COLUMBIA, Mo. • Call it ironic. Call it respect. Or call it a mere quirk.

But despite the University of Missouri's wobbly place less than two weeks ago, Mizzou chancellor Brady Deaton on Monday began a year-long term as chairman of the board of directors of the Big 12 Conference.

His rise from vice chairman to the seat formerly held by Texas president William Powers came after the Big 12 withstood an invasion by the Pac-10 and poaching from the Big Ten to remain viable despite losing Colorado and Nebraska.

At the height of the tumult, the conference was in jeopardy of dissolution with Texas, Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Texas A&M and Texas Tech weighing offers to leave that would have stranded MU in limbo after it had been widely perceived to be batting its eyes at the Big Ten.

While Deaton prefers now to focus on the future of the conference and simply said there was no offer from the Big Ten when asked if MU ever had any conversations with the league, during an interview in his office this week he reflected on some twists of the confounding last few months and looked ahead.

Q: What will you be trying to achieve as chair of the board?

A: We're going forward very aggressively and trying to work toward ensuring a strong commitment to the conference and where we're going from here, because I think this last go-round really did meld loyalties in a way that will add up for all of us. And we need that to happen. I think the Big 12 group feels good now. And I think there's a new sense of working together to really strengthen our brand beyond athletics. Clearly it's an athletic conference and we want it branded for excellence in athletics. But we also want to highlight some things that we were doing that we now realize more we were not calling that much attention to.

Q: You have longtime personal relationships all across the Big 12, but do you see wounds that have to be healed?

A: Yes. Right. I'm not so sure that it's germane toward a particular set of schools so much as it's permeated the fabric of the conference. This has been a difficult time, a bruising time. At the same time as we were going through it, we were all continuing to talk to each other and counsel. ... So it has truly remained quite collaborative in the way, even though there were pieces being
pulled in different directions. There has been a core commitment, and we have great respect for each other. That has never diminished. That played a role in why we’re still together in the Big 12.

Q: Gov. Jay Nixon is a devout supporter, but his jabs at Oklahoma State and Texas Tech when he was advocating talking and listening to the Big Ten had a role in the perception of Missouri as a divisive force in the Big 12. Have you spoken with him about that?

A: The governor and I chat about a lot of things. That has come up in discussion (laughs). He’s a big supporter, and we’re not shy of talking to each other. ... Certainly, the governor speaks for himself there. We aren’t consulted on those kinds of comments he makes. I do know that he was trying to help out the institution, and I think we all viewed it that way, but in no way would we want to encourage any disparagement of an other institutions in the Big 12. Or anywhere in the nation.

Q: In the telephonic board meetings you’ve had, has a binding new contract emerged or is the conference still tethered only by gentlemen’s agreements?

A: It came up at some point in the process, but it’s not being considered by the board at this point. We know it will be a point of discussion later this year, but it’s not been so far.

Q: Has there been any discussion of expanding back to 12 or more?

A: There has been a general sense that we like this 10-member conference and (that there are) some advantages in a 10-school conference at this point.

Q: Where does the board stand on such matters as whether to try to continue with a championship game, scheduling formats and other logistical issues that will have to be addressed when Colorado and Nebraska both are gone in the next few years?

A: They’re on the table identified as issues we need to be dealing with, and I have some sense of where the group is at this time, but I wouldn’t want to say "that's where we are" because we haven't made any decisions.

Q: What are your thoughts about shedding the North and South divisional labels in football?

A: I would see that as a big advantage. Those kinds of distinctions don't necessarily help much. ... (And) I think it would add to the potential for more collegiality.

Q: Along those lines, to some fans of North schools there is a sense that the South has undue influence and that the University of Texas is some sort of bully because of its power. What are your thoughts about that?

A: Let me say, first off, Texas has a wonderful group of administrators. Bill Powers and I always have been very close, and I know there's a strong mutual respect between our institutions. They happen to be in a location where they have significant amount of wealth that supports their
university, are in a very important state with a huge population, which makes them someone you want to draw on. They're very respected academically, and they're clearly very respected competitively and athletically. They command a big TV audience, (and) they're very important for the Big 12's overall revenue generation. I don't think most of us in the Big 12 have any criticism of the way they manage themselves and the success they have. That's all great. That happens to say, though, at the same time, that they are a very powerful institution and therefore that's recognized as we engage in the business of the Big 12.

Q: Speaking of the business of the Big 12, staggered revenue sharing based on television appearances has been cited as a source of frustration by Missouri and others. What does the future hold?

A: We have had ongoing board dialogue about the nature of the rules by which the Big 12 was formed, and that was with unequal distribution of income and revenue. Actually, we get a little more from the unequal revenue than we would were it equalized (MU received $10.4 million of the Big 12's $139 million distribution for 2009-10). But nevertheless we tend to argue for equal distribution. These are normal board matters that we talk about, and we've got to be free and open — and we are — in talking about that with each other in saying, 'What can we do to strengthen the conference?' There's some that feel more strongly about that than others.

Q: Among the reasons some Big 12 counterparts expressed exasperation with MU is an assertion MU publicly complained about revenue sharing while not working on it behind the scenes. Is that true?

A: No, no. It has been a point of in-depth board discussion. That doesn't necessarily mean board agreement, of course, but it does mean board acceptance of the disagreement. So that was there and probably led to some of the public comments we have seen about it. And looking back on them, maybe that was less than desirable at times. Most of that ought to be kept in-house, I think, because that's how we (best) govern ourselves.

Q: Since it became clear the Big 12 would survive for the foreseeable future, there has been some kind of disconnect about an apparent offer made to Texas, Oklahoma and Texas A&M, in particular by Missouri and the four other schools that would have been left scrambling had the conference gone bust. The Big 12 said the offer was to give up whatever exit money might be obtained from Colorado and Nebraska, and sources also spoke of a tiered system being put forth in the future, but MU denies both scenarios. Can you clarify the scene?

A: I really want to get it straight. This has been really a confusing item. ... It's the linking of two unrelated things, to be honest with you, that's what happened. Two totally unrelated (matters) and yet they got in the same conversation and we've never been able to disentangle them. Of course, there will be some exit fees paid by Colorado and Nebraska under the Big 12 contract. That's under discussion right now. I say "exit fees," (but) it's actually our bylaws provide for withholding of some of the revenue. If and when that occurs — in case it's contested in any way I don't want to say it's done — if that should occur, it's actually money that comes into the Big 12 coffers and is just part of our general revenue that would be distributed according to our regular formula. That's a totally separate set of issues. They got linked only because they're both talking
about money. ... (When) it was likely, we felt, that some of the institutions may have to give up significant revenue streams to remain in the Big 12, the five institutions that were not part of that process (Missouri, Kansas, Kansas State, Iowa State and Baylor were asked) would we be willing to make some show of support that we could allow a transitional option (in the next TV contracts) to provide incentives for those schools to remain in the Big 12. And we agreed to that. And we did it in the context of looking to our future media contract, knowing what was more or less on the table already in our discussion, knowing that overall we would all gain from this (and) we made that commitment as a show of good faith offer. We're not going to be penny wise and pound foolish here. ... What's happened since then, of course, is that Texas and Oklahoma have publicly said they appreciate the support shown by the conference. but they just want to go forward with the regular distribution of revenue that would have occurred anyway. It's never been taken up by the board, and it may never be. For the most part it's off the table at this time.

Q: Was that where the tiering talk emerged?

A: Exactly. When that started, all of us were a little surprised: "How did we get to there from this?" This all was occurring in the heat of the moment. We were making these commitments without having anything in writing agreed to. So as a result of that, everybody went forward with nothing (solid) to refer to and it got talked about it in so many ways. Between the CEOs and (athletics directors), you just had all kinds of words and everybody just started putting this fabric together. And it's been very difficult to parse that out. It's not a complicated issue, really, but if you ask five of us you might get some different wording on this.

Q: Much has been made about Texas retaining the right to create its own network, but other schools such as Oklahoma are exploring it and MU is free to as well. Are there any such plans?

A: It's very embryonic, let me say. Certainly, we along with any other schools will keep options like that open to the extent it doesn't jeopardize our major media contracts. In the past, at least, the technical (aspects) and the markets have suggested that's not a viable option. But with the changes that are occurring in the media world and with the technology — our journalism school is undertaking all kinds of innovative ways of addressing the mass market — we at least ought to have that discussion under way in case there is a major breakthrough. It's something that we will continue to keep or minds open to.

Q: Speaking of media, you've had a lot of microphones, cameras and tape recorders in your face lately. Has this been a hard time for you?

A: Really, I don't mind that. I understand it. I honor it. I mean, heavens, we really value journalism here. And I mean that. I'm with Thomas Jefferson — a free press is the most important freedom we have.

Q: What have you learned through all this?

A: It's been a time of tremendous reflection on our own strengths and weaknesses and I'm sure I'm probably speaking for most of the other institutions. So that helps you get yourself in perspective. For the most part, that's been some good news for us. Missouri is a valuable product
from a sports standpoint, and we want to use that in the most effective way possible for those who've invested so much in the university.
Newspaper group set to exit MU
Association can’t reach deal with the J-School.

By JANISE SILVEY

The National Newspaper Association is severing its ties to the University of Missouri and seeking headquarters elsewhere after failing to reach an agreement with the School of Journalism.

"We explored our future needs with the dean of the University of Missouri School of Journalism, with whom NNA contracts for management services, to request a change in management focus to guide NNA's mission," NNA President Cheryl Kaechele said in a statement. "We did not reach an agreement."

The association wanted to replace Executive Director Brian Steffens, who has served in the role for eight years. But under the university's agreement with the association, the six on-campus staff members, including Steffens, are MU employees.

Last week, Dean Mills, dean of the journalism school, said association board members told him they wanted to abolish the executive director position and replace it with a general manager. "I said I can't do that," Mills said. "It's our employee, not an NNA employee, and I can't do that because I think Brian Steffens has done a terrific job."

The association moved to Columbia from Washington, D.C., in 2002 on the brink of bankruptcy. With the university providing staff, space and support in exchange for a fee, it has been able to grow healthy reserves. "NNA came out here on the ropes," said Doug Crews, executive director of the Missouri Press Association. "Their finances were pretty much depleted. They've been able to do a turnaround and are on firm ground."

Now that association can afford to do so, the board wants back the power to hire its own staff. Jim Sterling, an MU journalism professor, said he fears the group also is looking for an excuse to move back to Washington.

"What you've got are people who want to see the association move back to Washington after they moved out of Washington broke," he said. "Now they want to move the entire thing back to Washington with money in the bank."

Sterling is an association board member but was not allowed to participate in discussions because of his university role. He said he's upset with the way things happened.

Tonda Rush, interim executive director and legal counsel for the association, said the group is interested in staying in Columbia even after it leaves the MU campus. Some suspect, though, that the group is only interested in staying here through the end of the year because a cross-country move now would conflict with the timing of its annual conference in the fall.
Meanwhile, Steffens is in limbo. He's recovering from an operation but was expecting to return to work on Tuesday when he learned through Mills of the change. Steffens said he still plans to go into the office, which is university property, but said the association has stripped him of his duties.

Steffens said he's not sure why the board wanted him gone. As for a focus on marketing to community newspapers, Steffens said he's been doing that, with a push in the past two years to retain and add new members and focus on studies of smaller markets.

"The guy did a great job," Sterling said. "I can't understand what they're thinking."

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Grant will boost MU’s ability in genetic code research

By JOEL WALSH

The University of Missouri is receiving advanced computing technology that will allow researchers to better understand the genetic code of humans, plants and animals.

A grant from IBM — valued at between $175,000 and $200,000 — will supply the university with more storage space and more powerful processors through its four-campus Bioinformatics Consortium. More than 70 additional central processing units will be stored at an MU data center in Columbia, growing the university’s disk space by about 5 percent.

The consortium allows researchers with the university’s computer science programs, medical schools and Christopher S. Bond Life Sciences Center to collect biological data and share information in real time.

The new technology will allow doctors at Columbia’s Ellis Fischel Cancer Center to sequence a person’s DNA more quickly, said consortium scientific director Gordon Springer, or it could help university researchers develop new vaccines or drought-resistant corn.

Springer said the university also has begun discussions with outside researchers to use the new technology to eventually create a shared network of information that universities and private companies can access along an “animal health corridor” stretching from Manhattan, Kan., to Columbia.

Springer said the university’s new system should be fully functioning within a month.

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IBM teams with MU to boost genome work
Deal unrelated to new facility.

By JANISE SILVEY
Published July 2, 2019 at 12:01 a.m.
Updated July 3, 2019 at 1:32 p.m.

IBM has awarded the University of Missouri a cluster of computers and software that will give scientists the infrastructure needed to more efficiently analyze research findings.

The goal is to advance bioinformatics research projects already under way on the MU campus. That research includes the study of genome sequences in plants and animals to improve the quality of food production or to fight the spread of diseases.

Those studies are among the highest priorities of the university's research mission, said Gordon Springer, scientific director of the UM Bioinformatics Consortium and an associate professor. But to continue the work, researchers need computing resources.

"This particular award will provide some computational facilities to help us better be able to analyze massive amounts of data being generated by researchers on this campus and across the university," he said.

Two machines now in the life sciences building on campus spew out 5 terabytes of data — or more than 5,000 gigabytes — per week, Springer said. "No human could handle or evaluate all of that data without the use of computers."

There are multiple real-world applications for the research, although Springer said he wouldn't expect those studies to translate to commercialized products for at least five to 10 years. But, ultimately, research of DNA sequencing has the ability to allow doctors to detect genetic problems within minutes or find ways to improve the quality of plants and meats.

The cluster of computers, which will be housed at the telecommunications building at College Avenue and Ashland Gravel Road, is valued at between $175,000 and $200,000, Springer said. "These machines will allow us to add on to the existing infrastructure and allow us to do more work in a shorter amount of time," he said.

IBM is donating the iDataPlex high-performance computing system and related software through its Shared University Research award, said Jeff Tieszen, spokesman for IBM.

The second phase of the partnership will let IBM and MU use that high-performance technology to create a prototype cloud computing environment for genomic research, which will allow scientists to share findings and discoveries with researchers from around the world through public and private networks.

The partnership has been about a year in the making, Tieszen said, and is unrelated to IBM's decision to locate a new center in Columbia.
IBM, University of Missouri push Kansas City-region genomics research

IBM and the University of Missouri plan to cast a “cloud” over Kansas, Missouri and the Midwest in an effort to bolster the Kansas City region’s life sciences industry.

The two entities announced a partnership Friday to advance the sharing and collaboration of DNA sequencing and analysis among the region’s universities and institutions. They’re referring to the project as the “IBM-MU genomics cloud.”

In an effort to expedite the sequencing and analysis of DNA in humans and animals, IBM (NYSE: IBM) will provide MU with a high-powered computer system known as iDataPlex. The system would remove labs as the middleman, reducing from weeks to minutes the time it takes to sequence and analyze DNA samples.

“The availability of these resources will enable discoveries that will benefit mankind and the environment,” Gordon Springer, associate professor in the MU Computer Science Department and scientific director of the University of Missouri Bioinformatics Consortium, said in the release.

Dan Getman, president of the Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute Inc., said the project is a “great example of an academic-industry partnership.”

“This will have far-reaching implications for the University of Missouri system and potential collaborations across the greater KC region,” he said.

After the iDataPlex system is installed, IBM will work with MU to develop a one-of-a-kind information network. The network, or cloud, would allow universities and institutions to share discoveries and collaborate on research projects to advance genomics and bioinformatics in the region.

“This project will not only benefit the University of Missouri, it will help establish the Midwest as a life sciences research hub,” Elmer Corbin, IBM’s director of university alliances, said in the release.
MU received the opportunity as a recipient of IBM's Shared University Research Award.

The Kansas City Area Life Sciences Institute, a nonprofit that oversees the area's life sciences push, reported in May that seven life sciences firms joined the region, which stretches from Manhattan, Kan., to Columbia, Mo.
No arrest in officer inquiry
Detectives take up MUPD case.

By BRENNAN DAVID

A criminal investigation continues into the case of a University of Missouri police officer who resigned in April after supervisors learned of a flash drive found in a patrol vehicle that allegedly contained pornographic images of children.

Officer Nathan Roberts submitted his resignation after a weeklong investigation by the department's Internal Affairs Division. Chief Jack Watring confirmed the resignation in April.

The criminal investigation is ongoing, said Tracy Perkins, a Mid-Missouri Internet Crimes Task Force detective. No warrants had been issued for the former officer's arrest as of yesterday. The Internet task force declined to comment further on the active investigation.

The officer allegedly left a "thumb drive" in his patrol vehicle's computer in March, and it was discovered by another officer who used the vehicle on the following shift, Watring previously confirmed.

The officer who discovered the thumb drive containing the images immediately turned it over to his supervisor, and Roberts was suspended for the duration of the investigation.

Internal investigators shared their discovery with Roberts upon the completion of their investigation, and he wrote his resignation immediately on the nearest blank sheet of paper he could find and walked out the door, Watring said.

The criminal investigation was turned over to the Internet crimes task force after the internal inquiry. Watring said the department followed standard procedure concerning the incident and was careful not to mix its internal investigation with the criminal investigation.

Records related to the internal affairs investigation are permanently sealed because the investigations were handled separately, said David Russell, MU records custodian. Records from the criminal investigation will not be accessible to the public until the investigation concludes.

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MU professor taking Rutgers job

June 22, 2010

Jackie Litt is leaving her post as associate professor and chairwoman of the University of Missouri's Women's & Gender Studies Department to take a position at Rutgers University.

She becomes dean of Douglass Residential College and the Douglass Campus at Rutgers on Sept. 1. The residential college is a community of students who elect to participate in a women's leadership curriculum, and the campus features residences for women who share similar interests.

Litt has received a number of teaching awards, has published two books and is involved in Mizzou Advance to increase the advancement of women in science, technology, engineering and math. She also has been involved in the study of women affected by Hurricane Katrina.
Happy patients could mean fatter wallets for University of Missouri health care workers

By Associated Press

4:01 AM CDT, July 5, 2010

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — University of Missouri health care workers could see fatter wallets for pleasing their patients.

The university health care system plans to pay employees an $800 bonus next year for reaching a 90 percent patient satisfaction rate. The incentive is also based on clearing $30 million in profits.

The Columbia Daily Tribune reported that hospital leaders unveiled the program at a June 30 town hall meeting for employees.

The system posted an 88.1 patient satisfaction rate this year but plans to offer tips to employees on how to increase that number.

Clearing the second hurdle could be easier. The hospital system has had profit margins of more than $30 million each of the past five years.
MU research farm, local business testing biomass compressor

COLUMBIA — MU’s Bradford Research and Extension Center farm and a local business have built a machine that can compact corncobs, switchgrass and other biomass so four times as much material can fit in the same amount of space.

Instead of needing an 18-wheeler truck to move biomass to burn as fuel for electricity and ethanol, the same amount could be transported in a dump truck.

"We're able to repackage it into a size that's usable rather than bulk material," said Jesse VanEngelenhoven, research director of the Columbia firm Ecologic Tech.

There are two major advantages to compacting biomass: lower transportation costs for hauling the same amount of material and lower emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide.

Tim Reinbott, the farm's superintendent, said burning biomass recycles carbon into the atmosphere; burning fossil fuels adds carbon.

The farm is testing to see how different materials compact in the "tabletizer," including wood and miscanthus grass.

"We'll have a way of converting our grasses and waste products into something usable," Reinbott said. "What we're hoping to start with is something that can be used on the farm itself."

In 2007, Ecologic Tech received a grant for about $100,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to design a machine that compacts biomass. In 2009, it received a second
grant for an additional $100,000 from the U.S. Department of Energy to build the machine.

Ecologic Tech is a local company of seven people that former MU civil engineering professor Henry Liu started when he retired in 2000. Liu died in a car crash in December 2009.

VanEngelenhoven said the tabletizer can produce the same amount of biomass tablets using half the energy of other machines on the market. The machine uses a hydraulic system to push a piston into a mold to compress the biomass.

The biomass compactor might provide farmers with an additional supply of income if they sell their scraps and waste material.

"Some of these products are something that has no use already," Reinbott said. "This gives us some value to something that normally doesn't have value."

The technology would make switchgrass a valuable crop for farms to grow to make biofuel tablets.

Ecologic Tech has applied for additional federal energy funds to refine the design and build a machine for commercial use that could produce two to three tons of biomass tablets per hour, compared with the one-tenth ton per hour the current machine produces.
Elite Inspiration
Mizzou New Music summer Festival leads fans on an adventure in performance, new compositions.

By AARIK DANIELSEN
Sunday, July 4, 2010

The thrill of adventure and the thrill of feeling you’ve finally arrived are often mutually exclusive delights. Not so at the Mizzou New Music Summer Festival.

Eight young composers’ works will premiere at the festival, experiencing an increased sense of legitimacy while no doubt enjoying the goosebumps traveling up their limbs as the first strains of a piece are performed for the first time by a group other than the chamber orchestras that have taken up residence in their minds. For the music community at the University of Missouri and Columbia at large, the inaugural incarnation is a big, bold undertaking but one that signals the area is quickly establishing itself as a haven for sonic creativity. The festival will be held July 12-18, with a variety of performances and workshops open to the public.

From among an international pool of 120 contenders, eight clearly distinguished themselves, earning the right to be called resident composers and have works debuted: Francisco Cortés-Álvarez, Christopher Dietz, Paul Dooley, Moon Young Ha, Edie Hill, Amy Beth Kirsten, Jeremy Podgursky and Zhou Juan. Each applicant was asked to submit three works, one of which demonstrates an understanding of what it takes to compose for larger ensembles; Stefan Freund, MU composition professor and one of the festival’s organizers, said this is a true test of a composer’s mettle as character and creativity can often be expressed more effortlessly in works for smaller groups.

"Are their ideas clearly coming through in the orchestration, or is it bogged down by having all these instruments?" he said, citing the example of a rock concert where musical clarity and tunefulness are sometimes lost in a densely constructed wall of sound. "What you want, ideally, with large ensemble music is for those ideas to be amplified rather than muddied."
AN INSPIRATIONAL FESTIVAL FACULTY

Freund was pleased with the diversity — demographically, geographically and, of course, musically — represented in the final lineup. Not only will this elite eight have the chance to hear their music rehearsed and performed, but they will receive private lessons throughout the week from two distinguished composers serving as festival faculty: Martin Bresnick and Derek Bermel. The fest's framework was designed to feature both a “senior” and “junior” faculty member, the designations based on years of experience, Freund said.

Serving as sage and statesman is Bresnick. Currently a faculty member at the Yale School of Music, he is a highly decorated musician whose compositions have been heard in remarkably diverse contexts — from great symphony halls to new music festivals, documentary soundtracks to solo piano performances. Bresnick has won numerous awards and fellowships; he has also played both the role of the learned master — with posts at Stanford, Harvard, Duke, Oxford, the Royal Academy of Music and Eastman School of Music, among others — and the student sitting at the feet of masters, having studied with brilliant composers such as György Ligeti.

As his website says, Bresnick “delights in reconciling the seemingly irreconcilable” and fuses the rhythmic repetition of a minimalist with “a harmonic palette that encompasses both highly chromatic sounds and more open, consonant harmonies and a raw power reminiscent of rock.” His soul-stirring compositions are imbued both with advanced musical techniques and a soft, human touch. Bresnick was the perfect person to fill this role, Freund said, because of his work at the Norfolk Contemporary Music Seminar, after which the festival was patterned. Freund himself sat in the student composer chair there once and found Bresnick’s instruction incredibly inspirational.

Of the younger songsmith, the Chicago Tribune wrote Bermel “may not be a household name yet, but if there is any justice in the music world, he soon will be.” The Grammy-nominated artist has served as composer-in-residence for the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and American Composers Orchestra and received commissions from the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and many symphonies including St. Louis. His music runs the gamut from jazz-inflected orchestral pieces, which are at turns quirky and chaotic, to slow-burning, cinematic works, discordant violin yearnings to hyper-percussive, hypersonic works that sashay from an artful avant-garde sound to jaunty swing rhythms.

Equally remarkable is Bermel's talent on clarinet — he's played alongside Wynton Marsalis and under the direction of renowned composer and conductor John Adams. “He’s the real deal in terms of a guy who just lives and breathes music … he's always doing something whether it's performing, improvising, composing,” Freund said, affirming Bresnick and Bermel were his chief selections when considering who should helm the festival.

ALARM WILL SOUND VISITS FOR FIRST TIME

Freund’s top choices will have choice performers at their disposal over the course of the festival. Performing for the first time in Columbia is acclaimed ensemble Alarm Will Sound, of which Freund is a member. The 20-person collective brings intense focus and an active presence to their concerts, Freund said. “I think the music that fits us the best is music that has some kind of rhythmic drive, dynamic contrast and contrast in orchestration, he said.
The group's repertoire is tremendous; they've played compositions by everyone from Renaissance master Josquin des Prez to 20th century genius Steve Reich, electronic artist Aphex Twin to original pieces by group members. They've covered the gaps between Bach and the Beatles, Ravel and Zappa, Philip Glass and Jelly Roll Morton, Charles Ives and Leonard Bernstein, John Cage and John Cale.

Sitting at the apex of modern music, the members of Alarm Will Sound have remarkably managed to express diversity, unity and individuality all at once. Although the group needs remarkable cohesion to pull off such wide-ranging pieces, they let their own personalities shine through each performance, something Freund said is easier to do in a chamber group. He compared chamber ensembles like Alarm Will Sound to a basketball team where players' distinctions come through; full orchestras play something that's more like football, a "behemoth that's led by this coach or this conductor, and it's all very finely directed."

DOWN UNDER POWER ON THE PIANO

Also bringing a unique performance style and worldwide acclaim to the festival is Australian pianist Lisa Moore. Moore, married to Bresnick, is a master interpreter who has demonstrated an almost chameleon-like ability to channel her gifts into any style. Moore has collaborated with everyone from Glass to Sonic Youth rocker Thurston Moore and jazz great Ornette Coleman, partnerships that have "stretched my own abilities and imagination beyond where I thought I could go artistically and musically," she said in an e-mail.

She is known for incorporating a variety of elements including singing and video projection into her performances; Freund described her style as "very theatrical." To access all the human drama inherent in a piece of music, Moore said she must engage with a number of physical and mental practices, including "breathing, imagining the sound before playing, having an image and a story for the piece, lots of practice at the piano, hearing the music in one's head away from the instrument, trying different interpretations and having the patience to stick at it."

THE DREAMS OF FREUND, SINQUEFIELD

This convergence of new musical ideas and time-tested performers has the potential to move MU one more step down a road on which Freund and prominent new music patron Jeanne Sinquefield embarked in creating the Mizzou New Music Initiative. Under the initiative's umbrella, scholarships, a camp for high school composers and composition contests have been instituted in an effort to realize Sinquefield's long-held dream of seeing Columbia become a new music mecca much like those found in Europe centuries ago.

"If you go back to when Beethoven was writing music in Austria, there was a whole community where composers got paid to write new pieces, you had orchestras play the music and had audiences," she said in a January article. "What we're trying to do is grow up the composers." Freund believes the young composers coming to Columbia this month will come away with a vision for what is happening here, then take the experience back to their respective communities, schools and students, singing MU's praises and ensuring that song becomes stuck in the heads of great future composers.

Of course, the festival is not merely for composers or academics but for crowds interested in hearing past influences, present greatness and future promise converge at once. Freund said the direction of new music, which will be audible at the festival, can't be summed as a single pathway but a bringing together of multiple directions. Whereas composers once claimed specific styles and schools, shutting out those
from other traditions, artists of the iPod generation have become musical pluralists, a truth evidenced in the credits of all those involved.

“What happened with my generation is that we grew up with an attitude that it’s all right to like those different composers’ music even though they didn’t like each other’s music,” he said. “That’s the real difference so you might hear within one piece references to different styles of music or integration of different types of styles.”

This same desire to branch out felt by composers is needed for audiences to fully experience and embrace the sounds they will hear. “This is not going to be the most acerbic music known to man, and it’s probably not going to be the most accessible music known to man,” Freund said. Those with an adventurous ear who want to be challenged, who want to hear something new and interesting, will find themselves rewarded, he said.

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COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) — Eight international composers will debut new material at a summer music festival sponsored by the University of Missouri.

The inaugural Mizzou New Music Summer Festival runs July 12 through July 18 at the Missouri Theater Center for the Arts in Columbia.

The festival is the centerpiece of the Mizzou New Music Initiative, created last year with a $1 million donation from philanthropists Rex and Jeanne Sinquefield.