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## Musical Duo Brings Experience and Energy to Campus

Ole Miss students to rehearse and perform with Jenny Conlee and Kelly Hogan

OCTOBER 21, 2021 BY LYNN ADAMS WILKINS

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Lillian Starrett, a sophomore music education major, rehearses a number on guitar. The Hernando native, who is set to perform Oct. 29 in bands with visiting artists Jenny Conlee and Kelly Hogan, said her career goal is to become a professional musician. Submitted photo

OXFORD, Miss. – The **University of Mississippi Department of Music** and **Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies** are welcoming professional musicians Jenny Conlee and Kelly Hogan to campus for a weeklong residency that includes master classes, an acoustic performance by the duo and a concert featuring UM students.

Conlee, a member of the Grammy-nominated indie rock quartet The Decemberists, and singer-songwriter Hogan are slated for several campus events the week of Oct. 25. They also are serving as the inaugural artists-in-residence for **Sarahfest**.

“This is such a fun, different, powerful learning experience for our students,” said Nancy Maria Balach, chair and professor of music. “We’re excited to partner with our friends at the Sarah Isom Center and **Living Music Resource** to provide this opportunity to students.”

One such student, Lillian Starrett, is a sophomore music education major from Hernando who said she may have found her calling by rehearsing and performing with Conlee and Hogan. An experienced clarinetist, Starrett grew up performing with band, jazz band and other school-based opportunities, all while continuing to play guitar, her first instrument, on the side.

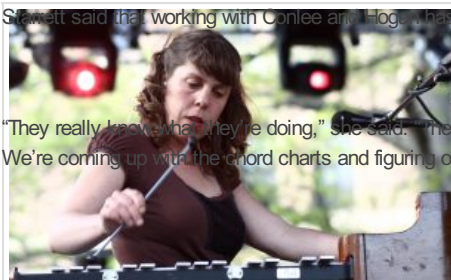
“This is my first time in an actual band, though, and it’s what I’ve always wanted to do,” she said.

Starrett said that working with Conlee and Hogan has been a fantastic experience, and it’s been fun to add another kind of music-making to her music education experience.

“They really know what they’re doing,” she said. “They’re so talented, but they’re also very laid-back. We’re coming up with the chord charts and figuring out the music ourselves, which leaves a lot of room for creativity.”

“I definitely enjoy the other parts of my degree work, and it’s fun to do something so different, too.”

Although Starrett’s main instrument is clarinet, she will be playing guitar and singing back-up in



Jenny Conlee performs with The Decemberists at Yale University’s ‘Spring Fling’ in 2009. Courtesy photo

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#### Donations Sought for 25th Annual Books and Bears Program

OXFORD, Miss. – The University of Mississippi is asking the community to help spread a little joy this holiday season by donating to the 25th annual Books and Bears program. Donations such as toys, books, dolls, bicycles and other children’s play items are being accepted through Dec. 14. All donations will be collected and sorted

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#### Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship Aims to Build Leaders

OXFORD, Miss. – Twenty-five inaugural recipients of the Mississippi Excellence in Coaching Fellowship – a program hosted by the University of Mississippi School of Education in partnership with the Mississippi Association of Coaches and the Mississippi High School Activities Association – are expected to increase their impact on student-athletes and their communities. The coaching fellowship

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#### Clarion-Ledger: New Essay Collection Tells the Story of Meredith’s Enrollment

Essays celebrate 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s enrollment at University of Mississippi By Lauren Rhoades Oct. 1 marks the 60th anniversary of James Meredith’s 1962 enrollment at the University of Mississippi as the school’s first African-American student.

a band with Conlee and fellow Ole Miss student Bryant Stubbs.

The audition process reflected the sort of collaborative music experience that students could expect, Starrett said. The students first were asked to learn a song by Hogan.

"Then, you added your own things, took a solo, basically jammed to the song so they could see your style," Starrett said. "After that I was asked to play whatever I wanted, so I played a song I wrote.

"Basically, they were looking to see the ways you take the music into your own hands."

Starrett, Stubbs and student Larry Duvall will perform with Conlee in a pop-rock-Americana band. Students performing with Conlee in a jazz-soul-blues band include Michael Wells, Alexis Rose, Miranda Shapiro, Nicholas Bottesini and Duvall.

The bands will perform separately and then come together for a finale bash featuring both Conlee and Hogan in a free Club Sarahfest concert at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 29 in the Ole Miss Band Hall.

Other events in this residency week include:

- **Monday (Oct. 25):** master class; 1 p.m., Nutt Auditorium
- **Wednesday (Oct. 27):** master class; 1 p.m., Nutt Auditorium
- **Thursday (Oct. 28):** "Thacker Mountain Radio Hour"; 6 p.m., **Kelly Hogan** Old Armory Pavilion
- **Saturday (Oct. 30):** Interview on "LMR Live"; 3 p.m., Nutt Auditorium

All events are free and open to the public.

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"James Meredith: Breaking the Barrier," a collection of essays edited by UM professor of journalism Kathleen Wickham, honors this historic milestone with

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