



# POLAR BEAR PRESS

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## BEYOND THE PRACTICE ROOM: MSM WOMXN



"We should be lifting other womxn up in this career rather than seeing them as our competition because their success is not our failure."

-Jordan Gilbert, BM '23

### Check Out What's New!

**MSM Womxn**

**COVID Column**

**Residence Life Update**

**Eating Disorder Awareness Week**



*The "Eating Disorder Awareness Week" spread on page 11 contains information about disordered eating and eating disorders which may be triggering for some people.*



## THIS ISSUE

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# BEYOND THE PRACTICE ROOM: MSM WOMXN

*This interview was conducted by Mindy Holthe*

## How did this organization come about and what inspired it?

**Chira Bell:** So what happened from my perspective was that Black Lives Matter had started and a lot of issues pertaining to womxn, gender equality, and sexual assault had started coming up at MSM. I was discussing these issues with my parents and my dad, who went to an HBCU (Historically Black College or University) said, “where is your womxn’s group to support these kinds of situations?” and I was like “... I never even thought about that!” He said, “well, all of the HBCU’s in the early 90s had womxn’s



*MSM Womxn Mocktails Event, from left to right: Ria Iparraguirre, Chira Bell, Lexi Brown, Jordan Gilbert, Arthi Nandakumar, Mindy Holthe,*

groups that supported these kinds of advocacy issues.” So then I just sat back and started to think about how much good it could do on behalf of the community and how every community-orientated organization has the goal of uniting a community of some sort. I feel like the womxn community at MSM is not always the most positive environment just because there are a billion of us and it’s hard because you have to be in constant competition with people that you want to support. But, patterns are patterns and we are here to break said patterns and to work together. I’m really grateful for the group that came together.

## What are the goals of this organization and are there any projects you are working on as a group?

**Chira:** Everything! Anything you could think we are working on or talking about, we are working on and talking about as a goal for us.

**Jordan Gilbert:** Going off of what Chira said, specifically we are trying to create an environment that is just full of support for womxn. I mean you go outside and it’s already lacking but then you come into an area like this where it’s just all tense competition all the time and you can feel like you’re drowning. I think it’s really important that we establish a safe space and community where we can advocate for other womxn.

**Lexi:** We want everyone to be seen and included in our communal space. Part of the reason I’m here is to create that sense of community between everyone on campus and everyone that identifies as feminine so we can all have that safe space.

**Chira:** I think the overarching purpose of this group is for us, as a community of womxn, to unite. I think we’re recognizing that we all have each other and the privilege of that and working together.

**Jordan:** As for projects, previously we worked with IrisHouse, a center for womxn in Harlem and we are collaborating with the Women’s Education Project that is helping with womxn’s education for girls in India. We are looking to collaborate with Black Trans Womxn organizations this upcoming semester and with organizations within the school, like QueerPBS and the Black Student Union.

## What excites you about the Women’s Education Project?



**Jordan:** Making an international connection while we’re cut off in terms of communication with the virus and everything, it’s kind of insane that we’re able to reach that far. I think a lot of what we stand for in this organization is really important and the fact that it’s getting somewhere like India is crazy. That’s my goal with this, is to spread awareness, advocacy, love, and support... and all those Libra kind of things.

*Continued on page 3*

## Why is it important that MSM allow students the opportunity to create student projects such as this one?

**Chira:** SO many reasons! There is a goldmine of opportunities at MSM and people just don't see them because we are so tunnel-visioned in our curriculum. If we weren't able to or allowed to create these projects, we wouldn't have the opportunity to explore the passions we have in this way. We don't have a womxn's study major and we're not able to partner with other colleges at the moment, so we can't take their womxn or queer studies courses. Projects like these give us the opportunity to direct our passions for other things, while also taking advantage of the networking and opportunities that MSM has to offer outside of the classroom or concert hall. There's so much for us to learn and so many people and leaders to connect with that will contribute to our future as artists. I think MSM, depending on where you come from, is the first place you can see a lot of leaders of diversity in your administration. While we are still far from being truly diverse, we have multiple high level administrators of color, our president is a gay man and his husband is Black. I think there is a lot of diversity in our leadership that a lot of people don't often get to experience. Allowing these student projects and organizations lets us embrace the diversity of our student body and the diversity of ourselves!

**Lexi:** I second the motion.

## What stigmas are there about women in music, particularly classical music, and what should we do about them?

**Lexi:** THERE ARE SO MANY!

**Chira:** The visceral reactions of everyone when that question was asked, everyone goes UGH.

**Jordan:** Do not even get me started with this! I think we're all very much so expected to fit a mold, in terms of classical music. I think that's incredibly limiting, especially when we are training for these roles. It's really awful to hear some teachers talk about students and say like, "oh they look a certain way," or, "they behave a certain way," or "you look too much like a boy," or, "you walk too much like a boy." It's so limiting! We're put in this box and everything that art is supposed to encapsulate is outside of the said box. Especially in a school like this, in a time like this, womxn are evolving, womxn are changing. I think the word femininity is now kind of an umbrella term and I think it's so much more than what it used to be. I think we need to stop limiting womxn in music to a four-corner box.

**Lexi:** I'm going to jump on this answer! I was trained in Musical Theater first, and the first thing I was told was you're either an Ingenue or a character actress and it's one or the other. These are the two boxes you can be put in and you can only be in these two boxes. Once I transferred into the opera world, it became that on steroids because there are no character actress spots. There is, "you're pretty," and "you sing pretty," and that's it, that's what you do. I think the first time I ever saw gender fluidity in anything opera-related was last year's performance of *Agrippina*. That was the first time anyone ever dared to challenge that on such a stage as the Met Opera, I think that meant so much to so many people, myself included.

**Arthi:** We love *NERONE* here!

**Everyone:** Kate Lindsey!

**Chira:** Opera lesbian Jesus

**Ria:** So much gender envy

**Lexi:** Kate! Everyone loves Kate, but it's true! I love her so much just because she has truly paved a way for womxn to not be the ingenue. We have just as much athleticism and as much androgyny and we can be whatever we want on that stage. We need to be the generation of musicians that start saying this is not a man's art. Art doesn't have a gender, music doesn't have a gender. We have very much assigned as if you are a male musician, you are special and we're going to put you in this special little box on this special little totem pole and you're going to be perfect no matter what you do. On top of that, it's like Daniel and the Lion's Den, like the king is sitting and then you throw all of us in the lion's den and say, "go, fight for these roles and chairs." That's not cool, no one wants to do that but especially with womxn in music, it feels like we're forced to. There is no answer for us, we have to check a box, and half the time, we don't "meet the requirements" for certain boxes. To really get to the bottom of equality in music, especially classical music, we have to take away the boxes.



Mezzo-soprano Kate Lindsey as Nerone from Sir David McVicar's new production of Handel's "Agrippina"  
-Photo by Marty Sohl / Met Opera

Continued on page 4

# BEYOND THE PRACTICE ROOM CONTINUED

How can the classical musician today bring more light to the musical works of women, from the past and present?

**Jordan:** To piggyback off of what you said, going back to something you said about fighting for roles. I can't tell you how exhausting it is, having this feeling of internalized misogyny instead of supporting other womxn that are successful. It is so draining, we should be lifting other womxn up in this career rather than seeing them as our competition because their success is not our failure. I've got to tell you, using that idea as a kind of motivational tool for us is not healthy. I think this group is literally trying to say please stop doing that, no more please because it is so exhausting. Girl, I'm tired.

**Ria:** I think it's so ironic too because when you're doing opera studies, my teacher is like "you'd be perfect for the said role because she's such a strong woman in this opera," yet meanwhile, in order to play the strong woman, I have to conform to a f\*\*\*ing box just to be considered for the role. On top of it, I love what we do so much but the last few times I went to an opera and I was sitting way up high, it was like staring down upon clouds. Everyone's hair was white. You see this greying population and part of the reason we're not seeing as many young people in the opera theaters as we are on Broadway is that we haven't changed s\*\*\* since we started this centuries ago! Nothing has changed! For stuff to stay relevant, and especially for art to stay relevant, it has to reflect the times. Honestly, I do not see that in opera. I can't remember the last time I saw someone that looked like me playing a role on any major stage-

**Chira:** Unless it was like an opera with Black people only, like *Porgy and Bess*. Then they make so much money off of it, that they want to bring it back, but they won't actually cast those singers in a Mozart opera. But that's none of my business...

**Ria:** Yeah, that's major tea. I think in order for opera to regain relevance and interest from the general public, outside of our musical communities, and for others to see the power that we see in it, it has to change. It has to grow with the times and with the people that are learning it and investing their time in it. It's kind of like a love-hate relationship that I've developed with this art because it's like it's very one-sided most of the time like I'm giving 100% and I'm only getting a few breadcrumbs in return, in terms of roles and everything.

**Lexi:** I really needed this conversation today. In order to tell real, relevant stories we have to be truly diverse, in every sense of the phrase. I don't want to have to worry about being skinny for the rest of my life to book a role and that's all I have to say.

**Arthi:** Most of us are singers here so we're talking about the opera world, but there is so much prejudice within other fields as well. In the classical and instrumental world, but especially in jazz! Womxn in jazz, they don't get any credit, not even 10% of the credit or opportunities they deserve and it needs to change! There is so much wrong and we are stuck in a world and profession that refuses to change and evolve. Then people wonder why the seats aren't being filled and the audiences are depleting. It's because, as you guys were saying, people don't want to watch something that is so stuck in the past in terms of conventions.



IrisHouse building, photo taken by Jordan Gilbert after MSM Womxn donation drive product drop-off

**Chira:** I just want to approach a different avenue of this, so much of this change happens from the leaders. Kind of coming full circle from our previous questions, that's why these situations and organizations are very important because not only is it the community of womxn in classical music stepping forward and saying, "we are not going to accept this anymore", but it's also getting those womxn in the seats of decision making. These womxn can look at their colleagues and say, "we can't do this anymore, it has to stop." In educational institutions and these big organizations of classical music, they see us as these people, like rats, pounding on their door saying, "you need to change!" There is excellence in opera the way it is now but it is not the excellence that will carry us through generations. We're seen as the "uninformed, radical left, young people that want to destroy the excellence of opera."

**Lexi:** "Rename the group MSM Ratical Rats".

Continued on page 5

## How can the classical musician today bring more light to the musical works of women, from the past and present? (Continued)

**Chira:** When all that we want is to embrace the excellence of opera by bringing it into the 21st century! We need to bring it past the 1910s because that's really where we stopped. Eisenbach's class on America is really changing my life right now, I'm going to tell him he needs to rename it to "Exposing America" because that's really what he's doing. Starting in the 1920s, we started to commune and make art together, not in an equal way of course because there were still racists out there, but people were able to commune and realize the art that Black people make is fun! We want to dance to jazz and be with Black people, we want to have a good time! Opera never got there. There's this elitism happening. Black opera singers and singers of color, in general, have to be absolutely perfect to get on a decent stage, whereas anyone that's been to the Met could probably say with confidence that they have mediocre white singers on the Met stage... but you have never seen a mediocre Black singer at the Met because musicians of color have to be impeccable to get attention. It's just an unfair standard and it's always been that way. It takes groups like this, communities like MSM, and collegiate institutions to set a standard to make a change. Then, these opportunities we have for leadership can set us up to take seats in leadership to make that change happen. We can yell and scream, "change!" from the collegiate level all we want, but until we're in the office signing the papers, we really can't make anything happen. That's one of the biggest lessons I've learned about being a leader, is that until you are a leader, you can't really do anything but be persuasive. That's what this group is about, creating this community to be in the office to sign the papers and to build an "army" of people who would say, "I'm not going to sing your opera unless someone of color is cast," and yes, that may cost me a job, but it's important. Sorry, just wrap that up in a spiky bow from all of us.

**Lexi:** Mhm, Scorpio risings ..

## How can classical musicians today bring more light to the musical works of women, from the past and present?

**Jordan:** DO YOUR DAMN RESEARCH LOVE! It's literally so easy to get on the Googles and look up someone like Clara Schumann, look up womxn composers. You have to be willing to take the time and not just take repertoire from a traditional category and stuff that's being pushed on you by a teacher, who's probably set in stone with the traditional male-written repertoire. There was such a stigma against women composers back then and there is still one now, it hasn't gone away and it's really frustrating! You really just have to be willing to look for it and put in that extra 5% effort to take time and listen to this person's music instead of doing what fits in a four-corner box.

**Chira:** Surround yourself with resources! Follow womxn of color in opera on social media, follow these accounts, follow us on Instagram! There are people out there putting in 70% effort to give you your 5%, to put it in front of your face for you so that you don't have to do it yourself. We're in it together, but you've got to do it!

**Lexi:** It's a matter of changing your way of thinking. As soon as someone says classical music, you automatically associate that with men.

**Jordan:** *White men.*

**Lexi:** You automatically associate classical music with "a white man wrote this". Instead of that, we now have to say, "okay, we're going to talk about classical music," and in every aspect of the term, we can talk about Black people, Latinx people, and womxn in music. We have to bring these narratives to the forefront of everything, instead of solely hyper-focusing on white men in music.

**Chira:** The excellence of classical music instead of the excellence of white male composers.



**Ria:** I have a LOT to say going off of what Chira just said. Excuse me while I go on a tirade. Everyone needs to stop invalidating womxn in music. We're the f\*\*\*ing majority bro, like, sopranos have such a bad reputation. Every time, men will just randomly make a crappy soprano joke and I'm like, "that's really not that funny". That's beside the point, like Lexi said, it's just about changing your way of thinking. Let me preface this by asking you a question. This could just be all in my head, but I'm pretty sure it's not because I've talked to other womxn about this, and I'm sure it's not just an MSM issue, but this is where I go to school, so this is what I know.

*Continued on page 6*

# BEYOND THE PRACTICE ROOM CONTINUED

How can classical musicians today bring more light to the musical works of women, from the past and present? (Continued)

**Ria:** Have y'all ever noticed, I'm just naturally someone that says hi to anyone that passes me in the hallway, but when I pass specifically men, I oftentimes notice they won't even look at me in the eye? They don't acknowledge me, and I'm always the person that's like, "Hello!" and they don't respond! It's such an invalidating feeling because we're in a conservatory right now like if you can't acknowledge me as a womxn, could you at least acknowledge me as a musician because that's what you are?

**Jordan:** Womxn are often just a face in the crowd in classical music, we're not props love.

**EQUALITY**

**Chira:** We are not just your romantic interest.

**Ria:** Also, actually do the work, like Jordan was saying, it's not that hard. I see so many people, so many of the men that I attend school with, on Instagram liking and commenting on their friends' posts when it comes to something musical that they've done. Yet, when it comes to womxn it stops at liking and commenting, and I don't see anyone promoting work, projects, and music that womxn are producing. I see none of that, and I'm sorry, but honestly, that's not a womxn's issue. Yes, we all need to support each other, but I feel like the main place it needs to come from is from men who are brave enough to actually invite womxn into their spaces. I'm currently dating someone that is a jazz major and he's working towards confronting and unlearning his own internalized misogyny because music is a man's world and a lot of it stems from the environment that they're in. He's trying to come up with a combo and I'm like please invite womxn! You cannot support womxn without also asking men to support womxn just as much as womxn support womxn. When it comes down to it, unfortunately, men are usually the ones with power in these spaces. I'm sorry, it's 2021, if I'm not seeing womxn included in your recordings and performances, there's no excuse. **Include womxn, include womxn, include womxn.**



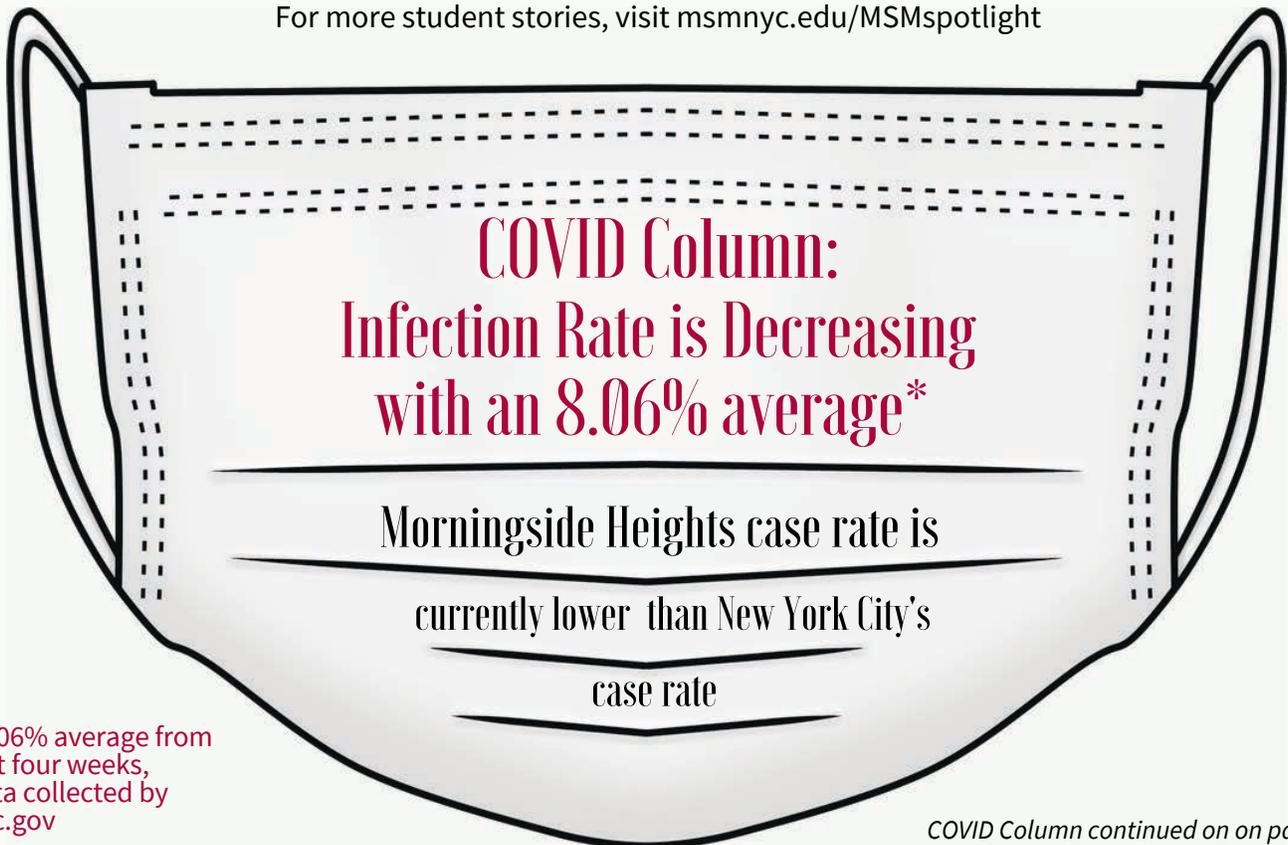
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**We'd love to hear from you! Feel free to contact us at [msmwomxn@gmail.com](mailto:msmwomxn@gmail.com) or DM/Message us on Instagram or Facebook! Stay tuned for an upcoming "Ask Alice" anonymous submission column!**

For more student stories, visit [msmnyc.edu/MSMspotlight](https://msmnyc.edu/MSMspotlight)



\*8.06% average from last four weeks, data collected by [nyc.gov](https://nyc.gov)

COVID Column continued on on page 6



# COVID Column (Continued)

## Vaccine and Underlying Health Conditions:

- 1) Use your local NYC address --only people residing in New York State are eligible to receive the vaccine due to an underlying health condition.
- 2) Be ready to testify to your health condition - the state offers three options for proving an eligible comorbidity: a doctor's letter, medical information proving a comorbidity, or a signed certification (an attestation a person would fill out at the vaccine site). Each vaccination facility should be able to accept any of these three options.

-Monica Christensen

## REMINDER

### MSM Campus Compact Enforcement:

Remember that this semester, any student caught with in a practice room without a reservation is immediately cut off from reserving rooms at MSM for three days. Any student caught a second time in a practice room without a reservation will most likely be banned from campus and will have to complete their studies on Track D. We are sorry to take what we know is a very tough stance but this is one rule that has been too frequently broken.



You may take off your mask **ONLY** if you are alone in a room and if no one else will be joining you in that room during your reservation

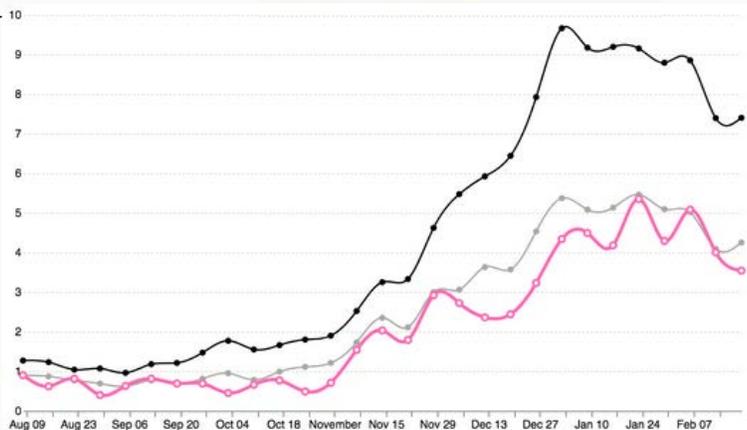
\*\*Anytime there are multiple people in a room (teaching studio, classroom, etc.), everyone **MUST** be wearing a mask, appropriately distanced, and the time limit in the room is 1 hour. The room must be vacated after this time, even if you have another reservation in the same room 30 minutes later.

Reminders and information from Henry Valoris and Dean Monica Christensen



Test rate (per 100,000 people). **Pink** stands for **10027**, **grey** stands for **Manhattan**, and **black** stands for **all of NYC**

- \*\*Practice room capacity is 1 person at all times.
- \*\*Wait until the time your reservation starts to go into a room and SET AN ALARM on your phone for 5 minutes before your reservation ends. You should be packed up and out of the room by the time the reservation ends, NOT starting to pack up at the time the reservation ends.



Percent of people tested who tested positive for COVID-19 in **10027**, **Manhattan**, and **all of NYC**

# Get Involved MSM

## Black Student Union

***“Black History Month is every month, so continue to educate yourselves more and more each day.”***

***-Rayna Campbell, BSU President***



As stated by our mission statement, “The purpose of the Black Student Union is to provide a sense of unity, support, safe space and cooperation among the black students at Manhattan School of Music. In addition, this organization provides educational and social opportunities for the entire Manhattan School of Music community to come together to learn about and celebrate the rich heritage, history, and contributions of persons of African ancestry...” The BSU is currently working on a few events, panels, and concerts coming up in the closing of Black History Month. Starting off with a special panel of artistic scholars such as; M Lamar, Jarvis Antonio Green, Garrett McQueen, and to begin the first stream of panel discussions with Damien Sneed Thursday, February 25th. Some more events coming with the BSU includes:

- Portraits and bios of Black artists, librettists, composers, conductors and scholars in the arts realm displayed in the Neidorff-Karpati Hall Hallway
- A Black History Month tribute on the 18th of March
- A Stream of Spirituals with Jessye Norman, Kathleen Battle, Harolyn Blackwell, and Damien Sneed

We sincerely hope to see you at future meetings and events! For frequent updates and “an Ode to Black Trailblazers” follow our Instagram account!

-Jaydon Beleford, Media Coordinator



All our love,  
The Black Student Union Executive Board  
*Rayna Campbell, President*  
*Jonathan Gilbert, Vice President*  
*Chira Bell, Secretary*  
*Adja Thomas, Treasurer*  
*Jaydon Beleford, Media Coordinator*  
*Imani Williams, Concert Coordinator*



**Follow BSU  
on  
Instagram!  
@bsu\_msm**

**Follow us on  
Instagram  
@msmqpbs**



**QueerPBS**



## Student Government



Join Student Government!

Every 4th Sunday of the month at **6 pm** we host a Student Council meeting via zoom (code: 272 821 9335). The next meeting is **THIS SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28TH!** Student Council meetings are open to the entire student population! In these meetings, you can hear updates from committees, student organizations, and department representatives. At the end of the meeting, there will be an open forum where you can bring forth any issues with the school! We hope to see you in a meeting!

*Best, Angelina Bush, Student Government Secretary*

# Get Involved MSM

Continued

At **InterVarsity Christian Fellowship**, we want to represent Biblical Christianity and show by example what it looks like to follow Jesus. In our supportive community, we study scripture together and grow closer to God and each other in the process. We want for all students, believers and non-believers alike, to be invited to either accept Jesus as their personal savior or grow in their spiritual journey with him during their time at MSM through the opportunities and communities we provide. We provide a safe space where students can learn about God's Word and can talk about anything that may be on their hearts. Our leaders are always here to talk to and to pray with anyone.

This semester at Intersvarsity we started a program called Alpha. This program is sectioned into 20min - 30min intervals each week talking about the nature of God and His love for us. For weekly updates, zoom link and bible scriptures **follow our instagram account:**

**@intersvarsity\_msm.**

We Hope to see you soon!

Intervarsity Leaders

Alex Jeffers

Alexcia Sanchez

Jackson Wells

Jonathan Gilbert

**It Stops Here**  
Stay tuned for  
upcoming meetings and  
events!

## MSM ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS CLUB



Help create a more environmentally conscious and sustainable MSM

**Follow us on Instagram!**

**@msm\_environmental**



INTERVARSITY PRESENTS:

# THE LOVE OF GOD WITH ALPHA

-Alpha is a program for people who aren't necessarily already Christians but want to learn about God's word and His Love

COME JOIN INTERVARSITY THIS COMING MONDAY 3/1/2021 IN OUR NEW BIBLE SERIES WITH ALPHA STUDYING ON THE LOVE OF GOD!  
MEETING ID: 880 2447 6658  
PASSCODE: BIBLE

Manhattan School of Music

InterVarsity  
EVERY CORNER. EVERY CAMPUS

## Fusion: One World at MSM

*Fusion seeks to create space and opportunity for cultural sharing between domestic and international students at MSM. Fusion members will plan events throughout the year to help MSM musicians meet and mingle with their student peers coming from many different regions of the world. If you are interested in hearing more about this organization, please follow us on Instagram:*

**@msm.fusion**



# Campus Store



**Friday, 2/26** is the last day to return textbooks to the store with your receipt. After this date all textbook sales are final since the add/drop period is complete.

## Registrar

- **May 2021 Graduates** need to complete a diploma application, more information will be made available soon.
- Students that are required to perform a jury, must have a Jury on their current schedule. If they do not, they should notify the Office of the Registrar right away.
- Students may withdraw from classes until **Monday, March 1st** with a grade of "W". Complete the *Withdrawal Form*.



### MAR 1 | MON | 10:00AM – 11:00AM Music Production & Supervision

- (Online)*
- Rebecca Grierson, Managing Director of SixtyFour Music, discusses the ins and outs of music supervision.
  - Presented as part of ME 1500.JC for Jazz and composition majors.
  - Online access information will only be sent to those who RSVP.

## Student Affairs

Are you interested in becoming a student leader? Don't miss your chance to become a Resident Assistant (RA), an Orientation Leader (OL), an Orientation Assistant (OA), a Summer English Study Resident Assistant (SESRA), or an International Peer Advisor (IPA). All students interested in a position are required to fill out an application and sign up for an interview. **The Student Leadership application deadline is 11:59PM on Sunday, February 28th.** To apply, go to: <https://www.msmnyc.edu/campus/student-affairs/student-leadership/>.



**Center for Music Entrepreneurship**  
Manhattan School of Music

As we progress with the spring semester, the CME Team wanted to share the most current list of upcoming

**Setting the Stage events.** Information about Setting the Stage, including registration information and attendance requirements can be found by visiting the *Setting the Stage page on the MSM website.*

Always feel free to email the CME at [cme@msmnyc.edu](mailto:cme@msmnyc.edu), introducing yourself, and someone will reach out to you to discuss our offerings, as well as the potential for one-on-one resume, bio, and cover letter coaching.

**MAR 25 | THURS | 6:00PM – 7:30PM**

### Telling Your Story, Shaping Your Sound

*(Online)*

- MSM Resident Artist Lara Downes discusses curating programs and projects that reflect our unique and authentic artistry.
- This will be an interactive session.
- Online access information will only be sent to those who RSVP.

**APR 15 | THURS | 6:00PM – 7:30PM**

### A Place For Us: Living as Artist Citizens in Our Communities

*(Online)*

- Engaged, impactful artistry comes in many shapes and sizes, and we can all find meaningful ways to contribute to social change, to build stronger communities, and to make work that makes a difference.
- This will be an interactive session.
- Online access information will only be sent to those who RSVP

**MAY 7 | FRI | 6:00PM – 7:30PM**

### Welcome to the Rising Sun: Shining a light on the music by Black composers

*(Online)*

- Engaged, impactful artistry comes in many shapes and sizes, and we can all find meaningful ways to contribute to social change, to build stronger communities, and to make work that makes a difference.
  - This will be an interactive session.
  - Online access information will only be sent to those who RSVP
- 

# Residence Life

We have enrolled in NYC's reFashionNYC and ecycleNYC programs. As you know, the reFashionNYC bin has already arrived and is available to Andersen Hall residents in the laundry room. We are awaiting delivery of the ecycleNYC bin and look forward to it arriving soon. refashionNYC is a free and convenient clothing donation and recycling service. Their partnership with Housing Works provides this convenient collection while fighting the dual crises of homelessness and AIDS.



Photo of reFashion bin in Andersen Hall taken by Mindy Holthe

## What Happens to Donations?

Some donations are sold in Housing Works thrift shops throughout NYC, including the Buy-the-Bag store in Brooklyn.

Some items are donated to Haiti or sent to other nonprofit thrift shops.

The rest are sold to a textile merchant for recycling or exported to overseas markets.

No donations are sent to landfills!

## What is re-fashionNYC?

re-fashionNYC is a free and convenient clothing donation and recycling service available to apartment, office, and commercial buildings.

The service is provided by the NYC Department of Sanitation and Housing Works.

In contrast to for-profit used clothing companies that supply similar collection bins, re-fashionNYC is 100% nonprofit and charitable.

# re-fashionNYC

NYC's official clothing reuse program in partnership with HOUSINGWORKS

## Items Accepted



women & men's clothing



children's clothing



shoes & boots



purses, gloves, scarves, hats & belts



towels & curtains



bedding & linens



clean rags & torn clothing

# Alumni Council Corner

Dear MSM Students,

Greetings! My name is Justin Bischof and I am the Chair of the MSM Alumni Council. I am a proud MSMer having received my 3 degrees - BMus, MMus, DMA - from our great school and served as a professor of Theory and Keyboard Skills for many years. I love our school and believe in our mission and in you, our amazing students.

Did you know that after completing 2 semesters you are considered an alum of MSM? This means that most of you are already on your lifelong journey as an alum of MSM and we want to be a part of that journey with you. Along with Vice-Chair Wendy Talio and the rest of the Council, we are excited to launch the regular Alumni section of the Polar Bear Express beginning with this issue.

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with us if you have questions, suggestions, etc. We would love to hear from you. Stay safe and healthy!

Warmly,  
Justin  
Dr. Justin Bischof '98'  
Chair  
MSM Alumni Council

## Alumni Spotlights

### **Alex, please share with us a treasured MSM memory.**

There have been so many treasured memories throughout all my years at Manhattan School of Music and, frankly, I feel quite lost trying to navigate through them. One of my most special moments was certainly my first day at MSM, my audition day. Having arrived at JFK just the night before, I was heading all the way from Brighton Beach to Upper West Side on a beautiful morning. At the end of a one-hour subway ride, I learned that I had taken the wrong train (2 instead of 1) and found myself in Harlem. Asking for directions in broken English and following the hand gestures of friendly passers-by, I had to sprint my way out of Harlem with nothing short of a personal jogging record as I was already quite late to the pre-audition lesson with my teacher to be. The grandness of Neidorff-Karpati auditorium was just breathtaking. Even being on the stage of Stern Auditorium a few years later did not make as much of an impression as I had that day. One of the fondest memories of that day is definitely the voice and unbelievably welcoming friendliness of the gentleman who greeted me on stage as I was approaching the piano. Later I learned it was Marc Silverman. His few words were so full of support and encouragement that it literally turned my world upside down and all the stage fright converted into radiance.

### **What advice do you have for your fellow alums during these challenging times?**

To my fellow Alumni I would like to send my most heartfelt words of encouragement. As we approach almost a year of the new order, live performances are rare and all of us are often busier adapting rather than focusing on our art. Some of the greatest creations and ideas were born in times of challenge and a peripheral vision might bring us more inspiration and joy rather than a premeditated focus.



Photo above: **Alexandre Moutouzkine** (MM '03, PS '05, AD '06) has won top prizes in more than 20 international competitions, including the Naumburg, Cleveland, Montreal, New Orleans, Shanghai, Iturbi (Valencia), Maria Canals (Barcelona) and Arthur Rubinstein (Tel Aviv). In addition to a career of playing alongside the world's top orchestras, he also received a Distinguished Alumni Award from Manhattan School of Music, where he was appointed its faculty member in September 2013.

## Alumni Council Corner Spotlight Continued



Photo on left: Born and raised in Colorado, **Charlene Huang** (BM '03) received her violin degree from Manhattan School of Music and moved to LA in 2004 to work in music production for world-renowned film composer Hans Zimmer. She considers herself to be a hybrid of studio musician and music executive in the entertainment business.

### **Charlene, please share with us a treasured MSM memory.**

It's hard to single out one treasured memory I have of MSM so I'd like to pay homage to my teacher Burton Kaplan and our studio class, TACTUS, playing under the baton of guest conductor JoAnn Falletta, Dr. Noon's Stravinsky class, sight singing with Justin Bischof, theory with Reiko Fütting, humanities with John Pagano, orchestral rep with Enrico DiCecco, jazz orch with Justin DiCioccio, doing homework in the library, chats with Monica at the security desk, time spent at Toast, Soundz, and going to Zs shows, living through 9/11 during the first few weeks of school and witnessing the resilience of NYC in the months & years after, and of course, the lifelong friends and bonds I made at MSM.

### **What advice do you have for your fellow alums during these challenging times?**

Advice I would give to fellow alums during these challenging times: Give yourself a pass. Acknowledge yourself for doing the very best you know how during quite possibly the most challenging time of our lives. Set your intentions for how you would like to pivot. Make new goals. Remember WHY you love music and let the essence and energy of what the answer is be your North Star, trusting and allowing the light to guide you out of the dark.



Photo on left: **Maxine Thevenot** (MM '01, DMA '06) completed her DMA thesis after moving to the 'Land of Enchantment', and now calls New Mexico home. Her career as a concert organist has taken her across North America, the UK, and Europe, performing on some of the world's most cherished and beloved pipe organs.

### **Maxine, please share with us a treasured MSM memory.**

If I hadn't had the opportunity to study at MSM as a scholarship student with my principal teacher, McNeil Robinson, I suspect my life would look quite different now. My life continues to be enriched by the colleagues – fellow students, professors, and working musicians in NYC – whom I met during my years at MSM. Attending MSM permitted me opportunities I could never have anticipated, such as the chance to perform on the same stage as the inimitable Renée Fleming and Dmitry Sitkovetsky. I am truly grateful for those 6 years of study with great mentors and teachers in one of the greatest cultural cities in the world.

### **What advice do you have for your fellow alums during these challenging times?**

This COVID time enforces a period of self-evaluation about what one's true passions are and what truly offers you comfort and solace. Live in those moments. Draw from your positive childhood experiences and your inner joy and love of music to comfort, heal, and find grace. May that grace lead you, and those you inspire, to find and hold on to hope.

# EVERY BODY HAS A SEAT AT THE TABLE

## NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS AWARENESS WEEK

February 22 - 28, 2021

#NEDAawareness



For 24/7 crisis support text:

"NEDA" to 741741



Find resources and treatment options at:

[myneda.org/help](https://myneda.org/help)



Take a confidential screening at:

[myneda.org/screening](https://myneda.org/screening)



National Eating Disorders Helpline:

800.931.2237

### WHAT IS AN EATING DISORDER?

### WHAT IS AN EATING DISORDER?

Eating disorders are real, complex, bio-psycho-social diseases that can have serious consequences for health, productivity and relationships. They are not fads, phases, or lifestyle choices.

The most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder. Other eating disorders include: avoidant/restrictive food intake disorder, rumination disorder, pica, other specified feeding or eating disorder, and unspecified feeding or eating disorder.

People struggling with an eating disorder often become obsessed with food, body image, and/or weight. These disorders can be life-threatening if not recognized and treated appropriately. The earlier a person receives treatment, the greater the likelihood of full recovery.

### WHAT ARE THE WARNING SIGNS OF AN EATING DISORDER?

- Preoccupation with weight, food, calories, dieting, and/or body image.
- Development of abnormal, secretive, extreme, or ritualized food or eating habits.
- Withdrawal from usual friends and activities.
- Evidence of binge eating, such as the disappearance of a large amount of food.
- Evidence of purging behaviors, including frequent trips to the bathroom after meals, self-induced vomiting, periods of fasting or laxative, diet pill, or diuretic abuse.
- Compulsive or excessive exercising.
- Discoloration or staining of the teeth.
- Feelings of isolation, depression, anxiety, or irritability.

While the signs listed may indicate an eating disorder, they are not all-inclusive. If you are concerned about someone and they are not demonstrating these warning signs, speak with them or seek professional guidance.

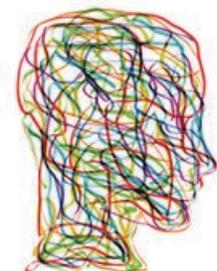


Often an individual with an eating disorder does not believe they have a problem. Many people with eating disorders look healthy, yet may be extremely ill. Eating disorders are often viewed as a disease that only affects affluent, white women.

Eating disorders can affect anyone, regardless of their gender or sex. Although eating disorders are more common in females, researchers and clinicians are becoming aware of a growing number of males and non-binary individuals who are seeking help for eating disorders.

Sources for this spread: NEDA online educational resources

Continued on page 15



## Diagnoses can include:

- **Anorexia Nervosa (AN):** Characterized primarily by self-starvation and excessive weight loss
- **Bulimia Nervosa (BN):** Characterized by binge eating and compensatory behaviors, such as self-induced vomiting, in an attempt to undo the effects of binge eating.
- **Binge Eating Disorder (BED):** Characterized by recurrent binge eating without the regular use of compensatory measures to counter the binge eating.
- **Avoidant-Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID):** Characterized by lack of interest in food, fears of negative consequences of eating, and selective or picky eating.
- Some **Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorders (OSFED)** include:
  - Purging Disorder: purging without binge eating
  - Night Eating Syndrome: excessive nighttime food consumption

# EATING DISORDERS, DIETING & "CLEAN EATING"

"Clean eating" has exploded in popularity; these days, it's tough to find a cooking magazine or wellness blog that doesn't mention the trend somewhere in its pages. Eating tasty and nutritious food is important, but the emphasis on cutting out "bad" foods raises one big question: is clean eating just dieting by another name? When "clean eating" becomes a socially accepted form of food restriction, it might be time to reconsider just how healthy it is.

## How can I help?

### WHAT SHOULD I SAY?

If you are worried about someone's eating behaviors or attitudes, then it is appropriate for you to express your concerns in a loving, supportive way.

It is important to handle these issues with honesty and respect. It is also important to discuss your worries early on, rather than waiting until they have endured any of the damaging physical and emotional effects of eating disorders.

Because your loved one's health, or even their life, may be in danger, it is important not to keep your concerns a secret for fear of making them angry or getting them in trouble.

Other people in their life need to know so they can encourage them to acknowledge their problem and get help. If your friend is under 18, a trusted adult needs to know immediately.

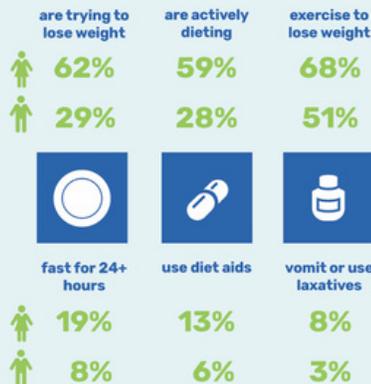
In a calm and caring way, talk to your loved one about specific things you see or feel. Share your memories of two or three times when you felt concerned, afraid, or uneasy because of their eating or exercise rituals. Talk about the feelings you experienced as a result of these events.

It is best to focus on the specific signs and symptoms that have caused you to feel concerned, not the person's weight or appearance. Try to do this in a very supportive, non-confrontational way.

#### Three suggestions to try:

- 1 **Use "I" statements.** "I'm concerned about you because you refuse to eat breakfast or lunch. I feel afraid when I hear you vomiting."
- 2 **Avoid accusatory "You" statements.** "You have to eat something! You're out of control!"
- 3 **Avoid giving simple solutions.** "If you'd just stop then everything would be fine."

### DIETING & DISORDERED EATING COMMON WITH TEENS<sup>2</sup>



In a large study of 14- and 15-year-olds, **dieting was the most important predictor of a developing eating disorder** compared to those who do not diet.

THOSE WHO DIETED MODERATELY were

**5X**

more likely to develop an eating disorder.<sup>1</sup>

THOSE WHO RESTRICTED EXTREMELY were

**18X**

more likely to develop an eating disorder.<sup>1</sup>

### YOUNG GIRLS ARE VULNERABLE

REGARDLESS OF THEIR WEIGHT, OVER 1/3 REPORT DIETING.<sup>3</sup>

### DIETS DON'T WORK

Americans spend over \$60 billion on dieting and diet products each year.<sup>11</sup>



**95% OF ALL DIETERS**

WILL REGAIN THEIR LOST WEIGHT IN FIVE YEARS.<sup>7a</sup>

And, multiple studies have found that **dieting was associated with greater weight gain and increased rates of binge eating** in both boys and girls.

### TEENS & UNHEALTHY WEIGHT CONTROL

Over 1/2 of teenage girls and 1/3 of teenage boys use unhealthy weight control behaviors such as:<sup>2</sup>



skipping meals



smoking cigarettes



fasting



vomiting/taking laxatives

GET SCREENED | [WWW.MYNEDA.ORG/SCREENING](http://WWW.MYNEDA.ORG/SCREENING)

GET HELP | CALL (800) 931-2237  
TEXT NEDA TO 741741

CITATIONS: [WWW.MYNEDA.ORG/INFOGRAPHICS](http://WWW.MYNEDA.ORG/INFOGRAPHICS)



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## FEBRUARY- MARCH

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
21	22	23 American String Quartet, Livestream	24	25	26 MSM Camerata Nova, Livestream  Campus Store Textbook Return Deadline	27
← National Eating Disorder Awareness Week →						
28 Student Council Meeting 6-7 PM  Recital: Elizabeth Fath, cello  Student Leadership Application Deadline	1 Setting the Stage: Music Production & Supervision Class Withdrawal Deadline Intervarsity Meeting	2	3 World Wildlife Day	4 American String Quartet, Livestream	5 MSM Camerata Nova, Livestream  Recital: Ricardo Javier Rodriguez, tenor & Elizabeth Anderson, soprano  Recital: Austin Zhang, jazz alto-saxophone	6 MSM Camerata Nova, Livestream  Recital: Arthi Nandakumar, soprano  Recital: Ashia Barnes, soprano
International Women's Month →			← Endometriosis Awareness Week →			
7 Recital: Stephanie Foster, soprano	8 International Working Women's Day	9 MSM String Chamber Orchestra, Livestream	10 Harriet Tubman Day  National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day	11 World Day of Muslim Culture, Peace, Dialogue and Film	12 Polar Bear Press Issue 06!	13

Want to see your event listed here?  
Email [msmpolarbearpress@gmail.com](mailto:msmpolarbearpress@gmail.com)

### A Note from the Editors:

We want to hear from you! Please send any student questions and submissions to [newspaper@msmnc.edu](mailto:newspaper@msmnc.edu) and stay tuned for the next issue on March 12th!

### Polar Bear Press Team

Mindy Holthe  
Editor in Chief

Jack Rittendale  
Managing Editor

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