

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

# artsKSU

MAGAZINE

2019-2020



KENNESAW STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

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**MAGAZINE**  
**2019-2020**

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Whitespace Gallery, Atlanta, GA.

Photography by Mike Jensen, courtesy of the Zuckerman  
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# A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



**T**he College of the Arts at Kennesaw State University is home to a dynamic community of artists and scholars, committed to advancing the academic mission of our student-centered public institution. The School of Art & Design, Department of Dance, School of Music and Department of Theatre & Performance Studies produce over 100 performances, exhibitions and events each year, vital to the ecology of our campus and Atlanta community. Our highly accomplished faculty and staff prepare our students for success in a complex global society through transformational scholarly and artistic engagement. Partnerships with professional art and community organizations ensure our relevance to our artistic practices and give our students experiences that are unique to ArtsKSU.

## **WE ARE ABOUT**

Visionary Ideas;  
Craftsmanship and Technique;  
Critical Thinking and Research;  
Point of View and Self-Authorship

## **OUR STUDENTS EXPERIENCE**

Inspiring Faculty and Staff;  
Acclaimed Guest Artists;  
Professional Performances and Exhibitions;  
Experiential and Applied Learning;  
Transformative Growth

## **WE ARE CONNECTED** by our

Partnerships;  
Collaborations;  
Outreach;  
Festivals;  
Presenting Season

## **WE VALUE**

Diversity and Inclusion;  
Innovation;  
Mentoring;  
Rigor and Excellence;  
Engagement;  
Community

Thank you for your continued support and patronage of ArtsKSU.

**Ivan Pulinkala, Ed.D.**  
*Dean, College of the Arts*





# Atlanta Symphony Orchestra performs at KSU

*Pianist Tengku Irfan plays Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 2*

*Photo: Robert Spano conducts the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra at KSU in 2019.*

By Kathie Beckett

**K**ennesaw State University's School of Music hosted the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) in October 2019. In his penultimate season as Music Director of the ASO, Robert Spano led the orchestra in the Preludes to Acts I and III of Wagner's *Lohengrin* (1850), two pieces engineered to excite the most exquisite yearning and all-out exhilaration.

Then, Malaysian virtuoso and ASO guest artist Tengku Irfan threw his "sheer incisiveness and power" (*The New York Times*) into the impish charm and pianistic thunder of Bartók's Piano Concerto No. 2 (1931).

Tengku, 20, began piano lessons at 7 and made his debut at 11, performing Beethoven's Piano Concerto WoO4 and improvising his own cadenzas with Claus Peter Flor and the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO). He has performed as soloist with orchestras worldwide under Neeme Järvi, Kristjan Järvi, Robert Spano, Osmo Vänskä, George Stelluto, Jeffrey Milarsky, among others.

Tengku's previous performances include the Montreal la Virée classique Festival (invitation from Kent Nagano), with AXIOM, MDR Sinfonieorchester, Aspen Chamber Symphony, Juilliard, Singapore Symphony, Sao Paulo State Youth, Estonian National Symphony, Malaysian & Lexington Philharmonic, Peoria Symphony, Aspen Philharmonic and Minnesota orchestras, among others. In conjunction with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra's 20th Season Anniversary, he was appointed as the MPO Youth Ambassador to cultivate appreciation in classical music among the new generation and inspire young musicians.

Brahms' First Symphony, a riveting and unforgettable symphonic journey from the stormy opening measures to its triumphant conclusion, closed the sold-out performance. •



# RESEARCH IN THE ARTS SERIES: "The Aesthetic Brain"

Dr. Anjan Chatterjee explores art and our brains



By Lauren Richmond and Kathie Beckett

**W**hat makes us appreciate beautiful art? Is art an essential part of being human? As part of the 2019-2020 Research in the Arts series, the College of the Arts (COTA) hosted guest lecturer Dr. Anjan Chatterjee in January 2020. He discussed his groundbreaking research using neurology to explore our understanding of evolution, production, and appreciation of art.

The lecture, "The Aesthetic Brain," explored Chatterjee's research presented in his book of the same title. Delving into aesthetics with a neuroscientific lens, he examined the significance of art, beauty, and pleasure. Is art

inherent neurologically, or is it a mere accident or outlier in our brain function? Why do we find people, places and even numbers beautiful and how that is related to pleasure? He discussed the challenges of defining, interpreting and understanding art from humanity's first paintings in caves to contemporary art. Why is something that is seemingly useless—outside of its beauty—feel like such a fundamental part of our humanity? What if appreciating beauty is not just pleasurable, but essential to our survival?

An Elliot Professor and Chief of Neurology at Pennsylvania Hospital, Dr. Chatterjee is also the founding director of the Penn Center for Neuroaesthetics. His main research interests include neuroaesthetics, neuroethics, and spatial cognition as it relates to language. He continues to explore these and other areas of neurology in the quest for understanding the human brain.

The event was designed to tie in with KSU's current emphasis on interdisciplinary research and was developed in partnership with Dr. Phaedra Corso and the KSU Office of Research.. The event was widely attended by faculty and staff from all COTA disciplines as well as colleagues from units across campus. •

# KSU Dance Theater gets an upgrade for patron experience

By Lauren Richmond and Kathie Beckett

Patrons of the Kennesaw State University (KSU) Dance Theater on the Marietta Campus will enjoy a new and improved process for ticketing: an official box office for the theater. A long-awaited upgrade for the College of the Arts (COTA) and the Department of Dance (Dance), the new box office provides a more streamlined and professional process for ticket purchasing and patron services.

Previously, according to Patron Services Manager Lindsay Walker, the KSU Dance Theater “had a tiny little closet just outside the production booth where we stored all of our scanning and box office equipment, and where ushers would store their belongings during their shift. During performances, we would have a folding table in the student center lobby, and we would have to cart all of our equipment out and set it up before every performance.”

Naturally, this created issues with patron services, as Walker explains: “We would often have issues with our technology because we were having to reinstall equipment before every single performance. The patron experience was greatly impacted when our equipment wasn’t working, and we could not provide a smooth and efficient experience.”

Last summer, COTA initiated plans to make this vital upgrade to their second largest venue. Senior Associate Dean of COTA, Harrison Long, began overseeing the acquisition of the space—formerly an Owl Radio sound booth—and orchestrated construction of the new box office during the fall semester.

“Now,” explains Walker, “the Patron Services staff have a professional environment to work in and will be able to provide a streamlined and professional experience to our patrons on both of our campuses.” •



Photo, above: Student Assistant Anna Reichard assists student Richard Rollins.



Photo, above, left to right: Lindsay Walker, Patron Service Manager; Anna Reichard, Student Assistant; Christy Neal, Patron Services Assistant; and Michael Mathieson, Student Assistant.





# Arts grad sculpts successful transition to career

Hanson Bassey shares his journey at KSU

By Robert S. Godlewski

**S**culpture student and 3D artist Hanson Bassey has been molding and shaping his career direction since he was a teenager in Lagos State, Nigeria. Through Kennesaw State's 3D Lab in the College of the Arts, he has discovered the perfect way to fuse his twin passions of technology and art.

"The 3D Lab opened in the fall semester of 2019, and I have been involved in it as a student assistant since its inception," said Bassey, who earned a college degree in computer technology in his native Nigeria before immigrating to America. An amazing place to visit, the 3D Lab is located in the School of Art and Design's Visual Arts Building. Managed by Makerspace Collective, a student-run club, it provides opportunities for students to utilize existing KSU technology and facilities for their creative endeavors.

"As president of the Makerspace Collective, I try my best to help students from all disciplines with their individual needs and utilize the technical knowledge, skill and experience gained in school to make a positive contribution," Bassey said.

Geo Sipp, director of the School of Art and Design, is one of Bassey's biggest fans. He credits him with launching KSU's nascent lab and inspiring his fellow students to learn more about 3D design.

"Hanson runs our 3D Maker Space; he is entirely self-taught, and we are learning from him!" said Sipp. "Such is the way with advanced technology."

## Hands-On Experience

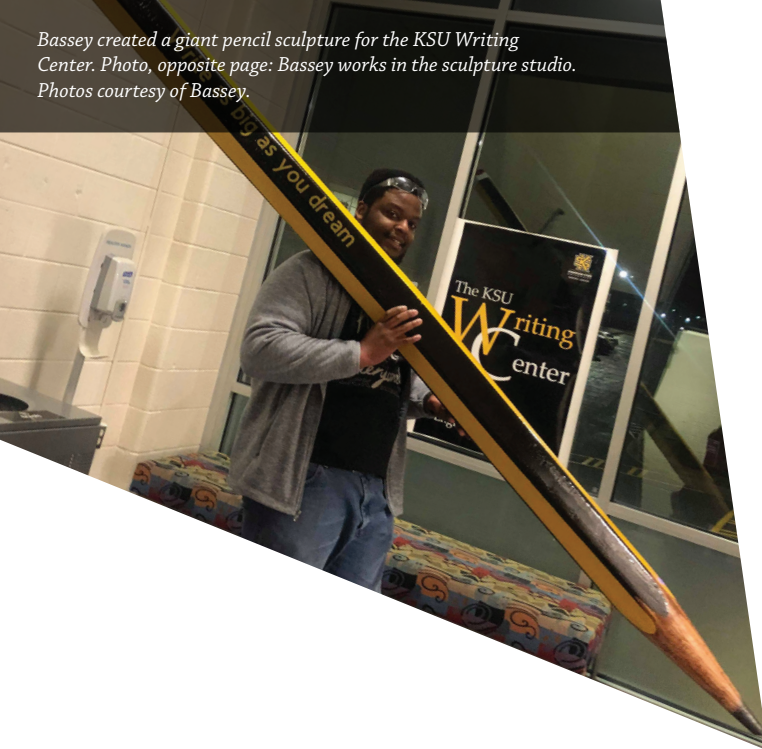
The affable Bassey loves teaching others and especially enjoys assisting students who might not be familiar with the College of the Arts' new high-tech learning environment.

"Sculpture student Dylan Doyle came in with a maquette (scale model) about one foot in height," said Bassey. "He had sculpted this by hand in clay, wanting to produce a seven-foot replica in foam."

The transformation required many steps, but Bassey walked Doyle through the process to a successful conclusion.

"With our existing technology we were able to 3D scan his clay model, import it to a VR sculpting program (Oculus Medium) for final refinements, slice it in a CAD software (Autodesk 3DS Max) into 3D planes that would eventually be CNC routed in foam for assembly," he said.

Bassey created a giant pencil sculpture for the KSU Writing Center. Photo, opposite page: Bassey works in the sculpture studio. Photos courtesy of Bassey.



Another example of the 3D Lab's technological range was the creation of a 3D chess set.

"Painting and Drawing student Wesley Sanders brought in some sketches, and with some consultation and planning, VR sculpting and 3D printing was used to take his 2D ideas from virtual to reality," Bassey said. "Many other projects of many varieties have been achieved using the 3D Tech Labs resources. If I were to list them all, we may end up with a book."

## A Personal Transformation

Just as he helps students transform their projects into reality, Bassey's personal transformation through higher education has been no less exciting.

"I got my first degree in computer technology at a private university in Nigeria," said Bassey. "During those four years, I was exposed to computer-aided design and modeling software by a good friend of mine. The first time I saw him creating basic three-dimensional shapes on computer software, I was blown away. It was a great awakening for me to finally realize the merging of art and technology in the world around us."

Bassey found himself pulled in several directions.

"In my teenage years, I knew I was going to become an architect or an artist because of my love for drawing, or a computer tech guy because of my love for technology," Bassey said. "Growing up, I always had a strong desire for making and fixing things. I enjoyed lots of animated movies, built a lot of sandcastles and played with tons of Legos. Exploring different technological advancements was also a joy to me."

Eventually, art won out.

## Building on Success

Associate Professor of Art Keith Smith, who teaches sculpture, said Bassey excelled inside and outside of the studio.

"He has collaborated with and helped both faculty and students that are using the three-dimensional printing and scanning technology that is so new to all of us," Smith said.

Last semester, Bassey created a giant pencil sculpture for the KSU Writing Center and was awarded an Outstanding Sculpture Student Scholarship to attend the Mid-South Atlantic Sculpture Confab in Chattanooga to exhibit and present his work. "His work for the senior exhibition this semester was to be a pair of VR goggles in the Arts Gallery that you could put on and virtually walk around the gallery," said Smith. "He completely recreated the gallery as a virtual environment filled with his work."

While attending KSU, Bassey has been working for Atlanta-based Imagination Fabrication LLC, a sculpture firm that designs and fabricates installations for trade shows, theme parks and museums.

"I am fortunate to have my dream job," Bassey said. "I love it there and hope to continue after I graduate." •



# Meet the AMBASSADOR'S COUNCIL

Ivan Pulinkala, dean of the College of the Arts, established the College of the Arts Ambassador's Council in August 2019. Members of the Ambassador's Council serve as advocates for ArtsKSU in the Atlanta community and beyond. They do so through volunteer leadership and fundraising activities.

These volunteers are entrepreneurs, philanthropists, and business leaders who are passionate about the arts at KSU and who commit a significant amount of time and energy to support the College of the Arts and its mission.

## Marcie Anthone



Marcie Anthone is a marketing specialist whose focus is on building powerful, enduring brands using a proprietary methodology that is rooted in the constant and immutable truths of storytelling. A 17+ year veteran of The Coca-Cola Company, Marcie opened her own marketing consulting company in 2015. Her

clients include large CPG companies as well as tech start-ups. Prior to joining The Coca-Cola Company, Marcie worked in advertising (Bozell, McCann Erickson, Ogilvy) in strategic planning and was the strategist on the Milk Moustache Campaign, which ran for over 15 years.

## Bill Beddingfield



Bill Beddingfield has spent over 45 years in leveraged lending with GE Capital, ING Bank and others, including 15 years as head of ING's Acquisition Secured Lending. A graduate of University of West Georgia, he is currently at Redemption Capital, a turnaround consulting business. Bill became involved with KSU in

2007 with the establishment of the Florence B. Beddingfield Arts Scholarship. He has served on the boards of KSU College of Humanities and Social Science, Department of Dance, Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, and The Joel A. Katz Music and Entertainment Business Program (MEBUS). Bill lives in Marietta with his wife of 42 years, Nina; their son Ryan is a film teacher at Lakeside High School in DeKalb County.

## Jerry Cooper



Jerry Cooper holds both Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Architecture degrees from Georgia Institute of Technology. He received a Fulbright Fellowship and studied under the mentorship of Architetto Bruno Zevi, (Hon. FAIA) in Rome, Italy and was a Visiting Artist at the American Academy in

Rome, Italy in 1997. Registered as an architect in 27 states, Jerry is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Board and is a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects. He is married to fellow ambassador Jean Cooper.

## Jean Cooper



A native North Carolinian, Jean Cooper received her Bachelor of Science in Family from UNC Greensboro. She is married to Jerome ("Jerry") Cooper and has three children and four grandchildren. Jean owned Jean Cooper Interiors from 1979 to 2014. Jean has served as a board

member on the following Atlanta organizations: Atlanta Chamber Players, American Jewish Committee, Atlanta Neighborhood Planning Unit B (NPU-B), Park Pride, Pine Hills Neighborhood Association, and the William Breman Jewish Home.

## Patricia Campbell



Patricia Campbell became personally involved with KSU's College of the Arts 15 years ago, when she and her family started a scholarship fund in honor of their mother, JoAnn Durham. Patricia has been able to see, firsthand, how her mother's scholarship has impacted the student recipients, and felt like she had an obligation to do more. Five years ago, she was asked to become a part of

the advisory board of the College of the Arts and now is honored to be a part of the Ambassador's Council.

## Russ Clayton



With a double major in Secondary Education and Social Science, Russell ("Russ") Clayton (KSU, '81) is a retired educator and art collector. He donated a collection of works by Italian-born Georgia artist Athos Menaboni to KSU's Bernard A. Zuckerman Museum of Art; a

gallery there is named in his honor. He also established four scholarships in the College of the Arts (dance, music, theater, and visual arts) and, since 2017, is a Distinguished Alumnus of the University.

## Mridula T Hormes



With a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education (KSU, '00), Mridula T. Hormes went on to get her Ph.D. in Leadership and Administration and worked primarily in K-12 education. She retired in 2013 after a career in education and administration in charter schools as a principal. She was part of the administration to start the first charter school in Marietta and continued to work in Cobb County and Atlanta Public

Schools as an administrator.



## Pam Hubby



Pam Hubby enjoyed a banking career that spanned over 30 years. Next, she held the position of Director of Corporate Relations for Kennesaw State University from 2010 to 2013; she then joined ArtsBridge Foundation as the Director of Development (2013-

2017). Today, she is actively engaged with a number of nonprofit organizations. She also sits on the board of the Humane Society of Cobb County.

## Teresa Joyce



Dr. Teresa Joyce, Professor Emeritus, retired in 2015 after a 27 career at KSU. She was KSU's first Associate/Senior Vice Provost and then served as an Associate Vice Chancellor for the University System of Georgia (USG). Dr. Joyce led the effort to implement KSU's inaugural

Safe Space Initiative and endowed the Safe Space Scholarship—awarded annually to a KSU undergraduate student who advocates for LGBT individuals on- or off-campus. She currently directs a family foundation and is a partner in a company focused on economic development in her hometown of Andover, NY.

## Auta Lopes



Auta Lopes is a successful institutional financial consultant and marketing strategist with more than 20 years of investment experience in the financial services industry. Her main areas of emphasis include public-private partnerships, capital strategies for entrepreneurs, and institutional financial

services consulting. Other areas of focus include state and local governments and foreign countries. A proactive marketer and sales professional, Auta has significant expertise in establishing long-term relationships, building coalitions, and facilitating sales directives to achieve desired results.

## Joseph Meeks



A gifted pianist and distinguished International Steinway Artist, Joseph Meeks was the founding dean of the College of the Arts and is Emeritus Professor of Music. He joined the faculty of the School of Music in 1975 and retired from his faculty and administrative roles at KSU after 38 years

of service. Meeks had many successes under his leadership, including the School of Music's designation as an All-Steinway school and the significant private giving to COTA leading to the naming of the Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center, the Onyx Theater, the Audrey B. and Jack E. Morgan Sr. Concert Hall, the Eric and Gwendolyn Brooker Rehearsal Hall and the Bernard A. Zuckerman Museum of Art.

## Tom Sands



After teaching theater, English and speech communications, Tom Sands used his hospitality industry experience and joined Atlanta's Standard Country Club as Banquet Manager. He found his true calling in 1983: selling and renovating homes. His knowledge in the industry, strong

communications skills and continued dedication to his clients have placed him among the top realtors in Atlanta. His membership associations include the Morningside Lenox Park Zoning Commission, Human Rights Campaign Federal Club, The Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, and Aid Atlanta.

## LaSona Turk



LaSona Turk is a native Georgian and alumna of West Georgia College. Her appreciation and love for the arts have roots in her exposure to youth activities like piano, clarinet, twirling and dance team. LaSona feels very honored to serve as an Ambassador for the College of the Arts; her husband, Trent, serves as a KSU

Foundation Trustee. LaSona and Trent love living close to both KSU campuses where they enjoy the full array of ArtsKSU! They are pleased to sponsor an endowed scholarship that benefits a College of the Arts student each year.

## Don Vellek



Don Vellek finds it a joy to serve on the Ambassador's Council for KSU's College of the Arts. His lifelong interest in and support of the arts has helped shape him into the man he is today. While both his education and work history focused on business, the arts

have been the fuel to his engine. After a 30-year corporate career in global marketing with AT&T and as co-owner of a bespoke travel agency opened in 1976, he now has the time to nurture and enjoy the arts offerings at KSU. A Vietnam-era veteran of the U.S. Army, Don holds a private pilot license and has travelled to all seven continents. He is thrilled to help the arts at KSU continue to flourish.

## James Weis



James Weis has his hands on every aspect of the Atlanta arts community and is happy to serve on the Ambassador's Council. The founding donor and a major supporter of Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre, he also serves on the Governance Committee of Serenbe Institute in Chattahoochee Hills,

Terminus' home. His latest project is "Discovery in the Arts: hosted by James Weis" at Callanwolde Fine Arts Center. The live talk show format will introduce remarkable and entrepreneurial young talent in the performing and visual arts, giving support to young artists who will make a big impact in the world in the future. James may be found at virtually every dance and theatre performance in metro Atlanta.



# Thank You

## **\$100,000-\$1,000,000**

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# WELCOME

Over the past academic year, the College of the Arts has conducted several critical national searches. We welcome the following three new College of the Arts leaders who will be joining the Dean's Cabinet and Leadership Team.

## Dr. Peter Fielding (Associate Dean)



Peter G. Fielding has been named associate dean, effective July 1. Previously an associate dean at two collegiate institutions, Fielding joins KSU with five collegiate degrees in Music Theory (M.Mus. and Ph.D.), Trombone Performance (B.Mus. and M.Mus.), and Education-

Curriculum Studies (M.Ed).

"I am pleased to welcome Dr. Fielding to the senior leadership team in the College of the Arts at KSU," said Ivan Pulinkala, dean of the College of the Arts. "His experience serving as associate dean at two prior institutions and his exemplary academic credentials—including five collegiate degrees and

over 30 publications—will help us advance our research, student success and curricular initiatives with great stride."

Fielding has previously served as associate dean at Red Deer College (School of Creative Arts, School of Education) and Mahidol University's College of Music (Academic Affairs and Research).

His instructional career spans the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami, the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Music, and the Canadian Armed Forces Music Training Company. His research spans tonal and post-tonal analysis, music theory pedagogy, world and traditional vocal musics, contemporary trombone solo and ensemble literature, and arts-based curriculum inquiry and reform.

## Marsha Barsky (Chair, Department of Dance)



Marsha Barsky has been named chair of the Department of Dance, effective July 1. Barsky served as associate professor and director of Dance at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) since 2017 and as assistant professor at MTSU since 2007. Previously, she was the director of the Vanderbilt Dance

Program and member of the executive board for the Tennessee Association of Dance. She was instrumental to the creation of the first collegiate dance major

degree in Tennessee. Her career as a choreographer, performer, educator, and somatic movement practitioner has spanned over 20 years. She is deeply committed to art that engages socially, created from a place of embodiment and sustainability.

"Marsha brings her experience successfully leading two collegiate dance programs to her appointment at KSU Dance," said Ivan Pulinkala, dean of the College of the Arts. "Her background as a choreographer, performer and somatic movement practitioner will advance the future trajectory for Georgia's leading collegiate dance program at KSU to greater national prominence."

## Chuck Meacham (Chair, Department of Theatre and Performance Studies)



Chuck Meacham has been named chair of the Department of Theatre & Performance Studies, effective July 1. A professional theatre production manager and technical director, Meacham has served as professor of the Department of Theatre at University of Evansville (UE) in Evansville, Indiana since fall 2012. Meacham has worked

professionally with organizations such as the Utah Shakespeare Festival, Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, and the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival.

"Chuck Meacham brings over 20 years of professional and collegiate experience as a production manager and technical director to the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies at KSU," said Ivan Pulinkala, dean of the College of the Arts. "His commitment as an artist, scholar and community-engaged leader is evidenced by his outstanding body of work that is rooted in the professional practices in the arts. Prof. Meacham will continue to advance KSU's Theatre and Performance Studies with a commitment to student success and artistic excellence."



# Cellist Zuill Bailey performs at Kennesaw State University

*Performance features solo works and Brahms' Double Concerto*

By Kathie Beckett and Lauren Richmond

**K**ennesaw State University's School of Music hosted cellist Zuill Bailey in October 2019. Bailey performed solo works and a special performance of Brahms' Concerto for Violin, Cello, and Orchestra in a minor, Opus 102 with KSU Professor of Violin Helen Kim and the KSU Symphony Orchestra.

Bailey is widely considered one of the premiere cellists in the world. A Grammy Award-winning artist, he is internationally renowned as a soloist, recitalist, artistic director, and teacher. He has performed on nearly every continent, from France to Australia to Mexico.

Trained at the Peabody Conservatory and Juilliard, Bailey made his concerto debut at Carnegie Hall in New York, performing the U.S. premiere of Miklos Theodorakis' "Rhapsody for Cello and Orchestra" in 2001. His recital debut was at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2007 in

a sold-out performance of Beethoven's complete cello sonatas, which he performed with pianist Simone Dinnerstein.

In addition to his live performances, Bailey is also known for his recording work. He won the best solo performance Grammy Award in 2017 for his live recording of "Tales of Hemingway" by composer Michael Daugherty. His "Britten Cello Symphony/Sonata" CD with pianist Natasha Paremski immediately claimed the number one spot on the Classical Billboard Charts.

He is also known for his network television appearances, including recurring roles on the HBO series "Oz" and NBC's "Homicide." He has performed live with many symphonies, including the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico City, and the National Orchestra of Cuba. •

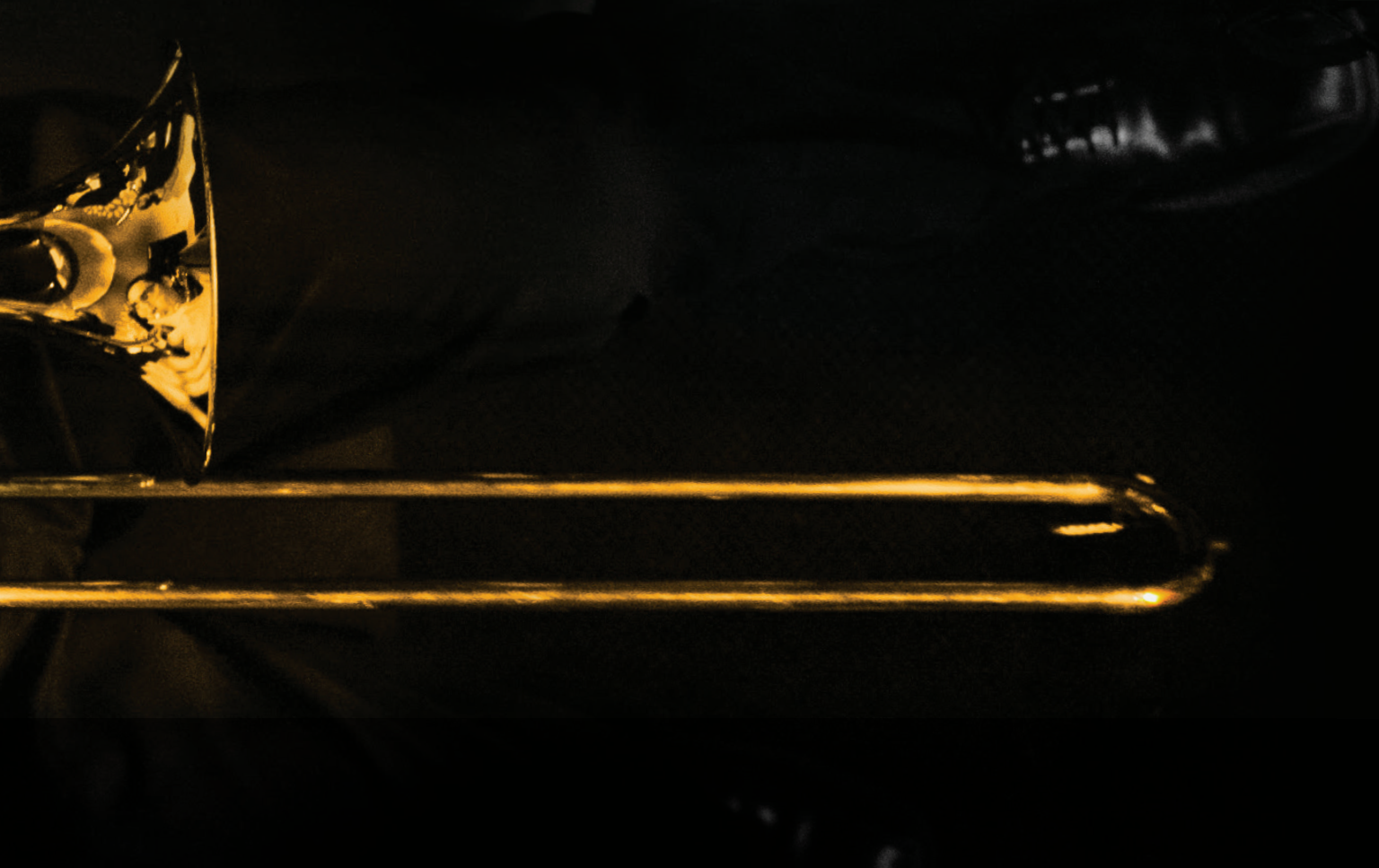




# Endowments and Scholarships

*10 for 10 Annual Music Scholarship*  
*Alice Lennie Glover Music Scholarship*  
*Annual Dance Scholarship*  
*April Conaway Endowed Scholarship in Music*  
*Arts Dean's Endowed Scholarship*  
*Athos Menaboni Art Fund*  
*Athos Menaboni Art Research Scholarship*  
*Athos Menaboni Endowment Fund*  
*Atlanta Steinway Society Annual Scholarship*  
*Atlanta Steinway Society Endowed Scholarship*  
*Audrey and Jack Morgan Music Scholarship*  
*Austin Burruss Endowment: College of the Arts*  
*Austin-Burruss Endowment*  
*Ayokunle Odeleye Minority Endowed Arts Scholarship*  
*Barbara Jane Swindell Endowed Scholarship in Visual Arts*  
*Barry and Sylvia Hyman Endowed Art Scholarship*  
*Betty and Joel Siegel Theatre Scholarship*  
*Brian Miller Memorial Music Award*  
*Cam and Marti Graham Theatre and Performances Studies*  
*Cheryl and Ron Baer Endowed Scholarship in Theatre and Performance Studies*  
*Cobb County Music Teachers' Annual Scholarship*  
*College of the Arts Annual Senior Dance Scholarship*  
*College of the Arts Dance Scholarship*  
*College of the Arts Scholarship in Theatre and Performance Studies Scholarship*  
*College of the Arts Scholarship in Music*  
*College of the Arts Visual Arts Scholarship*  
*Cup of Kindness Scholarship*  
*Cynthia Feldberg Endowed Piano Scholarship*

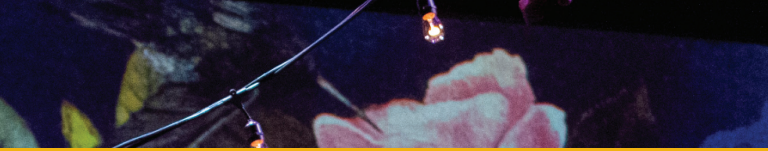
*Don Freeman Clayton Theater Scholarship*  
*Don Russ Music Scholarship*  
*Dorothy G. Keith Endowed Scholarship for Visual Arts*  
*Dorothy G. Keith Endowed Scholarship for Vocal Performance*  
*Dr. Bobbie Bailey Endowed Music Scholarship*  
*Dr. Leslie J Blackwell Annual Scholarship in Choral Music*  
*Dr. Mary Ursits Endowed Scholarship for the School of Art and Design*  
*Dr. Oral L. Moses Endowed Scholarship*  
*Elo Pomare-Glen Conner Choreographic Residency*  
*Emily Bourne Grigsby Visual Arts Scholarship*  
*Eric and Gwendolyn Brooker Endowed Voice Scholarship*  
*Flo Bruns Memorial/Women's Commerce Club Scholarship*  
*Florence B. Beddingfield Memorial Art Scholarship*  
*Fred D. Bentley Sr. Scholarship (Visual Arts)*  
*Geraldine Barmore Clayton Music Scholarship*  
*Glenn Hollingsworth, Jr. Endowed Scholarship (Music)*  
*Glenn Hollingsworth, Jr. Endowed Scholarship (Theatre)*  
*Glenn Hollingsworth, Jr. Endowed Scholarship (Visual Arts)*  
*Gretchen Van Roy Voice Endowed Scholarship*  
*H. Fred Rodenhausen Endowed Music Scholarship*  
*J. David Watkins Annual Scholarship in Piano*  
*J. David Watkins Endowed Scholarship in Piano Performance*  
*James & Cecelia Dunn Endowed Art Scholarship*  
*James Gregory Endowed Scholarship*  
*James P. Smith Memorial Art Scholarship*  
*James T. Weis Endowed Scholarship for the College of the Arts*  
*James T. Anderson, Jr. Scholarship (College of the Arts)*  
*Jim Wallace Theater and Performance Art Fund*



*Jimmy Mays and Valerie Whittlesey-Mays Scholarship for the Arts*  
*Jo Ann Durham Arts Endowed Scholarship (Dance)*  
*Jo Ann Durham Endowed Arts Scholarship (Music)*  
*Jo Ann Durham Endowed Arts Scholarship (Theatre and Performance Studies)*  
*Jo Ann Durham Endowed Arts Scholarship (Visual Arts)*  
*Joan Harrell Annual Dance Scholarship*  
*John and Linda Cooke Scholarship for Violin*  
*John and Linda Cooke String Quartet Scholars*  
*John Gentile Performance Studies Endowed Scholarship*  
*John Gentile Performance Studies Scholarship*  
*Joseph D. Meeks Music Endowed Scholarship*  
*June Boykin Tindall Dance Scholarship*  
*Kennesaw State University Community & Alumni Choir Choral Scholarship*  
*KSU Dance Clinic Scholarship*  
*KSU Music Clinic Annual Scholarship*  
*KSU Theatre and Performance Arts Clinic Scholarship*  
*KSU Visual Arts Clinic*  
*Lillias B. Prillaman Visual Arts Endowed Scholarship*  
*Malone Endowed Music Scholarship*  
*Marching Owls Band General Scholarship*  
*Martha Thompson Dinos Music Performance Scholarship honoring  
Dean Emeritus Joseph Meeks*  
*Marti M. Graham Memorial Dance Scholarship*  
*Mary and Bruce Clayton Family Scholarship in Honor of Sam Skelton*  
*Mattie Borders Proctor Endowed Scholarship for Instrumentalists*  
*Mattie Borders Proctor Fellowship Endowment*  
*Michael Edwin Lips II Memorial Arts Endowed Scholarship*  
*Music Department Endowed Scholarship*  
*Nick S. Labroff Memorial Endowed Piano and Voice Scholarship*

*Onyx Theater Endowment*  
*Oral Moses Endowed Voice Scholarship*  
*R. Wayne Gibson Annual Music Scholarship*  
*R. Wayne Gibson Endowed Piano & Voice Scholarship*  
*Robert and Alivia Lipson Endowed Arts Scholarship (Music)*  
*Robert and Cheryl Moultrie Endowed Arts Scholarship (Visual Arts)*  
*Sam Wilhoit Jazz Endowed Scholarship in Music*  
*School of Music Annual Scholarship*  
*School of Music Outreach Scholarship*  
*South Cobb Rotary Arts Scholarship*  
*Susan and Horace White Annual Music Scholarship*  
*Ted & Roberta Griffin Visual Arts Scholarship*  
*Tena E. Redding Endowed Arts Scholarship*  
*Terri and Jeff Wigley Marching Owls Scholarship*  
*The Byk-Girardot Family Scholarship*  
*The Lana Wachniak and William Wallace Today's Promise Endowed Scholarship  
for the College of the Arts*  
*The LaSona and Trent Turk Endowed Scholarship for the College of the Arts  
Theatre and Performance Studies Faculty Benefit Performance Study  
Abroad Scholarship*  
*Thomson Salter-Salova King Foundation Scholarship*  
*Valerie Dibble Endowed Scholarship in honor of Frank Walsh  
and James Montgomery*  
*Virginia Tumlin Endowed Music Scholarship*  
*Visual Arts Endowed Scholarship*  
*Visual Arts Studies Abroad Scholarship Fund*  
*Wachovia Endowed Theatre Scholarship*  
*Youth Bands of Atlanta Scholarship*  
*Pomare-Connor Memorial Endowed Fund for Dance*





# A conversation with Ben Rawson: Lighting designer and KSU alumnus

*Rawson's work seen across Atlanta and coast-to-coast*



*The Alliance Theatre's  
production of  
"Seize The King."  
Photo by Greg Mooney*

By Kathie Beckett

ArtsKSU asked alumnus Ben Rawson to talk about his career in lighting design. Originally from New York, raised in Augusta, Georgia, Rawson received his B.A. in Theatre and Performance Studies in spring 2016 with a design concentration in lighting. Interested in the arts from a young age, Rawson became heavily involved in theatre through a technical theatre class in high school and realized that he could build a career working behind the scenes designing for live performance. Since graduation, his lighting design work has been seen in productions for the Atlanta Opera, Alliance Theatre, Glimmerglass Opera, and Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre, to name only a few. He was nominated for a Suzi Bass Award for Outstanding Lighting Design in both 2018 and 2019.

## **ArtsKSU: Why did you choose KSU?**

**Rawson:** KSU had a good mix of what I was looking for in both location and program. The location, near Atlanta, gave me the chance to build relationships with companies in the city, work with local professionals who work and teach at KSU, have access to see a variety of professional productions, and the opportunity to work professionally while in school. The program itself offered several productions a season with a smaller number of design students, so there was an opportunity to be able to work sooner and more often than in other programs.

## **ArtsKSU: Did you have any favorite professors or classes?**

**Rawson:** A project in my first lighting design course paired us with a student from the Department of Dance; each lighting student was to light one of their student works. It was one of my first experiences diving deeper into the production design world of dance and it really informed my career later as I moved into lighting for various performance disciplines and styles other than theatre. My undergraduate lighting influences include TPS professor Rebecca Makus, lighting designer David Tatu from Dance, and lighting designer Robert Wierzel, a guest lecturer at TPS who brought me into opera lighting.



**ArtsKSU: What made you want to study lighting?**

**Rawson:** I was quickly drawn to lighting, specifically within theatrical design, because it has such versatility as a craft and offers opportunities across so many performance disciplines. As a lighting designer, you're given the chance to create the mood and environment of a piece. Lighting is able to change the space, to snap the stage into a bright, overly colorful theatrical world—juxtaposed from something that was previously dark and intimate or realistic—in real time, in front of an audience. Lighting gives so much creative liberty and an opportunity that does not exist in other design disciplines.



*Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre's production of "Horizons."  
Photo by Joseph Guay.*

**ArtsKSU: What is a favorite project that you have worked on recently?**

**Rawson:** My work with Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre (TMBT) would be some of my favorite design work. I think the openness of dance, as well as the team at TMBT, has really lent itself to me designing some of my best and most creative designs.

**ArtsKSU: Describe your life post-graduation.**

**Rawson:** After graduating, I hit the ground running trying to secure design work at local theaters from relationships I developed while at KSU. I began designing small shows around town, designing for local dance companies, in little black box theaters, anything I could book. I put my name and work out as much as I could, watched and observed other designers, and took assistant designer work to learn from—and work with—established career designers.

**ArtsKSU: What's next for you?**

**Rawson:** My next steps are to continue designing and working in Atlanta, continue pursuing other regional and national design work, and to keep moving towards the kind of career and life I want for myself and for my partner and fiancée Maddie, who has been everything for me during my life and career.

To see more of Rawson's work, please visit [www.benrawsondesign.com/](http://www.benrawsondesign.com/). •





# Department of Dance receives gift from the Yunek family

*Donation will support annual choreographic  
residency program at KSU Dance*



By Kathie Beckett

**K**ennesaw State University Department of Dance has received a donation of \$541,000 from the Yunek family.

The Eleo Pomare–Glenn Conner Dance Endowment will be used to begin the KSU Choreographic Residency Program to bring two nationally curated choreographers to the Department of Dance each summer to create two world premieres. The annual choreographic residency honors the late benefactors who were luminaries of the dance world.

The gift from Jay and Debra Yunek, the Eleo Pomare–Glenn Conner Dance Endowment, honors their late uncle, Glenn Conner, and his partner and choreographer Eleo Pomare. Pomare, who passed away in 2008, was known for developing innovative choreography that deals with social inequality and injustice. The funds will be used to promote and preserve Pomare’s legacy through the cultivation of new choreographic voices. Ivan Pulinkala, dean of the College of the Arts and the founder of KSU Dance, announced the major gift at the opening of the student dance performance “Slang” at the KSU Dance Theater in Marietta.

“We are grateful to the Yunek’s for their generous donation to KSU Dance in honor of Glenn and Eleo,” said Pulinkala. “The KSU Choreographic Residency will help support the careers of emerging choreographers

nationally and give our students a unique experience of collaborating with professionals in the field.”

Combined with a previous gift received in 2018, the Yunek family has given almost \$1 million to support dance at KSU.

Through the generosity of the Yunek family, emerging choreographers will have the opportunity to develop their unique artistic voice. The KSU Choreographic Residency Program will provide each chosen choreographer with a \$6,000 honorarium to support their housing, travel and living expenses during the four-week residency and performance, as well as a budget to produce an original choreographic work.

KSU Dance will create a summer course in which students accepted by audition will have the opportunity to work with one of the nationally curated choreographers. Both works will be produced at the end of the summer in the state-of-the-art KSU Dance Theater, allowing the choreographer to premiere his or her work and create a promotional video for future commissioning purposes.

A screening committee of university and community professionals will annually review the work of emerging choreographers from a national pool of applicants to select two individuals for the four-week KSU Choreographic Residency Program. •



**K**ennesaw State University's (KSU) School of Art and Design (SOAAD) has experienced tremendous growth in enrollment over the last several years, and as a result, SOAAD was out of space. With the support of the College of the Arts and Kennesaw State, SOAAD began renovating a massive 21,000-square-foot facility at Chastain Pointe in October 2019 to give art and design students more space to work and study.

On track to open in fall 2020, the Chastain Pointe facility will feature an impressive number of large studios and workspaces, along with additional faculty and administrative offices. Director of SOAAD and Professor of Art Geo Sipp has been overseeing the renovations and is very impressed with the work done so far. "The studios will have suspended ceiling panels, and the space will maintain a very industrial aesthetic, with ductwork and the decking visible," says Sipp.

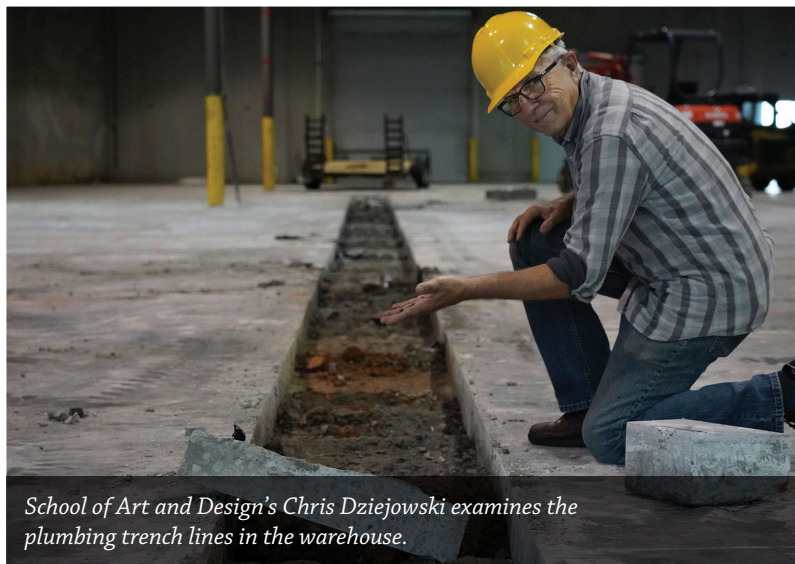
Of the 21,000-square-foot space, only 1,000 square feet will be used for such items as electrical equipment, leaving ample room for students to create and learn. Major studio spaces include four drawing and painting studios and a printmaking studio, including dedicated areas for different techniques utilized by printmaking students.

Many pieces of equipment, including antique printing presses, will be on display and be available for use by printmaking students. "We have so many printmaking materials," according to Sipp, "and, right now, so many pieces of equipment that are in storage are state-of-the-art printmaking equipment. We're going to be the best print facility in the South." The facility will also boast a papermaking studio, a small computer lab and conference room, plus ample open study spaces. Several faculty offices and an administrative office will help give the growing faculty and staff some breathing room.

While the new facility will primarily house drawing, painting, and printmaking spaces, all art and design students will benefit from this facility. "We are a very pluralistic program where fine and applied arts inform each other," according to Sipp. "For example, animation and illustration students have to take figure drawing, advanced figure drawing; they have to take painting, they have to take printmaking. It's essential to

understand these other disciplines to be a well-rounded illustrator or animator." This merging of these distinct areas of art, fine art and applied art sets SOAAD students up for success after graduation. Sipp explains, "It's all about image development and image content—so you learn these skills and it makes you a better professional in these other disciplines. What we have done is really focused on the marriage of fine and applied arts, and I think that makes us really unique."

Although it's been a tight squeeze in the current SOAAD facilities, the faculty and staff of the school are excited to see such growth. "Students are voting with their feet," say Sipp. "They're coming to KSU specifically because we offer these five disciplines. KSU's programs are gaining students rapidly. We now have approximately 1100 students in art and design. When I came



*School of Art and Design's Chris Dziejowski examines the plumbing trench lines in the warehouse.*

here in 2014, we had around 400, and it's simply because the faculty and staff supported our ideas that the applied arts would draw students." Sipp and the School have seen ample support from both COTA and KSU as a whole with the expansion of their programs and facilities as well. "KSU, as such a young institution," remarks Sipp, "has been supportive of the interesting ways of devising programs and putting programs out there. We have a really unique institution here, and the School of Art and Design is positioned well." •

# New art facility on the way for School of Art and Design



*The new facility will primarily house drawing, painting, and printmaking spaces.*



Photos by Casey Gardner



Photo, above: L'Oréal Roaché as Ella and Alex Harding as Prince Char. Photo, Left: L'Oréal Roaché as Ella.

# **KSU Theatre students, alumni star in "Ella Enchanted"**

*Cinderella gets an update at Synchronicity Theatre*





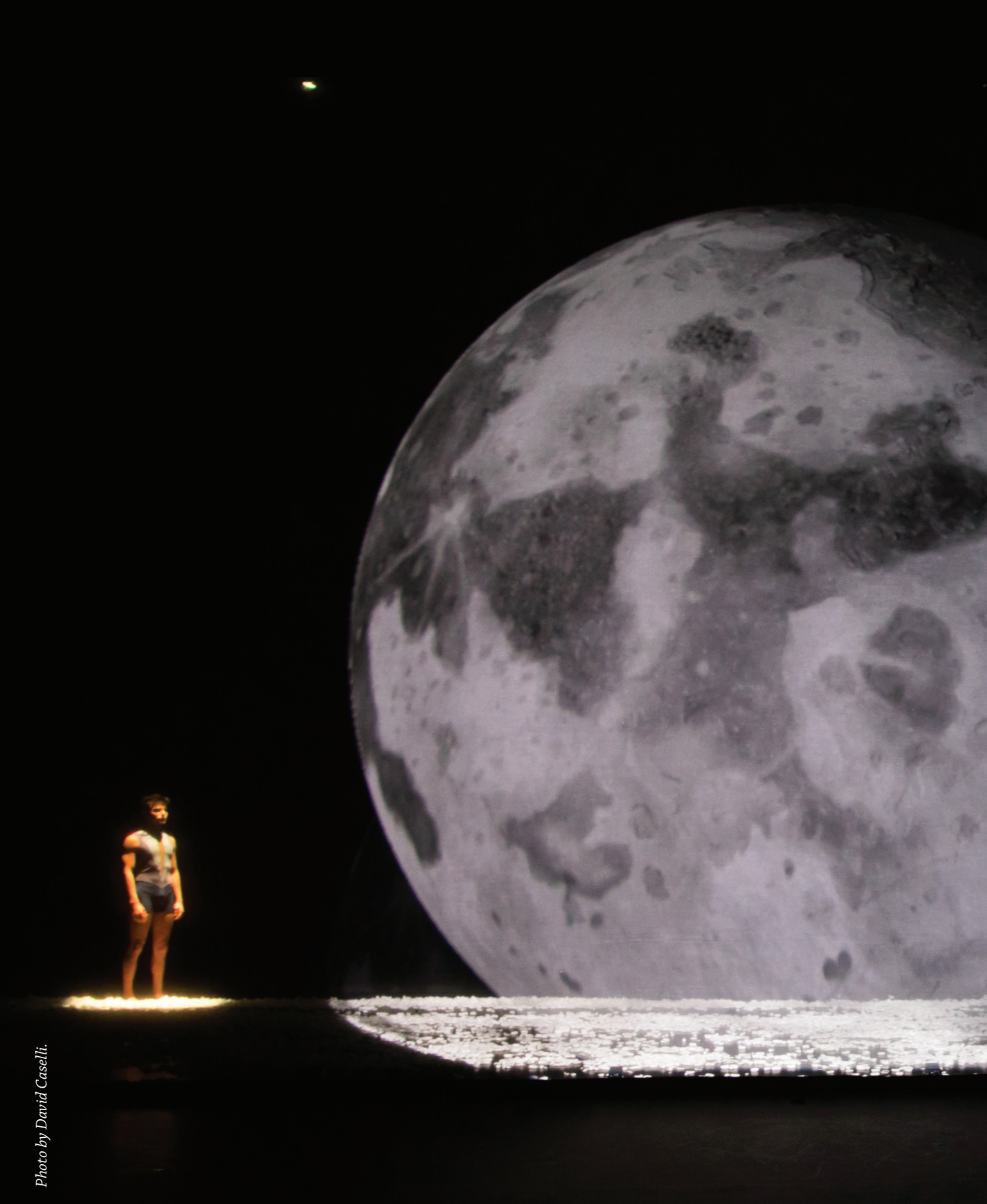
By Kathie Beckett

**K**ennesaw State University's Department of Theatre and Performance Studies' (TPS) students and alumni helped make the magic of the holidays last a little longer with their roles in "Ella Enchanted" at Synchronicity Theatre. TPS senior L'Oreal Roache, who led in KSU productions over the fall semester, landed her first professional role as the title character of the musical "Ella Enchanted." TPS junior Alex Harding also took on his first professional leading role as Prince Char. TPS alumni Amy Reynolds (Lucinda) and Meg Harkins (Hattie) also co-starred in this fantastical production, while TPS faculty member Amanda Wansa Morgan led the music direction and sound design, helping to create the magical fairy-tale world for the audience.

"Ella Enchanted" is a family-oriented musical based on the Newbery Award-winning young adult novel by Gail Carson Levine and adapted for the stage by Karen Zacarias. Filled with whimsical musical numbers, colorful characters, and a heap of humor, this retelling of the classic fairy-tale "Cinderella" also sets out to turn stereotypical female roles on its head by giving young girls a new kind of fairytale character to look up to: Ella, a strong, smart, and ambitious young girl who tackles her own problems and sets her own boundaries.

Audience members are entranced by the bewitching story of Ella, who was inadvertently cursed at birth by a young fairy named Lucinda and forced into a life of compelled obedience forever. Told this is a "gift," Ella spends all her life involuntarily serving the people around her. After her mother dies, Ella breaks free and sets out on a quest for her freedom from this "gift," certain that this curse was not the life she was meant to lead. She travels through a magical world of elves, gnomes, and giants in search of her fairy godmother, Lucinda, to reverse the curse placed on her all those years ago. She faces many challenges along the way while making new friends and finding her voice and independence. •





*Photo by David Caselli.*

# KSU Department of Dance presents "Moon Dust"

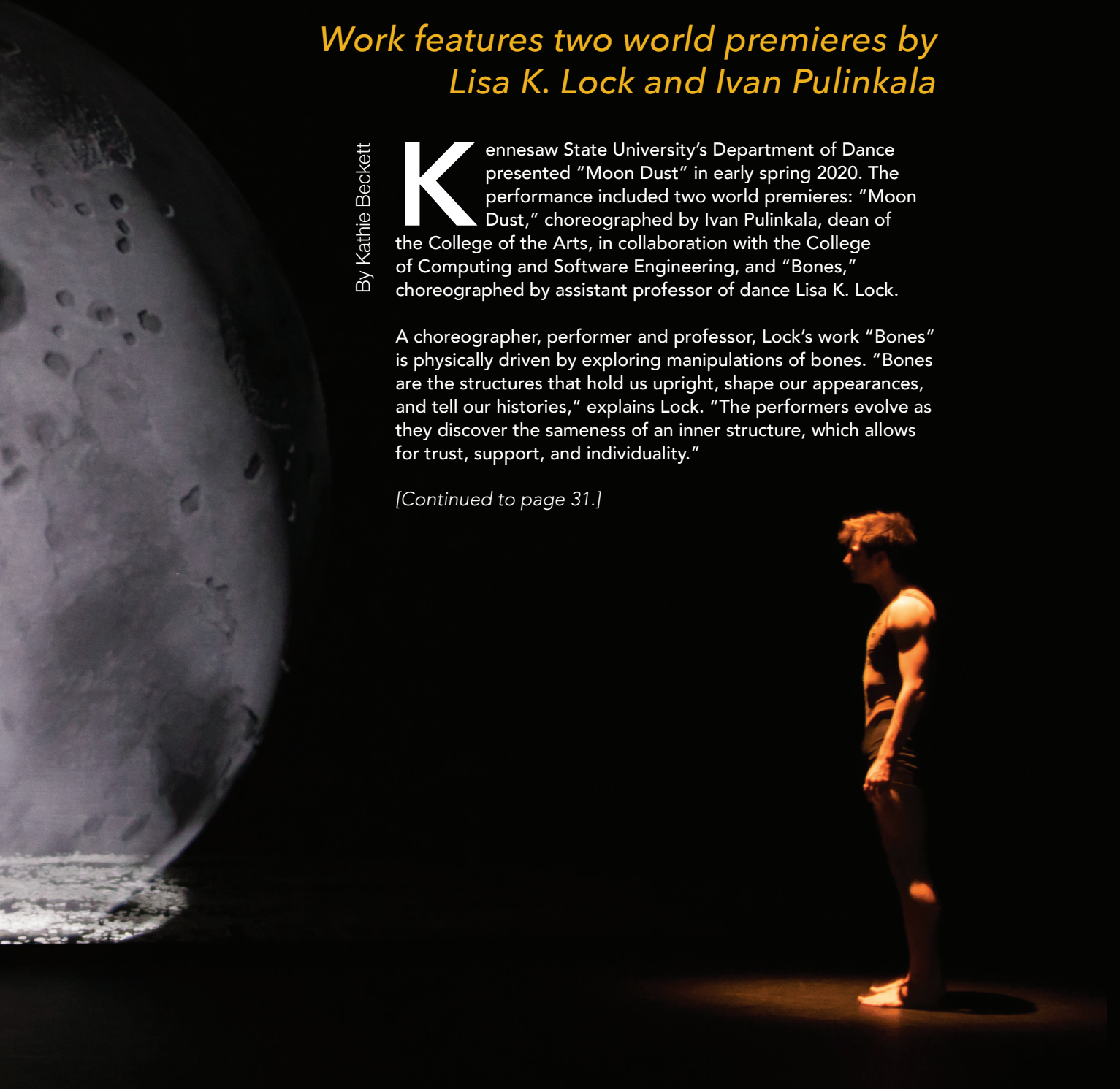
*Work features two world premieres by  
Lisa K. Lock and Ivan Pulinkala*

By Kathie Beckett

**K**ennesaw State University's Department of Dance presented "Moon Dust" in early spring 2020. The performance included two world premieres: "Moon Dust," choreographed by Ivan Pulinkala, dean of the College of the Arts, in collaboration with the College of Computing and Software Engineering, and "Bones," choreographed by assistant professor of dance Lisa K. Lock.

A choreographer, performer and professor, Lock's work "Bones" is physically driven by exploring manipulations of bones. "Bones are the structures that hold us upright, shape our appearances, and tell our histories," explains Lock. "The performers evolve as they discover the sameness of an inner structure, which allows for trust, support, and individuality."

*[Continued to page 31.]*







***"Creativity spans all disciplines, and this dance production shows what we can accomplish when we work with others who come to a project with different perspectives," said Jon Preston, dean of the College of Computing and Software Engineering.***

*[Continued from page 29.]*

Next, patrons left the physical body behind and explored the journey of the human spirit as it transitions between life and an afterlife in "Moon Dust." Pulinkala's work is based on his research on the phenomenon of near-death experiences. Advances in medical sciences have resulted in a growing population of individuals who have been resuscitated from near-death events. Often, these individuals narrate vivid descriptions of their out-of-body experiences and their journey into the realms of an afterlife.

Through "Moon Dust," Pulinkala metaphorically explored the journey of soulmates through life into an afterlife, using visually stunning effects developed through a collaboration with dean Jon Preston and designer Jaylin Gillam from KSU's College of Computing and Software Engineering. Preston said, "The 'Moon Dust' collaboration is an excellent example of the interdisciplinary opportunities at KSU. Creativity spans all disciplines, and this dance production shows what we can accomplish when we work with others who come to a project with different perspectives. Certainly, computing and software engineering students and faculty have benefitted greatly by working with arts faculty and students."

The production was unlike anything ever produced at KSU. Pulinkala visually altered the audience experience by using a screen that covered the entire front proscenium. At times, the screen was used as a projection surface that interacted with the choreography. A cast of 15 KSU dance majors presented this visually gratifying and physically demanding work through Pulinkala's uniquely sophisticated choreographic vocabulary. The journey of soulmates was explored through a series of duets culminating in a defining male pas de deux that anchored the work and gave it a strong emotional charge.

With lighting design by Jordan Wardach, an alumna of KSU's Department of Theatre and Performance Studies who now serves as the manager of the KSU Dance Theater, and costume design by Jill Peterson, "Moon Dust" took audiences into a supernatural world of visual imagination and left them reflecting on their own spiritual journeys with soulmates, some of whom are fortunate to have in this life. •

*Image, left, from Lisa K. Lock's "Bones." Image courtesy of Larry Coleman.*





# Zuckerman Museum of Art

## Collaborates with Clark Atlanta University Art Museum

By Kathie Beckett

In a unique collaboration, the School of Art and Design's Zuckerman Museum of Art and Clark Atlanta University Art Museum combined forces for the inaugural Tina Dunkley Fellow exhibitions in spring 2020 at the Zuckerman Museum of Art, located on the Kennesaw campus of Kennesaw State University.

The Bernard A. Zuckerman Museum of Art's (ZMA) new exhibitions "UNBOUND," curated by Tina Dunkley Fellow Nzinga Simmons and "Looming Chaos," curated by Tina Dunkley Fellow TK Smith, approach abstraction and its utility in interrogating identity, politics, and artistic expression. The exhibitions are the cumulative project of the inaugural Tina Dunkley Curatorial Fellows.

This multi-institutional, cross-regional curatorial fellowship is a collaborative project between Clark Atlanta University Art Museum (CAUAM), the Zuckerman Museum of Art (ZMA), and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA). Created by Dr. Maurita Poole (CAUAM), the late Justin Rabideau (ZMA), former Director of Curatorial Affairs, Teresa Bramlette-Reeves (ZMA), Sarah Higgins, former Curator (ZMA), and Brooke Davis Anderson (PAFA), the fellowship is meant to foster the next generation of museum professionals.

"UNBOUND" brings together a multigenerational group of artists whose work takes an inventive and experimental approach to abstraction. Their works consider the essential elements of abstract painting: color, form, gesture, line, and space, through unorthodox use of materials that break the confines of a rectangular canvas, and implode the boundaries between painting, sculpture, and installation. The works on view hang, stretch, tether, and dangle off the walls, breaking free from the bounds of figuration, and complicating the boundaries of painting itself. "UNBOUND" features the works of Romare Bearden, Sam Gilliam, Joe Overstreet, Eric N. Mack, Anthony Akinbola, Krista Clark, and Tariku Shiferaw.







“Looming Chaos” is a solo exhibition of Atlanta-based artist Zipporah Camille Thompson. The exhibition explores the artist’s use of weaving to engage ideas of chaos. Thompson conceptualizes chaos as the tensions associated with personal and universal experiences of disaster and catastrophe. Her weaving practice enables her to materialize the destruction, disorder, and confusions of the world, transforming them into fantastical fiber abstractions. The deterioration of the environment, tumultuous personal histories, and the complexities of her own identity become fodder for creation. •

Image, left page, top: Sam Gilliam, *Untitled*, 1970. Courtesy of Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA. Image courtesy of the Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA.

Image, left page, bottom: Zipporah Camille Thompson, *mutant*, 2016. Courtesy of David Armistead and Emily Sorgenfrei. Photography by Mike Jensen, courtesy of the Zuckerman Museum of Art.

Image, this page, top: Zipporah Camille Thompson, *azul electrica (electric blue)*, 2019. Courtesy of artist and Whitespace Gallery, Atlanta, GA. Photography by TK Smith, courtesy of the Zuckerman Museum of Art.

Image, this page, right: Romare Bearden, detail, *Snow Morning*, 1959. Courtesy of Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA. Image courtesy of the Clark Atlanta University Art Museum, Atlanta, GA.





# KSU Department of Dance hosts Charlotte Ballet and Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre



By Kathie Beckett

In 2019-2020, the Department of Dance hosted both Charlotte Ballet and Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre. McCree O’Kelley, interim chair of the Department of Dance, said, “We were thrilled to share these nationally-ranked companies with both our students and metro Atlanta audiences. The Department of Dance at Kennesaw State University is committed to exposing our students and audiences to cutting-edge dance. KSU Dance is distinguished by our state-of-the-art Dance Theater, community partnerships and our commitment to engage with the professional practice.”

A world-class repertory dance ensemble based in Charlotte, N.C., Charlotte Ballet performs classic and contemporary dance with virtuosity, energy, and artistic excellence for local, statewide and national audiences. Charlotte Ballet’s collective talents challenge, stimulate, educate, entertain, and enrich audiences.

In September 2019, the ensemble took the stage of the KSU Marietta Dance Theater to present “Walking Mad” and “Redbird.” Choreographer Myles Thatcher’s abstract piece “Redbird” echoed the choreographer’s own struggle with grief and loss while having, as one reviewer put it, “a gorgeous ritualistic tableau.” Acclaimed choreographer Johan Inger’s “Walking Mad” followed “Redbird” and showcased breathtaking beauty, boundless energy and amazing athleticism.

Under the artistic direction of Hope Muir, Charlotte Ballet (formerly known as North Carolina Dance Theatre) has received national recognition for their classical and contemporary repertory featuring the choreography of artists from around the world.

With the goal of assembling a group of dancers who focus on telling stories through dance, alumnus John Welker (Dance, ’17) started



Terminus Modern Ballet Theater (Terminus). KSU Dance hosted Terminus in March 2020 as they presented “Modern Myths.” An original production, “Modern Myths” demonstrates that “you don’t have to go to New York City to experience world-class arts programming,” according to Welker.

An evening of neo-classical ballet inspired by the legends of Greek mythology, “Modern Myths” featured the Atlanta premiere of Terminus resident choreographer Tara Lee’s “Under the Olive Tree” and Terminus resident choreographer Heath Gill’s “Horizons.” An Atlanta premiere, “Under the Olive Tree” first premiered with New Orleans Ballet Theater in 2016. Called “stark,” “striking,” and “sensual” by the Miami Herald, Lee’s fluid choreography both celebrates and opposes classicism, and is inspired by the divine/human duality of the Greek gods and goddesses. The work featured

Peng Yu Chen, formerly with Atlanta Ballet, and Terminus School students, making it the largest cast to date.

Terminus and KSU Dance announced their partnership in Fall of 2019; this production was the first Terminus performance hosted by KSU since establishing the partnership. O’Kelley said.

“We are thrilled we were able to bring these innovative companies to campus and give our students the opportunity to witness these inspiring artists.” •

*Photo, left: “Walking Mad” courtesy of Charlotte Ballet. Photo, top: “Modern Myths” courtesy of Terminus Modern Ballet Theatre.*





Art and Design students, faculty, & alumni

# Throw For A Cause

*Bowls thrown, glazed, and fired for Empty Bowls Project*

By Lauren Richmond

**F**or the 12th annual Homelessness Awareness Week (HAW), Kennesaw State University's (KSU) CARE Services partnered with the School of Art and Design (SOAAD) and University Dining to bring the Empty Bowls Project back for its third year as part of the HAW lineup. The annual fundraising event helps KSU CARE services fight hunger and raise awareness about the issues of food insecurity; all proceeds go directly to CARE Services.

KSU Mudslingers Ceramics club members, led by associate professors of Art Jeff Campana and Keith Smith, held a "throw-a-thon" during the SOAAD Open House on October 24, 2019. Participants threw, glazed, and fired 75 bowls for the Empty Bowls Project. Campana also assigned this project to his wheelthrowing class, where students created two bowls each, bringing in another 50 bowls for the event. Campana also made an additional 25 on his own to bring the total amount of bowls for the event to 150.

"In addition to the charitable cause," says Campana, "there is a valuable experience for students to make work and put it in the public realm. They had the opportunity to fire in all of the varieties that our studio can offer, that were suitable for the function."

Each attendee selected their own handcrafted bowl, which was promptly filled with vegan soup, made from local, seasonal produce. While enjoying the meal, patrons heard from guest speakers on sustainability and food insecurity.

Speakers included a student representative of CARE Services as well as representatives from Forerunner Foods, University Dining, the Office of Sustainability, and SOAAD. Attendees proudly carried their bowls home as a reminder of the event; all proceeds went directly to CARE Services.

"The purpose of this event," said Kim Henghold of the Office of Community Engagement, "is two-fold: creating awareness around food insecurity and homelessness and creating a fundraising opportunity for CARE Services. It is such a unique event because the attendees are able to learn, feel good about their donation, and walk away with a beautiful piece of art that we hope reminds the participants of the issues presented." •



Photo by David Caselli.



# KSU Dance senior rehearses renowned dance company

*Hard work pays off with important professional opportunity*



Photo by Summer Davis and Matt Hafner

By Lauren Richmond

**K**ennesaw State University (KSU) senior Shari Purnell gained critical professional experience in January when Department of Dance Professor Thang Dao invited Purnell to assist him in staging *Roked* for Philadelphia Dance Company (Philadanco) in New York City for their upcoming season and tour. In fall of 2019, *Roked* was performed by a cast of 17 dancers from the KSU Dance Company, in which Purnell was a soloist.

Each fall semester, Dance faculty choreograph works for students to learn and perform, and Prof. Dao choreographed *Roked* as part of the production *SLANG*. Purnell proved to be skilled at not only learning how to analyze movements, but also how to decipher movements to teach fellow dancers. "During our rehearsals," she says, "Professor Dao tasked me with retaining choreography and teaching parts." Prof. Dao has a history with Philadanco, regularly working with them over the past several years, and when they asked him to set a new work for their upcoming season, *Roked* was an obvious choice, and he enlisted Purnell as his rehearsal assistant.

"Philadanco's dancers are a miracle of skill and energy," writes *Dance Magazine*. "They work in a range of idioms most companies don't even try to possess...a company that can do more than anything. It can represent the human spirit through dance." Purnell knew this was an exciting and challenging opportunity. "I was scared at first," she reflects. "The first day, my voice was shaking as a tried to teach, but the dancers were really nice. We

loosened up and every day turned out to be so much fun." While the experience in and of itself was quite the opportunity for a dance student, one aspect stuck out to Purnell: "I think the professional development side of it was really exciting for me. I tend to be really nervous about getting out there to meet companies and network, so I feel like that gave me a chance to develop something before I graduate: a relationship with a company that I could possibility work with in the future."

"I think I've gained more confidence," she says of her Philadanco experience. "I'm still nervous here and there, but being in that experience where I knew the information and knew how to teach it, there was no doubt that I was going to deliver. I didn't always think that, but I now have more confidence to tell myself 'no, I know how to do this,' and realize I can bring value to someone's company." This confidence has been developing over the course of her studies at KSU and this experience with a professional dance company cemented that growth. "I've seen over my time here at KSU," she says, "that the [Dance] department has really put an emphasis on professionalism that we need after we graduate. That has been really important to me."

**"You have to believe in yourself," she advises aspiring dancers. "If you don't believe in yourself, no one else will. You have to put that in if you want to continue, and those around you will see if you don't believe in yourself. Be your biggest fan and advocate." •**



# Alumnus Ryan Gregory joins Atlanta Opera Orchestra

*Violinist finds “a kind of musical innocence” in the viola*

By Lauren Richmond

All too often, our paths to our calling take a long route, with many forks in the road where one must decide the next step. Yet nearly every time, we eventually get to where we were meant to be. Kennesaw State University (KSU) alumnus Ryan Gregory is one such example. Gregory (Music Performance, Violin, '16) flipped the script and landed a nationally competitive viola position with the Atlanta Opera Orchestra in November 2019.

Inevitably, Gregory started thinking about his future after high school. “Initially,” he says, “I had decided to pursue a degree in engineering at Georgia Tech.” This would have certainly led to a great career for him, but a chance encounter changed everything: “I met Professor [Helen] Kim at a fundraiser where I played traditional Balkan music on the violin. She gave me some words of encouragement, and, coupled with the fact that I had discovered a real love for teaching music along the way, this led me to change career paths and turn again towards music.”

During his studies at KSU, yet another professor inspired the young musician: Professor Alyson Fleck. She encouraged Gregory to take up the viola in addition to the violin. He quickly carved out time

for private lessons with Prof. Fleck and ASO violist Cathy Lynn.

“I was always drawn to the sound of the viola,” he explains, “especially the sound of the instrument under my ear.” While many assume that violins and violas are markedly similar, this is not the case: “Playing viola in an ensemble requires a somewhat different mindset from the violin,” he says. “Violin requires a heavy emphasis on virtuosity, and, physically speaking, the viola is just more difficult than the violin. Everything has to be done with a bit more care and even the simplest musical line requires deep awareness.” While his studies focused on the violin, Gregory used his love for the viola as a way to escape the pressures of the violin and bring himself back to what he calls “a kind of musical innocence.”

Although now devoted to the viola, Gregory says he is not giving up the violin: “Not many people are truly comfortable pursuing both as performers, but, for me personally, I find the viola and violin to be mutually beneficial and rewarding.”

To those aspiring to enter the professional music world, Gregory says, “Be patient with yourself and be persistent. Beware of perfectionism, but always listen to yourself honestly.” •



# **Collage Concert at KSU** **features a myriad of performances**

*Over 200 KSU students and faculty perform a variety of music*







By Kathie Beckett

Audiences were delighted by the variety of music and talent performed by students and faculty at Kennesaw State University's School of Music as they presented the Collage Concert. Led by interim director Leslie J. Blackwell, the School of Music presented the signature production for the 14th year in a row to raise funds for student scholarships.

Over 200 students and faculty members graced the stage, highlighting the numerous concentrations offered at the School of Music. Patrons saw performances in all areas, including KSU's Chamber Singers, Symphony Orchestra, and Wind Ensemble. Special lighting effects and stage design complemented the program as each selection was presented in rapid-fire, flowing vignettes in a truly unique event.

Many popular selections were showcased, including the student Jazz Combo pumping out the smooth sounds of Cole Porter's song "Just One of Those Things" from the musical "Jubilee." The Symphony Orchestra performed "The Pines of the Appian Way" by Respighi from "The Pines of Rome," a classic Italian piece centered around the past glories of the Roman republic.

Chamber Singers wooed audiences with their melodious voices through "The Sleep of Poets" by David Maslanka from the composition "A Litany for Courage and the Seasons," and the Wind Ensemble highlighted their skills with Gabrieli's "Canzon duodecimi toni" with its unique composition alternating between majesty and introspection.

Faculty also performed, including the always popular Summit Piano Trio featuring pianist Robert Henry, violinist Helen Kim, and cellist Charae Krueger. The Trio spotlighted 20th century Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla with "Spring" from his set of tango compositions entitled "Four Seasons." •

Photos by Lauren Liz Photography





# Department of Theatre and Performance Studies presents: "Bring It On: The Musical"

*In collaboration with KSU Cheerleading Squad*

*Jovahn Burroughs (above) engages the audience with his dance moves.*

**K**ennesaw State University's Department of Theatre and Performance Studies produced the acclaimed "Bring It On: The Musical," in November 2019. Staged by Justin Anderson, one of Atlanta's most accomplished directors, this high-energy production focused on the competitive world of cheerleading and one young woman's journey as she navigates life's challenges. Originally created and performed by Atlanta's Alliance Theater in 2011, the music is by Tom Kitt and Lin-Manuel Miranda, lyrics are by Amanda Green and Miranda, and the book is by Jeff Whitty. "The piece is derived from an amalgamation of all the 'Bring It On' films and borrows from the variety of scripts. It celebrates athleticism and the legitimacy of cheerleading as a sport," says Anderson.

"Bring It On: The Musical" was a collaboration between the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies and KSU Athletics' award-winning Cheerleading Squad. Six KSU cheerleaders took the stage, including Gary Milloway, Ann-Dupree Goodsell, and Malik Warner. Performing alongside KSU's musical theatre students, squad members built pyramids, performed lifts and executed other thrilling gymnastic feats.

The production proved to be a learning experience for all involved. Annaliese Bauer, who portrayed the lead character Campbell, says, "The longest part of learning most of my lifts was the first time, getting the guts to just do it and trust my team has my back...I'm fortunate to have strong, confident cast members lifting me alongside the KSU cheerleaders, and, of course, they nailed it every time."

Anderson and the creative team intentionally cast students at varying stages in their studies and experiences,

providing opportunities to learn, teach, and grow. "We got to have a room full of people who are at different stages in their process, which is the best part about academic theatre," says Anderson. "You see the growth of students as they lean into developing their skills. I wanted them to be open to failing, to trying, to learning. That way, they are prepared to do so in the professional world."

Scheduling was a challenge in this production: students committed 20 or more hours per week to rehearse, on top of school and work. Anderson feels that this rigorous experience "teaches them the importance of prioritizing and communicating, learning how to be flexible with an air of grace, and leaning into the opportunities presented, but learning to speak up when life gets in the way."

"From learning new styles of dance in

*We got to see this show become our own, unique to KSU, unique to this moment.*

short periods of time, to working on the stamina required for the show and playing Campbell's essence, it's all been stretching me as a performer," says Bauer of her experience so far in the production. "I've had over a decade of dance experience, but the unique style in this performance took some work and time to commit to muscle memory and execute confidently."

"I think one of the most exciting parts," says Bauer, "was to put life into our onstage characters after we learned all the choreography and blocking. We got to see this show become our own, unique to KSU, unique to this moment."•



# Anat Cohen Tentet with Oded Lev-Ari performs at Kennesaw State University

*Features transformative pieces from latest albums "Triple Helix" and "Happy"*

By Kathie Beckett and Lauren Richmond

**K**ennesaw State University's School of Music hosted Anat Cohen Tentet with musical director Oded Lev-Ari in November 2019. A featured artist in the *ArtsKSU Presents* professional series, Grammy-nominated clarinetist-saxophonist Anat Cohen and the Tentet (rhythm section, horns, vibraphone, cello, and accordion) performed selections from their albums "Happy Song" and "Triple Helix." "Happy Song" draws influences from Brazilian music and African grooves to vintage swing and touching ballads, and, in a stirring follow-up, the group reaches a new crest in its evolution with "Triple Helix."

Commissioned by New York's Carnegie Hall and Chicago's Symphony Center for live world premieres earlier in 2019, "Triple Helix" won raves from the *Chicago Tribune* as "a work of considerable expressive reach" and a "sensuous tonal palette," with Cohen "sounding like a musician transformed." The album's centerpiece is a three-movement concerto composed for Cohen and the Tentet by her longtime collaborator Oded Lev-Ari, the Tentet's musical director.

The Tentet, a vibrant mix of ace New York players, bring a wealth of color to the new work, which defies all stylistic pigeonholing: weaving in and out is the sumptuous brass of Nadjé Noordhuis and Nick Finzer, the robust baritone sax of Owen Browder, the sonically enriching vibraphone and percussion of James Shipp, the lithe and versatile cello of Christopher Hoffman, the radiant piano and accordion of Vitor Gonçalves, the edgy yet ingeniously integrated solid-body guitar of Sheryl Bailey and the decisive and driving rhythm section work of bassist Tal Mashiach and drummer Anthony Pinciotti.

Ever charismatic, prolific, and inspired, Anat Cohen has won hearts and minds the world over with her expressive virtuosity and delightful stage presence. Cohen has been declared Clarinetist of the Year by the Jazz Journalists Association every year since 2007 and has also been named the Top Clarinetist, Rising Star, and Jazz Artist of the Year by *Downbeat Magazine*. •











*Image: Lucas Pollitzer, sitting, with Carlson Seabolt, reclining. Photo by Sydney Lee.*

# A tough discussion with "The Normal Heart"

*Student-led production pays tribute to  
marginalized community*

By Kathie Beckett

Students in the Department of Theatre and Performance Studies (TPS) tackled complicated issues in the production of Larry Kramer's "The Normal Heart," a heart-wrenching piece centered around the early years of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in New York City. The entire creative team for this production was comprised of current TPS students, including senior Zach Elton as director.

"The Normal Heart," a largely autobiographical piece by playwright Larry Kramer, takes audiences back to 1981 and shows the rise of the HIV/AIDS crisis through the eyes of writer and activist Ned Weeks, the gay founder of a prominent HIV advocacy group. Weeks, notorious for being exceptionally passionate and obstinate, navigates through the media and the political system in order to identify this disease affecting the gay male community and bring awareness to the issue before the death toll mounts even higher. Despite his efforts, he and the community he represents are essentially ignored.

Kramer's overwhelming story, constructed through the directorial vision of Elton, leaves audiences reflecting on the lives lost and how society has (or has not) changed since the time of this story. "I take pride in telling a story that is so often overlooked," says Elton. "The early years of the AIDS epidemic are rarely studied in our classrooms...we aren't exposed to the pain, fear, rage, and love that united these men through one of the most horrific epidemics of the past 100 years...the only way we can break down the stigmas surrounding the AIDS crisis is to start a discussion."

"Our job as cast and crew is not only to educate our audience," Elton continues, "but also to honor those who so needlessly died. Our job is to give these men more life and more love than they received in their lifetimes. By doing so, I hope to foster empathy, understanding, and above all else, love."

"'The Normal Heart' was born thanks to Zach Elton's noteworthy initiative and vision," says Karen Robinson, assistant chair of TPS and Artistic Director. "His impassioned advocacy for telling this particular story about the AIDS crisis in the gay community, combined with his strategic approach to his directorial training in the program, inspired our Season Selection Committee to offer him the opportunity to direct in the season. The fact that he is leading this project is a testament to our Department's desire to empower our students to take on leadership roles when they demonstrate this kind of excellence and preparedness."

While all productions through TPS provide excellent opportunities for its students, this show in particular holds great importance to the student-driven creative team: "This show was an opportunity for us to put the skills we have learned at KSU into practice and show ourselves and our professors that we are ready to move from a collegiate to a professional atmosphere," adds Elton. •

*Editor's Note:* Larry Kramer passed away on May 27, 2020 at the age of 84. Read more about the life of this remarkable playwright and AIDS activist at [nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/27reuters-people-larry-kramer.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/27/us/27reuters-people-larry-kramer.html)



# KSU Chamber Singers perform in Mobile, AL, barely escaping COVID-19 closures

## *Ensemble awarded coveted spot at American Choral Director's Association conference*

By Kathie Beckett

The week had finally arrived, and School of Music students in the Chamber Singers ensemble were excited to perform in Mobile, AL during the American Choral Director's Association (ACDA) Southern Division Conference, scheduled for March 11-14, 2020. The Chamber Singers were chosen to perform at the highly selective Conference after a peer-reviewed submission of one song for each of three years of performance recordings plus a proposed concert program. Devised by conductor Leslie J. Blackwell, interim director of the School of Music and director of Choral Activities, was all acapella except two songs featuring John Lawless, vibraphone and John Warren, clarinet.

It was a high bar to meet, especially since the students knew they would be performing for the highest-ranking national choral professionals in the field. The students rehearsed tirelessly, in different halls, with the risers and students arranged in various configurations. Blackwell, known affectionately as "Dr. B." by her students, intentionally threw obstacles in front of the musicians so they would be comfortable singing in any configuration at the conference. The students practiced

jumping from song to song, without being given the pitch; one selection took them from F sharp minor to E flat major, and the students hit it perfectly.

As if rehearsing for six acapella selections was not enough, the Ensemble was ecstatic when ACDA asked them to perform the

Raymond W. Brock Composition Commission featuring Swiss composer Ivo Antognini. Every division performs the selection, but only one choir is selected to actually perform it; it was a huge honor. The students embraced the opportunity and worked with Antognini via Skype. The composer said that the students got it; they understood his composition. "It was a wonderful learning experience to talk with a living composer and to understand his rationale musically and compositionally. It gave the students such a breadth of knowledge as they brought his music to life," said Blackwell.

Confident yet nervous, the students left KSU on Wednesday, March 11, headed to Mobile.

On Thursday, KSU announced the campus would close due to COVID-19 on Friday, March 13 at 5 p.m. Dorms were to be closed, and classes were to be moved online. It was a surreal experience. Students were anticipating a marvelous time in this once-in-a-lifetime performance, and, at the same time, dealing with the real-world implications of COVID-19. "Parents were calling, our phones were all blowing up," said Blackwell, "but we



*Leslie Blackwell waits in the wings as the KSU Chamber Singers get ready to perform. Image by Tom Yackley.*



*The KSU Chamber Singers perform at ACDA in Mobile, AL.*

collectively made the decision to perform.” The students and Dr. B. would not turn the bus around for home. They would perform as scheduled, but they would limit social contact and observe safety precautions and take care of each other. Some students were very concerned about being homeless, especially since the dorms were closing. (KSU made special considerations to take care of all of the students.) Other students lamented about the lack of food in their kitchens. At a time when the students should be laughing and joking together on the bus, instead, they were discussing the real-life implications of the pandemic.

Even though they had plans to attend a concert on Thursday night, they all agreed to call it an early night so they would be dressed, warmed-up, and ready to go at 7 a.m. on Friday morning; not a single person was late to the bus. The students performed exceptionally well and received a standing ovation from the audience, complete with whistling and yelling. An ACDA official remarked that it was superb

musicianship. But Dr. B. would not let the students linger long for additional accolades; they were all corralled back onto the bus immediately so that she could keep them as safe as possible.

Arriving back on campus at about 8 p.m. on Friday night, the campus was eerily dark and quiet, but all of the students were safe. Their collective experience would not be easily forgotten, marked forever by the theme “I am” that was the title of the program and also boldly imprinted on their t-shirts. The phrase was taken from their set by composer David Maslanka’s “Litany for Courage and the Seasons” in “Movement V. Little Dance: For Barbara Mason” •

And then the boundaries will cave in  
and then my spirit will fly.  
In this moment and no other,  
In this way and no other  
I am.



*The KSU Chamber Singers and Dr. Blackwell pose for a candid shot in Mobile, AL.*



# School of Art and Design

## Alumna April Marten

*Contemporary artist is exhibiting across the country*

By Lauren Richmond

Communication and creative expression are not cut and dry notions, but fluid ideas that we as humans can explore, create, and imitate. Artist April Marten uses these ideas to question the world around us through art. A 2012 BFA graduate in Drawing and Painting at Kennesaw State University's (KSU) School of Art and Design (SOAAD), Marten is making waves in the art community with her work, including a recent exhibition in New York City.

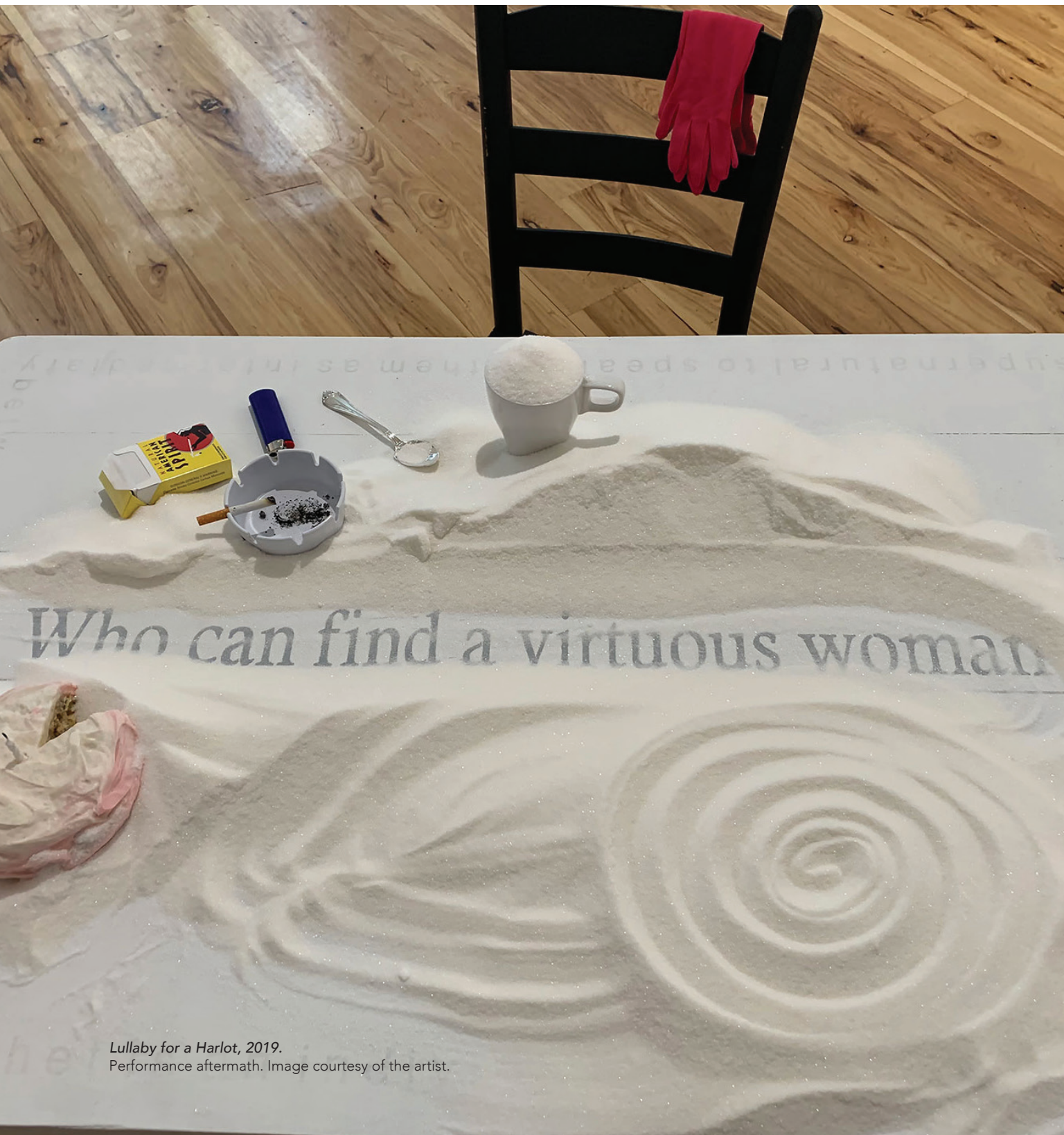
From KSU's Zuckerman Museum of Art to Atlanta's High Museum of Art, NYC's Foley Gallery to Charlotte, N.C.'s Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Marten's work has been on display nationally. As artist-in-residence at the McColl Center for Art + Innovation in North Carolina, she displayed a limited edition of her project *Frances Wasn't a Saint*. This is where the cards fell into place for Marten: little did she know that well-known art dealer Monica King visited her exhibition at McColl. King purchased one of the prints from Marten's exhibition for her private collection, then, according to Marten, "reached out and began conceiving of an exhibition around this entire series of work." King then offered Marten a solo exhibition as the inaugural show for her new gallery opening in Tribeca, NY.

This kind of break does not come by often, especially with the continuous opportunities it provided to Marten. "At first, it was intimidating," confesses Marten, [by] "the thought of filling an entire NYC gallery with work that was so important to me personally and to incorporate live performance using my own body." She pushed passed the intimidation with King's guidance and now she says, "to show work on such a spectacular stage is one thing, but to be represented by a gallerist who is interested in nurturing an emerging artist's career is like winning the golden ticket!" Marten's work kicked off the gallery on September 6, 2019, with a live performance by Marten on September 7, 2019, and her work was on display through October 12, 2019.



*Untitled (Frances Wasn't a Saint) No. 2, 2019.*  
Pigment print on panel. 24 x 24". Image courtesy of the artist.





*Lullaby for a Harlot, 2019.*  
Performance aftermath. Image courtesy of the artist.

*Frances Wasn't a Saint* explores the female identity and the societal and power structures that we allow to shape it. Using multiple mediums, including still images, multimedia sculptural installations, video, and live performance, Marten creates a figure named Frances, a representation of women, "an ambiguous female figure who lived, a grandmother I couldn't really know, but who is talking to me and through me now," says Marten. Frances began as a personal inquiry through private performance, where Marten explored and confronted the "historically problematic male gaze via the lens of the camera," she says. "I was thinking of the #MeToo movement and the ever-increasing cry of women to confront gender-based violence and predatory behavior head-on."

Born in 1969 in Miami, FL, Marten grew up in a family deeply tied to a fundamentalist Christian group. Artistic expression and critical thought were considered threats to this community's foundations, and Marten's early inclinations towards art and creativity were thoroughly suppressed. "It took ten years of my adult life to make the break and finally pursue my intellectual curiosity," says Marten.

In this pursuit, she decided to move to Atlanta for a fresh start and sought an educational institution that allowed her to delve into multiple research topics. "I was interested in art as a vehicle for social dialogue," says Marten. "KSU's interdisciplinary studies department seemed like a good fit as a place where I could combine my research interests." After a couple of years at KSU, with the assistance of academic advisors, Marten decided to focus her studies on art full-time. After graduating with her BFA, she began creating and researching and started her career through her exhibitions and residencies, mainly in North Carolina.

Marten continues to research and delve into the human condition through art. She has explored areas such as religious histories, gender-based violence, ritual, excess, and consumption. "All of these come under the umbrella of questioning the function of ecstasy and whose happiness matters," says Marten. "The subjects I explore, at times, feel dark and heavy, so I infuse the work with layers of humor and meditative relief, employing magical realism."

Her most recent, and current favorite, project is an installation entitled *Dinner of White Desire* (2019) recently exhibited at Goodyear Arts in

Charlotte, NC. It is a unique piece, displaying an unusual dinner spread consisting of mismatched food such as cauliflower, white jelly beans, and uncooked lima beans. A recipe card and shopping list are included, giving not only instructions for preparing the food, but setting the entire room, including putting sugar on the floor. The intention of the piece is interactive, having gallery visitors sit at the table and experience "sipping" the duck egg tea from simple white teacups, all while leaving their mark via footprints in the sugar. A single sentence about the installation is given for description: "I fear we are growing increasingly intolerant to what remains after ecstasy."

*To see a catalogue of Marten's professional work, along with more information about what inspires her, please visit [aprilmarten.com](http://aprilmarten.com).* •



*Blue Window, 2019.*  
Sugar, Wood, Ceramic. 23" x 25" x 4.5".  
Image courtesy of the artist.



# Auditions at artsKSU continue despite COVID-19

*Students and faculty create unique ways to show talent*



Students interested in pursuing a degree in the fine arts at Kennesaw State University (KSU) haven't let COVID-19 stop them from following their dreams. Certain arts programs, musical ensembles, or theatre productions at KSU's College of the Arts require an audition. For example, a student wanting to major in Dance would normally audition in front of the faculty in one of the dance studios.

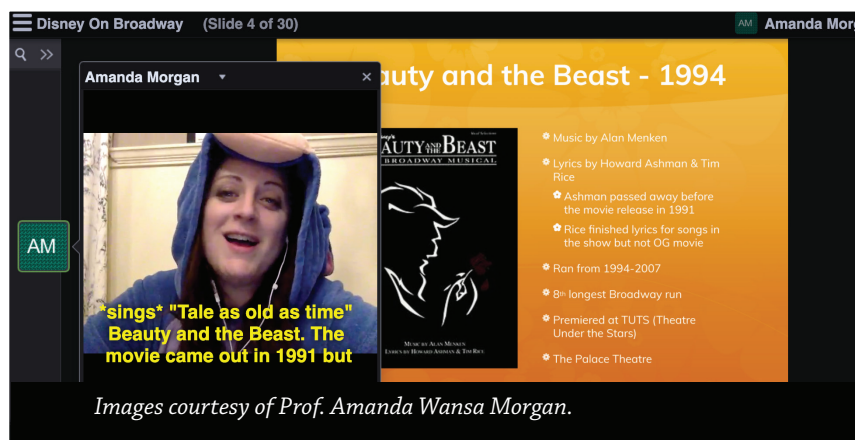
To protect students, faculty and staff from COVID-19, KSU moved all classes online as of March 18, so live auditions were not possible. So, how would a dancer audition? McCree O'Kelley, interim chair of the Department of Dance, created a virtual audition for prospective dance majors. Students are directed to watch two dance videos, learn the moves, and then record themselves performing the routines. No ballet barre at home? No problem; kitchen counters are perfectly acceptable substitutes.

"We understand that these are not ideal conditions, and that no studio space is available. However, we wanted to create an audition process that would be accessible to everyone," said O'Kelley. "It's important to us that any student who wants to audition for KSU Dance still has that opportunity, even if that means using a kitchen counter for a ballet barre and recording the routine on an iPhone."

John Lawless, Director of Percussion Studies in the School of Music (SOM), knew that students seeking a spot in the Fall 2020 KSU Percussion Studio probably did not have access to the instruments necessary for their auditions. He asked students to make a video playing whatever they have at home, leading to some very interesting submissions. "Several people only had sticks and a practice pad, and one only had a wooden stool to play on. I even had one video of a timpani (kettle drums) etude played on a pair of bongos that were propped up by a chair! As silly as all of this sounds, I was able to see their level of playing and make a judgment of whether or not they would be a good candidate for our program," said Lawless.

"I also contacted all of their private percussion teachers to fill in the blanks concerning how they play the larger instruments of the percussion family. Between the videos, and the conversations with teachers, I feel as though I have a good idea of their

musical abilities. Based on the above, we were able to offer quite a few incoming freshman positions in the KSU Percussion studio," he said. Sam Skelton, director of SOM Jazz Studies, received a stellar audition video from a student, with an unusual twist: the student recorded himself in the bathroom. Skelton said, "It was a magnificent audition. I know his mom and I asked her why he chose the bathroom and she said, 'Well, it has the best acoustics in the house!'"



Images courtesy of Prof. Amanda Wansa Morgan.

"Normally, the School of Music holds one in-person audition day per month starting in February, with the largest audition day in March," explains Susan Grant-Robinson, SOM Associate Director. "The faculty have been wonderful about reaching out to the students to assist with video preparation and to conduct virtual B.A. and music education interviews."

The Department of Theatre and Performance Studies (TPS) does not require an audition for admission into the program, but auditions are required for all of their productions. Karen Robinson, TPS Assistant Chair and

Grant-Robinson added, "We are grateful for the technology that makes this new paradigm a possibility, but we look forward to welcoming the students—live and in-person—when our social distancing has flattened the curve, our scientists have more answers, and the world is once again 'reopened.'" •



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