



# Take Note



834 Asylum Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06105

**Did you know...** *Downbeat* magazine readers' poll to select the Male Vocalist of the Year ranked Conservatory Jazz Vocal Coach **Giacomo Gates** among the top 11 following winner Tony Bennett? In addition to teaching at the Conservatory and recording CDs, Giacomo performs at **national and international jazz festivals** and appears regularly in large arenas, including those at **Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun**.

## Hartford Conservatory

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## John Bolduc: He Gives Sound Advice

by Lynn Huntington

This child of the sixties sports a long ponytail and carefree attitude as you might expect. At age seven John began playing drums in Meriden, Connecticut, his hometown, with visions of Buddy Rich dancing in his head. But John's brother played guitar, and at twelve John, hoping to impress the chicks, took up electric guitar (a tag sale find) himself. Teased on by garage bands and small paid gigs, as well as the Maloney High Jazz Band, he was a quick learner from the older players in those groups. (Early on he ventured into the world of jazz, with George Benson his idol.) Lured away from his intended pre-med career by a recording class at Trod Nossel Studios in Wallingford, John soon found himself at . . . the Hartford Conservatory!

Here in the mid-1980s he learned digital audio before it was commercially available. Two years at the Conservatory with teachers Jack Stang and Pamela Molava gave John the skills, though he "engineered" his own entry into the recording business. Mentor Jack Stang owned the commercial studio, Nickel Recording, where there were closets containing thousands of feet of reel-to-reel tape recordings from former clients. The enterprising Mr. Bolduc, with his mentor's permission, made a job for himself by securing releases from the artists



John Bolduc, Dean of Recording Arts

featured on those tapes, erasing and selling them at a discount to new studio clients for re-use! He was soon hired as a studio recording engineer at Nickel.

After that studio closed, John played in the big leagues in New York City, teaching guitar at Sam Ash Music Institute, recording for Greenstreet and Quad Studios, and undertaking some producing in Long Island. A stint at Sony soon followed where he recorded Boys II Men, Eddie Money, David Byrne of Talking Heads fame, and several international releases. Returning to Hartford in 1998, John became Dean of the Sound Recording (now Recording Arts) program at the Conservatory. His commercial studio, Bold Music LLC in Manchester, has a full schedule, but John makes time for teaching here. He enjoys the constant review of the basics that teaching provides, and the chance to mentor young up-and-comings as he was helped at his beginnings. To bands he is recording he recommends the Conservatory for further education, and from students at the school he gets referrals for his studio. It's all connected, and it's all good.



Jordan Bartucca, Cobla Akafish in the Recording Arts Multi-Track lab

## Spotlight on Kristina Kentigian '04

by Lynn Huntington

It is always a special treat for me to chat with Conservatory graduates, so it was with great anticipation that I called the frosty state of Maine to speak with Kristina Kentigian '04. Looking for a small school, she had found the Conservatory through an Internet search, and arrived in 2002 solidly entrenched in the hip-hop genre. Many are the types of musical expression preferred by Conservatory freshmen, but after a few years, they all come away flavored with jazz. It was no different for Kristina. She is now close to releasing her first solo album, which leans toward jazz and soul.

A Recording Arts major, Kristina chose not to pursue a career as an engineer. She says, "I learned enough in that program so...I know what I want out of (a recording)...I also have a better understanding of technique...how to incorporate better harmonies into my songs...and how to be a better performer...."

After graduation she was named one of Maine's Fifty Most Influential Females, and toured with National Association for College Activities (NACA). Her band opened for several big-name musicians; she recorded in New York City and then she lived on her own in Nantucket for a while. Back in Maine now (where friends and family are), she received the Best New Artist Award in November '07 from the New England based "We Push Buttons" group.

She still keeps up with school friends Andy Nelson and Rich Nowak '06, as well as Natalie Mitchell '07 and Dean of Students Susan Mazer. She recalls participating in a Musical Theater production of *Cole*, and learning jazz singing from Giacomo Gates. Looking back she realizes, "The teachers and staff were there because they really wanted to be. They believed in the idea of (people of) any age, background or level getting the chance to broaden their music skills. It was infectious and encouraging." Reminiscing about those years in Hartford, she says, "It was one of the best times in my life". Onward and upward, Kristina!



## Stunning Stenciled Ceilings Revealed

The ominous sound of dripping water foretold a boiler malfunction early on a cool October morning. Water filled all the steam radiators on one side of Welch building, resulting in extensive damage to ceilings and floors. A devastating situation—but one covered by insurance that let us proceed immediately with water and mold remediation even before the claim was fully developed.

Above: Reception Room Below: Second floor ceiling and motif detail



Much to our astonishment, removal of water-soaked canvas and acoustical tile ceilings revealed intricately stenciled plaster ceilings, even in the second floor bathroom. The plaster on the second floor could not be saved, but we were able to photograph the decoration before it was destroyed, recording the different patterns used for two bedrooms, a sitting room and a bathroom. We also salvaged several fragments to serve as documentation of the colors original to the Victorian house.

On the first floor the elaborate ceiling design of our Reception Room, likely a parlor in the 1880s, has been exposed since the fall. The ceiling of the Hill Room (at right) has also been visible since the fall, with the painted motif indicating the room was originally for dining. These two ceilings do not have to be removed due to structural support provided by beams that were added when the plaster was overlaid by canvas ceilings. Regrettably, we cannot safely leave them exposed. They will be covered, however, with material that will have an unadorned plaster coating. In time we will consider the feasibility of seeking funding to remove canvas ceilings in rooms that were not affected by water and restore or reproduce original plaster designs.



## Celebrating a Year of Outstanding Performances

### *Duke Ellington's Jazz Nutcracker*

The 2007 performances of the *Duke Ellington's Jazz Nutcracker*, the seventh annual presentation held at the Hoffman Auditorium, Saint Joseph College, were filled to capacity with children, parents and seniors enjoying their introduction to the Hartford Conservatory's unique offering of the classic Nutcracker. Choreographer Darcie Froman, a 2006 graduate of the Hartford Conservatory, created a montage of dance styles—jazz, tap, swing, ballroom and ballet—appropriate for Duke Ellington's rhythmic score that recalls Harlem of the 1940s. The New England Jazz Ensemble, on stage with the dancers, was directed by Walter Gwardyak, the Conservatory's Dean of Music and award-winning arranger who adapted Ellington's 35-minute score to support the full Nutcracker suite of dances.

*Photographs by Phil Farnsworth*



Save the dates for 2008 performances: December 5-7.

Sponsored in part by Lincoln Financial Foundation

### Diploma Program

As part of their college-level training, Diploma students take to the stage in a variety of fall and spring productions.



### Sweet & Hot: The Songs of Harold Arlen

Harold Arlen's name is not well-known, but his songs are. Musical Theater students performed such Arlen classics as *Stormy Weather* and *Over the Rainbow* in October.

Far left: Megan Wingo and John Noel. Left: Keri Hermann, Catherine Rogala, Caly Oliveira, Megan Wingo and John Noel



### The Apple Tree

The spring musical consisted of three acts based on stories by Mark Twain, Frank R. Stockton and Jules Feiffer under the direction of Conservatory faculty Jerry Prell and Phil Rittner.

Far left: Rachel Perlin. Left: James Bittel. Right: Adrian Lewis, Michael Malhoit and Megan Wingo.



## Diploma Program



The Diploma Program, accredited through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, offers specialized training in music, dance, recording arts and musical theater, enabling students to prepare for a career in the field of performing arts.



Musicians clockwise from lower left: Michael Conroy and Chris Harwell; Frank Pascale; Jennifer Civitillo, Mark Munroe, Elizabeth Strong, Michael LaChapelle, Nate Santoro, Jordan D'Angelo.

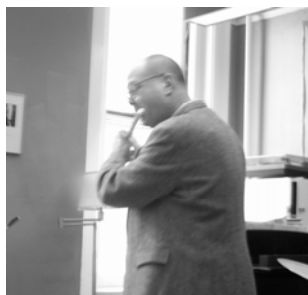
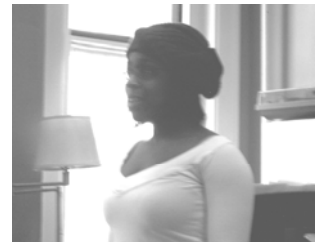


The Hartford Conservatory was the first music school in the country to incorporate a modern dance department. Dance was introduced in 1934 by modern dance pioneer Truda Kaschmann who subsequently trained scores of dancers, including the Conservatory's current Dean of Dance. At right: Tony Olivares in **Sounds and Movements**, a recent collaboration of music and dance students...



## Community Program: Spring Recital, Suzuki Play-Down

The Community Program has students of all ages and abilities who simply enjoy learning from skilled teachers in a non-competitive environment. Private and/or group lessons in the fields of dance, music and theater help students hone their performing skills. Our programs also serve to introduce a new generation to the sheer joy of the performing arts. With generous foundation and corporate support for our tuition-free program, we are able to reach students who otherwise would be unable to afford private or group lessons.



Clockwise from upper right: Raven Turner, mezzo soprano; Suzuki Violin students with teacher Linda Embser; Alvin Smith, drums; Vernon Lee, guitar and Kiara Lee, bass; Shannon Mann, soprano; Tahlia Martinez, soprano; William Petrosky, flute Shannon is a recipient of the Ralph Baldwin Scholarship Foundation Award. Alvin and Raven are recipients of City of Hartford scholarships.



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Above: **World premiere** of *Lookin' Out My Window*, an original song by age group 13-16. Below: Recorder performance by age group 9-12.



## Summer Performing Arts Intensive 2008

June 27 through July 25

Preparations are underway for our popular Summer Performing Arts Intensive that provides students ages 6-16 with daily dance, music and acting lessons leading up to showcases for their accomplishments. Showcases held in Drew Hall at Asylum Hill Congregational Church on the second and fourth Fridays allow all students to perform on stage in front of family and friends at least once.

More than 60 students participated in the 2007 Summer Performing Arts Intensive, pictured here. With the generous support of the Elizabeth Carse Foundation, City of Hartford Community Development Block Grant, City of Hartford Department of Youth Services, Ensworth Charitable Foundation, Fisher Foundation, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and a private grant, 95% were able to attend on a tuition-free basis. We were pleased to welcome students from virtually every Hartford neighborhood.

One highlight of the 2007 season was an original song—*Lookin' Out My Window*—composed by age group 13-16 who performed their song at the first showcase. It was a wonderful composition that gave voice to the thoughts and concerns of this age group and was presented with a high level of skill and sophistication before family, friends, faculty and their peers.

Contact Kelly Orlando at 860-246-2588 x15 for 2008 enrollment information.

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