

Matthew Forte, Conductor, Educator

Profile

Director of Orchestras at the University of New Mexico, conductor at Sitka Fine Arts Camp, and education faculty at the Aspen Music Festival and School. Graduate of Michigan State University (DMA, MM), where I was a Rasmussen Fellow, a University Distinguished Teacher, and Music Director of the Michigan State University Concert Orchestra and the Hartt School (BM), summa cum laude, Belle K Ribicoff Prize.

Previous teaching experience includes as Director of Orchestral Studies and Assistant Professor of Music History at the University of Toledo, conductor of the Toledo Symphony Youth Orchestras and the Greater Toledo International Youth Orchestra, conducting faculty at Grand Valley State University, and graduate fellow positions at Michigan State University. Also a composer, my works have recently been premiered by organizations including the Glass City Singers, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble, Michigan State University, and the Hartt School.

Education

Michigan State University (2012-2017)

- D.M.A., Orchestral Conducting (2017) *Rasmussen Fellow, MSU Distinguished Teaching Citation*
- M.M., Orchestral Conducting (2014)

The Hartt School of the University of Hartford (2007-2012)

- B.M., Music History (2011), *summa cum laude, Belle K. Ribicoff Prize*
- Graduate Professional Diploma, Orchestral Conducting (2012)

Professional Conducting Engagements

University of New Mexico Orchestras (Fall 2020-)

- Director of Orchestral Studies

Sitka Fine Arts Camp (Summer 2020-)

- Conductor

Aspen Music Festival and School (Summer 2018-)

- Frequent collaborator and conductor with the AMFS Department of Education.

University of Toledo Symphony Orchestra (Fall 2017-Spring 2020)

- Music Director

Toledo Symphony Youth Orchestras (Fall 2018-Spring 2020)

- Conductor, Symphonic and Philharmonic Orchestras

Greater Toledo International Youth Orchestra (Spring 2018-Spring 2020)

- Music Director, Chamber Orchestra

Toledo Symphony Orchestra (Summer 2019)

- Concert of new works for chamber orchestra with orchestra members. Sponsored by the Toledo Symphony and the Toledo Museum of Art.

University of Toledo Opera Theatre (Spring 2018)

- Music Director, *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Britten)

St. Louis Symphony (Fall 2016-Fall 2018)

- Cover conductor. Recent concerts with Maestros Hannu Lintu and Jun Märkl in October of 2016 and November of 2017, respectively; performances of *Petruška* (1947), Dvorak's Cello Concerto, and Lutoslawski's *Chain 3*, De Falla's *El Amor Brujo*, Ravel's *Alborada del Gracioso* and *Bolero*, Sarasate's *Carmen Fantasy*, and Chausson's *Poème*.

Michigan State University Concert Orchestra (2012-2017)

- As the Music Director of this ensemble, I supervised all aspects of the ensemble's activity; I run auditions for the group, program all repertoire, grade students, develop a comprehensive syllabus, run rehearsals, assist in the scheduling of venues and the transportation of equipment, supervise the orchestra's student advisory board, and- as the orchestra functions as both a class and an extracurricular activity- interact with the Department of Student Life at the university-wide level.

Michigan State University Symphony (2012-2017)

- Performances of *Fountains of Rome*, *La Valse*, *Tzigane*, Shostakovich's 1st Cello Concerto, Schwantner's Concerto for Percussion, among other works

American Academy of Conducting at Aspen Orchestra (2014-2015)

- Weekly concerts with the Academy Orchestra, including Beethoven's Symphony no. 3, Tchaikovsky's Symphony no. 5, Mahler's Symphony no. 1, Ravel's Suite no. 2 from *Daphnis et Chloe*, Stravinsky's *Jeux de Cartes*, finale scene from *Nozze de Figaro*, daily readings of standard literature and premieres of new works.

Aspen Festival Orchestra (2014-2015)

- Repertoire read includes Stravinsky's *Petruška*, Strauss's *Ein Alpensinfonie*, among others

Aspen Chamber Symphony (2014-2015)

- Repertoire read includes Gershwin's *Catfish Row Suite* from *Porgy and Bess*, and Brahms' *Haydn Variations*, among others

American Brass Quintet (July 2015)

- The second ever performance of Nina Young's *Fata Morgana* for brass ensemble and percussion, as part of the Aspen Festival's Chamber Music Recital Series, with the American Brass Quintet, the Rendezvous Brass Quintet, and faculty and festival fellowship percussionists.

Aspen Opera Theatre (July 2014)

- Assistant Conductor, *Eugene Onegin*. Selected competitively, by audition, from a group of twelve academy fellowship conductors, I conducted blocking and choreography rehearsals during the two week rehearsal process, conducted backstage choruses during four performances of the work, and assisted the maestro in rehearsing the orchestra and cast from the hall.

MSU Opera Theatre (2012-2015)

- Music Director- Weill's *Mahagonny Songspiel* (Fall 2012). Upon entering MSU to begin my master's degree, I was offered the music directorship of MSU Opera Theatre's fall 2012 production, which was a revue of Weill works, including a complete performance of his *Mahagonny Songspiel*. The revue was structured around a libretto that was partially improvisatory, devised for this production, and which involved acting from the conductor and the pit musicians- all onstage- as well as the members of the cast.
- Assistant Conductor, *La Bohème*, Nelson's *A Room with a View* (Spring 2014, Fall 2015, respectively)

Hartford Symphony (May 2012)

- Guest conductor for "Behind the Podium" conducting masterclass. Along with two other local conductors, I was invited to conduct the Hartford Symphony in public readings of Mozart's Symphony no. 40 and Tchaikovsky's Symphony no. 6 and was coached by Hartford Symphony Music Director Carolyn Kuan and Hartt School Director of Orchestral Studies, and former music director of the HSO, Edward Cumming.

The Hartt School Foot in the Door Ensemble (2011-2012)

- Performances of Schwantner's *Music of Amber* and many premieres of new works, including a particularly rewarding collaboration with Hartt's Dance Division: a set of premieres of works for small ensemble, dancers, and mixed media/electronics

The Hartt Orchestra (2010-2012)

- Performances of Stravinsky's *Greeting Prelude* and Yoshimatsu's *Cyberbird Concerto*, readings of Saint-Saëns' Symphony no. 3, Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture*, Beethoven's Symphony no. 9, and Strauss' *Also Sprach Zarathustra*

The Hartt Wind Ensemble (2011)

- Performance of Turrin's *Lullaby for Noah*

The Hartt Symphony Band (2010-2012)

- Performances of Schuman's *George Washington Bridge* and Nelson's *Passacaglia*

Greater Hartford Youth Wind Ensemble (2009-2012)

- Performances of Grainger's *Lincolnshire Posy*, Persichetti's *Divertimento*, Mackey's *Hymn to a Blue Hour*, Newman's *....as the scent of spring rain*, and Tull's *Sketches on a Tudor Psalm*

The Hartt School Collegium Musicum (2009)

- Performance of Bach's Cantata, BWV 202, *Weichet nur, betrübte Schatten*

Guest Conducting/Clinics

University of Toledo Honor Orchestra (Fall 2019)

- Honor Orchestra Host

Maumee High School, Maumee, Ohio (Fall 2018-present)

- Frequent guest clinician/conductor

Whitmer High School, Toledo, Ohio (Fall 2018-present)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Bedford High School, Temperance, Michigan (Fall 2017-present)

- Frequent guest clinician/conductor

Sylvania Southview High School, Sylvania, Ohio (Fall 2017-present)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Toledo School of the Arts, Toledo, Ohio (Fall 2017-present)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Sylvania Northview High School, Sylvania, Ohio (Spring 2017-present)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Bowling Green High School, Bowling Green, Ohio (Fall 2018)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Start High School, Toledo, Ohio (Fall 2018)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Waite High School, Toledo, Ohio (Fall 2017, 2018)

- Guest clinician/conductor

Connecticut Music Educators Association (Spring 2018)

- Conductor, Middle School Eastern Regional Honor Band

Bethel College (KS) (Spring 2018)

- Guest conductor, Bethel College Honor Orchestra

Aspen All Valley Honor Band (Spring 2015, 2016, 2018, 2020)

- In the course of a three day residency, I traveled to local middle schools throughout the Colorado Roaring Fork Valley area, coaching and conducting large ensembles at each school, and coaching chamber groups and individual young musicians- both on repertoire from throughout the academic year, and in preparation for the All Valley Honor Band Concert on the last day of the residency. The residency culminated in a day long rehearsal process and final concert at the Aspen Festival's Harris Hall.

Teaching Experience

University of New Mexico (2020-)

- Director of Orchestral Studies

The University of Toledo (2017-2018)

- Director of Orchestral Studies, Assistant Professor of Music History

Michigan State University (2012-2017)

- Graduate Assistant, Doctoral Fellow, private instructor in conducting

Aspen Music Festival (Summer 2015-present)

- Conducting lessons to area music educators through the festival's Department of Education

Aspen PALS Program (Summer 2015)

- I have cultivated a special relationship with the Department of Education at the Aspen Music Festival, and, in particular, their program, PALS, which- by way of lessons and free concerts- introduces local kids, aged 6-18, to classical music. In the 2015 season, I was asked frequently, and often at short notice, to give introductory remarks to the kids and their parents prior to orchestral concerts throughout the summer. Initially my audiences comprised of, on average, ten people, but over the course of the summer, grew to often thirty or more. It was great fun, and a learning experience for all involved- myself included- and remains one of my fondest memories of the festival.

Grand Valley State University (Fall 2014)

- Faculty in conducting: I was asked, on short notice, to teach beginning conducting courses at Grand Valley State University during the 2014-2015 academic year, introducing over forty students to conducting in a large classroom setting.

The Hartt School (2010-2012)

- Teaching assistant in conducting, score reading. In this capacity, I both tutored students privately in score reading and taught in classroom settings.

Compositional Activities

Unitarian Church of Greater Lansing (2019)

- Premiere of "The Road Goes Ever On", based on poetry of Tolkien, in March of 2019.

Glass City Singers (2018)

- Premiere of "The Smile", based on poetry of William Blake, in December of 2018.

The Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble (2015)

- Premieres of two short commissioned works; one for small ensemble (five players) and the other for string duet.

Musique 21, Michigan State University (2015)

- Premiere of a set of interludes, for saxophone and harp, for a theatrical performance- entitled "Love Is"- featuring works by prominent living Latin American composers as part of Michigan State University's celebration of contemporary Latin American music, "Latin IS America"

"Premieres Concerts", Department of Composition, Michigan State University (2013-2014)

- Premieres of works both for solo piano and for string quartet

American Choral Directors Association, Hartt School Chapter (2012)

- Winner of annual choral composition contest

Professional/Academic Affiliations

National Association for Music Education (Fall 2018-)

- Member

Ohio Music Education Association (Fall 2018-Spring 2020)

- Member

Academic Activities/Presentations

University of Toledo Festival of New Music (March 2019)

- Festival co-coordinator

Sarah Davis Beuchner Lecture (February 2019)

- Event Moderator

Robert Spano – University of Toledo Roundtable (December 2018)

- Event organizer and discussion moderator

**University of Toledo Roger Ray Institute for the Humanities Symposium:
Memories of World War I (November 2018)**

- Symposium Presenter

Academic Honors

MSU Distinguished Teaching Citation (2017)

- Awarded to anywhere from 2-6 graduate students, campus-wide, in recognition of both outstanding teaching, and of a commitment to bettering the MSU community. Presented in recognition of my work in developing the MSU Concert Orchestra.

Rasmussen Doctoral Fellowship, Michigan State University (2014)

- Presented to less than ten graduate students across the university, in recognition of service to the university community. This honor was presented to me after the completion of my master's degree in recognition of my development of the Michigan State University Concert Orchestra, in order to support my continued studies at MSU, and to encourage the continued growth of the orchestra.

Belle K. Ribicoff Prize, University of Hartford (2011)

- Presented to one undergraduate student upon graduation, in celebration of academic achievement and of creative and intellectual contributions to the university as a whole. This honor was in recognition of my academic work and of a series of conducting recitals that I presented throughout my undergraduate years; works performed included Adam's *Shaker Loops*, Copland's *Appalachian Spring*, Walton's *Facade*, Higdon's *wissahickon PoeTrees*, Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto*, and Stravinsky's *L'Histoire du Soldat*

Writings on Music

Liner Notes for NAXOS Label (2011)

- As the culmination of collaboration with composer William Bolcom, which began with a personal interview for a semester paper during the composer's residency at the Hartt School, I was asked by the composer to

author notes for a NAXOS release of his *Symphony for Band*, on the album *Angels in the Architecture*, released by the Middle Tennessee State University Wind Ensemble and Reed Thomas.

Writing Presented at College Band Director's National Conference (2010)

- Critical analysis of Bolcom's *Orpheé Serenade*, preceding a performance by Foot in the Door, the new music ensemble of the Hartt School

Instrumental and Vocal Performance Experience

Trumpet

American Academy of Conducting at Aspen Orchestra (2014-2015)

- Assistant principal trumpet; performances of Beethoven Symphonies no. 2, 3, Brahms Symphonies no. 2, 4, Tchaikovsky Symphonies no. 5, 6, Mahler Symphonies no. 1, 5, Sibelius Symphonies no. 2, 6, Debussy's *La Mer*, Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe* and *Rhapsodie Espagnole*, Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, among many other works, both performed and read.

Aspen Festival Orchestra (2015)

- Section trumpet, Verdi's *Aida*

Michigan State University Symphony Orchestra (2016)

- Section trumpet, assisting the ensemble in a performance of Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*

Hartt School Symphony Band (2007-2010)

- Principal trumpet

Hartt School Wind Ensemble (2007-2010)

- Principal trumpet (2007) and section trumpet (2008-2010)

The Hartt Orchestra (2008)

- Section trumpet

Piano

Musique 21, the new music ensemble of Michigan State University (2014)

MSU Symphony (2014)

The Hartt Wind Ensemble (2009-2012)

- Heard on the ensemble's NAXOS release *Dragon Rhyme*, featuring the music of Yi, Higdon, and Turner

Foot in the Door, the new music ensemble of the Hartt School (2010-2012)

The Hartt Symphony Band (2008-2012)

The Hartt School Collegium Musicum (2009)

- Harpsichord in performances of the music of Purcell and Handel

Vocal (tenor)

The Hartt Chamber Choir (2009)

The Hartt Chorale (2008-2010)

- Performances of Brahms' *Ein Deutes Requiem*, Syzmanowski's *Stabat Mater* and Vaughan-Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, among other works

Press

Aspen Public Radio: “Festival Showcase”

<http://aspenpublicradio.org/post/festival-showcase-august-11-2015-feltsman-porter-forte#stream/o>

Lansing City Pulse: “Dark Triumph”

<http://lansingcitypulse.com/article-7996-dark-triumph.html>

MSU College of Music: “Conducting Student Embraces Leadership Roles”

<http://music.msu.edu/news/conducting-student-embraces-leadership-roles>

MSU College of Music: “MSU Honors Outstanding Work and Excellence”

<http://www.music.msu.edu/news/msu-founders-day-recognizes-college-of-music>

WKAR Radio: “Non-majors find outlet in Concert Orchestra”

<http://wkar.org/post/non-music-majors-find-outlet-msu-concert-orchestra#stream/o>