

# Teacher travels to play music, spread culture

BY MICHELLE MARTIN  
Staff Reporter

Professor of Music Gregory Jones said he rarely spends an entire year within the US borders.

Jones said he takes about two international trips a year for his musical pursuits and is living his dream.

"When I was [young], if someone had told me what kind of life I'd be living now I'd have said, 'Yeah right, I'd love to have that,'" Jones said.

Jones said he assumed he would start working after graduation like the rest of his family and that his attending college to study the trumpet was somewhat accidental.

"Lo and behold, one of my band directors got me hooked up with Florida State and the idea of going to college, which was actually very foreign to me," he said.

Jones said he graduated from Florida State University and obtained his master's from the University of North Texas and his doctorate from Eastman School of Music (N.Y.). He was hired at Truman in 1987.

In 1995, Jones received a six-month Fulbright Artist in Residence Award to teach and play the trumpet in Greece, he said. He said the experience of living in a foreign country was both wonderful and challenging.

"The things they do, the way they eat food [and] the way they live their lives are very different," he said. "For example, in Greece it was still a custom that you would sleep from two until five o'clock to take a nap."

Jones said he has been to Greece about 20 times and has played in

England, Sweden, France, Albania, Bulgaria, Russia, Japan, China, Thailand, Australia and Canada.

"I go to other countries, I work with their trumpet players, their brass players," he said. "I hang out with their professors, and we exchange ideas about music and we also exchange a lot of ideas about how we live."

Jones said his exposure to the unique cultures of the world has made him appreciate American life.

"I gained a bunch of understanding for what it means to be an American because you understand how America is the same and different from other places," he said. "The more you go out the more you realize that Americans have a really easy, luxurious life."

For instance, Jones said he noticed that students in countries, such as Albania, don't have the easy access to instruments and music that American students often don't think about.

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**Gregory Jones**  
Professor of Music

understand people's heart and music, you have to understand their lives."

Jones visited Albania for the second time this summer to perform in concerts, he said. He said he still

"It's really sad," he said. "It's something we take for granted over here, and you go over there and even the simplest little things they don't have."

Jones said he makes a point to historically and culturally understand a country when he visits someplace new.

"My favorite part is probably learning about how these people have come to where they are now," he said. "... If you want to

All eyes on

# Gregory Jones

"It's not just about music. It's about learning your place in the world."



Photos Submitted

Truman professor Gregory Jones plays his trumpet with a fellow trumpet player at a performance in Durrës, Albania. He said he usually takes two international trips a year.

found the country to be eye-opening.

Despite the language barriers between Jones and many of his foreign peers, playing music enables a profound connection to be formed, he said.

"I can't speak their language, and they can't speak English," he said. "... But then you can experience music together and it's a form of communication that's instantaneous, and it can be very deep."

Jones said he thinks music can open doors to other types of communication between conflicting cultures.

"I was talking about getting a group of musicians together from these countries in the Balkans," he said. "For instance, Serbia and Albania don't get along at all ... so I was thinking, put Serbia and Albania in the same musical group [to] promote understanding."

Members of the U.S. embassy in Kosovo have expressed interest in the idea, which Jones said could happen in the near future.

Jones also brings back new music and ideas from these various countries for his students to experience, he said.

"Right now I'm working on a recording of all the music I've been to from all of these places," he said. "We can share this music with a wider audience outside of Kirksville."

Jones said he plans on traveling more in the near future, such as a trip to England in May to teach a class on the British Invasion. He doesn't plan on stopping his travels anytime soon, he said.

"It's not just about music," he said. "It's about learning your place in the world."

# Indie film club seeks members, viewers

BY ZOE MARTIN  
Assistant Features Editor

Just call sophomore Drew Turner Dr. Frankenstein.

Turner is on the brink of bringing a new independent film club to life at the University.

"I have to do my Frankenstein act in the week or two before school to get the monster — the club — walking for the fall semester," Turner said.

The creation of this "monster" has been almost a year in the making, Turner said. He said he began brainstorming ways to bring more independent films to Kirksville last Thanksgiving Break after seeing "Lars and the Real Girl" with a friend at the Ragtag Cinema, an independent theater in Columbia, Mo.

"On the way back we talked about the Ragtag experience and atmosphere and wanted to start some discussions to see if we could get the ball rolling on a similar independent movie experience in Kirksville," Turner said.

Although Turner's original dreams to bring a theater similar to the Ragtag to Kirksville stalled because of the costly nature of the project (see the Feb. 14, 2008 issue of the Index), he said he now has modest plans to assimilate his ideas for an independent film organization into the University's existing movie group, the Filmmakers Club.

"I am talking with Kevin Haar, the secretary for the existing film club on campus," Turner said. "... [The club] actually shoots a film each semester, where my less hands-on plan is just have a large group of people who occasionally watch independent films together, so there is a core group of students right there."

Turner, who has worked at Downtown Cinema 8 for five years, said he hopes to attract students who are tired of Kirksville's limited movie options either to this hybrid organization or to a group — similar to a book club — in which the members could watch films in small groups and meet to discuss their impressions.

"I hope to bring those people out of their own dark living rooms and build a network," Turner said.

But beyond uniting existing indie film fans, Turner said he wants to cultivate an interest in other viewers.

"There are students out there too who may not be too adventurous about their movie choices," he said. "Hopefully we can turn them on to the non-Hollywood plot."

Turner currently oversees a Facebook group to promote the pending organization

and enable members to contact each other and share ideas.

Part of the process of bringing clubs like Turner's to life is applying for a charter with the University. The Center for Student Involvement regulates the formation of new groups on campus and supports the University's current 247 active organizations.

Amy Currier, program adviser for the Center for Student Involvement, said the CSI offers charters to as many as 20 new organizations each semester. She said a division of the CSI called Organizational Services is responsible for chartering.

"Until recently the charter process was overseen by a limited number of staff who had additional CSI responsibilities," Currier said. "... Now we have a group of five staff members — four students and one full time staff member — and are able to complete the charter process more efficiently."

Before a student can apply for one of the charters he or she must find at least six other full-time Truman students to join the organization, she said. The founder then meets with an Organizational Services member to discuss

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**Drew Turner**  
Sophomore

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