1-1-1993

UAH Music News, 1993

University of Alabama in Huntsville

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

I hope that you have been able to attend many of the performances presented by our faculty in the past month. As I take stock, I notice that all of our full-time faculty, and virtually all of our part-time faculty as well, have performed during the last month, either as players or conductors. This represents a wealth of musical opportunities for listeners throughout the Tennessee Valley. I also hope that, if you have been enjoying our musical offerings, you will consider completing the membership form and adding your name to our growing list of contributors presented elsewhere in this newsletter. We are quite excited to be in the process of awarding our first scholarships resulting from the generosity of these individuals. Next fall two of our new students will benefit significantly and directly from this fund.

At the same time I am making a pitch for your support of our program, I want to speak a bit to the issue of funding for the arts in general. I'm sure you are aware that, in these economic hard times, funding for the arts is the first place where dollars are saved. This means not only support for our arts institutions, such as the Huntsville Symphony, the Huntsville Chamber Music Guild, the Community Chorus, the Altarezza Series, and numbers of others, but also funding for the most important arts activity of all — arts education. (continued on page 3)
FACULTY NOTES

Dr. Carolyn Sanders performed a Baroque trumpet and organ recital on March 7 with organist Dr. Ann Knipschild of Auburn University. The duo performed at the Church of the Nativity Episcopal with a terrific pipe organ that has been recently refurbished. The recital also included two antiphonal pieces for brass quintet and organ with assistance from Peter Lott, trumpet; Susan Stewart, horn; Tom Mitchell, trombone; and David Byrd, tuba. Mitchell teaches part time for UAH, as does Susan Stewart. This recital will be repeated in Auburn on April 25.

Sanders was invited by John Lewis, organist at Nativity, to perform on the Noontime organ series on March 11 at the Church of the Nativity Episcopal. Late spring will find her in St. Louis performing at the 1st Annual International Women's Brass Conference, organized by Susan Slaughter, principal trumpet of the St. Louis Symphony.

Research endeavors include Sanders' continuing work on the Baroque composer Johann Samuel Endler. Following a summer trip to Darmstadt, Germany to study original manuscripts of the composer, she has had two pieces tentatively accepted for publication by Musica Rara of Monteux, France. This publishing company is one of the largest publishers of 17th and 18th century instrumental music.

Dr. Marx Pales served as adjudicator for the seating of string players for the 1993 All-State High School Orchestra in early January.

Mrs. Kathy Shaw, a member of Dr. Pales winter term conducting class mentioned to the class that her 10 year old son, Eric, was enrolled in the choir school for boys at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in New York City on Fifth Avenue. Dr. and Mrs. Pales attended three services at the church Christmas week, heard the marvelous male chorus and met young Eric. Dr. Pales also had Kathy's mother, Connie Sharp, enrolled in his conducting class in the mid-seventies!

The Pales-Contreras Duo, with guest soprano, Ginger Beazley, planned an unusual program for Saturday, Feb. 13th. Instead of lengthy sonatas they performed shorter compositions that suited the title of their program "Valentine's - Music for Love."

Dr. Pales kept his fiddle and conducting arm hot participating in the Alterezza Chamber Concerts Jan. 22 and Feb. 23. A number of Huntsville's fine players, keyboardists and singers participated including Fred Hinger, famed tympanist, formerly of the Philadelphia and Metropolitan Opera orchestras.

Dr. D. Royce Boyer performed a recital on Saturday, February 6 in the Recital Hall. His program included Bach's great solo bass cantata "Ich habe genug," University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa faculty composer Frederick Goossen's "Cavalier Songs," two early Italian secular cantatas of Handel, a group of mixed art songs, and "Patterns in Blue," jazzy songs for piano, clarinet and voice. Several members of the UAH faculty, students and friends assisted with accompaniments: Susan Fletcher and Jean Perreault, keyboardists; string players, Robert Larkin (leader), Christie McCleary, Joyce Green, Mary Peck, Roso Prince, Veneta Billmayer, William Marsh; oboist Tiffany Murdock and clarinetist Robert West. Voice instructor, Charlotte Regni, and former student Christian Bishop Jackson were the sopranos sharing in the Handel works.

Dr. D. Royce Boyer was appointed Chairman of the Publications Board by University President Frank Franz. The student newspaper, the exponent, has a demise last spring, and the Board's time this fall has been developing a plan for establishing a new student staff and to resume publication. The first issue was January 14. Alums can keep up with campus activities by subscribing to the paper. Call 895-6070 for information.

(continued on page 5)

NATS COMPETITION

The National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS) auditions were held at Samford University in late February, with over 200 singers participating. UAH students Lyn Philyaw, soprano (student of Ms. Regni) and Mark Blackburn, baritone (student of Dr. Boyer) prepared the required repertory and participated in this annual event. While there, they were able to hear other singers perform and to attend an outstanding recital by Chris Owen, baritone of the Houston Grand Opera. It was an excellent learning experience.

Do You Have An Unwanted Guitar?

The Department of Music is in need of guitars for the sequence of Music Education classes. If you or anyone you know has such an instrument gathering dust and feeling neglected, either sign up for lessons with faculty guitarist Phil Weaver or donate it to our cause!
For those of you who love the arts, and most especially music, I am sorry to tell you that the state of arts education in Alabama is even worse than the state of funding for all education. We still have lots of hard-working teachers out there doing their best, but they are being asked to do more with less every day. Needless to say, many will become disheartened and leave.

If arts education in Alabama is not funded better in the near future, I am very much concerned that life for the next generation of Alabamians will be without the arts. There will simply not be enough citizens left who value the arts enough to support it as you do.

Some weeks ago, Alberta Arthurs and Douglas Davis, in an editorial in the Los Angeles Times, stated that U.S. per capita tax outlay for defense is close to $1,000, while individual outlay for the arts is sixty-eight cents! Compare this to per capita arts spending in Canada ($32), France ($32) and Sweden ($35). If, as I believe, the arts and humanities are what distinguish us from other living creatures on this earth, i.e. that part of us concerned not merely with survival, but with intellectual and artistic endeavor, and if our level of public support for such endeavor is a valid indicator of the value we place on it, then we are indeed in trouble. In this sense, each of us must have a “special interest” in perpetuating our cultural heritage. This means teaching our youth the value of the arts and making it possible for our musicians, artists, dancers, and the like to actually make a living doing their art.

Talk to your friends in the arts, and to your elected representatives at all levels of government. Let them know that education for “survival” isn’t enough for us as human beings, that we must educate as well as train. And let them know that the arts are a vital part of that education. I believe that this is a critical issue if we are to preserve and further our cultural heritage, and indeed, “survive” as a nation.

David L. Graves

The Camerata has had a successful fall term completing their fundraising activities. They purchased a letterboard for display on the 2nd floor wall near the door leading to the breezeway. This display will showcase the calendar of events for the Music Department.

Activities for the Winter term included helping to host the 2nd annual Singer’s Day on Jan. 30 and scholarship auditions in February.

Wind Ensemble prepares for Snow Weekend. This concert was held March 29.

Singer’s Day

The 2nd annual Singer’s Day was held Jan. 30. Twenty-three people attended from several high schools and community colleges. This is the Choral Department’s annual recruiting effort. Singers are invited to join in a Saturday morning rehearsal with the Concert Choir and the Admissions Dept. sponsors a free lunch for them. Lunch is then followed by a football game between the Wind Ensemble and the Choir. Last year saw the choir defeat the Wind Ensemble 18-0. For 1993 the results were Choir 14, WE 0.

Concert Choir

The Concert Choir recently completed its first Spring Tour under the direction of Dr. Bonnie Sneed. The choir performed at Berry High School and at Homewood High School, both in Birmingham. Present at the Homewood concert were choirs from Mountain Brook, Vestavia Hills and Shades Valley. After the stops in Birmingham, the choir relaxed for two days at Panama City Beach. A performance at Northview High School in Dothan and at Enterprise High School in Enterprise concluded the tour.

Left to right, Choir President Jon Roth, Freshman Greg McAmis and Alto Judy Jackson
Her years at UAH, when we in music had just moved into the "new" building, were golden years as I look back. In our new music degree programs were several outstanding talents roaming our halls, and Vivienne was a leader for all. She was named by her UAH Choir peers for the "Note of Spirit" award in 1971 and again in 1972. I personally used her as a student assistant director several times.

She remains a personal and professional friend, and is a UAH graduate of whom I am very proud.

D. Royce Boyer, Professor
February 1993

Of all the teachers I have had, my music teachers have been the most memorable and the most important in my life. They introduced me to the beauty of music, and demonstrated the devotion and discipline required for success in the field. One teacher in particular played a significant role in directing me toward music. This teacher was Vivienne Atkins.

I met her for the first time during rehearsals for Lee High School’s production of “Guys and Dolls.” She yelled frequently, seemed mad most of the time, and didn’t really say much to us in the orchestra. But when the curtain went up on opening night, the show was incredible. I could not believe how truly wonderful it was—everybody working together, singing and dancing. The kids on that stage were my classmates, yet they seemed bigger than life. Less than two years later I was on the stage instead of the orchestra pit. Although there were a few ups and downs, that show was one of the best experiences of my life. Vivienne has a way of tapping into talent kids don’t even know they have. One moment they’re everyday high school students, the next moment they’re on that stage pouring their hearts out.

Before writing this article, I spoke to Marcia Ashford, a former classmate of Viv’s from her UAH days. I wanted to find out what Viv was like as a student. What I found out didn’t surprise me in the least. The first word Marcia said was “dependable.” She said “Dr. Boyer could always depend on Vivienne.” She also said that Viv was like a “momma” to the rest of the group. “She always took care of us,” Marcia said. I had to agree with her. Vivienne is still dependable to this day. Not only does she continue to produce excellent shows and performances, she is always there for her students. They are her kids. Vivienne allows students to get closer to her than do most teachers. The door to her office was open whenever a student had a problem. Many kids thought of her as a personal friend. Her students in turn want to do well for her because she has gone out of her way for them. Kids just don’t want to disappoint their “momma.”

Of course Vivienne’s dependability and relationship with her students are not the only reason for her tremendous success. She is without a doubt, one of the most talented, gifted people I have ever known. She is as comfortable with a serious choral piece as she is with any show. What is even more impressive is that she can make teens-agers feel the same way. Vivienne Atkins amazed me then and continues to do so today. I feel very fortunate to have had her as my teacher. I doubt that I would have pursued vocal music if it not been for her. From every student she demands the best. I think Vivienne believes that each young person that enters her classroom does so for a reason: to grow and to mature. Obviously not all of her students go on to pursue musical or dramatic careers, but by being one of her kids for a few short years and participating in her performing groups they have already learned so much. They have both received and given back much more than they would have by simply attending the required classes. When I was her student, I experienced music in many new ways, and was given the opportunity to explore new ways of expressing that creative side we all have. For that I am truly grateful. Thank you, Viv.

Kristi Heatley Hill
March 1993

SMITH AWARDED BILL DALE SCHOLARSHIP

Mark Smith, senior music major, has been awarded the Bill Dale Scholarship for Outstanding Contribution to the UAH Wind Ensemble. This $500 scholarship, is awarded annually to a member of the Wind Ensemble who has, by virtue of length and quality of service, shown outstanding leadership, musicianship and dedication.

Mark is a twenty-eight year resident of Huntsville and began his career as a percussionist in the seventh grade. He attended Grissom High School, and in 1981 was named Best Jazz Drummer in a competition held at The University of Notre Dame. Mark has performed at Six Flags Over Georgia, Disney World, and, as a member of the group "Jungle," in Yokohama, Japan.

More recently, Mark has been much in demand around Huntsville as a singer and guitarist (he’s a regular at The Mill). He is a student of Mr. Fred Hinger, and on March 19th, presented his junior percussion recital. Mark has been a member of the UAH Wind Ensemble since the spring of 1990.
The Twickenham Singers of North Alabama will be singing performances, in Huntsville and the environs, of Cherubini's "Requiem" and assorted unaccompanied motets with "passion" texts during lent and Holy Week. D. Royce Boyer is Music Director of the "Twicks." An orchestra is being assembled to support the twenty singers in the 18th century Cherubini setting, a work not of the magnitude of Mozart's famous work, but in similar style. Other composers represented on their program are: Jacobus Vaet, Pierre de la Rue, Orlando di Lasso, Antonio Lotti, Anton Bruckner and Edwin Fissinger.

Welcome to a new and exciting year for all UAH music alumni and friends as we join together in support of our Department of Music!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have worked so diligently in preparing the Music Alumni Reunions, the Scholarship Benefit Recital and Reception as well as those who attended the countless number of meetings necessary to firmly establish our organization. I would also like to say a personal "thank you" to Tami Winkelman for her efforts in support of our cause from its inception nearly five years ago.

At the conclusion of our 3rd Annual UAH Music Alumni Reunion on November 14th, 1992, the by-laws were approved by the general membership to establish the UAH Department of Music "Alumni and Friends." Our purpose is to sponsor and support activities which will enhance the welfare and advancement of the UAH Department of Music. Specifically, we plan to establish, promote and maintain communications with alumni and friends as well as sponsor social activities for all alumni and friends.

Membership in the Alumni and Friends is open to all graduates and former students of the UAH Department of Music, and all actively participating friends. I encourage each of you to make your tax-deductible contribution and become an active member of the Alumni and Friends. A membership form is included in this newsletter.

I am proud to introduce to you the Board of Directors of the Alumni and Friends.

President - Carol D. Muery
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The UAH Department of Music continues to offer outstanding musical programs to our community as well as a solid educational program for those aspiring to teach or perform music. The Alumni and Friends are committed to supporting the Department of Music in all its endeavors with vigor and enthusiasm. I challenge each Alumni and Friend to become a member of our organization; stay active by promoting the Department of Music in the community, attending its functions and providing new ideas for our continued growth and success!

Carol D. Muery

MEMBERSHIP FORM

ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF THE UAH DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Yes, please include me among the Alumni and Friends. My tax deductible check is enclosed.

Make check payable to UAH Department of Music, and mail to:
UAH Development Office, 122 Alumni House, Huntsville, AL 35899

☐ Member $15 to $25  ☐ Donor $26 to $99  ☐ Patron $100 or more

Amount enclosed $ __________________________

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Please print your name (and your spouse's, if you want) exactly as you would like it to appear on our list of contributors.
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