

# SPOTLIGHT ON COFAC



College of Fine Arts & Communication  
University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point



## STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS & AWARDS

Distinguished. Humble. Accomplished. Centered. Pointers.

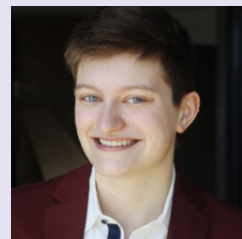


**Levi Ballenger** ('24) and **Cayli Ballenger** ('23) are UWSP's 2024 [Downbeat Student Music Award](#) winners! Both were chosen in this international competition by world-class adjudicators in the Blues/Pop/Rock Soloist Outstanding Performance category.



### 2024 MELVIN R. LAIRD EXCEPTIONAL ARTIST AWARD

The 2024 recipient of the Melvin R. Laird Exceptional Artist Award is **Arista Deffer**. Arista graduated in Spring '24 with a BFA Musical Theatre and BA Dance double major. Arista is excited to move to New York City this summer and to continue her work as a NYC-based artist. [Learn More](#)



**Jaden Richards, Zak Palmer** ('23), and **Irene Wilson** were accepted by the directors from a national pool of applicants to attend the Lyric Academy in Vicenza, Italy and study and perform there this summer. Learn more about the Lyric Academy [here](#).

The 2023 "Dial 'M' for Moore Menotti" Opera Workshop production has received multiple accolades at a national level!

- **2nd Place (tie)** [National Opera Association](#)
- **2024 National Finalist** in the Smaller College/ University Division of for The American Prize [ERNST BACON MEMORIAL AWARD](#) for PERFORMANCE OF AMERICAN MUSIC
- **2024 National Finalist** in the College/ University Division for The American Prize in [Opera Performance](#)

**Congratulations to Professor Matthew Markham, Professor Mathew Buchman, and the cast and crew!**



The **Iris Window** is new addition to the UWSP campus! Recent graduate, **April Greider** ('24 Graphic Design), created the design and worked with vendors throughout the entire process of the installation. The artwork is a direct print on translucent material with laminate applied over printed graphics. 10 graphics at 42" x 84" were installed over one day. You can find this gorgeous new display in the Dreyfus University Center.



## SUNY NEW PALTZ UNDERGRADUATE ART HISTORY SYMPOSIUM



### Art History Students' SUNY Presentations

Current students **Kyle Arndt** and **Jarita Bavido** both presented research during this spring's SUNY New Paltz Art History Symposium. Kyle's research on an influential Chinese painting manual was titled "Katshshika Hokusai and the Mustard Seed Manual of Painting." Jarita presented "A Picturesque Falsehood: Theodore Woes and San Francisco's Chinatown." They were among more than 150 students who presented during the 4 day symposium. Learn more about all the student symposium presentations [here](#).



**WWSP Trivia** celebrated 54 years this April! Thank you to the teams and sponsors for making this year another success.

### The NFAC has been busy this summer!

[Point Music Camp](#) welcomed high school students in June for an intensive week of music.

[Edna Carlsen Gallery Exhibit](#) "At Risk, Collections of the Kohler Foundation" is on exhibit through September 15.

[Summer Dance Intensive](#) more than 60 high school dancers will join us in July to study with our dance faculty.

[American Suzuki Institute](#) Suzuki students from across the US will be on campus starting July 15.

[UWSP Orientation](#) our building has been host to incoming students and their families this summer as they begin their UWSP journey.

**100% placement!!**  
**Music Education**

For more than a decade, our Music Education students have all been hired before graduation!



## 2024-25 THEATRE & DANCE SEASON

We invite you to join us for our exciting season of theatre and dance performances. A number of our shows this season will also be traveling to our satellite campuses in Marshfield and Wausau.

**Eleven Weeks of Nuclear Summer** September 19-22, 2024

**Side by Side by Sondheim** October 4-6, 10-12, 18-20, 2024

**The Mousetrap** November 15-17, 21-23, 2024

**Afterimages 2024** December 5-8, 2024

**A Cry of Players** February 6-9, 2025

**The Pirates of Penzance** February 28-March 2; March 6-8, 2025

**Danstage 2025** April 11-13, 2025

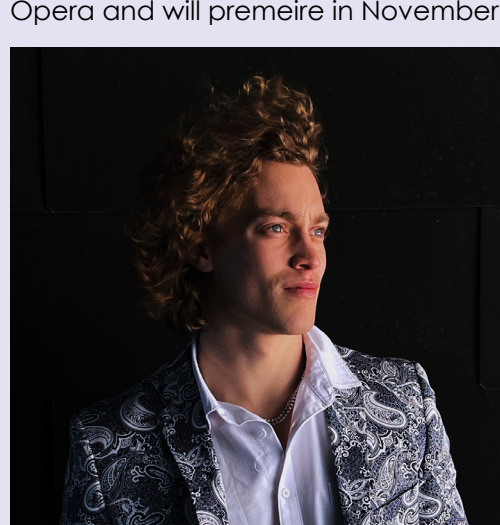
**Love's Labor's Won** May 2-4, 8-10, 2025

## ALUMNI HIGHLIGHTS



COFAC alumni **Max Cooke** (General Manager and Operations Manager of Liquid in Madison, WI), **Stephon Kiba Freeman** (Professional Artist), **Emily Goretski** (Director of Presenting at Overture Center for the Arts), **Karalyn Niemeyer** (Interior Designer), and **Nicholas Reising** (VP of Development with Special Olympics of WI) recently came to campus to speak about their careers in Creative Arts with Arts Management students in Jim O'Connell's class.

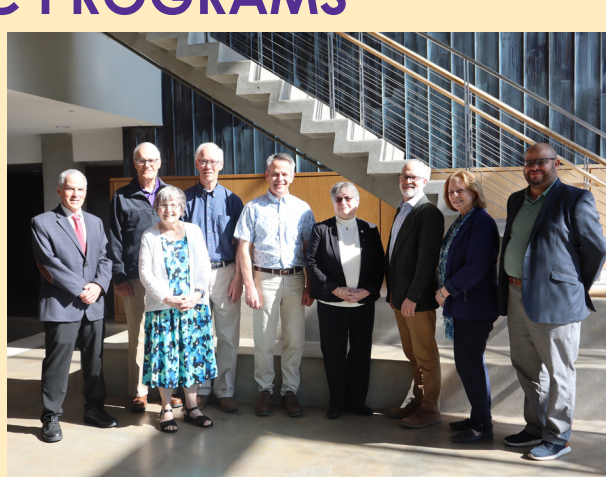
Alumnus **Chandler Benn**, currently a graduate student at Indiana University, was cast in an opera production last fall (while he was still finishing his senior year at UWSP). In addition, he was recently cast in the title role of Joe Kavalier in ["The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay"](#) by composer Mason Bates - this world premiere performance is in collaboration with The Metropolitan Opera and will premiere in November.



## GIFT TO MUSIC PROGRAMS

The **Copernicus Cultural Foundation** of Stevens Point, Wis. recently added to their gifts to enhance music programs in the COFAC. The \$130,000 gift, from the foundation funded by notable Stevens Point businessman Edmund Bukolt, will benefit both the Aber Suzuki Center and Department of Music.

\$80,000 of the gift has been earmarked for Suzuki programs to support instrument repair, including piano repair, and the purchase of new instruments as well as bringing in guest artists. The remaining \$50,000 will enhance the foundation's existing music scholarship endowment.



Thank you to members of the Pointer Family for helping to make the Day of Giving a great success! While D.O.G. has ended, you can still make a gift to support COFAC. [Give Now](#)



We have so many COFAC success stories as well as upcoming events to share with you - follow us on social media!



COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS & COMMUNICATION

1800 Portage Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481

[cofac@uwsp.edu](mailto:cofac@uwsp.edu)