

APRIL SHOWERS BRING MAY FLOWERS!

APRIL

2026

UMBC DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Upcoming
Events

News

Current
Students

Alumni

Faculty

WELCOME TO OUR Monthly Newsletter

Through individual attention from extraordinary faculty, a supportive community, and real-world experience, we develop forward thinking musical citizens who make a positive impact in their communities and the world.



Upcoming Events



5/1 UMBC Gamelan, 5:00PM

5/2 UMBC Jubilee Singers/Gospel Choir, 5:00PM

5/3 UMBC Jazz in Concert, 3:00PM

5/3 UMBC Camerata, 3:00PM

5/8 UMBC Symphony Orchestra, 7:30PM

5/9 Student Composers Recital, 2:00PM

5/9 UMBC Free Improvisation Ensemble, 7:30PM

5/10 UMBC Percussion Ensemble, 3:00PM

5/10 UMBC Opera Workshop, 7:30PM

5/12 Department of Music Honors Showcase, 7:30PM

5/15 UMBC New Music Ensemble, 6:00PM

Learn more and get tickets at music.umbc.edu/events

George Lewis Residency Inspires UMBC Community



UMBC was honored to host composer George Lewis in residence last month. During his visit, RUCKUS performed his works *Signifying Riffs* and *Hexis*, and Lisa Cella premiered his solo bass flute and electronics piece *Dark Matter*.

Lewis engaged deeply with students through a presentation on his monodrama *Song of the Shank*, a workshop with the UMBC free improvisation ensemble on his piece *Creative Construction Set*, and a masterclass for student composers. His residency offered a meaningful opportunity for students and the broader community to learn from a pioneering voice in contemporary music.

UMBC Jubilee Singers to Perform at Smithsonian



The UMBC Jubilee Singers will present Music from the Hearts of America at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History on May 9, 2026. The program will feature spirituals and anthems as part of a series highlighting African American music and history, including stories of the Underground Railroad and the Civil Rights Movement.

Music Department Co-Hosts Meeting in the Middle Conference and Immersive Medieval Banquet



Over the weekend of April 10–12, the UMBC Music Department co-hosted the undergraduate research conference Meeting in the Middle – Trailblazers: Visualizing the Pre-Modern in collaboration with Medieval and Early Modern Studies. The conference welcomed presenters from seven states, Washington, D.C., and Canada, with events held in the Music Box and Dance Cube. As part of the program, five UMBC music majors performed a Monteverdi work they arranged for a blend of period and modern instruments.

The conference culminated in a sold-out immersive Medieval banquet set in 1161 at Klopp Castle in Bingen. Directed by Dr. Lindsay Johnson, James Magruder (Visual Arts), and Jill Vasbinder (Dance), the interactive performance featured historical figures including Hildegard of Bingen and Archbishop Conrad of Mainz. Students in a specially designed interdisciplinary course created every aspect of the evening, from scriptwriting and choreography to musical performance, visual art, costumes, and lighting. Drawing on research into medieval culture and politics, the event brought history to life in a vibrant and collaborative celebration.

Current Students



Current Music Technology students **Tal Pluznik '26**, **Zac Johnson '26**, **Nick Komosa '26**, and **Andifon Ubom '26** had their video work featured in a news segment on WMAR-TV Baltimore (ABC).

The story highlighted Wax Atlas, a Baltimore venue where several UMBC student bands are actively involved in both performance and music technology.

Their work reflects the important role UMBC students play in supporting local venues and sustaining Baltimore's live music community.

Congrats to UMBC JAZZ

A huge shout out to the Jazz Ensemble for presenting a fantastic concert this month at the Keystone Korner. They brought the house down!! Great job everyone!



UMBC Jazz at the Smithsonian!



The UMBC Jazz Ensemble participated in the University Jazz Jam at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History on April 10, performing for an enthusiastic audience of museum visitors. During their visit, the ensemble also received a special tour of the museum's archives, where they viewed historic jazz photographs, original Duke Ellington manuscripts, Apollo Theater booking cards, and materials related to the International Sweethearts of Rhythm.

Alumni



Sarah Van Waes '20, will join the Dallas Symphony Orchestra as Manager of Orchestra Personnel this April. Sarah began their career in arts administration as a music librarian for the Endless Mountain Music Festival while studying at UMBC. After graduating in 2020, they continued their studies with John Sharp, principal cellist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, at the Chicago College of Performing Arts.

Over the past four years, Sarah has held a variety of roles in production and personnel management with the Chicago Philharmonic, most recently serving as Director of Personnel and Artistic Operations. In addition to their administrative work, Sarah remains an active performer as a founding member of the Chicago-based chamber collective Ikaros.

Henry Smith '24, has performed as a musician aboard cruise ships since graduating, playing a wide range of styles with diverse ensembles. His work has taken him to over 30 countries across the UK, Europe, Japan, Mexico, and the Caribbean, where he has collaborated with musicians and connected with audiences around the world.

Performing nightly has provided invaluable professional experience and fueled his artistic growth. He credits his training and mentorship at UMBC as essential preparation for a career as a professional musician.



Faculty News

Dr. Juan Sebastián Delgado spent a week in residence at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity in Canada, contributing to the development of *Speak No Words*, a multidisciplinary work integrating camera sensor technology, lighting, staging, and new music. The piece premiered last March in Montreal at the International New Music Festival, La Semaine du Neuf, to a sold-out audience.



Dr. Natalie Groom's soprano/clarinet duo *Whistling Hens* was the featured Ensemble in Residence at the Women Composers Festival of Hartford (CT). During their March 2026 residency, the duo premiered six new works, including winning pieces from the Call for Scores competition, selections from the Emerging Composers Workshop, and a commissioned work by the festival's Composer in Residence, Kari Cruver.

Faculty News



Professor Sammy Huh (vocal and Opera) will perform the tenor role of the Trojan Man in Washington Concert Opera's production of Idomeneo by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart on May 9 at Lisner Auditorium in Washington, D.C. The performance will be conducted by Maestro Anthony Walker.

Assistant Professor **Dustin Donahue** performed with Yarn/Wire as soloists with the New York Philharmonic from April 8–10. The ensemble presented the premiere of George Lewis' 40-minute work ...Ohne Festen Wohnsitz, conducted by Kwamé Ryan.

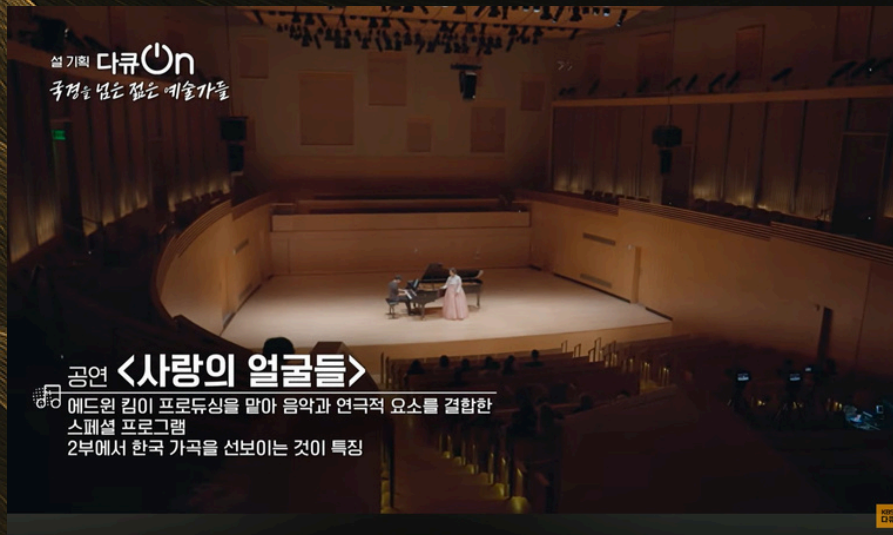


Faculty News



Dr. Young-Jun Lee's (composition) work Nan received a Special Mention at the 1st Aion Digital Art Prize, an international award organized by the Ise-Shima Art Committee that highlights innovative approaches in digital and interdisciplinary art.

Nan is an installation-based work that explores themes of Asian heritage, digital identity, and fragmentation through the interplay of sound, video, and spatial elements.



Seyoung Jeong's concert last fall, *Faces of Love*, was featured in a documentary by the Korean Public Broadcasting System. The episode was part of a special Lunar New Year documentary titled *Young Artists Who Crossed Borders*, profiling Jeong's collaborator, pianist Edwin Kim. Their performance in Linehan Concert Hall showcased a fusion of Korean art songs and Western classical music woven together by accessible storytelling.

Watch the documentary:

https://youtu.be/_3jVuR2baJk?si=wEssCN2_3iZHGidh&t=2005

Faculty News

Brian Kaufman Receives USM Board of Regents Award for Excellence in Creative Activity



Professor Brian Kaufman has received the 2026 University System of Maryland Board of Regents Award for Excellence in Creative Activity, the highest honor bestowed by the Board of Regents on exemplary faculty. He was one of just 39 recipients selected from more than 42,000 faculty and staff across the University System of Maryland.

Thank you!

Please send your updates to the
music office so we can share your
accomplishments with the
community!

<https://forms.gle/Mz9dPRfVRmkGCLhy5>



**UMBC
MUSIC**

For more information and to view our 2025 arts +
concert series, visit us at

music.umbc.edu