Dear Friends of the Stearns:
In October, I was honored to become the newest Director of the Stearns Collection. In addition to my performing and teaching, my passion for musical instruments and my years of study with instrument builders Thomas and Barbara Wolf made Stearns a natural fit for me.

My students, colleagues, and I have benefitted from the Collection’s instruments and lecture series in lessons, masterclasses, and dozens of performances. We are excited by its unique breadth and accessibility, and how it is improving the experiences and education of SMTD students and our wider community.

Important recent activities include:

- moving the Collection to the climate-controlled North Campus Research Complex (NCRC),
- providing instruments for scores of U-M students in ensembles, classes, and for private study,
- hosting lecturers by scholars, luthiers, and curators expanding beyond the University for collaborations with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Toledo Museum of Art, the Academy of Early Music, and others
- and growing the Collection through the purchase and donation of a wide range instruments, many of historical and cultural significance. (cont. on p.8)

Contents and Highlights

Performances (p. 2)
Baroque Chamber Music at the Hatcher Graduate Library
Moving to NCRC (pp. 3-4)
Old instruments, a new space
Lectures/Acquisitions (p. 5)
— Elizabeth Weinfeld performs and discusses Leonora Duarte
— Lester Monts donates African and South American instruments
Online & Perf. Arts Tech. (p. 6)
Sarkisian Recordings & the Moog Foundation
Historical Performance (p. 7)
Charpentier and Stradella operas
People & Connections (p. 8)
“This collection has been an invaluable resource...”
Stearns instruments are used in practice rooms and in dozens of performances on and off campus. Instrumentalists who study and perform on brass, wind, and string instruments develop a new sense of sound and a tactile experience that transcends any theoretical knowledge. Singers and conductors in opera, choirs, and ensembles also benefit greatly from working with such instruments.

In April 2019, the English Concert presented Handel’s opera, Semele, as the concluding concert of the UMS season. For the performance, they used recently repaired Baroque timpini from the Stearns Collection. Right: Concertmaster Nadja Zwiener leads a Baroque string masterclass.

In January 2020, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra borrowed several instruments from the Stearns Collection for their Chinese New Year Concert with the Shanghai Chinese Orchestra. Left: Wang Yinrui prepares to play a drum from the Collection during rehearsal.

Top: Students join Dean of Libraries James Hilton and Director Gascho after a performance at the Hatcher Graduate Library.

Above: Students perform in the Gamelan’s Fall 2019 Concert.

Left: The Baroque Chamber Orchestra performs at the Toledo Museum of Art.
The **Stearns Collection** was housed in the Argus Building for several decades before moving to the North Campus Research Complex (NCRC) in 2018, a mission cornerstone of former Stearns Director, Senior Vice Provost, and Professor of Musicology, Lester Monts. Thanks also to the visionary work of Christopher Kendall, former SMTD Dean, and the storage space configuration by Collections Manager Ted Lottman, the Stearns is more fully integrated into the teaching and research missions of SMTD.

Now with over 2,900 individual pieces, the Stearns Collection is one of the most diverse musical instrument collections on any university campus in the country.

Before: Argus main collection room

After: The new facility at the NCRC covering over 5,000 square feet, including climate-controlled rooms filled with floor-to-ceiling shelving.
Instruments are easily accessible and the Collection welcomes researchers, curators, and experts from across the world to study pieces. Over the last academic year, legacy artists and specialists from renowned collections have visited:

**Jillon Stoppels Dupree**, harpsichordist

**Michael Lynn**, traverso player and scholar (Oberlin Conservatory)

**Michelle Moog-Koussa**, Executive Director for the Bob Moog Foundation

**Paul O’Dette**, Professor of Lute and Director of Early Music at the Eastman School of Music; Co-Artistic Director of the Boston Early Music Festival

**Right: Kenneth Slowik**, Curator of Musical Instrument Collection, National Museum of American History; Artistic Director of Smithsonian Chamber Music Society

**Willard Martin**, harpsichord builder

Instruments are sorted by the way they produce sound – idiophones and membranophones (percussion and drums), aerophones (winds), and chordophones (strings) – and, then tagged and numbered, so any given instrument can be located in a matter of minutes.

Stearns instruments are a vital classroom resource and have become a part of many students’ education from instrumentalists exploring the range of sound to technology innovators in digital fabrication to practicing curators who want to engage in the field of organology.

**Prof. Lester Monts** with students of the Baroque Chamber Orchestra and Musical Instruments of the World class
UP CLOSE with the Stearns: Lectures & Acquisitions

Virginia Martin Howard LECTURE SERIES

Virginia Martin Howard, performer and music educator, endowed the Stearns lecture series which features presentations by performers and distinguished scholars in areas of ethnomusicology, historical musicology and organology throughout the academic year. This year’s lectures included:

Elizabeth Weinfeld (The Juilliard School), Sept. 2
Leonora Duarte (1610–1678):
Converso Composer in Antwerp

Michelle Moog-Koussa (Bob Moog Foundation), Nov 1
Performing Arts Technology Seminar

Michael Lynn (The Oberlin Conservatory), Nov. 22
Twenty Flutes and Twenty Decades

Willard Martin (harpischord builder), Jan. 28
The Lautemwerk Harpsichord

Hillary Finchum (The Association for Asian Studies), Jan. 18
Silk, Bamboo and Wood:
The Resonance of Korean Tradition

EXHIBITS

Portions of the Stearns Collection are exhibited across campus—in displays at the lobby and library of SMTD as well as Hill Auditorium, where the students from the “Musical Instruments of the World” class installed their work (example above). In addition, temporary exhibits have appeared at the U-M Hospital Gifts of Art Program and the Ann Arbor District Library.

ACQUISITIONS

Thirty instruments from Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Benin, Tanzania, Uganda, Guinea, and Brazil, generously donated by former Stearns Director Lester Monts

With increased demand for Baroque instruments from students and faculty and with funding from SMTD Dean David Gier, we have purchased replicas, made by highly regarded builders, of three flutes, two bassoons, a Baroque guitar, and several new string instruments and bows.

A donation of more than a dozen brass instruments from Michigan collector and historian, Ron Berndt.

Christopher and Regina Brodersen of Northville, Michigan’s generous donation of an oboe d’amore, built by Jonathan Bosworth in 1991

Jack Spence’s generous donation of a silver plated Holten Shepherd’s Crook cornet and a 14-inch oversized model of a Conn brass valve

An acquisition from the former U-M Confucius Institute’s collection of Chinese instruments, including several pipa, erhu, yueqin, guzheng, and yangqin

An anonymous donation of dozens of historical wind instruments and playable replicas
Performing Arts Technology

On the other end of the historical spectrum, Performing Arts Technology (PAT) students can learn from the electronic synthesizers housed in the collection, including two mid-20th century instruments by rival companies Moog and Buchla. PAT Assistant Professor John Granzow described how his students gasp in excitement when they see these rare treasures. The wide range of acoustic instruments in the collection is also extremely useful to PAT students. "The collection is a vast laboratory of materials formed to fashion sound from numerous musical traditions, cultures, and time periods," he said. "There is no better way to expand one’s notion of music technology than to walk into a musical instrument collection like Stearns."

Recordings

The following audio and video recordings are now hosted by the University of Michigan and easily searchable and accessible online.

**Leo Sarkisian’s Music Time in Africa**
Over 40 years of rare African music recorded by Leo Sarkisian, who donated a sizable collection of African instruments to the Stearns, has been archived by U-M Library Special Collections Center and made available online.

**La Descente d’Orphée aux Enfers, Marc-Antoine Charpentier**
Featuring many instruments from the Stearns Collection, performed by SMTD students in 2018, with Joseph Gascho, conductor/harpsichord and Matthew Ozawa, director.

**In B, J.S. Bach and Terry Riley, arr. Joseph Gascho**
Featuring the Baroque Chamber Orchestra with special guests Matt Albert, Baroque viola and Jillon Stoppels Dupree, organ.

Search the Collection

Available on the Stearns website, the digital collection contains more than 12,800 color photographs of the 2900+ instruments comprising the Stearns Collection. This includes color images of all instruments from the 1921 Albert A. Stanley (U-M Professor of Music) catalogue, in addition to the 1,200+ instruments that have been acquired since then.

Left: Students experiment with an original Moog synthesizer during Michelle Moog-Koussa’s mini-residency.
Stearns Supports Historical Performance at SMTD

Gambist/scholar Elizabeth Weinfeld (Juilliard) and the musicians of Sonnambula coach and play side-by-side with SMTD and community viola da gamba players.

Maestro Masaaki Suzuki and concert master Natsumi Wakamatsu (Bach Collegium Japan, Yale) and the Baroque Chamber Orchestra.

Baroque flutist Kathie Stewart (Apollo’s Fire, Cleveland Institute) and Prof. Amy Porter with members of her flute studio after a Baroque flute masterclass.

Baroque cellist Phoebe Carrai (Juilliard/Harvard) and Prof. Anthony Elliott with members of his cello studio after a masterclass on Bach’s Suites for Solo Cello.

Historical performance supports and enriches many departments and aspects of musical education at SMTD. Previous Stearns directors Joseph Lam and Lester Monts both fostered beneficial connections between the SMTD community with the instruments and resources of the Stearns Collection.

Two recent highlights include collaborations with the opera department to produce staged performances of opera by Marc-Antoine Charpentier and Antonio Stradella.

Ongoing projects include the performances of the Baroque Chamber Orchestra and other Early Music Ensembles; annual concerts featuring SMTD alumni who have made careers in historical performance; and collaborations with UMS, the Sally Fleming Masterclass Fund, and the Academy of Early Music to host masterclasses with internationally renowned teachers and performers.

The orchestra for SMTD’s production of Marc-Antoine Charpentier’s La Descente d’Orphée aux Enfers, including special guests Kathie Stewart (recorder) and Dean Emeritus Christopher Kendall (theorbo).
“The Stearns Collection gave me the opportunity to play and perform on historically accurate instruments including violins, violas, and bows….Prior to coming to the University, I’d had no experience with historical instruments and was feeling frustrated with my modern instrument and playing. Having access to the Stearns Collection allowed me to reevaluate my playing and relationship to music…”
Alyssa Campbell, BM in Violin Performance, 2020

“Working with historical instruments has a transformative effect not only on the music itself, but also on the musicians making the music, indeed even those of us whose instruments are built-in, only ever as old as we are…. Three of the most musically fulfilling experiences I had at the University involved the Stearns collection…”
Daniel McGrew, DMA in Voice, 2020

“During my master’s degree at U-M, I played on the Dominik Zuchowicz viola da gamba from the Stearns Collection... one of the finest gambas I have ever played... with recordings using this instrument, I was awarded the Margriet Tindemans Early String Scholarship by Early Music America to study viola da gamba in the Netherlands...”
Alex Baker, MM in Cello Performance, 2019

On behalf of the staff, faculty and many students connected with the Stearns Collection, I send you my best wishes for good health and peace of mind in these difficult times. We are very grateful for your support and interest in our many activities and resources. Despite uncertain times, we are confident and enthusiastic about recent developments and future areas for growth. I welcome your feedback, questions, and ideas for supporting the Stearns Collection.

Sincerely,

Joseph Gascho
jgascho@umich.edu