



Seattle Pacific University's

Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts Newsletter

creators

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Music Therapy: Making a Connection That Only Music Can

If you ask Betsy Pinney what she loves to do, one of the first things she'll say is, "Play the harp." But the Seattle Pacific University junior never thought she'd be able to do so professionally.

In fact, as a freshman she planned to be a nursing major. It was an early morning music theory class that changed everything.

Taught by Assistant Professor of Music Carlene Brown, the theory class covered what Pinney expected: music fundamentals, the basics of musical keys, the complexities of musical analysis. But the class also introduced her to something she hadn't considered before: a career in music therapy.

Now, thanks to a new Seattle Pacific major in music therapy, the first of its kind in Washington state, Pinney will one day play her harp professionally — but not in a concert hall or classroom. Instead, as a trained music therapist, she will utilize her musical and analytical skills to help people heal in settings such as hospitals and nursing homes.

"Music is a powerful way to reach people," says Pinney. "You can connect with them in ways most things can't." Carlene Brown, the program's director, agrees. "Words aren't the only means to get at what is going on. Music provides a release and a way for people to respond and work out issues."

Music therapy offers many career opportunities, and nationally, the number of openings for music therapists exceeds the number of qualified candidates.

A relatively new field, music therapy came about after World War II as a way to aid recovering soldiers. Today, however, music therapists serve all ages and conditions, from autistic kids working on their motor skills to middle-aged adults recuperating from surgery to elderly people suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

Music therapy is a little bit like putting together a puzzle. First the therapist gets a picture of what a person needs. Then she or he uses music to fill that need. For one person, the therapist might perform meditative music to reduce stress; for the next person, the therapist might have the subject write song lyrics to express inner turmoil or tap a drum to improve motor skills.

It sounds simple. But the countless variables encountered in working with clients means that music therapists need to be creative, empathetic, and sensitive.

To develop these traits in her students, Brown oversees a rigorous program that combines high musicianship skills and proficiency in multiple instruments with academic requirements, such as cross-disciplinary courses in psychology, biology, and anatomy and physiology.

Music therapy students Laura Frank and Betsy Pinney (above) are forming a student music therapy group open to all SPU students. Pinney (below) has played harp for 10 years.



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Students Design

Bible Study in a Box

Of all the things you've checked out of a library, was one of them ever a toolkit to help you better understand the Beatitudes from Christ's Sermon on the Mount? No? Then you haven't been to the Seattle Pacific University Library. There, thanks to a collaboration between University Ministries (UM) and senior visual communications students, patrons can check out a Blessed Box filled with innovative approaches to understanding some of the most significant teachings of Jesus.

The germ of the idea came when Matthew Koenig, associate director of University Ministries, received a Cross pen and pencil set in recognition of five years on staff at SPU. "While I very much liked the pen and pencil," he remembers, "I was wild about the box it came in." He liked the size of it, the feel, and the fun of opening a box in excited anticipation of what was inside.

"That's the way we should feel about the Bible," Koenig continues. "I asked myself, 'What if we could

put everything for a great Bible study in a box like that? And why limit the contents to printed media? There could be all kinds of things in there."

He wanted something interactive and intuitive, something created just for SPU students by SPU students and their UM advisor. Something that dovetailed with the chapel program, which is focusing on the Beatitudes.

He knew where to turn. Karen Gutowsky, associate professor of art/visual communication, was looking for an independent study project for her senior students in which they would create something for UM. Partnerships between the fine arts and other disciplines across campus, such as a no-smoking campaign in collaboration with the School of Health Sciences and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, teach graphic design majors how to utilize the elements of good design while participating in real-world applications of their talents.

The contents of the Blessed Box, agreed Koenig and the students, should provide a variety of prompts and ways of raising questions to stimulate conversation around the Beatitudes.

A map would lead "travelers" on a journey in which they get to know each other, dig into Scripture,

and contemplate how lives lived by the Beatitudes might be different.

A story would help travelers imagine the people who gathered on the mountain to hear from Jesus.

Icons on the map would match icons on printed questions to help travelers gain insight into Christ's teaching on the qualities of those who are a part of the kingdom of heaven.

Quirky three-dimensional objects such as a Roman soldier and a Jesus pencil topper would help travelers connect with the biblical text and have fun doing it. "They're not game pieces," says Koenig, "but if you wanted to make up a game that uses them, who are we to stop you?"

Lastly, a pen would be included for marking the outside of the box with a prayer, a challenge, a hope, or some other "message" to inspire the next person or group that used the box.

Socially, intellectually, or through just plain goofy play, users of the box would be exposed to the thinking of church fathers, the Reformation, and modern scholars.

Along the way Koenig demoed the various elements of the Blessed Box with students, before turning them over to the box-builders. "Karen and her graphic design students were fantastic. The last day of final exams, when they had been without sleep for a week, they stayed until the end to finish construction. I shudder to think how much this would have cost if we had been required to pay them."

The design students met often with Koenig and studied every aspect of what was needed and how best to execute each concept. They called themselves the "University Ministries Packaging Group." They divided the duties, and, despite their diverse graphic styles, each was able to leave his or her distinct imprint on the finished product.

"They were able to let go of sole authorship and together meet the client's needs," Gutowsky says. "It's exciting for them to see what they did as a vehicle to communicate real concepts and ideas."



Mongolian Artist in Free Concert

World-renowned master of the morin khuur, Li Bo presented a free public concert at Seattle Pacific University's McKinley Hall on February 18.

Born in Inner Mongolia in 1955, Li Bo began playing the morin khuur, or Mongolian horse-head fiddle, at the age of 10. He has been a professional musician since the age of 15, was the head morin khuur player with the Inner Mongolian Radio/Television network, and taught in the School of Music at the Inner Mongolia Normal University. Since 1995 the award-winning artist has lived in Japan and performed internationally, including at Seattle's Northwest Folklife Festival.

"Arts have a way of educating the community to help it become more globally aware," says Kim Gilnett, marketing associate in the fine arts at SPU. "Part of the reason we are able to have him on campus is our advantageous urban location." This quarter Li Bo is a visiting professor at the University of Washington.

The concert was offered free to the SPU community under the auspices of The Lawrence and Ruth Schoenhals Fine Arts Symposium. Lawrence Schoenhals served for 28 years at Seattle Pacific in a variety of administrative positions, including as head of the Music Department.



Acclaimed artists such as Li Bo expose SPU students to world-class music and rich cultural heritage.

Music Therapy

Continued from front



Carlene Brown and Betsy Pinney know how healing music can be.

Students also observe and work with board certified music therapists out in the field; specialize in areas such as special education, psychology, or physical science; do a six-month internship somewhere in the United States after graduation; and take a national board certification exam. Pinney arranged a required practicum session at the Bailey-Boushay House, a residential care community for people living with AIDS and other life-threatening illnesses.

Throughout the demanding program, Brown makes sure to keep the degree in perspective for students. “A benefit of having a music therapy program at SPU is that it allows for a dialogue about Christian values,” she says. “And how to integrate those values into therapy.”

Ultimately, she reminds students that it’s not about them or their personal glory. “They need to understand that music therapy is true service. That its end goal is healing and uplift and hope. That using their music is actually God’s work. And that’s cool.”

Which is something Pinney says inspires her. “Some day I want to open a house for women who have been abused physically, sexually, emotionally,” she says. “It will be a place for women to live safely and comfortably while they receive the therapy they need.”

Spring Arts Calendar



April 3
Thalia Symphony Concert

*First Free Methodist Church.

April 23-25, 30—May 2
Dancing at Lughnasa

** by Brian Friel. Michael remembers the five women who raised him, unmarried sisters who make the most of their simple existence in rural Ireland in the 1930s.. Matinee May 2, 2:00 p.m. E.E. Bach Theatre.

May 2
Gospelfest 2009

Suggested donation \$5 and a nonperishable food item for Northwest Harvest. 7 p.m. Royal Brougham Pavilion.

May 22
Wind Symphony Concert

First Free Methodist Church.

May 26-30
See Rock City

** by Arlene Hutton. A tender portrayal of the married life, showing the best of the human spirit and its abilities to overcome obstacles. McKinley Backstage Theatre.

May 29
Thalia Symphony Concert

* First Free Methodist Church.

* Ticket required. Call Thalia Box Office at 206-281-2048.

** Ticket required. Call Fine Arts Box Office at 206-281-2959.

All performances are open to the public and begin at 7:30 p.m. unless otherwise indicated. For ticket and other information, www.spu.edu/finearts, or call 206-281-2959.

Visit our website!
www.spu.edu/finearts

Get hired for being tech savvy.

Discover concerts that surprise.

Plumb the inner world of the Blessed Box.

Grasp the power of music therapy to heal.



Inside!

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Major Seattle Theatres

Request SPU Students

Because they are committed

to the process of making good theatre, Seattle Pacific University theatre students with technical skills are in demand by some of the most prestigious professional theatres in town.

"I get calls asking for our students," says Don Yanik, chair of the Theatre Department. "The theatre people say that our students are so well trained and show such initiative to take on any task. I'm very proud of them and their skills. The world of theatre is not always the most hospitable of places. To change that culture in a positive way will take students like ours."

Part of that can-do initiative is seen in the leadership responsibility given to students of technical theatre in seven primary positions: stage manager, technical assistant, master electrician, lighting engineer, sound/audio engineer, props manager, and costumer. They must ensure that in whatever area they take charge the elements of production are in keeping with the goals of the show.

Yanik, who is also professor of scenic design and a Fulbright Scholar, tries to build some kind of challenge into every show to test the mettle of his technical crew. For last year's Seattle Pacific production of "Honk!" he designed two turntables (one of them 20 feet in diameter) that could rotate in either direction and at any speed. The complicated computerized machinery was subject to unexpected breakdowns like drive chain breaks. During one performance one part of a costume slid across the stage and caught in the chain. During another, a piece of the equipment simply flew off.

But student technical director Kate Jordan rose to the occasion and her reputation for handling the unexpected helped her find work at Seattle Repertory Theatre, where A-list actors such as Meryl Streep and Samuel L. Jackson perform.

At SPU, students receive cross-training in all aspects of live theatre. "The nature of theatre is collaborative. Students learn to do it all," says Yanik, who has designed more than 250 productions, including for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and scores of SPU productions. In addition, he was restoration designer for the home of C.S. Lewis in Oxford, England. "When a student is ready, they will get to design something. That way, when they leave here, they are willing to do anything for the good of the show."

Saying he is blessed to do two things he truly enjoys, Yanik is able to design his own creative visions and to pass his knowledge on to others. "I want my students to be better than me," he says. "It's their time." Yanik models the collaborative spirit by teaching, designing, and managing the entire production program. In other educational institutions, those are typically separate jobs. "I have professional expectations; my standards are high," Yanik says, noting how the students "do it all" and that paying patrons deserve only quality. "We teach students not to need us." In that way they discover what it takes to succeed.



Theatre professor and set designer Don Yanik says he would put SPU theatre students up against those from much larger universities with bigger budgets.

Sacred Sounds

a Two-Performance Sellout

Celebrating its ninth year, Seattle Pacific University's *The Sacred Sounds of Christmas* played for the first time to two sell-out houses at Seattle's famed Benaroya Hall last November.

One of the premier concert venues, Benaroya's world-class Taper Auditorium provides a quality experience for what has become one of the city's most popular Advent performances.

People are looking for hope, say SPU-concert organizers. The program presents the Christmas story from the promise of Christ's coming to the advent of his birth, and it is the only true Christmas concert event at Benaroya (among a plethora of more secular holiday offerings).

Sacred Sounds showcased these accomplished Seattle Pacific performing groups: Concert Choir, Chamber Singers, Women's Choir, Men's Choir, Wind Symphony, String Orchestra, and Flute Ensemble. There were nearly 230 music and theatre students on stage.

Readings represented the breadth of Christendom and included those from the Orthodox tradition, the English Prayer Book, and the words of Pope John Paul II.

"*The Sacred Sounds of Christmas* is one of many ways we seek to serve our community and fulfill our vision to engage the culture and change the world with the hope of the gospel," says SPU President Philip Eaton.

"The concert surprises people," adds Kim Gilnett, marketing associate in the Division of Fine Arts. "Not everyone in Seattle knows that SPU has such an incredibly strong music program." Judging from the applause of the 4,600 people who were present for the most recent *Sacred Sounds*, that situation is rapidly changing.



Brass and strings beautifully blend for *Sacred Sounds*.