

BGSU[®]

College of Musical Arts
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403-0290

The ProMusican

Fall 2010

**PROMUSICA**
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY



Promoting Musical Excellence

Pro Musica supports the College of Musical Arts by inviting the participation of alumni, friends, parents and the Bowling Green community in a wide variety of musical events, and by providing financial support for music students.

A Letter from the President

Dear Members:

Your passion and generosity have driven our work.

Numbers tell our story.

Let us review.

- Membership – 300 members. This is the greatest number of members in Pro Musica history.
- Travel Grant Expenditures – \$42,408. This too is the greatest amount of funds spent for student travel.
- Travel Grant Awards – 130. This is the highest number ever and exceeds school year 2006/2007, when 111 grants were given.

These facts represent your generous, unwavering support for BGSU music students. Thank you. Together we have made a special memory during this centennial celebration. We look forward to sharing a new journey with each of you this fall.

Sincerely,
Karol Spencer

Profile

Margit Heskett

The principles behind *noblesse oblige*, inherited from her father, have given purpose to Margit Heskett's life; a person with special gifts or significant wealth is compelled to share their riches with others. Celebrating her 90th birthday on July 17, Margit taught dance at BGSU from 1965-1979 and ethnic studies in the 80s. She was a founding member of Pro Musica and has endowed a Distinguished Professorship in the College's Department of Music Performance Studies.

Born in Czechoslovakia and immigrating to New York City in 1938, she describes herself as not being conventional in anything. In her book, *Margit's Red Book: Reflections of a Bohemian Butterfly*, she writes: "My love of music was fostered by my parents. Music was always an integral part of my life. Besides Czech and German folk music, which I adored, I was exposed to classical music from grade school on."

Margit's governess, Oushko, took her to dancing class as a young girl. She described with fond memories the beautiful green costume with bows on the shoulders. She felt like a butterfly, but was heartbroken when Oushko described her as an elephant to her mother. One to never give up, Margit was not to be deterred.

Her family was affluent. As an only child whose father was a retired officer in the Austrian army and a civil architectural engineer, she was "daddy's



It is with great sadness that as the ProMusician was going to print, the college learned of Margit's passing on August 13. She will be greatly missed by all whose lives she touched with her zest for life, her generosity and her kindness.

Margit Heskett in her sculpture garden

*the more I have
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girl," but still extremely independent. Margit began architecture study at Columbia University and then transferred to New York University to study physical education. After two years in New York, she received a scholarship and transferred to complete her undergraduate degree at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. In 1964, she earned the Masters of Art from Columbia.

Margit is particularly fond of modern and folk dance, but also loves challenges. She has designed and taught numerous interdisciplinary art, dance, exercise and music courses and workshops, as well as coached sports teams in the United States and Europe. Speaking four languages and having a passion for adventure, her experiences and stories are captivating. Life, like dance, is about improvising. One time she fell asleep on a train and ended up in

Verona instead of Venice. As an adventure was ahead at every turn, Margit took a train to Rimini and saw Juliet's balcony. Terrible at directions, she once walked in unescorted to the Athlete's Village at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, the same year the Palestinian terrorists murdered 11 Israeli athletes.

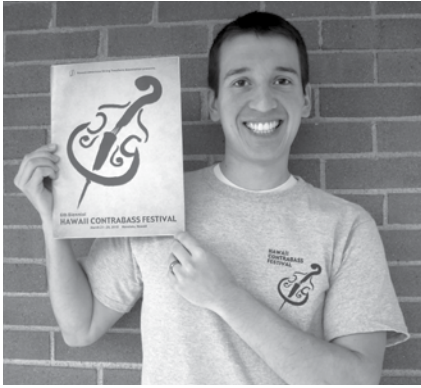
Margit states it best herself in her book: "The more I have thought about my life, the more precious it has become. As I reviewed all that I have accomplished, it became clear to me that my dance continues (and it has been a very long time since anyone thought I looked like an elephant), made possible by loving family, devoted friends, and talented colleagues. I have learned that even when one seems to perform solo, supporters are always just steps away, watching from the wings."

Happy 90th Birthday Margit!

Pro Musica Officers

Karol Spencer, *president*
Andrew Housholder, *vice president*
Douglas Wayland, *secretary*
Ellen Dalton, *treasurer*
Myra Merritt, *member-at-large*
Vanessa Chapman, Richard Kennell,
Susan Knapp and Penny Thompson Kruse,
ex-officio members
Penny Thomspson Kruse, *newsletter editor*

Student Essays



Benjamin Taylor Premiere of *7 Million Results* at the Sixth Biennial Hawaii Contrabass Festival in Honolulu

Terra Nova, a trio specializing in new music, is based in Hawaii and consists of Mike Gorman (contrabass), Steve Dinion (percussion) and Vicki Gorman (soprano). Terra Nova commissioned me to write a piece it could premiere at the 6th Biennial Hawaii Contrabass Festival in March 2010. After my arrival in Hawaii, I drove to the northern part of Oahu to give a lecture to composition students at Brigham Young University–Hawaii. I was honored and pleased to be their guest and enjoyed talking with several students after the lecture. Wednesday afternoon the trio and I gave a presentation at the festival. The audience consisted primarily of bass players from age 10 to adult. I spoke about my ideas behind the composition *7 Million Results* and Terra Nova performed excerpts. I also led a short group improvisation illustrating the difference between free and structured improvisation. The younger bassists were particularly enthusiastic and responsive.

Terra Nova premiered *7 Million Results* Wednesday night at the Fresh Café and was well received by the audience of approximately 120 people. After the concert I received many compliments as well as specific questions about the piece. More importantly, I met several bass players that are interested in future collaborative projects with me! Specifically,

I met and talked with Alex Hannah, a bass player in the Detroit Symphony, and we discussed the possibility of working together on a piece in the near future. I am grateful to Pro Musica for their generous assistance.



John Gruber Music Teachers National Association Young Artist Brass Competition in Albuquerque, N.M.

I traveled to Albuquerque to perform in the National Finals of the Music Teachers National Association Young Artist Brass Competition, having already won the state and division levels. My pianist and colleague, Sara Young arrived in New Mexico four days prior to the competition, allowing us time to acclimate to the altitude. We rehearsed extensively throughout the year and presented a truly collaborative performance in which we both contributed important musical ideas and drew on our individual experience. Having never worked so closely with another musician, this close collaboration was the most important educational component of the entire experience for me. We each learned a great deal from one another, and the fact that we were able to prepare so much in advance went a long way towards helping us win the competition.

My participation in this competition has allowed me to consider more career paths where I can combine expressing and performing music on my own instrument as well as my passion for teaching. That realization alone may prove to be far more valuable than any title or award money ever could.



Katherine Kilburn Seasons Festival Conductor's Workshop in Yakima, Wash.

On October 9, 2009, I flew to Yakima, Wash., for the Seasons Festival and as one of seven conductors chosen for the Seasons Festival Conductors Workshop held in the Composer's Workshop. The master conducting teachers were Donald Thulean and Brooke Creswell, with additional commentary from Robert Frankenberry, a respected and experienced professional in the field of conducting, performing and teaching.

The one-week workshop culminated in a performance with the Seasons Festival Chamber Orchestra, a professional orchestra consisting of musicians from Yakima and from as far away as Seattle. For the concert each conductor premiered an orchestral work composed by one of the composition fellows. Master teachers for the composers' workshop included Daron Hagen, Chris Brubeck, Gilda Lyons and Michael Wimberly.

During the week, we began each day with movement classes lead by Donald Thulean, helping us to connect with our center and allowing us to focus our energy before stepping on the podium. Issues of balance, connection with sound, strength, tension versus intention were addressed and set a wonderful tone for the day. The next activity was devoted to score study, professional development, or forums where everyone shared their own experiences. We discussed the fields of conducting and composition, shared thoughts and experiences about new music and the impact of being involved in first performances. The composers

sometimes joined us and the discussion was extremely enlightening. I grew from my exposure to different approaches of score study, different attitudes about conductor/composer relationships, etc.

Each day I had at least one podium session, but usually two. The repertoire we conducted included Beethoven's Second Symphony, Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*, Hagen's *Built Up Dark* and the young composers' works. We also had sessions with piano, sessions with a string quintet with the piano realizing winds and brass and sessions with full orchestra for the new works. The musicians were skilled and professional, but also accessible and friendly, and willing to share their constructive criticism and positive feedback. I found this to be extremely valuable, as the musicians are not usually encouraged to share their thoughts with conductors. If the musicians feel respected and inspired, everything will work and sound better! We attended inspiring concerts every night, including African Drumming, Imani Winds and the Michael Wilson Quartet.

All of the conductors had unique strengths and weaknesses, different backgrounds and experiences, and as Brooke Creswell, the creator of the workshop, intended, there was tremendous synergy between the composers, conductors, musicians and even the staff. I benefited from my participation in this wonderful workshop.

I was proud to represent not only BGSU College of Musical Arts, but also the MidAmerican Center for Contemporary Music, Pro Musica and the Doctor of Musical Arts in Contemporary Music degree program. The feedback I received from the

teachers, other participants, musicians and composers was encouraging and gave me confidence in my professional goals. I would like to thank Pro Musica for making this workshop possible, and I would also like to thank the many people who donate their time, energy, and funds to make Pro Musica such an extraordinary resource for young musicians pursuing their professional goals.



Irene Fiesinger
2009 Percussive Arts Society International Convention in Indianapolis

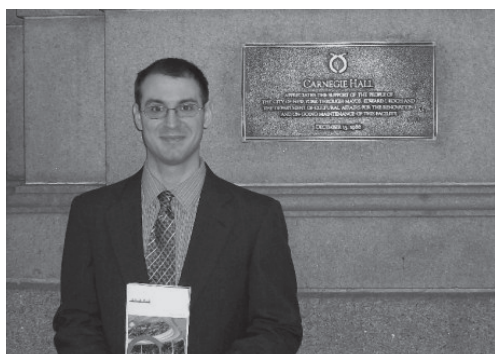
Attending the 2009 Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) was an extremely educational and enlightening experience. The majority of the concerts I attended contained relatively new works, many of which were composed by the performers themselves and others were world premieres. The amount of good literature for solo marimba is somewhat limited, so it was beneficial and exciting to hear so many new pieces that are attainable for me and my students.

The highlight of this convention was a clinic in which the Louisville Leopard Percussionists performed. This ensemble is comprised of kids between the ages of

seven and 12, most of whom start with no prior musical knowledge. I was transfixed. Some of the students could barely see above the keyboards; yet they were playing arrangements of Bach, Michael Jackson and Thelonious Monk. The kids loved the music and its variety; some were even given opportunities to improvise over a blues scale in one piece.

Since most of these young musicians cannot read music, they learn by rote. Verbal phrases are used to help remember the rhythm. In addition to working on their musical skills, they are becoming better leaders and teachers among their peers. The instructors first teach new pieces to the students who learn the quickest; these students then teach the parts to their peers while the teachers work with the students who tend to struggle more. The teachers' initial focus is not on proper technique or learning to read music, but to simply develop a passion for playing music. Once this passion for making music has been cemented, then note-reading is introduced.

The directors were an inspiration to me, having taught their students more than just a love for music, but also necessary life skills such as leadership, patience, teamwork and pride in one's accomplishments. If more students are exposed to music at an early age, I think more students would participate in music programs throughout high school and continue to grow personally as well. I would love to establish a similar program in my own hometown or, at the very least, use their teaching strategies with my own students. Attending PASIC was extremely beneficial and I am grateful to Pro Musica for making this possible.



Timothy Stulman
New York Youth Ensemble Carnegie Hall Premiere



Jessica Terban, Jacqueline Townsend and Sarah Ludwig
Midwest Band and Orchestra Conference



Christopher Narloch, Ben Bertin and Yijia Bu
2010 Music Teacher's National Association Conference