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MUSIC AND THE BLACK CHURCH After Devotion

Braxton D. Shelley



Braxton Shelley, center, flanked by panelists Cheryl Townsend-Gilkes and Cornel West.

In my teaching and scholarship on the Black gospel tradition, I routinely make reference to the philosopher Michel Foucault's notion of "heterotopia" in order to describe the ways that many sanctuaries become profoundly perplexing spaces—physical locales in which a congregation can be located in the twenty-first century while standing at the foot of the cross, struggling to cross the Red Sea while soothing themselves with a balm in Gilead. On Wednesday November 3, the Divinity School's Marquand Chapel became one of those spaces. As we talked and listened, sometimes sitting and sometimes standing, centuries' worth of musical memory and time-stained scriptural tradition found new life on the campus of Yale University with the launch of the new Interdisciplinary Program in Music and the Black Church. This new program's aim between Yale, the ISM, and its local and national communities was evident from the roster of participants. From Houston and Memphis, from Chicago and Newark, from New York City and Waterville, Maine, musicians and panelists came to New Haven. Drawing together those who reflect and those who practice, those who teach and those who learn, this event, like the program it launches, sought to explore the boundaries between each of the aforementioned categories.

What a time! What a celebration, an event that was, in many ways, about time itself. When I first conceived of this launch event, an event that would bring together scholars and practitioners, students and faculty, the notion of *devotion* came rather forcefully into my mind. Devotion: before and after. Devotion: the moment

FACULTY NEWS

In a new [online video series](#), ISM faculty members **TERESA BERGER**, **JAMES TAYLOR**, **JEFF DOUMA**, **VASILEIOS MARINIS**, and **DAVID MAHAN** talk about the ISM's programs and community life.

Beloved **PROFESSOR EMERITUS THOMAS MURRAY** received an *honoris causa* Doctorate of Music from the School of Theology at Sewanee, the University of the South. The honor was conveyed during the school's Michaelmas Eucharist, and was attended by bishop and liturgist J. Neil Alexander, as well as several ISM alumni.



Prof. **MELANIE ROSS**, associate professor of liturgical studies at Yale Divinity School and Yale Institute of Sacred Music, has been awarded an \$18,000 Vital Worship Grant for 2022–2023 by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, one of sixteen to be given this year. | [Read more](#)

Prof. **BRYAN SPINKS**, who retires in 2022, delivered the Aidan Kavanagh Lecture as part of YDS Convocation in October. The lecture, entitled “Sleuthing Dorothy L. Sayers’ 1942 Address on Anglican Worship: A ‘Wimsey-cal’ Detection of the Background and Context of the Text,” is available for viewing on [YouTube](#).



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before the official start of many Black Baptist church services and the force that sustains this practice from Sunday to Sunday. Devotion is synonymous with Black gospel, a tradition preoccupied with scenes and settings that somehow become present during the performance of a song or sermon. Devotion: both a period of preparation and a promise to persist. Persistence is what I heard when Joey Woolfalk played Richard Smallwood’s “I Love The Lord (He Heard My Cry)” on the guitar. As he made his guitar cry, I could see this fragment from Psalm 116 travel into Dr. Isaac Watts’ aural repertory, morphing into a treasured Black expression of hymn lining, one of the musical traditions that shaped the gospel imagination of a young Richard Smallwood. Given the mechanics of this practice, it is quite likely that it was during the ritual called *devotion* that Smallwood first heard this hymn. Thus, is it quite fitting that this is where *Devotion* began.

Even before the beginning of that Wednesday evening program, profound things were already afoot. While dozens of people gathered in Marquand on Wednesday, for the 11:30 am chapel service and for the 7:45 event, a few folks assembled on Tuesday evening, evoking a scene that gave new meaning to these words of Jesus: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst.” That night, as the musicians Pamela Jean Davis, Melanie Hill, Derrick Jackson, and Joey Woolfalk prepared for the main event, a few students gradually and organically made their way into that space. What was to be a kind of rehearsal became its own event: as these musicians played and these students—safely clad in their masks—sang the “songs of Zion,” something happened: the Fire fell. This emergent musical gathering became a site of worship—an experience of presence. Surely presence—the presence of musical genius, the presence of divine power, the presence of diverse community—showed up in Marquand. Even more, the event offered many of those who routinely inhabit the spaces of this University and its Divinity



School an opportunity to find the indispensability of their presence affirmed in an official, deeply meaningful, and deeply personal way.

In Marquand, the clouds parted, the sky opened, and the kind of intense, liminal, and ecstatic so often elicited by the music of the Black church found a home on this campus. As students and guests used their bodies to acknowledge another world’s presence, the significance of the ISM’s new program came into view. More than the virtuosity or intellectual sophistication that the program will lift up, community itself, the kind that the Black church has long exemplified, the kind of sincere collectivity that is practiced through sound, will be our chief aim. This, too, is *devotion*.

I leave this inaugural series of events more convinced than ever that, through the ISM’s Interdisciplinary Program in Music and the Black Church, we have the opportunity to build an institutional home for one of the most generative traditions of American music. In so doing, we will make new space for many of the students already on this campus and for many of those yet unborn to feel a different kind of home on this campus.

NOTE: More information and a YouTube link are available at [Devotion: Meditating on the Black Gospel Tradition](#).



MUSIC AND THE BLACK CHURCH

In Retrospect: A Student's View

Terrance McQueen (M.Div. '24)

While some time has passed since the ISM and Dr. Braxton Shelley launched *Devotion: Meditating on the Black Gospel Tradition*, I still find myself without words which to fully encapsulate what transpired during this event. As a product of the Black church and a Black church musician, I was reminded of home. During the event, I was able to recall the sounds and songs of my grandparents' church. Every instrument told a story. Dr. Melanie Hill's rendition of *For Every Mountain* on violin, Pamela Jean Davis's world-renowned *Order My Steps* on piano, and Derrick Jackson's soul-stirring *I Don't Feel No Ways Tired* on the Hammond organ captured the experience of the Black gospel music tradition. I cannot forget the phenomenal bassist, guitarist, and drummer who also contributed to the stories being told through the sounds of Black gospel music. This was no ordinary launch or celebration, but it was a moment to reflect and meditate on how African Americans endured hardship without losing their sound. *Devotion: Meditating on the Black Gospel Tradition* was a celebration of the sounds that carried my ancestors through slavery. The sound of Black gospel music is a sound of hope, resilience, and strength to continue fighting for better days.

It can be argued that the Black gospel music tradition is not universal and solely belongs to those of the African American experience, but *Devotion* showcased a counterargument to that belief. In the



Black church, congregants respond with a waving of a hand, a vocal shout, or simply standing with a distinct face of satisfaction. While the response to gospel music varies across the diaspora, something beautiful manifested for many attendees that filled Marquand Chapel that evening. A diverse crowd that was representative of different cultures and faith practices came together to experience an electrifying evening. For the many attendees unfamiliar with the Black cultural response to music, there was an unspoken response where these attendees were also moved to wave their hand, stand in awe, or simply sit in amazement from the sounds of the Black church. *Devotion* illustrated what will take place as the ISM carries out its Interdisciplinary Program in Music and the Black Church — a space where folks of many cultural backgrounds and musical expertise will learn the rich history of Black gospel music.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Musicians, panelists, and audience in the moment.

MUSIC AND THE BLACK CHURCH

Postscript

Martin Jean

November's launch of the ISM's Interdisciplinary Program in Music and the Black Church was the culmination of a longstanding dream and planning phase. I am grateful to Terrance McQueen for his reflection on it, and doubly grateful to Prof. Braxton Shelley for curating and leading it.

For my part, it represented the best of what the ISM was founded to do. We were honored to spend a life-changing evening with some of the leading Gospel instrumentalists of the age, as well as scholars who have devoted their life to understanding, interpreting, and preserving the meaning of this immense body of work. Dr. Cornel West claims that Gospel music is America's greatest musical gift to the world. We heard evidence of this on November 3.

Marquand was at COVID capacity that evening, and we were joined then and through later viewing by thousands of others who have shared their own thanks for these great gifts. But these thought leaders have made us aware that we were joined by still more – by the people, living and dead, whose life experiences shaped, nurtured, and transmitted this music through the generations. We worshiped that evening with saints and angels and the whole company of heaven, and my heart was overflowing with thanks for this feast of music and prayer.

This event is truly a beginning of a new chapter in ISM's history. Music and the Black Church is a multi-pronged program that will bring classes, sounds, and practices to Yale through scholars, musicians, and church leaders. It will nurture not only Yale students, but prepare people for ministry in parishes and for leadership in the



academy and society. As soon as COVID protocols allow, you will soon be reading about events to engage clergy and church musicians as well as seminars to gather young scholars who are at the beginning of their explorations of these riches. I look forward to learning alongside so many others as we walk down the path together.

Event photos by Faith Hahn except where noted

Photo by Eben Graves



Martin Jean with the musicians.

From the Director's Desk: ISM Faculty Search Updates

Martin Jean



The ISM is beginning a number of faculty searches this year. As you can imagine, hiring freezes due to the pandemic have delayed us, as have issues around ISM faculty governance and my own tenure as director. With these issues resolved, I write with updates.

Two positions are open jointly with the Yale Divinity School: one in **Religion and Literature**, and the other in **Sacred Music Studies** (music and religion). With both, we are showing special preference to candidates who work outside the western European canons. In the field of literature, this might yield someone working in African/African American, Latinx, or Indigenous literatures, for example, and with the music position, we will seek someone whose discipline will complement our current music faculty (Markus Rathey and Braxton Shelley.)

With the School of Music, we intend to hire at the senior level in **organ**, and have discerned this position to have capacity to bring on someone

who can teach not only lessons to graduate organ majors, but also can teach more broadly in church music. In fact, we are especially keen to bring on someone who is not only an organist of international standing, but who has also run a major program in liturgical music, and may have additional skills in choral training or improvisation.

Our **choral conducting** area goes from strength to strength, this year with the largest number of applicants yet. Upon the retirement of Prof. Marguerite Brooks, Prof. Jeff Douma (director of the Yale Glee Club) has assumed the position of area coordinator and now teaches the senior graduate conducting majors. David Hill teaches the first-year majors. This month, we are beginning a search for the next conductor of the Yale Camerata and are thinking creatively about the remainder of this faculty member's load. Rather than teaching the graduate majors, this person will be focused on an equally important need: giving instruction in choral conducting to non-majors. We are also exploring possibilities of directing some of this new colleague's energies into New Haven itself, possibly through collaborations with the Music in Schools initiative in YSM. More details on this soon.

Africana Sacred Healing Arts conference at Yale University

May 16–18, 2022

with

Yvonne Chireau, Swarthmore College

Paul Stoller, West Chester University

Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz,
Indiana University Bloomington

Braxton Shelley, Yale University

and more!

In much of Africa and the African Diaspora, healers offer holistic remedies to treat physical ailments, social conditions, and psychological states. Studying healing and the arts serves as a lens to study identities of self, community, and society. How do the Black healing arts infect disease, illness, and sickness on individual, social, and political bodies?

More information and registration at
ism.yale.edu/Africana



Alex Batagi, "Manbo"

ISM Students 2021–2022

Photo by Faith Heahn



Orientation in Marquand Chapel.

As always, many of our students, both new and returning, took advantage of the opportunity to introduce themselves to PRISM readers.

C.E. Aaron (M.A.R., religion and music, '22) is a second-year student at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. Aaron holds a B.A. in music composition from Seattle Pacific University; while attaining this degree, they completed coursework in musicology at Oxford University. In 2019, they cataloged the Rae Linda Brown papers on Florence Price for acquisition by the Stuart A. Rose Library at Emory University. They currently focus on the sonic analysis of 1970s popular music, and theological readings of musical projects. Their research interests include musical explorations of speculative fiction, racial discourses within music, and the relationship between gender and genre. Outside of academia, Aaron is exploring the contemporary monastic community, hoping to join or start an Episcopalian religious order upon graduation. They enjoy singing, songwriting, and embroidering.

Maddie Blonquist (M.A.R. religion and visual arts '22) received her undergraduate degree from Brigham Young University, where she pursued a double major in music and the interdisciplinary humanities. There, she became involved with various curatorial and performance projects, many of which brought music into exhibition spaces, and engaging viewers in interdisciplinary museum experiences. She plans to pursue a career as a museum curator, and to explore the ways various religious narratives influence the visual interpretation of the female form in contemporary art.

Ben Bond (M.Div. '22) is a third-year student on ordination track with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ben hails from southern California, where he earned his undergraduate degree in religious studies at Chapman University. He is currently the founder and co-chair of DivineAbilities, YDS's first student disability organization. Ben has had the incredible opportunity to work with ISM fellows from around the world in the field of ethnomusicology, with a particular focus on how music can be used for advancing social justice. He has a background in

music, documentary filmmaking, podcast creation, and activism. He hopes to use his degree to serve as a university chaplain.

Emily Boring (M.Div. '23) is a writer and scientist working at the intersection of biology and theology. During her undergraduate study at Yale, she traversed the space between lab and chapel, finding resonance between courses in religious literature and poetry, and her research on ecology and evolution. She earned her M.Sc. as a National Science Foundation Fellow studying the genetic resilience of sea stars at Oregon State University. Her goal at the ISM is to join writers and artists who are pushing the vocabulary of faith in new, interdisciplinary directions. Building on her work as a hospital chaplain within a burn ICU, she is passionate about holistic, person-centered healing, and how biology and spirituality interact to form the "self." Her interdisciplinary writing has appeared in academic journals such as *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith*, and *Yale DISTILLED*, as well as creative outlets like *The Christian Century*, *Yale Scientific Magazine*, and *Yale Literary Magazine*.

Blake Bruchhaus (M.A.R. liturgical studies '23) is a professional liturgical musician and an aspiring liturgist. Originally from Kinder, Louisiana, he has served as the full-time director of music and liturgy for large Roman Catholic parishes in Baton Rouge and Shreveport. Blake holds a master's degree in sacred music from the University of Notre Dame, and a bachelor's degree in sacred music from Centenary College of Louisiana. In addition to his primary studies in choral conducting, Blake is a trained vocalist, pianist, and organist. During his time at Yale, Blake hopes to study congregational song as a ritual action of the liturgy with particular interest given to the Roman Catholic tradition.

Clare Byrne (M.A.R. religion and music '22) is a songwriter and dancer. She is passionate about American canons of song, including those of blues, folk, rock, and gospel traditions. Clare has taught contemporary dance at Muhlenberg College, Long Island University, and the University of Vermont. She has a B.A. in dance from Connecticut College and an M.F.A. in dance from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Her long-term interdisciplinary projects have included "Weekly Rites," a dance and writing blog, and "The Poor Sister Clare's Traveling Dancing Monk Show," which is an experiment in gardening and liturgical dancing in Vermont.

EmmaRae Carroll (M.A.R. liturgical studies, '21) is in her third year at Yale Divinity School, where she studies preaching and worship. A Kansas City native, EmmaRae is a born-and-raised Evangelical, and a happy Northeastern convert; she and her spouse currently reside in New Haven with their two cats. In her free time, EmmaRae loves taking walks, playing board games, and knitting.

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Fiona Chen (M.A.R. '22) received her B.A. in theology, medieval studies, and classics from Fordham University. She is a former choral scholar (alto) with the Fordham Schola Cantorum, and greatly enjoys sacred choral music from the Renaissance to present day. In spring 2019, Fiona studied abroad at Trinity College Dublin, where she developed an interest in early Christian martyrdom. Her research is primarily focused on the history and ethics of martyrdom and premodern Christians' perceptions of death, dying, and the afterlife. Fiona is likewise interested in modern philosophical ethics and Christian existentialism. When she is not studying the art history of premodern Christianity, she enjoys listening to music of all kinds, cooking and baking, and reading memoirs.

Kalvin Cummings (M.A.R., '23) is a first year ISM student from Johnson City, TN. He received his B.S. in biology from East Tennessee State University, and an M.A.R. from Milligan University, where he focused on Christian theology. From his study in community organizing, Black citizenship status, and community mental health, he hopes to offer better understandings of Black life, with critical work at the intersection of African American history, religion, and archival study. He hopes to strain and press interdisciplinary study to redress vestiges of racism, and to construct accessible sites of Black material culture for social renewal.

Jake Cunliffe (M.Div. '22) is a third-year student at the Yale and Berkeley Divinity Schools seeking ordination in the Episcopal Church. Having completed an M.Sc. in world Christianity at the University of Edinburgh, he is interested in the relationship between music and the arts, liturgy, and Christian formation. After graduating, he hopes to work in congregational ministry and leadership development.

Benjamin Ferriby (M.M. voice '22) has an appreciation for choral music that was cultivated during his boy chorister years with the Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys in New York City, then directed by John G. Scott. As a high school senior, he performed with the Yale Camerata and Chamber Singers, conducted by Marguerite Brooks. Ferriby earned his Bachelor of Music degree at DePauw University, where he minored in Italian language studies. He looks forward to the year ahead at the ISM and YSM and hopes that his Connecticut-located family can attend some of his performances.

Moe Graviet (M.A.R. religion and literature '23) comes to the ISM from Brigham Young University, where she majored in English and minored in philosophy, focusing on spiritual studies, East Asian religions, and Victorian poetry. Moe has a passion for interfaith dialogue—especially between Japanese Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity—and is particularly interested in understanding how literary and theological texts express identity formation across religious and

cultural contexts. These interests have led her to undertake research in Japan, Jerusalem, and England. She hopes to pursue a doctoral degree following her studies at Yale, continuing her examination of the possibilities of transformation through engagement of intensified—or spiritualized—texts.

C Han (M.M. voice '23) is a leftist Korean-American from Queens, NY. They are a soprano, keyboardist, and researcher specializing in early Western art music, and the music of living, “global” composers. Han comes to Yale to actively move classical music away from white supremacy (and its many derivatives), in order to become a safer space for queer, non-Christian, poor people of color. They invite you to refer to them as either “Han” or “C”.

Madeleine Harris (M.Div. '24) is originally from North Carolina. Her most recent work was focused on food insecurity and community building in North Philadelphia, PA. She is an Aspirant in the Diocese of Pennsylvania, very much looking forward to continuing to discern her call to the priesthood here at the ISM, alongside artists and fellow theologians. She is grateful to be a part of this vibrant community.

Noah Klein (M.M. organ '23) graduated from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University with a B.M. in organ performance under Dr. Janette Fishell. He was the musical intern for Tabernacle Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis, Indiana. Back home in Northfield, Minnesota, Noah plays for local churches, and organ recital series throughout the state. He was the winner of the Great Lakes Regional Competitions for Young Organists at the 2019 regional AGO convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Noah has also played at Trinity Church Wall Street in New York City as part of their “First Friday” series, which features undergraduate and graduate organ students from leading music conservatories across the U.S. and Canada. The *Diapason* included Noah in their “20 Under 30” list for 2021. At Yale, he is the Battell Chapel organist.

Abigail Kromminga (M.A.R. liturgical studies '22) received a bachelor's degree in history from Smith College, and has worked in Hamburg, Germany, through the Fulbright teaching program. At Yale Divinity School she enjoys studying devotional practices from the inception of Christianity to the Reformation.

Isaac Lee (M.M.A. organ '23) holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the Royal Danish Academy of Music. Before coming to Yale, he completed a successful fellowship at Roskilde Cathedral, Denmark, a UNESCO world site that boasts the 1555 Raphaelis organ. His interests as an educator have led him to teach at Singapore Bible College, and to curate an organ series at Victoria Concert Hall, Singapore. “Pipe Up!” aims to entertain, educate and engage a new generation of organ lovers. His interests outside of music include art history, cooking, and languages.

Patrick McGill (M.M.A. voice '22) received his bachelor's in vocal performance from the Boston Conservatory, and a Master of Early Music Performance degree from McGill University, where he studied with Ben Heppner and John MacMaster. Since completing his studies at McGill, Patrick has been fortunate to sing at some of the most prestigious summer festivals in the United States and Canada, including time as a Fellow at The Tanglewood Music Center and at Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity. Since his time in University, Patrick has continued to perform in many major concert halls across North America including The Montreal Symphony House, Salle Bourgie, Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, The National Arts Centre, Palais Montcalm, and Carnegie Hall. Although his focus has been early music, Patrick's performance career has encompassed opera, art song, oratorio and chamber music. When not performing, Patrick teaches both private voice and music theory in Canada and the United States; he enjoys teaching a wide variety of students both young and old. For the past two years he has taught private voice with the Westmount Piano Studio in Montreal, Quebec. In Connecticut, Patrick is thrilled to be joining the staff at the Crystal Theatre in Norwalk.

A native of Fort Pierce, FL, **Terrance McQueen** (M.Div. '24) earned his B.A. in sociology from Morehouse College, and his M.A. in higher education—with an emphasis on diversity and social justice—from the University of Michigan. Terrance's interests lie at the intersection of sociology, education, and theology, through the lenses of queer and disability studies. Terrance enjoys listening to Jazmine Sullivan and checking the "Crumb Cookies" Instagram account for their weekly rollout. Terrance attributes his success to his parents, his faith in God, and his hometown.

Meredith Noorda (M.A.R. religion and visual arts '23) is from Newport Beach, CA. She received her bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University, where she majored in Art History and Curatorial Studies, and minored in French. While an undergrad, she completed internships at Christie's and the Musée des Arts-décoratifs in Paris, as well as a curatorial fellowship at the BYU Museum of Art. Her research interests center on religious dress, particularly in eighteenth-century Europe.

Matthew Reese (M.Div. '24) is a Postulant for Holy Orders in the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. He is a resident at Berkeley Divinity School. Matthew comes to New Haven from Baltimore, where he was a lecturer in musicology at Johns Hopkins University. Matthew completed his undergraduate degree at the College of William & Mary, and his master's and doctorate degrees in musicology at the University of Oxford; there, he focused on American musical culture at the *fin-de-siècle*. Matthew is active as a professional choral singer and conductor, having directed the Oxford University Philharmonia, Consortium Novum, the Washington Young Sinfonia, and the Choir

of Pusey House, Oxford. When not otherwise engaged, he can usually be found in search of hummus, coffee, or a pint.

Ryan Rogers (M.M. choral conducting '23) is a conductor, pianist, and singer from Texas. Ryan majored in piano performance and choral music education at the University of Houston's Moores School of Music. There, he served as director of the Floreat *a cappella* group, student choral director, and tenor section leader under Drs. Betsy Cook Weber and Jeb Mueller. After completing his bachelor's degree, he served as the assistant choir director for North Shore High School in Houston, TX. In this position, Ryan directed seven choirs, including the North Shore Senior High Chamber Choir, and its show choir, "Perfect Harmony." During the COVID-19 pandemic, he began editing audio for virtual performances, assembling in excess of two hundred hymns, anthems, and songs for various universities, schools, churches, and arts organizations across the country. In his free time, Ryan enjoys running, singing with friends, arranging, and recording his own compositions.

Vienna Scott (M.A.R. religion and literature '23) did her undergraduate work at Yale, where she received degrees in both political science and religious studies. While a student, she wrote and edited for *The Yale Logos*, debated in the Yale Political Union, and taught within the math department. While she retains an interest in the intersection of religion and politics—especially in contemporary American evangelicalism—she intends to spend her time at ISM/YDS thinking about the roles of gender and mysticism in the formation of medieval Christian literature.

Jenny Claire Smith (M.A.R. liturgical studies '22) studied history and liturgy at the University of Notre Dame, and completed paleography training in early modern English and Dutch at the Huntington Library, Columbia University, and the Universiteit Antwerpen. Her archival research in London and Antwerp was generously supported by the Nanovic Institute for European Studies and the Institute for Scholarship in the Liberal Arts. While at Notre Dame, she served as editorial assistant for the scholarly journal *Archiv für Reformationgeschichte*. She likewise served as a deacon, catechist, usher, lector, and communion server at her church. At Yale, Jenny works as a research assistant for Professor Bryan Spinks, as an assistant to the faculty coordinator for liturgical studies, and as a research assistant for the Jonathan Edwards Center. She is a student fellow at the Rivendell Institute. Jenny began classical ballet training at the age of four, and is a teaching assistant for New Haven Ballet.

Deborah Stephens (M.M. voice '22) is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Georgia, and a featured soloist called for choral engagements throughout Georgia. In 2017, Deborah founded and began directing

VERITAS Vocal Ensemble, which has performed at the UGA Student Spotlight Concert, many faculty and student recitals, and has hosted a joint-ensemble benefit concert to support music education. Deborah currently performs with ensembles such as Kinnara, Coro Vocati, and the Lake Junaluska Singers. As a professional soprano, Deborah is frequently invited for solo performances, university speaking engagements, and podcast appearances.

Jared Swope (M.M. voice '23) is a baritone ensemble singer and soloist specializing in early music, oratorio, and newly-commissioned works. His ensemble engagements include the Spire Chamber Ensemble, JSB Ensemble, Weimar Bach Academy, CORO Vocal Artists, Chorosynthesis Singers, and more. Jared holds bachelor's degrees in both music education and vocal performance from Missouri State University, and a master's in sacred music from the University of Notre Dame. Aside from singing, you can find Jared perfecting his craft of pour-over coffee and tinkering with bicycles on a near-daily basis.

Nico Tjoelker (M.M. organ '23) completed a B.Mus. in organ performance at Sydney Conservatorium of Music (Australia), where he studied under Philip Swanton. In 2020, he wrote his honors thesis on early twentieth-century recordings of organ music on paper rolls. Nico previously served as organ scholar at St. Stephen's Uniting Church and St. Mark's Anglican Church in Sydney, and has served as organ scholar at Trinity on the Green in New Haven since August 2021. Nico has also toured Europe and attended organ academies in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, the UK, Holland, France, and Switzerland, and completed a semester exchange at the Hochschule für Musik in Freiburg, Germany during 2018–19. At Yale, Nico hopes to integrate his interests in music scholarship, sacred music, and historical performance.

Maura Tuffy (M.M.A. choral conducting '22) is a conductor and vocalist continuing her studies at the ISM and YSM. During the 2020-2021 season, she served as the director of the Marquand Chapel Choir. This year, she will serve as principal assistant conductor for the Yale Camerata, and as student manager of Yale Schola Cantorum. Before coming to Yale, Maura earned bachelor's degrees in choral music and vocal arts from the University of Southern California, where she sang with the USC Thornton Chamber Singers. Maura's creative curiosities lie at the intersection of choral music and dance, and how this relationship defines a new performance paradigm for 21st-century artistic spaces.

Carey Wallace (M.A.R. '23) is a writer and songwriter. As a writer, she is interested in the unseen, and how it affects what is seen. As a student, she is interested in spiritual disciplines, prayer, community creation, justice work, global theology, religious experiences among the ostensibly non-religious, and ghosts. She

grew up in Michigan, and lived most recently in Brooklyn with her Appenzeller, Bandit.

Tommy Watson (M.Div. '24) is on the ordination track in the Episcopal Church. Watson has earned a bachelor of arts, master of music, and doctor of musical arts degrees in vocal performance, as well as a certificate in contemporary music pedagogy. For the past twenty-five years, Watson has taught classical and non-classical voice lessons; he has also directed opera. As an aspiring priest whose ministry will focus on social justice, he desires to learn how the intersectionality of The Gospel, liturgy, diverse musical expression, and visual art can be applied such that the broken, hopeless, and invisible can embrace the restorative love of the One God.

Born in Dalian, China, **Mengfei Xu** (M.M. organ '23) began her studies at the affiliated Middle and High Schools of Shenyang Conservatory of Music. She has since earned performance degrees from Xinghai Conservatory of Music (B.A. piano), Ithaca College (M.M. piano and organ), and UNC-Greensboro (D.M.A. piano and historical keyboard). Mengfei holds a special interest in French keyboard music, and conducts her doctoral research toward organ influences in selected piano works by Franck, Widor, and Dupré. In her spare time, Mengfei enjoys hiking.

Gloria Yin (M.M. choral conducting '22) is a conductor, pianist, and singer from London, UK. They received a B.A. in mathematics from Princeton University, a certificate in piano performance, and the Isidore & Helen Sacks Memorial Prize for extraordinary achievement in the arts. They continue to work regularly with Princeton's Department of Music in various professional capacities as a collaborative pianist, conductor, and arranger. They are likewise a co-founder of the New Muses Project—an arts organization that seeks to break down canon-culture in Western classical music through performance, editions, and scholarship. They are also interested in the storytelling power of opera, and its potential to connect people, despite its history of elitism. In their spare time, they love backpacking, climbing, baking too many desserts, drawing, and meeting new people over coffee or tea.

Conductor, composer, pianist, and vocalist **Yiran Zhao** (M.M. choral conducting, '23) received her bachelor's degree in piano, theory, and composition from Westminster Choir College, where she also served as faculty for its high school piano camp. She has directed the Feng Arts Choir, and Christ the King Lutheran Church; notably, she is the assistant conductor of the Grammy-nominated Same Stream choir. Born and raised in Beijing, China, Yiran joined the award-winning Beijing Philharmonic Choir at just eight years old. She has composed several works of varying genres. Her orchestral compositions were used as background and processional music at Westminster Convocation and Commencement in Spring 2021.

ISM STUDENTS 2021-2022 CONT. FROM PAGE 10

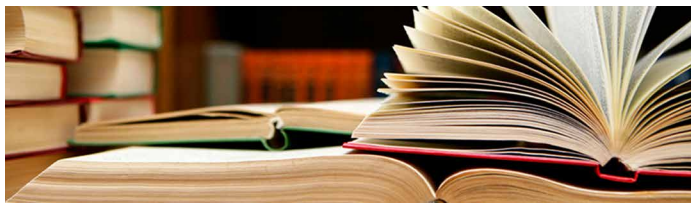
Other students: **Bel Ben Mamoun** (M. Div. '24), **Matt Bickett** (M.A.R. theology '22), **Teddy Cheng** (M.M. organ '22), **Carolyn Craig** (M.M.A. organ '22), **Alexandra Dreher** (M.A.R. religion and music '22), **Joshua Ehlebracht** (M.M. organ '23), **Rebecca Ehren** (M.M. organ '22), **Elisabeth Gray** (M.Div. '23), **Ethan Haman** (M.M.A. organ '23), **Ike Harijanto** (M.Div. '23), **Emily Helferty** (M.M. voice '22), **Haven Herrin** (M.Div. '22), **Madeleine Hutchins** (M.A.R. religion and literature '23), **Matthew Ingwersen** (M.M. organ '22), **Margaret Kearney** (M.A.R. religion and literature '22), **Clare Kemmerer** (M.A.R. religion and visual arts '22), **Nilaya Knafo** (M.A.R. religion and visual

arts '22), **Michael Lukin** (M.M. choral conducting '22), **Mattias Lundberg** (M.M. choral conducting '23), **Molly McGuire** (M.M. voice '23), **Sydney Mukasa** (M.M. choral conducting '22), **Jackie Nappi** (M.M. organ '23), **Matthew Newhouse** (M.M. voice '23), **Manuel Piazza** (M.M. organ '22), **Jane Potthast** (M.A.R. religion and literature '22), **Marika Proctor** (M.A.R. '23), **Kyler Schubkegel** (M.A.R. religion and literature '22), **Elizabeth Searcy** (M.Div. '22), **Christy Stang** (M.Div. '22), **Nyoman Usadhi** (M.A.R. religion and music '23), **Christine Veillon** (M.Div. '23), **Nate Widelitz** (D.M.A. choral conducting '26).



Photo by Faith Hahn

Unmasked while outdoors, ISM students gather on the steps of Miller Hall at orientation.



Publications

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ISM Annual Report

2020-2021

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ALUMNI, STUDENT, AND FELLOWS NEWS

ALUMNI NEWS

Soprano **EMILY DONATO** (M.M. '19) has won First Place in the 2021 New York Oratorio Society competition (September 2021).

The Reverend **ZACK NYEIN** (M.Div. '16) has accepted the call to join the clergy team as Senior Associate Rector at St. Bart's in NYC.

Countertenor **BRADLEY SHARPE** (M.M. '18) has joined renowned vocal ensemble Chanticleer (September 2021).

STUDENT NEWS

CAROLYN CRAIG (M.M.A. organ, '22) has won Second Prize – and a Special Prize for “Best Performance of Mikael Tariverdiev’s Works” – in this year’s Mikael Tariverdiev International Organ Competition in Kaliningrad, Russia (September 2021).

MANUEL PIAZZA won First Prize at the RCO National Organ Playing Competition (8/12/21). | [Read more](#)

FELLOWS NEWS

Check out the fellows’ podcast series, featuring current ISM students in conversation with current fellows. New this fall: **MELANIE R. HILL** on African American womanist preaching and **CARLA NEUSS** on the educational and transformative power of theater. | [listen here](#)

NINA GLIBETIĆ and **GABRIEL RADLE**, both fellows in 2013–2014 now at the University of Notre Dame, have been appointed by Pope Francis as consultants for the Congregation for the Eastern Churches. | [Read more](#)

*Holiday Greetings from Miller Hall,
and best wishes from the ISM for a wonderful 2022.*

