

# Occasional Updates

*Volume III, No. 1 - December 2019*

To our Augsburg Music community,

It is a privilege to share with you, once again, the many exciting activities and events occurring in the Department of Music at Augsburg University. As I write this message, we have just completed our [40th year of Advent Vespers](#); and, as always, we have ushered in this most anticipated time of the year with hymns, anthems, orchestral works, and readings holding great meaning. Planning for next year's Vespers begins almost immediately, giving you some idea of the time and effort the department gives to this signature occasion in the life of the university.

In the links that follow (I hope you will peruse all of them), you will learn about many initiatives in the department. As you likely know, this is Augsburg's sesquicentennial year, and the [music department](#) was active not only in the kickoff gala but also in a collage concert in Hoversten Chapel the next day. It was a marvelous portrait of the work our ensembles are doing, and our directors and students showed exemplary effort in performing so well so early in the semester! Our [new departmental advisory council](#) met for the first time on October 30. We have a wonderful group of friends, alumni, and colleagues who will provide invaluable feedback, encouragement, and advice on our work. In February, [Tienda](#), a chamber opera commissioned by the Schubert Club from [Reinaldo Moya](#), our own widely recognized professor of composition and theory, will be performed in Hoversten. This is a not-to-be-missed experience that will incorporate professional artists along with The Augsburg Choir and Augsburg Orchestra. Please note our [events calendar](#) for many other opportunities to share in the musical learning and growth that is occurring day-by-day on our campus!



We are also grateful for our growing number of relationships with the professional music community in the Twin Cities and beyond. In October, we hosted the inimitable [Spektral Quartet](#), for a remarkable concert at MacPhail's Antonello Hall, and sessions on business models and community engagement. Our new quartet-in-residence is the Jamison String Quartet, whose members are invigorating our strings and orchestra program. We are also host to SOTA, the Singers of This Age, that are part of Vocalessence and are "in residence" at Augsburg for regular rehearsals and other activities.



This past year, we have also been richly blessed with new and significant investments that are supporting scholarships to help us attract and retain outstanding students and to pursue our goals of inclusion, access, and equity for prospective students. We have instituted a nation-leading process of reviewing prospective students that is both welcoming and encouraging, and schools around the country have shown interest in learning more about what we're doing. Our dedicated [faculty](#) are incredibly busy, showing every day not only their total commitment to students but also their own professional development in national and international forums. I know you will enjoy reading about this stellar group of individuals who are dedicated to Augsburg's values and mission. In short, this is a very busy place, and we invite you to partake of our work in any ways you can - particularly through attending concerts and staying in touch with our activities. If you know of potential Augsburg music students, please share our application and [Music Exploration Day information](#) with them.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not do two additional things: First, I send to you our very best wishes for the holiday season. We are fortunate here at Augsburg to be the beneficiaries of many religious and cultural traditions, and even as the season focuses heavily on Christian beliefs and traditions, we celebrate our diversity

and the deep religious expressions of our colleagues and friends of many backgrounds and faiths. Whatever your particular faith perspectives, let us join in the wish for peace, justice, and equitable opportunities for all the world's peoples!

Secondly, we express profound gratitude to those who have supported, and continue to support, the transcendent values of music in a world that desperately needs more harmony, more empathy, and more mutual understanding - all values that are embodied in the musical experience. I hope that you will [consider a financial gift](#) to Augsburg music in support of our incredible students who seek to carry the values of music to communities as professional leaders, teachers, therapists, and performers. You can help us right what is often, in today's world, an "upside down kingdom" by investing in the gift of music!

With very best wishes now and throughout the New Year,

David E. Myers, Ph.D.  
Department Head for Music Studies

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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

*Below are just a few highlights of many upcoming concerts & events at Augsburg. For a full listing, check out our [Events Calendar](#).*



**Saturday, January 18, 2020**  
[Augsburg Bassoon Workshop](#)



**Friday, January 24, 2020**  
[Music Exploration Day](#)



**Saturday, January 25, 2020**  
[Augsburg Honor Band Festival](#)



**February 21-22, 2020**  
[Tienda \(A Chamber Opera\)](#)  
Music by: Reinaldo Moya  
Libretto by: Caitlin Vincent  
Tickets required, available in early January

## DEPARTMENT NEWS:

NEW Fall 2019 a **Music Student Advisory Committee** was created to promote a healthy music community by fostering communication between student and faculty. Inaugural members include: **Molly Tengwall '21**, music education; **Paul McCoyer '22**, Music Performance; **Laura Tsai '21**, Music Therapy; **Stephanie Johnson '22** Music Therapy with Kristina Boerger as the faculty advisor.

[Kristina Boerger's](#) spring performance schedule included singing the Holy Week liturgies at Saint Ignatius of Antioch in Manhattan, singing a concert entitled *The Origins of Polyphony* sung with Pomerium on the Gotham Early Music series at Church of the Transfiguration in Manhattan, and conducting Johann Adolf Hasse's symphonic choral *Te Deum in D* at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. Summer activities included appearing with the Rose Ensemble in their farewell concert at the Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis, followed shortly by a study and performance residency in the Kakhetian region of the Republic of Georgia. In late July, Boerger directed the Summer Workshop of the Schola Cantorum of Syracuse in works by Dowland, Gibbons, and Tallis. The summer also saw the release of Pomerium's latest CD project, [Musical Games of the Renaissance: A Century of Musical Ingenuity, 1410-1510](#), where which Boerger is featured on two tracks as a soprano soloist.

[Jill Dawe](#) is back on campus after a sabbatical dedicated to exploring the intersections of culture, music and community. October included a performance with visiting Slovenian faculty artist, Matjaž Drevenšek as part of an Augsburg Collage Concert; reading new songs by local composer George Maurer for Nautilus Music-Theater's monthly *Rough Cuts* series; and playing chamber music by the esteemed Bulgarian composer, Vassil Kazandjiev at the University of Minnesota. Continuing a long-standing interest in Augsburg's West Bank neighborhood, Dawe is a lead in strategic planning for The Cedar Cultural Center where she volunteers as co-president of the Board of Directors. Upcoming: collaborative development of a new music-theater piece written by Katherine Bergman and Katherine Glover.

[Ariel Detwiler](#), Adjunct instructor of Bassoon, was a featured soloist with the Minnetonka Symphony Orchestra on October 26 and 27. The concert series, entitled *Amazing Beasts and Creatures*, is a pair of two sensory-friendly concerts for all ages. Ariel was also featured with two solo performances: on the contrabassoon solo in the *Mother Goose Suite* by Maurice Ravel, as well as on the bassoon concerto, *Der Alte Brummbaer* (the grumpy old bear) comic polka by Julius Fucik. Performances were held Saturday October 26 at the Minnetonka Community Center, and Sunday October 27 at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

[Peter J. Durow](#), Adjunct Instructor of Music, Human Development, and Learning recently joined the artistic personnel for the 10th annual Byzantine Choral Festival which was held at St. Constantine Ukrainian Catholic Church in Northeast Minneapolis on October 5-6, 2019. Peter's chamber choir of young professionals, [From Age to Age](#), was one of the featured guest ensembles in this year's festival. From Age to Age will release a new recording this December entitled, *Sounds of the Season*. The choir was also selected by blind audition to perform at the 2020 Central and North Central ACDA Conference in Milwaukee. [peterjdurow.com](http://peterjdurow.com)



[Nancy Grundahl](#) received the F. Melius Christiansen Lifetime Achievement Award - So well deserved! Check out this [Facebook link for Nancy's acceptance](#).

As one of the recipients of a Sesquicentennial Grant, the **Riverside Wind Quintet** ([Trudi Anderson](#), flute; [Merilee Klemp](#), oboe; Jennifer Gerth, clarinet; [Chuck Hodgson](#), French Horn; and Laurie Merz, bassoon) performed a program on September 28 featuring music from Augsburg's large Nordic collection of music. The concert featured music of Carl Nielsen, Joonas Kokkonen, Lars Erik-Larsen, and Ola Gjeilo. The grant also provided funding towards the completion of cataloguing this gift of scores from the American Scandinavian Foundation. Additionally, the ensemble received a grant in

November 2019 from the American Scandinavian Foundation for the presentation of a concert next September of rare works of chamber music from our Nordic collection. The Riverside Winds have also been asked to present this program for the Norway House next season!

**Merilee Klemp** performed a series of concerts in early September called, *A Hapsburg House Party*, with soprano Andrea Leap performing music of rarely-heard composer Marianna Martinez and Handel. Named by the [Star Tribune on Sept. 8](#) as one of “the week’s best classical concerts. Over the summer, Ms. Klemp was a soloist in the inaugural season of the Bach Roots Festival performing Bach’s *b minor Mass* and Bach’s *Cantata #12* in a vespers service, conducted by Matthew Olson. Summer activities also included performing as a member of the Lake Harriet Pops Orchestra and the Minnesota Sinfonia.

Professor Klemp served on the panel last season for the William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board in the selection process of the Fulbright U.S. Student Program for the 2019-2020 grants (woodwind panel).



Congrats to [Ryan LaBoy](#), director of the Cedar Singers, and ensemble members who represented Augsburg University at the annual Nordic American Thanksgiving Breakfast! Not only did our students sing well, but we had 100% attendance, everyone in full concert attire, and all singers carpooled and arrived at our venue early before 6:30 AM!!

Members heard speeches from the likes of UMN President Joan T.A. Gable and Minnesota's Lt. Governor Peggy Flannigan. We also heard native Norwegian, Swedish, Danish, Finnish, and Icelandic speakers, ate yummy

cardamom buns, and saw the most Norwegian sweaters one could ever expect to see (they were trying to break the Guinness Record)! All of this before 9:00 am, and with the understanding that we had an advent vespers rehearsal later the same night

[Erika Svanoe's](#) *Steampunk Suite* for Wind Ensemble received its Costa Rica premiere with Augsburg Orchestra conductor Rafael Rodriguez and the National Bands of Costa Rica. The fourth movement, *Barnum and Tesla's Tandem Bicycle*, was also performed by the Minnesota All-State Band this summer. Erika recently completed a new piece titled *Mary Shelley Meets Frankenstein* for Wind Ensemble was premiered by the University of New Hampshire this fall. Her piece *Band of Heroes: An Interactive Musical Adventure* will be published by Alfred Music this spring and her arrangement of *Four Grainger Songs* for voice and chamber winds will be published through G. Schirmer on Demand.



First Lady Gwen Walz hosted the Augsburg leadership team earlier this month. KUDOS to **Molly Tengwall (Junior, Music Ed)** - Her musical performance kicked off the evening! ([post](#))

[Sonja Thompson](#), was in residency early this October at Wild Rice Retreat Center in Bayfield, and participated in the “Any Woman Can” all day festival of women in music at the Dunsmore Room at Crooners in Fridley this past September. Sonja had additional performances on November 12-13, presenting *Songs to the Moon* — Open Eye Figure Theatre, and the Grieg Festival with Edvard Grieg Society on November 15-17.