



NOTE

Message from the School of Music Director, Dr. Scott Plugge

Welcome to the Fall 2020 "Pandemic Edition" of the Sam Houston State University School of Music Newsletter! These are unprecedented times! The School of Music faculty and staff spent a tremendous amount of time and effort creating a safe plan of action to address COVID-19 concerns for the return of our outstanding students. We installed sanitary wipe stations throughout the building and invested a significant amount in air filtration units to circulate the air and filter the air every 20 minutes for each room and performance space. We acquired cold foggers to sanitize areas (especially practice rooms) and established protocols to safely navigate all aspects of the building. In spite of all these issues and concerns, we are proud to announce that our enrollment numbers increased this fall! We are currently at 452 majors! In addition, we welcome three outstanding new faculty members! (Diego Caetano, assistant professor of piano, Lana Kuscer, assistant professor of flute, and Emily Heilman, assistant professor of voice). I hope you have a chance to meet and hear them perform...either virtually or live! In closing, thank you for your support of the school of music and stay safe!

Dr. Scott Plugge
Director, School of Music

Do you have news to share? Please send it to Patricia Duran at:
patriciaduran@shsu.edu
for possible inclusion in the next issue!

Thank you, FRIENDS OF MUSIC!

Even in these times of limited performances with limited capacity due to social distancing, your generosity is much appreciated. We cannot maintain the high level of educational and artistic programs for which we are known, without your financial support.

Help us grow! Join FRIENDS of MUSIC for the 2020–2021 season!

Please see the Friends of Music information at the end of this newsletter.



PREVIEW OF UPCOMING EVENTS

October 30–31
Old Main Pit, 7:30pm
Opera Performance

November 17
Concert Hall, 7:30pm
All Choirs Concert

November 19
Concert Hall, 7:30pm
Wind Ensemble Concert

November 20
Concert Hall, 7:30pm
Beethoven2020@SHSU
CAM Artist Series

November 23
Concert Hall, 7:30pm
Symphonic Band Concert

November 24
Concert Hall, 7:30pm
Fall Jazz Bands Concert

Very limited seating for events. COVID-19 safety precautions will be enforced. For a complete list of events, check your email or visit the website at:
www.shsu.edu/music
Please note that performance dates/times may change.
Contact the office or website for updated information.



Faculty & Alumni Spotlight

SHSU (Online) Summer Music Workshops: a BIG SUCCESS!

The Center for Music Education is committed sponsors Continuing Education Sessions for practicing teachers at the secondary level, offering inspiring and informative sessions for Band Directors and String Orchestra Directors throughout the academic year. This past summer, four workshops were held virtually, bringing together teachers, performers, and students to explore teaching at the highest levels. The workshops were successful, with record number of attendees, even after having to change gears and go online abruptly due to COVID-19. Congratulations to SHSU faculty that made this happen: Dr. Brian Gibbs, Dr. Sandy Hinkley, Darla McBryde, Dr. Matthew McInturf, and Dr. Daniel Saenz.

The workshops this summer were: The Art of Teaching Music; The Pedagogy Project for Band Instruments; String Pedagogy Workshop for Music Educators; and Choral Educators Professional Development Workshop. Look for information about Summer 2021 Music Workshops in the next few months!



Above: Image from The Art of Teaching Music Online 2020 Edition Workshop. The title of the clinic was *Tonal Energy: More than Just a Smiley Face* by Albert Vela.



Above and Right: Photos of presenters in the Choral Educators Workshop *Back to Basics: Repertoire, Reading and Rehearsal*.

SHSU welcomes new faculty to the School of Music family!

Diego Caetano
Assistant Professor of Piano

Emily Heilman
Assistant Professor of Voice

Lana Kuser
Assistant Professor of Flute



Above: photo of Choral Educators Workshop *Back to Basics: Repertoire, Reading and Rehearsal* coordinator Dr. Sandy Hinkley during a session.





Faculty & Alumni Spotlight

Congratulations to REFLECT harp+percussion on a successful summer concert series!



The REFLECT harp+percussion duo, consisting of SHSU faculty members Dr. Alaina Graiser (harp) and Dr. Brian Graiser (percussion), were ready to begin their Spring 2020 concerts...then COVID-19 happened. Rather than cancel, they presented weekly mini-concerts live-streamed from their own home studio via YouTube Live and offered them free of charge on their new channel, "REFLECTV."

Here, Dr. Brian Graiser tells us his thoughts about the online experience:

When COVID-19 began its initial sweep across the U.S. early in the year, Alaina and I figured there might be a chance that our REFLECT harp+percussion faculty duo concert at the end of March might get cancelled, but we really were hoping to avoid that outcome. Not only had it been a while since we had performed a full program together (the last time had been our national tour over the previous summer), but there was a world premiere on the program that we REALLY needed to present! The piece (*Milk and Honey*) was written for us by composer Stuart Saunders Smith a few years ago, and due to various reasons (including the birth of our first child) we had not been able to dedicate the necessary time until this occasion. And it was crucial that we present it now, as Alaina was due to deliver our second child this summer and we didn't expect our schedule to get any easier once that happened! So we were very disappointed when the university shut down all activities three weeks before our concert, although of course it was the right thing to do in the face of the growing pandemic.

We were still extremely committed to the idea of presenting our program in some fashion, and as with most musicians, the subsequent COVID-19 lockdown forced us to consider streaming our performances online from our own home studio. This thinking quickly led to our development of "REFLECTV," as we eventually called it; instead of presenting our original full program, we mapped out a more-or-less-weekly series of short concerts (about 20–30 minutes each), mainly because we knew we needed to limit our performances to our son's nap time! Even though this required us to prepare a few extra pieces that hadn't originally been on our March program, the whole thing turned out to be pretty sustainable since we only needed to have two pieces ready each week, and what was supposed to be a 4-concert series turned into an 8-episode season!

Of course, there were some technical snags and other frustrations as we were forced up the learning curve of live-streaming. We had a memorable faux pas when, for the first 5–10 minutes of one episode, I forgot to unmute the microphone (thankfully our secondary HD camera and microphone caught the whole thing, which we uploaded after the fact). Then there was the time that our neighbors were out mowing the lawn, despite my very specific request that they not do so at that time! As the season wore on, we would sometimes re-record a piece as soon as our live performance had ended. I guess you could say that was a bit of perfectionist wish fulfillment for us; how many times have performers wished they could have had one more go at a piece as soon as they walk off stage? There are still some tiny errors and surprises in the final videos; our son's naps aren't THAT long and we didn't have the time to treat any of these episodes like studio sessions and record several takes of each piece, but we were both very happy with the results each week.

Ultimately, the whole experience not only managed to bring us into the twenty-first century practice of streaming performances, but it ended up being way more fun than we expected, and we are definitely committed to revisiting REFLECTV for a second season! I'm not sure when exactly that will be (our time is at an all-time premium right now, between juggling our full-time teaching loads at SHSU and taking care of our toddler and new baby at home without relief from babysitters or daycare thanks to COVID), but we will definitely be back. On the bright side, all of our episodes from Season 1 are still readily available on our REFLECTV YouTube channel, and will be for the foreseeable future!

Sincerely,
Dr. Brian S. Graiser



School of Music
COLLEGE OF ARTS & MEDIA
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY
MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Faculty & Alumni Spotlight

SHSU 2021 School of Music Auditions!

NOVEMBER 14, 2020 **VOICE & ALL INSTRUMENTS**
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF GUITAR, PERCUSSION, & PIANO)

JANUARY 30, 2021 **VOICE & ALL INSTRUMENTS**
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF GUITAR, PERCUSSION, & PIANO)

FEBRUARY 20, 2021 **VOICE & ALL INSTRUMENTS**
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF GUITAR)

MARCH 6, 2021 **VOICE & ALL INSTRUMENTS**
(WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HARP)

APRIL 12, 2021 **VOICE ONLY**
(NOT FOR SCHOLARSHIP CONSIDERATION)



Since SHSU...

SSG Irving Ray,
The United States Army Band "Pershing's Own"
Bachelor of Music Education '10

SSG Irving Ray joined the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" in March 2016. A native of Houston, TX, Irving completed his Bachelor of Music Education at Sam Houston State University and both a Master of Music and Doctorate of Musical Artist in Euphonium Performance at the University of North Texas.

Aside from touring colleges and conservatories across the United States with the North Texas Euphonium Quartet, SSG Ray is an active soloist and clinician, frequently featured as a guest artist in Singapore, Mexico, South Africa, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and at conferences such as the International Tuba Euphonium Conference and the Midwest Clinic International Band, Orchestra, and Music Conference to name a few. Some of his greatest musical influences include Isaiah Ray, Frank Troyka, Dr. Matthew McInturf, Rex Martin, Dr. Demondrae Thurman, and Dr. Brian Bowman.



BECOME A FRIEND OF MUSIC!

Music lovers have an unyielding need to keep music in their lives. Whether it be mastering an instrument, singing, or attending performances of orchestras, wind ensembles, jazz groups, or vocal groups, there is a shared passion in the room, an adoration, an advocacy, a never-ending eagerness to experience the joy which overwhelms when the right chord strikes the heart.

The SHSU School of Music shares and embraces this passion with its students and faculty. Because Sam Houston State University is a state-assisted institution, the School of Music receives only a small portion of financial support from state funds. We are dependent upon departmental fundraising initiatives, grants, and generous donations from music lovers, such as yourself.

Our program enrollment now has over 450 students! Generosity from our Friends of Music allows us to sustain such growth, while enriching the lives of our students and audiences. It is important that we continue to excel. By becoming a Friend of Music, you will support the education and diffusion of great music performed by maturing musicians. Your contributions are used for a wide variety of important projects ranging from providing scholarships to worthy students, to helping fund guest artists. Without your financial support, we could not maintain the high level of educational and artistic programs for which we have become known.



YES! I WANT TO BE A FRIEND OF MUSIC!

To become a Friend of Music, simply fill out the form below, attach your donation, and send it to SHSU School of Music at:

**Sam Houston State University
School of Music, Box 2208
Huntsville, TX 77341-2208**

You may also donate online at: www.shsu.edu/academics/music/friends-of-music/. If you have any questions, please give us a call at **936-294-1360**. Thank you for your support.

(Circle desired giving level)

Angel \$5,000+

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Impresario \$3,000+

Artist \$100+

Maestro \$1,000+

Friend \$25+

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Phone _____

Email _____

☐ Enclosed is my check for \$_____ payable to: **Sam Houston State University**

☐ Charge my gift of \$_____ to my credit card:
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Exp. Date _____

Name on card _____

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Double or triple your support for SHSU if you are employed by a company with a matching gift program. Please secure a matching gift application from your firm's human resources department and return it with your gift.