

FRIDAY FANFARE - FEBRUARY 13, 2026

# NEWSLETTER

**MTSU***School  
of Music*

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dr. Jennifer Snodgrass, Director - [jennifer.snodgrass@mtsu.edu](mailto:jennifer.snodgrass@mtsu.edu)



For most of us, there are moments in life when time seems to stand still. For our students, it could be when they first received the admission letter from the School of Music. It may have been a performance that stirred something deep enough to say, this is what I want to do for the rest of my life. For some, it was the decision to major in music. For others, it was the commitment to be part of an ensemble community they simply love as a non-major.

One of those defining moments for me happened exactly one year ago this week: my interview at MTSU. Over two days, I had the privilege of meeting with faculty and students, sharing my leadership philosophy, and presenting my vision for the School of Music. I was asked thoughtful, challenging questions. I listened carefully. I observed. I connected. I wanted to be a part of this. Saying "yes" to this community was easy. But as we all know, an easy yes does not mean every day is simple or perfectly clear. What it does mean is that you recognize you are exactly where you are meant to be. One year later, I remain deeply grateful and energized to champion the extraordinary work of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

It's important to pause and practice that gratitude in this busy time. Thank the person who took you to lunch. Thank the professor who helped you understand something more clearly. Thank those who invest in this School of Music. Thank family and friends who support your path. Gratitude builds relationships and reminds us that none of us does this work alone.

As we move forward together this semester, I invite each of you, students, faculty, parents, and alumni to reflect on your own defining moments. What brought you to music? What brought you to MTSU? And how will you be a part of the next chapter?

This Monday, we welcome over 60 prospective students to our first ever Music Monday for a full immersive experience. I want these students to hear the amazing music and teaching that are in the halls of Saunders and Wright, but I also want them to see the community we are building. Let's continue building that community rooted in authenticity, communication, true musicianship and gratitude.



# FEATURED FACULTY: MEI HAN, CENTER FOR CHINESE MUSIC AND CULTURE

Dr. Mei Han holds a PhD in ethnomusicology from the University of British Columbia and MA degrees from UBC and the Chinese National Academy of Arts in Beijing. She is founding Director of MTSU's Center for Chinese Music and Culture. An internationally recognized zheng artist and scholar, Han creates contemporary works grounded in Chinese tradition while expanding the instrument's expressive range. She has contributed to major Grove dictionaries and is cited by Bruno Nettl as a model performer-scholar. Han has toured, recorded eight albums, earned Juno nominations, and appeared with leading orchestras in chamber music and improvisation.



MTSU CENTER FOR CHINESE MUSIC AND CULTURE

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Concert



### FEATURING YAZHI GUO

A world-leading performer of Chinese wind instruments and a member of the Silk Road Ensemble



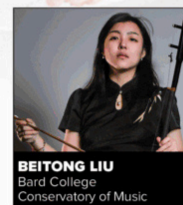
HAIGONG DENG  
Florida State University



YUXIN MEI  
University of North Texas



JINGYI ZHAN  
Shaanxi Normal University



BEIFONG LIU  
Bard College  
Conservatory of Music

**Saturday, March 21 • 7:30 p.m.**

Hinton Music Hall, Wright Music Building, MTSU

With **MTSU Jazz Faculty**, **MTSU Chinese Music Ensemble** and **alumni**, and **Middle Tennessee Community Zheng Ensemble**

Led by **Mei Han**, Director, Center for Chinese Music and Culture

Presented by MTSU International Affairs, MTSU School of Music, MTSU Center for Chinese Music and Culture, and the Distinguished Lecture Fund



Center for Chinese Music and Culture

MIDDLE TENNESSEE  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

MIDDLE TENNESSEE  
STATE UNIVERSITY  
Office of International Affairs

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I AM *true*BLUE.



MUSIC.MTSU.EDU

## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Based on votes by the School of Music Faculty and Staff, we are pleased to share that the following students have been selected to move forward as the School of Music's nominees for the CLA Outstanding Student Award, CONGRATULATIONS! These students represent the very best of our community through their musicianship, scholarship, leadership, and character.



Jocelyn Bullock (undergraduate)



John "Cameron" Wilson (graduate)

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T  
S  
U



## JAZZ Ensemble 1

Featuring Selections From:

Thad Jones, Bob Mintzer, Duke Ellington and Daniel Kuk

Thursday, February 19th 8:00 pm

Hinton Hall

Free Admission

Jazz Studies  
MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Romances Around the World

Senior Recital  
Jonathan Oldham

February 27, 2026  
Friday at 5:00pm  
Hinton Hall

With Pianist:  
Gyuhee Kim





## FACULTY NEWS

Here are two upcoming Black History Month events featuring MTSU School of Music Faculty Member **Dr. Cedric Dent**, whose work continues to illuminate the deep and meaningful connections between gospel, jazz, and community. These events invite us to listen deeply, reflect thoughtfully, and celebrate a tradition that continues to shape American music.

### February 20, 2026 | Nashville, TN

Dr. Dent will present a pre-concert lecture, "The Intersection of Black Gospel Music and Jazz," as part of a special Black History Month Tribute at the Nashville Jazz Workshop.

### February 27, 2026 | Houston, TX

As Artist and Arranger in Residence, Dr. Dent will be in concert with the Jason Max Ferdinand Singers at Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church as part of their Black History Month Concert Series.




AMERICA'S MUSIC:  
A BLACK HISTORY MONTH JAZZ RETROSPECTIVE

**Hamilton Hardin**  
**THE BLACK GOSPEL TRADITION**

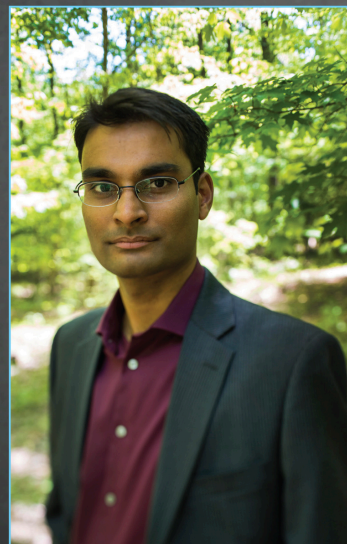
**7:30 PM**  
**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>**

WITH A PRE-CONCERT LECTURE  
FROM DR. CEDRIC DENT AT 7 PM

📍 1012 Buchanan St.



## MTSU KEYBOARD ARTIST SERIES



### Arunesh Nadgir Piano

Friday, Feb. 13, 7 p.m.  
Hinton Music Hall

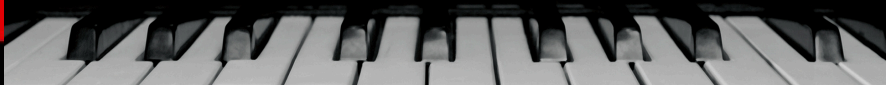
Free and open to the public

Performing works by Dvořák,  
Scriabin, Chopin, and Beethoven

[music.mtsu.edu/keyboardseries](http://music.mtsu.edu/keyboardseries)



STEINWAY PIANO GALLERY  
NASHVILLE



## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHT

We're proud to recognize MTSU School of Music alumna **Amanda Holla** (BM in Vocal Music Education; MM in Music Education), who has been named a 2025–2026 Teacher of the Year for the Clarksville-Montgomery County School District.

For 14 years, Ms. Holla has nurtured curiosity, confidence, and a lifelong love of music in young learners at Northeast Elementary School. Her dedication reminds us that great teaching shapes not only musicians, but people.

Congratulations, Amanda. Your work reflects the very best of our community, and we're grateful for the example you continue to set.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, February 16 – Drake Wallace Memorial Concert, 8:00pm (WMB 174)

Thursday, February 19 – Jazz Ensemble I Concert, 8:00 pm (WMB 174)

Friday, February 20 – CNAfME Event, 3:00 pm (SFA 117)

Friday, February 20 – TVW Concert, 7:00 pm (WMB 174)

Saturday, February 21 – Nashville Taiko, 5:00 pm (WMB 174)

Sunday, February 22 – Smith and Nadgir Faculty Recital, 3:00 pm (WMB 174)

**MTSU**  
*School of Music*

The FRIDAY FANFARE is a weekly newsletter of the MTSU School of Music edited by Dr. Chris Combest - [chris.combest@mtsu.edu](mailto:chris.combest@mtsu.edu)

Want to see your event, faculty, student news featured? Submit it to the [Director's Advisory Box](#)

Share your Alumni news at <https://forms.office.com/r/8Eu72excj6>

To learn more about our programs and events at the School of Music, please visit [music.mtsu.edu](http://music.mtsu.edu).