

NICK CURRY

Research, Scholarship & Creative Activity

Introduction

In my first five years at UNF, I have been highly active in the area of scholarship and creative activity and the quality of my research has been on an upward trajectory over the last two years, a deliberate, focused acceleration on my part. As is typical for musicians in academic positions in colleges and universities, my creative activity as a cellist has taken the form primarily of professional performances, presenting my research at conferences, giving educational clinics and master classes, writing articles and making recordings. I have performed internationally in nine different countries, six of them in the last two years. My research has been published twice by the *ASTA String Journal*, the leading string publication in the United States. I have presented at two national conferences, one regional conference, and three state conferences. I have just been invited, based on my performance ability, to present at another national conference in the fall of 2013. I have recorded on four different CD projects. In the summer of 2012, I premiered a piece by a well-known composer in South Africa. The diversity and breadth of my research is something I value.

My performances include appearances with a Grammy Hall of Fame winner, with one of the top ten ticket-selling bands of the in the first decade of the new millennium, on Garrison Keillor's *Prairie Home Companion* for four thousand people live and four million on radio, on the nationally televised Oprah Winfrey Network, and nationally and internationally on Sirius radio and NPR. Finally, I have performed throughout the United States giving multiple chamber and solo performances in Georgia, Florida, Alabama, South Dakota, Tennessee, Illinois, Minnesota, Nebraska, Iowa, New York, and Vermont.

In addition to the work listed above, I have reviewed textbooks, have been awarded funding by TLO grants and by student government, and have personally fundraised over fifteen thousand dollars for my area. My traveling schedule has led me to either performances or master classes at more than a dozen higher education institutions. Finally, I presented masterclasses at the most prestigious summer institution in the country in the summer of 2012 when I was asked to join the faculty of the Meadowmount School of Music.

International Performances

- Performed as a soloist on Daniel Bernard Roumain's *I Need You*, premiering the work in Port Elizabeth, George, Paarl, and Cape Town South Africa with the UNF Chamber Singers *April–May 2012*
- Concert at Musikademie Feldkirchen for Europe's most talented students, Austria *July 2011*
- Concert as part of the Festival Imago Concert Series Ljubljana, Slovenija *July 2011*
- Solo performance at Église Saint-Augustin Paris, France *July 2011*
- Chamber Music Performance in Pussigny, France *July 2011*
- Concert at the Centre Pere Apostol, Barcelona, Spain Associacio Musical de Mestres Directors Concert Series *June 2011*
- Solo performance at the English Chaplaincy to raise funds to restore the church's organ damaged in terrorist bombings, Istanbul, Turkey *June 2011*
- Performances with Rawlins Piano Trio in Taiwan Locations including Kaohsiung Cultural Center, Taipei, Kenting, I-Shou University, SooChow University, Taiwan University School of the Arts, Taipei Municipal University of Education, Normal University, and in the cities of Feng Shin and ShiShin. *December 2004,
May 2006*

Throughout my career as a professional cellist, I have been featured in many significant performances. In the summer of 2011, I performed concerts in five different countries — Austria, Spain, Slovenia, Turkey, and France. These came as the result of submitting recordings for consideration to be a part of their concert series. In Austria, I was invited to the Musikademie of Feldkirchen, where gifted students from around the world gather to study. In Barcelona, my concert closed the annual concert series presented by the Associacio Musical de Mestres Directors at the Centre San Pere Apostol. In Slovenia, I played on the prestigious Imago Slovenia Concert Series. In Turkey, I performed at the English Chaplaincy in Istanbul to benefit the restoration of their organ which was damaged in terrorist bombings. My first performance in France was a solo

recital in the beautiful and historic Église Saint-Augustin and the other concert was a chamber concert in the south of France accompanied by Boosey & Hawkes composer and pianist Lee Kesselman.

In the summer of 2012, I premiered a work by well-known African-American composer Daniel Roumain on a concert tour in South Africa with the UNF chamber singers. I commissioned Daniel to write the piece, and the work brought positive attention to UNF's music flagship program. The work was performed in Port Elizabeth, George, Paarl, and Capetown. Daniel Roumain has collaborated with Philip Glass and Lady Gaga among others.

Earlier in my career, I participated in two 10-day performance tours of Taiwan with my University of South Dakota trio, the Rawlins Piano Trio, performing up to ten concerts during each period. The December 2004 tour began in Taipei, moved through Taichung and Tainan, and finished in Kaohsiung and Pingtung. The May 2006 tour included concerts in Taipei, Kenting, and Kaohsiung. The most prestigious concert of both tours occurred at the Kaosiung Cultural Center, a world-renowned center for the performing arts whose building was originally intended as the memorial hall for Chiang Kai-shek. To put the level of prestige of the venue in context, world famous string players Gil Shaham and Truls Mork played the hall the night before one of our performances. In addition, I performed concerts and provided master classes at other public institutions, including multiple universities, listed below, and five high schools. Master classes and concerts were given at numerous universities during the two tours to Taiwan including SooChow University, Taiwan University School of the Arts, Taipei Municipal University of Education, Normal University, I-Shou University, as well as in the cities of Feng Shin and ShiShin.

Collaborations and Performances with Noted Individuals

- Johnny Mathis — multiple performances in 2011 with this Grammy Hall of Fame performer
- Trans-Siberian Orchestra — multiple performances in 2011 and 2012 with this world famous group
- Oprah Winfrey — performed on her show *Lovetown U.S.A.* on the O Network, to be aired in the fall of 2012

This past year, I have collaborated with Grammy Hall of Fame member Johnny Mathis and I have now twice played with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. The Trans-Siberian orchestra has been voted by Billboard magazine one of the top ten ticket sellers for the first decade on the new millennium. In one

performance with the Trans-Siberian orchestra, my cello solo was heard by over 10,000 people. I was also invited to perform for Oprah Winfrey's O Network and played cello in her presence. This past academic year, I performed live on two occasions for the Channel 4 News in Jacksonville.

Notable Radio Broadcasts

- Taped radio broadcast—Music on the Hill Concert Series June 2008
Atlanta, Georgia
- Performed on the King Amati cello (c. 1538) as a soloist April 29, 2006
on Garrison Keillor's *A Prairie Home Companion*. This performance was broadcast nationwide on NPR and was rebroadcast repeatedly. The concert was performed for a live audience of four thousand people and four million live on radio. I was personally selected by Garrison Keillor for this concert.
- Performed a concert broadcast on KVNO, Omaha, September 2004
Nebraska, with the Rawlins Piano Trio as part of the Organ Vespers Series

In April 2006, while on faculty at the University of South Dakota, I performed as a soloist on *Prairie Home Companion*, the famed show on NPR featuring Garrison Keillor. Numerous newspaper articles were written about this performance; the show was re-broadcast multiple times; and it is currently available online on the *Prairie Home Companion* website. The show, performed for a live audience of 4,000 people and four million more on live radio, was broadcast all over the United States and was also heard in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand. I performed three different solo works on this show playing the King Amati cello of 1538 made for King Charles IX of France. This unique cello is one of the most famous instruments in the world, and it was a tremendous honor to be selected personally by Garrison Keillor, a member of the Radio Hall of Fame. I was the third person to play the cello in 25 years and this was the largest audience to ever hear this instrument.

Other recorded performances include two live concerts that were recorded and aired in Atlanta and Nebraska. Both of these concerts were a part of concert series for which invited to perform. The Atlanta series was entitled *Music on the Hill* and the concert in Omaha was part of the *Organ Vespers Concert* series and broadcast several times. As a point of reference, internationally famous cellist and recording artist Zuill Bailey performed on the same series.

Selected Performances in the U.S.

In Vermont, I performed as a soloist and a chamber musician at a camp founded by two of the most famous string teachers in the world: Almita and Roland Vamos. In Florida, my co-founding of Trio Florida with two colleagues, Gary Smart and Simon Shiao, led to invitations to perform in a number of concert series around the region including the EMMA concert series and the Amelia Island Concert Series. I was also invited to perform in Jacksonville's Friday Musicale. While this concert took place locally, legendary musicians Fritz Kreisler and Sergei Rachmaninoff have performed in this series thus making it a high honor. Many of the artists performing in this series come from outside the state of Florida. I was also invited to perform in the Jewish Community Alliance Jacksonville concert series. In the state of Georgia, in addition to my concert as a part of Music on the Hill, I was invited to perform in the Mostly Mozart Chamber Music Series in collaboration with Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra musicians. While teaching in South Dakota, the Rawlins Piano Trio was invited to perform on a number of different concert series around the region. We performed in a concert series in Rapid City, in the Brookings Chamber Music Series, in the Owatonna Arts Chamber series, and on a concert series in Iowa.

Conference Presentations

- Lecturer: "Recruiting Basics for College Educators" *March 2012*
for the American String Teachers National Conference.
Invited to present based on submission of proposal.
- Presenter: "Practicing Intonation on a String *February 2012*
Instrument" at the College Music Society's regional
conference in the spring of 2012 with two UNF students
assisting. Chosen after submitting proposal.
- Presenter: "Dr. Nick's Steps to Practicing Intonation *January 2011*
on a String Instrument" at the FMEA music conference in
Tampa, FL in 2011. Cello students Hannah Hoffman and
Andre Washington assisted the presentation. Selected to
present based on a submission to the FMEA board.

- Presenter: “Principles of Sound for String Instruments” at the state music conference in Tampa, FL for nearly 100 string teachers. Assisted by UNF student Brittany Maroney. As a result of this class, an invitation was sent to do the same presentation at many schools around the state including Vero Beach and Timber Creek High Schools and Lavilla School of the Performing Arts, all strong recruiting contacts for our department’s future. Chosen based on submission made to the FMEA board. *January 2009*
- Performed with Gary Smart and Guy Yehuda at both the FSMTA conference in Gainesville and the College Music Society National Conference in Atlanta *May, June 2008*
- Lecturer: FSMTA conference including a UNF cello student demonstration, “Principals of Sound on the Cello.” Simultaneously arranged and prepared a student to play for University of Florida cello professor Stephen Thomas. *June 2008*
- Presenter: “Body Music: An Examination of the Physical and Mental Similarities of Sports Performance and String Music Performance,” at the South Dakota Music Educators Association conference *February 2006*

In addition to performing as a soloist and chamber musician, I enjoy contributing to the profession as a guest lecturer for the academic side of our field. I performed and lectured at the National Conference for the College Music Society (CMS). The CMS National Conference routinely attracts over 450 faculty members, administrators, graduate students, independent scholars, composers, publishers, and music business personnel who share a common interest and dedication to the improvement of music and its relationship to the other academic disciplines within higher education. I was invited to present and perform here based on a submission. Fewer than 40% of submissions were accepted for this national conference.

In the spring of 2012, I presented a lecture on building a college string studio at the American String Teachers Association (ASTA) National Conference. ASTA is the largest national organization for string players and teachers in the United States. In the spring of 2012, I also presented at the College Music Society’s Southern regional conference. I presented on the many different

ways of practicing intonation on a string instrument. Two of my current UNF students assisted in this lecture. Our UNF faculty piano trio has been selected to perform at the CMS national conference in Boston in Fall 2013 chosen as one of the five groups from the 30+ who submitted recordings for consideration.

In addition to presenting at national and regional conferences, I was chosen via written submission in a peer-evaluated format to present and lecture at the Florida Music Educators Association (FMEA) state music conference for roughly 100 participants in both 2009 and 2011. UNF cello students collaborated with me in both hour-long presentations. I am the sole cellist from Florida who has been invited to present research here twice; to be asked back a second time is a high honor. Further, the FMEA conference is the 4th largest conference of its kind in the country with numerous non-Florida schools being represented including Vanderbilt University and LSU.

I do not limit sharing my expertise with one organization and thus have taken part in other conferences. I performed a concert and presented a formal lecture at the Florida Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) State Conference in 2008. MTNA includes over 24,000 independent and collegiate music teachers. This invitation came based on submissions for both the lecture and performance. In 2006, I was invited and presented an hour-long lecture at South Dakota Music Educators Association State Conference, my submission chosen from many others in my area of expertise.

Recordings

- Service of Darkness, Bill Wren & Frank Ralls September 2012
(upcoming release)
- Gary Smart album, Albany Records recorded 2012
(upcoming release)
 - CD featuring Trio Florida
- Journey Around the Sun: A Mayan Odyssey, Bill Wren & Frank Ralls 2011
 - Nominated for ZMR Music Awards as Album of the Year and Best Contemporary Instrumental Album.
 - Album hit #1 on the new age radio charts in 2011 and #2 on the world music charts on CD Baby.
 - Available for purchase on CD Baby, iTunes, and Amazon.
 - Played across the US and internationally on Sirius XM Radio.

- When I Sing, University of North Florida Chamber Singers 2011
- A Day in the Life, Bill Wren & Frank Ralls 2008
 - The song “En Mai,” on which I was featured, hit #1 in the Classical and Contemporary categories on the indie chart Soundclick.
 - Album hit #1 on FM new age music radio stations around the U.S. in 2010
 - Available for purchase on CD Baby, iTunes, and Amazon.
 - Played across the US and internationally on Sirius XM Radio.

I recorded and premiered two chamber works written by composer Gary Smart, both recorded under the Albany Records Label. I was the featured soloist on multiple tracks on a Bill Wren and Frank Ralls CD entitled “One Day in a Life.” The tracks have been aired on nearly 100 radio stations including stations in Canada, The Netherlands, Australia, Spain, and Romania, as well as on Sirius/XM radio. I was then featured on multiple tracks on their second album “Journey Around the Sun.” This album also has been frequently played on Sirius radio both nationally and internationally. I have just completed recording for my third album with Frank Ralls where I collaborated with Niki Dawson from NBC’s “The Voice.” The third album is entitled “Service of Darkness” and again features my solo cello playing.

Publications

Author

- “Dr. Nick’s Steps to Practicing Intonation,” American String Teacher, November 2011.
 - The article was chosen based on a submission to the nation’s premiere string journal, published quarterly.
- “Interview with composer Richard Meyer,” American String Teacher, November 2010.
 - Commissioned Meyer to write a work for the 7th and 8th grade Florida All-State orchestra and the interview discussed this work and his compositional techniques.
- Body Music: An Examination of the Physical and Mental Similarities of Sports Performance and String Music Performance. Dissertation published by the Oregon Microform Publication in Sport and Human Performance, 2006. Abstract published in Kinesiology Abstracts Vol. 19 No. 2.

Reviewer

- Reviewer, American String Teacher journal Spring 2012–present
 - Selected as reviewer for music and recordings in the nation’s premiere string journal.

- Kristine Forney, Andrew Dell’Antonio, and Joseph Machlis, *Enjoyment of Music: Essential Learning Edition*, second edition (forthcoming). New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2013. Selected chapters. June 2010

- Joseph Kerman and Gary Tomlinson, *Listen*, seventh edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2011. Unit 1: Fundamentals. June 2009

Since the 2005 publication of my dissertation and abstract, my scholarly activity has increased in audience size. I was published in the November 2010 National American String Teacher Association Journal where I interviewed famous composer Richard Meyer. ASTA is one of the top string organizations in the country. One year later, my article on practicing intonation was published by the ASTA journal in the November 2011 edition. The ASTA journal is published quarterly, so to be published twice in the last two years is significant. Finally, there was an extensive article praising my work at “Cellobration” in the state ASTA newsletter (January 2011). In addition to these articles, I have done two book reviews: one for *Listening Fundamentals* by Kerman and Tomlinson and one for W.W. Norton’s *Enjoyment of Music* text.

Grant Money

I have been active in applying for grant money since arriving at the University of North Florida. I applied and received a grant from National ASTA so that Florida ASTA could commission a piece to be written for 2010 All-State. I sought out famous composer Richard Meyer, who composed a piece for the 7th and 8th grade All-State due to the grant money I was awarded. I have personally raised about \$15,000 dollars to support department-related activities since arriving at UNF in 2007. I was awarded student government grant money in 2007–2008 with my colleague Charlotte Mabrey to bring in guest artists for concerts of contemporary music. Finally, I applied for and was awarded a TLO grant in the spring of 2012 for my students Andre Washington and Hannah Hoffman to attend the Meadowmount School of Music in NY.

High School Clinics

- Chosen as featured clinician at “Cellobration” in Orlando. Worked with over sixty pre-college cellists at this event, conducted them in concert, and gave a masterclass. *April 2012*
- Chosen as the featured clinician at “Cellobration” in BocaRaton. Led 80+ cello students in performances and in a masterclass. Past clinicians were professors from the Berklee College of Music, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Michigan and the University of South Carolina, among others. Six of my UNF cello students also attended and participated as assistants and performers. *November 2010*

Over the past three years, I have been invited to present clinics to high school students around the state as well as at summer music programs around the country. In November 2010, I was chosen as the featured clinician at “Cellobration” in Boca Raton leading 80+ cello students in performances and in a master class. Past clinicians include professors from the Berklee College of Music, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Michigan, and the University of South Carolina, among others. This accolade provides great prominence for UNF and for me. Many of the most talented cellists from across the state attend this event; to be invited to do this was a great compliment given the prestige of the past clinicians. As this was during my fourth year at UNF, it shows that I have visibility in the state and that I am very well regarded.

It was an honor to be invited again as the clinician for Cellobration in Orlando in the spring of 2012. I worked with over sixty pre-college cellists at this event, conducted them in concert, and gave a master class. In the summer of 2012, I taught at the Meadowmount School of Music for two weeks providing individualized instruction and master classes to future internationally renowned performers. This is arguably one of the most prestigious string camps in the country, a place where Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, and Pinchas Zuckerman all attended as young musicians.

Solo Performances

As a soloist at UNF, I have been featured with the UNF Chamber Singers and the UNF Symphony Orchestra. As an orchestral player, I have performed with Eric Genius, at the University of Florida, with the Jacksonville Masterworks Chorale, and with the UNF Chorale, and have spent multiple summers with the faculty orchestra at the Tennessee Valley Music Festival. Finally, I am a substitute member of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra as schedule allows.

Summer Performances

During the summer, as a Tennessee Valley Music Festival faculty member, I play a string quartet recital in addition to my teaching responsibilities. In 2010, my string quartet members were featured soloists with the top student orchestra on a work by Chicago composer Daniel Pesca, who was in attendance and coached us through his work. I have also performed at the Prelude Strings Camp and on the Saint Augustine Chamber Music Festival in the last two years.

Performances and Master Classes at Universities

Finally, I have given performances and master classes at many universities:

- Master class and performance at Vanderbilt University, one of the finest music schools in the South
- Performance at Northwestern University, one of the premier music programs in the nation
- Performance and master class at South Dakota State University
- Performance at Florida State University
- Master class and performance at Mercer University, home of the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings
- Master class and performance at Ball State University, whose music school has 500+ majors and offers graduate degrees in music
- Performance at St. Thomas University in Minnesota
- Performance at Minnesota State University, Mankato
- Performances at the University of Alabama at Huntsville
- Performance at the University of Florida
- Performance at the University of Cape Town, South Africa
- Performance at Nelson Mandela Municipality University, South Africa

Summary

As demonstrated above, I have been highly active and successful in many different areas of scholarly activity since earning the doctorate from Northwestern, but even more so as my reputation continues to grow as a respected pedagogue and performer. I have been invited to play with highly esteemed artists and my name has grown in many circles leading to my invitation to give classes at the Meadowmount School of Music, one of the most internationally well-respected summer festivals for strings. I have performed all over the world, presented at the most prestigious conferences, and had my articles published in the most highly respected string magazines. My playing on radio broadcasts and recording projects has been heard throughout the U.S. and abroad. Combined with my scholarly activities, this has enhanced my profile as a cellist and pedagogue.