



Photo submitted by Jennifer Canfield

Senior Jenny Choo, left, accompanies junior Lucas Willsie, right, as he performs Weber's Clarinet Concerto No. 1 during a student recital last October in the Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall. All music majors are required to give a senior recital to showcase what they've learned during their time at Truman.

BY ALEX CARLSON
Staff Reporter

Senior Stephanie Koltookian trembled as she walked on the stage. The audience was full of faculty, students and family who watched her every move as she began playing her saxophone. Her future as a musician partially depended on her performance. When the recital was finished, she was overcome with relief. Her senior recital was complete.

The senior recital is a capstone performance for music majors, music department chair Jay Bulen said. Instead of a typical exam, the recital is their final test before graduating from Truman State. Students working toward a bachelor of arts in music general concentrations must complete a 30-minute recital while performance majors must complete a 50-minute recital to demonstrate the skill they have developed during their time as a music major, Bulen said.

Bulen mentors music students' progress as they prepare for their senior recitals. Bulen said the

amount of physical skill, creativity in music selection and stamina come together to make a performance that entails the skills learned since freshman year.

"The recitals are a way for students to perform professionally," Bulen said. "For music students, experiencing the full art of performing is what we really want them to show."

The senior recital is composed of five to six pieces of musical material. Bulen said the general template has a light opening followed by a heavier seven-minute piece. Next is a sonata piece, followed by a three-movement piece and a major sonata or concerto, lengthier and more intricate pieces with piano accompaniment that are between 10 and 20 minutes. Bulen said students typically choose a lighter, more exciting final piece, which he calls the crowd pleaser.

Koltookian finished her senior recital last semester. It con-

sisted of material she already had performed for her junior recital, along with a 10-minute solo and two new quartet pieces performed with other students in the saxophone studio, including seniors Chloe Bertschi, Steven Irving and Alex Buffa. Koltookia has practiced an hour each day.

Before performing her senior recital, Koltookian showed her progress to a music faculty jury for preliminary judgment. Her preliminary performance had a few problems, primarily nervousness, which the faculty helped her overcome.

"My studio professor helped me get over many of the problems and told me to imagine myself getting on stage and getting through a different piece each night," Koltookian said. "If you fall asleep thinking about it, you wake up knowing it more."

Senior Nick Faulkner said the physical element and the creative element both are important when

performing.

"Tone quality and creative flexibility are what you really need when performing a recital," Faulkner said. "They're different things, but since the recital takes everything you've learned in the music program, combining them is what I've been doing for a while now."

Given the length of the recitals, playing endurance is especially important, so students, such as Faulkner, work on building musical endurance long before their recitals.

Faulkner, who has played trumpet since 2001, is currently working to strengthen his endurance before his junior recital March 25 in Ophelia Parrish Performance Hall.

The junior recital is a 30-minute recital all performance majors are required to put on. It is used to chart music students' progress halfway through their college experience.

Faulkner's junior recital consists

of trumpet pieces he selected in November. Faulkner is a fan of Romantic and Neo-Romantic material, which influenced his pieces he chose to perform. The faculty jury reviewed Faulkner's selected material and then offered him commentary and suggestions.

Faulkner said the practice sessions were challenging, but he tuned them to his own preference. However, too much practice can make him weary.

"I find that when I practice for more than an hour, my mind begins to drift," Faulkner said. "Once I reach the hour, though, I check my flexibility and muscles. If I feel like I've pushed too hard, then I take the instrument apart and close shop."

Despite his junior recital being just a few weeks away, Faulkner already is thinking about his senior recital. He said his practice sessions will occur more frequently as the senior recital approaches, but will use the same techniques he's become used to.

Royal theater still entertains

Macon theater serves as cultural icon after 100 years of operation and renovations

BY MOLLY SKYLES
Opinions Editor

index.opinionseditor@gmail.com

On the corner of North Rubey and Vine streets in downtown Macon, Mo., is an unsuspecting, tall brick building. Passersby might not realize it, but this structure has been a hub for cultural and societal gatherings for more than 100 years.

Built during 1889, the Royal Theater has gone through various transformations before becoming the performance theater it is today. Merlyn Amidei, the Macon Historical Society Museum director and author of two books about Macon's history, said the theater, which then was called the Jobson Theater, originally was built as an opera house after an existing opera house burned down while under construction.

Amidei said that during its early years, the theater housed local businesses such as grocery and hardware stores and hosted most community events like high school graduations, beauty pageants and large church services because it was the largest venue in town. Traveling musical, acting and vaudeville groups performed at the theater and movies were shown, making it what Amidei called a "centerpiece in Northeast Missouri" for much of the early 20th century.

"The theater was tremendous because it brought people from all around together to allow country folk to see live performances and things they ordinarily could only see in the city," Amidei said.

Throughout the next 40 years, the theater underwent various name changes and renovations until it was finally called the Macon Theater and transformed into solely a movie theater during 1936.

The Macon Theater was one of two movie theaters in Macon at the time, and "it was everything" to the town, said Bernard Huffman, retired railroad engineer and former Macon Theater employee.

Huffman began working at the theater during 1944 at the age of 15. He started as a door boy tearing tickets before patrons entered the theater, and he made \$8 a week. At that time, Huffman said tickets sold for 10 cents for children younger than 12 and 20 cents for adults and popcorn was 5 cents.

A few years later, Huffman was promoted

to a projectionist position, making \$25 a week, which he said was a lot for a high school teenager during that time. During 1948, Huffman entered the military where he also acted as a movie projectionist periodically. Huffman said working at the movie theater was a great job for a teenager because it paid well and allowed him to see the big movies before anyone else.

"You couldn't find a single place to park in downtown Macon on Sundays when the new movies came out," Huffman said. "Most people didn't have television so the movies were it for entertainment. It was a much simpler time, and I got to be in the center of it."

Huffman said he has not been to the Royal Theater since before he left for service, but is curious of what it has become.

Amidei said it remained the Macon Theater until 1991, when owner Todd Davison bought the property and renamed it the Royal Theater. Davison renovated the theater's interior and exterior during the 1990s, and today it is home to the Maples Repertory Theater, the only professional theater group in Northeast Missouri.

Davison, who is the artistic director for the Maples Repertory Theater, said Maples Repertory has been performing at the Royal Theater since 2004, and they put on six big shows and three children's shows every season. The theater group is composed of actors and technicians from throughout the country, and all the sets and costumes are made in Macon.

Carousal Productions, a community theater group in Macon composed of local volunteers, also rents the Royal Theater to perform two shows a year.

While the Royal Theater no longer is the largest venue in Macon, Davison said it still is used for community and social events like beauty pageants and weddings, but its main role in the community has remained the same since 1889.

"It has been a cultural touch point for the area for many years," Davison said. "We think it's important for people to see things outside of their normal rural Missouri experiences. All different types of people are sitting next to you: Republicans or Democrats, or people with different religions or social economic backgrounds. Throughout time, people have come to the theater to learn about different types of people and situations, and it's important to experience things like that together as a society."

For more information regarding upcoming shows and ticketing at the Royal Theater, visit the Maples Repertory website at maplesrep.com.



Submitted photos

Above, the Royal Theater in Macon, Mo., during the 1940s. The building was constructed as an opera house during 1889. Below, the Royal Theater remains open after renovations during the 1990s. The venue, which once housed operas and plays, now is used for social events such as beauty pageants and weddings.

