

# RITORNELLO

## Department of Music and Dance West Texas A&M University

Volume 26, Number 1

Fall 2002

### NEW ORCHESTRA DIRECTOR NAMED

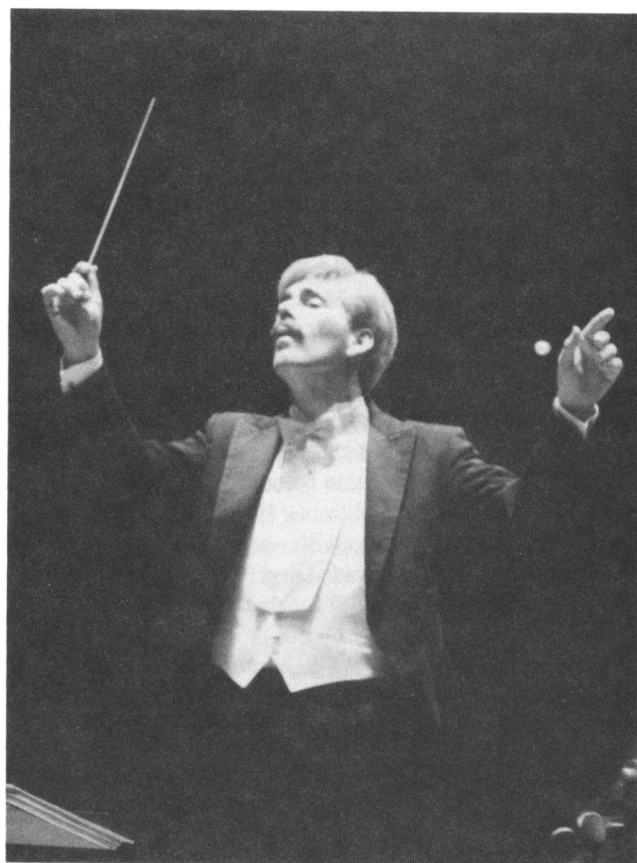
Dr. Douglas Morrison was recently named as Director of Orchestral Studies at West Texas A&M University. A native of Michigan, Dr. Morrison completed his advanced studies at Michigan State University, studying conducting with Leon Gregorian, previously having studied privately with Dr. Valter Poole, former Associate Conductor of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Upon completion of undergraduate studies in Michigan, Mr. Morrison served on the faculty of the Armed Forces School of Music, in Norfolk, Virginia, following which he returned to the Detroit area, where he became Music Director of the Scandinavian Symphony Orchestra, the Dearborn Choral Art Society, and the Michigan Lyric Opera Company.

The Central Kentucky Youth Orchestras, The Kentucky Youth Chamber Orchestra, and concurrent duties at the Stephen Foster Music Camp led Morrison and his family to the Lexington, Kentucky, area after which the move was made back to Michigan to complete his doctoral studies.

During his time at Michigan State University, Douglas Morrison conducted the University Opera Theater, the Campus Orchestra, and was assistant conductor of the University Symphony Orchestra; it was also during this time that Dr. Morrison became associate conductor of the Battle Creek Symphony.

In his time at East Carolina University, Dr. Morrison built the ECU orchestra program into one of the finest in the southeast. In addition to regular season concerts on campus, Douglas Morrison led the orchestra on an historic tour of the Czech Republic and Austria in 1999, as the first American orchestra to be invited to perform in the annual *International Festival of Student Orchestras* in Prague.

Active as a conductor of opera and ballet, including fully staged productions of Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro* and *Der Schauspieldirektor*, Humperdinck's *Hansel und Gretel* and Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Ballet*, Morrison has also conducted performances with the ECU Opera Theater and ECU Summer Theater program.



**Dr. Douglas Morrison**

A strong advocate of taking music outside of academia and into the community, Dr. Morrison led the East Carolina University Symphony Orchestra in many outreach, educational, and "pops" concerts, and appeared as guest conductor/clinician with regional high school honor orchestras throughout North Carolina and Virginia.

We welcome Dr. Morrison and look forward to his contributions to the WTAMU orchestra program.

## ALUMNI NOTES

From **Roy and Molly Benson ('88 BME and '82 BME)**:

"We haven't sent an update to you in a while so here goes: We are here in Mount Pleasant, TX, for our 5th year. Molly is teaching 4th-grade language arts and her kids are doing very well on the TAAS. I am beginning my 5th year at Mount Pleasant Junior High school and P.E. Wallace middle school where I direct the sixth grade choir and a treble and tenor bass choir at the JHS. Aaron is now 18 and recently graduated from Mount Pleasant HS with honors, and he is currently attending Northeast Texas Community College preparing to transfer to UNT when he is ready. Andrew who is now 16 is a junior at MPHS playing in the band and singing in the choir. Aaron and Andrew were the tenor section in last year sweepstakes choir. In the choir's production of *Lil' Abner* last year, Aaron played Marryin' Sam and Andrew was Gen. Bullmoose. They have grown a lot from the boys that played with Hotwheels while I had my lessons".

And from **William and Brenda Brown McNeiland (attended 1958-1960)**:

"My husband Bill and I attended WT 1958-60 or 61 in music and received an excellent foundation before attending the University of Illinois. He is orchestra director at Jacksonville (FL) University and I have traded my bassoon position with the JSO for that of manager of the symphony chorus. I am also organist/director at All Saints Episcopal Church. We still have family in Amarillo and try to keep up, at least a little bit, with the music school at WTAMU. Your proposed new building looks wonderful!"

## NEW BAND SECRETARY

We were all so very sad to see Barbara Wooldridge retire this year, but we are also very pleased to welcome her replacement, Tracy Lowe. Tracy comes to us from Iron Mountain, Michigan

She attended Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI, majoring



**Tracy Lowe**

in speech communication, with a minor in mass communication/broadcasting. She spent 11 years (1982-1993) in broadcasting before changing to PR/advertising/marketing (1994-2001).

She was active for 7 years in Zonta International, a classified women's service organization and served as secretary, vice president, president, district public relations chairman and area director.

She enjoys traveling (21 US States and 3 foreign countries), Green Bay Packer football (been to 38 games at Lambeau field – "I bleed green and gold"), and motorcycle riding.

She moved to Hereford, TX, in 2001, where she lives with a 9-month old Black Lab/Border Collie mix named Maggie. She's been employed by WTAMU since March 2002.

## FACULTY FOOTNOTES

**Joe Ella Cansler**, musical director of the outdoor drama TEXAS 2002, conducted and directed 50 plus shows this summer with the new artistic director Lynn Hart. She traveled over much of the US to audition over 1400 people for roles in the newer version of the show with all live music. It was well received and next year will bring many more exciting changes.

Dr. Cansler was invited to observe and participate in this summer's Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program July 14-18 in a collaborative effort with Mary Jane Johnson. She had opportunity to observe and critique apprentice vocal coaching sessions, follow rehearsal

scene staging, "sits" probing, and costuming; then she observed actual performances of *La Traviata*, *Eugene Onegin*, *La Clemenza di Tito*, and *The Italian Girl in Algiers*. She had the opportunity to exchange ideas with Bruce Donnell, Santa Fe Opera director of *La Traviata* and John Crosby, orchestra conductor, which added insight into repertoire, technique, directing, conducting and counseling students for a professional career.

The Stone Fort Wind Quintet at Stephen F. Austin University will premier a new woodwind quintet composed by **Dr. Joe Nelson** in November and perform it at TMEA in February

**Douglas Storey**, associate professor, was awarded a faculty teaching excellence award at the spring commencement ceremonies.

**William Takacs**, instructor of trumpet, was named principal trumpet of the Amarillo Symphony following auditions in August.

**Dr. Susan Martin Tariq** was promoted to full professor as of September 1.

## OPERA SCENES

Great things are happening in opera at WTAMU. Last May we traveled to Denver with scenes from our production of *Così fan tutte*. We visited several high schools while we were there. One of the highlights of our trip was the opportunity to hear WT alumna Emily Pulley in Opera Colorado's production of *Eugene Onegin*. It was an exciting evening for the students when they got to "rub shoulders" with the stars of the production. They got to ask questions and were generally star struck! Emily was a gracious hostess and gave the students insight into life as a performer in the operatic world.

We are currently preparing Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas* and Menotti's *Old Maid and the Thief* for our spring production which is scheduled for January 31, February 1 and February 2, 2003. We are looking forward to

much growth in our opera program. Next year we will be performing with the WTAMU orchestra and our new orchestral conductor, Douglas Morrison.

## MUSICAL THEATRE

The Music Theatre Department just finished a three-night run of *Side By Side* by Stephen Sondheim, directed by Royal Brantley and Joe Ella Cansler. Sondheim is always a challenge but the eight very talented students in the show beautifully performed numerous solos and ensemble songs, some of which were quite familiar and others that were more obscure but thought provoking to the theme of relationships

## MUSIC THERAPY

A new group of students, cooler weather, plans for attending the national AMTA conference!! Fall must be here. It is and we are already past midterm. We have 10 new music therapy students this fall and five students completed their internships and graduated last year (2001-2002). We were pretty active during homecoming this year. The music therapy students participated in the parade both in the WTAMU band and on the music therapy float. We had an opportunity to visit with former students and their families. It was a nice day for all. Yes, we are making plans to go to Atlanta at the end of October. We will be taking 9 students to the national conference. We hope to see many of you there. Have a great fall!!!!

## BANDS

The West Texas A&M University Band has had an excellent start for a promising year. We have performed at six home football games, traveled to Wichita Falls for the WTAMU at Midwestern football game, and marched in two parades. Our half time show, which has been an eclectic mixture of "Americana" pieces, has been well received by both home and visiting audiences. I can safely say



**Robert Frost**

that our marching season has been one of the best I can remember!

On October 19th, we held our annual Band Parents Day Brunch on campus in the Hazel Kelley Alumni Banquet Facility. We were fortunate to have 250 students and parents in attendance. We were honored to have Mr. Robert Frost, one of our highly distinguished alumni from the class of 1969, as our guest speaker. He gave a very moving speech and reminded our current students of the strong foundation and the long history of success in our band that has preceeded them. The band presented Mr. Frost with a plaque in recognition of his unyielding loyalty to West Texas A&M University. As always, the band council, led by our current president Anne Kane, did a wonderful job organizing the event.

The band would like to invite you to our upcoming concerts. The Wind Ensemble will be performing on Wednesday, November 20, at 6:00 in the evening. Additionally, the Concert and Symphonic Bands will be performing the following week on Tuesday, November 26, at 6:00 and 8:00 in the evening. All concerts promise to be worth your time, and it would be great to see you all in the audience!

We are excited to announce that world famous trumpet virtuoso Allen Vizzutti will be visiting the WTAMU campus as an artist in residence during the second week of the WT Band Camp in July. Mr. Vizzutti will be performing as our guest artist with several of the top performing ensembles during his stay. He will also be teaching numerous master classes for both our campers and the faculty, so be sure not to miss out on this excellent opportunity for you and your students this summer!

On behalf of the West Texas A&M University band members, I would like to thank all of you for your ongoing support and generosity. Your donations make a world of difference to so many of our students in need of financial assistance. The directors and students of the band are excited to continue the wonderful legacy that its former director, Dr. Gary Garner, shared with us. Once again, thank you for your support!

## TMEA ALUMNI REUNION

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**Come join us at the Mengar Ballroom for the 2003 alumni reunion. February 14 from 9:30 to 11:30pm.**

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### SPRING EVENTS

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Jan. 30 Opera	8:00pm NRH
Jan. 31 Music Career Day	
Jan 31 Faculty Grand Recital	8:00pm NRH
Feb. 1-2Opera	8:00pm NRH
Feb. 16 Choir Concert	8:00pm NRH
Feb. 23 Symphonic Band	8:00pm NRH
Mar. 9 Concerto Concert	3:00pm NRH

Mar. 9 Concert Band	8:00pm NRH
Apr. 4 Showcase of Music	8:00pm AmCC
Apr. 22 Jazz bands	8:00pm NRH
Apr. 23 Special Student Recital	4:00pm NRH
Apr. 24 Concert Band	8:00pm NRH
Apr. 27 Symphony Orchestra	3:00pm NRH
Apr. 27 Symphonic Band	8:00pm NRH
Apr. 28 Special Student Recital	4:00pm NRH
Apr. 29 Honors Recital	3:30pm NRH



**2002-2003 DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC AND DANCE FACULTY:** Front row, left to right – Dr. Ted DuBois, Dr. Robert Hansen, Donna Flatt, Dr. Tina Carpenter, Joanna Mendoza, Sally Turk, Dr. Joe Ella Cansler, Dr. Joe Nelson, B.J. Sayer (GA). Second row, left to right – Dr. Joe Cox, Cecil Crabtree (GA), Ron Lemon, Barbara Wooldridge, Dr. Susan Martin Tariq, Dr. Edward Kahler, Eric Rath (GA), Bill Evans, Don Lefevre. Third row, left to right – Dr. Robert Krause, Annie Chalex, Dr. Sandor Ostlund, Doug Storey, Denise Parr-Scanlin, William Takacs, Dr. Cloyce Stradley, Brian Kuhnert (GA), Dr. Douglas Morrison, Dr. George Biffle. Not pictured: Emmanuel Lopez, Neil Hess, Russ Teweleit.

**RITORNELLO**

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