

Professional Leave Report Cover Sheet

Name: Benjamin Boone

Department: Music

College: Arts & Humanities

Leave taken: ☐ Sabbatical ☒ Difference in Pay ☐ Professional Leave without Pay

Time Period: ☐ Fall
☐ Spring
☒ Academic Year 2022-2023
☐ Other

Your report will be sent to your Dean for your PAF and to the Library Archives.

Benjamin Boone DIP Report for AY 2022-23

During the 2022-23 academic year I was granted a DIP so that I might serve as U.S. Fulbright Scholar to the University of Limerick's Irish World Academy of Music and Dance. While in residence in Ireland, I was extremely active and exceeded the expectations of my grant, the focus of which was to collaborate with musicians in Ireland on the composition, performance, and recording of new music. UL was pleased with my significant contributions to such a degree that they have asked me to serve as the External Reviewer for the MA and Ph.D. programs in Creative performance and Composition for the next four years!

In summary, I completed the collaborative composition and professional recording of over three albums worth of music, much of which will be released on Origin Records, performed in numerous concerts in a variety of contexts; performed with student ensembles; presented modules to composition, world music, and music therapy students (as well as for the university community at large); attended conferences; and absorbed all of IWA's program offerings. A selected list of activities appears below.

RECORDINGS COMPLETED

1. Limerick Jazz Quartet project:

- composed 14 compositions in collaboration with this ensemble, which includes drummer John Daly, bassist Dan Bodwell, guitarist Joe O'Callaghan, and singer Jayne Fraser
- recorded 9 of these compositions for an upcoming Origin Records album (to be released September 2024)

2. Samdharhana Group

- composed seven compositions in collaboration this group which includes Australian Sarod pleyer Matthew Noone, Ireland's leading traditional percussionist Tommy Hayes, and Indian table player Debojyoti Sanyal (who was also a guest of UL). Includes guest singer Jared Nadin.
- recordings will be released on an Origin Records album in 2025

3. New Global Ensemble

- composed 11 compositions in collaboration this group which includes German violinist Stefan Poetzsch; vocalist Oscar Masqueranas (on the UL faculty); and guitarist Anthony Monahan (UL graduate student)

4. Glenstal Abby Recordings

- collaborated with the Monk Columba McCann on arrangements for organ and saxophone. Recorded in Glenstal Abby Chapel

5. Collaborated with UL staff on recording overdubs for my “Caught in the Rhythm” album (released on Origin Records in September 2023). Graduate student Rodrigo Dalla performed congas on this album.

CONCERTS

- Featured concert at the University of Limerick’s Irish World Academy of Music with the Limerick Jazz Quartet plus Ghanaian drummer John Nutekpor (UL faculty) and German violinist Stefan Poetzsch
- Concert with the Limerick Jazz Quartet for Ballbriggan Africa Day, with guest Ghanaian drummer John Nutekpor (UL faculty). Special guests included leading drummers from all over Africa
- Concert the Limerick Jazz Quartet for Limerick’s Africa Day, with guest Ghanaian drummer John Nutekpor (UL faculty).
- Radio appearance to support performance at Limerick’s Africa Day
- RTE (Irish National Radio) featured a segment about my recording sessions in Ireland
- Limerick Jazz Society concert at Dolans
- Performance with Jazz Limerick’s educational program ensemble, Dolans
- UL’s 50 Anniversary extravaganza concert with UL faculty accompanying MA Dance students under leadership of Breandan DeGallai (Riverdance lead) with the President of Ireland in attendance. Rhiannan Giddens was headliner.
- Doonbeg Jazz Festival with Mark O Connor Band

TEACHING

MA in Creative Performance and Composition

- Two guest presentations
- Feedback on midterm and final projects
- Sat in on most classes, and offered feedback

World Music Program:

- Taught module on American Blues music
- UL World Pop Ensemble: Featured on final concert
- UL Gamelon Ensemble: Premiered collaborative sax/trumpet/Gamelon composition on final concert

Special saxophone duo module for World Music and Composition students with Nick Roth

- rehearsed, offered feedback, then premiered and recorded 8 student compositions

MA Dance

- performed for rehearsals and on two of their concerts

MA in Music Therapy

- Presentation on improvisation

Consulted with Dean and Head regarding service learning and community music

CONFERENCES

Participated in UL's: Migrant Health Research Conference, 2023.

Benjamin Boone
College of Arts and Humanities | Department of Music
Application for Difference in Pay leave during AY 2022-23

In consultation with the Chair of my Department and the Dean of my College, I am requesting a Difference in Pay Leave for AY 2022-23 in the event I receive either a Fulbright Fellowship to teach and engage in creative activity at the University of Limerick's Irish World Academy of Music and Dance (academic year DIP) or receive a Fellowship to the American Academy in Berlin to create a new composition (one semester DIP). The review process organized by IIE's Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) is complex and there is no guarantee I will know their (and Ireland's) final decisions before May. The American Academy in Berlin is slated to make their decisions by March.

Attached is a copy of my Fulbright Project Proposal Statement, but in summary:

In the field of music, the creation of new works and subsequent performances or recordings of those works is considered a scholarly activity. I will follow the participant-observation methodology, used by Ethnomusicologists to study music in its cultural context, to a) learn more about Irish music—its aesthetics and cultural contexts—by attending performances, taking lessons, and immersing myself in Ireland's musical scene; b) immerse myself in Irish culture, examining political and societal issues; and then c) collaborate with Irish musicians on the composition, performance, recording, and dissemination of situationally relevant creative works. This methodology builds upon my project in Ghana, where I absorbed aspects of traditional and contemporary music by performing in several ensembles, then collaborated to create original music which merged Ghanaian music, Western art music, and American Jazz into something new. Interestingly, both traditional Irish and Ghanaian music exemplify ancient traditions that are still very much embedded into the fabric of their musical cultures.

Concurrently, Dr. Joyce has conveyed that programs that would benefit from my expertise include the MA Composition and Creative Music Practice; MA Songwriting; BA Performing Arts; BA World Music; PhD Arts Practice; and MA Community Music. I will also share expertise with Irish colleagues and the general public in the areas of saxophone, jazz, and American music. Additionally, with my experience in service-learning pedagogy, Prof. Helen Phelan has suggested I assist with their innovative community music program, which engages migrant populations. I look forward to contributing to the Academy in whatever capacity I am able and needed.

TIMELINE: Given the 10-month duration of my project, I am confident I can accomplish the goals set forth in this proposal, with the full awareness that I will need to be adaptable. During the first month, I will settle into Limerick and my courses. I will also investigate potential field sites and begin building my network of potential musical collaborators and contacts. Over the next several months I will continue to build these relationships and advance in my studies of sean-nós, ritual music, and traditional Irish music. It will take me approximately three months to compose work for the album, one month to rehearse, and the last month I will record.

My proposal to the American Academy in Berlin states in part:

I seek to compose a multi-movement piece of music at the American Academy of Berlin for viola da gamba virtuoso Hille Perl (Bremen), violinist Stefan Poetzsch (Erlangen), and myself (saxophone), for which I

interview refugees in Germany and German citizens about their respective perceptions and experiences, compiling from these a sound montage around which I will then weave music. The intent is to create a dialogue and connection between immigrant populations and broader German culture. The piece intentionally juxtaposes the ancient viola da gamba with the contemporary saxophone and audio production techniques. This work is tentatively slated for performance at the Erlanger PoetenFest in August 2023. There is a possibility this could be expanded to include the Leipzig Baroque orchestra as well.

If I receive either Fellowship, I expect that it will be a pride point for our Department, College and University. I also expect that it will dramatically alter my perspective on music education, music theory, and music performance. This was certainly the case during my 2017-2018 Fulbright in Ghana, which was hugely successful on a personal, pedagogical, and professional levels, as documented in the attached DIP/Sabbatical Report. Significantly, a primary goal of our Department's action plan is to update our curriculum so that the music studied and performed at Fresno State better reflects the cultural heritage and rich diversity of our students. Donald Henriques and I have led this effort and numerous course descriptions in our department have been altered to reflect this change in perspective. I have also begun an OER project with Dr. Lisa Beebe at Consummes College, wherein we are creating modules on non-Western usages of elements studied in theory classes, accessible by theory teachers anywhere. For example, when students learn about scales in a theory or ear training class, there will be modules available wherein they can learn Indian performers describe how they conceive of scales and pitch collections, and how that is articulated in their music. My students have an assignment where they do this in Music 40. In this manner, my students' horizons are widened as they see the multiple ways various cultures conceive of music. This is one of many examples of how my time in Ghana has impacted my teaching.

Benefits:

- No Music faculty at Fresno State currently specialize in Irish music. Having this experience will enhance knowledge base of the Department.
- Curricular development: The Academy requires collaboration and integration of musical styles amongst programs and disciplines. Experiencing this innovative model may lead to suggestions on how we at Fresno State can foster interdisciplinary collaboration more effectively.
- I will model for my students how to learn about other cultures inquisitively and sensitively while also being a responsible ambassador for their own culture, and that music can be used to bring people of different communities together.
- Creative Activities include composition, performance, and recording that will enhance my creative portfolio.
- Expanded network of collaborators
- Expanded international relations for the university