



Washington Music Teachers Association

Newsletter – March 2018

www.wmta-dc.org

Lori McCarthy, *President*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear WMTA Members:

You may have been missing the WMTA Newsletter. Our last edition was April 2017 so many things have happened since then. Hopefully, you have been checking the WMTA website for news about competition winners and the calendar for event information. I'm still filling in as temporary newsletter editor and it's been a challenging year on a personal level as my mother's health deteriorated greatly over the summer, and she passed away in August after a long battle with cancer. Needless to say, my time and focus has been on family matters in the aftermath and one of the things that fell by the wayside was the newsletter. Then in the continued saga of our annus horribilis, I fell down the stairs in my home and broke my right collarbone, so have been in a sling for the last couple of weeks.

We have a very special event planned for the General Membership Meeting on Thursday, April 12th, 10:00am at Jordan Kitt's, 11726 Parklawn Drive, Rockville, MD. Dr. Alan Fraser will do a presentation entitled **The Thumb, Rotation, & Transforming the Physical into the Musical at the Piano**. We have Marjorie Lee to thank for putting us in touch with Dr. Fraser and facilitating the presentation. More information can be found in this newsletter about the program. And plan on staying after for our luncheon as well for good food and camaraderie.

In other news from the WMTA board, it was decided to make the Modern Piano Music a biennial event, to be held in the same year as the Specialty Competition. The next MPM will be held in 2019. The WMTA board voted that all WMTA noncompetitive events and both sections of the Modern Piano Music Event will now be memory-optional. So, if you have students that are reluctant to play due to memorization issues, they will now have some performance-friendly events in which to participate.

WMTA students and teachers did very well in the MTNA Eastern Division Competitions. Congratulations to teachers John Hughes, Dmitri Nazarenko, and Elena Arseniev and their students. Results can be found in the competition winner section of the website.

Lori McCarthy, President, WMTA



JUDGED RECITAL RESULTS

WMTA Judged Recital - October 22, 2017

Honors

Annabel Lee, piano student of Silva Blazquez
Aiden Seo, piano student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt
Lauren Elizabeth Kim, piano student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt

Honorable Mention

Elizabeth Her, piano student of Emil Chudnovsky
Ethan Hsiao, piano student of Dmitri Nazarenko
Elizabeth Qiu, piano student of Marjorie Lee

Judges

Bonnie Kellert and Nancy Hallsted

WMTA Judged Recital - December 3, 2017

Honors

Hanna Zhang, piano student of Dmitri Nazarenko
Jessica Chen, piano student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt
Nicole Papenfuss, piano student of Silva Blazquez

Honorable Mention

Amber Li, piano student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt
Arthur Ding, piano student of Marjorie Lee
Oscar Paz-Suaznabar, piano student of Marjorie Lee

Judges

Karen Bartman and Toku Kawata

WMTA Judged Recital - January 21, 2018

Honors

Justin Chen, piano student of Dmitri Nazarenko
Ethan Hsiao, piano student of Dmitri Nazarenko

Honorable Mention

Kenneth Duong, piano student of Silva Blazquez

Judges

Grace McFarlane and Nancy Breth

WMTA Judged Recital - February 18, 2018

Honors

Rose Wen, piano student of Dmitri Nazarenko
Tongtong Ye, piano student of Marjorie Lee
Ashley Ondoua, piano student of Nancy Breth

Honorable Mention

Angela Zhang, piano student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt
Rachel Cheung, piano student of Bonnie Kellert
Noah Tennenbaum, piano student of Andrew Horowitz
Kevin Wang, piano student of Nancy Breth
Trung Nguyen, piano student of Marjorie Lee

Judges

Jeongseon Choi and Katerina Zaitseva

WMTA Bartok Competition 2018

The WMTA Bartok Competition was held on February 17th at The National Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC. Many thanks to Chair Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt and Co-Chairs Marjorie Lee and Margarita Gramaticova for their tireless work in putting together this impressive program. The winners' recital was held on March 1st at the Hungarian Embassy. A video of the program may be found on the Hungarian Embassy's Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/HunEmbassy.Washington/videos/1873998349313062/>

Level 1

1st Place: #7: Richard Huangfu (Marjorie Lee)
2nd Place: Tie
#2: Andrew Nguyen (Margarita Gramaticova)
#6: Nancy Tzioumis (Margarita Gramaticova)
3rd Place: Tie
#4: Elaine Zhang (Marjorie Lee)
#5: Juliet Lee (Yoshinori Hosaka)
Honorable Mentions:
#1: Charles Zhao (Marjorie Lee)

Level 2

1st Place: #23: Kalan Warusa (Marjorie Lee)
2nd Place: #14: Kenneth Liu (Vivian Kwok)
3rd Place: #25: Caroline Su (Margarita Gramaticova)
Honorable Mentions:
#30: Lin Zheng (Vivian Kwok)
#12: Aidan Wang (Jun Yang)
#15: Ayla Zhang (Margarita Gramaticova)

Level 3

1st Place: #45: Arthur Ding (Marjorie Lee)
2nd Place: #52: Jessica Wang (Marjorie Lee)
3rd Place: #41: Alexander Lee (Valerica Maican)
Honorable Mentions:
#44: Anthony Xu (Margarita Gramaticova)
#47: Chance Hattrick (Jaewon Lee)
#50: Iris Duan (Vivian Kwok)
#55: Michelle Dong (Marjorie Lee)
#56: Ethan Pham-Do (Margarita Gramaticova)

Level 4

1st Place: #75: Angela Zhang (Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt)
2nd Place: #66: Elizabeth Vinokurov (Elena Arseniev)
3rd Place: Tie
#72: Qi Wei Chen (Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt)
#63: Cindy Yang (Jun Yang)
Honorable Mentions:
#77: Kevin Kirk (Debra Gunnerson)
#61: Tan Nguyen (Marjorie Lee)
#62: Anna Gu (Elena Arseniev)

Level 5

1st Place: #83: Jialin Tso (Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt)
2nd Place: #84: Trung Nguyen (Marjorie Lee)
3rd Place: #89: Alexander Suh (Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt)
Honorable Mentions:
#86: Ashley Lee (Marjorie Lee)
#87: Austin Huang (Jun Yang)

Level 6

2nd Place: Tie
#91: Clara Ke (Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt)
#92: Jeffrey Yu (Marjorie Lee)

A special thank you to our judges: Lori Piitz, Audrey Andrist, Eva Mengelkoch, Jose Ramos-Santana, Mayron Tsong and Scott Beard. We had 93 registered students and 14 participating teachers. The teachers were: Margarita Gramaticova, Nancy Breth, Vivian Kwok, Marjorie Lee, Jun Yang, Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt, Elena Arseniev, Esther Kwon, Jaewon Lee, Yoshinori Hosaka, Debra Gunnerson, Priscilla Yang, Bonnie Kellert and Valerica Maican.



WMTA Young Composers Competition – Deadline April 1

Do you have students who enjoy creating their own music? Do you value composition assignments as a useful pedagogical tool? Encourage your students to enter the Young Composers Competition.

This competition is open to any student composers, and all submissions are welcome, not just those from students planning college-level composition study. Students will receive constructive critiques from the judges, and first prize-winning students at each level will be invited to have their compositions performed at the WMTA honors recital held in June.

Levels:

- Elementary: through the 5th grade
- Junior: 6th-8th grades
- Senior: 9th-12th grades

For more information see the WMTA website or contact Janet Peachey, janet.peachey@dc.gov.

WMTA Website



Please check out the "Members Only" section of the WMTA website, where you can download a pdf of the membership for printing. Forms available only to members are also there. Your username is your last name and password your membership number. If you don't know your membership number, simply click on the provided link to have it emailed to you.

You can also find information about signing up for the WMTA Listserv in the Members Only section. The listserv is where you will receive information about discounted tickets for WMTA Members. The NSO often sends \$10 ticket offers to wonderful concerts!

If you have any problems, feel free to contact Lori McCarthy, Web Liaison at lorinmccarthy@verizon.net

Eastern Division Winners – WMTA Teachers

| | Place | Name | Instrument | Teacher |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|---------------------|------------|
| <u>Eastern Junior Performance String - 9 entries</u> | | | | |
| Winner | Miyabi Henriksen (DC) | Violin | John Hughes | |
| Alternate | Michael Fisher (PA) | Violin | James Lyon | |
| Honorable mention | Joe MacDonald (MA) | Violin | Fudeko Cohler | |
| | Dexter Doris (NY) | Violin | | Ann Setzer |
| <u>Eastern Senior Performance Piano - 11 entries</u> | | | | |
| Winner | Carrie Chen (NJ) | Piano | Michael Thomopoulos | |
| Alternate | Evan Hu (MD) | Piano | Marjorie Lee | |
| Honorable mention | Ethan Hsiao (DC) | Piano | Dmitri Nazarenko | |
| | Shane van Neerden (DE) | Piano | Carl Cranmer | |
| <u>Eastern Senior Piano Duet - 4 entries</u> | | | | |
| Winner | Alena Lu (DC) | Piano | Elena Arseniev | |
| Alternate | Michael Xie | Piano | | |
| | Jake Cheng (NJ) | Piano | Julia Lam | |
| Honorable mention | Jeffrey Koc | Piano | | |
| | Stephen Wang (NH) | Piano | Mila Filatova | |
| | Alessandra Mariano | Piano | | |

WMTA General Meeting

Thursday, April 12, 2018, 10:00am

Jordan Kitt's Music, Rockville, MD



Alan Fraser will give a presentation at the WMTA General Membership Meeting on April 12th as part of a series of talks. Plan on attending if you can!

ALAN FRASER IN DC, APRIL 2018

Alan Fraser will be in the DC area from March 30 to April 15 2018. He is scheduled to give five lecture/demonstration/master classes in various locations, as well as teaching privately at the Marjorie Lee Studio in Vienna. He will stay on after each presentation to give private lessons to interested attendees on site.

Canadian pianist **Alan Fraser** has developed a new approach to piano technique based on the Feldenkrais Method and his work with Phil Cohen of Montreal (the “Moshe Feldenkrais of the piano world”), and Kemal Gekić, one of the preeminent virtuosos on the concert stage today. Fraser’s books on technique (www.alanfraserinstitute.com/natural-artistic-piano.php) delve into the rich field of exploration that appears when we activate the hand instead of relaxing or tensing it. Likening the hand to a mini-body (the finger as a leg, the hand as pelvis, the arm as torso) sheds new light on its structure and function, and builds on our traditional understanding of weight technique by introducing the anti-gravity function inherent in all standing, walking, running and jumping. Some of the

musical results: a bigger, more colourful sound, greater dexterity, freedom from pain & injury, and perhaps most important, a deeper, more meaningful musical communication.

Fraser teaches at the University of Novi Sad, Serbia, and runs branches of the **Alan Fraser Piano Institute** (www.alanfraserinstitute.com) in various European and North American cities. His teaching videos can be found at www.pianotechnique.org.

April 4TH

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY (contact: Paulo Steinberg, paulosteinberg@gmail.com)

Integrate Biotensegrity into Your Piano Technique to Improve Injury, Dexterity & Sonority.

In our attempts to relax while playing, we tend to mis-align our skeletal structure, making movement less efficient. Understanding how the physical mechanics of the human body can be applied to the hand on key can lead to striking improvements in a pianist's sound, agility and well-being. Q & A time included.

April 5th

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (contact: Jim Litzelman, litzelman@comcast.net)

Injury as Opportunity: Using Hand Structure & Function to Bring Healing and New Ability to Ones Playing

Fraser’s recent experiences have led him further into the field of disability and recovery. In his latest research he had confirmed many of the principles of skeletal mechanics previously explored, and taken them to new levels of precision and effectiveness to deal with his own injury as well as deepening his musicianship. This lecture will describe that process. Q & A time included.

April 7-8th

ARLINGTON: ALAN FRASER MINI-INSTITUTE
(contact: Marjorie Lee, LeeStudio1@hotmail.com)

Saturday Lecture:

Empowering Our Students by Developing Hand Structure & Function: Replace Relaxation with the Anti-Gravity Function & Suppleness with Springy Elasticity

Trying to get our young students to play with agility and musicality is often like treading a minefield between floppy relaxation and stiff tension. How to get them to move well? This lecture explores hand structure and function from a Feldenkrais perspective to offer an empowering view of piano playing that can easily be used to transform your playing and teaching.

Sunday Lecture:

Practical Matters: How to Put Theoretical Knowledge to Work for Quick, Effective Results and Remarkable Progress

This lecture discusses case histories of specific strategies given to specific students with particular repertoire or technique challenges. This will include a question & answer segment where Fraser will invite you to share your own experiences (in brief) and ask advice.

April 10th

MCMTA MEETING (contact: Immanuela Gruenberg, igruenberg@yahoo.com)

Arm Weight Technique, the Hand's Arch Structure & the Anti-Gravity Function: Myth and Reality

With rare exceptions, arm weight technique has been taught ubiquitously through most of the 20th century. This lecture explores the logic behind the technique, its advantages and its potential pitfalls. Discussing the hand's structure and function from a Feldenkrais perspective, Fraser will offer practical remedies for some of the most debilitating side effects of this well-intentioned technique. Q & A time included.

April 12th

WMTA MEETING (contact: Lori McCarthy, lorinmccarthy@verizon.net)

The Thumb, Rotation, & Transforming the Physical into the Musical at the Piano

This follow-up to the Tuesday MCMTA lecture begins by zeroing in on the thumb's special role at the piano, its unique supportive relationship to the hand and the other fingers. This leads to a discussion of the many ways in which general hand empowerment can open up new musical vistas for the pianist – in sound (orchestration), phrasing, agogics, articulation and emotional impact. Q & A time included.



WMTA Essay Award

The WMTA Music Essay Award for High School Seniors netted several wonderful essays this year. It made the committee's decision quite challenging as there was a wide variety of thoughtful essays. After much discussion, the committee selected an essay by Ellie Trainor, student of Barbara Wing. Ellie's winning essay can also be found on the WMTA website. However, the committee felt that because there were so many well written essays, the WMTA membership might want to read all of them, so they are posted on the website as well. Many thanks to new chair Jacqueline Banks for all her work in coordinating this growing event!

ELLIE TRAINOR

When I was a freshman in high school, I was afraid of everything.

I later learned that I was struggling with undiagnosed social anxiety, depression, and Generalized Anxiety Disorder. But at the time, it simply felt like I was being swallowed whole by the vast expanse of my new high school. As I moved through the halls, I was overwhelmed with the sensory stimulation of two thousand overlapping voices, scents, and auras; all I wanted was a quiet place to be alone.

Ironically, the place that changed everything for me was not quiet, and I was certainly not alone. It was decidedly noisy, and densely populated with an array of uncomfortable teenagers. It was Freshman Chorus.

When I entered the chorus room, with its high white walls and cerulean floors, I felt cleaner than I had anywhere else in the school. The baby grand and upright pianos that stood back-to-back in the center of the room awed me with their confidence; the evenly stacked risers and their neat rows of chairs relaxed my neurotic brain. This was music like I had never seen it before.

The first week of school, my director called for student accompanists. I hesitantly responded, unsure whether my ten years of piano experience qualified me for such a position. When no one else volunteered, I became by default the official accompanist for Freshman Chorus.

Suddenly, music took on a new role in my life. I was not only accountable for myself as a performer, but for an entire choir. I was forced to learn my part at the pace of the singers, which occasionally resulted

in the need for creative improvisation. Singled out at the piano, I was a commodity; I found it strange that my peers were impressed with a skill that felt so natural to me, but I never complained. I was improving musically, making friends, and learning the most important lesson of accompaniment: the art of pushing through.

My next few years were not easy. Health problems, both mental and physical, were omnipresent; academic pressure and social drama engulfed me. When I entered the chorus room every day, none of those concerns disappeared, nor did I experience a 45-minute escape. When I entered the chorus room, I was more prepared, assured, and optimistic. For each period I spent making music in that place, *I* got better. I pushed through.

Four years later, I am one of the only choral students applying to undergraduate music programs, having largely conquered the most debilitating veins of my anxiety. My GPA is high, my family is supportive, and my friends are extraordinary. My freshman self would be proud.

During my lunch period, I accompany this year's Freshman Chorus. I do it not only because I love the piano, or because I would go to war for my director. I do it because the chorus room is still my sanctuary, and I can never give enough to equal what it has given me.



Ellie Trainor, a senior at Walt Whitman High School, has been playing the piano since she was four years old. Since then, music has taken on many roles in her life: she is a songwriter, performer, composer, teacher, and accompanist. She was a semifinalist for the Bernard Ebb Songwriting Awards in 2015, and has participated in such exclusive summer programs as Grammy Camp Los Angeles and the New York University Summer Songwriting Workshop. She plans to pursue a degree and career in songwriting, but hopes to continue integrating music into her life in as many ways as possible.

Ylda Novik Memorial Piano Concerto Competition

The 2018 Ylda Novik Memorial Piano Concerto Competition was held on Saturday-Sunday, March 10-11 in Ward Hall, Catholic University of America, Washington, DC. This competition was established in recognition of Mrs. Novik, who served as President of WMTA from 1965-1967. A Hungarian-American immigrant, internationally recognized and highly respected pedagogue, author and editor, she contributed generously to musical life in the Washington Metropolitan area. Known for her flaming red hair, her kindness and generosity, she was a true advocate for the music of Bartok.

The high quality of her teaching, which resulted in her students consistently excelling in competitions, inspired other teachers and raised the level of pedagogy in the area. Some of her most notable students who have gone on to pursue major music careers include Ana-Maria Vera, Brian Ganz and Jessica Krash.

This biennial concerto competition has been in existence since Spring 1981 and was created to recognize and encourage excellence in the performance of piano concerti among students of elementary, middle and high school age in the Washington Metropolitan area. It was designed to support healthy competition, informed assessment of skills, award monetary prizes and an opportunity for the Senior winner to perform with an orchestra. There are two divisions – Junior and Senior – competing in two stages, Preliminaries and Finals. Juniors are required to perform a movement of a standard concerto and Seniors must perform an entire concerto.

This year's preliminary competition attracted a field of eighteen competitors. Repertoire submitted included the following concerti: Beethoven #1 and #3, Mozart K.246 in C and K.491 in C minor, Grieg, Schumann, Mendelssohn #2,, Saint-Saens #2 , Shostakovich #2 and Rachmaninoff #1 and #2.

AWARDS

WMTA gratefully acknowledges the longstanding generosity of Paul Sekhri, former student of Mrs. Novik, who has once again underwritten all prizes and incidental costs related to the 2018 Competition.

Unable to attend this year's competition, his mother, Mrs. Betty Sekhri, graciously agreed to come and hand out the prizes to the prize winners.

The 1st place winner in the Senior Division receives an award of \$2,000.00 plus an appearance as soloist with the Capital City Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Maestro Victoria Gau. The 2nd place Senior winner receives \$1,000.00.

The Junior Division 1st place winner receives a prize of \$1,000 plus the Junior Trophy and the 2nd place Junior winner receives \$500.00.

The winner of the 2018 Junior Competition is **Sophia Lin**, student of Marjorie Lee, and 2nd place winner is **Raelyn Hoang**, student of Silva Blazquez. Honorable Mention was awarded to **Joanna Cheng**, student of Marjorie Lee, **Daniel Liu**, student of Dmitri Nazarenko, **Alexander Suh**, student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt and **Angela Zhang**, student of Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt.

The 1st place winner of the 2018 Senior Competition is **Tan Nguyen** and 2nd place was awarded to **Oscar Paz-Suaznabar**, both students of Marjorie Lee. Honorable mention was awarded to **Christopher Papenfuss**, student of James Litzelman and **Michelle Tang**, student of Katerina Zaitseva.

Participating teachers were Silva Blazquez, Wen-Yin Chan, Douglas Harrington, Marjorie Lee, James Litzelman, Dmitri Nazarenko, Lisa Emenheiser Sarratt, Ping Steimel and Katerina Zaitseva.

The Preliminary Competition judges were Larissa Dedova, Christine Delbeau and Lori Piitz. Judges in the Finals were Piotr Gajewski, Lori Piitz and Jose Ramos-Santana.

Submitted by Grace McFarlane, Chair

With thanks to Nancy Breth, Co-Chair

Photos from the Ylva Novik Piano Concerto Competition



Senior finalists: Tan Nguyen, Oscar Paz-Suaznabar, Christopher Papenfuss and Michelle Tang, with Mrs. Betty Sekhri, judges and the competition chair.



Junior finalists with judges



Junior winner, Sophia Lin, with Finals Judges, Jose Ramos-Santana, Lori Piitz, and Maestro Piotr Gajewski.

Welcome New Members

Jung Hye
MiHyang Joo
Eric Himy
Lindsay Bass
Priscilla Yang
Jamilla Tekalli

Upcoming WMTA Events

Chanaka Classical Festival, March 17
Judged Recital/Student Musicales, March 18
Young Composers Competition, April 1
(deadline)
General Membership Meeting, April 12
Talk About Teaching, May 7
Hartman Piano Awards, May 13
Lichtenberg Competition, May 13
Honors Recital, June 7
Adult Musicales, June 7

For further information about WMTA events,
please see our website wmta-dc.org.

Deadline for next newsletter: June 5, 2018

Send information to
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