

## 2025-2026 MMTA Interactive Webinar Series

### Starting the Teaching Year Strong

Tuesday, September 2, 2025 at 11am

Featuring Panel: Jim Hohmeyer, David Husser, Andrea Johnson, and Emily Lau

Jim Hohmeyer [headshot](#) & bio:

James Hohmeyer is the retired Artistic Director and Conductor for the Midland Center for the Arts. He is the Music Director for the United Church of Christ in Midland. His current and former students have been finalists in the SAT competition. Jim has conducted over 85 musicals and was the conductor of the Hollywood Concert Orchestra on a national tour with Shirley Jones. Hohmeyer was named Midland's Musician of the Year and is an adjudicator for the Michigan School Vocal Music Association. For the Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association, he conducts the annual Keyboard Festival and chairs the annual SAT program. Along with his partner, Susan Mercy, the music studio works with over 50 students.

David Husser [headshot](#) & bio:

David Husser is a pianist and piano teacher living in Traverse City, Michigan, where he maintains a large independent studio. He teaches group and applied piano at Northwestern Michigan College. He also frequently collaborates as a pianist with high school and collegiate choirs, and with other soloists and organizations in the Traverse City area.

Mr. Husser's compositions have been performed by pianists and choral ensembles in multiple states. His articles have been published by American Music Teacher, and he has served as a presenter and panelist at a variety of national conferences. Since 2021, he has served on the board of the Michigan Music Teachers Association as the state treasurer. He holds a Master of Music Education degree from the University of Oklahoma and a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Illinois.

Andrea Johnson [headshot](#) & bio:

Andrea Johnson has been a private piano teacher in the Grand Rapids area for over 30 years. She enjoys teaching beginners, introducing them to music and watching their excitement grow as they learn. Andrea has been an active member in Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids, serving in many different roles over the years, including Parliamentarian, Referral Chair, Student Achievement Testing Chair, and is currently serving her second term as president. Additionally, she serves as the Awards Chair for MMTA. Andrea is the worship team lead and pianist for her church, and often works with the children classes to prepare musically for special services.

Emily Lau [headshot](#) & bio:

Emily Lau is an independent piano teacher in Ann Arbor, MI. She is serving her first year as the president of the Ann Arbor Area Piano Teachers Guild. Emily loves exploring new

teaching ideas and technology to make the music learning experience more engaging and effective for her students. She taught previously on the faculty of the New School for Music Study in New Jersey, curated digital content for the Frances Clark Center, and worked as support staff at the National Conference of Keyboard Pedagogy. She most recently completed the RCM Adjudicator Certification Program, and joined the College of Examiners as a new member this year. Emily grew up in the metro Detroit area, and holds degrees in piano performance from the University of Michigan and Roosevelt University.

## **Striking a Chord with Your Students: Nurturing Young Composers in Your Music Studio**

Tuesday, November 4, 2025 at 11am

Presented by Joy Morin

### Session description:

Do you have budding composers in your studio? This engaging session presents a five-step approach for helping young musicians develop their original musical ideas into polished, fully notated compositions. Learn practical strategies for guiding both reluctant and prolific young composers to compose, notate, illustrate, and “publish” their own musical masterpieces. Experiencing this creative aspect of being a musician can help transform students into passionate, creative, and multi-skilled music makers!

Joy Morin [headshot](#) & bio:

Joy Morin, MM, is a pianist, piano pedagogue, and composer recognized as an authority in music learning and piano pedagogy. She currently serves as Secretary for the Gordon Institute for Music Learning (GIML) and member of the Committee for Young Musicians (Birth to Age 9) for the Frances Clark Center. Her leadership experience includes serving as Teacher Education Chair of MichiganMTA, Vice President for Membership of OhioMTA, and participating on various conference planning committees. She is Director of Music at Holy Faith Church (Saline, Michigan) and teaches all ages at her independent piano studio near Ann Arbor.

Joy presents frequently at regional and national conferences and has authored articles for Piano Magazine, American Music Teacher, and her blog at [ColorInMyPiano.com](#). As a composer, she has created several pedagogical works, including Incidental Music for Piano, Composition & Improvisation Prompts for Piano, and Keys at Play: 88 Progressive Pieces for Pianists of All Ages. She creates educational resources at [colorinmypiano.com/shop](#) and is founder and host of Retreat at Piano Manor, a professional development retreat for piano teachers ([pianoteacherretreat.com](#)).

Joy holds two certifications from the Royal Conservatory of Music and multiple certifications in both piano and early childhood music from GIML. She earned her Master of Music in piano performance and pedagogy from Central Michigan University (Mount Pleasant, Michigan) and a Bachelor of Music from Hope College (Holland, Michigan). Her past teachers include Adrienne Wiley, Andrew Le, Adam Clark, and Mary Scanlan.

## **Preparation and Inspiration for Successful Student Testing**

Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at 11am

Presented by Mary C. Siciliano

### Session description:

Join Mary Siciliano for a discussion of selection of repertoire, levels, and pre-planning to ensure growth, confidence, and successful testing experiences for our students.

Mary Siciliano [headshot](#) & bio:

Mary Siciliano has a multi-faceted career. She was on the piano faculty at Oakland in Rochester, Michigan, where she taught applied piano, piano ensemble, chamber music, and coordinated the piano pedagogy program. She also taught piano pedagogy at Madonna University, Schoolcraft College, and the University of Michigan. She currently has a very active private studio, continues to give pedagogy workshops, masterclasses, and teaches at the Interlochen Summer Arts Camp. Her students have distinguished themselves in many local, state, and national competitions—among them the Music Teachers National Association National Finals, the Piano Arts International Competition, and the Michigan Music Teacher Association events.

Siciliano and violinist Velda Kelly cofounded “CHAMBER MUSIC WITH PIANO”. This summer workshop at Madonna University includes students from age 12 through adults. It is currently in its seventh year. Siciliano also coordinates the “Pleyel Piano Series” at the Scarab Club in Detroit, Michigan.

Siciliano is very active in piano teacher organizations. She has served on the boards of the Metropolitan Detroit Musicians League, Michigan Music Teachers Association, the East Central Division of MTNA, and the Tuesday Musicale of Detroit. She continues to coordinate the monthly programs for the Metropolitan Detroit Musicians League.

Mary Siciliano performs throughout the United States, Canada, and France. She has been broadcast on CBC, WRCJ, and several others. She has collaborated on several cd albums that include the first recordings of Richard Stöhr on Toccata Classics, as well as the chamber music of Jacques de la Presle, Pierre de Bréville, Ignatz Waghalter, Fernand de la Tombelle, and most recently Nicolas Bacri on the Centaur label.

## **Mid-Year Wellness in the Studio**

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 11am

Featuring Panel: Sarah Boyd and Paola Savvidou

Paola Savvidou [headshot](#) & bio:

Paola Savvidou, DMA, NCTM, is a pianist, pedagogue, and wellness advocate. She serves as Wellness Program Manager and Lecturer III at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance while also running her own piano studio called Music Lotus in Ann Arbor, MI. As a proponent of healthy-living for musicians, she utilizes a holistic approach that incorporates mindfulness and well-being practices in her teaching. She frequently presents related research work at prominent conferences including the MTNA National Conference, the National Center for Keyboard Pedagogy, and the European Piano Teachers Association. Her work has won Article of the Year through the Music Teachers National Association three times. She co-authored "At the Piano with Yoga" with Haley Myers; a collection of duets for beginning piano students coupled with yoga poses. Dr. Savvidou's book entitled Teaching the Whole Musician: A Guide to Supporting Music Students' Wellness was published by Oxford University Press in 2021.

In Spring 2015 she received the prestigious Purple Chalk Teaching Award by the College of Arts & Science Student Council at the University of Missouri. In 2024, she was honored to receive the "LaVaughn Palma-Davis Award for a Wellness Committee" through University of Michigan's MHealthy for her work in promoting well-being among faculty and staff at the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre, and Dance, and the ""Belonging Award"" for building a community of inclusivity and support for all students within the performing arts.

She is a member of the Wellness Committee for the National Conference for Keyboard Pedagogy and previously served as Chair of the Editorial Board for the MTNA e-Journal. She holds a BM from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, graduate degrees (MM and DMA) in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Wellness Counseling Certificate from Cornell University.

### **Webinar Presentation**

Tuesday, March 3, 2026 at 11am

Presented by Christopher Goodpasture

Christopher Goodpasture [headshot](#) & bio:

Described by the Dallas Morning News as a pianist who "plays with rhetorical grandeur, romantic warmth, and a surefire technique", Steinway Young Artist Christopher Goodpasture is establishing himself as an imaginative programmer of the classical repertoire.

As the winner of the 2020 New York Concert Artist Worldwide Auditions and the 2019 Astral Artists National Competition in Philadelphia, Christopher has since given recitals at the Philharmonie Berlin, the Kennedy Center (Washington D.C.), Benaroya Hall (Seattle), Koerner Hall (Toronto), Alice Tully Hall, Merkin Hall, and Weill Recital Hall (New York City), as well as in the festivals of Ravinia, Aspen, Caramoor, and as fortepianist in the Valley of the Moon Music Festival. He has also received top awards at

the Washington, Dallas, Iowa, and Seattle international piano competitions and the Serge Koussevitzky Competition in New York.

His concerto performances of late include performances with the Baltimore Chamber Orchestra, Bucks County Symphony Orchestra, Dallas Chamber Symphony, West Virginia Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of New York, Sioux City Symphony, Acadiana Symphony Orchestra, Oakville Symphony in Toronto, and the Joven Orquesta Leonesa in León, Spain, among others.

Born in Los Angeles, California, Christopher studied with Stewart Gordon and John Perry at the University of Southern California and the Glenn Gould School in Toronto. He then pursued graduate degrees at The Juilliard School and the Yale School of Music where his teachers were Hung-Kuan Chen, Jerome Lowenthal, and Peter Frankl. At present, Christopher is finishing his doctoral candidacy at the Peabody Institute, working with Richard Goode.

From 2018-20, he was a member of the New York-based Ensemble Connect, a fellowship program of Carnegie Hall and the Juilliard School which emphasized chamber music, audience engagement, and mentorship for young musicians. Since fall of 2024, Christopher has been full time piano faculty at the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan, where he mentors a studio of talented young pianists.

### **Keys to Brilliance: Teaching Piano with Neurodivergent Strengths in Mind**

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 11am

Presented by Derek Polischuk

“Keys to Brilliance: Teaching Piano with Neurodivergent Strengths in Mind” explores how piano pedagogy can highlight and nurture the unique abilities of neurodivergent students. Through research insights and stories from the teaching studio, this session demonstrates how music education can become a place where creativity, focus, and joy flourish—and where neurological differences are embraced as essential sources of brilliance.

David Polischuk [headshot](#) & bio

Derek Kealii Polischuk is Professor of Piano and Director of Piano Pedagogy at the Michigan State University College of Music. A San Diego native, he studied with Krzysztof Brzuza before earning the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance with distinction under Daniel Pollack at the University of Southern California.

Polischuk’s recordings have received international acclaim. His solo album *Terra Incognita* (Blue Griffin, 2013) was praised by *Fanfare* for its “perfectly judged shadings” and “pure joy,” while *City Pulse* described it as “a thought-provoking mix of sensual pleasure and deep reflection.” His collaboration with pianist Sarkis Baltaian, *Latin American Music for 2 Pianos*, was hailed by the *American Record Guide* as irresistibly engaging.

A dedicated advocate for inclusive music education, Polischuk has presented at major conferences including the Music Teachers National Association, the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy, the DOCTRID Conference in Ireland, the ABLE Assembly at Berklee College, and at universities across China. He serves on the NCKP Committee for Teaching Students with Special Needs, the Advisory Board of the Orange County School of the Arts Pianist Program, and the Board of Directors of the San Diego Musical Merit Foundation, while also leading the Michigan Music Teachers Association as its Past-President.

Polischuk is founder and director of Celebrating the Spectrum, a pioneering festival for advanced pianists on the autism spectrum. His book Transformational Piano Teaching (Oxford University Press) has been called “a landmark in the field” and reflects his vision of piano pedagogy as a joyful, inclusive art.