

Creation

Spring 2009

The Marshall University 12.0 Jazz Ensemble

Jazz in July



The Marshall University 12.0 Jazz Ensemble has been selected to perform at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Montreux, Switzerland in July 2009. Considered the best-known music festival in Switzerland, the festival has hosted classic musical acts like Ella Fitzgerald and Marvin Gaye and contemporary artists like Alanis Morissette and Alicia Keys since its inception in 1967.

In addition, the group will play at the Jazz à Juan festival in Juan les Pins, France.

"The opportunity to go to the Montreux Jazz Festival is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for most of the students in the ensemble," Dr. Ed Bingham, director of Jazz Studies at Marshall, said. "This

festival is one of the best-recognized events in the world of jazz. The preparation for the concerts in Europe will be a year-long effort that will bring the students to a new performance level. As the jazz studies program at Marshall continues to grow, festivals such as Montreux and Jazz à Juan will showcase the talents of the students and help Marshall increase its prominence."

In addition to the musical growth gained by participating in the festival, the trip will enhance the cultural awareness of the students, Bingham said. Seeing different countries and experiencing life in unfamiliar cultures is an education in itself.

"The memories of a first trip to Europe last forever," Bingham said. "I clearly remember my first trip 'across the

pond,' where seeing the landscape and meeting people in different countries helped me make sense of the history and art appreciation classes that I studied in college. Similarly, I expect that the members of Marshall's Jazz Ensemble '12.0' will carry memories of the trip with them throughout their lives."

Bingham's enthusiasm has spread to his students as well.

"Having the opportunity to travel with the jazz ensemble to Europe is a great educational opportunity both musically and culturally," said senior Chris Clark. "Jazz, as an art form, is thriving in most western European countries, and it will be a unique chance for the ensemble's members to learn about the European take on American music. Having never traveled to Europe personally, I look forward to the diverse cultural array Switzerland, Italy and France have to offer, and I feel both privileged and excited to take part in this endeavor."

The invitation to play at the Montreux festival coincides with the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Marshall University College of Fine Arts. As part of that celebration, COFA invites alumni to travel with the Jazz Ensemble to Europe, July 4-13, 2009. For information on how to join this trip, contact Melanie Griffis, director of development.

The College of Fine Arts is delighted to bring back *Creation* following an extended hiatus. There is a great deal happening in the arts at Marshall and we want to share with you some of the creativity and excitement that defines this college.

A very special exhibition held in the Birke Art Gallery this past winter featured the work of Professor Michael Cornfeld and select students he worked with over a four decade career at Marshall. The exhibition offered an insightful look at the constructive influence faculty can have on students and was a testament to the powerful teaching which has distinguished Michael's work at Marshall. Michael, who currently serves as the associate dean of the college, retires at the end of this year. I want to thank him for his dedication to our students over the 42 years he has been at Marshall. We will miss him, particularly in the dean's office, as he has been a tremendous advocate for students during his tenure as the associate dean and throughout his time as a professor at Marshall.

We are very excited about the Marshall University 12.0 Jazz Ensemble trip this summer to the Montreux, Switzerland Jazz Festival. Our students, under the direction of Dr. Ed Bingham, were invited to perform at Europe's most prestigious festival after a jury reviewed a performance tape of the ensemble.

And talk about exciting! Theatre major Sean Watkins, who played the lead role in last fall's MU Theatre production *George M!*, is headed to New York and Broadway. Sean has been cast in a developing musical about the life of martial arts personality Bruce Lee. Sean is scheduled to graduate this spring and will be on the road to New York as soon as he finishes his classes.

Plans are underway for a 25th anniversary celebration of the College of Fine Arts during the 2009-2010 academic year. The Joan C. Edwards Distinguished Professor of the Arts endowment will provide financial support as we identify artists and performers who will join us to commemorate the anniversary while enhancing the education of our students,



A Message from the Dean

and the Birke Fine Arts Symposium will also complement the anniversary celebration. Next year promises to be an extraordinary year so please make plans to join us as we celebrate all that is good and vital about the arts, our college and the university!

I would be remiss if I did not note the passing in October 2008 of our good friend and colleague, Professor Stan Sporny. Stan taught painting and drawing in the Department of Art and Design for 20 years and he inspired hundreds of students during his time at Marshall. Perhaps his greatest legacy is the Annual Student Juried Exhibition, where the best works from art and design students are displayed. Stan worked tirelessly over the years on the exhibition and its magnitude is the direct result of his efforts. Thank you, Stan.

The College of Fine Arts' mission statement proclaims that "the arts celebrate the best of human endeavor." Now, more than ever, it is important that we embrace the wonder and restorative power of the arts. The arts bring joy and meaning to life, and we all certainly benefit from the arts' ability to lift the spirit. Please, come and experience the arts with us here at Marshall.

Donald Van Horn

Melanie A. Griffis '78 Director of Development, College of Fine Arts



Melanie Griffis joined the College of Fine Arts as director of development in December of 2007. Throughout her 25 year career in fundraising,

Griffis has worked with non-profit organizations and academic institutions in Virginia and West Virginia. Her experience, ranging from alumni relations to capital campaign and strategic planning and from board relations to publications and marketing, gives her a broad understanding of the principles and foundations of advancement. She has served as a professional fundraiser, executive director, and volunteer.

This experience includes a varied and rewarding career focused on fundraising for small nonprofits, independent schools, the arts, and now her alma mater, Marshall University.

Griffis develops funding resources for the College of Fine Arts. Her priorities include establishing relationships with COFA alumni and friends of the arts to

(Continued on page 3)

MICHAEL CORNFELD & ALUMNI EXHIBITION

January 19th - February 5th

Legacy of Learning

Michael Cornfeld has long been the standard of excellence in the visual arts at Marshall University. Professor Cornfeld joined the university in 1967 as an assistant professor and has been known throughout his 42-year career at Marshall as an extraordinary teacher of drawing and weaving.

Cornfeld was the Department of Art and Design chair for 12 years and has been the associate dean of the College of Fine Arts since 2004. His time at MU comes to an end with his retirement at the close of the spring 2009 semester.

"An unfailing advocate for students, Professor Cornfeld has taught and inspired countless individuals, Don Van Horn, dean of the College of Fine Arts, said. "Students seek him out as a mentor, confidant, and friend, and many of those friendships between the teacher and his students continue and flourish long after graduation."



Jaye M. Ike Special Projects Coordinator, College of Fine Arts

Jaye Ike joined the College of Fine Arts as special projects coordinator in August of 2008.

Her experience ranges from working in corporate public relations for Lucent



Technologies and B. Braun, Inc., both Fortune 500 companies, to marketing and development for Touchstone Theatre, a non-profit arts organization near Philadelphia.

Ike also served as editor-in-chief for *The Whitehall News*, a 16-page community newspaper based in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Much of Jaye's work in Allentown focused on building strong community relationships to advance growth of the paper while enhancing the communities the paper served.

As COFA's special projects coordinator, she manages all aspects of public relations and marketing for the college. She plans events and community outreach initiatives and serves as the liaison for all media. Jaye is the editor of *Creation* and oversees all college publications.

Jaye graduated cum laude from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, with a Bachelor of Arts in public relations and an emphasis in marketing. Having grown up a fan of Marshall, she is happy to have come back to Huntington. Jaye's nearly 2-year-old daughter Avery shares in the enthusiasm. If you ask her where her mommy works, she cheers "Go Herd!"

Melanie Griffis (continued from page 2)

develop financial support for the college. She works to increase communication, offer opportunities for alumni to return to Marshall, and creates opportunities to meet Marshall's COFA students in the region. She engages donors in giving to the University Fund and works to maintain and establish scholarships and new endowments for the college as well as the Departments of Art and Design, Music, and Theatre.

A native of Huntington, WV, Griffis returned to Marshall University in 2007 as the first director of development for the College of Fine Arts. The third of four generations of her family to attend the university, Griffis is the mother of two young adult daughters. Ellen is a graphic design major at Marshall in the Department of Art and Design. Her elder daughter, Anna, lives and works in South Carolina.



in the news

Catching up with students, alumni, and faculty.

ART & DESIGN

Associate Professor **Jonathan Cox** completed and installed *The Discovery IV*, an 18' tall sculpture, in front of the College of Creative Arts on the campus of West Virginia University. The finished work is constructed in stainless steel and marble. This is the first permanent public work created for the campus of WVU. It is prominently situated at the main entrance of the College of Creative Arts. Cox also completed and installed five commissioned works for the city of Richmond, Virginia. Four of the works are wall reliefs which are approximately 6-7 feet in diameter and the fifth work is a freestanding sculpture which is 24' high. All are sited permanently at the Fourth Police Precinct Building which is in the geographic center of the city. The work and the new building had a dedication ceremony attended by the mayor and many other city council members on February 7, 2009.

Hayson Harrison, assistant professor, designed the innovative new marketing materials for COFA including designs for the departments of Music, Theatre, and Art and Design. Assistant Professor **Brent Patterson** created an outstanding DVD showcasing faculty and programs within COFA to be used for marketing, recruitment and development. Other colleges are already inquiring about his services. **John Farley**, BFA 2007, is currently serving as director of the Birke Art Gallery, and is an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Art and Design. **Christine Humphrey**, BA 2005, in anthropology with an art history minor, finished her MA in critical and curatorial studies at the University of Louisville,

December, 2008. **Amy Clister Carter**, a Yeager Scholar with a double major in English and art, 1995, and an MA in art 2005, graduated with distinction from the University of New Mexico with an MFA in studio art in 2008.

Eric Gollanek, another Yeager Scholar, who graduated in 1999 with a major in historic preservation and courses primarily in art, art history and history, now has an MA and PhD from the University of Delaware in art history and is assistant professor of art history at Ferris State University, Grand Rapids, MI.

Paul Mullins, BFA 1992, is now a professor of painting at San Francisco State University. **Ed Pauley**, BFA 1984, is the new director of the Kennedy Museum at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio.

MUSIC

The **Music History Committee** has completed a revision of the music history sequence that incorporates a progressive approach to developing students' research and writing skills. Performance majors **Angela Crum** and **Austin Seybert**, members of the Delta Kappa Chapter of Delta Omicron International Music Fraternity, have been selected to perform in the Collegiate Concert at the fraternity's triennial conference July 2009. The students competed against DO collegiate members across the country for this coveted recital. Assistant Professor **Vicki Stroehrer** will be presenting a paper titled, "And we read the short stories of Somerset Maugham aloud to each other": Britten and Auden On This Island" at the Sixth Biennial International Conference on Music Since 1900, held at Keele University

in Keele, Staffordshire, UK, July 2009. **Steve Hall**, percussion coordinator and associate professor, played percussion/drum set in 2008 with national artists such as Mannheim Steamroller, Martin Short, The Diamonds, The Clovers, The Marvellettes, Mac Frampton, Casting Crowns, Avalon, Michael English, and Natalie Grant. **Deanna Bertsche Hamm**, BFA 2002, completed her doctorate in fall 2008 at Florida State University and has just been accepted as a fifer in the Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps in Washington, DC. The Corps serves as escort to the president and is world renowned.

THEATRE

Erika Courtney, production and design major and stage manager for the MU Theatre production *Charlie's Aunt*, recently returned from an interview for one of two available slots in the University of Nevada at Las Vegas MFA program, one of the country's top conservatory programs. Courtney also received a Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) Barbizon Lighting Design Nomination for her work on *The Glass Menagerie*. Marshall senior and theatre major, **Sean Watkins** has been cast as an ensemble member in the proposed workshop production of the new musical based on the life of martial arts master Bruce Lee. The workshop production is now scheduled, the creative team assembled and Sean will leave for New York this spring. Bartlett Sher, a Tony Award nominee for his direction of *South Pacific*, will direct the new David Yazbek-David Henry Hwang musical *Bruce Lee: Journey to the West*, to be produced

on Broadway by Elephant Eye Theatrical. Associate Professor **Jack Cirillo** hosted a workshop for theatre majors and local high school students with famed actress, **Tovah Feldshuh**. Ms Feldshuh appeared in the Marshall Artists Series performance of *Golda's Balcony*. Performance majors **Chelsea Saunders** and **Mary Williams** were finalists at this year's Region IV Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in Greensboro, North Carolina. They performed a scene from the Marshall University Theatre production of *The Glass Menagerie*. **Helen Majdalany**, theatre department program assistant, curated an exhibit entitled *19th Century Africa Through the Eyes of American Painter Travelers*, at the Cabell County Public Library and at the Marshall University Drinko Library. The Huntington Renaissance Center holiday production of *1940's Radio Hour* featured performance majors **Scott Brunner** and **Nathan Mohebbi**. The creative team included adjunct faculty member **Bruce Rous** (director/musical director), Professor **Lang Reynolds** (lighting design), and Associate Professor **Gene Anthony** (choreographer). Associate Professors **Jack Cirillo** and **Gene Anthony** were awarded Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival 2009 Certificates of Meritorious Achievement. **Ola Kraszpuska**, BFA 2007, has arrived in Tallahassee, Florida, to get settled in before starting work on her MFA at Florida State University. **Nick Reynolds**, BFA 2007, is currently an MFA student in the Pennsylvania State University School of Theatre professional training program. He will appear in the spring production of *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, by Stephen Adly Guirgis. **Laura Frye**, BFA 2005, has been invited to join Actors' Equity. She is now a card carrying theatre professional who was seen in the Marshall University Theatre production of *The Tempest* (2005). **Jerry E. Donahue**, BFA 2005, will appear in the film currently in production, *Star Wars: The Mandalorian Legacy* from Group Films and D. Studios Productions, Hollywood, CA. **Brandon McCoy**, BFA 2004, was recently nominated for a Helen Hayes Award,

Best Ensemble, Heart of America, by Naomi Wallace at Rep Stage in Washington DC. Brandon, recently featured in the *American Theatre Magazine*, said "I did an interview concerning the nomination, and I was quick and proud to mention my undergraduate training at Marshall, especially highlighting the work and care of Professors **Jack Cirillo** and **Gene Anthony**. I give them all of the credit in the world for giving me the tools to allow my career to thrive." **Doug Hildeman**, BFA 2003, has accepted a position at the University of Notre Dame as production manager and begins "immediately." Doug recently finished his MFA at Florida State University after completing the Certification Program at Yale. **Robert Kovach**, BFA 1996, scenic and production designer, recently relocated to New York City where his new production company has signed a contract with Junkyard Dog Productions to co-produce a new show. Of Kovach's work in the 2008 production of *OLIVER!*, New York Times reviewer Aileen Jacobson wrote, "...Robert Andrew Kovach's set, brushed occasionally by fog, handsomely suggests the streets, institutions, shops and homes of Victorian England."

GOT NEWS?

Let us know where you are and what you're doing. We'd love to include you in the next edition of *Creation*.

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COFA philanthropist J. Kaye Trippy and Trippy scholarship recipient John Daniels share a moment together.

Legacy of Leadership

J. Kaye Trippy, donor of the Elizabeth, Harriett and J.K. Trippy Scholarship and the J. Kaye Trippy Scholarship in the Fine Arts, died in January 2009. The Trippy scholarships, along with a number of other endowed scholarships established through the generosity of several generations of many wonderful donors, provide students in the fine arts at Marshall University with significant financial support vital to their studies. Leading the way as a mentor, philanthropist and valued friend of the college and university, Mr. Trippy knew first-hand the importance of scholarship support.

Lance West, Vice President for Development at Marshall, knew Mr. Trippy best, "J. Kaye came to Marshall in the 1930s from New York. He rode the train from upstate New York to attend Marshall because he could afford to go to Marshall. The cost of education in his home state was much higher and he had to work and struggle to go to college." He completed his education, stayed in Huntington and became a much admired and highly successful businessman.

"Because it was so hard for him financially, he wanted to make sure that he did everything possible to help students so they would not have to struggle like he did. He was a wonderful person and I miss him," said Don Van Horn, Dean of the College of Fine Arts. "I had the privilege of getting to know J. Kaye Trippy and I was touched by his dedication to the arts, and more importantly, to students."

In 2001 J. Kaye Trippy established the Elizabeth, Harriet and J. Kaye Trippy Scholarship. An endowed fund, the scholarship is granted to students studying in the Department of Music at Marshall University. Since the establishment of this scholarship, 15 students have benefited from Mr. Trippy's contribution. Trippy continued his commitment to helping students reach their goals. He established his second scholarship in October, 2008. At a small gathering to sign his scholarship documents, the 97-year-old chatted with Marshall senior and Trippy Scholarship recipient, John Daniels, about his education and future plans.

Leading the way as a mentor, philanthropist and valued friend of the college and university, Mr. Trippy knew first-hand the importance of scholarship support.

"I endowed a scholarship fund," Trippy said. "This is an investment in someone's life. I feel that every student should have the opportunity to go to college if they want to. I worked hard to save the money to go to college and continued working while I was at Marshall. My gifts are to help young people get an education....maybe they can have a little easier time because they have a scholarship. Education is important... it is the most important investment I can make toward a student's future." But Trippy was much more interested in hearing Daniels' aspirations than talking about how Trippy himself was making them a reality.

For Daniels, the scholarship made it possible for him to attend Marshall. "Without your scholarship, I would not be able to afford to go to school here," Daniels explained. "Coming from out of state and with only a few academic scholarships, the Trippy scholarship allowed me to be a full-time student without having to work to pay for school. That way, I can focus solely on my academics."

Daniels continued, "My wife came to Marshall before we were married, so I followed her here. The Trippy scholarship gave me an opportunity to experience life in this city and this part of the country in the most positive way. I have been given many opportunities that I certainly would not have had otherwise." Daniels is working toward a Music Education degree. "I love learning to teach," he said, "and I love to teach. Since

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New Developments

Student Scholarship Stimulus Support

Every student and alumnus of Marshall University feels the effects of the current economic situation in our nation. Like most colleges and universities, Marshall's earnings from endowed scholarship funds have been significantly reduced because of the changes in the market and investment performance. In plain language – most of our scholarship endowments will not produce income to fund our scholarships for next academic year. The College of Fine Arts is contacting the donors and relatives of donors of established endowed scholarship funds to seek their guidance and their additional support to fund the unmet scholarship needs of the college.

J. Kaye Trippy (continued from page 6)

the majority of my time is devoted to coursework and my studies at this point in my life, I am able to pursue areas outside of my major that are interesting to me. I hope to be fluent in many languages someday, and I have started learning Japanese in and out of class. I reiterate my gratitude in having the opportunity to take classes outside my major, which of course would not be made possible without the financial assurance provided by Mr. Trippy and his family.

"Mr. Trippy was an amazing person, Daniels said. "He was so generous, and it was a pleasure to have had many meetings with him. I always appreciated his stories, and he never seemed to run out of them. His experiences have helped me to appreciate my current situation. I was always grateful for his genuine interest in the recipients of his scholarship. He was truly interested in the pursuits of students and was eager to see them succeed." Dean Van Horn echoed these Daniels' sentiments.

"He was a wonderful human being and he was very interested in helping students be successful in their studies," Van Horn said. "I last saw him in November and I will carry the memory of those bright, twinkling eyes with me forever. Even at our last meeting, Mr. Trippy was talking about scholarships and how he could assist students studying in the fine arts."

If you would like to make a special gift to assure that COFA's outstanding students continue to receive scholarship awards for the next academic year, please contact Melanie Griffis, director of development, to discuss how you can help with this funding need for our students.

Marching Thunder Band Complex – The March is On!!

The Marshall University Board of Governors has approved plans creating an instructional and practice complex for the MU Marching Band – the first time in the band's history that it will have a classroom large enough to accommodate the entire band for indoor rehearsals! We need your help to make the Marching Thunder Band Complex a reality.

The Auxiliary Gym on the southeast corner of the Henderson Center will be recreated as a band classroom and rehearsal facility, offices for the band director, and storage for uniforms. A storage building, compatible in brick and style to the new residence halls, will be constructed to the east of the Henderson Center. The band will have its own practice facility on a new field – also to the east of the HC. All of these changes bring the band together for rehearsal – rain or shine --- in one place for the very first time!

The Marching Thunder represents the university in Conference USA, at regional band festivals, parades, and state occasions. They serve as goodwill ambassadors for Marshall University, the Department of Music and the state of West Virginia, and are instrumental in recruiting students interested in the university. Members include music majors – as well as students who simply enjoy participating as musicians in the ensemble.

You can help by making a tax deductible contribution to the Marshall University Foundation – Band Complex. Contact COFA's director of development.

MU Jazz Ensemble Invited to Montreux Jazz Festival

The 12.0 Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Ed Bingham, professor of music, has accepted an invitation to perform at the Montreux Jazz Festival in Switzerland in July 2009. With partial support from the Joan C. Edwards Jazz Endowment, MU's Jazz band members are working hard to raise the funds to perform at this prestigious festival. Gifts to the COFA Travel Abroad Fund help to reduce the personal cost for each student performing with the ensemble. To make a special gift to assist the Jazz Ensemble, contact COFA's director of development.

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Q & A

with Julie Jackson

Julie Jackson became the Department of Theatre chair in July 2008. Before coming to Marshall, she served as chair of the Department of Performing Arts at Indiana University Northwest in Gary, Indiana.

Don Van Horn, dean of the College of Fine Arts said, "It was clear to me through the interview process that Julie Jackson would bring excellent credentials and a broad understanding of what was needed to help move our excellent theatre program to new heights. She has boundless energy and an engaging personality – both essential traits for successful leadership."

Tell us a little about you? I was born in Wisconsin but I am from Chicago where I spent most of my professional life as a

theatre designer and teacher. I earned a BS in cultural history from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and then went to architecture school. I dropped out before finishing the Master's degree because I wanted to join the circus and settled for theatre. I earned an MFA in theatre arts from the Goodman School of Drama, School of the Chicago Art Institute. I worked summer stock with Jason Robards and Lynn Redgrave and then in off loop theatre.

Over 20 years I worked at a lot of Chicago theatres, but always went back to the Candlelight Playhouse where I designed, I don't know, maybe 17 musicals. The only one I didn't love was *They're Playing Our Song* and that was because they changed their clothes too many times to make up for what I thought were boring songs. Nonetheless, I love musicals. I also taught full time at Columbia College in Chicago for 15 years. I went back to UW in the nineties and earned my PhD in drama and performance. I would rather be a student than anything else in the world and would be one still, but the pay isn't very good.

What brought you to Marshall? The remarkable combination of theatre professionalism and excellent academics on this campus. Most of my teaching life was spent in an urban based conservatory program dedicated to professional training. I started out as a teaching artist and moved toward becoming an artist teacher. I wanted to be an educator, not a trainer, and Marshall offered me

a wonderful opportunity to work in an excellent academic community without abandoning my commitment to the profession I love. Also, as much as I appreciate conservatory training, it is extremely expensive and not available to a wonderful pool of talented and dedicated students without considerable financial means. Finally, Marshall students have a remarkable work ethic, but I discovered that once I got here, not before.

What are your goals for the Department of Theatre? I hope to increase enrollment and theatre attendance. This is a terrific program. Our faculty, staff and students are at the top of their game and we need to let prospective students know this. Increased enrollment will allow us to expand our production season and thereby better serve the campus and Huntington communities. I also hope to bring more artists to campus and to expand off campus opportunities for our students. There's more, but these are the first steps.

What's your favorite place in Huntington? Ritter Park is my home away from home. In fact, I think I spend more time there than I do at home. The rose garden is already showing signs of spring. Also, I was pleased to discover that you can get a darn fine hot dog in Huntington, though there is room for improvement. The secret to a great Chicago hot dog is celery salt. They should offer celery salt so I don't have to carry my own!