performances included (1) *Big Band Theory 2.0*, (2) *A Kolomyika Fantasy* and (3) *Ode to a Tenor Titan: A Tribute to Micheal Brecker*. Although all SJO concerts have their own uniqueness to them, the *Kolomyika Fantasy* concert in particular was a very special event in that it saw the premier of 8 new original works and it served as a fundraiser for the Ukrainian Museum of Canada. This concert also featured as soloist USASK. B.Mus. grad Kateryna Khartova (voice), and the premier of a significant work by B.Mus. grad/sessional/Ph.D student Paul Suchan entitled *A Kerchief*.





## FACULTY FOCUS (CONTINUED):

To listen to one selection from this concert entitled *Kolomyika Fantasy* (composed by award winning USASK B.Mus. graduate Silas Freisen) visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7gSFOYfXfg>. The SJO's entire *Kolomyika Fantasy* concert can be viewed through a partnership agreement with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra (SSO) via the SSO's Concert Stream platform found at <https://concertstream.tv/>. All related streaming revenue benefits the Ukrainian Museum of Canada. (SJO pictured below)

Dr. Mark Tse was invited to adjudicate at the Vancouver Kiwanis Music Festival from April 8th - 10th, and the Battleford Kiwanis Music Festival from April 15th - 19th. He had the pleasure of working with bands from Valley Manor School and Osler Elementary School under the direction of Marcy Racicot on May 16th and 17th. He was also asked to fill in for an adjudicator who could not participate in the Alberta Band Association's Provincial Festival of Bands. This event took place in Red Deer, Alberta from May 21st - 24th. Many elementary, middle school, and high school bands performed beautifully, including Saskatchewan's Centennial Collegiate's Grade 10 Concert Band under the direction of Christa MacBride and Lloydminster's Holy Rosary School Grade 8 Concert Band under the direction of Aaron Sikora, the later which Dr. Tse had the pleasure to workshop. On May 29th he worked with bands from St. Augustine School in Humboldt under the direction of Sharon Bates in the Shekinah Retreat Centre.

Dr. Tse had the pleasure of hosting an interview of Past President of the CBDNA Jerry Junkin, Director of Bands at the University of Texas at Austin via Zoom for an Oral History Project. The project is designed to document the founding years as well as the collective wisdom gleaned from the experiences of band's greatest titans.

This summer, Dr. Tse will be back in his hometown of Toronto. While there he will be conducting a workshop for Keswick High School. He will also be going to South Korea from July 16th - 20th to attend the World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles conference. This will be Dr. Tse's first time in South Korea.





## CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY:

Department of Music students **Samuel Boyd, Samuel Dmyterko, Daly Haas, Hanna Hashi, Keegan Isaac, and Jonathan Tait** (pictured bottom left) were asked to perform at the University of Saskatchewan CASES International Energy Forum in May of 2024. They performed Paul Suchan's *Peacemaker* for brass sextet.

The 21st U of S High School Select Wind Orchestra (pictured bottom right) was held on February 2 – 4, 2024. The ensemble consisted of 112 students representing 24 high schools from around the province. The event culminated with a 1:30 concert in Quance Theatre to a full house, **co-conducted by Drs. Mark Tse and Glen Gillis.**

To help celebrate the 40th anniversary of the **Saskatchewan Band Association**, the SBA commissioned University of Saskatchewan sessional instructor **Paul Suchan** to participate in a special project involving students from across the province. The project was conceived and initiated by **Suzanne Gorman**. The first step consisted of a "Honor Composition" course, where music teachers from across the province had the opportunity to nominate students with an interest or experience in composing for band. Mr. Suchan met with these composers (including Department of Music student **Margarette Perolino**) weekly from January to April. During these sessions, the young composers suggested ideas for themes, melodies, characters, chord progressions, orchestration and form. Based on the suggestions, Mr. Suchan composed the piece *Follow the First Wind* (with versions for beginner band, intermediate band, advanced band, and jazz band).

When **Dr. Mark Tse** took on the role of social media coordinator in January, he created the goal of increasing the department's Instagram followers from 670 to 1000, TikTok followers from 0 to 200, and Facebook followers from 782 to 1000. Two of the three goals have been surpassed, largely due to the viral videos submitted by Social Media Assistant **Celestino de Pedro** and the Association of Student Musicians. Special credit goes to **Piper Van Beek** and **Eli Mortson**, whose recital video continues to draw in hundreds of views every day. Drawing from his experience as Social Media Coordinator for the Department of Music, Dr. Tse has been vigorously creating his own content on Instagram and TikTok. His videos are 1-2-minute clips that contain useful advice and perspectives for music teachers and conductors. He will be posting one video a day. You can find him on both sites as **@marktseconductor**.

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS



*University of Saskatchewan High School Select Wind Orchestra 2024*

Follow the **USASK**  
**Music Department**  
on social media:

Instagram: @usask\_music 

TikTok: usaskmusic 

Facebook: usaskmusic 



## CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY (CONTINUED):

**Educational Student Teaching (EDST).** In May, our music education undergraduate students had the opportunity to continue to discover and develop their teaching skills in the real world with real students in real classrooms. **Dr. Glen Gillis and Dr. Tse** interviewed the first-year students after their classroom observations and all students were more motivated than ever to get into the classrooms and teach. Drs. Gillis and Tse then observed the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th year students teach classroom lessons and offered detailed feedback afterwards. The future of music education through the USask Music Department is looking bright!

**The U of S Student Saxophone Quartet** performed concerts at two local high schools, Evan Hardy Collegiate (April 11) and Martensville High School (April 12).

From June 13th - 15th the 2024 Strata Festival of New Music will feature the music of six University of Saskatchewan music students and alumni: **Brett Graham, Kendra Harder, and Spencer Kripps, Jude Leschyshyn, Rory Lynch, and Rochelle Wright.** Rochelle and Jude were commissioned specifically to compose music for the lowest acoustic instruments in the province with the premiere of their music happening on June 15th in the concert "Rumble in the Knox." The festival will also feature current students, sessional, and faculty as performers. [stratafest.com](http://stratafest.com)

## ENSEMBLE EVENTS:

**The U of S Concert Band** under the direction of **Dr. Glen Gillis** presented its *Taking Flight* concert on March 26th in Quance Theatre. The ensemble performed a variety of repertoire that included works by Lindsay Stetner and Yukiko Nishimura, and a 2024 *Space Travel Suite* premiere by Glen Gillis. The program featured 4th-year clarinetist, Celestino de Pedro III as soloist performing Paul Suchan's *Middle of Somewhere*. The concert also highlighted guest conductor Dr. Mark Tse, our new Department of Music faculty member.



University of Saskatchewan  
Concert Band 2023 - 2024

**The Symphony Orchestra**, led by **Professor Shah Sadikov and Dr. Mark Tse**, performed an exciting concert in Quance Theatre on Wednesday, April 27th. Pieces included Shostakovich's *Waltz No. 2*, Richter's *on the nature of daylight* (featured in the movie *Arrival*), Anderson's *The Typewriter* (featuring Dr. Véronique Mathieu as both soloist on typewriter and conductor) and finished with a rousing performance of Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings*. Audience members described the concert as one of the most exciting they had attended.



**The Music Theatre Ensemble** ended their year with an exciting night of short musical theatre shows and songs. These five students portrayed different characters in a variety of eras, singing in styles from classical, to Broadway, to jazz. Thanks to our lively audiences both this semester and last semester who came to see our classical show in November! We are looking forward to growing our ensemble in the fall - watch for audition information around the department and consider joining this ensemble!





## ENSEMBLE EVENTS CONTINUED:

The Greystone Singers had a busy term full of performances and fundraisers, culminating in its debut at Carnegie Hall in New York City on June 1, performing Elaine Hagenberg's *Illuminare*, where we took the stage by storm and received thunderous applause and a standing ovation. For a sample of the performance, visit [this link!](#)

The new term began with a January weekend retreat at Queen's House followed by a Conducting Symposium, which featured guest conductors to work with Dr. Adam Con and Dr. Jennifer Lang. *Illuminare* was then performed alongside the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra (SSO) at St. John's Cathedral on February 4th and featured a Projection Project Quantum Light show with Dr. Steven Rayan and Anna Elliott and Nur showcasing the work and voice of Dr. Hussein Janmohammed.

Later that month, we worked with Greystone alumni 'Aurora Voce' to host a wonderful 'Renaissance Feaste' at Shekinah Retreat Centre and we also had a partnership rehearsal with Korora and Scott Leithead. The term concluded with our concert at Knox United Church, a massive choral SSO experience of Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, and a performance at the Research Intersections event hosted by the Vice-President Research, Dr. Baljit Singh, on the importance of the fine arts in health care. Following our triumphant Carnegie debut, Greystones will sing at the June 11 Presidential campaign event at Merlis Belsher Place.



The Winter 2024 semester was filled with excitement and activity for the U of S Jazz Ensemble. This ensemble performed alongside the Saskatoon Jazz Orchestra, Stone Frigate Big Band and the Footnotes Big Band at the Broadway Theatre's Winterruption Festival capping off the week of activities in their *Big Band Theory 2.0* concert. This concert was followed by the jazz ensemble's annual *Masquerade Dance* at the Manhattan Ballroom concluding the term with their final concert in Quance Theatre featuring the Juno-award-winning Canadian trombonist [Alastair Kay](#). An archival version of this performance can be viewed [here](#). This final concert included big band and combo selections, classic repertoire and new repertoire created by Mr. Kay, sessional Paul Suchan and ensemble member Keegan Isaac. A copy of the term end concert program can be viewed [here!](#)





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SEE YOU  
IN THE  
FALL!