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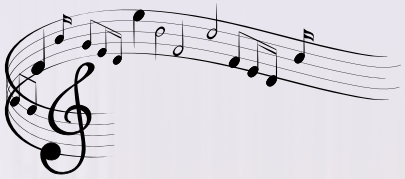
Douglas Bakenhus, D.M.A.
Director of Orchestral Studies
Professor of Bassoon

School of Creative & Performing Arts
(318) 357-5792 | bakenhusd@nsula.edu

To request more information, scan QR code above.

Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony website:

www.nnssla.org



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Northwestern State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, masters, specialists, and doctorate degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Northwestern State University.

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String/Orchestra Faculty

Douglas Bakenhus | bakenhusd@nsula.edu

Dr. Douglas Bakenhus is the music director and conductor of the Natchitoches-Northwestern Symphony at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, where he also teaches bassoon, aural skills, and conducting. His music degrees are from the University of Texas at Austin (DMA 2006, B.Music Ed.1983), Texas A&M University-Commerce (M.M. conducting 1985), and he has completed additional graduate courses in conducting and bassoon-performance at the University of Michigan. In addition, Dr. Bakenhus has been the music director of the Northeast Texas Symphony since 2002 and was the music director of the Austin Philharmonic from 2001-2004. He held positions as a college band director at Texas Lutheran University, and the University of Mississippi. His conducting teachers include Larry Rachleff, Gustav Meier, Carl St. Clair, and Gary W. Hill; and he studied bassoon with Hugh Cooper, Kristin Wolf Jenson, Robert Williams, and Sue Schrier. Throughout his teaching career, Dr. Bakenhus has remained active as a guest conductor and clinician with honor orchestras in Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. He recently made international conducting appearances with the Sinfonietta Bratislava in Slovakia, and the San Pedro Sula City Chamber Orchestra in Honduras. He has also performed abroad as a bassoonist with the NSU Faculty Woodwind Trio in Canada, Slovakia, England, and the Czech Republic. Furthermore, he regularly plays bassoon in local orchestras including the Shreveport Symphony, Longview Symphony, South Arkansas Symphony, and Texarkana Symphony. In addition, he has participated in the Tafelmusik Baroque Summer Institute in Toronto and the Twin Cities (Minneapolis, MN) baroque instrumental program on his baroque bassoon, and has made recent appearances in ensembles such as the Baroque Artists of Shreveport, the Austin Baroque Orchestra, Ars Lyrica of Houston, the Houston Bach Society, and the Mercury Baroque Ensemble of Houston.

Andrej Kurti | kurtia@nsula.ed

Internationally acclaimed violinist Andrej Kurti was born in Belgrade, Serbia, where he began his violin career in the studio of professor Djula Tesenji. He continued his studies in Moscow "Tchaikovsky" Conservatory in studios of professors Levon Ambartsumian and Zorya Schikmurzaeva. Kurti finished his graduate studies in the University of Georgia, where he received doctorate degree in violin performance.

He was a recipient of five first prizes in competitions in Yugoslavia, four first prizes in competitions in Georgia and Florida, and a finalist of the MTNA (Music Teacher National Association) Competition in 1998.

In 2000, Kurti became a recording artist for classical label Blue Griffin Recording, for which he later recorded Six Sonatas for Violin Solo by Eugene Ysaye, op.27. Classics Today and American Record Guide wrote..."his near-perfect intonation, assured technique (check out the Third Sonata's climactic double stops), and intelligent shaping of polyphony"..."Kurti is an excellent violinist and musician, very musical and stylish, and these are some of the better performances of these sonatas that I have heard...you couldn't go wrong if you had this disc as your only recording of these works".

In 2004, Kurti became a professor of violin at Northwestern State University of Louisiana. He appeared as a soloist with many symphony orchestras in the United States, Serbia, Montenegro, Italy, Greece, Russia and France. He also appeared as a chamber performer in Spain, France, Latvia, Canada, and South Korea.

In non-classical music world, Kurti performed and arranged on more than forty albums of popular and modern music, which he recorded for many different music labels in the United States.

Kurti has been invited to several international music festivals where he most often performed music written for solo violin. Most recently, Kurti performed Ysaye's op.27 in Road to Carnegie nation-wide recital series, culminating with his Carnegie Hall debut.

The Dear School of
CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS
CAPA

NSU's Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) is dedicated to creating a diverse, inclusive and equitable experience for all students, faculty and staff. CAPA will not tolerate racism or discrimination and is committed to creating a fair, empathetic, and just environment.

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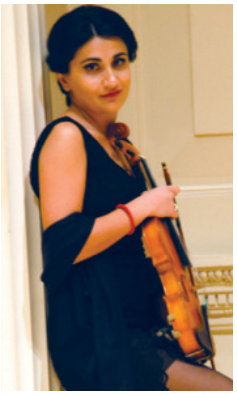
Sofiko Tchetchelashvili | sofiko@nsula.edu



Ms. Sofiko Tchetchelashvili was born in Tbilisi, Georgia, where she began her violin career in the studio of professor Alla Laperashvili. She continued her studies in Tbilisi State Conservatory in the studio of professor Ernst Arakelov, before completing her graduate studies in the studio of professor Rodam Jandieri.

In 2014, Ms. Tchetchelashvili accepted graduate assistantship at Baylor University, and two years later she completed another graduate degree in violin performance in the studio of Dr. Eka Gogichashvili.

Ms. Tchetchelashvili was a winner of four Georgian national violin competitions, as well as a recipient of two consecutive President's Awards.

Since 2016, Ms. Tchetchelashvili serves as an Adjunct professor of violin/viola at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, where, beside her teaching duties, she remains very active concert violinist and violist.

Paul Christopher | christopherp@nsula.edu

Paul Christopher received his Bachelor of Music Education from the New England Conservatory of Music and his Master of Music in Cello Performance from the University of Memphis.

From 1981 to 1984 Mr. Christopher was employed as a string teacher in the School District of Greenville County (South Carolina) public schools. Then he became a member of the Memphis and Charlotte symphony orchestras. From 1989 to 2004 he was Principal Cello of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra, Shreveport Opera, and a member of the Premier String Quartet. Simultaneously, from 1993 to 1999 he also served as Adjunct Instructor of Low Strings at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. In 2005 Mr. Christopher joined the string faculty at NSU teaching low strings and music theory.

In the summers he performed as Assistant Principal Cello with the Peter Britt Festival Orchestra in Jacksonville, Oregon. Mr. Christopher has appeared as clinician and guest artist throughout Louisiana, as well as, Arkansas, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panamá, and South Korea. His articles have been published in American String Teacher, Bass World, the Jacques Offenbach Society Newsletter and Strings.

Mr. Christopher has appeared on numerous recordings as a member of the Nashville String Machine with artists such as Faith Hill, Ricky Skaggs, Bruce Springsteen and George Strait. He is currently recording the cello duos of Jacques Offenbach, with seven CD's available on the Human Metronome label. For more information visit: paulchristophercello.com.

Karla González | gonzalezk@nsula.edu

Ms. Karla González began her musical training as a pianist at the Music Conservatory in Puebla and graduated with honors in 2015. In 2023, she completed a Master of Music at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, majoring in double bass and piano.

As a double bass player, Ms. Karla González studied with Roberto Garrido (México), Piermario Murelli (Italy), David Desimpelaere (Belgium), Justin Kujawski (USA), and Darren Cueva (USA).

In her development as a performer, she participated for five consecutive years in the National and Regional Meetings of Orchestras of the National Musical Promotion System - CONACULTA – performing in Mexico City, Puebla, Tlaxcala, Oaxaca, and Quintana Roo. Participated in the double bass festival in Celaya-Guanajuato for three consecutive years and attended the International Double Bass convention in Lucca-Italy. She made three international tours with the Camerata of Puebla in Germany, Italy, and the United States of America.

Ms. Karla González has participated and performed in numerous events, festivals, and music projects in the State of Puebla, preserving folk Mexican music in ensembles such as Los Chinacos de Puebla and the baroque music ensemble El Caracol.

In 2024, Ms. Karla Gonzalez joined the music faculty as an Adjunct Professor at Northwestern State University.