



SCHOOL OF
MUSIC

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS | THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

TEACHING COMPOSITION

A Symposium on
Music Composition Pedagogy

Sept. 28-30, 2023

David P. Gardner Hall

WELCOME

Welcome to the second annual meeting of “Teaching Composition: A Symposium on Music Composition Pedagogy!” This conference was started by Linda Dusman and Jessica Rudman in 2021 to address a significant gap in music scholarship. In other areas of music academia—for example, performance or theory—there are pedagogy journals, conferences, courses, and degree programs. In contrast, there are very few resources or programs relating to the teaching of music composition and almost none dealing with teaching undergraduate or graduate students. Teaching Composition was created to help remedy this lack of resources, discussion, and training.

The conference was first held in Oct. 2022 at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. The University of Utah is pleased to host the second meeting, and we are looking forward to more events in the future.

This year, approximately 30 composers and teachers will share their research, techniques, and philosophies in a series of papers and workshops selected to foster conversation on composition pedagogy. We also have two invited speakers, Patricia Plude and Alan Belkin. You’ll find abstracts and bios for all presentations and workshops in this program book.

Thank you for joining us and for contributing to the growing dialogue about music composition pedagogy!

Linda Dusman and Jessica Rudman, directors

THANKS

The 2023 Teaching Composition Symposium is made possible through a generous Dee Grant Award supported by the Thomas D. Dee II Endowment.

We are also grateful for the support of Dr. Kimberly Council, Director of the School of Music; Dr. Miguel Chuaqui, Head of Composition; Dr. Michael Cottle; School of Music staff Osvaldo Rodriguez, Michaela Funtanilla, Natalie Herrick, and Michelle Coulam Addison; and student assistant, Kai Bowen — all of whom have shown enormous dedication to the success of the conference.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Jessica Rudman, chair

Lynnsey Lambrecht

Devin Maxwell

Joseph Sowa

SOCIAL MEDIA

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Humanities Commons - Teaching Music Composition

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: PATRICIA PLUDE



With more than forty years of teaching experience in the fields of music pedagogy, musicianship, improvisation, aural skills, music theory, and piano, Patricia Plude is dedicated to promoting and inspiring creativity and innovation in education and helping people of all ages – and in all walks of life – discover and manifest a personal creative voice through improvisation and the arts.

Pat is the Director of Avivo, a consortium of Teaching Artists dedicated to fostering creativity and artistry in music education. She has also served as Visiting Faculty for the Master of Music Teaching Program at Oberlin Conservatory (2009-2017), and the Master of Arts in Teaching Program of the Longy School of Music of Bard College (2013). As a Lecturer in Music for Santa Clara University (2000-2012), Pat designed and implemented a unique, interactive two-year aural skills curriculum, which employs improvisation and composition at every level. In the non-profit arts world, Pat served as the Executive Director of The Walden School from 1997-2003 and the Director of The Walden School Teacher Training Institute from 2004-2012.

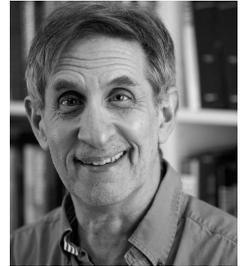
In keeping with her passion for helping people become more fully and authentically themselves through the arts, Pat is a certified leader of InterPlay®, a philosophy and practice of improvisation designed to unlock the wisdom of our bodies and in our communities. She is a former member of the dynamic San Francisco Bay Area performing group, Wing It!, an ensemble dedicated to

mounting fully improvised performances combining dance, storytelling, and music.

In 2020 Patricia received her Doctor of Ministry in Creation Spirituality, which maintains that every one of us carries within us the capacity to be creative, visionary, and an agent for change, and that it is our responsibility to cultivate these capacities for the benefit of earth and all its creatures. Pat currently serves as the Minister of Music, Arts & Formation for First Mennonite Church of San Francisco, where she accompanies people of all ages in the path of developing their creative capacity in service of our changing world.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: ALAN BELKIN

Dr. Alan Belkin fell in love with music when he started to play the piano at age 7. His grandfather paid to have an old upright piano moved up from the basement to their apartment, which proved to be a determining event in his life.



Apart from studying piano all through childhood and adolescence, Belkin studied harmony and counterpoint with Prof. Marvin Duchow for several years in private lessons. This kind and extremely generous man was not only a profound musician, but a mentor and a friend when he most needed one.

Belkin gave his piano debut concert at age 18. At around the age of 21 a friend took him to try out a new (at that time) tracker organ. It was love at first sight, and he began studying the organ, first with Dom André Laberge, and later with Bernard Lagacé. Although he plays less now, he became good enough on the organ to be a finalist in the Dublin International Organ Competition and a semi-finalist in the Toulouse Bach Competition.

Belkin obtained a B.A. from Concordia University and a Masters Degree from McGill University, but his real education in composition took place when he was accepted to the Juilliard School. Not being an American citizen, he could not work in the U.S., so he commuted for three years every week to New York to obtain his doctorate while working full-time in Montreal. At Juilliard, he studied with David Diamond and for a few months with Elliott Carter.

Belkin has taught at all four of Montreal's universities. From 1982 to 2016, he was a full-time faculty member at the Université de Montréal. He is proud to have been awarded a prize as Best Associate Professor in the university in 1994. Now he is retired, and teaches privately and online.

Belkin's music has been played in Canada, the United States, Mexico, Europe, Australia, and elsewhere. For a full list of works and recordings, please see <https://alanbelkinmusic.com>.

SCHEDULE

DGH = David Gardner Hall
LGCH = Libby Gardner Hall

THC = Thompson Chamber Hall
* indicates a remote presentation

There will be an approximately 15-minute break between sessions.

Thursday, Sept. 28

**10:45 am — U of U Composition Student Masterclass
with Linda Dusman (DGH 324)**

1:30 pm — Check in (outside LGCH)

2 pm — Welcome and Opening Remarks (LGCH)

2:15 pm — Session 1: Playback Objects (LGCH)

Digital Transformation in Composition Pedagogy
— David MacDonald & Kevin Wilt

Composing the Body: Teaching Collaboration and the Art of “Writing For” —
Nicholas Tran

3:30 pm — Session 2: Where to Begin (LGCH)

Heteronyms and Music Composition Pedagogy — Christopher Newman

Composition as a Process of Elaboration — Stephen Mitton*

A Comprehensive-Immersive Approach to Beginning Composition

Instruction: A 25th-Year Report from the University of North Texas
— Joseph Klein*

5:15 pm — Session 3: University of Utah Faculty (LGCH)

Favorite Music Tech Assignments — Mike Cottle

Fostering Self-Care in Composition Students — Devin Maxwell

Purpose as the Guiding Force in Composers' Development — Jessica Rudman

Friday, Sept. 29

8:30 am — Check in (outside LGCH)

9:00 am — Keynote Speech by Patricia Plude (LGCH)

Journey of the Nautilus: the Art of Transformation

10:45 am — Session 4: Collaboration (LGCH)

The Art of Creative Collaboration — John Cope*

Music and Words — Jean Ahn*

Building Community Through Group Composition — Jennifer Jolley

12:15 pm — LUNCH

1:15 pm — Session 5: Legacy (LGCH)

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants — Joseph Sowa

Inside and Outside the Box — Miguel Chuaqui

The Problem with Cultural Legacy — Joseph Vasinda

3:00 pm — Session 6: Teaching Composition to Non-Majors (LGCH)

A Graduate Assistant's Guide to Teaching Composition — Tanner Harrod*

Teaching Away from the 5-line Staff — Jasmine Thomasian*

Designing a Composition Course for Non-Majors: A Practical Approach —
Alex Burtzos

4:45 pm — Keynote Workshop led by Patricia Plude (TCH)
Spontaneous Art Song

Saturday, Sept. 30

8:30 am — Check in (outside DGH 270)

9:00 am — Session 7: Composition in Music Education (DGH 270)

Holistic Music Education — Sam Merciers

Composition Pedagogy for K-12 Students — Gregory Klug

Teaching Music Composition in the Private Studio — John Syzygy

10:45 am — Session 8: Popular Musics (DGH 270)

A Student's Perspective on University Jazz Arranging Pedagogy — Peter James

An Approach to Teaching Song Pop Form for Composition Instructors —
Frank Nawrot

Teaching Song-Writing in Prison — Owen Belcher and Yotam Haber

12:15 pm — LUNCH

1:15 pm — Keynote Speech by Alan Belkin* (DGH 270)

General Principles of Musical Composition (Style Neutral)

3:00 pm — Workshop (DGH 270)

Grading and UNgrading in the Postsecondary Composition Studio:
Toward a More Transparent and Comprehensive Framework for
Summative Assessment [or “How Do I Get an A?”] — Kevin Morse

4:15 pm — Lightning Talks (DGH 270)

An Educator’s Road Map: Composing with Band Students — Travis Maslen*

The Missing Piece of Music Education: Why We Need to Teach Music

Notation — Alexander Liebermann*

Expanding the Composer’s Toolkit: Towards Pedagogical Frameworks for
Genre and Sound Design — Brooklyn Ludlow

5:15 pm — Session 9: School’s Out for Summer (DGH 270)

A Framework for Describing Compositional Technique — Jimmy Levi

Summer Etudes for Student Composers — Linda Dusman

Engaging and Promoting Student Composition Growth During School Breaks
— Lynnsey Lambrecht

6:45 pm — Closing Remarks (DGH 270)

ABSTRACTS

THURSDAY, SEPT. 28

Session 1: Playback Options (LGCH)

Digital Transformation in Composition Pedagogy — David MacDonald & Kevin Wilt

Many music composition teachers today did not have easy access to music notation software when they were beginning musicians, or if they did, their teachers almost certainly did not when they were beginners. In part because these early notation applications had very rudimentary (or no) playback capacity, we (the authors) were taught both implicitly and explicitly that “real” composers of acoustic music wrote with pencil and paper, often without even a piano, and that if computers entered the process at all, it was only as a means of typesetting an already-completed composition. Our students, on the other hand, do not hold this same set of assumptions. In many cases, they arrive in our university courses with extensive experience writing music in free and low-cost notation applications such as MuseScore, StaffPad, and Noteflight, or DAWs like GarageBand, Logic Pro, or Ableton Live, with minimal instruction in music composition or even music theory. They have often done so without any acoustic performances, relying exclusively on playback from notation software to hear their music. To these students, the software playback is the composition.

To ignore the drawbacks of these programs is pedagogically neglectful, but we should also acknowledge the drawbacks of composing with paper and pencil. At the same time, to dismiss composing with this software outright is disrespectful of both the students and the

tools they are most comfortable with. And more importantly, it ignores the many ways in which software can be a tool, rather than a crutch as we were often taught.

In this paper, we identify some of the issues associated with software-first composition while also respecting its benefits. We then discuss strategies for working with students who expect computer software to be an integral part of their compositional process, rather than an afterthought. This digital transformation has the goal of respecting students' experiences and expectations while also giving them the intellectual tools to use software in a way that enhances, rather than limits, their creative expression.

Composing the Body: Teaching Collaboration and the Art of “Writing For” — Nicholas Tran

Performers are not “expensive MIDI,” yet so many students treat performers like nothing more than resonating objects. In surveying orchestration manuals, music theory textbooks, and music history textbooks, very little is written about how gestures and figures feel on the body of the performer. What would it mean to radically reorient composition pedagogy to treat the performer's body as a locus of information rather than an expensive playback object?

Written as autotheory, this paper explores collaborative techniques that map music unto the body. I start with interviews with performers, asking why performers are drawn to their particular make and model of their instruments—why did one horn player choose a Geyer wrap over a Kruspe wrap? A Schilke mouthpiece over a Bach mouthpiece? A Steinway over a Bosendorfer? By understanding the in/macies between the performer and their instrument, I begin to theorize about where the composer fits into this

relationship. How can composers write music that is for a particular performer-instrument relationship?

This paper is rooted in performance studies (Le Guin 2005, Leong 2020, Cook 2014) and will contain examples of pieces written for, between, and against the body. I extrapolate from queer theories (Sedgwick 1990, Gorman-Murray 2010, Muñoz 2009, Ahmed 2006) to move toward a relation that treats performers not as a monolith (i.e. “all cellists”) but as an equally powered collaborator.

Session 2: Where to Begin (LGCH)

Heteronyms and Music Composition Pedagogy — Christopher Newman

Numerous factors interfere with the beginning composer’s progress towards individual expression. The pressure to win awards, to fit in with their peers, and to sell an artistic product all combine to create a pressure for authenticity on the young composer, often long before they’ve achieved technical proficiency. One result of these pressures is the student’s infatuation with just one style of music.

This paper proposes a method of beginning model composition in which the student attempts to compose the music of another. Instead of asking “what should I write?,” the student would reframe the question as “what would they write?” The other in question could be a fictional character that the student already identifies with, an invented heteronym of the student (found in the work of Fernando Pessoa), or a persona that one could adopt (such as David Bowie’s Ziggy Stardust). Composing with heteronyms may alleviate the burden of authenticity placed upon the student, opening up a freer environment for depiction, experimentation, and crazy.

Composition as a Process of Elaboration — Stephen Mitton

One of the greatest challenges young and developing composers face in beginning a new piece is the seemingly infinite possibilities that lie before them. Rather than let students grapple alone with frustration in this important initial step, composition instructors can help students sharpen their focus on what they intend to say and then suggest reliable options for elaborating upon their ideas.

A thorough analysis of a well-crafted composition with students quickly reveals the processes of elaboration by which composers spin small musical ideas into larger works. When we view the compositional process through this lens, we can mitigate choice paralysis at the beginning of a project by breaking it down into three simple steps:

- 1.) Choosing an object of elaboration (e.g., a melody, an image, or a line of poetry)
- 2.) Determining the desired results of the elaboration (e.g., structural logic/unity, narrative coherence, or social commentary)
- 3.) Selecting processes for elaboration (e.g., motivic expansion, adherence to a form, or a signal processing technique)

In this presentation, I will provide analyses of pieces from a variety of genres, then demonstrate how each represents an elaborative framework available to composers. For example, a composer writing an orchestra piece in response to a painting might assign specific timbres or orchestral colors to certain subjects (timbral elaboration: Thomas Adès, *Totentanz*). A composer of electronic music might comment on an existing composition by using a tape delay (spatial elaboration: Pauline Oliveros, *Bye Bye Butterfly*). Breaking down the early writing stages using this model offers students manageable choices

when they begin, inspiring confidence in their own ideas while helping them to discover the value of analysis in the creative process.

A Comprehensive-Immersive Approach to Beginning Composition

Instruction: A 25th-Year Report from the University of North Texas — Joseph Klein

Teaching composition to the beginning student poses a number of formidable challenges for the composition instructor. At the root of these challenges is the comprehensive nature of composition itself. Students of composition must certainly have developed at least a moderate level of technical facility on an instrument or voice prior to embarking on their first compositional efforts. An understanding of music theory is inextricably linked to composition. A solid knowledge of music literature is also very important in providing a context to the composer's work. An understanding of the acoustical properties and function of the various instruments within an ensemble—orchestration—is crucial for students to move beyond their own instrument/voice. Technology is increasingly important, including the engraving of musical scores and the production of recorded music in a variety of genres.

Each of these facets of composition as a discipline is important to the young composer's technical and artistic development. But where does the beginner begin? Rather than spending years of preparation in the abstract before setting pen to paper (or cursor to screen), composition is very much a trial-and-error endeavor. In order for students to truly learn their craft, there will be much stumbling and fumbling along the way. During this initiation period, the young composer should be exposed to as many ideas as possible through score analysis, literature survey, and source readings, as well as philosophy, sociology, and aesthetics.

The model for composition instruction developed at the University of North Texas over the past two decades has proven incredibly effective in immersing the young composer in a rich, comprehensive creative environment, letting each student traverse a unique path to discovery. While it is important to address the wide variety of ways that composition skills and techniques may be applied—such as composing for media and various commercial music genres, as well as the more traditional concert music and jazz idioms—the program at UNT does not subscribe to a “trade school” approach to teaching composition; rather, it provides a solid foundation that incorporates historical, theoretical, aesthetic, and practical elements that may be applied to any number of composition-related activities.

Session 3: University of Utah Faculty (LGCH)

Fostering Self-Care in Composition Students — Devin Maxwell

Music degrees, usually due to the high level of quality work required to succeed coupled with a large number of credits required for completion, are potentially taxing on students, especially when it comes to self-care. While there has been more discussion in recent years about this topic, there is still a lot of work to be done as music educators in terms of developing best practices and techniques for helping students build skills and working processes that take into consideration a student’s well-being. This lightning talk and group brainstorming session will explore how to encourage and develop self-care in composition students.

Favorite Music Tech Assignments — Michael Cottle

Applications, concepts, outcomes, and examples of my and my students' favorite, and most effective, music tech assignments.

Purpose as the Guiding Force in Composers' Development — Jessica Rudman

Today's musical world is multi-stylistic, multicultural, and multidisciplinary—and there is a corresponding diversity of creative and professional paths a composer might take. Yet advice about portfolio- and CV-building is often based on the assumption that students will follow one particular professional path: that of academia. That path in turn prioritizes particular styles and approaches that may not be authentic to the composer's vision or beneficial for their desired career.

So, how should a composer decide which projects to undertake, which areas of study to focus on, and which professional experiences to seek out? And how should teachers guide students in making such decisions?

In this talk, I will share how I am refocusing my group composition classes and private lessons to allow a student's artistic vision and long-term goals to shape an intentional course of development. I will discuss ways to help students with goal-setting and finding their (always evolving) identity as an artist, as well as approaches to assignment creation and assessment.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 29

Keynote Talk by Patricia Plude (LGCH)

Journey of the Nautilus: The Art of Transformation

The exquisite, spiraled shell of the nautilus is created over a lifetime by an ancient mollusk called a cephalopod. A newly hatched nautilus will usually have just four chambers, with the tiny mollusk living in the largest, outermost chamber. As the mollusk matures, it moves its body forward and seals off the space it has outgrown, creating a new chamber in the spiral. Together, the vacated chambers form a sophisticated system that allows the creature to adjust its level of buoyancy as it moves in the depths of the sea.

Using the Nautilus’s evocative spiral of chambers as a metaphor for the creative journey, we will explore questions, such as “Why do we compose? Why do we teach the art of music? How do our art and our passion for teaching make a difference in the world?”

Through this interactive keynote address, we will explore practices and promises of the journey that will imbue our art and teaching with power to transform ourselves, our communities, and the world.

Session 4: Collaboration (LGCH)

The Art of Creative Collaboration — John Cope

For my presentation at the 2023 Teaching Composition Symposium, I will talk about the art of creative collaboration and how composers have collaborated with performers, other composers, and professionals outside the field of music. The goal of my presentation is to show how composers can find collaboration opportunities and evolve their writing. Collaboration is directly

linked with creativity, art, and individuality just like music composition. Encouraging composition students to collaborate with their peers will help them grow as composers and people.

I have created a set of four tiers of collaboration in music composition to help explain where composers can start. Tier 1 is a collaboration between a composer and someone in a music field outside of composition (i.e. performers), tier 2 is a collaboration between two composers, tier 3 is a collaboration between a composer and someone in the fine arts but outside of music (painting, dance, etc.), and tier 4 is a collaboration between a composer and someone outside the fine arts realm (robotics, politics, etc.). I will explain each of these tiers and show examples of composers collaborating in these various areas. Afterwards, I will explain some strategies for effective collaboration. Having a clear vision and goal, mutual respect from one another, and a detailed plan are just a few ways composers can employ strategies to increase effectiveness in a collaboration. Lastly, my presentation will end with a deep dive into how composers can find funding for collaborations. I will discuss university grant funding, grants from music affiliated organizations, third-party informational resources, and crowdfunding.

My hope is that the instructors and composers who come to my presentation become inspired to collaborate and encourage their colleagues or students to find ways to collaborate while writing their music.

Music and Words — Jean Ahn

We learn to become a composer through real-life experiences. Recently, I initiated a class project called "Music and Theater Collaboration". Students collaborated with actors from "Fundamentals of Acting" and worked in teams to compose music for short stories selected by the actors. In this presentation, I

would like to share the outcomes of this project and discuss the impact of multidisciplinary collaboration.

Building Community Through Group Composition — Jennifer Jolly

Compositional spaces often focus on the individual process rather than the community it can build. As a Fulbright Scholar teaching in the Faculty of Music Education at Helwan University in Egypt, I had the opportunity to create a composition workshop for collegiate music students that focused on creating a collaborative piece of music to be performed and showcased during a concert. Collaborating with colleagues Dr. Nahla Matta and Dr. Angi Adawy to translate into Egyptian Arabic, this case study breaks down the five sessions the students participated in. I will breakdown the process of working with students to design a melody using their mobile number, attaching rhythms to these created melodies, working together to create the order and instrumentation of their overall composition, my role throughout the process, and how they worked on practicing and performing this group composition.

This workshop not only built a community amongst the students involved but by making their piece open-source and downloadable in PDF and MuseScore files, the overall musical community can learn from and perform this music in our musical circles.

Educators change teaching methods to bring variety to classrooms, and performers may change routines to avoid falling into the same practice rut, so why can the same not be done for composition? As composers, educators, and scholars, we need to think of ways to continue exploring and expanding our craft, and building a collaborative community is one way to continue evolving our practice.

Session 5: Legacy (LGCH)

Standing on the Shoulders of Giants — Joseph Sowa

Student composers are regularly encouraged to study scores and recordings to develop their technique and artistry. This pedagogical tradition captures the spirit of Isaac Newton’s famous quote, “If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.” Score study is a key practice enabling composers to build on the accomplishments of their predecessors. While this practice inevitably introduces students to new repertoire, it brings three potential pitfalls.

First, because students typically learn analysis as part of the theory core, they often bring to their compositional score study tools and frameworks theorists designed for unrelated repertoires and non-creative academic objectives. As a result, students often mishear complexity and fail to notice both the underlying simplicity of intricate textures in many atonal pieces, as well as the intricacy of familiar-sounding textures in many tonal ones.

Second, in finding repertoire to study, students may struggle with academia’s implicit biases. On the more benign end, these biases reflect the inescapable nature of curation. Professors cannot assign endless listening lists. However, without careful consideration, the listening lists students receive may perpetuate systems of oppression. As a result, admonitions to study scores may limit students’ artistic horizons even while attempting to expand them.

Third, simple “exposure” to new works is rarely effective in showing students what to do with the techniques and artistic expression they contain. Although many students bring to their studies an intuitive sense for how to “steal like an artist,” students too often struggle to identify what specifically impresses them about a piece and to assimilate these characteristics into their artistic voice.

In this paper, I will suggest three ways to address these pitfalls through a mixture of practical score study tips and broader curricular ideas. First, I will show the parametric and segmentation analytical approaches I teach my students and how these tools are broadly applicable across styles. Second, I will discuss the collaborative listening list-generation process I use to give my students greater agency and validation in their listening choices. Third, I will show the process I use to help students identify personally meaningful and analytically salient questions and assimilate what they find into their music.

Teaching How to Compose “Inside and Outside the Box” — Miguel Chuaqui

Students usually come to composition wanting to make music that “sounds good,” based on music they like. Learning how to write music that sounds like other music gets students writing and it develops compositional technique, but ultimately it can be tantamount to composing “inside the box.” To understand what it means to develop a personal style, student composers need to experience examples that show composers doing something innovative with the traditional techniques, materials, and styles they knew, that is, composing “outside the box.”

Using examples from music by Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Ginastera, and Xenakis, this presentation will focus on compositions in which traditional techniques and materials were transformed into innovative music that did not fit into the traditional boxes (styles of music) prevalent at the time the pieces were composed. It will also focus on ways to encourage students to notice what is already unique in their own compositions and how they can develop this uniqueness further.

The Problem With Cultural Legacy — Joseph Vasinda

Time and attention are the two major resources that any composition teacher can use to communicate the importance of part of a compositional process. By not only explicitly discussing what practices we would like our students to engage with, but considering which practices we implicitly elevate in our pedagogy, we can more thoroughly teach practices vital to the compositional process. For instance, if a teacher takes thirty seconds out of a thirty-minute lesson to analyze their student's piece, they demonstrate that analysis is a minor component of composition. On the other hand, if a teacher spends ten minutes both reading through a student's reflection and encouraging them to elaborate on it, the student will begin to understand that reflection is a meaningful component of composition. Therefore, if we as teachers want students to build meaningful and productive compositional processes, then we should examine which practices we already emphasize through the ways in which we respond to students' works.

In this session, I will present findings from a recent ethnographic study with composition teachers across the U.S. Through the analysis of interview and observational data, it became apparent that the teachers both explicitly discussed various compositional processes and implicitly promoted specific processes by modeling them. Considering the contexts of these teachers' own educations and the ethos of the schools in which they taught, participants will develop an understanding of the legacy of practices passed down from these teachers. With this context, participants will further engage in an examination and discussion of examples of practices and the reasoning that led teachers to pursue these practices. Lastly, using a framework of theory-in-use, we will explore the typical difficulties of self-analysis so that participants leave the session with questions that they can ask themselves to critically examine their

explicit and implicit instruction and bring these two halves of their instruction into alignment with one another.

Session 6: Teaching Composition to Non-Majors (LGCH)

A Graduate Assistant's Guide to Teaching Composition — Tanner Harrod

Outside of the private studio, many composition instructors receive their first opportunities to teach via the graduate teaching assistantship. Incoming graduate assistants will naturally enter into their new assignments with various levels of comfort and expertise, depending on their prior experience before beginning their program. These teaching duties will often be balanced with “other duties as assigned,” creating a wide variety of work duties that give graduate students many different experiences by the end of their degree. Additionally, GTAs must balance their dual role within a music program—as both students and instructors. This dual identity can lead to certain challenges in the culture of a composition program, especially in group settings such as in composition studio meetings.

My paper discusses tools and techniques designed to create successful experiences for the graduate teaching assistant in composition. The majority of the paper will focus on teaching the novice, undergraduate composer, as GTAs will typically be assigned to teach either underclassmen or non-composition majors. Teaching concerns will include selecting appropriate projects for students to complete, developing strong writing habits, and engaging students with theoretical concepts that may be out-of-sync with the institution's theory curriculum. Other topics covered include mentoring applied students, teaching opportunities for GTAs outside of the applied lesson, and balancing the plethora of duties assigned to a composition GTA. Attention will also be

given to the GTA's role as both a teacher and a student, navigating the dual persona mentioned earlier.

Teaching Away From the Five Line Staff — Jasmine Thomasian

Five-line staff notation is frequently an assumed element of composition education at the undergraduate level. However, when teaching non-major composition courses—often including non-music majors, in addition to non-composition music majors—a reliance on 5-line staff notation creates learning gaps for students without this fluency. Fortunately, even within Western art music traditions, a variety of other notational systems are and have been employed, including graphic notation, text-based notation, tablature, audio scores, and no notation at all. Additionally, the proliferation of software-based music has called into question the necessity of 5-line staff fluency for the development of compositional craft.

In this presentation, I offer multiple methods that instructors of undergraduate composition courses can implement to support students' use of diverse notational systems, drawing on my own and colleagues' experiences teaching "Class Composition," a non-major composition course. I then detail two activities I have used to help students develop foundations for conceptualizing and thoughtfully implementing various notational systems. In the first activity, students seek examples of diverse music notation and use this peer-sourced corpus to create their own frameworks for differentiating between notational systems. In the second activity, adapted from a parametric graphing exercise I learned from Nathan Davis, I invite students to create their own notational systems for listening description and analysis that they can then apply to future compositions.

By supporting students in developing their own, personalized notational practices, composition instructors encourage students to think

critically and creatively about their methods of communicating musical ideas. From a Universal Design for Learning perspective, offering multiple means of artistic expression enables students with differing learning styles and backgrounds to more effectively demonstrate their compositional skill. Through exposure to (and practice with) a variety of notational systems, students develop unique, nuanced ways of listening, thinking about sound, and navigating the constraints of translating music into a medium that facilitates repeat performance.

Designing a Composition Course for Non-Majors: A Practical Approach — Alex Burtzos

One of the most challenging – and most common – assignments for composition faculty at the post-secondary level is teaching composition to non-majors. The difficulty of this endeavor can be partially explained by three broad considerations:

1. Disparity in skill and experience level. Students in non-major electives have wildly varying levels of previous experience. Some are likely to be very comfortable, having composed recreationally alongside their performance studies. Others will be complete beginners. Additionally, there is a great skill/experience gap between students and the instructor, which may potentially result in the use of overly technical terminology.

2. Potential stylistic limitation. The instructor must devise a way to teach students the technical fundamentals of composition without prescriptively imposing one specific style.

3. Technological hurdles. Students possess varying degrees of familiarity with different types of notation software, DAWs, and other tools. It

is all too easy for a non-major course to become focused on how to successfully use software and neglect to discuss the craft of composition itself.

Over the past six years, I have worked to refine a two-semester composition course for non- majors at the University of Central Florida that confronts and overcomes these challenges. To distill the design of the course into a few bullet points is impossible. But my approach can be partially represented as follows:

1. Focus on form first. An initial focus on form – and specifically building formal elements from small to large – allows students to successfully construct successively larger works without attempting to control their musical language.
2. Design assignments that create an environment for self-directed play. Assigning open-ended “challenges” allows students to be creative while encouraging them to work towards the limits of their individual ability.
3. Keep projects flexible and require collaboration. Requiring students to collaborate regularly with performers and oversee the rehearsal/performance of their music encourages them to learn from practical experience alongside their study in the classroom.

In this presentation, I describe the way I’ve arrived at the most current iteration of this course, describe the course schedule and layout, and show example assignments alongside representative student work.

Keynote Workshop led by Patricia Plude (TCH)

Spontaneous Art Song

In this interactive workshop, participants will engage in several improvisation forms developed in the InterPlay* community, and expanded upon by Pat during her many years teaching music improvisation to undergraduate music majors at Santa Clara University. Playing with our voices, text, our bodies, and our instruments, we will work our way incrementally to improvising short, “Spontaneous Art Songs” with one another. Participants should wear comfortable clothing that will allow gentle movement, bring their instruments (if other than piano), and come with a playful, adventurous spirit.

*Pat is a certified leader of InterPlay®, a philosophy and practice of improvisation designed to unlock the wisdom of our bodies and in our communities.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 30

Session 7: Composition in Music Education (LGCH)

Holistic Music Education — Sam Merciers

The proposed presentation aims to explore the transformative power of music composition in the classroom and its role in fostering creative agency among students. By integrating composition into secondary school music curriculum, educators can unlock potential in their students, enabling them to become active creators rather than merely curators reproducing art. This presentation will highlight the benefits of composition, emphasizing its ability

to combine all aspects of music theory in a practical and useful manner. Attendees will gain practical insights, strategies, and resources to implement composition-based pedagogy effectively. In today's ever-evolving educational landscape, it is essential to provide students with a comprehensive music education experience that goes beyond traditional performance-oriented approaches. Music composition holds immense potential for engaging students in active music-making and fostering their creative abilities. This presentation aims to explore the significance of composition as a pedagogical tool, emphasizing its inherent benefits for students of all ages and skill levels.

Composition Pedagogy for K-12 Students — Gregory Klug

Composition should not be the province of a select few. Like drawing, it can and should be a rewarding creative activity for many. The time to cultivate basic (if not advanced) composition skills is during youth. While young people may not find composition as natural as drawing or coloring, they can increase their level of comfort with composing when given the proper guidance. Music educators have the opportunity—and according to the National Standards for Music, the responsibility—to provide this guidance. As a public-school music teacher, I have developed a curriculum for students in grades four through twelve to practice composition. This approach includes the following:

Students are taught to hand-write music correctly. (Some schools may have the resources to conveniently teach students to use notation software, and this approach may be preferable to some). Students learn the elements of music construction: scales and arpeggios representing various keys. Depending on the grade level, students learn some or all of the major and minor keys, and complete exercises within teacher-provided parameters. The classroom environment provides the opportunity for student composition exercises to be

shared and heard in a group setting. The teacher shares some or all student melodies with the class (keeping the authors' identity anonymous or otherwise). Then melodies are performed—either by the teacher, or, ideally, by the class. Choir students will practice their sight-singing and/or solfège skills; band and orchestra students will practice sight reading, (and learn to read and/or transcribe music in the clefs of their peers). This approach tends to foster ensemble cohesion. It's also fun.

The benefits of these exercises are manifold. After studying the basic materials of construction—keys, meters, rhythmic patterns, text-setting (if applicable), etc.—students will be ready to study form: the period, sentence, and AABA forms. In band, orchestra, and choir, rehearsal often takes priority (and in general music classes, performance and history require due attention); thus it is more than sufficient to conclude composition studies once these forms are addressed.

Teaching Music Composition in a Private Studio — John Syzygy

Private music studio instructors play a crucial role in mentoring novice, intermediate, and pre-college composition students. However, many lack formal training in composition or composition pedagogy. Additionally, students at these particular ages and levels often demonstrate an interest in composing across diverse genres and styles. For instance, a classically trained instrumental instructor may encounter a student eager to compose songs, jazz pieces, electronic dance music (EDM), film scores, or other musical styles, without possessing the necessary guidance to nurture and cultivate the student's skills effectively.

Drawing on my own experience as a private piano and composition instructor, I aim to showcase an array of methodologies and techniques that

private studio teachers can use to foster creativity, encourage experimentation, and enhance compositional abilities of students, regardless of style or ability. The central focus of these methods revolves around two core concepts: gentle suggestions and parallel play.

Gentle suggestions encompass non-judgmental prompts that guide students in exploring their own ideas and developing their own compositional skill. While suggestions from instructors can be invaluable to students, it is essential to bear in mind that during the compositional process, such suggestions can impede creativity. This presentation explores a few reasons why this might be—bad timing; robbing students of creative autonomy; inadvertently teaching a student they cannot succeed without help—and, offers effective approaches to avoid hindering students' progress when offering guidance.

Parallel play is a term used to describe a stage of social development commonly observed in young children, when they engage in independent play alongside others without significant interaction. In the private studio, an instructor can “play” with the same compositional concepts as their student, as if they are a student. While the teacher models methods of creativity, inquisitiveness, research, and critical thinking, the student learns through observation and discovery.

This presentation illustrates strategies and techniques related to these two concepts by presenting specific examples derived from my own teaching. Using numerous excerpts from student compositions spanning various proficiency levels and stages of completion, I will offer practical methods and advice that private music instructors can use to help their students become better composers.

Session 8: Popular Music (LGCH)

A Student's Perspective on University Jazz Arranging Pedagogy — Peter James

The proliferation of jazz education in the U.S. has resulted in over sixty university jazz studies degree programs, almost all of which offering the common undergraduate "jazz arranging" course. The varying pedagogical approaches and non-standardization of subject material has resulted in vastly differing courses from one institution to the next. Ultimately, there is legitimate potential for disconnect between the current curriculum in place and the abilities and deficiencies of the modern jazz student. This proposal is a positional paper from the perspective of an experienced student of jazz composition, academically discussing future development of jazz arranging pedagogy as it relates to the method itself and the curriculum involved. The goal is twofold: first, to discuss a theory on jazz arranging pedagogy as the balance of five essential features: listening, score study, projects, feedback, and laboratory; second, to advance a detailed course outline serving as a basis for the curriculum of one possible stratification of the common undergraduate jazz arranging course which fully integrates the pedagogical theory discussed.

An Approach to Teaching Song Form for Composition Instructors — Frank Nawrot

Some may argue that due to the ubiquity of pop music, pedagogues need not spend as much time on the architecture of pop tracks as they would on concert music that a student may not have otherwise been exposed to. But because of the ways pop music penetrates most people's lives, there should be attention given to the construction of a pop song. Furthermore, the fact that one of the few normative components of a pop song is form allows us to

compare disparate styles. I offer an approach for composition instructors to teach their students how to wield contemporary pop song form that integrates recent scholarship in this field.

Adding a standardized form from pop music to a composer's set of creative tools will help universities embrace a student population whose love of music stems from their engagement with popular styles. This demonstration will build on the theory that formal techniques are paramount to the success of composition students learning in a post-modern framework that rejects any hegemonic musical meta-narrative.

My approach for teaching the norms of pop song form will have three activities/student learning outcomes in mind: 1) Students will be able to identify the constituent formal units of a contemporary pop song, 2) Students will be able to compose a pop song for voice and instrumental accompaniment, and 3) Students will be able to compose an instrumental concert work in a contemporary pop song form. These outcomes will be achieved through teaching Verse-Chorus form and its variations, melodic and harmonic norms for the various sections of a pop song, and the basic elements of pop song orchestration/production. Next, these skills will be applied to composing a thirty-two-measure brass quintet in Verse-Chorus form and a song in a popular style such as hip hop or country.

Teaching Song-writing in Prison — Owen Belcher and Yotam Haber

The last decade has seen an increased emphasis on inclusivity and community engagement in many higher education music programs, and particularly in music theory and composition. Recent approaches range from wholesale curricular revisions (Reid 2022, De Clerq 2019, College Music Society 2016), incorporation of public scholarship in theory pedagogy (Belcher and Grant 2019, Jenkins 2017), involvement of community groups in model

composition assignments (Bourne 2017) and the pairing of student composers with scholastic and community ensembles (Williams 2017). Though admirable, these initiatives exclude a significant demographic: the incarcerated. As a step towards redressing this problem, our presentation offers a case study of a songwriting program at the medium/maximum men’s wing of Lansing Correctional Facility (Lansing, KS) we began in Fall 2021.

After overviewing representative composition activities and listening to brief excerpts of original compositions by incarcerated participants, we conclude by speculating as to why the incarcerated are commonly ignored in otherwise robust higher education community engagement programs. We find that these reasons range from the practical (issues of transportation, security clearance, etc.) to the economic (in that the incarcerated are unlikely to either donate or apply to the university in the near future, and thus do not provide a financial benefit).

Keynote Speech by Alan Belkin* (DGH 270)

General Principles of Musical Composition (Style Neutral)

The musical world of today is more fragmented than it has ever been. Students may arrive wanting to write pop music, film music, so-called “classical” music, or video game music. Then they may meet teachers who introduce them to whatever variety of contemporary music they themselves identify with. And this can vary, enormously, from one teacher to another. So how can we teach composition so as to help all these people, without forcing them to write in one specific style, that they may not even like?

I have confronted this problem all through my career, and I think that the only way to succeed is to base what we teach on how human beings perceive music.

There is no known human culture that has no music, although of course the *kind* of music will vary, according to where and when it is coming from. However, since most normal humans respond to one kind of music or another, surely there must be some common principles that tie them all together. Without pretending to be an ethnomusicologist, or a specialist in the psychology of perception, I have still managed to point out some basic principles that can explain many things in music, in a way that does not depend on any specific style.

This is what led me to write my book *Musical Composition, Craft and Art*. In this book, although I do present the so-called “standard” musical forms—ternary, binary, variations, etc.—my emphasis is always on how, even in these familiar forms, the same psychological principles apply. To take an obvious example, sonata form requires contrast and development. Well, if we think about it, just about any music that is more than a minute or two in length will require some degree of contrast and development. The details can vary greatly, and I have a lot to say about them, but can one really imagine a large piece with no contrast, and no coherent idea or ideas that get worked out? Several of these basic principles will form the subject of my talk.

Workshop (DGH 270)

Grading (and UNgrading) in the Postsecondary Composition Studio: Toward a More Transparent and Comprehensive Framework for Summative Assessment [or “How Do I Get an A?”] — Kevin Morse

Composition teachers at the post-secondary level devote a great deal of their time and energy to providing and facilitating qualitative formative feedback. Formative feedback in lessons, seminars, or workshops serves a clear and intuitive purpose to both the composition teacher and student: to help the student develop and refine their work before it is finished. Once a student composition is completed and submitted, however, the teacher’s task of preparing a summative assessment and assigning a grade serves a different (and often less clear) purpose.

The scholarly literature on assessment in composition provides some helpful lenses through which to consider this often fraught process of summative assessment. Most of these approaches involve identifying and assessing some combination of craft and creativity, or “micro view” and “macro view” (Leung, Wan, and Lee 2009; Hickey 1999). Gregory Simon expands this dual framework to include other factors such as program-specific priorities, extra-musical intentions, and consideration of the student’s broader understanding (Simon 2015).

This session begins with a short paper in which I build upon the work of Simon and others, informed by my own teaching experience, to articulate a framework that includes the many factors and tools that might be considered by teachers for the summative assessment of compositions. I then discuss ways in which this customizable framework might be used to further increase transparency in grading, to reduce anxiety around assessment, and to increase the impact of summative assessments. The paper leads into an interactive

workshop which provides an opportunity for participants to respond, to ask questions, and to share their own strategies and experiences with grading and summative assessment. Together, we will undertake a guided case study exercise to assess a short sample composition assignment and to develop assignment instructions and a grading framework for it.

Lightning Talks (DGH 270)

An Educators Roadmap: Composing With Band Students — Travis Maslen

Composing for athletic bands, such as stadium (pep) and marching bands, can be overwhelming, especially if an educator wants to create something special and unique for their ensemble. Knowing how to create a composition for a band offers music instructors a path to success for themselves and their ensembles, although the educator may need more composing knowledge.

This educational project aims to provide music educators with a systematic methodology for designing a customized composition for a stadium or marching band ensemble as a group project with their students. Educators can guide students in organized discussions throughout the decision-making process that includes the components needed to compose for stadium or marching bands. This educational project aims to provide a systematic method of the many decisions emphasizing a specific ensemble's strengths while navigating their limitations. The primary goal of the educational project is to help music educators achieve customized band compositions independently or through guided class collaborative work that ultimately showcases the strength of the ensemble while establishing student ownership. The secondary goal is to allow students to make the decisions

required to create a composition for an athletic band. This project attempted to answer the following question, could an athletic band composition template be designed to help music educators create customized compositions with their students in a structured approach?

The Missing Piece of Music Education: Why We Need to Teach Music Notation — Alex Liebermann

Music notation serves as the language of music, and just as philosophers use language to communicate their ideas, composers rely on notation to convey their musical thoughts. However, despite its crucial role, music notation is often overlooked in music education, both at the pre-college and college levels. As a composer who has studied in various European and American institutions and an active composition teacher, I have observed that many composers do not fully utilize music notation correctly.

Although music notation is often deemed an essential skill for college-level composers in both European and American institutions, it is frequently neglected after being taught in the early years of music education. Consequently, composers must acquire this crucial skill through trial and error during performances, learning from performers, reading books on the subject, or relying on the suggestions of music notation software. This ad hoc approach can lead to suboptimal outcomes and can be frustrating, particularly when significant time is spent on a work, only to realize later on that much of the notation is incorrect. For instance, common issues include stemming notes in different time signatures and correctly using a legato bow (distinguishing between a legato bow and phrasing).

I have prepared a concise 10-minute talk for the Symposium, drawing from my personal experiences studying composition in various institutions and countries. My talk begins by illustrating how widespread the problem of weak

knowledge in music notation is. I will then explain how I became aware of this problem, both through my own mistakes and thanks to the guidance of a composition teacher who taught me how to correctly notate things.

My goal for this presentation is to emphasize the importance of music notation as an essential tool for the composer's craft and advocate for the inclusion of a dedicated music notation class in composition programs. I will highlight how such a class could be a valuable addition to composition programs, providing composers with the technical skills necessary to fully express their musical ideas.

Expanding the Composer's Toolkit: Towards Pedagogical Frameworks for Genre and Sound Design — Brooklyn Ludlow

Composers of the 21st century grapple with a broader scope of concepts than ever before, but the pedagogy hasn't kept pace. Modern skills like sound design are often treated as esoteric arts with few guiding principles or theories. This is in sharp contrast to the rigor afforded their more traditional counterparts like harmonic theory and orchestration. This lightning talk explores how nascent theories of genre and timbre could be incorporated into a more rigorous and complete compositional pedagogy.

Genre plays an integral and distinct role in modern music. Film and video game composers paint genres like colors on a canvas, weaving them into complex motivic structures and invoking them as culturally symbolic associations to create rich sound worlds. It's clear that modern composers must be able to engage holistically with a vast array of genres. By examining cultural semiotics and the aesthetic philosophy of Metamodern Polystylism, we can see a potential path towards a pedagogical framework of genre.

Timbre and sound design are equally vital components of modern composition practice. While the field of sound design has matured significantly over the past half-century, there are still few effective frameworks for teaching it in a musical context. Here, we can draw inspiration from the concept of "layering" as discussed by EDM producers. Similar to functional theories of harmony and voice leading, "layering" provides the basis for a functional theory of timbre. Each layer of sound serves a specific role—such as instrument, pad, atmosphere, FX, and so on—to drive the composition forward. Different layers interact based on their spectral characteristics, transients, and dynamics. By formalizing and generalizing this idea, we could establish a framework for students to combine disparate sounds into compelling compositions.

The talk will conclude with some brief reflections on skill inflation, the pedagogical treadmill, and the role of a composer in the era of Large Language Model AI.

Session 9: School's Out for Summer (DGH 270)

A Framework for Describing Compositional Technique — Jimmy Levi

Technical training is an important feature of composition curriculum, but it can be difficult to decide which techniques to focus on. This is complicated by community-wide concerns identified by Ian Power about marketability and experimentalism, which are flawed pedagogical frameworks for teaching technique. I propose a framework that categorizes compositional techniques based on their potential to expose students to new forms of divergent and convergent thinking, new ways to produce sound, and ultimately new ways of structuring their creative process.

Compositional technique has two components: a desired musical feature (e.g. an affect or structure) and a set of steps that the composer follows in order to achieve that feature. Technique is therefore a marriage of knowledge and/or skill with compositional process, and both are necessary to achieve technical success. I identify two kinds of compositional techniques: generative (pertaining to how material is produced) and transmittant (how the sounds are produced, or how to communicate with performers). This taxonomy and others reveal connections between different kinds of creative restrictions (or other approaches to creating composition assignments) and can help inform decisions about curricular structure, especially in terms of scaffolding.

This framework places technique at the ‘ground’ level of compositional thinking as described by Ian Power. As Joseph Sowa points out, individual techniques are musically meaningless; a complete compositional process constitutes a number of techniques applied simultaneously. This does not relieve teachers from teaching individual techniques, however: In the context of beginner composers, communication about the technical needs of closed forms is vital.

This summer I designed and ran an online summer course with this framework in mind. The content of the course draws from Lynnsey Lambrecht’s “Compose the Year” format as well as creative frameworks like Maud Hickey’s SCAMPER and Aaron Helgeson’s seven creative activities to introduce students to creative thinking and applying it to different elements of music. I outline my premise and approach to designing the course, its connection to my pedagogical thinking about technique, and on the project’s successes and setbacks.

Summer Etudes for Student Composers — Linda Dusman

Having taught composition in a liberal arts university for many years, I have noticed that, since the quarantine, many of my students respond differently to creative projects. Students suffer from increased levels of anxiety and stress, more mental health issues, and difficulties with time management. Increasingly, students seem preoccupied with the "right way" to compose. My younger students seem especially risk averse and seek answers from authorities rather than generating creative responses for themselves.

Under any circumstance finding a path to one's creative practice can be daunting. In the past, I motivated my students with discussions of disciplined time for composing alongside promises of performances. In the past two years, this has proved less effective. Understanding my students' new reality requires a new pedagogical approach, so this summer I am initiating the "Summer Etudes" project.

Designed to encourage imaginative practice during a time free of other academic stressors, I will send each of six students bi-weekly compositional "writing prompts" akin to those used by our colleagues in the literary arts. I designed each "etude" to provide a loose structure for a creative response no longer than 60". Students may choose to respond with traditional notation, graphic notation, or music generated in a DAW. My hope is that during the summer, when academic demands from an array of liberal arts courses are not present, that the students will respond with more ease and creativity. I also hope that one of the etudes will become the germinal idea for a more fully developed composition in the fall. This removes the stress of generating the initial idea for a new work while experiencing the pressures of a new academic year. My paper for the Composition Pedagogy Conference will present the etudes; profiles of the students and examples of their responses; and an analysis of the efficacy of this approach.

Engaging and Promoting Student Composition Growth During School Breaks — Lynnsey Lambrecht

If the art of composition is a lifelong journey, then student learning is ongoing and does not abide to a collection of weeks outlined by an academic calendar. This concept of continuous learning of composition has been true of my experience as both a pupil and instructor of composition. Bradley Green and Andrew Hannon’s “Pedagogical Trends in the Undergraduate Composition Curriculum” outlines and ranks forty essential skills for undergraduate composers to learn during their education. Successfully implementing these experiences into an undergraduate composition curriculum requires a significant time investment by the student and substantial planning by the instructor. With less academic and extracurricular obligations during the summer and winter breaks, students are able to invest more time into fostering and growing compositional skills. By drawing upon pedagogical practices from the scholarship of teaching and learning, such as educational gamification, project scaffolding, the sandbox method, and Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning, an instructor can create projects to assist in student learning and command of skills outlined by Green and Hannon that are self-led by the student and require limited monitoring by the instructor. Further, this approach is reinforced by the theories of motivation and periodization as a cyclical method of planning and managing training. This presentation will outline projects established for an undergraduate composition studio to complete over an academic break, report on student and community engagement, highlight visibility and recruitment benefits, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of the endeavor.

BIOS

Jean Ahn

Jean Ahn finished her B.A. and M.M. at Seoul National University and Ph.D. at UC Berkeley where she currently teaches. She received First Prize at the Renée Fisher Competition and the Sejong Korean Music Competition as well as awards from the Korean National Music Composers Association, the De Lorenzo Prize in Music Composition, and the Isadora Duncan Award for Saltdoll. She was two times a Finalist for the League of American Orchestra Women Composers Commissioning Competition, and for the American Prize. Her works have been performed by the Berkeley Symphony, Oakland Symphony, Memphis Symphony, Diablo Symphony, Contemporaneous Ensemble, Dinosaur Annex, Earplay, Enhake, Ensemble Sur Plus, Invoke String Quartet, Khasma Duo and Aspen New Music Ensemble.

Her recent projects include “Footsteps” for piano and multimedia written for New Arts Collaboration, “The New Women” for MTAC National Convention, and “Animal Farm” for the Saint Mary’s College Performing Arts Department. Her ongoing projects “Folksong Revisited” and “K-Folksongs” show her vision to introduce Korean songs to performers in the US.

www.jeanahn.com

Owen Belcher

Owen Belcher is Assistant Professor of Music Theory at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory. Prior to his appointment at UMKC, he served as Lecturer in Music Theory at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. He received his PhD from the Eastman School of Music and also holds degrees from Furman University and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

His research interests include the analysis of J.S. Bach’s vocal music, transformational approaches to 19th- and 20th-century theories of harmony,

public music theory and its pedagogy, and the music of Caroline Shaw. He has presented at conferences including the annual meeting of the Society for Music Theory, The Music Theory Society of New York State, and internationally in Hannover, Germany, Cambridge, U.K., and Moscow, Russia. His research has appeared in *Theory and Practice*, *Engaging Students*, and *HAYDN: Online Journal of the Haydn Society of North America*. He has published reviews in *Music Research Forum*, and the *Journal of Music Theory Pedagogy*.

Alex Burtzos

Alex Burtzos is an American composer and educator based in New York City and Orlando, FL. His music has been performed across four continents by some of the world's foremost contemporary musicians and ensembles, including JACK Quartet, Yarn/Wire, loadbang, Contemporaneous, ETHEL, Jenny Lin, RighteousGIRLS, Decoda, and many others. Alex is the founder and artistic director of ICEBERG New Music, a New York-based composers' collective.

As Artistic Director of ICEBERG New Music, Alex leads one of the most adventurous and dynamic composers' collectives active today. Since 2016, the ten members of ICEBERG have produced concerts and delivered lectures across North America and engaged in educational outreach in schools in New York and Tennessee. ICEBERG's debut album, with Pianist Jenny Lin, has been praised by Gramophone and *I Care If You Listen*. ICEBERG also awards scholarships to young composers from under-represented backgrounds and, in 2020, debuted a Summer composition Institute in Vienna, Austria.

Alex holds a DMA from Manhattan School of Music, where his primary teachers were Reiko Fueting and Mark Stambaugh. He is the Endowed Chair of Composition Studies at the University of Central Florida, where he teaches composition, orchestration, film scoring, video game scoring,

and music technology. His music is published by Just a Theory Press, NewMusicShelf, and others.

Miguel Chuaqui

Miguel Chuaqui was born in Berkeley, California, and grew up in Santiago, Chile. He completed his undergraduate studies at the University of California at Berkeley, where he majored in Mathematics and Music, studied electroacoustic music at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies (CNMAT), and went on to complete a Ph.D. in Composition with composer Andrew Imbrie. He has received commissions from the Fromm Foundation, the Koussevitzky Foundation, the Utah Arts Council (NEA), Meet the Composer, and from U.S. and international performers and ensembles. Honors include an Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Aaron Copland Recording Grants, the Eisner Prize, a Nicola de Lorenzo Award, an award from the Society for Universal Sacred Music, and induction into the National Association of Composers of Chile. His works are released on Parma Recordings, Centaur Records, New World Records, and Albany Records, as well as on all online platforms. Dr. Chuaqui has taught at the University of Utah since 1996, teaching several generations of composers at all levels, from undergraduate to doctoral students. Following an extensive national search, in 2015 he was appointed Director of the School of Music, a position he held for 7 years. Prior to his appointment, he had served as Interim Director in 2014-2015, and he had served for a decade as the head of the Composition Area.

John Cope

Described as a “groovy, syncopated loving, and fun writer” by the Peru State Wind Ensemble conductor Scott Walker, John David Cope is a

composer, percussionist, and educator from Texas. He is currently a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Texas Christian University while working on his Doctorate in Music Composition.

Recent premieres include works written for the Trace Chamber Society, the UNL Percussion Ensemble, the TCU Percussion Orchestra, and Dulcis Duplicitous. Recently, Mr. Cope received commissions for a percussion quintet by percussionist Jacob Cauley, a vocal duet for renowned singer Daniel Ikpeama, and a wind ensemble piece for the Peru State Wind Ensemble.

Mr. Cope received his MM in Music Composition from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he studied composition with Tom Larson and percussion with Dr. Dave Hall. He completed his BM in Music Composition at Texas Christian University under the direction of Dr. Blaise Ferrandino and Dr. Martin Blessinger.

Michael Cottle

Dr. Cottle received his D.M.A in Composition at the University of Illinois with a focus on electro-acoustic and computer assisted composition. Since the 90s his compositional work has been exclusively algorithmic, generative, computer assisted systems that are, often by design, too complex or precise for human performance. Publications include *Beyond MIDI*, MIT Press, 1997; *SuperCollider, The Book*, MIT Press, 2011, 2nd edition 2023; and *Computer Music with Examples in SuperCollider and Logic Pro*, 2012. Each year he records over 300 art music concerts, sessions and recitals including season contracts with The Utah Symphony and Opera, the University of Utah School of Music, Utah Chamber Artists, Cathedral of the Madeleine concert series, Utah Arts Festival, UMEA, Utah Choral Artists, The Gifted School, Naxos, BYU Choirs, Centaur, SEAMUS (2008), and Performance Today. He is an active researcher working with the medical complex, Technology Venture

Commercialization and the Lassonde Institute at the University of Utah. He is now Lecturer/Associate Professor and director of the experimental music studios at the University of Utah, where he teaches music technology, audio engineering, and computer assisted composition.

Linda Dusman

Linda Dusman's compositions and sonic art explore the richness of contemporary life, from the personal to the political. Her work has been awarded by the International Alliance for Women in Music, Meet the Composer, the Swiss Women's Music Forum, the American Composers Forum, the International Electroacoustic Music Festival of Sao Paulo, Brazil, the Ucross Foundation, and the State of Maryland in 2004, 2006, and 2011 (in both the Music: Composition and the Visual Arts: Media categories). Her compositions *Dream Prayer Lullaby* (2018) and *Mother of Exiles* (2019) both reflect on the refugee crisis, and *Corona Bagatelles* (2020) on the global pandemic. *Flashpoint* for solo bass flute was commissioned by Lisa Cella in 2022. *Infinite Transformations* is a sonic and bioart installation created with Foad Hamidi in 2023 during a Faculty Research Fellowship at the Imaging Research Center at UMBC. Her frequent collaborations with the *Trio des Alpes* have resulted in multiple commissions, including *Thundersnow* and *Dancing Universe* for piano trio.

Former holder of the Clark University Jeppeson Chair in Music at Clark University, composer Linda Dusman is currently Professor of Music at University of Maryland Baltimore County in Baltimore. Complete info at lindadusman.com.

Yotom Haber

Dr. Haber's music is hailed by New Yorker critic Alex Ross as "deeply haunting," and chosen as one of the "30 composers under 40" by Orpheus

Chamber Orchestra's Project 440. Haber was born in Holland and grew up in Israel, Nigeria, and Milwaukee. He is the recipient of a 2017 Koussevitsky Commission, a 2013 Fromm Music Foundation commission, a 2013 NYFA award, the 2007 Rome Prize and a 2005 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship. Haber's first monographic album of chamber music, *Torus*, was hailed by New York's WQXR as "a snapshot of a soul in flux—moving from life to the afterlife..." Recent commissions include works for architect Peter Zumthor; New York-based Contemporaneous; the Venice Biennale; and the Tel Aviv-based Meitar Ensemble. Haber was Assistant Professor of Music at the University of New Orleans and Artistic Director Emeritus of MATA, the non-profit organization founded by Philip Glass.

Tanner Harrod

Dr. Tanner Harrod is Assistant Professor of Music at Peru State College, where he teaches music theory and general music courses. He received his DMA in Composition from the Glenn Korff School of Music. At UNL, Dr. Harrod was the recipient of the Othmer Fellowship and the 2022 Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award at UNL. His M.M. in Music Theory is from the University of Oklahoma and his B.S. in Music Education is from Texas A&M University-Commerce. In addition to his work as a pedagogue and composer, Dr. Harrod maintains an active performance schedule as a guitarist, specializing in musical theatre, jazz, and contemporary chamber music. Recent engagements include *Dreamgirls* at the Omaha Community Playhouse and *Spamalot* at the Ralston Community Theatre.

His piece, *Feather Fall*, was selected for performance at the New Creations Workshop at the National Flute Association's 50th Convention in Chicago, as well as at the 2023 SCI Region V conference. Upcoming commissions include a new work for vocalist Daniel Ikpeama.

Dr. Harrod studied composition with Greg Simon, Marvin Lamb, and David Davies. He currently serves as the Deputy Province Governor for Province 6 (Nebraska/Western Iowa) of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia.

Peter James

Peter James is a New Hampshire-born pianist, composer, and aspiring jazz educator. His love of jazz music brought him to New Orleans, where he earned a B.M. in Jazz Studies from Loyola University. He enjoys playing and gigging out and is an active member of the ME/Seacoast region. He maintains a small studio of private students and is a regular church pianist and organist. He began studying composition in earnest in his undergraduate years and has had his original compositions performed at the French Quarter Festival and New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. Peter is currently in the second year of the Master's in Studio Jazz Writing program at the Frost School of Music under the tutelage of Dr. Stephen Guerra and Maria Schneider. At Frost, he regularly composes commissions for the Frost Jazz Orchestra, Henry Mancini Institute Orchestra, Frost Recording Ensemble, and other small school groups. As a future educator, he hopes to one day build his own university jazz studies program from the ground-up to continue to expand jazz education to young audiences. As a musician and composer, he finds his inspiration by exploring new sounds, ideas, and communities.

Jennifer Jolly

Jennifer Jolley is a composer, conductor, and professor person. Jennifer's work draws toward subjects that are political and even provocative. Her collaboration with librettist Kendall A, Prisoner of Conscience, has been described as “the ideal soundtrack and perhaps balm for our current ‘toxic...times’” (Frank J. Oteri of NewMusicBox). Her piece, Blue Glacier Decoy, depicts the Pacific Northwest's melting glaciers. Her partnership with writer Scott Woods, You Are Not Alone, evokes the fallout of the #MeToo Movement. Jennifer's works have been performed worldwide. She has received commissions from the National Endowment for the Arts, MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music, Left Coast Chamber Ensemble, Quince Ensemble, among others. Jennifer deeply values the relationship and collaboration between composers and their communities. She has been composer-in-residence at multiple institutions and promotes composer advocacy through her NewMusicBox & I CARE IF YOU LISTEN articles. She is on the Executive Council of the Institute for Composer Diversity and the New Music USA Program Council.

Jennifer received degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. She is an Assistant Professor of Music Theory and Composition at CUNY Lehman College and a composition faculty member at Interlochen Arts Camp.

Joseph Klein

Born in Los Angeles in 1962, Joseph Klein is a composer of solo, chamber, and large ensemble works, including instrumental, vocal, electroacoustic, and intermedia compositions. His music—which has been described as “a dizzying euphoria... like a sonic tickling with counterpoint gone

awry” (NewMusicBox) and exhibiting a “confident polyvalence [that] heightens its very real excitement” (The Wire)—reflects an ongoing interest in processes drawn from such sources as fractal geometry, chaos, and systems theory, often inspired by natural phenomena. His works frequently incorporate theatrical elements, whether as a component of the extra-musical references or as an organic outgrowth of the musical narrative itself. Literature is another important influence on his work, with recent compositions based on the writings of Franz Kafka, Elias Canetti, Alice Fulton, W.S. Merwin, Milan Kundera, and John Ashbery.

Klein holds degrees in composition from Indiana University (DM, 1991), University of California, San Diego (MA, 1986), and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona (BA, 1984). His composition teachers have included Harvey Sollberger, Claude Baker, Robert Erickson, and Roger Reynolds. He is currently Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of North Texas College of Music, where he has served as Chair of Composition Studies since 1999.

Alexander Liebermann

Alexander Liebermann is a German-French composer whose sought-after music is known for its eclectic blend of diverse topics from philosophy, biology, astronomy, and other fields. Among his most recent commissions are a climate-change reflecting monodrama from the Deutsche Oper Berlin, a birdsong-inspired wind quintet from the Brazilian Winds Ensemble, and a soundtrack for the documentary film 'Frozen Corpses Golden Treasures.' As a passionate nature enthusiast, Liebermann spends much of his time studying the sounds of wildlife; his original and accurate transcriptions of animal vocalizations are viral on social media, featured in the world-renowned magazine National Geographic, and earned him invitations to international

congresses, including the 10th Birdwatching Congress in Colombia. He recently published his first book, *Birdsong: A Musical Field Guide*, which offers a unique perspective on the musicality of birds and their relationship to human music-making.

Liebermann graduated from Hanns Eisler Music Conservatory, the Juilliard School, and Manhattan School of Music. For his thesis on Erwin Schulhoff, Liebermann was awarded the Saul Braverman Award in Music Theory. Liebermann currently resides in New York and serves as a faculty member for music theory and ear training at Juilliard's preparatory division, the Music Advancement Program.

Gregory Kyle Klug

Gregory Kyle Klug is a music educator with a doctorate in composition from the University of Northern Colorado. His compositions and arrangements are published with MMHC Music Publications and his own Firth Publications, and distributed by JW Pepper and Sheet Music Plus. Dr. Klug's research and other writings have appeared in various scholarly and online publications: *Sacred Science Journal*, *Search Journal for New Music and Culture*, *The Journal of the American Liszt Society*, *The Philosopher Journal*, and *Philosophical Investigations*. His work as composer, writer, and teacher is informed by diverse interests and accomplishments: he studied piano performance with Vergie Amendola at UNC, business entrepreneurship as an undergraduate at Long Island University, creative writing with Bharati Mukherjee at the 2004 Southampton College Writers Conference, and graphic art with Pam Capozzola in Westhampton Beach, NY. A native Long Islander, he is currently based in Phoenix where he serves as orchestra director at BASIS Ahwatukee and enjoys life as a husband and father of three.

Lynnsey Lambrecht

Lynnsey Lambrecht is an Assistant Professor of music theory and composition at Bradley University. She has presented research and compositions at Carnegie Hall, The Midwest Clinic, the College Music Society International Conference, the International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition, the National Composition Pedagogy Symposium, the Canadian University Music Society National Conference, and the Music by Women International Festival. Her research has been published in the Routledge Companion to Music Theory Pedagogy and the International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition proceedings, and her music is featured in Original Études for the Developing Conductor. Lambrecht's compositions and arrangements are published by Murphy Music Press, Grand Mesa Music Publishers, and Eighth Note Publications. Previously, she has been an instructor of music theory at Western Michigan University and an instructor of music theory and history at the Interlochen Arts Camp. Lambrecht holds a DMA in composition and a MM in theory pedagogy from Michigan State University, a MM in theory and composition from the University of Northern Colorado, and a BA in music education from Colorado Mesa University. www.lynnseylambrecht.com

Jimmy Levi

From listening to 80's pop music on repeat to singing in children's choruses, Jimmy Levi (he/him/his) has been musicking for longer than he can remember. Jimmy's music has been performed by ensembles such as the Mivos Quartet, Dal Niente and the International Contemporary Ensemble. Recent premieres include The Frog, performed by Dominic Reyes and Ensemble 20+, and The Alibi, a collaboration with Saxophonist Allison Adams for the Nief Norf 1:1 collective, and . He recently completed a Master's degree at DePaul

University, where he studied composition with Dr. Osnat Netzer and Dr. Christopher Wendell Jones.

Brooklyn Rose Ludlow

Brooklyn Rose Ludlow is a jazz drummer, composer, and multimedia artist based in San Diego. She is known for her experimentation and polystylism, blending elements from a variety of genres while maintaining an acute awareness of style. Her work often explores themes of self-reflection, emotional catharsis, and the intimately human experiences enabled by new technology. She currently leads The Brooklyn Rose Future Jazz Orchestra, a 20-piece supergroup that has been featured in Columbus Monthly and performed for Jazz Arts Group's Community Jazz Series.

Brooklyn graduated summa cum laude with a B.M. in Jazz Composition from The Ohio State University in 2019.

Travis Maslen

Travis Maslen is in his twenty-ninth year as a music educator and his twentieth year as an instructor at Christian Brothers High School in Sacramento, California. He also serves as Department Chair of the Media, Visual, and Performing Arts Department. As Director of Instrumental Music, he conducts and oversees three levels of band, jazz band, drumline, string orchestra, and handbell ensemble. Travis is currently the representative for the CMEA High School Capitol Section Honor Band and is a committee member of the California All-State Golden State Honor Band. As a composer and arranger, Travis has created works in the classical and jazz genres for instrumental and choral ensembles, both large and small. Ensembles and events include the Liberty University Band; Festival of New American Music

(FeNAM) annually held at California State University, Sacramento; Cosumnes River College Brass Choir; Sacramento Gay Men's Chorus; Princeton Singers; Trombone Christmas Los Angeles; Tuba Christmas Sacramento and Monterey; and Handbell Ensembles.

Travis Maslen holds a BA degree in music and an MM degree in music composition from California State University, Sacramento. He is currently working on a dissertation on the topic of jazz improvisation.

Devin Maxwell

Devin Maxwell, PhD, is a composer, percussionist, and music technology entrepreneur. His chamber music has been described as "amiably strident...clusters hammered insistently" by the New York Times and orchestral works "a beautiful puzzle, ... fitting between plucks and pedals that build pyramid melodies" by the American Record Guide. Awards for composition include the Nief-Norf Composition Prize, the Leroy Robertson Prize, "Best Experimental Film" New York Independent Film Festival, New Music USA/Commissioning Music USA and an Honorable Mention at the American Composer's Orchestra 2013 Underwood Readings. Maxwell has collaborated with choreographer Jessica Gaynor Dance, filmmaker Rollin Hunt, graphic designer Phillip Niemeyer, photographer Svavar Jónatansson, and violist/songwriter Anni Rossi. An avid supporter of new music, Maxwell has commissioned and performed dozens of solo or chamber compositions throughout the course of his career. In addition to composing and performing, Maxwell co-founded the LoudLouderLoudest Music Production Company in Brooklyn, NY, and was responsible for many firsts in wireless music and mobile game sound for clients such as Sony, Warner Music Group, Universal Music Group, Atlantic Records, HBO and Disney. His music is published by Good Child Music New York and Éditions musique SISYPHE.

David McDonald

David MacDonald's music has been performed at venues around the world, including Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall. He has been honored by the BMI Foundation, ASCAP Deems Taylor Awards, the Kansas Music Teacher's Association, Koch Cultural Trust, and the Sinquefeld Family Foundation. He has been commissioned by the Allen Philharmonic, Hastings College Symphonic Band, h2 Quartet, and others. David serves on the board of directors of Null-state, a non-profit organization promoting research and education in computer music, as well as the board of KNOB Festival of New Music in Wichita. His writing on music notation, teaching, and music technology have appeared in Scoring Notes, where he is a senior contributor and cohosts the Scoring Notes podcast.

He teaches composition, theory, and technology at Wichita State University, where he is also the founding director of the contemporary music ensemble Happening Now.

Sam Merciers

Sam Merciers is a composer, performer, and intermedia artist with a diverse musical background. His recent work has focused on integrating music with film, and collaborative efforts in sound design for theatre and documentary film. His compositions have been played in venues around the world including the 2004, 2010, and 2020 North American Saxophone Alliance Biennial Conferences, the 2006 World Saxophone Congress in Ljubljana Slovenia and the 2006 John Donald Robb Composers' Symposium, where Sam was a featured composer. His teachers have included Pete Temko, Mario Abril, Chris Shul2s and Ricardo Lorenz.

Stephen Mitton

Stephen Mitton (b. 1991) is a composer, performer, and educator currently based in Mesa, AZ. He holds a doctorate in Music Composition from the University of Michigan where he studied with Bright Sheng and Michael Daugherty as well as a Master's degree in Music Composition from Arizona State University where he studied with James DeMars and Rodney Rogers. Dr. Mitton is the recipient of numerous awards and grants and has received commissions from such ensembles and organizations as the Fry Street Quartet, Utah State University, Chicago Public Schools, Arizona State University, and the Arizona Flute Society. His music frequently centers on exploring the mental landscapes where language, memories, dreams, and obscure emotions overlap, often working with concepts like multilingualism, nostalgia, liminality, and the development or perception of one's sense of self as time passes. Mitton is also deeply engaged in music about humankind's impact on the environment and the Earth's immense biodiversity, having written music about plastics pollution and wildlife conservation, among similar topics. Stephen currently holds a faculty position teaching Composition at Utah State University.

Kevin Morse

Kevin Morse is an Associate Professor in the Department of Music at Mount Allison University (Canada), where he directs the New Music Creation Lab and teaches courses in Composition, Orchestration, Arranging, and Electronic Music Creation. A committed educator, he has been recognized with several awards for teaching, including Mount Allison's 2020 Tucker Teaching Award, the university's highest acknowledgement of teaching excellence. His Variations on a Fantasia of J. S. Bach for solo piano were released on the Leaf Music label in 2023. He can be found at www.kevinmorse.ca.

Frank Nawrot

Dr. Frank Nawrot is a composer, guitarist, and educator. His original music is inspired by Danny Brown, Julia Wolfe, Meshuggah, Julius Eastman, and Prince. He is Assistant Professor of Music Technology and Music Theory at Southeast Missouri State University. The recording of Frank's opera, *Don Henry*, about a Kansas student who fought and died in the Spanish Civil War is now available on Spotify and Apple Music.

Frank's research interests include popular music, minimalism, and composition pedagogy. He has presented his research for the Society of Music Theory, the Society of Minimalist Music, and the Society of Composers, Inc., among others. He has taken to the stage across the country as a guitarist, bassist, and singer, performing a multitude of styles from classical to hip-hop to metal. Frank is also sound designer and composer for the short story podcast, *Tiny Tales* (<https://tinytalespodcast.com/>).

Listen to Frank's music: <https://franknawrot.bandcamp.com/>

Frank's website: <https://franknawrot.com/>

Christopher Newman

Chris Newman is a composer originally from Michigan. He holds degrees in Music Composition from Michigan State University and the University of Maryland. He is currently a PhD candidate in music composition at the University of Utah where he is also an instructor. When not busy with classes, Chris enjoys composing. When busy, Chris enjoys video games.

Jessica Rudman

Jessica Rudman’s “starkly effective music” (Opera News) inspires empathy for social issues through stories of myth, magic, and the modern world. Described as a “new music ninja” by the Hartford Advocate, she blends lyrical melodies and dramatic narrative structures with sensual harmony and vibrant color to draw listeners into the worlds she creates. Rudman’s music has been performed by groups including the Arditti Quartet, International Contemporary Ensemble, the Riot Ensemble, the Omaha Symphony’s Chamber Orchestra, the Yakima Symphony Orchestra, and the Hartford Independent Chamber Orchestra. She is the recipient of an Artist Career Empowerment Grant from the Salt Lake City Arts Council and was a 2019-21 Composer Fellow in The American Opera Project’s Composers & the Voice program. She has also received awards from SCI/ASCAP, Boston Metro Opera, the College Music Society, the International Alliance for Women in Music, and others.

Rudman is an Assistant Professor of Composition and Theory at the University of Utah. She received her doctorate from the City University of New York, where she studied with Tania León. More information about Rudman (she/they) and her work can be found at <http://www.jessicarudman.com>.

Joseph Sowa

Noted for its visceral immediacy and reflective depth, the music of Joseph Sowa grows from a love of metaphor. Diverse influences—including cartooning, linguistics, meteorology, poetry, and schemata theory—inspire his music, which focuses on intricate textures and vivid colors to produce surprising twists and compelling flourishes. His concert works have been performed across the United States and in Europe. Recent performances include premieres by the Ludovico Ensemble, Collage New Music, Ensemble

Dal Niente, and a consortium of English Horn players including Carolyn Hove, principal English Horn of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. His piece Motion Lines is scheduled for release by the PRISM Quartet on their album Surfaces and Essences.

He has been commissioned by performers including Hub New Music, the Genesis Chamber Singers, the Farallon Quintet, Douglas Bush, Carolyn Hove, Neil Thornock, and Arianna Tieghi as well as foundations including the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition, the Laycock Endowment for Creative Collaboration in the Arts. Joseph's sacred music, including originals and arrangements, has been performed at congregations in the United States, Canada, and England. His arrangement of "For the Beauty of the Earth" was recorded by soprano Charity Tillemann-Dick on her album American Grace, which debuted no. 1 on the Billboard® "Traditional Classical" chart. Joseph received his PhD in music composition and theory from Brandeis University. He has co-taught the class "Star Wars: How Long Ago? How Far Away?" at Tufts and dreams of writing a piece for tuba ensemble. Learn more at www.josephsowa.com.

John Syzygy

John Syzygy has been teaching piano and composition for over 20 years. His students have received numerous awards in regional, state, national, and international competitions, including: the 2022 YoungArts Award, the 2022 ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award (Honorable Mentions for two of his students), the 2022 US Open Music Competition (Open Own Composition Category), the 2020-2021 MTNA Composition Competition, the 2020 Morton Gould Young Composer Award (Honorable Mention), 2019 ASCAP Herb Alpert Young Jazz Composer Award, the 2017 NAFME Electronic Music Composition Competition, the 2016 Miami

International GuitART Festival Competition. Many of John's students have chosen to pursue careers as professional musicians, and have continued on as music majors or minors at schools such as the Blair School of Music (Vanderbilt University), Mills College, Lawrence University, the University of Puget Sound, Stanford, Cal Poly, and more. John Syzygy received his B.M. and M.A. in Composition from San Jose State University, where he was a two-time winner of the Eva Thompson Phillips Award for Composition. He studied piano with Dr. Gwendolyn Mok, Dr. Laurel Brettell, Debbie Poryes, and Marc Steiner. His primary composition instructors include Dr. Pablo Furman, Dr. Brian Belet, and Dr. Daniel Wyman.

Jasmine Thomasian

Jasmine Thomasian (they/them) is a PhD candidate in Composition & Music Technology at Northwestern University. There, they have taught courses in composition, music technology, music theory, and aural skills. As an educator, Jasmine prioritizes student agency and supportive classroom environments in which students collaborate, experiment, and take creative risks. Jasmine presented at TEACHx 2023 on play-based learning activities. As a composer, they are engaged in collaborative projects that explore the realms of memory, selfhood, storytelling, and intergenerational trauma. Jasmine frequently employs extended techniques, mundane objects, theatrics, and opportunities for improvisation in their works for stage and installation. Their work spans acoustic and electronic media. Jasmine's recent collaborators include Garden Unit, Thomas Giles, Unheard//of-Ensemble, Wan Heo, and Waveform Collective. They have also been performed by Ben Melsky, Chicago Fringe Opera (Sounds of Pride), and Constellation Men's Ensemble.

Nicholas Tran

Nicholas Tran is a first-generation, queer, Vietnamese-American composer. Tran is now pursuing a Ph.D. in music composition at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, where they are studying with Jason Eckardt and Suzanne Farrin, and was awarded the Graduate Center Fellowship. Tran is currently teaching at Queens College.

Fiercely committed to education, Tran completed the 2020 Keep Composers Weird residency in Austin, Texas where they appeared as a guest lecturer at Dobby Middle School. That same year, Tran created a special music program for students with learning disabilities in Boston and put together a peace-building education project centered around the music of Earl Kim. Their academic research focuses on queer listening perspectives, queer phenomenology, and affirmative power structures.

In addition to composing and teaching, Tran believes in creating real world change. They are the current grants administrator for the Woodcock Foundation, where they have stewarded over \$1.95M to organizations in democracy, free media, gender equality, and racial equality. Tran has presented and disseminated academic research to these groups, speaking about the politics of sound and the relationships between music and gender. Their academic research focuses on queer relationships with music. In 2022, Tran and their husband co-founded New Arts Music Studio, a teaching studio focused on creating teaching opportunities for early-career musicians.

Joseph Vasinda

Joseph Vasinda (he/him/they/them) is a composer and music educator based in Boston who recently gave their exit seminar to complete their PhD. in Music Composition and Theory with a focus on composition pedagogy. As a composer, they are interested in processes which remove them as sole author of compositions. Through performer input and improvisation, Vasinda attempts

to align themselves with performers to make more profound musical moments that resonate with everyone involved. In their teaching, they similarly try to align with student goals. In their lessons and the extracurricular programs they have created, Vasinda works with students to help them see patterns in those students' pieces and to think critically about those students' compositions as well as the compositions of their peers. To that end, Vasinda encourages students to improvise and work with peers to develop pieces which are more meaningful to everyone involved.

Kevin Wilt

Kevin Wilt is a classical music evangelist. He composes music to introduce new audiences to the joy, drama, and adventure of classical music through familiar colors and lush textures, while engaging seasoned audiences with an underlying craftsmanship and sophistication. His recent commissions include AutoBonn for Michael Francis and The Florida Orchestra, and March of the West River, premiered at the College Band Directors National Association Southern Division Conference.

Recent performances include those by the Space Coast Symphony Orchestra, the Sydney Contemporary Orchestra, Fifth House Ensemble, the h2 Quartet, the Boston New Music Initiative, Project Fusion, SHUFFLE Concert, the Mexico City Woodwind Quintet, ensembles at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, the University of Texas at Austin, Florida State University, the University of Kansas, and the University of Oklahoma.

He was a resident at the Millay Colony for the Arts, winner of the Music Teachers National Association Commission in Florida, the Fresh Squeezed Opera Call for Scores with his chamber opera, Prix Fixe, and the Musical Chairs Chamber Ensemble Composer Search. He is Associate

Professor of Music, Composer-in-Residence, and Chair of the Florida Atlantic University Department of Music in Boca Raton.