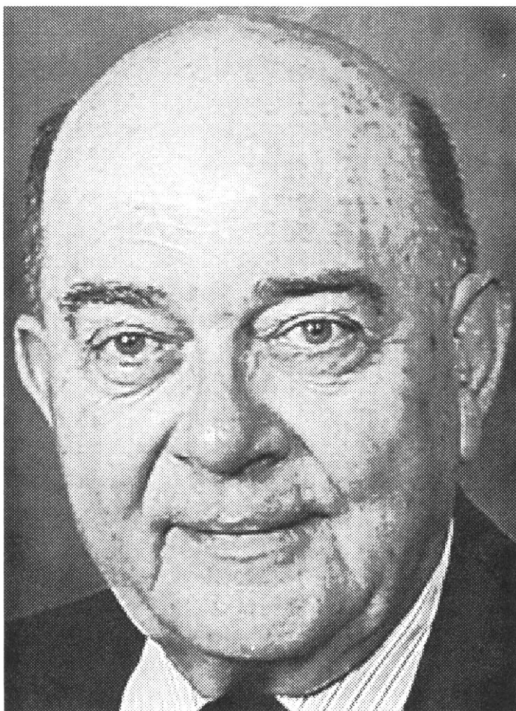


RITORNELLO

Department of Music and Dance West Texas A&M University

Volume 27, Number 1

Fall 2003



ROYAL L. BRANTLEY (1922-2003)

IN MEMORY OF MR. B

An icon for the arts and culture of the Texas Panhandle left this world on Monday, Aug. 11, 2003, but his legacy lives on. Royal L. Brantley (1922-2003) was a longtime vocal music professor and vocal area coordinator at West Texas A&M University, composer, mentor and director of the outdoor musical drama TEXAS. He will be remembered for his high expectations, his humanity and multiple talents. His original opera *Samuel* was produced in the Branding Iron Theater in 1978, and he directed and starred in 54 opera and musical productions at WTAMU. Many will remember him in *The King and I*, *Most Happy Fella* and *Man of La Mancha*. During his career, he was recognized with many awards:

WTAMU Alumni Association Phoenix Award, WTAMU Hall of Fame, Professor Emeritus, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Orpheus Award. Many of his students remember him as a second father. He will be greatly missed.

Mr. Brantley was born in Yorktown and attended several small public schools in Texas. During World War II he served as a first lieutenant in the Army Air Corps, flying B-24 bombers. After the war he completed a bachelor of music in 1947 at Southwest Texas State University and received the master of music in vocal performance in 1949 from the University of Texas-Austin. He was head of the department and director of choirs at Tarleton State before coming to West Texas State University in 1953. Brantley brought musical theatre and opera to the area through his directorship of the WTSU Opera Workshop. He was the original music director of the outdoor musical TEXAS (1966-1979) and took over as the second artistic director in 1980.

Memorials may be sent to the Royal L. Brantley Scholarship, Department of Music, WTAMU, P.O. Box 60870, Canyon, TX 79016.

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S CORNER

Lots of exciting things are happening at WTAMU these days, and there's usually no time to sit back and enjoy the moment. It's more like "hang on for dear life."

We've had two faculty changes from last spring. Dr. Daniel J. Hall was hired to replace Dr. Biffle, who retired in May, as the director of choral activities. The choirs gave a fall concert on Oct. 16, and it was fabulous. In May the University decided it would not rehire Mr. Neil Hess, special lecturer of choreography and director of dance since 1977. A frenzied search ensued that yielded some very fine candidates. Selected as the dance instructor is Mr. Edward Truitt. He also impressed Lone Star Ballet, so much so that they have hired him as their artistic director in place of Mr. Hess. We believe that both of these gentlemen will make a significant contribution to furtherance of the arts at WTAMU in their respective disciplines. See their articles elsewhere in this issue. (cont on page 3)

ALUMNI NOTES

Dick Lowry ('64 BME) reports: "After twenty years as a school superintendent, I have recently retired to our home in the Wawona Section of Yosemite National Park. Nancy (my wife of the past 37 years) and I plan to spend time skiing, traveling, interfering with the rearing of our four grandchildren and possibly a minimal amount of educational consulting. As a WT graduate of 1964, I send my best wishes to the staff, alumni, and all those who have been instrumental in the growth and achievements of the music and fine arts program of our university and the tri-state area."

Steven Paxton ('79-80, Faculty) has recently accepted a new position as Director of the Contemporary Music Program at the College of Santa Fe. Paxton previously taught for over 20 years at Texas Tech University, and he and his wife Joy are currently making the transition toward becoming New Mexicans after living their entire lives in Texas (Borger, Denton, Canyon, and Lubbock). In his new position Paxton oversees a music department which offers a B.A. in contemporary music, emphasizing world music, recording & technology, and contemporary musical styles of all genres. He may be contacted at spaxton@csf.edu and always enjoys contact with WT friends.

Gerald Langner, DMA ('81 MM) writes: "It's been a long time since I've contacted you. I enjoyed receiving a copy of the *Ritornello* and thought to update you on my recent happenings. After completing the D.M.A. in choral conducting at Michigan State University, I taught high school for a number of years in Saskatchewan and also in Jackson, Mississippi. Since 1999 I've been teaching choral/music education at the University of Saskatchewan (also my undergraduate alma mater) and now have just received tenure and promotion to associate professor. I've been thoroughly enjoying my work here with choirs

and classes. I can't believe that time has moved on so quickly--just seems like last year when I took pleasure in classes and lessons from you, Norman Nelson, Robert Hansen, and Hugh Sanders; I remember and still use some of those "tips and tricks" from you all--it was a really great year and a lot of fun! Please greet Dr. Nelson as well as Robert Hansen--hope they still remember me!"

Stephen Sampsell ('81 BME) is in his 4th year in the Grandview School District which is a suburb outside Kansas City, Mo. (21st overall). He's been married for 16 years and has three kids, two boys and a girl: Taylor-15, Graham-12, and Blaire-9. His wife is Kenna. He would enjoy hearing from anybody that went to WTSU from '77 to '81.

Marcy McKee ('98 BM, '02 MM) recently won the first round of the Met auditions in North Dakota. She is presently teaching voice at Bemidji State University in Minnesota.

IN MEMORIUM

Former voice faculty member Dr. Margaret Forrest reports that **Kip Watkins ('79 BME)** passed away recently in Dallas. He had been sick for a long time.

BAND ACTIVITIES

The Buffalo Marching Band is completing an outstanding season of performances this fall. We have stayed busy preparing for our five home football games at Kimbrough Stadium, two parades and a visit to San Angelo to march at the WTAMU vs. Angelo State University football game. The highlights of our season were the two exhibition performances we were so graciously invited to take part in: one in Midland at the Tall City Marching Festival and the other at Kimbrough Stadium at the U.I.L. Region I Marching Band Contest. It was a wonderful opportunity for the WTAMU Buffalo Marching Band to

perform for an audience of high school band students and parents. Our last home game was scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 15th vs. Abilene Christian University.

The Symphonic Band has been invited to perform at the Texas Music Educators Association Convention in San Antonio. Our concert is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2004. We plan to depart the WTAMU campus on Tuesday afternoon, Feb. 10th, and tour on our way to San Antonio. We hope to see many WT alumni on our way to TMEA, as well as a host of others at the final concert. The band will be performing *Savannah River Holiday* by Ron Nelson, *Solfeggiotto/ Metamorphosis* by C.P.E. Bach featuring John Tegmeyer as clarinet soloist, *Sinfonietta* by Ingolf Dahl, and *Danse Folâtre* by Claude T. Smith.

In addition to the Symphonic Band's performance at the Texas Music Educators Association Convention in February, the band will be performing a selection on an afternoon concert at the WT Career Day of Music on Monday, November 10th. Additionally, please mark your calendars and come hear us in concert in Mary Moody Northen Recital Hall throughout the school year! Our campus concerts for this year are scheduled on Tuesday, Nov. 25, Sunday, Feb. 8, and Tuesday, April 27, all occurring at 8:00 p.m. Please join us for as many performances as you can!

Dr. Gary Garner and I, in collaboration with the WTAMU instrumental faculty, will be presenting clinics for four very talented high school bands in the spring on the WTAMU campus. We have invited Palo Duro High School directed by Jeff Doughten, Tascosa High School directed by Mike Ellis, Midland High School directed by Gary Doherty and Robert E. Lee High School directed by Randy Storie to participate in the clinics and concerts, scheduled on Saturday, April 27. The clinics and concerts are open to the public, so please take advantage of this wonderful

opportunity to hear these great high school bands perform their contest selections.

As always, thanks to all our alumni and friends for their continuous support. We can't wait to see you at TMEA!

Don Lefevre

OPERA WORKSHOP

Opera workshop, under the direction of Dr. Cloyce Beard-Stradley, is very excited to be back in the BIT this year. We will be performing Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* accompanied by the WTAMU Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Douglas Morrison. Cast members include: Michael McBride as Nanki-Poo, April Johnston as Yum-Yum, Rolando Salazar as Ko-Ko, Brian Kuhnert as Pooh-Bah, Ben Grabber as Pish Tush, Justin Loe as The Mikado, Meredith Kemp as Katisha, Landree Woodward as Pitti-Sing, and Katie Shipp and Nicole Griffin as Peep-Bo. The performance dates are March 5-7, 2004. You may call 651-2856 for questions regarding tickets and times.

MUSIC THERAPY

Well, as you probably know, it is an exciting time on campus with the start of the new Fine Arts Building. The Music Therapy Program is off to another fast and furious start. It is only mid October and we had our fall retreat, visited a local retirement home for a sing-a-long, had a float in the Homecoming Parade, participated in several fund raisers, took part in the University Work-a-Thon and Halloween Carnival, and made plans to attend the national conference in Minneapolis. Wow, what a list of accomplishments.

One of the "interesting" fundraiser ideas was a "topless carwash." That gave me a little scare, but the girls assured me the idea is to wash everything but the "top" part of the cars (whoosh). We have also had a visit from an alumna during this semester. Katherine (Plock) Jones visited campus and talked to several classes about her experiences with music therapy in the El Paso schools.



MUSIC THERAPY CLUB IN THE HOMECOMING PARADE

We love to have visitors. It really gives the kids a good view of the "end of the tunnel." So come visit us!!!!

It does not look like we are going to be able to attend the regional conference again this year. We have a conflict with Showcase and feel we need to be here to participate in the scholarship fundraiser (it pays many bills for many of our students), so we hope to see you at nationals. If not, think of us in early April. Have a good fall and great holiday!

Dr. Edward Kahler

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S CORNER, con't

As most of you know, the Texas legislature had a difficult session this time with appropriations. Higher education (colleges and universities) was part of the budget cuts. One of the ways that we helped was to hire replacements at entry-level positions for retiring faculty in order to accumulate salary savings. Dr. Sandor Ostlund, double bass instructor, resigned last spring to take another position in Virginia with a significant salary increase. Given the State's situation, it was a good move for him and his family. By not requesting a replacement, we were able to add his annual salary to the mix. The result is that we've absorbed courses he was teaching with existing faculty. Mr.

Emmanuel Lopez is teaching bassists this year, but we'll try to have an adjunct position for next fall. As all the dust has settled, our operating budget is the same as last year because of some of the sacrifices we were able to make elsewhere.

Speaking of dust, there's a big hole in the ground east of Northen as construction began in August. In spite of the financial difficulties that the State has experienced, the new building is a separate issue. It's not tied to the budget at all; it's financed by bonds. Northen parking lot is gone, and that's been rough on commuters. The University has tried to ease the pain by providing alternate spaces and by instituting a bus ride from the Activities Center. I don't know when construction on the west wing will begin, but it should create some other new challenges to getting around on campus. It will be worth it, though. The new complex is scheduled for spring 2005 completion. It should be an impressive structure.

WTAMU music graduates know that our faculty are talented and practice what they preach. Well, this year the woodwind, brass and percussion faculty expanded their all-state help CDs to cover all the instruments. We've filled in with alumni on the instruments that we couldn't complete, but all 13 are represented in both 4A-5A and 1A-2A-

3A classifications. The playing of the CDs was the easy part for the faculty; it was the editing and putting the tracks in the right order that took the most time for them. We realize that there are many students in public schools who don't have private lesson teachers or even have access to them. The CD helps to bridge that gap and aids band directors who have talented students but who do not have enough time to teach all those students all the etudes. Our faculty are committed to music education, and this is one of the ways that they are trying to show that support. Mr. Don Lefevre heads the project.

Speaking of Mr. Lefevre—I think an English teacher would shriek seeing how I'm linking these paragraphs together (it's probably illegal), but I've got a thousand thoughts and no space to speak them—the Symphonic Band will perform at TMEA on Thursday, Feb. 12 at 11 am. Hope to see you there. (See the band article.) Last Saturday (Oct. 19) the WTAMU band was featured at the conclusion of the UIL Region I marching band contest which was held at Kimbrough Stadium—for the first time in a whole bunch of years—and I've heard many complimentary comments about that performance.

For your information, Dr. Joe Ella Cansler and Dr. Cloyce Stradley were promoted from assistant professor, to associate professor, this fall (in case they won't tell you in the faculty footnotes). Also, Mr. Lefevre was recognized by the University with a Faculty Excellence Award at May commencement.

Many of you have told us that our web site "sucks." Several years later (because we've been busy, thank you, very much), we're about to launch a new web site that we hope meets your expectations. We formed a committee (always a dangerous sign for certain disaster) and talked about what we wanted in a web site. Dr. Robert Hansen, voice professor, headed the committee. A prototype was shown us a week ago, so by the time you get this message, we should be up and running. The address will probably be the same as it has been (www.wtamu.edu/academic/fah/mus). If that doesn't work, start cutting parts

off the address from the right side until you find the right link.

We're very grateful to our alumni for continued support of our department in terms of scholarship donations, referring potential students, general communications, and so forth. We believe in what we do, and we're trying hard to do the very best that we can. We're proud of our graduates and their accomplishments, and we vow to continue that fine tradition.

NEW DIRECTOR OF CHORAL ACTIVITIES

Dr. Daniel J. Hall was named Assistant Professor and Director of Choral Activities at West Texas A&M University. He conducts the WTAMU Chorale, Collegiate Choir, and Chamber Singers, as well as teach conducting and voice.

Dr. Hall was born in 1971 in Anoka, Minnesota. Shortly thereafter, he moved with his family to the coal-mining town of Price, Utah, where he was raised. He holds a bachelor of music/liberal arts in voice from Weber State University – Ogden, Utah, a master of music in choral conducting from Brigham Young University – Provo, Utah, and the doctor of musical arts in choral studies from the University of Miami, Florida.

Before coming to West Texas, he was highly active as a conductor, composer, instructor, and performer in the choral studies program at the University of Miami, where he served as assistant conductor of the civic chorale of greater Miami, and directed the University of Miami men's and women's chorales. In February 2003, he conducted the University of Miami chamber singers, chamber orchestra, and soprano and baritone soloists in the world premier of his multi-movement work *The Muse in Arms*, a collection of settings from poets of World War I. In November 2003, the work will be performed by the combined choirs of Tennessee Tech University, under the direction of David Rhyne. Dr. Hall's works have been performed at such events as the 2003 American Choral Director's National Convention in New York City's Carnegie Hall, Festival Miami

concerts, Brigham Young University's annual Celebration of Christmas, the Temple Square Concert Series in Salt Lake City, and the State Convention of the Utah Music Educators Association. His music is published by Colla Voce Press and Walton Music.

As a performer, he has toured nationally and internationally with Brigham Young University Singers and the University of Miami Chorale, performing in such places as Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, Riverside Church, Washington's National Cathedral, Exeter Cathedral – England, Leicester Cathedral – England, The American Cathedral in Paris, Brigham Young University's Jerusalem Center, Tel Aviv, Israel – with the Israeli Chamber Orchestra, Aman, Jordan, and Salt Lake City's Temple Square. In July 2001, he served as spokesperson, French translator, and performer for the Miami Bach Society's *Collegium Musicum* as it performed concerts in Aix-en-Provence and Paris, France. Dr. Hall currently resides in Canyon with his wife Bonnie, and their two children, Elizabeth and Gale.

HSQ SCHOLARSHIP

The Harrington String Quartet is pleased to announce the availability in 2004-2005 of scholarships at West Texas A&M University for four highly talented and motivated string players. Significant scholarships, plus possible work with the Amarillo Symphony Orchestra, will be awarded to two violinists, one violist, and one cellist in order to create a string quartet. This group will study chamber music and have weekly coachings with West Texas A&M's critically acclaimed faculty, the Harrington String Quartet. They will be expected to audition for the Amarillo Symphony, perform one recital per year as a string quartet, as well as give performances for University functions and educational outreach. In addition, they will serve as principal players in the West Texas A&M University Symphony Orchestra. Students may audition individually and need not be a member of an existing quartet to audition.

This is an excellent opportunity to grow as a musician through valuable chamber music experience, professional orchestral experience, and developing leadership skills. The Harrington String Quartet is an active, performing ensemble with concerts across the nation. Performing four concerts a year in the Amarillo/Canyon area, often bringing in exciting guest artists from the country's leading chamber groups and music schools, the Harrington String Quartet brings a wealth of experiences to its students. For more information about the Harrington String Quartet please visit their web-site at www.harringtonstringquartet.com.

HARRINGTON STRING QUARTET TO PERFORM AT WEILL HALL IN NEW YORK CITY

In February of 2004 the Harrington String Quartet will travel to New York City for a Valentine's Day concert in Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall. The quartet is excited for the opportunity to perform in the chamber music hall of one of the country's most celebrated classical music venues.

The Harrington String Quartet will be joined by the Cleveland Orchestra's concertmaster, William Preucil, and concert pianist, Arthur Rowe, for Ernest Chausson's Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet. After greatly enjoying collaborating with Preucil and Rowe for a performance of this work in Dallas in November of 2002, the quartet sought to rebook these artists for a repeat performance in New York City.

The rest of the program will feature the Harrington String Quartet in Anton Webern's *Langsamer Satz*, Beethoven's 'Harp' Quartet, Op. 74, and the east coast premiere of Daniel McCarthy's *Visions in Funk*. *Visions in Funk* is also to appear on a CD of Daniel McCarthy's music the quartet is planning to record in the summer/fall of 2004.

ORCHESTRA NEWS

The West Texas A&M University Symphony Orchestra presented the

premier concert performance of Vitezslava Kaprálová's *Vánoční preludium (Christmas Prelude)* on the annual Holiday Kick Off Concert on Nov. 23, 2003. Written for chamber orchestra, this short work has only been heard once, during a Radio France program, "Noel à Prague," broadcast to Nazi occupied Czechoslovakia on Dec. 24, 1939.

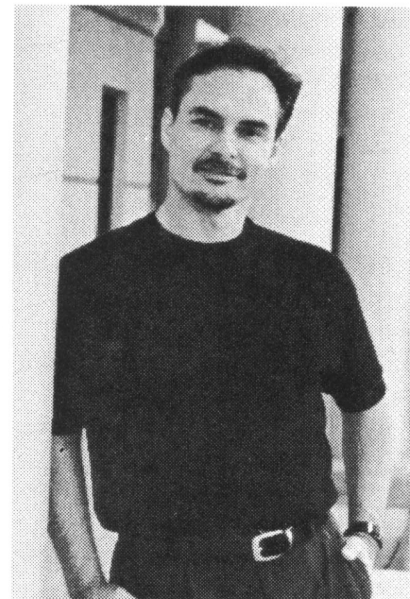
Kaprálová was born in Brno on Jan. 24, 1915, the daughter of composer Václav Kaprál. She studied composition and conducting at the Brno Conservatory before continuing her education at the Prague Conservatory, where she participated in the master classes of Vítězslav Novák (composition) and Václav Talich (conducting). She moved to Paris in 1937, where she studied composition with Bohuslav Martinu and conducting with Charles Munch.

Following the German occupation of Czechoslovakia on March 15, 1939, Kaprálová decided to stay in exile in France. Her career as a composer and conductor was tragically cut short by her death by tuberculosis in June of 1940.

NEW DANCE INSTRUCTOR

Edward R. Truitt was recently named Artistic Director of the Lone Star Ballet and Director of Dance at West Texas A&M University.

Mr. Truitt has an extensive and varied background in dance. He has performed principal and soloist roles in much of the classical canon including *Giselle*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Coppélia*, *Swan Lake*, *Raymonda (Pas de Deux)*, and *Nutcracker*. He has also performed in the ballets *Romeo and Juliet*, *Carmina Burana*, *Daphnis et Chloe*, *Cheri*, *Orpheus*, *Graduation Ball* and many others. He was a principal soloist with the Los Angeles Classical Ballet Company, Santa Barbara Ballet Theatre, Omaha Ballet Theatre and has performed as a jazz dancer in feature films, television and the professional stage in Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Tokyo, Paris and Moscow. Mr. Truitt has also been a guest artist for various modern dance companies and has danced in the works of Bill Evans, Jose Limon and others.



EDWARD TRUITT

Mr. Truitt has choreographed professionally for the stage, film and television, for universities and various dance companies. Mr. Truitt has been accepted as a Fulbright Senior Specialist. In June 2003 he received a Fulbright grant to set his work "Misguided Faith..." on the Kannon Dance Company, to teach at the International Festival of Contemporary Dance - OPEN LOOK, and to consult on the development of a new dance program in St. Petersburg, Russia. While in Russia, Mr. Truitt took part in "Project Distance", a teaching/performance tour that traveled from St. Petersburg to Yaketerinburg, Novosibirsk, and Krasnayarsk (Siberia). Mr. Truitt was the first and only non-Russian invited to participate with this project. Mr. Truitt presented excerpts from his jazz/ballet "Energy Unbound" in Yaketerinburg and Krasnayarsk. His contemporary work, "Misguided Faith...", had its Russian premiere at the Krasnayarsk Ballet Opera House and was performed at the gala of the OPEN LOOK International Festival of Contemporary Dance July 10, 2003, in St. Petersburg.

In January 1999 Mr. Truitt was invited to St. Petersburg, Russia, where he completed teaching a seminar in contemporary dance forms for teachers, choreographers and professional dancers. The seminar was conducted with the support of the

Administration of the Culture Committee of St. Petersburg as part of the Contemporary Choreography Development Program in St. Petersburg, Mr. Truitt produced, wrote, directed and choreographed the one-act play/ballet *Sarah's Dance* which premiered in Eugene, Oregon in 1995. In the fall of 1996 Mr. Truitt collaborated with Paris-based visual artist Lauren Unger on a series of performances integrating dance with the creation of visual art that took place in Los Angeles, Paris and Moscow.

Mr. Truitt has a master's degree in dance from the University of Oregon, and is currently an assistant professor of dance at WTAMU as well as serving as Artistic Director of the Lone Star Ballet. Prior to his service at LSB/WT, Mr. Truitt was an assistant professor of dance at Southern Utah University, taught at California State University, Fresno, Brigham Young University, and the University of Oregon (as a graduate teaching fellow).

Mr. Truitt has also performed as an actor in many productions and is a member of the Screen Actors Guild.

GAUME GIFT

Matilde Gaume's legacy continues at WTAMU. As part of her last will and testament, she left \$10,000 to be divided equally between the music library ("for the purchase of tapes, scores, and other materials for student use"), the Matilda Gaume Consort ("for the purchase of materials for student use"), and piano students ("for the benefit of piano students"). Her contributions were felt by many students in her years as a faculty member at WTAMU and her kindness and devotion to education will be appreciated by many more through her generous gift.

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