

**FALCETTI MUSIC, INC. DONATES LOBBY
FOR
NEWLY RENOVATED CONCERT HALL
AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS IN AMHERST**

Falcetti Music, Inc. and the University of Massachusetts Department of Music & Dance have had a long and fruitful partnership for many years now. Starting in 1995 Falcetti and the Yamaha Corporation began providing high quality pianos for the Department to use during the academic year. At the end of each spring semester the instruments are sold by Falcetti to alumni, friends and music lovers. The pianos have been invaluable, allowing the Department to offer its students excellent instruments on which to practice and perform with virtually no cost. This is becoming increasingly important to a Department that is struggling with reduced budgets from the State of Massachusetts.

The Falcettis have contributed in others ways as well. On Sunday, April 13, 2003 the Department of Music & Dance celebrated the reopening of a newly renovated 200-seat concert Hall--Bezanson Recital Hall. During the fundraising phase of the project, a sizeable gift from Falcetti Music helped the Department achieve its goal. As a result, the brand new lobby of the Hall bears the Falcetti name.

"Now we finally have a Hall to match the outstanding level of the performances presented by faculty, visiting artists and advanced students," said Ernest May, former Chairman of the Department of Music & Dance who is now Secretary of the Faculty Senate. This Hall will have an impact on alumni, community members, parents, friends, and faculty, students, and staff of the University. "Thanks to the Falcetti Family and our other donors, there now sits on the Amherst campus a little gem of a concert hall--a beautiful, intimate space where music of all kinds can be enjoyed by audiences and performers alike," said Marilyn Kushick, the Department's Director of Advancement.

Bezanson Recital Hall has a complicated history. The initial blueprints for the Fine Arts Center, where Bezanson is located, included a major, 2500-seat concert hall with no space for a smaller setting so vital to a center for the performing arts. The space that became the small concert hall was created out of an area originally designated as a faculty lounge. Surprisingly, Bezanson Recital Hall had excellent acoustics from the outset. However, it came with several major flaws. Principally, it lacked sound insulation. The musicians on stage and the audience were disturbed by sounds emanating from the corridor and rehearsal rooms on the level below. Sounds also infiltrated from the Hall's lobby. The backstage area was tiny and cluttered with chairs, stands and instruments, leaving the performers virtually no room for themselves or their instruments. Time and use took its toll on the Hall, as well.

With space at a premium on the UMass campus, the Hall was used as a classroom AND a concert hall. Students with little respect for the sanctity of a concert hall, left their imprint through wads of gum and graffiti. The original seats and the carpet held up for many years but did succumb to wear and tear.

With \$300,000 raised by the Department, it proceeded to bring the project to the attention of the UMass Facilities Planning Division which hired architects and acousticians. Additional funds for the project were provided by the President's Reserve Fund, Office of the Chancellor, the General Education Fund and the Provost's Office. Lee Edwards, Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, was most supportive of the project from its earliest days until its completion.

Bezanson Recital Hall has been transformed. Sound insulation prevents the penetration of noise from outside the Hall. New carpeting and newly re-upholstered seats have been installed. Undulating wood paneling now covers large portions of the bare concrete side walls. The old harsh lighting fixtures are gone. The expanded lobby includes the area between what was the Hall's old lobby and the south wall of the Music Wing. In addition, it has been enclosed by a set of doors. A new, lighted sign with the name of the Hall greets concert goers and makes Bezanson Recital Hall easy to find. The parking directly across the street from the Hall now has Handicapped-designated parking spaces and a newly installed ramp leads from the lot to the street. For the artists, a new stage was installed and the back stage area reconfigured to allow for more space and easily accessible storage of instruments, stands and chairs.

"This Hall is now an absolute joy to perform in," said soprano and Professor of Voice Paulina Stark, who performed at the opening concert for donors to the renovation project. "We waited a very long time but now we have one of the best halls for chamber music in the State and New England. I look forward to every concert that my students and I will give or hear in Bezanson."

Donors and University officials were invited to the official opening of the Hall on Sunday, April 13. It included two concerts, one at 4 pm and one at 7 pm with a reception in the Lobby of the Fine Arts Center between the two at 5:30 pm at which Chancellor John Lombardi and other dignitaries spoke. The concerts were performed by UMass Department of Music & Dance faculty members and the Department's Chamber Choir.