

## **Dr. Michael Hix**

### **Recent research publications and presentations:**

Dr. Michael Hix recently completed his book *An American Organist in Paris: The Letters of Orville Lee Erwin 1930-1931*. The book examines the life and musical career of Alabama organist/composer Lee Erwin. Letters written while Erwin was studying in Paris form the core of the book. He writes of his lessons with famed organist André Marchal, harmony lessons with Jean Verd, classes with Nadia Boulanger, and dinner parties with Olivier Messiaen. Erwin's letters do not provide only the singular experiences of a young musician, but reflect the common experiences shared by the multitude of American composers who studied in France during this time. They thus serve as a window through which the reader can view the musical culture of France in the early 20th century. Paired with the letters from France is a biographical chapter on Erwin, which outlines his extensive musical career and impact on the silent film music revival in the 20th century. The book, which will be published by Scarecrow Press, will be available in April 2012.

Dr. Hix has also contributed a chapter to the upcoming book *Jewish Music and Germany After the Holocaust*. The chapter, entitled "The Collaboration of composer Paul Dessau and singer Lin Jaldati," examines Dessau's lieder composed for Lin Jaldati with discussions of the artists' friendship, their collaborative process, Dessau's musical style, and the themes of their songs. The chapter also focuses on the 1969 Setting of Erich Fried's text "Höre, Israel," which allows for a discussion of how Dessau and Jaldati negotiated Jewish identity politics and Anti-Zionism in the GDR. A Summer Research Grant from the Faculty Development Committee allowed Dr. Hix to travel the Akademie der Künste Musikarchiv in Berlin to carry out the research for this book chapter.

Dr. Hix also presented the research he undertook in Berlin at the National Conferences of the College Music Society and the American Musicological Society.