The Hartt School’s Preludio Saxophone Quartet placed second in the 2008 National Collegiate Chamber Music Competition. The quartet won local, state, and regional rounds to earn the right to travel to Denver, Colo., last March for the finals, held during the Music Teachers National Association Conference.

Adjunct professor Carrie Koffman teaches saxophone at Hartt and coaches the group. She notes, “This is a phenomenal accomplishment. Our students were in the company of extremely high-level players from across the country. They created some incredibly communicative and beautiful art music and were deservedly rewarded.”

Founded in 2006, the Preludio Quartet members (l-r in photo) are Nick Statzer ’09, an acoustics and music and saxophone performance major, who plays soprano saxophone; acoustics and music major Scott Edwards ’11, who plays alto saxophone; Dan Luongo ’09, who completes his bachelor’s degree in music education/instrumental music in May and plays baritone saxophone; and Steve Fitzgerald M’08, who received his Master of Music at Commencement and plays tenor saxophone.
Professor John Feierabend of The Hartt School has a goal: to make the world more musical. This fall his efforts will go national in a new PBS television series for young children called *Lomax: The Hound of Music.* “I often say I have a 30-year plan,” says Feierabend. “That’s why I’m teaching kids of this age. Thirty years from now, I want them to be musical enough to be able to sing a lullaby to their babies.”

Produced by Sirius Thinking and presented by Connecticut Public Television, *Lomax* is scheduled to debut in October. It is based on Feierabend’s renowned “First Steps in Music” curriculum, a music-and-movement program for infants through early elementary-aged children.

The series stars two puppets: a dog named Lomax and his feline sidekick, Delta. The chums sing as they travel across the United States on a train called the Melody Hound Express. They ask young viewers to sing along and to get up and move to the music. These techniques are scientifically proven to give young children the lifelong gift of music.

“It helps them become more tuneful, beatful, and artful,” Feierabend explains. “If you’re tuneful, you can sing together with others; if you’re beatful, you can dance together with others; if you’re artful, you will enjoy sharing beautiful moments in music together with others.”

The 13-part *Lomax* series focuses on developing in three- to seven-year-olds a greater appreciation of American folk music. Over the course of his career, Feierabend has been committed to collecting and teaching folk music, believing that it helps build community. Characteristically, *Lomax* features songs like “Michael, Row the Boat Ashore,” “Turkey in the Straw,” and “Buffalo Gals.”

Director of the music education division at The Hartt School, Feierabend is considered one of the leading authorities on music development in early childhood. The Hartt Community Division at the University offers “First Steps in Music” parent/child classes to children ages birth to 5. Undergraduate music education students study the curriculum in their junior year and attend the Community Division classes as a lab. Pedagogy in Early Childhood Music, a graduate-level course, is based on the “First Steps in Music” curriculum and is required for graduate students pursuing a master’s or doctorate in music education with an early-childhood emphasis. Many Hartt graduates are teaching “First Steps in Music” early-childhood music classes or using the curriculum in lower-elementary classrooms throughout the United States.

Feierabend is the author of more than 60 books, articles, CDs, and videos. These credentials helped him secure a grant from The Bingham Trust, which made *Lomax* possible. The trust selected Feierabend in part because of the program’s potential to change culture, by making people more musical.

“If you can do that, imagine what else you can do,” Feierabend says. “You can sing ‘Happy Birthday’ with your kids, you can sing together with the community, you can sing at worship. But if you can’t sing, you’re left out of that community and all those people who are finding joy through music.”
Mapping the Legacy of Sobibor

HARTFORD TEAM PROBES DEEPER INTO HOLOCAUST HISTORY

Using state-of-the-art geophysical techniques, such as ground-penetrating radar and electromagnetics technology, a University of Hartford team made remarkable discoveries at the Sobibor concentration camp in Poland this summer. Up to 200,000 people were killed during World War II at the camp before a successful 1943 rebellion allowed about half of the camp’s 600 prisoners to escape. Within days the Nazis buried the site and planted trees over it.

Last year a team led by Richard Freund, director of the University’s Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, mapped the surface of the camp using electromagnetics, magnetometry, and ground-penetrating radar equipment. The group detected the floor of what is thought to be the camp’s gas chambers. A woman’s curling iron, boot-heel sections, a pair of scissors, a shovel—traces of daily life—surfaced during the dig.

Mapping of the hundreds of new finds and the entire Sobibor concentration camp was done by Philip Reeder, a University of South Florida geography professor. Assisting him was University of Hartford student Sarah Rutman ’09, a Judaic studies major. Rutman’s interest in the discoveries in Poland was personal.

“There are many [Holocaust] survivors in my family, so it was a very interesting experience,” she says. “Much of my family left Poland to come to the United States, and I was able to go back to Poland to rediscover what was buried so long ago.”

This was not Rutman’s first archeological trip. She previously worked on the Greenberg Center’s excavations at Bethsaida, Israel. She has helped curate exhibitions and is a student docent at the University’s George J. Sherman and Lottie K. Sherman Museum of Jewish Civilization. She believes that studying at the University of Hartford has given her a greater range of experiences than she would have had at other schools.

“I don’t think students who are interested in history and archaeology at other schools have as much of a chance to study abroad,” Rutman says. “Most of them are bound to the classroom. Most people don’t get to go out and experience history rather than just read about it in a textbook.”

The work by the University of Hartford team was undertaken at Sobibor with Marek Bem, Polish director of the site, and Israeli archaeologist Yoram Haimi of Ben Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. The Israeli project is also supported by Yad Vashem, Israel’s official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.

The Sobibor project is receiving worldwide attention. It is being filmed for a full-length television documentary by PBS science producer Gary Hochman, who previously produced Ancient Refuge in the Holy Land, a NOVA documentary about the University of Hartford’s excavations at the Cave of Letters in Israel. Writer Leonard Felson is also covering the work for an upcoming article in Reader’s Digest.

Yoram Haimi will present findings from the excavation project in the University’s Wilde Auditorium on Sunday, Oct. 26. Professors Freund and Avinoam Patt will present papers—“From Sinai to Sobibor—Jewish Rebels and Archaeology” and “The Legacy of Sobibor in the History of the Holocaust.”
Standing Up for Peace

University students, faculty, and staff making their way across the busy Harry Jack Gray Center courtyard on May 5 maneuvered through a lawn installation of more than 3,000 wooden dowels. The dowels, as well as accompanying music, dance, poetry, and speeches in the courtyard, were intended to raise awareness of those who have died in the Iraq war. Hartt student Rachel Waddell ’09, working with her faculty advisor, Professor David Macbride, and other students, conceived of the daylong event, titled “Operation Iraqi Awareness: A Peace Forum.”

According to Waddell, the dowels each represented 200 military and civilian lives lost. The wooden rods were installed by students in Hillyer Professor Sharon Shepela’s course, Building Cultures of Peace. Photographs of people who have been killed during the war also were posted around the courtyard.

“For me, it’s not so much speaking out about the war in Iraq as much as it is speaking out against the concept of war or any other instances that make peace impossible,” explains Waddell. It was her hope that the forum would, “at the very least, get people to think about the world and the society they live in.”

A spring trip you won’t want to miss!

March 12–20, 2009

Jewish Poland & Prague

A mini-course offered by the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies

**In Poland**

Take a walking tour of the Warsaw Ghetto. Visit the Jewish cemetery, the monument to the 1943 ghetto uprising, and the Jewish Historical Institute and Museum.

Visit the Sobibor extermination camp, site of a successful prison uprising that freed an estimated 300 prisoners. Professor Freund worked at the site in July 2008.

**In Prague**

Investigate the Terezin concentration camp outside Prague. Many musicians, writers, artists, and prominent leaders of the period were held in this small village that was turned into a crowded Jewish ghetto by the Nazis.

Richard Freund, director of the Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, will serve as your guide into the penetrating history and culture of Jews in Poland and Prague.

To request an application form and additional information, call Susan Gottlieb at 860.768.4964 or e-mail mgcjs@hartford.edu.
On CAMPUS

PRESIDENTIAL RACE ’08

Facing History
BY WARREN GOLDSTEIN

Each school year, the University’s history department asks students to think and write about complex historical questions. The Observer asked Warren Goldstein, chair of the history department, to answer the question “Is the 2008 presidential campaign truly historic?” In the following essay, he gives his answer.

Back in 2004, Professor Emeritus Ed Sullivan and I curated an exhibit at the [University of Hartford’s] Museum of American Political Life called *Pivotal Elections in American History*, highlighting the elections of 1800, 1828, 1860, 1896, 1932, and 1980 as turning points in U.S. political history. With so many to choose from, we picked the ones after which, historians said, politics were really different.

How does the current presidential race stack up? Could it produce a downsized executive branch, Thomas Jefferson’s “revolution of 1800”; or a surge in middling voters, as Andrew Jackson’s Democratic Party did in 1828; or swings in party affiliation, as in 1860, 1896, and 1980? What about money, according to legendary California pol Jesse Unruh, “the mother’s milk” of politics?

No historian can claim with any confidence to know how the future will see the present. Still, every now and then we can glimpse vague outlines that may be clearer 50 years hence. So let me climb out on a limb and suggest that the 2008 contest is genuinely historic.

How so? Not because of the issues. War and peace, the economy, health care—these are presidential campaign staples. It’s the other stuff.

First, it’s the longest campaign in a century, with the most serious candidates for president in generations. Just about every senator or governor with any national reputation or ambitions decided to throw a hat into the race—even though, paradoxically, the price of running a campaign has grown astronomically in the last couple of election cycles.

Second, their sheer number meant that we’ve seen more of the candidates discussing the campaign, themselves, and the issues than ever before. I’ll bet the number of televised debates satisfied the most earnest good-government folks. True, the often clunky formats put a premium on personalities rather than policies. But here’s another guess: despite what we like to think about preferring policy talk, a nation in love with *American Idol* and *Survivor*-like reality TV likes the “who’s in, who’s out” style of campaign debate and coverage. There have been more reporting, more air time, and more public and private conversation about politics than have occurred since the 1930s, and maybe for a century. I think we’ve reversed the downward voting trend and may be enjoying a taste of the days when politics used to resemble an all-consuming spectator sport.

Third, the intense, grueling, up-and-down battle between the first female and African American presidential candidates with a real chance for a major party nomination injected more passion into presidential politics than we’ve seen since the 2000 Florida fiasco and the religious Right’s mobilization in 1980.

And astonishment: I don’t know anyone who predicted the stunning Democratic outcome. Despite pundits’ best efforts to put the twin phenomena of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama into neat, I-knew-it-all-along packages, in reality, they were all—no matter their race, gender, age, or politics—flabbergasted: by Obama’s meteoric rise, by Clinton’s apparent collapse and gritty comeback, by the Jeremiah Wright saga and Obama’s survival (we’ll be reading his speech on race for decades), and by the final superdelegate rush to Obama.

Finally, Obama’s popularity among the young—his own youth, his rock-star charisma, his “cool”—combined with his campaign’s sophisticated use of the Internet, could remake the American electorate and campaign finance system. The irony is that John McCain helped make campaign finance reform a reality, and Obama has made it irrelevant, raising hundreds of millions in small contributions from a genuinely expanded electorate.

Whether he wins or loses, by bringing youth into politics, expanding the electorate, fully exploiting the Web, raising unprecedented funds, and breaking one of the great barriers in American politics, Barack Obama has already made 2008 a historic election.