

Music, Theatre and Dance students, alumni honored at 18th annual MaTiDa Awards

The Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance recently honored some of its top student performers and distinguished alumni during the **18th annual MaTiDa Awards**, which took place on April 18 in the Oakland Center Banquet Rooms. The “red-carpet” event included dinner and music performances, as well as award presentations recognizing exceptional service and performance by Music, Theatre and Dance students.

2017 MaTiDa Award honorees

Alumni and Community Members

Bibianne Yu

Distinguished Community Service Award

Bibianne Yu recently stepped down as director of Oakland University's Music Preparatory Division, a position in which she served for fourteen years. She has also been a lecturer of keyboard techniques and an applied piano instructor at Oakland. Bibianne obtained her Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Ottawa (Canada) and received a Master of Music degree in Piano Pedagogy at Oakland, where she was the recipient of the Distinguished Musicianship Award (1999), the Jennifer Scott Memorial Award in Piano Pedagogy (1999), the Joyce Adelson Memorial Award in Piano Ensemble (2000), and an Oakland University Administrative Professional Award (2012). She is an active adjudicator, soloist and chamber musician, and has presented many workshop and master classes to piano teachers' organizations.

Cheryl Ogonowski

Alumni Achievement in Music

Cheryl Ogonowski earned her master's degree in Music Education from Oakland University, and has taught music classes at all levels from Pre-K through college. She has held positions teaching band, vocal music, general music, beginning theory and performing experiences for children. Her most recent service is in the Rochester Community Schools, teaching K-5 general music while also serving as the district's Music Program Coordinator. Her passion for sharing with colleagues has motivated her to serve as a Cooperating Teacher for many OU students, provide presentations at a variety of conferences and workshops, publish research in the Michigan Music Educator publication, open her classroom to educators from Hong Kong, New Zealand, China, Greece and Poland. She continues to seek new ways to enable students to grow through musical experiences in the classroom, and embraces opportunities to share with them in the process.

Carol Halsted

Alumni Achievement in Theatre

Carol Halsted was Director of Dance at the Detroit Opera House and retired Professor of Dance and Chair of the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan. Dr. Halsted received her Doctorate from Wayne State University and had been on faculty at Oakland for 31 years. She was President of the American College Dance Festival Association, Michigan Dance Teacher of the Year, Editor of the Detroit Dance News, grant reviewer for the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural Affairs, recipient of the Oakland University Faculty Recognition Award, the Wayne State Alumni Arts Achievement Award, Michigan Dance Council Lifetime Achievement Award, American College Dance Festival Award for Outstanding Service and founding Board Member of the Eisenhower Dance Ensemble. The Carol Halsted Dance Photography Collection has toured various museums around the country including the Detroit Institute of Arts, The Akron Museum and the St. Petersburg Museum of Art. Since 2002, she was Director of Dance at the Detroit Opera House and in this position was responsible for planning major dance seasons, as well as community outreach programs (i.e. the Ailey Revelations Project), special event: Nutcracker activities, master classes, dance film series and pre and post-concert talks.

Kenneth Jones

Alumni Achievement in Theatre

Kenneth Jones is a playwright, librettist and lyricist. His play *Alabama Story* was a 2016 nominee for the Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award and a 2014 finalist in the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference. It had its world premiere by Pioneer Theatre Company in Salt Lake City in 2015, and by spring 2018 will have been seen in at least ten cities around the country. His play *Two Henrys*, a semi-finalist in the O'Neill NPC, was seen in Pioneer's 2016 Play-By-Play series. A revised version played 12-performance developmental production at the Co-Op of Pacific Resident Theatre in Venice, CA. A further revision had a February 2017



A total of 31 students, alumni and community members were honored during the annual MaTiDa Awards.

called *Circa 1976*, was inspired by the Oakland County Child Murders of 1976-77. His musicals include *It Happened One Christmas*, co-conceived with Karen Azenberg (Pioneer Theatre 2015); the satiric Christmas revue *Naughty/Nice*, co-conceived with composer Gerald Stockstill (published by stagerights.com); and *Voice of the City*, with composer Elaine Chelton (developed by O -Broadway's York Theatre Company and Ohio's Human Race Theatre Company). In a past life, he was an arts writer at the Detroit News (1989-1998), including four seasons as chief theater critic/reporter. His byline of "John Kennet" appeared in The Oakland Press for more than 13 years. In 1998, he moved to New York City, where he worked for 15 years as a reporter and editor for Playbill.com while also pursuing dramatic writing opportunities. He is now a full-time dramatist. He was raised in Southfield and Beverly Hills, MI, graduating from Groves High School and later Oakland University's College of Arts and Sciences with a bachelor's degree in communication. His plays have been produced or developed by O -Broadway's TACT/The Actors Company Theatre, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Peninsula Players, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre, Clarence Brown Theatre and other companies. He is a member of the Dramatists Guild. He writes about his own plays and advocates for other playwrights, new plays and theatre makers at his website ByKennethJones.com. He is indebted to retired professor-director Yolanda Fleischer, his OU theater history teacher, who helped light the spark and raise the curtain on a career.

Student Honorees

John Andersen

Outstanding student in Chamber Music

Colin Holstein

Outstanding student in Chamber Music

Ian Lester

Outstanding Student in Chamber Music

Outstanding Student in Composition

Brandon Tibault

Outstanding Student in Chamber Music



Brian Baylor

Pat and Mercedes Nicosia Meadow Brook Estate Award

Timothy A. Brown

Outstanding Student Service Award: Music



Becky Ciccone
Maggie Allesee Choreography Award



Joey Fontana
Outstanding Student Service Award: Theatre



Halla Hillborn
Outstanding Student in Instrumental Music



Gabriel Jamison
Gittlen Achievement Award in Acting



Jessica Julian
Outstanding Student in Instrumental Music



Karen Li
Outstanding Undergraduate Student in Piano Performance



Kelsey Millerschinn
Outstanding Student in Music Education



Noelle Millis
Distinguished Dance Student

Alexis Moore
Outstanding Student Service Award: Dance



Rachel Pawson
Outstanding Dance Performance



Alyssa Primeau
Distinguished Musicianship Award



Katie Reid

Outstanding Dance Performance



Stefanie Sambrano
Gittlen Achievement Award in Musical Theatre



Robert Schneeweis
Outstanding Graduate Student in Piano Performance



Zollie Schut
Outstanding Student in Jazz

Jared Seymour
Outstanding Student in Music Education

Krystal Smoger
Gittlen Achievement Award in Theatre Design and Technology



Jessica Stasik



Emily Stoddard
Gittlen Theatre Award



Jacob Surzyn
Outstanding Student in Voice Performance



Ian Turnwald

Gittlen Achievement Award in Musical Theatre

This year's MaTilDa Awards were sponsored by the Oakland University Alumni Association and Oakland University Credit Union. Learn more about Music, Theatre and Dance programs at oakland.edu/mtd.