Osnat Netzer on Teaching & Composing

The first time she taught Music 2, Osnat Netzer approached the Department’s largest course idealistically. “In a perfect world,” she thought, “how would I teach this? It was my chance to invent, to create a new way to teach theory and composition to students who have never studied them before.”

Then reality hit. Netzer had 100 students at various skill levels and with many different interests. “Performers want to understand what they’re playing. Some students want to arrange popular songs, some are simply looking to deepen their appreciation of music, some aspire to be professional musicians but have another concentration to fall back on. I have to accommodate all of them.”

She began visiting all of her sections to meet students and get to know them better. “I can conceptualize classes with an ideal world in mind, but I needed to know the actual students. So what I do now is tailored to what students are looking for; is this relevant to them? How will this be helpful in their lives?”

Now in her second year as Preceptor, Netzer has a successful working structure for her course. When an unprecedented number of blizzards shut down the Harvard campus this past winter, she found an innovative way to make up material the students had missed.

“We called them the Snowstorm Sessions. They were spontaneous, really,” she says of the several short instructional videos she and Head TF William O’Hara created at the Derek Bok Center Media Literacy and Visualization Lab. The videos covered concepts such as tetrachords, sharp keys/flat keys, “avoiding enharmonic errors,” “character in major and minor modes” and many more—eleven three- to-four-minute mini-lessons in all, meant to help students catch up and review content they’d missed.

“This is one of the great things about Harvard,” she says of the Bok Center’s staff. “There’s a team available to help you do your job better. It’s amazing.”

The Wondrous Woman Within

As Netzer completed her second year of teaching at Harvard she also finished casting for the premiere of her first full-length opera, The Wondrous Woman Within. Woman is a comic opera in two acts with a libretto adapted from the play of the same name by controversial Israeli playwright, Hanoch Levin. The work will premiere this fall at the Cameri Theatre in Tel Aviv.

Netzer wanted the opera to be an Israeli opera, and she wanted to write it in Hebrew, so it made sense to her to base it on a play written by Israel’s iconic playwright. “Levin’s early plays were brutal and extreme politically; some were censored or banned. Later he found more subtle ways to write about the state of affairs in Israel, in allegory, where politics were disguised as family dynamics. But The Wondrous Woman Within is not that. It’s a funny sexual farce about two suitors, neither of whom has a chance at winning the diva. “If you’re creating an opera from a play, you have to make sure that there’s a reason to add music. Music for Levin’s plays, I think, is essential. I think he knew it, too. The characters are unsympathetic on the page. The plays have moments with incidental music that contrasts with or is completely antithetical to the stage action. Levin knew that music was essential in order to make the deep criticism bearable and the characters more believable. I try to employ music in a similar way, only on a more extreme level.

“For my first opera, I didn’t want to take something too close to my heart. You have to live with opera for years and years, so I’d like to be able to be slightly emotionally detached from it. I know the outcome will be a little out of my control.”

continued, p. 2
Netzer began work on the opera in 2008, composing full-time in Berlin for a year, then six months in Boston. She finished it in 2011 and workshopped the first scene on New York City Opera’s 2012 VOX Festival. A grant for Fringe Opera by the Israel National Lottery Council for the Arts helped fund a production of the opera in Israel. Julia Pevzner will direct the 2015 premiere of the fully staged version at the Cameri, with the Israel Contemporary Players serving as the orchestra, Yuval Zorn conducting.

Netzer will travel to Tel Aviv to see some of the staging and vocal rehearsals. “It’s so exciting—the opera will be premiered at the Cameri Theatre’s second Levin festival. It’s his house theater, and this play premiered there in 1992. If the opera’s good, it will hopefully get another production. If it requires some revisions, the performances will reveal that need. Every step of the way I’m happy but cautious.”

Israeli composer, pianist, and singer/songwriter Osnat Netzer received her doctorate from New England Conservatory. She joined the Music Department faculty as Preceptor in 2013.

Laurie Anderson Gives 2015 Elson Lecture

When asked how she introduces herself, Laurie Anderson says that she references whatever she’s working on at that moment. “Right now,” she told a group of graduate and undergraduate students, “I’m a filmmaker.”

Anderson spent a day on campus as the Department’s Louis C. Elson Lecturer. She met with students informally, and later gave the annual Elson Lecture to a packed Paine Hall.

“Hearing is the last sense to go,” she told the crowd. “Tibetan monks believe this; the subtitle to the Tibetan Book of the Dead is Great Liberation Through Hearing. After the heart stops and the eyes go dark, the hammers in your ears are still going. Tibetan monks yell into your ears when you die—mostly instructions: there are two lights. Go toward the faraway light.”

Anderson’s new film project works with the Tibetan Book of the Dead, and dogs. During her Elson lecture she showed images of her work-in-progress as well as images of past projects and performances, such as one of herself performing on the violin in the mid-1970s, wearing ice skates and standing on blocks of ice. The piece was inspired by something she and her grandmother witnessed: ducks, their feet frozen to the icy surface of a pond. At performances in Italy, one older man came to every performance she had, she said, and told spectators that she and her grandmother were once frozen to a pond. “Close enough,” Anderson thought.

She showed images of her invented instruments, including the tape bow for which she’s best known, and some of her installations, such as her table with built-in holes where a sound installation could be heard through the audience’s elbows.

Anderson’s never been shy about pushing through assumptions, or the barriers that separate one artform from another.

“I’m always interested in discarding assumptions,” she told students in an informal meeting. They’re usually so sad: You have to do this in a certain way? WOAH. Says who. We all have the freedom to discard assumptions. I became an artist because I wanted to be free.

“People may tell you to get back into your discipline—that you don’t know enough to do the other thing. You do know enough. That’s what instincts are for.”

Faculty News

Yosvany Terry Joins Faculty

Yosvany Terry has been appointed Visiting Senior Lecturer on Music and Director of Jazz Ensembles for the 2015–16 year.

Terry is an internationally acclaimed Cuban musician, American composer, saxophonist, percussionist, bandleader, educator and cultural bearer of the Afro-Cuban tradition. Terry’s latest release, the Grammy Award-nominated New Throned King (5Passion, 2014), features music based on Arará cantos and rhythms and has been called the “musical culmination of his spiritual exploration” (All About Jazz). His previous album, Today’s Opinion (Criss Cross, 2012), was selected as one of the Top 10 Albums of the Year by the New York Times. In 2015, Terry was named a recipient of the prestigious Doris Duke Artist Award.

Preceptor Richard Beaudoin gave a talk at the American Consulate in Shanghai, called “What Makes Music Beautiful.”

Parker Quartet members Daniel Chong and Jessica Bodner welcomed a son this summer, Cole Franklin Chong.

In May, Professors Emily Dolan and Alexander Rehding hosted an exploratory seminar at the Radcliffe Institute entitled Making Sense of Timbre. Twelve music scholars gave short presentations. Rehding was the Rieman and Baketel Fellow for Music at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study this past year.

This past summer Franklin D. and Flor-
Sir John Eliot Gardiner at Harvard

Vincent J. Panetta, Jr. (A.B. 1972, PhD 1991) and Eunice Johnson Panetta ’90 generously established The Christoph Wolff Fund for Music to support, among other things, an annual residency by a noted musicologist, composer, theorist, or performer. Conductor John Eliot Gardiner was the inaugural Christoph Wolff Distinguished Visiting Scholar in the Music Department. Gardiner—an English conductor, early music expert, and Bach biographer—came to campus to participate in a series of events February 2–8, which included an open rehearsal with Harvard choral groups in Memorial Church (where he rehearsed the choirs in several Bach motets), and an informal rehearsal with the Harvard Radcliffe Orchestra and pianist Robert Levin in Sanders Theatre, where they discussed aspects of the Mozart Piano Concerto K. 491. On February 4, he visited with a group of young conductors.

“There’s nothing more stupid than a conductor on his own,” Gardiner told a dozen students in Dr. Andrew Clark’s choral conducting class. “Music is collaborative.”

Monteverdi’s Vespers 1610, a work Gardiner conducted as a student at King’s College, Cambridge, was his first big challenge, he told students. “I’d never done anything like this before. I recruited a choir and an orchestra. The choir sung in euphony—this was the style at King’s college—it was like stroking a cat. Singing the Italianate was foreign to them. The orchestra was even harder to recruit. I had to find the only three sackbut players in England. “[The Vespers] was my epiphany; I changed course. I’d been an historian and farmer, but I became a musician. I was 20.”

“The students here,” Clark told Gardiner, “do this sort of thing all the time; they make up their own projects, and through sheer force of will, get it done.”

Gardiner was encouraging. “If you can do your own thing, it’s the best—to bypass conventional routes. I’m an unconventional conductor, I’m not a pianist. I learn the music by sitting in a chair and reading the score. I don’t listen to recordings, just use my aural training. I really study the score.”

Most important to conducting, Gardiner explained to the students—music concentrators as well as Middle Eastern and chemistry concentrators, pianists and organists—is connection. It’s what a conductor does. “Your job, without talking, is to connect the musicians so they understand how their part fits with the others. A conductor empowers musicians to give it their best; to be free within context of agreed utopian parameters. Music is not a democratic art.”

Notes on page are literal printed hieroglyphics, Gardiner believes—they are not the music. They’re a shorthand, braille, for release of the imagination. Bach’s handwriting, for example, is more expressive than his typeset scores. “Bach shows you how it should be—it’s physically expressive. If you play only notes,” Gardiner warned, “you haven’t left the subbasement of what the piece could be. Music carries responsibility if you have the nerve to direct it.”

“What is classical music? Sounds dead to me. Why not call it music. Don’t think it should be hidebound or labeled. See it as accessible to everyone, not exclusive to the elite or upper middle class.” —JEG

Vance George leads Holden Choruses

Conductor Vance George led the San Francisco Symphony Chorus to four Grammy awards in the 23 years he served as their conductor. During his visit to Harvard for a residency from Jan. 27–30, George led the Holden Choruses in a rehearsal of three different works by Johannes Brahms. “It’s like working with something that’s alive, and you start where you find them and build on that. It’s not unlike cooking...you put [the ingredients] together and fashion them into something delicious,” he says.

George focused heavily on the emotional aspects of the performance during his rehearsal with the Holden Choruses—a pleasant surprise for the participants. Radcliffe Choral Society member Nareen N. Manoukian agreed that George’s focus on emotion and connection was unique. “Someone who is that accomplished...you’d think there’d be an emphasis on accuracy...but I was really surprised by his broad approach and his emphasis on connection to the music.”

George has been praised for his distinctive style of conducting and emotional manner of teaching, which accounts for his selection of Brahms’ works for the masterclass. “They are redemptive,” George says. “They have incredible texts and musical expression that reaches deep into the soul and is deeply moving to bring you to your best self. I think great art... lead[s] us to experience our best selves—our deepest self. ...I think when people leave a concert they are better human beings, and certainly the performers have gone inside that inner being and explored what the composer has put down on the page that was deeply moving to him or her.”

—Mac G. Schumer. Excerpted from the Harvard Crimson
Talking With the Parker Quartet

“Throughout this past year, we could feel their presence every week,” adds Ying Xue, violinist. “It has definitely brought into our rehearsal room an energy that we interact with, and the wonderful visitors that pass through these hallways. It’s a process of integrating ourselves into the Harvard community.”

“Harvard is such a unique place for us to call home,” says Jessica Bodner, viola. “Coming from a conservatory where music is the whole world, being here has made me think about music in the context of society as a whole and what music means to many different kinds of students. Additionally, there are so many incredible resources within the Harvard community. At first, it was overwhelming how many incredible events take place on campus—we wanted to attend everything!”

Chong concurs. “We are constantly reexamining how we think of music. If someone is learning a Brahms quartet, for example, we must think of the students’ preparation beyond the idea of music as performance and search for what this art form has to offer each student in a larger sense.”

“We see our chamber music students every week,” adds Ying Xue, violinist. “It has been wonderful for us to see students bonding more and more through playing together. Throughout this past year, we could feel their growing sense of trust in us and each other.”

This trust, this close relationship, is key to the Quartet, and to how they can steward the long-term acquisition of skills specific to chamber music.

“We’re finding that the students are beginning to explore listening on a higher level, an essential chamber music skill that continually develops,” says Kee-Hyun Kim, cellist. “It’s part of our mission to show students what an incredible experience playing chamber music is. To show them what it feels like to exchange ideas, listen critically, and work towards creating a unified conception of a piece, and to have them experience, ‘Oh, THIS is what it feels like when everything is working together!’”

Having a resident chamber ensemble on campus means more than having teachers available to coach the department’s Chamber Music course. The Parkerers think of themselves as performing ambassadors within the music department and throughout the Harvard campus. The quartet makes classroom visits to other music classes, such as Chaya Czernowin’s or Osnat Netzer’s composition seminars, Richard Beaudoin’s theory classes, and Anne Shreffler’s Beethoven quartet seminar. They also play house concerts—at PfoHo, Cabot, Leverett, Mather—which Kim thinks of as projects meant to develop new student audiences: “We see these campus concerts as opportunities to expose students to chamber music and make connections. It’s a process of integrating ourselves into the community.”

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“Adding Xue, “we’re part of history now,” recognizing the depth of what has come before them and the excitement looking forward.

With one year under their collective belt, the Parker is exploring future plans. They have a concert in the works with pieces by Harvard faculty composers Tutschku, Czernowin, Iyer, and last year’s Fromm Visiting Professor Michael Pisaro. In addition to helping seniors prepare for their performance thesis concerts, they would love to collaborate with the Dance Center and work more with the department’s visiting composers and musicians. They also continue to pursue cross-disciplinary projects, to explore the connections that can be made even outside of the music department.

“These are ideas currently in discussion,” says Chong. “We also plan to incorporate a guest artist award, an award that gives select students the chance to prepare and perform a major work from the chamber music repertoire with us on one of our Blodgett series concerts. These would include quintets, sextets, and octets and other larger chamber ensemble pieces. We want students to be part of the process and witness what we go through to present a given work on stage.”

Says Bodner, “This year it felt like we were presenting ourselves, and now it feels more like, ‘let’s see what else is possible with these residency concerts!’”

“Yes,” adds Kim. “We want performances to be as celebratory as possible and to be events that the whole school can get behind. We love seeing students at our concerts - the level of talent amongst the students is already so high, and we see so much potential in all of them. We know they have it in them to always look for more and to reach for an even higher level. We want to inspire them.”

The Parker Quartet’s 2015–16 public performances in John Knowles Paine Hall will take place Friday, October 16th at 8:00pm, Sunday, November 22 at 3:00 pm, Saturday, March 5 at 8:00 pm and Sunday April 17 at 3:00 pm.
ence Rosenblatt Professor Vijay Iyer embarked on two European tours with his trio, He also directed the International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music at the Banff Centre in Alberta, Canada. Iyer was recently named Downbeat Magazine’s Jazz Artist & Jazz Group of the Year.

Morton B. Knafel Professor Thomas F. Kelly lectured at Duke University, the University of Maryland, and MIT. He gave two seminars at the Conservatorio San Pietro a Majella in Naples, and lectured at the Pontificio Istituto di Musica Sacra in Rome. Kelly was a keynote speaker at the Smithsonian Institution’s symposium on Early Music in Higher Education and at the national meeting of Chorus America. He taught a seminar in musical paleography for the younger monks of the monastery of Solesmes, participated in a panel in Symphony Hall in celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Handel and Haydn Society, and contributed a chapter to their celebratory volume. He served as curator and presenter for the three events of the Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Insights series in February. With Blue Heron, Kelly presented a lecture/concert at the Boston Early Music Festival. For HarvardX, he produced a module on liturgical manuscripts in the Houghton Library. He spoke at the opening of the Allston Education Portal with Mayor Martin Walsh and President Faust, at a Harvard Campaign event in Seattle, for the Harvard Clubs of New Hampshire and Cape Cod, and at reunion events for the 50th and 60th class reunions.

William Powell Mason Professor Carol J. Oja was named one of ten 2015-16 Walter Channing Cabot Fellows for her new book, Bernstein Meets Broadway. Collaborative Art in a Time of War. She published “The Original Miss Turnstiles: On the Town brought a bold style of casting to Broadway,” in Humanities: The Magazine of the National Endowment for the Humanities, January/February 2015, among others, and completed a second year as Leonard Bernstein Scholar-in-Residence with the New York Philharmonic. Oja also served as the Barr Laureate Scholar, Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri at Kansas City, and as the Chair of the the Pulitzer Prize Committee on Music in 2015. She received the Distinguished Service Award of SAM in recognition of her many outstanding contributions as a scholar of American music and her exemplary service to the Society.

Fanny Peabody Professor of Music Alexander Rehding gave talks at Hong Kong University, University of Pennsylvania, University of Iowa, and the Peacock lecture at Toronto, and spoke at GSAS Alumni Day (with Peter McMurray PhD ’14). Rehding won the Selma V. Forkosch Award for “Music-Historical Egyptomania, 1650–1950,” published in Journal of the History of Ideas. He also published in Die MusikTheorie and Istoria nemetskoy literatury.

Professor Kay Kaufman Shelemay received a fellowship to spend the 2015-16 academic year at the Stanford Humanities Center.

James Edward Ditson Professor Anne Strother gave the keynote, “Precarious Utopias: Modelling Community in Collaborative Works,” at the University of Chicago symposium “there is no repetition: mathias spahlinger at 70.” She also gave a lecture and workshop, “Paradigm Shift or Style Change? Some Thoughts on a Historiography of Compositional Style in the 20th and 21st Centuries” at the Graduate School for the Arts, Bern, Switzerland, and spoke at the Tanya Bonakdar Art Gallery in New York City in connection with the exhibition by Susan Philipz, “Part File Score,” an artwork based on Hanns Eisler’s music and his persecution by the FBI.

Oxford University Press sponsored a launch of Professor Kate van Orden’s new book at the “Voices and Books 1500–1800” conference in Newcastle. Materialities was released in May, 2015.

“Unmasking Jim Crow” Parses Minstrelsy History

The exhibit, a collaborative project by students, was curated by Sam Parler, Katie Callam, assistant curator. “There have been two ways to look at things like minstrelsy. One way is to say: ‘Let’s forget it and look forward,’ and the other way is to say: ‘We will never forget.’” Louis Chude-Sokei said at the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library on Jan 26. Author of The Last ‘Darky’: Bert Williams, Black-on-Black Minstrelsy, and the African Diaspora. Chude-Sokei was the keynote speaker at the opening of the exhibit “Unmasking Jim Crow: Blackface Minstrelsy in American Pop Culture.” Consisting of comic skits, variety acts, dancing, and music, blackface minstrelsy was hugely popular in 19th-century America and was viewed as one of the first U.S. cultural exports, spreading to Australia, France, South Africa, and even China. Today, however, minstrelsy is largely ignored as an embarrassing and inconvenient page of American history.

Last semester, Carol J. Oja and Samuel J. Parler, PhD candidate in Music, created a seminar entitled Blackface Minstrelsy in 19th-Century America to explore the history and legacy of blackface performance. The class created the student-curated exhibit “Unmasking Jim Crow,” in the Loeb Music Library. The exhibit included images, sheet music, information on songsters, and other artifacts from the Harvard Theater Collection, which has one of the most important compilations of 19th-century minstrelsy materials in the world. The exhibit’s opening symposium also featured Rhiannon Giddens, banjoist and vocalist of Grammy award-winning old-time string band The Carolina Chocolate Drops.

—Tianxing V. Lan. Excerpted from The Harvard Crimson, 2.2.15
**Graduate Student News**

Sivan Cohen-Elias and her husband Rey welcomed a daughter, Meshi Elias-Hulme on March 22nd.

Rujing Huang was awarded a fellowship grant by the Asian Cultural Council and will be traveling to Taiwan to research the revival of Chinese imperial court music. Fellowship recipients represent a selection of young creative forces in the region as well as professionals currently positioned in pivotal roles within the cultural landscape of Hong Kong and China.

Michael Uy was awarded the Mark Tucker Award at SAM for “Staging Catfish Row in the Soviet Union: The Everyman Opera Company and Porgy and Bess, 1955-1956.”


Walden on Musical Experimentation in the Renaissance

“It was like a 1500s version of Disneyland. The instruments were more closely connected to nature, they interacted with weather—wind, heat, water,” says Daniel Walden, of the complicated musical machines installed in the elaborate gardens of Renaissance Italian courts. “Some worked with hydraulic pressure, and they had to divert streams to power wheels to keep the instruments working. They’d only play when nature was moving the gears. There really is something to this connection with Disneyland; it’s an artificial world made to seem natural.”

The idea of music and its relationship to space—to architecture and proportion—has interested Walden since his undergraduate days as a Classics major at Oberlin.

“Architecture and music are combined in ancient ideas. There’s a treatise by the 1st-century B.C.E. Greek Vitruvius that talks a lot about music and harmony, about performing in a space that resonates. Architecture was seen as both mechanical and philosophical.” Walden theorizes that when Renaissance Italy—specifically the music theorist Nicolo Vicentino—turned to Greece to develop its music theory, this facilitated a culture of musical and magical experimentation that influenced music for a long time.

“Vicentino was a visionary. He invented the microtonal keyboard, an impressive example of mechanical ingenuity,” says Walden, who wrote his thesis for a MPhil in Musical Studies at Cambridge on keyboards that have more than 12 notes per octave. “In Vicentino’s 16th-century treatise (L’antica musica ridotta alla moderna prattica / ancient music adapted to modern practice), he talks about the beauty of enharmonic music featuring microtonal intervals even smaller than the chromatic half step. He lamented that musicians no longer wrote enharmonic music in his time, and so he invented a new instrument with microtonal divisions that could perform it.

“I think it did, and does, have a significant impact on musical discourse. There’s an interesting genealogy of this experimentation with instruments in 16th- and 17th-century Italy, then again in 19th-century England, where there was a dramatic resurgence of interest in new keyboard formats. Some of the instruments built then still exist. There are also a few instruments in Europe that are modern recreations. A team in Basel is recreating the arciorgano, a microtonal organ. But Vicentino’s famous archicembalo, a 31-key harpsichord, has still not been recreated. It would be cool to see that.”

Is it possible? Walden’s always been interested in the mechanics of instruments as well as their performance. As an undergraduate at Oberlin, he built a clavichord. “I spent a lot of time in the shop at Oberlin. It’s good to have first hand contact with an instrument you play all the time.

“And instrument-building has beautiful philosophy. There was an early Italian treatise by Fabio Colonna, a friend of Galileo. He invented a keyboard instrument that could be played by circling the hands around six rows of keys in movements that they saw as relating to the orbit of spheres. There was a real interest in what the gestures of the hands at the keyboard might communicate musically.

“And yes, it’s possible to build Vicentino’s 31-key, totally possible. It would be so much fun.”

Walden completed degrees at Oberlin College and Conservatory in Classics and Piano Performance with a minor in Historical Performance. He has a MPhil in Musical Studies at Cambridge, and is pursuing the PhD at Harvard in Music Theory.

A musical machine at the Villa di Pratolino, one of the gardens Walden is studying. Image from Salomon de Caus’ “Raisons des forces mouvements” (pub. 1624).
Natasha Roule

It’s a side project, but it’s taken on a life of its own, says Natasha Roule of her research into the early music scene in Boston in the 1960s and 1970s. She’s specifically focusing on a group headed by Marlene Montgomery, the Quadrivium, and is working to digitize a multitude of recordings. Collaborating with musician, researcher, and colleague Ian Pomerantz, she plans to write a book that addresses what makes Boston unique in the early music scene.

“If you google Marlene Montgomery, there’s almost nothing out there. Yet Marlene helped define many aspects of the Boston music scene,” says Roule. “How did she do it, and in what ways?”

Roule’s project was born when Lisle Kulbach, a member of the Sephardic folk music group Voice of the Turtle (Pomerantz is the newest member), mentioned the boxes of Quadrivium postcards, letters, programs, and recordings she’d discovered cleaning out her house. She invited Roule to take a look.

“I was dumbfounded by what I saw. I brought the papers to Professor Shelemay and she said, ‘This is big. Pursue it.’ So I asked Lisle if I could talk with her about the group and Marlene, and we talked for two hours. Through Lisle, I began contacting former members and interviewing them about their time in the group. Some are now professional musicians, others are amateur musicians. Some have gone on to theater, and pantomime. I’ve talked to Revels about their perspective of what Marlene did. It’s interesting how many groups spun out from Quadrivium—Live Oak, Voice of the Turtle, Alexander’s Feast.”

Marlene and Quadrivium, Roule and Pomerantz have found, were extraordinary in many ways.

“They were seen as anti-establishment. On a spectrum of early music groups, Quadrivium would be far off to one side and Handel and Haydn would be on the other. People don’t even agree about what to call what they did. Some agreed it was early music, definitely. Others said it was musical pageantry. Quadrivium has lots to say about what music sounded and looked like 40 years ago in this area, at the birth of the early music scene in Boston.”

Since she’s come to Harvard, Roule has been grappling with this question of why and how musicians perform older music. “I’ve spent enough time in Boston to notice that not everyone performs the early music aesthetic the same way. So, why do people do things differently? How are groups delineated; how do people align themselves with various performance practices? I’m trying to put Quadrivium in the giant puzzle that is the list of performers in Boston’s early music scene.”

Montgomery and Quadrivium didn’t pay much attention to definitions of musical styles, Roule says. “Marlene was interested in American folk music and medieval repertories and she brought them together however she thought best. She taught musicians how to embody music, sound, and emotion, how to evoke presence on stage.

Those ideas about feeling your presence on stage—I want to implement that right now in my teaching.”

Although the Quadrivium project is ancillary to Roule’s dissertation topic—revivals of the operas of Lully from 1687 to present—both stem from her interest in looking back. And Quadrivium has influenced Roule’s research in interesting ways. “Marlene was interested in the present moment, in staging and the body as integral to music performance. A lot of what she did parallels what people who are reviving older music are doing now. What is the overall experience going to be for the audience? What will they see, feel, hear?”

Roule and Pomerantz have conducted 15 Quadrivium-related interviews to date, and already have a good oral history of Marlene Montgomery and Quadrivium. Roule is digitizing LPs and cassette tapes of concerts with the assistance of Chris Danforth in the Department’s Ethnolab. She’s working on getting recordings of rehearsals to digitize as well, and when the project is finished, Roule plans to give all the material to Harvard’s library so that the music and all its supporting materials can be available to scholars worldwide.

**Natasha Roule is a doctoral student in historical musicology. Her dissertation is entitled, “Reviving Lully: the Politics of Baroque Opera and the French Historical Narrative.” In addition to baroque opera, her research interests encompass troubadour song, histories of the book and of reading, and modern interpretations of early music. She is also an active performer of the viola da gamba and medieval strings.**
Chin's Travels in Nepal

I focused on the Buddhist and Hindu ritual music played by the Newars, who are the indigenous people of the Kathmandu Valley. Specifically, I observed, recorded, notated, and learned the dapha (devotional) music repertoire of the khin—a Newar double-headed drum—in Ikachhen-tole, a neighborhood in the city of Patan, directly south of Kathmandu.

Buddhist and Hindu beliefs and practices seamlessly coexist within Newar society, and as such, the religious music of the Newars is based in stories of and devotion to gods and figures from both Buddhist and Hindu traditions. Newar society in the Kathmandu Valley has historically, and to some extent still is today, been organized and divided by tol (neighborhood) and caste. For the tol in which I did my research, learning the khin takes about one-and-a-half years, consisting of daily prayers to Naasadhyo, instruction from a guru, and various rituals. (Examples of musical apprenticeship rituals from other tol caste traditions include stealing a chicken to be used as an offering in order to prove adroitness, and sacrificing a buffalo and distributing specific parts of the head to apprentices in order of skill.)

According to my teacher, the right side of the drum represents the god Naasadhyo, and the left is Mahaankaal (Bhairav, also a form of Shiva). Each sound that is produced on the drum is assigned a syllable, or a bol. During apprenticeship, emphasis is placed on learning and memorizing the bols for the music before ever setting hands on the instrument. The bols themselves carry the meaning and significance behind the music—the drum is used only to express those bols with sound. Thus, it is urged that the bols (whether spoken in the mind or out loud) should lead the hands in playing the drum, not the other way around.

Traditionally, apprenticeship is only open to males belonging to the tol (and thus the same caste). The training is done indoors in a specially designated house, and in secret, such that none of the information transferred is picked up by unintended audiences. In Ikachhen-tol, the recent modernization of the country and evolving views have lifted many of these restrictions in the last 20 years. My teacher, Anup Ratna Shakya, helped to convince his gurus to open up musical apprenticeship to anyone in the tol, regardless of caste, gender, and evidently, nationality.

Religious and traditional music has been fading away in a modern society that values entertainment over tradition, ritual, and worship. The forms are rarely written down, and knowledge of them dies off with the older gurus. Recent civil war, political revolution, and natural disaster make the preservation of old ritual music even more difficult. It is all the more impressive that some communities have managed to preserve their traditions for so long. As Nepal rebuilds itself after the recent earthquakes in 2015, I hope that the work that I've done will help in some small way to call attention to the country’s rich heritage.

—Calvin Chin [report is excerpted and edited]
Linklater Appointed Keeper of Isham

Christina Linklater (PhD ’06) has been named Keeper of the Isham Memorial Library and Houghton Music Cataloger. This is a blended position in which Christina will work with both Houghton Library and the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library. It is intended to meet overlapping needs in the two libraries, and provide the opportunity for a holistic view of musical special collections at Harvard. At the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library, the primary repository for musical materials at Harvard at Loeb Music Library, the position is Keeper of the Isham Memorial Library, a special library dedicated to research with primary musical sources. At Houghton, this position catalogs incoming and backlog Special Collections music material, focusing on material in the John Ward Collection. Christina began working at HCL in 2006, as a Library Assistant in Loeb Music Library, before moving into the position of RISM Project Cataloger in 2008. In 2010, Christina took a position at Houghton Library as a Project Music Cataloger.

My Wars are laid away in Books—

As part of National Poetry Month at the Harvard Library, the Loeb Music Library co-produced My Wars are laid away in Books. Emily Dickinson’s Music Book: A Prelude to the Civil War. Red Skies Music Ensemble presented the performance at ART’s Oberon Theater in Cambridge in April, combining Emily Dickinson’s own wit, letters, and poetry with live performance of the music she loved and played. The Ensemble guided the audience through the musical engagements, social context and historical events that informed and enlivened Dickinson’s poetic voice, one that was emerging just before the American Civil War. Intertwined with a curated and archive-based illustrated narrative presented by George Boziwick, Chief of the Music Division of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, the program centered on Dickinson’s personal sheet music collection (her “binders’ volume”), which is part of the Dickinson Collection in the Houghton Library. Actress Elise Toscano used Emily Dickinson’s own words to portray Dickinson’s New England spirit as a knowing observer of her inner and outer musical and poetic worlds.

Solti Exhibit Wins ACRL Award

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) has selected the Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library as the winner of its electronic exhibition division for “Music, First and Last: Scores from the Sir Georg Solti Archive.”

“This online exhibition had a clean, uncluttered design, and it was easy to navigate,” stated David Faulds, chair of the RBMS Exhibition Awards committee and curator of rare books and literary manuscripts at the University of California-Berkeley. “The ability to access complete scores is good for scholarship, while the ability to easily access audio and video enhances the experience for the visitor.”

2015 Exhibition Awards are funded by an endowment established by Katharine Kyse Leab and Daniel J. Leab, editors of “American Book Prices Current,” recognize outstanding printed exhibition catalogs and guides, and electronic exhibitions, produced by North American and Caribbean institutions. Music and media catalog librarian Beth Iseminger accepted the award on behalf of the library at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco this past June.
Fall 2015 Calendar of Events

Blodgett Chamber Music Series

Parker Quartet

Friday October 16 at 8:00 pm
Mozart String Quartet in E-flat Major, K. 428
Szymanowski String Quartet No. 1
Tchaikovsky String Quartet No. 1 in D Major

Sunday November 22 at 3:00 pm
Beethoven String Quartet No. 11, Op. 95 “Serioso”
Kurtág String Quartet, Op. 1
Schumann String Quartet in A Minor, Op. 41, No. 1

Louis C. Elson Lecture
Tuesday November 17 at 5:15 pm

Angélique Kidjo
Spirit Rising

Barwick Colloquia

Mondays at 4:15 pm
Davison Room, Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library
September 28: Sumanth Gopinah
University of Minnesota
“Departing to other spheres”: Psychedelic Science Fiction, Perspectival Embodiment, and the Hermeneutics of Steve Reich’s Four Organs (1970)
October 19: Seth Kim-Cohen
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
“The Future of No Future: Rock and Roll vs. Modernism”
November 9: Jocelynne Guilbault
University of California, Berkeley
“Labors of Love: Theorizing Work Ethics through Musical Biography”

Harvard Group for New Music
Richard Haynes, Clarinet
October 24 at 8 p.m.
New works by Harvard composers.

Events are free and take place at 8:00 p.m. in John Knowles Paine Concert Hall unless otherwise noted. Free passes required for the Angélique Kidjo lecture and for the Parker Quartet concerts and are available two weeks before each concert at the Harvard Box Office. Full listing of 2015–2016 events at www.music.fas.harvard.edu
The Office for the Arts and the Council on the Arts at Harvard are pleased to announce the recipients of the annual undergraduate arts prizes for 2015.

Stella Chen ’15 is the recipient of the first Robert Levin Prize in Musical Performance. This prize has been established to recognize an extraordinarily gifted undergraduate musician, preferably of the senior class. The award honors Robert Levin ’68, Professor Emeritus and former Dwight P. Robinson Jr. Professor of the Department of Music at Harvard University.

A resident of Kirkland House enrolled in the Harvard/New England Conservatory five-year A.B/M.M. program concentrating in Psychology, Stella Chen is a violinist and concertmaster of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra and the Dunster House Opera and is a co-president of the Brattle Street Chamber Players. In 2013, Chen received an Artist Development Fellowship to participate in the Perlman Music Program, the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, and the Mozarteum International Summer Academy in Salzburg. This May she performed Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto with the Bach Society Orchestra. After graduation, she hopes to pursue a career as a performer and teacher of music.

Chase Morrin ’15, received the Louis Sudler Prize in the Arts. The prize recognizes outstanding artistic talent and achievement in the composition or performance of music, drama, dance, or the visual arts. It honors the sum of a student’s artistic activities at Harvard.

A resident of Quincy House enrolled in the Harvard/New England Conservatory joint five-year A.B/M.M. program concentrating in Computer Science with a secondary in Neurobiology, Morrin was awarded this prize in recognition of his exceptional work as a composer and jazz pianist. Morrin has earned multiple national and state awards, which include the ASCAP Jimmy Van Huesen award as a promising composer; the ASCAP Plus Award for composition recognition; four ASCAP Young Jazz Composer awards; nine DownBeat Magazine awards for composition, arrangement and leading his own school groups; three National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (YoungArts) awards in jazz composition, jazz piano, and classical composition; the Jazz Education Network (JEN) Composer Showcase award; and the Monterey Jazz Festival’s Gerald Wilson award for his big band composition “Murphs,” which was performed at the 2011 Monterey Jazz Festival by the Next Generation Jazz Orchestra, for which Chase was selected as the pianist for their west-coast tour. He has studied with Vijay Iyer, Fred Hersch, Jason Moran, Ed Simone, and Bruce Brubaker, and composes for the NEC Jazz Composers’ Workshop Orchestra (JCWO). During the summer of 2012, Morrin participated in the ASCAP/NYU Film Scoring workshop in memory of Buddy Baker and was selected to participate in the Jazz Composers’ Orchestra Workshop Institute (JCWI) through the Center of Jazz Studies, Columbia University and American Composers Orchestra. Chase also won the national 2012 Yamaha Young Performing Artist (YYPA) competition for jazz piano. A 2013 Artist Development Fellowship recipient, he was selected to participate in the Banff (Canada) International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music. He plans to pursue a career as a pianist and composer.

Li Wins Silver at Tchaikovsky Competition

Sophomore George Li ’17 was awarded the silver medal in the XVth International Tchaikovsky Competition. Held every four years in Moscow and St. Petersburg, the Tchaikovsky Competition showcases competitors in piano, violin, voice, and cello from 16 to 32 years of age. This year’s competition, commemorating the 175th anniversary of Tchaikovsky’s birth, attracted a total of 623 applicants from 45 countries.

Li studies under Wha Kyung Byun and Russell Sherman in the Harvard/New England Conservatory joint degree program. He was the winner of the 2014 Concours International Grand Prix Animato in Paris, third-prize winner in the 2015 U.S. Chopin Competition, winner of the 2012 Gilmore Young Artist Award (its youngest recipient), winner of the inaugural Cooper Competition at the age of 14 (including a full four-year scholarship to Oberlin Conservatory), and first-prize winner in the Young Concert Artists International audition in 2010. He is currently a Gilmore Young Artist and is on the roster of the Young Concert Artists. In 2011, at the age of 15, George performed at the White House at a State dinner for President Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel. [excerpted from The Boston Musical Intelligencer]
Fromm Players’ Voces de America Latina

Alejandro Madrid conducted a pre-concert public interview of composer and 2015 Fromm Players concerts co-curator Tania León, sponsored by the Office of the Arts.

On April 17 and 18 the Fromm Players at Harvard presented “Voces de America Latina,” performed by the International Contemporary Ensembel (ICE), and conducted by Steven Schick. Curated by Carol J. Oja and Tania León, Voces de America Latina was a window on today’s vibrant new music scene in the Americas. The two-evening program included four works never heard before in Boston, and one US Premiere.

Composers hailed from Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico, and Spain. Some made their careers in the United States or Europe. Others had significant artistic experiences abroad, then returned home. Together they formed a multigenerational, multinational Latina/o network that extends beyond stylistic boundaries.

Cuban composer Leo Brouwer wrote the film score for Like Water for Chocolate; his Parabola, inspired by the artist Paul Klee, was performed on Saturday’s concert. Fellow Cuban composer, Grammy-nominated Tania León, who famously collaborates with artists outside her genre—such as writers Margaret Atwood and Derek Wolcott, or theater director Julie Taymor—had pieces on both Friday’s and Saturday’s program, and was the Eileen Southern Distinguished Visitor in the Harvard Music Department this spring.

Also on the “Voces” programs were works by five Mexican composers—Julio Estrada, Marisol Jimenez, Gabriela Ortiz, Hilda Paredes, and Carlos Iturralde—and Brazilian composers Marcos Balter and Felipe Lara. From Argentina, Pulitzer prize-winning Mario Davidovsky’s Divertimento for 8, Ambiguous Symmetries had its Boston premiere.

The Fromm Players at Harvard, a professional ensemble dedicated to the performance of contemporary music, play works organized around a strong theme that adds something unique to new music in Boston.