



MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

139th Annual Conference

Founded 1885

An affiliate of Music Teachers National Association



October 10-11, 2025

Saginaw Valley State University

Curtiss Hall

University Center, MI

PIANO *Adventures*

salutes the MICHIGAN

Music Teachers...

*Best wishes for a great conference
full of melodies, memories, and making
a musical difference!*



NANCY AND RANDALL FABER
AND THE PIANO ADVENTURES TEAM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Letter, MMTA President, Laurie M Marshall	4
Conference Welcome, MMTA Vice President/Conference Chair, Janice Derian	5
Saginaw Valley State University Welcome Letter, Music Department Chair, Norman A. Wika, DMA	6
MTNA Welcome Letter, President, Kevin Chance, and Chief Executive Officer, Brian Shephard	7
Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association Welcome Letter, MMMTA President, Diana Scott	8
Michigan Music Teachers Association Leadership	9
Conference Schedule	10-13
Curtiss Hall Map	14-15
Conference Key Speaker, MTNA CEO Brian Shepard Bio	16
Gala Concert Artists, Stanislav Khristenko	17-18
MTNA National Conference 2025	18
Gala Concert Program	19
Gala Concert Notes	20-25
MTNA Michigan Commissioned Composer & Performing Artists	26-28
Conference Artists, Presenters, titles, and Abstracts	29-34
Conference Artists &Presenters Bios	35-52
Opening Recital Program	53
MTAN Michigan Competitions leadership Invite	54
Michigan Students Honors Recital Program	55-56
MTNA Michigan Competition Results	57-58
MTNA Michigan National Results	59
MMTA Concerto Competition Results	60
MMTA SAT Piano Auditions Results	61
Michigan Student Honors Recital Student Bios	62-65
MMTA Distinguished Service Award	66
MMTA Local Association Teacher of the Year Award	67-69
Advertisers Index	69



Michigan Music Teachers Association

AFFILIATED WITH THE MUSIC TEACHERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOUNDED IN 1885

Dear colleagues and friends,

On behalf of the Michigan Music Teachers Association leadership and the 2025 Michigan MTA Conference Committee, welcome to the 139th Annual Conference.

The Michigan MTA conference theme

THE ART OF TEACHING: ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

presents award winning concert artists and educators including presentations on artistry, pedagogy, literature, technique, musician wellness, and more.



Michigan is honored to have outstanding legacy, university faculty, young professionals, and collegiate chapter members presenting. Additionally, several performances highlight the event including the Friday evening Gala Concert and Saturday afternoon Student Honors Recital featuring Michigan winners from the MTNA Performance and Composition Competitions and the Michigan Concerto and Auditions competitions.

We welcome Music Teachers National Association, CEO Brian Shepard as our keynote speaker, and a special message from MTNA President Kevin Chance.

Finally, much gratitude to Vice President / Conference Chair Janice Derian, the Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association, and the faculty and staff of Saginaw Valley State University for their outstanding work on this event.

To all Michigan MTA leadership and local association members, thank you for all you do!

Laurie M Marshall

Michigan Music Teachers Association, President



Michigan Music Teachers Association

AFFILIATED WITH THE MUSIC TEACHERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
FOUNDED IN 1885

Welcome conference attendees-

The 139th State Conference of the Michigan Music Teachers Association (MMTA) is finally here! We are delighted to welcome you to this exciting event.



The State MMTA conference committee and the Mid-Michigan chapter have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make this gathering possible. A special thank-you goes to the Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association for inviting composer Catherine McMichael to create a new piece for the conference, and for supporting us every step of the way. We are also honored to feature our gala artist performer, Stanislav Khristenko, along with many distinguished guest speakers.

We extend our gratitude to the Saginaw Valley State University team—from the conference center staff to the Music Department—whose attention to detail, energy, and warmth have made this event truly special.

Over the next few days, we encourage you to reconnect with friends, meet new colleagues, and welcome fresh faces. Attend the sessions that inspire you and let them renew your musical and professional spirit. Together, we celebrate *The Art of Teaching: Essential Elements*, right here at Saginaw Valley State University.

Warmly,
Janice Derian
MMTA VP & Conference Chair



Department of Music



Dear MMTA Attendees,

Welcome to Saginaw Valley State University! On behalf of the Music Department and the entire University, we hope that you have a musically fulfilling time at this year's MMTA conference. Please remember that the SVSU Music Department is not just a set of great facilities, but a collection of faculty and students that are bringing high level music making to this community. Whether it's student performances, faculty recitals, or guest artist appearances, there are many events throughout the year. To stay informed about our events, please visit our website, www.svsu.edu/musicdepartment, or follow us on Facebook.

There are a couple of events that I would like to highlight. The first is our Rhea Miller Recital series. This year's lineup includes pianist Kathryn Brown, percussionist Andrea Venet, the Trillium Woodwind Quintet, and mezzo soprano Emily Marvosh. All of these events are free and open to the public, and they all include a free masterclass with the artists. Dates and times are all on our website!

I'm also excited to highlight our annual Piano Day, hosted by Dr. Chia-Ying Chan. Our featured guest artist is Kathryn Brown, Head of the Keyboard Division at the Cleveland Institute of Music. The day will feature performances, masterclasses, and lectures, and it is all geared towards pianists of all levels. For more information, please pick up a flyer or contact Dr. Chan, cchan@svsu.edu.

I'm confident that you're going to have an outstanding conference here at SVSU. I hope that this is not that last time that we will see you, and that you will continue to be involved with the Music Department at SVSU.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Norman'.

Norman A. Wika, DMA
Chair, Music Department
Saginaw Valley State University



MUSIC TEACHERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

October 10, 2025

Dear Michigan MTA Members:

On behalf of your MTNA colleagues across the country, we add our warm welcome to the Michigan state conference. Gathering with your friends and colleagues from around the state is a very special benefit of membership—a benefit that offers multiple educational and social opportunities for you to grow as a music teaching professional.

At conferences like this, you, the music teacher, become the music student. And as you participate in professional development, new information and techniques are learned, which ultimately become the basis for new ways to teach your students and engage with your communities. These enriching relationships—of constantly receiving and giving away—is vital to your success as a music teacher, to the success of your students and to the longevity of the profession.

As you consider additional opportunities for professional development and networking, we invite you to the 2026 MTNA National Conference in Chicago, March 21–25—a landmark event, as we celebrate the 150th birthday of MTNA! This historic conference will feature more than 100 informative sessions, inspiring master classes, and an exhibit hall with the latest music, products and innovations. Acclaimed pianist Angela Hewitt will perform in the Tuesday evening recital, with more distinguished performers and talented presenters to join the roster. The 2026 MTNA National Conference promises to be an unforgettable celebration of music, education and community, so mark your calendars and stay tuned for details at mtna.org!

Again, welcome to the Michigan state conference. Please enjoy every moment of it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Chance".

Kevin Chance, NCTM
President

Sincerely,

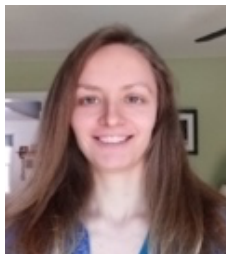
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Shepard".

Brian Shepard
Chief Executive Officer



Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association (MMMTA), I am delighted to welcome you to Saginaw Valley State University for the 139th State Conference.



MMMTA—also known as M3TA—is comprised of dedicated teachers from eleven cities across the Tri-City area, with the majority based in Midland. We are honored to host this year's annual gathering and to celebrate the power of music and education together.

We are thrilled to feature a commissioned piece by Catherine McMichael, a Gala Concert performance by Stanislav Khristenko, and a keynote address from our distinguished Conference Speaker, Brian Shepard.

May we all come away from this conference with new ideas, new sounds, and new friends!

Thank you for being here and enjoy the conference.

Warm regards,

Diana Scott

President of the Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association

Michigan Music Teachers Association Leadership

President, Laurie M Marshall
Vice President, Janice Derian
Secretary, Alisha Snyder
Treasurer, David Husser
Immediate Past President, Derek Kealii Polischuk
Parliamentarian, Christie Otter

Advocacy and Awareness, Michael Zutis
Assessment and Audition Chair, Michelle Mitchum
Awards Chair, Andrea Johnson
Certification Chair, Maria Lonchyna-Lisowsky
College Collegiate Chair, Derek Kealii Polischuk
College Faculty Chair, Sookkyung Cho
Commissioned Composer Chair, Silvia Roederer
Communications and Technology Chair, Jasmine Lucia Wong
Concerto Competition Chair, Wendy Was Hsing Chu
Ensemble Youth Festival Chair, James Hoymeyer
Event Coordinator, Trinity Fan
Historian, Tristan McKay
Local Association Chair, Zhao "Lia" Wang
Membership Chair, David Keep
Michigan Competitions Auditions Chair, Tristan McKay
MTNA MMTA Foundation Chair, Megan Nyquist
MTNA Michigan Director of Competitions, Laurie M Marshall
MTNA Michigan Composition Coordinator, Michael Zutis
MTNA Michigan Junior Division Coordinator Karen Johnson
MTNA Michigan Senior Division Coordinator, Karen Fella
MTNA Michigan Young Artist Division Coordinator, Lora Kolean
Musician Health and Wellness Chair, Sarah Boyd
Newsletter Editor, Emily Suszko
Representative and Advocacy Chair, Hyemin Kim
Student Achievement Testing Chair, Pinlin Liu
SAT Piano Handbook Chair, Jacki Vander Slik
SAT String Chair, Erin Thomas
SAT Voice Chair, Deidre Myers
SAT Woodwinds Chair, Karen Betz-Griewahn
Social Media Coordinator Christopher Goodpasture
Teacher Education Chair, Allison Shinnick Keep
Webmaster, ITI, LMM, C&T Committee

MMTA CONFERENCE 2025 SCHEDULE

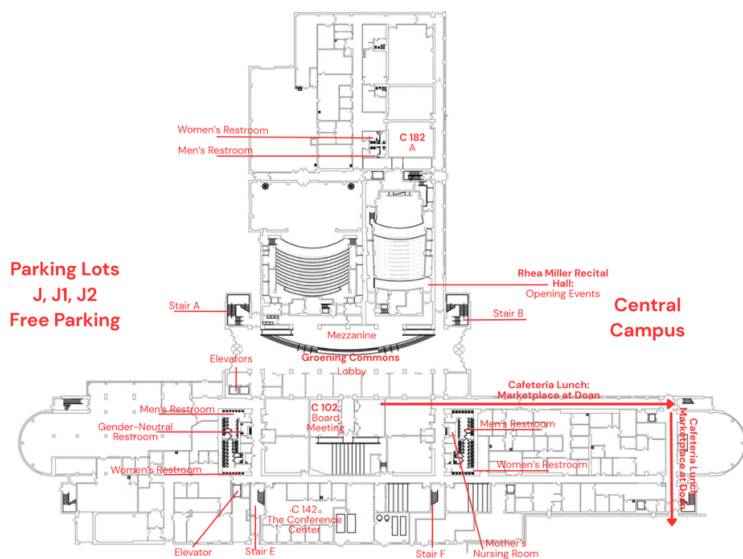
DAY ONE: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10			
TIME	EVENT	LOCATION	SPEAKER
7:30-9:00	Board Meeting	102	Board
8:00 AM	Reg Opens	Lobby	Mid-Mich team
8:30 AM	Committee Booths/Vendor Exhibits	Lobby	
9:15 AM	Welcome	Recital Hall	Laurie Marshall MMTA President, Janice Derian, MMTA Conference chair/V.P., Dr. Norman Wilka SVSU Chair of Music Department, Brian Shepard MTNA CEO
9:30-10:20	Opening Recital	Recital Hall	Chia-Ying Chan and David Brickie
10:30-10:55	The Power of Community	Recital Hall	Brian Shepard
11:00-11:50	Like a Chef that Creates a Stupendous Meal, how do Teachers Help their Students Foster Artistic Personality at the Piano?	Choir room 182	Dr. Helen Marlais
11:00-11:50	The Evolving Role of Imagination and Musicality in Piano Performance: A Study of Corigliano's Fantasia on an Ostinato and Debussy's Images, Book II	Recital Hall	Hyemin Kim
Noon	Lunch on your own	Lunch	Marketplace at Doan- Doan center- lower level
	MMTA Local Association Presidents' and Membership Chairs' lunch	Seminar D	

1:00-1:50	Integrating Memory	Recital Hall	Chia-Ying Chan
	Don't Miss a Beat! Strategies for Rhythm Success with Transfer Students	Choir room 182	Joy Morin
2:00-2:50	Defiance! Learning From the Music of Sofia Gubaidulina and her Soviet-Era Contemporaries	Recital Hall	Holly Quist, DMA
3:00-3:50	Comparative Pedagogy: When Experts Disagree	Recital Hall	John Ellis
3:00-3:50	From Breath to Bow: Pianistic Adaptation in Brahms Op. 120 Sonatas	Choir room 182	Zhao Wang, Jacob Bleeker, Ning Zhang
4:00-4:50	Discovery and Meaning	Recital Hall	Logan Skelton
4:00-4:50	The Collaborative Pianist in Ballet Class	Choir room 182	Dr. Gjergji Gaqi
6:00 PM	Gala Dinner	Seminar F & G	MTNA Foundation, Megan Nyquist, Michigan Chair MMTA 25&50 year Members Local Association Teachers of the Year Awards, Zhao "Lia" Wang, Chair
8:00 PM	Commissioned Composer Award & Performance	Recital Hall	MTNA Commissioned Composer, Michigan Chair Silvia Roederer Benjamin Krause, composer: ensemble Dr. Gary June and Christina Krause
8:15 PM	Gala Concert	Recital Hall	Stanislav Khristenko
9:30 PM	Gala Concert Reception	Lobby	Hosted by MMTA leadership

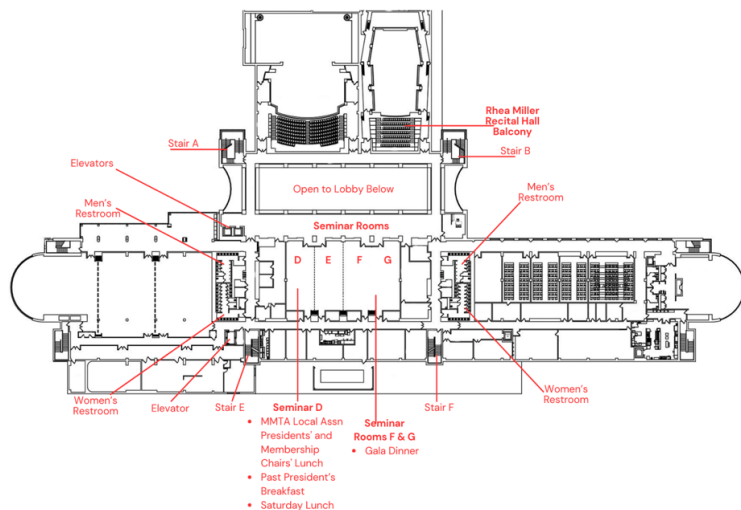
DAY TWO: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11			
8 AM	Reg opens	Lobby	Mid-mich team
7:30-7:55	Morning Movement for Musicians	Recital Hall	Sarah Boyd and Joshua DiMercurio
7:30-8:30	Past Presidents breakfast	Seminar D	
8:00-8:25	Enhancing Lessons with Hooktheory: Exploring Music Theory Through Popular Music	Recital Hall	Greg Cervený
8:30-9:20	Sight Reading Made Simple	Recital Hall	Don Crafton
9:30-9:55	Inside the Performer's Brain: From Practice Room to Stage	Recital Hall	Stanislav Kristenko
10:00-10:50	Composition in Lesson	Recital Hall	Catherine McMichael
11:00-11:25	The Art of Solo Recitals: Elementary, Junior, Senior	Choir room 182	Sarah Boyd
11:00-11:25	No Script, No Fear: Improvisation for All Levels	Recital Hall	Trinity Fan
11:30-11:55	Conducting Beyond the Podium: Leadership Lessons for Music Educators	Recital Hall	Dr. Tenille Woodward
11:30-11:55	Beyond the Canon: A Guide to Underrepresented Composers	Choir room 182	Sam Harris, Parker Sturgill, Lauren Shutt and Julian Avendaño
Noon	Lunch on your own		
	SAT Lunch	Seminar D	
1:00-1:45	MASTERCLASS	Recital Hall	Stanislav Kristenko
1:45-2pm	Annual meeting	Recital Hall	

2:00-2:50	Touch, Listening, and the Inner Life of the Pianist: A Lecture-Recital on Marie Jaell		Derek Kealii Polischuk and Jiwoon Sim
2:00-2:50	Who's Afraid of the Five-Line Staff? The Art and Opportunity of Graphic Notation Music	Choir room 182	Tristan McKay
3:00-4:15	Honors Recital	Recital Hall	
4:15-5:00	Recital Reception (for parents/students)	Lobby	Hosted by MMTA Membership
4:15-5:05	Problem-Solving & Pianism: Leadsheets as a Musical Sandbox	Choir room 182	Justin Colwell
4:15-5:05	Technique and Artistic Development Through Czerny's Op. 849	Recital Hall	Tian Tian
5:15-6:05	Teen Technique Triage: Creating Technical Games and Activities to Produce Strong Practicing Skills for Teenagers	Recital Hall	Kara Huber
5:15-5:40	Jennifer Thomas: Artist Pianist, Composer: Pushing the Boundaries	Choir room 182	Adrienne Willey

Curtiss Hall 1st Floor



Curtiss Hall 2nd Floor



MMTA 2025 Conference Key Speaker MTNA CEO, Brian Shepard



Brian Shepard is Chief Executive Officer of Music Teachers National Association. Shepard first began his career at MTNA in 2003 as the Director of Marketing and Public Relations. In 2008, as a result of his successes in marketing the programs and services of MTNA, he was promoted to Chief Operating Officer. During his tenure as COO, Shepard has increased the association's operational efficiencies, overseen the expansion of MTNA's in-person national events, grown current revenue streams and introduced new ones to further the organization's mission.

In addition to his work at MTNA, Shepard serves on several other nonprofit boards and committees. From 2009 to the present, Brian has served in multiple leadership roles with the American Classical Music Hall of Fame, including Board Chair and Professional Organizations Advisory Council Chair. He currently serves the Hall of Fame as Board President. Since 2013, he has been a member of the CCMpower Board, having held the positions of Treasurer, Harmony Fund Co-Chair, Awards Committee Co-Chair, Board Development Committee Co-Chair and Membership Committee Co-Chair. Shepard has also served on the Cincinnati Opera Sales and Marketing Committee and was President of the Middletown Music Club for three years. Shepard is also an accomplished musician who performs frequently for church and community programs as a pianist, vocal soloist and choral conductor. A graduate of Miami University of Ohio, Shepard holds degrees in marketing and music education. He was named an MTNA Foundation Fellow in 2010.

MMTA 2025 Gala Concerto Artist Stanislav Khristenko



Described as a “poet of piano” by *Le Soir* (Belgium), Ukrainian-born American pianist Stanislav Khristenko has performed in some of the world’s major concert halls. He has been praised for “emotional intensity”, “charismatic expression”, “palette of touches”, “solid” and “precise technique” by *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *Miami Herald*, *The Gramophone* and *BBC Music Magazine* and *El Pais*.

Khristenko has appeared as a piano soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra, National Orchestra of Belgium, Phoenix Symphony, Liege Royal Philharmonic, Suwon Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as Bilbao, Madrid, Tenerife, Puerto Rico, Richmond symphony orchestras, among others. His performance highlights include solo recitals at Carnegie Hall, Vienna Konzerthaus, Palais de Beaux-Arts in Brussels, as well as performances with orchestras in The Berlin Philharmonie, Seoul Arts Center, Prague Rudolfinum, Moscow Conservatory Great Hall, among others. Khristenko’s performance as a piano soloist with The Lviv National Orchestra of Ukraine in Stern Auditorium at Carnegie Hall has been chosen as one of 15 highlights of the 2022/2023 Carnegie Hall season by *The New York Times*.

His recordings were released on Steinway & Sons label (“*Fantasies*”, “*Romeo and Juliet*”), Naxos (“*Soler Sonatas*”), Oehms (“*Krenek: Piano Works*”), and Toccata Classics (“*Ernst Krenek Piano Works: Volume One*”, “*Ernst Krenek Piano Works: Volume Two*”). He is a Steinway Spirio Artist with a significant presence in the Spirio recording library.

Khristenko is a prizewinner of numerous piano competitions including Gold Medal at Cleveland Piano Competition, First Prize at Maria Canals Piano Competition, Second Prizes at Isang Yun and Takamatsu Piano Competitions, and Fourth Prize at Queen Elisabeth Music Competition. In the United States, he also received First Prizes at Bosendorfer, Jose Iturbi, Virginia Waring, and Wideman Competitions, among others. He has been on the jury panel of many international piano competitions.

In his hometown in Ukraine, Khristenko co-founded music festival KharkivMusicFest that presented world's top classical musicians as well as unique projects including Festival Orchestra, classical music conference, Children's Orchestra, artist-designed pianos for interactive public display. As a Music Director, he founded Nova Sinfonietta Chamber Orchestra of Ukraine that performed works of over 40 composers in its first three seasons.

Khristenko gave his first piano solo recital in Kharkiv Philharmonic Hall at the age of 11. He graduated from Moscow Chopin College and Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, where he studied with Vera Gornostaeva. In 2008, he moved to the United States to study with Sergei Babayan at the Cleveland Institute of Music. He also completed Postgraduate Artistic Training in Orchestral Conducting at The Chopin University in Warsaw, Poland and Short Course in Orchestral Conducting at The Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester, England.

In 2024, Khristenko was appointed Assistant Professor of Piano in the Michigan State University College of Music. Stanislav Khristenko is a Steinway Artist.



Michigan Music Teachers Association Annual Gala Concert Stanislav Khristenko, Piano 24 Preludes

Unmeasured Prelude in F Major	Louis Couperin
Prelude from Suite No. 6 in F-sharp Minor, HWV 43.	George Frideric Handel
Prelude in A Minor from <i>Premier livre de pieces de clavecin</i>	Jean-Philippe Rameau
Little Prelude in C Minor, BWV 934	Johann Sebastian Bach
Prelude in C Major, K. 284a	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Prelude No. 1 through All the Major Keys, Op. 39.	Ludwig van Beethoven
Praeludium from <i>Holberg Suite</i> , Op. 40.	Edvard Grieg
Prelude in D Minor, Op. 1 from 9 Preludes	Karol Szymanowski
Prelude from <i>Chants d'Espagne</i> , Op. 232	Isaac Albeniz
Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Op. 9, No. 1	Alexander Scriabin
Prelude from <i>Suite Bergamasque</i> , L. 75	Claude Debussy
Prelude in B-flat Minor, Op. 28, No. 16	Frederic Chopin

Intermission

Prelude in G Minor, Op. 23, No. 3	Sergei Rachmaninoff
Prelude in B Minor, after Prelude in E Minor, BWV 855a	J.S. Bach
Prelude, Op. 12, No. 7	arr. Alexander Siloti
Prelude in A Minor, M.65	Sergei Prokofiev
Prelude No. 17 in A-flat Major, Op. 53 from 24 Jazz Preludes	Maurice Ravel
Prelude No. 1 in B-flat Major from Three Preludes	Nikolai Kapustin
Prelude IV from 9 Preludes	George Gershwin
Prelude No. 5 "Sincopado"	Maxim Shalygin
Prelude No. 4 <i>From Songs of Bukovina</i>	Fabian Beltran
Prelude for Paul	Leonid Desyatnikov
Prelude	John Corigliano
Thumper from <i>The Anne Landa Preludes</i>	Zhou Tian
	Carl Vine

Michigan Music Teachers Association Annual Gala Concert Program Notes

24 Preludes

The prelude, originally an improvisatory form, evolved into a standalone genre throughout music history. While often used to introduce larger works, composers increasingly treated preludes as self-sufficient pieces, allowing for the expression of a wide range of musical ideas and characters. The concept of writing a set of 24 preludes, covering all major and minor keys, was popularized by J.S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* and later expanded upon by composers like Chopin, Scriabin, and Rachmaninov, among many others. This program brings together preludes from various composers across different centuries, creating a sense of time travel through the genre's development and the history of keyboard music. The brief notes about each piece below serve as a guide to accompany this musical journey.

Louis Couperin - Unmeasured Prelude in F Major (c. 1658)

Louis Couperin is one of the earliest composers to develop the keyboard prelude as an independent genre. A defining feature of the French harpsichord tradition, the unmeasured prelude is written without rhythmic notation, leaving phrasing and pacing to the performer's discretion.

George Frideric Handel - Prelude from *Suite in F-Sharp Minor*, HWV 431 (1720)

This prelude is the opening movement of Handel's *Suite in F-sharp Minor*, HWV 431, published in 1720 as part of his *Eight Great Suites* for keyboard. Unlike the unmeasured preludes of the time, it features the dotted rhythms of the French overture, a style frequently used in the openings of Baroque operas, oratorios, and instrumental works.

Jean- Philippe Rameau - Prelude in A Minor from *Premier livre de pieces de clavecin* (1706)

The *Prelude in A Minor* is part of Rameau's *Premier livre de pieces de clavecin*, his first published collection of harpsichord works. The prelude begins with an unmeasured section, where phrasing and rhythm are left to the discretion of the performer. Following this free-flowing introduction, the

piece transitions into a measured section with clear rhythmic notation, creating a striking contrast between the two sections.

Johann Sebastian Bach- Little Prelude in C Minor, BWV 934 (1720)

Unpublished until 1802, the Little Prelude in C minor, BWV 934, is part of Bach's set of Six Little Preludes (BWV 933-938). While simple in structure, the prelude contains musical ideas and harmonic progressions that Bach would later develop in his more advanced works, showcasing his early experimentation with chromaticism and contrapuntal textures.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart - Prelude in C Major, K. 284a (1777)

Often referred to as the Capriccio (K. 300/395), the Prelude in C Major, K. 284a is believed to have been composed by Mozart for his sister, Nannerl, as a warm-up exercise. The piece is structured in four distinct sections, leading some to refer to it as the "Four Preludes."

Ludwig van Beethoven- Prelude in All Major Keys, Op. 39, No. 1 (1789)

At just 19 years old, Beethoven composed a piece that cycles through all twelve major keys in a continuous, unbroken progression. Though published much later and assigned a higher opus number, Prelude in All Major Keys, Op. 39, No. 1 stands as a unique example of Beethoven's early compositional style, with his distinctive energy evident from the very first note.

Edvard Grieg - Praeludium from *Holberg Suite*, Op. 40 (1884)

The Praeludium is the opening movement of Edvard Grieg's Holberg Suite, Op. 40, composed in 1884 to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Norwegian playwright Ludvig Holberg. The suite is inspired by 18th-century dance forms, with each movement reflecting Baroque style, reimagined through Grieg's Romantic lens.

Karol Szymanowski - Prelude in D Minor, Op. 1 (1899)

Often called 'The Father of 20th-Century Polish Music,' Karol Szymanowski composed the Prelude in D minor, Op. 1, while still a teenager in a small town in present-day central Ukraine, where he was born and lived until the age of

19. The prelude reflects the influence of Chopin, while also foreshadowing the harmonic innovations that would come to define Szymanowski's later works.

Isaac Albeniz - Prelude from *Chants d'Espagne*, Op. 232 (1892)

Isaac Albeniz's Prelude, also known as Asturias and Leyenda, is one of his most famous works. Originally composed to recreate the sounds of flamenco guitar on the piano, it was later transcribed for guitar and has since become one of the most performed pieces in the guitar repertoire.

Alexander Scriabin - Prelude in C-Sharp Minor, Op. 9, No. 1 (1894)

Scriabin composed a total of 90 preludes across his three main compositional stages, including his Chopin-inspired 24 Preludes, Op. 11, in all keys. The earlier Prelude, Op. 9, No. 1, was written for the left hand alone, a result of the composer's overuse injury to his right hand during practice.

Claude Debussy - Prelude from *Suite Bergamasque*, L. 75 (1890)

Inspired by Bach's and Chopin's sets of preludes, Debussy would later compose his own set of 24 Preludes. An earlier example of his approach to the genre is the opening movement of Suite Bergamasque, which already reflects his distinctive Impressionist musical language.

Frederic Chopin - Prelude in B-Flat Minor, Op. 28, No. 16 (1839)

Chopin's 24 Preludes, Op. 28, is considered the most influential 19th-century work in the prelude genre, inspiring generations of composers to write their own sets of piano preludes, a tradition that continues today. Prelude No. 16 stands out as an example of the extraordinary virtuosity in Chopin's works, showcasing both his technical brilliance and expressive depth.

Sergei Rachmaninov - Prelude in G Minor, Op. 23, No. 5 (1903)

One of Rachmaninov's most well-known preludes, the G minor Prelude, is part of his set of 10 preludes, Op. 23, dedicated to his cousin Alexander Siloti. Later, Rachmaninov composed 13 more preludes, Op. 32, which,

along with his early Prelude, Op. 3, completed his own collection of 24 preludes.

Alexander Siloti - Prelude in B Minor (after Prelude in E Minor, BWV 855a by J.S. Bach)(1912)

Alexander Siloti is perhaps better known for his famous Prelude in B minor than for his varied contributions, including conducting the premiere of Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto, introducing Stravinsky's music to Diaghilev, or being a Liszt student that later taught at Juilliard for many years. The arrangement of Bach's Prelude is just one of over 200 similar works by Siloti.

Sergei Prokofiev - Prelude, Op. 12, No. 7 (1913)

Sergei Prokofiev did not attempt to compose a complete set of 24 preludes and wrote only one short prelude. This early composition, created during his conservatory years, is one of 10 pieces in a set primarily based on Baroque genres, where Prokofiev's distinctive musical language is already clearly evident.

Maurice Ravel - Prelude in A Minor (1913)

Ravel's Prelude in A minor was commissioned for the 1913 sight-reading competition at the Paris Conservatory and was later dedicated to its winner, Jeanne Leleu. She went on to become a professor of sight-reading at the Conservatoire and is also renowned for premiering Ravel's *Ma mere l'oye* Suite.

Nikolai Kapustin - Prelude in A-Flat Major, Op. 53 (1988)

Nikolai Kapustin, trained as a classical pianist at the Moscow Conservatory, never received formal composition training but became captivated by jazz while listening to Voice of America radio during his conservatory years. He later gained recognition for his unique style, combining jazz harmony with classical genres. His contributions to classical and jazz music include composing 24 preludes as well as preludes and fugues.

George Gershwin - Prelude No. 1 (1926)

Originally planned as a set of 24 preludes titled *The Melting Pot*, George Gershwin ultimately composed only three. In 1926, he premiered them at the Roosevelt Hotel, bringing the prelude genre into the New York jazz scene.

Maxim Shalygin - Prelude IV (2005)

Maxim Shalygin, a Ukrainian-born composer based in the Netherlands, is known for his approach that expands traditional playing techniques while maintaining a tonal language and avoiding avant-garde radicalism. His 9 Preludes for piano solo were among his first published compositions.

Leonid Desyatnikov - Prelude No. 4 from *Songs of Bukovina* (2013)

"The Songs of Bukovina" by Leonid Desyatnikov is a cycle of 24 preludes inspired by folklore melodies originating from the region of Bukovina, which today is divided between Romania and Ukraine. In Prelude No. 4, Desyatnikov, who describes his style as "an emancipation of consonance, transformation of banality, and 'minimalism' with a human face," incorporates the melody of the Ukrainian folk song "Oh, Petrivochka, a night so short."

Fabian Beltran - Prelude V "Sincopado" (2017)

Fabian Beltran, a New York-based composer born in Bogota, Colombia, composed Prelude V in a single night. The piece features a descending chromatic idea that is developed through mixed meter, syncopation, and additive rhythm.

John Corigliano - Prelude for Paul (2021)

John Corigliano composed "Prelude for Paul" as a commission for Paul Sekhri, an amateur pianist and biotech CEO, who has a tattoo of the opening measures from Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2 on his forearm. Given this, John Corigliano felt it would be fitting to incorporate those measures into the piece.

Tian Zhou - Prelude (2023)

Commissioned by Salon de Virtuosi, the piece was first premiered by Claire Huangci on February 28, 2024. Inspired by an imaginary ballet, Prelude consists of several contrasting sections with a hint of Chinese folk elements.

Carl Vine- *Thumper* from *The Anne Landa Preludes* (2006)

Commissioned in memory of Anne Landa, a major supporter of the arts in Sydney, *The Anne Landa Preludes* is a set of 12 preludes. Prelude No. 3, titled "Thumper," features complex rhythmic patterns and frequent meter changes.



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Michigan Music Teachers Association 2025 Commissioned Composer



Composer and pianist **Benjamin Krause** creates music that freely draws upon varied sound worlds, characterized by its visceral rhythmic energy and colorful, impressionistic harmonies. Described as “immediately appealing...inventive” (*EarRelevant*), and “potent” (ICareIfYouListen.com), his music has been performed by the Houston Symphony, Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra, Atlanta Chamber Players, and Philadelphia’s Network for New Music, among other leading ensembles and organizations. He has received a Copland House Residency Award, the Houston Symphony Emerging Composer Award,

a Presser Foundation Award, and was named the Distinguished Composer of the Year by the Music Teachers National Association in 2019. His work has been supported through residencies at the Ragdale Foundation, Brush Creek Arts Foundation, and at the Hambidge Center for Creative Arts, where he was awarded a Distinguished Artist Fellowship. Other honors include recognition from the RED NOTE Music Festival; the Indiana State Contemporary Music Festival; and the National Association of Teachers of Singing. Significant recent commissions include those from the Atlanta Chamber Players, Kalamazoo Symphony Artist-in-Residence Ensemble, Fox Valley Symphony, and Lutheran Summer Music Academy.

Krause earned degrees in music composition from Rice University (DMA) and the University of Oregon (MM). As a student at the American Conservatory of Fontainebleau, France, he was awarded the Prix Marion Tournon Branly; he has also been in residence at Brevard Music Festival, the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium, and the Lutheran Summer Music Academy and Institute, where he has served as Composer-in-Residence. He lives with his wife (pianist Christina Giuca Krause) and son in Holland, Michigan, where he teaches composition and theory at Hope College. (Scan the QR code to view the score)



2025 Commissioned Composer Artists



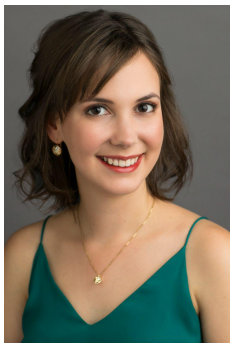
Dr. **Gary June** is a clarinetist and educator based in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he is Visiting Professor of Clarinet at Grand Valley State University. He also teaches clarinet at Grand Rapids Community College and has previously served on faculty at Saginaw Valley State University and North Central College. As an orchestral musician, he is Principal Clarinet of the Holland Symphony Orchestra and the 2nd/Eb clarinetist of the Flint and Saginaw Bay Symphony Orchestras. He likewise regularly plays with orchestras such as the Grand Rapids Symphony, the West Michigan Symphony, and Sinfonia da

Camera. As a committed educator of primary and secondary-aged students, he has a thriving studio of young clarinetists, and he spends summers teaching and playing at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp.

Gary June is also an active chamber musician and soloist. As a member of the Amosa Duo, he has given recitals at universities throughout the United States and at the PianoForte Foundation in Chicago, IL. In 2018 the Amosa Duo toured many of Taiwan's most prestigious concert halls, including the National Recital Hall in Taipei. As a member of Grand Valley's faculty wind quintet, Grand Valley Winds, he traveled in July 2018 to the Czech Republic to perform as the featured ensemble in the Janáček Music Festival. Other recent engagements include serving as Guest Artist at Kansas State University's Clarinet Day and performing Debussy's *Première Rhapsodie* with the Holland Symphony Orchestra, Copland's *Appalachian Spring* at the Saugatuck Chamber Music Festival, and faculty recitals at GVSU, SVSU, and Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp.

Dr. June has given master classes at universities such as the Janáček Conservatory and Ostrava University in the Czech Republic, the National Tainan University in Taiwan, the University of Colorado-Boulder, Kansas State University, Northern Illinois University, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Austin Peay State University. He holds degrees from Grand Valley State University and the University of Colorado-Boulder,

and completed his Doctorate of Musical Arts at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he wrote his thesis on contemporary Finnish clarinet music. His principal teachers include Dr. Arthur Campbell, Daniel Silver, and J. David Harris.



Hailed as a “sensitive partner” by the New York Times, pianist **Christina Giuca Krause** enjoys a diverse musical career as a pianist and educator. She has performed on stages including New York’s Carnegie Weill and Steinway Recital Halls and Preston Bradley Hall in Chicago. She served on the music staff of the Houston Ballet, Opera Theatre of St. Louis, and Chicago Opera Theater, alongside collaborative pianist positions at Chicago Lyric Opera’s Ryan Opera Center and Northwestern’s Bienen School of Music, among others. She has performed at festivals including the Music Academy of the West, Aspen Music

Festival, Prussia Cove (England), and most recently, the Saugatuck Chamber Music Festival. Christina is passionate about championing the music and stories of today. As the pianist winner of the Marilyn Horne Song Competition in 2017, she premiered “These Strangers” by Jake Heggie. She helped bring new operas to life, including Terence Blanchard’s *Fire Shut Up in My Bones* (Opera Theatre of St. Louis). She is a founding member of piano duo 4x5, with composer/pianist Benjamin Krause. They were guest artists at the Oregon Bach Festival Composers Symposium in 2016 and 2021, and performed at the 2019 MTNA National Conference in Spokane, WA. From 2019-2022, Christina was the Artistic Director of LYNX Project, a Chicago-based organization that amplifies diverse voices through new song commissions and educational programming. Under her leadership, LYNX released its first album and grew its songwriting program, *Composition of a City*, which now reaches more than 700 students. Christina holds degrees from the Oberlin Conservatory and Rice University, and a postgraduate fellowship from the Bard College Conservatory. She is the Coordinator of Collaborative Piano at Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

2025 MMTA Conference Artists & Presenters, Titles, and Abstracts

Alphabetical by Presenter

Sarah Boyd and Joshua DiMercurio: *Morning Movement for Musicians*

We move to understand - come experience the Laban movement efforts of flow, weight, space, and time - accompanied by live piano improvisation. Experience how movement enhances our feeling rhythmic comprehension and musicianship. No dance necessary!

Greg Cerveny: *Enhancing Lessons with Hooktheory: Exploring Music Theory Through Popular Music*

This session introduces Hooktheory's suite of web-based resources that help students apply music theory concepts through the lens of popular music. From ready-to-use ear training games to interactive song analysis tools, we'll explore practical ways to extend learning beyond lessons. These tools work across instruments and student levels. Attendees will leave with examples, teaching strategies, and access to free resources that support creativity, reinforce concepts, and encourage musical exploration. Whether you're working with individual students, leading group theory classes, or assigning at-home enrichment, this session highlights practical ways to integrate Hooktheory into your existing teaching practice.

Chia-Ying Chan: *Integrating Memorization: A Seamless Approach from Practice to Performance*

Memorization is a lifelong pursuit in a musician's journey. This session explores how integrating theoretical understanding with practical memory strategies can strengthen learning and build confident, expressive performance. Designed for intermediate and advanced students, the presentation offers tools to deepen musical comprehension and support secure memorization from the start.

Don Crafton: *Sight Reading Made Simple*

Building confident sight readers doesn't have to mean hours of extra practice or complex planning. In this interactive session, Mr. Crafton will demonstrate how you can strengthen your students' music-reading skills in just minutes a day — no matter their level. With Sight Reading Factory's new auto-graded assignments and group sight reading with Live Practice, you'll see how easy

it is to build independent musicians who read with fluency and confidence. While this session will focus primarily on piano, Mr. Crafton will touch on how Sight Reading Factory can be used with band, orchestra, and choir as well. Whether you're working with beginners or more advanced students, this session will give you practical, time-saving strategies to make sight reading effective, engaging, and stress-free in any piano studio, group piano class, or classroom.

Justin Colwell: Problem-Solving & Pianism: Leadsheets as a Musical Sandbox

Leadsheets can add variety to lessons, motivate students, and allow you to teach high-level musicianship concepts like analysis, voice leading, fingering, voicing, and playing by ear. This presentation will highlight resources for getting started with leadsheets and provide teaching strategies for two popular songs.

John Ellis: Comparative Pedagogy: When Experts Disagree

This will be an interactive presentation exploring a series of piano pieces where experts in pedagogy disagree on how to teach and play them. The presentation proposes a process for analyzing the conflicts so as to lend us opportunities to broaden our pedagogical scope with more options while teaching.

Trinity Fan: No Script, No Fear: Improvisation for All Levels

This session explores accessible beginner improvisation techniques for classical musicians of all levels, offering solo exercises and guided duets to deepen musical understanding of existing written repertoire, as well as guiding points for how to personally create something new.

Dr. Gjergji Gaqi: The Collaborative Pianist in Ballet Class

The Collaborative Pianist in Ballet Class is a brief but comprehensive immersion for pianists into the world of playing for ballet class, including directions to useful resources, musical materials and tips to facilitate this musical journey.

Sam Harris, Parker Sturgill, Lauren Shult and Julian Avendaño:
Beyond the Canon: A Guide to Underrepresented Composers

This student-led presentation highlights underrepresented composers by sharing biographical backgrounds and pedagogical resources, including repertoire from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender identities. It also introduces Dr. Yu-Lien The's TIPS database, an accessible tool for discovering inclusive piano literature with detailed teaching insights.

Kara Huber: ***Teen Technique Triage: Creating Technical Games and Activities to Produce Strong Practicing Skills for Teenagers***

Transform teenage resistance to technical practice into enthusiasm through gamified learning. Experience hands-on technique games, practice challenges, and step-by-step assessment strategies that maintain pedagogical rigor while appealing to teen motivations. Leave with ready-to-implement activities for your studio.

Stanislav Khristenko: ***Inside the Performer's Brain: From Practice Room to Stage***

"I played it perfectly at home, but something changed on stage" - a common experience for musicians of all levels. This presentation explores what happens in the brain during practice and performance, examining the roots of stage anxiety and how mental and physical preparation can improve performance. Practical strategies are offered to help make the transition from the practice room to the stage more seamless and confident.

Hyemin Kim: ***The Evolving Role of Imagination and Musicality in Piano Performance: A Study of Corigliano's Fantasia on an Ostinato and Debussy's Images, Book II***

This lecture recital explores how John Corigliano's Fantasia on an Ostinato and Claude Debussy's Images, Book II challenge performers to transcend literal score interpretation, highlighting the evolving role of imagination and musicality in piano performance.

Dr. Helen Marlais: ***Like a Chef that Creates a Stupendous Meal, how do Teachers Help their Students Foster Artistic Personality at the Piano?***

Unfortunately, many students are not given the tools to learn how to play expressively and with artistic personality. Often times students play in a

mechanical way. But students are inherently musical, so it is our responsibility to teach them the technical tools they need to foster their musicality.

Tristan McKay: *Who's Afraid of the Five-Line Staff? The Art and Opportunity of Graphic Notation Music*

Works composed with graphic notation often use scribbles, shapes, and colors (rather than the typical five-line staff) to convey musical ideas. Join me as we discover their bold history, unique interpretive challenges, and educational potential.

Catherine McMichael: *Bringing Composition into your Studio*

Catherine can help you plan a simple step-by-step curriculum for adding composition projects to your students' lessons. And maybe even for your own use!

Joy Morin: *Don't Miss a Beat! Strategies for Rhythm Success with Transfer Students*

Using strategies based on Edwin E. Gordon's Music Learning Theory (MLT), this session offers practical activities for addressing rhythm issues in transfer students. Gain fresh, pedagogically-sound ideas to use in your lessons immediately!

Derek Kealii Polischuk and Jiwoon Sim: *Touch, Listening, and the Inner Life of the Pianist: A Lecture-Recital on Marie Jaëll*

This lecture-recital explores the music and pedagogy of Marie Jaëll—composer, pianist, and visionary thinker. Featuring selections from her Six Esquisses Romantiques and Douze Valses, Op. 8, we examine Jaëll's radical ideas on touch, listening, and embodiment, offering fresh insights for pianists, teachers, and scholars.

Holly Quist: *Defiance! Learning from the Music of Sofia Gubaidulina and Her Soviet-Era Contemporaries*

In this lecture recital, Dr. Quist explores the relevancy and 21st century lessons to be learned from the defiance found in Sofia Gubaidulina's Chaconne, Piano Sonata, Toccata-Troncata, Galina Ustvolskaya's Sonata No. 6, and Elina Firsova's For Alissa.

Brian Shepard: *The Power of Community*

Join Brian Shepard, CEO of the Music Teachers National Association, for an inspiring presentation on the power of community that membership in MTNA provides. In an increasingly digital world, the importance of human connection has never been greater—especially for music teachers, who often work in isolation. Discover how MTNA fosters a supportive, collaborative network that enriches professional growth, combats loneliness, and elevates the music teaching profession. Whether you're new to MTNA or a longtime member, this session will reaffirm the value of belonging to a national association dedicated to advancing the music teaching field.

Logan Skelton: *Discovery and Meaning*

This presentation deals with how to read scores at a deeper level, always asking what the composer's true intent was through the notes they have written as well as the performance indications. Sometimes startling and mind-bending insights can be gleaned by a close examination of the music. I include all sorts of musical examples correlated with live and recorded performances. It is my belief and experience that with a deep understanding of a composer's actual musical intentions, a great freedom of interpretation results. The presentation seeks to lead students to find meaning through understanding.

Tian Tian: *Technique and Artistic Development Through Czerny's Op. 849*

For years, pianists used Czerny's School of Velocity to develop technique in terms of speed, clarity, and agility. However, as etudes also reflect artistic elements required by standard repertoire, this session will discuss ways to change colors through physical movement in addition to basic technique training using etudes from Op. 849.

Zhao Wang, Jacob Bleeker and Ning Zhang: *From Breath to Bow: Pianistic Adaptation in Brahms Op. 120 Sonatas*

This lecture discusses the interpretive and collaborative distinctions in performing Johannes Brahms's Op. 120 clarinet sonatas which were adapted later for viola, aiming to explore how breathing and bowing inform timing, phrasing, balance, ensemble texture and other related topics in collaborative piano.

Adrienne Wiley: Jennifer Thomas: *Artist Pianist, Composer: Pushing the Boundaries*

Jennifer Thomas is a young composer who resides in Sequim, Washington. She has expanded the boundaries of composing for piano, orchestra, and the use of video medium. She has won international and national awards for her video presentations of her compositions.

Dr. Tennille Woodward: *Conducting Beyond the Podium: Leadership Lessons for Music Educators*

Explore how music educators can lead with clarity, confidence, and purpose—both in and beyond the studio. This session offers practical leadership lessons, drawn from real experiences, to help you inspire students, build community, and elevate your impact as an educator and leader in music education.



*“When words fail,
music speaks”*

Hans Christian Anderson

**Greetings from
Mid-Michigan Music
Teachers Association**

For more information on our programs visit our
website at mmmta.org
or email Diana Scott @ dianakurin@gmail.com

2025 Conference Presenter

Julian Avendaño is a Colombian pianist and educator currently pursuing a Master's in Piano Performance with Lori Sims at Western Michigan University. He holds a Bachelor's in Piano Performance and a Master's in Instrumental Pedagogy from the National University of Colombia, where he studied under Mac McClure. Julian has appeared as a guest artist at events such as the XXXVIII Festival Internacional de Piano UIS and Sewanee OperaFest 2022. He has performed solo and chamber music across Colombia and the U.S., and participated in festivals in Colombia, Brazil (FEMUSC), and the U.S. (Sewanee, Brevard). He currently teaches piano at Crescendo Academy in Kalamazoo. Passionate about Latin American and Spanish music, he incorporates this repertoire in performance and as a teaching tool with his students.



Jacob Bleeker is a rising clarinetist in Michigan's classical music community. He began his performance career as principal clarinetist of the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony and the Michigan Youth Arts Festival and was also a concerto competition winner with the Grand Rapids Symphonic Band. While attending Grand Valley State University, Bleeker won a national audition for the Pierre Monteux Orchestral Training Festival as well as the 2018 Grand Valley State University Concerto Competition. After the pandemic, Bleeker continued his undergraduate studies closer to home at Central Michigan University, where he was named winner of the 2024 Nixon Woodwind Competition and the 2025 Central Michigan University Chamber Music Competition. Bleeker is currently pursuing a master's degree in clarinet performance at the University of Michigan, where he studies with Professors Chad Burrow and Daniel Gilbert. His former teachers include Dr. Arthur Campbell and Dr. Kennen White.



Sara Boyd is a multifaceted music educator, deeply passionate about fostering musical growth in students of all ages. Sarah owns Piano Vine Studio, est. 2010, where she employs an audition-based approach to piano instruction, both in person and online. She is the Lead Teaching Artist for the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, she develops curriculum, conducts teacher workshops, and engages with Detroit's public preschool classrooms. In 2010, she founded Hummingbirds Music Together, bringing early childhood education to numerous families in her community. Sarah is actively involved with the Gordon Institute for Music Learning and recently joined as a faculty member.



She also holds a Graduate Certificate in Injury-Preventive Well-Coordinated Keyboard Technique from Salem College with Dr. Barbara Lister-Sink and a Master in Music Education from Eastern Michigan University where she was a student of Dr. Garik Pedersen. In addition to her professional pursuits, Sarah enjoys making music with her husband, Ryan, and their four children.

David Brickle serves as Assistant Professor of Music at Milligan University teaching piano and music theory. David has performed widely throughout the continental United States, Puerto Rico, and internationally in Spain and has appeared in a variety of broadcasts including National Public Radio's "Performance Today," and ETV Radio's "On the Keys."



David has been a featured guest artist in numerous concert series including the Lander University Emerging Keyboard Artist Series, Oklahoma Baptist University's Digby Bell Memorial Recital, the Festival of Keys, the Southern Exposure Concert Series, and the South Carolina Governor's School Discovery Summer Music Program. He has also performed as a concerto soloist with the Anderson Symphony Orchestra and as a keyboardist for the Chautauqua Music School Festival Orchestra.

After winning first prize in the South Carolina MTNA competition two years in a row and receiving honorable mention at the southeastern division level, David has also twice been a finalist at the Chautauqua International Piano

Competition. He was selected as a winner of the Roundtop Festival Institute chamber music competition and as the winner of the Chapman/Neesen competition.

David completed his Doctor and Master of Music degrees in piano performance at Florida State. While at FSU, he also completed the Specialized Study Program in Pedagogy of Music Theory. David holds a Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance from the University of South Carolina. He regularly serves on the faculty of Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan and has previously taught at the MasterWorks Festival, the FSU Summer Piano Institute and Piano Camp.

Greg Cerveny is a music software developer based in Midland, Michigan. He has co-founded music startups incubated at Stanford's StartX Accelerator and developed interactive tools in collaboration with organizations such as Chamber Music Detroit and The Royal Conservatory of Music. His artistic practice includes electro-acoustic performance, sound art, and experimental media, with recent features at SPLICE Institute and CITR's 24 Hours of Radio Art, as well as recognition as a SEAMUS CREATE Grant recipient. Greg currently works with Hooktheory, where he helps build accessible, popular-music-based theory tools for musicians and educators.



Chia-Ying Chan, Originally from Taiwan, pianist Chia-Ying Chan is acclaimed for her vibrant and sensitive artistry. As a soloist and chamber musician, she has performed throughout Taiwan, the U.S., and Europe, with appearances featured on The Grand FM 101 (Canada), WILL FM 90.9 (USA), and Radio Taiwan International.

Chan has won top prizes in both national and international competitions. Recent highlights include a performance with Sinfonia da Camera under Ian Hobson, the 21st Century Piano Commission Recital at Krannert Center, and a solo recital at the 2024 Piano Technicians Guild conference. Her debut



album on Centaur Records earned critical praise, with Classical Music Sentinel describing her as “a highly sensitive artist... a musician to watch and follow.”

A dedicated chamber musician, Chan co-founded the Amosa Duo with clarinetist Gary June and the Brickle & Chan Piano Duo. She has appeared at major venues such as the PianoForte Foundation (Chicago), the National Recital Hall (Taipei), Oakland University, and Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp.

Chan currently serves on the piano faculty at Saginaw Valley State University. She has given masterclasses and lectures in the U.S. and Taiwan, and presented a webinar series in China. She is vice president of WPTA USA–Illinois, co-chair of the Chambana International Music Competition, and a frequent competition adjudicator.

Her students have earned top honors in national and international competitions and gained admission to institutions including UIUC, Interlochen Arts Academy, and Beijing Normal University. She holds a DMA and Artist Diploma from UIUC, MM from the Cleveland Institute of Music, and BM from the National University of Tainan.

Justin Colwell, began playing the piano at age four and has enjoyed making music as a collaborative artist, music director, and occasional composer ever since. Recent projects include a debut solo album *the fires & the river*: piano music for modern dance (2021), collaboration on the piano duo accompaniment for *Side by Side* by Sondheim with Grand Valley State University Opera Theatre (2021), performances of the Brahms and Mozart requiems in chamber orchestration with Grand Rapids Community College choirs (GRCC, 2023-24), and VoxGR's holiday concert VOXmas (2024).

Today, Justin's work revolves around performing and teaching music in community spaces in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He currently serves as the Faculty Accompanist at GRCC and Music Director at All Souls Community Church of West Michigan. With his spouse Melia, he co-owns Yellow Door Music Studio and Joyful Sounds Music Studio, offering comprehensive music education services to families in the region. His teaching specialties include collegiate group piano and private piano for intermediate students and adult beginners. He serves on the board of Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand



Rapids. Justin holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance & Humanities from Indiana Wesleyan University (piano studies with Phoenix Park-Kim, conducting studies with Jason Thompson) and a Master of Music degree in Piano Performance from the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory (piano studies with Robert Weirich). Justin lives with his spouse, two children, and two cats in Grand Rapids' West Sides.

Don Crafton is the Founder and President of SightReadingFactory.com, a leading web-based platform that helps musicians improve their sight reading through automatically generated, customizable exercises. He received his bachelor's degree in music education and performance from The Catholic University of America and his master's degree in orchestral performance from The Manhattan School of Music.



Mr. Crafton has taught band, orchestra, and music theory in school systems across Maryland, Virginia, and New York. As a bass trombonist, he performs regularly with the Savannah Philharmonic and the Hilton Head Orchestra, and has also played with the Syracuse Symphony. He previously taught low brass at Hamilton College.

Through his work with Sight Reading Factory, Don has combined his passions for education, technology, and performance to support music educators and students around the world. As a clinician, he has presented numerous workshops nationwide on music literacy and the innovative tools available through Sight Reading Factory.

Joshua DiMercurio has played the piano for 12 years with 3 years of teaching experience. He has studied under multiple teachers, including Kevin Sayers and Lucile Elmore. In 2024, he completed a certification in Music Learning Theory (Piano Level 1) from the Gordon Institute of Music Learning. He is mentored by Sarah Boyd, the lead Teaching Artist of the DSO. His areas of expertise include classical, traditional, pop, theory, technique, and teaching based on the Music Learning Theory by Edwin E. Gordon. He opened his piano studio in January of



2022. He teaches music classes at a homeschool organization, Juniper Classical, and teaches Early Childhood Music Classes. He plays solos for parties, church, solo/ensemble at competitions, accompaniment, and worship teams. Mr. Josh strongly advocates a sequential movement-based approach to learning music, believing that the student's first instrument is their body and voice. Students develop their ability to think musically and apply that to their performance pieces. Mr. Josh individualizes his approach to determine the best teaching style for each student based on their specific goals and needs. He also holds a professional membership with the Michigan GIML Chapter.

John Ellis, Professor of Piano, is director of Graduate Studies in Piano Pedagogy and administers the Piano Pedagogy Laboratory Program. He is in demand, nationally and internationally as a master class clinician, adjudicator, and lecturer on piano pedagogy. His travels have taken him to the University of South Florida, the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, Finland, and Hawaii. Ellis speaks regularly on pedagogy topics to teachers' groups throughout Michigan and the United States. At the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance, he was given the 2024 Harold Haugh Award for excellence in studio teaching. As a pianist, he has performed as soloist, lecture-recitalist, and collaborative artist. He has recorded the solo piano music of Arthur Cunningham.



As a scholar in the field of pedagogy, Ellis combines music theory, musicology, and the humanities with the more traditional pedagogical methods. His book, *The Pedagogical Writings of Marguerite Long: A Reassessment of Her Impact on the French School of Piano*, was published by IU Press in 2024. He has published articles on Long as well as on the history and curriculum of the progressive Metropolitan Music School in American Music Teacher. He has also worked with the Musical Signification Project of the International Congress on Musical Signification (ICMS) since 1996, presenting papers on musical meaning and pedagogy. At the University of Michigan, he has previously served as Chair of the Piano Department and Associate Dean for Productions, Programs and Partnerships.

Trinity Fan is pianist, composer, educator, and artist based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She has been a top prizewinner of several competitions including YoungArts, Music Teachers National Association (MTNA), Camerata Artists International Competition, and more. In 2025, Trinity won first prize in the Rosamund P. Haeberle Competition, and Honorable Mention in the Michigan MTNA Young Artists Piano Competition. In 2024, she was awarded Second Prize in the MTNA Composition Competition. Trinity studied composition with Shuyu Lin, Corey Chang, and Wong Chun Wai. She was also a finalist in the 2022 Spotlight International Piano Competition, where she was awarded the Audience Prize.



Previously, Trinity was a student of Edward Auer at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and recently graduated from the University of Michigan with a master's in Piano Performance and Pedagogy under Christopher Harding, where she will continue her doctorate studies. Trinity is also studying jazz improvisation with Andy Milne.

Aside from performing, Trinity has taught piano for 8 years. She is a former faculty member of IU's Young Pianists Program and is currently a Graduate Student Instructor at the University of Michigan, and teaches at SMTD's Piano Pedagogy Laboratory Program.

Equally at home in solo and collaborative music, pianist **Gjergji Gaqi** maintains an active performing career throughout North America and Europe. Gaqi's latest pedagogical research on various topics has brought him to present sessions at the Alabama, Arkansas, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Virginia Music Teachers Association conferences.



Dr. Gaqi studied piano and chamber music at the International School of Chamber Music "Trio di Trieste" in Duino (Italy), while completing the bilingual International Baccalaureate diploma. He was a winner of the Colby Concerto Competition and a Summa Cum Laude graduate of Colby College with a major in Music and a minor in Economics. As a Walgreen scholar, Gaqi received his Master of

Music and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in piano performance at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, with additional studies in chamber music and jazz piano. Dr. Gaqi is currently Assistant Professor of Piano at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, with previous appointments at Tyler Junior College, Siena Heights University, College of the Mainland and Brazosport College. He is currently the Composition Competition Coordinator for the Arkansas State Music Teachers Association, having formerly served as president of the East Texas Music Teachers Association and chair of the ETMTA Helen Elbert Collaborative Music Festival. In addition to being a sought-after masterclass clinician and adjudicator, Mr. Gaqi is co-founder and Artistic Director of the Settenote Online Piano International Competition.

Sam Harris is a Minnesota native who is currently pursuing his Master of Music in Piano Performance at Western Michigan University under Lori Sims. He holds a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance from St. Olaf College where he studied with Christopher Atzinger. Sam attended the Brevard Music Center Summer Festival in 2024 and 2025, where he studied with Yu-Lien The and Norman Krieger. In 2023 he attended the Bowdoin International Music Festival where he studied with Julian Martin and Itzhak Rashkovsky. In the summer



of 2025, Sam will be in residence at the Krzysztof Penderecki Summer Academy of Music in Krakow, Poland, under the mentorship of Andrzej Pikul. In an effort to reflect his own African American heritage, Sam regularly includes pieces by African American composers in both his solo and chamber repertoire. Sam is passionate about teaching students of all ages, which serves as the driving force for his career in music.

Kara Huber has performed across North America, Europe, and Australia, including lauded solo appearances at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Piano Virtuoso Series at the Canadian Opera Company, the Rising Stars Piano Series in Southampton, New York, and the Steinway Series at the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Huber has received numerous prizes and awards for her performances, including the Audience Favorite Award in the Cincinnati World Piano Competition. A graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, where she studied piano with Michael Coonrod, Huber received additional training at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music with Awadagin Pratt and the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music with John Perry and Leon Fleisher. Huber completed a DMA in piano and conducting at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, served on the faculty of the University of Louisville School of Music, and is currently the Marjorie Wood Drackett Piano Chair at the Interlochen Arts Academy.



Hyemin Kim is a versatile performing artist and esteemed educator who serves as a faculty member in Collaborative Piano at Interlochen Arts Academy. As a featured soloist and recitalist, Kim has performed with several orchestras, including the Philharmonische Solisten Bratislava (Mozart Hall, Wiener Konzerthaus, Austria) and Benzie Area Symphony Orchestra (Corson Auditorium, Interlochen, MI).

She has also performed extensively across the U.S., Austria, and Korea, appearing at the Youngsan Grace Hall, Daejeon Culture and Art Foundation (Korea); Bad Goisern Landesmusikschule, Landesverband Steiermark, Grazer Landesmuseum (Austria); the American Protégé Foundation (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall) (U.S.). Kim has been recognized with numerous accolades in international piano competitions, including the Internationaler Wiener Pianisten-Wettbewerb, where she received a Schubert Special Award; the Vienna Grand Prize Virtuoso Competition; the Concorso Internazionale di Esecuzione Musicale "NUOVI TALENTI" - Città di Spinea; the Tadini International Music Competition; the



Concorso Internazionale - Città di Ischia; Fanny Mendelssohn International Competition; Franz Liszt Center Piano Competition, and American Protégé International Competition.

As an active chamber musician, Kim has become a sought after collaborator. She was invited as a pianist at the Styrian Chamber Music Festival (Graz, Austria), and the Music House Museum (Acme, MI) has been organizing Hyemin Kim's Concert Series "Classical Voyage". Dr. Hyemin Kim holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance, as well as her second Doctorate in Collaborative Piano from Michigan State University; a Master of Music and Postgraduate Diploma from Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Graz, Austria; and a Bachelor of Music from Kookmin University, South Korea. Currently, Dr. Kim serves as a committee member in Inclusive Teaching at The Piano Conference: NCKP 2025 and will join Blue Lake Arts Camp as a Piano Instructor starting in the summer 2025.

Helen Marlais teaches piano in a joy-filled, practical way. She has given hundreds of presentations and master classes, and has created 200+ piano books to support piano teachers as they guide their students to playing well, which includes the innovative and state of the art technique of the Succeeding at the Piano method.



PORT HURON MUSIC TEACHERS
ASSOCIATION
SERVING TEACHERS AND
STUDENTS OF
ST. CLAIR AND SANILAC
COUNTIES

Tristan McKay, PhD is a pianist, educator, and writer based in Detroit, Michigan. Celebrated for his “dramatic” and “assertive” playing (New York Times), he has premiered dozens of new solo and chamber works at iconic venues including Carnegie Hall, The Apollo Theater, The Chamber Music Society at Lincoln Center, National Sawdust, Symphony Space, and Pittsburgh Opera.



Tristan currently runs an online piano studio for students of all ages. His prize-winning students have received State Awards and Regional Gold Medals from the Royal Conservatory of Music as well as outstanding marks from local organizations. Tristan is currently on faculty at the State University of New York at New Paltz, and also serves on the Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Detroit Musicians League and the Michigan Music Teachers Association, where he was recently appointed Historian.

Equally dedicated to writing about the music of our time, Tristan published a monograph entitled *The Semiotics of Open Notations: Ambiguity as Opportunity* (Cambridge University Press). As a contributing writer for The Seattle Symphony for the past two seasons, he has created program notes for artists including Sir Stephen Hough, Emanuel Ax, Bruce Liu, Joe Hisaishi, and Yulianna Avdeeva. He is also a music critic for I CARE IF YOU LISTEN, an award-winning hub for living music creators.

Tristan is a graduate of New York University (PhD, BM) and Manhattan School of Music (MM), where he studied with Marilyn Nonken, Anthony de Mare, and Christopher Oldfather.

Catherine McMichael, pianist, is an award-winning composer, arranger, performer, clinician and teacher in Saginaw, Michigan. Her degrees from the University of Michigan are in piano performance and chamber music. She is the pianist for the Saginaw Bay and Flint Symphony Orchestras, Ann Arbor based River Raisin Ragtime Revue, accompanies the Saginaw Choral Society and directs Bells on High at First United Methodist Church of Saginaw.



Her compositions are represented by five publishers and have been played on all seven continents by

orchestras, bands, vocal and handbell choirs and chamber ensembles of all types; performed by professional touring artists, university faculty and students, avid amateurs and young musicians. Catherine and her violinist husband Rod Bieber have two adult children, Meredith, Physical Therapist in training, photographer and world traveler; and Nathan, Nashville studio violinist, conductor and composer's assistant. Catherine is available for commissions for any instrument or voice. Contact her via www.catherinemcmichael.com.

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 has presented at numerous regional and national conferences and authored articles for Piano Magazine, Clavier Companion, 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 teachers include Adrienne Wiley, Andrew Le, Adam Clark, and Mary Scanlan.

Derek Kealii Polischuck is Professor of Piano and Director of Piano Pedagogy at the Michigan State University College of Music. Originally from San Diego, he earned his Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California, where he studied with Daniel Pollack.

An acclaimed recording artist, Polischuk's 2013 solo album *Terra Incognita* drew wide critical praise for its nuanced interpretations and thoughtful programming. His 2024 release *Many Hands* features works by women composers and collaborative performances with his MSU students, reflecting his commitment to inclusive programming and community-building through music.



Polischuk is a passionate advocate for inclusive music education, and he regularly presents at national and international conferences around the world. He is the founding director of *Celebrating the Spectrum*, a summer festival for advanced pianists on the autism spectrum. The program reflects his deep commitment to creating meaningful musical opportunities for all students, with a focus on artistic excellence and neurodiversity.

His contributions to pedagogy are also reflected in his book *Transformational Piano Teaching*, published by Oxford University Press, which explores equity, embodiment, and artistry in the piano studio. At MSU, he has received multiple honors, including the Curricular Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Award, the Excellence in Diversity Award, and the Teacher-Scholar Award.

Polischuk's work as a performer, educator, and advocate continues to shape a more expressive and inclusive future for classical music and piano education.

Holly Quist, American pianist has performed, collaborated, and taught within communities throughout the U.S., Ireland, and Italy. She recently finished completing a Doctor of Musical arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she studied piano under Christopher Taylor, and piano pedagogy under Dr. Jessica Johnson. Today, Dr. Quist teaches as a professor of music at Fort Lewis College, where she teaches music theory, music history, and piano.



Lauren Shult is a student at Western Michigan University (WMU) studying music therapy and piano performance. She has studied under both Dr. Yu-Lien The and Professor Lori Sims. During her time there, Lauren has served on the executive boards for the collegiate Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) and Student Music Therapy Association (SMTA) chapters. In 2024, she attended the Brevard Music Center Summer Festival where she studied with Professor Jihea Hong-Park. Lauren taught piano at Crescendo Academy of Music in Kalamazoo, MI and has an interest in exploring teaching for neurodivergent students. She often works collaboratively with choirs, instrumentalists, and vocalists. She is currently a music therapy intern at University Hospitals in Cleveland, Ohio.



Logan Skelton is a much sought after pianist, teacher and composer whose work has received international critical acclaim. He has concertized widely in the United States, Europe and Asia and has been featured on many public radio and television stations including National Public Radio's "All Things Considered," "Audiophile Audition," "Performance Today," as well as on radio in China and national television in Romania. He has recorded numerous compact discs for Centaur, Albany, Crystal, Blue Griffin, Equilibrium, Supertrain, and Naxos Records, the latter two consisting of collaborations with fellow composer-pianist William Bolcom.



Skelton is a frequent juror for international piano competitions and regularly appears in such festival settings as Bachauer, Amalfi, Gijón, Eastman, Tunghai, Chautauqua, American Romanian, Eastern, New Orleans, Poland, Indiana, Hilton Head, and the Prague. He is a popular presenter at music teacher organizations including numerous appearances at MTNA national conventions and EPTA World Piano Conferences, as well as serving as Convention Artist for many state conventions. Moreover, he has given countless performances and masterclasses at colleges and conservatories throughout the world.

Skelton balances his busy career as performer, composer and recording artist with an international class of prize-winning students as Artur Schnabel Collegiate Professor of Piano, Arthur Thurnau Professor, and Director of Doctoral Studies in Piano Performance at the University of Michigan.

Jiwon Sim, a pianist from South Korea, recently earned her Doctor of Musical Arts degree in piano performance from Michigan State University, where she studied under Dr. Derek Kealii Polischuk. During her doctoral studies, Sim was awarded a full graduate assistantship.

Sim appears on the recording *Many Hands* (Blue Griffin Records), a piano ensemble project featuring works by women composers. Through this project, she was first introduced to the music of Marie Jaëll, which became the focus of her doctoral research, aiming to rediscover and share Jaëll's contributions to piano performance and pedagogy.

Sim previously completed her Master of Music degree in piano performance at Indiana University, where she studied with Norman Krieger and was awarded multiple scholarships. She earned her Bachelor of Music degree from Ewha Womans University in Seoul, Korea, graduating with honors while studying with Yoon-bo Jung and Yoon-Jung Song.



Parker Sturgill is a musician and student currently pursuing a degree in Music Education at Western Michigan University. At Western, he studies piano under Yu Lien The as well as Audio Technology under John Campos. Parker also serves on the executive board for the Music Teacher's National Association (MTNA). Before starting his studies at WMU, Parker's experiences with music have been broad and motivated by a raw, passionate love for Music and the people who make it.

His interests are broad: Ranging from live performances with his band Andrea Doria, where he writes and arranges original music, to working at Csipke Tabor, a Hungarian Folk Music and Dance Camp that takes place every summer in Michigan. Parker hopes to combine his love for recorded



music, its history and practices, with the discipline of collegiate music making. Bringing an attitude of academic curiosity and unfiltered enthusiasm for the art form of music.

Tian Tian began her training at the age of four in her native China. Upon arriving in the United States, she quickly began amassing top prizes at national and international competitions. She received degrees from the Juilliard School and Eastman School of Music under the tutelage of renowned pedagogues such as Robert McDonald, Nelita True and Logan Skelton.



Tian has presented solo concerts across the US, Canada and China. She has also appeared in music festivals such as Piano Texas, the Gilmore Festival, and Summer Courses with Arie Vardi (Germany). An avid chamber musician, Tian has performed with the Juilliard Quartet, Imani Winds and toured in the US, China, and Korea as a member of the Studzinsky Trio. Tian currently serves on the faculty of Oakland University as Associate Professor of Piano and Area Coordinator. Her in-depth analysis of technique and charismatic teaching style have made her a frequent guest speaker at numerous teachers' groups and earned her the title of Honorary Professor at ten different universities in China.

Zhao Wang, Chinese-born pianist currently is the Assistant Professor of Piano and Collaborative Piano at Central Michigan University School of Music. An avid soloist and collaborative musician, Wang has performed in cities throughout Belgium, Germany, Italy, Spain, Canada, the United States, Japan, Thailand, and China. She frequently collaborates in concerts and recordings with renowned university faculty and members of major orchestras including the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Boston Symphony Orchestra. In recent seasons, Wang has performed at the Blue



Lake Fine Arts Camp, the Interlochen Center for the Arts, the Henri Selmer Summer Academy, the Thailand International Composition Festival, and has toured with CMU School of Music faculty members in cities in China.

A dedicated educator, Wang has taught and adjudicated at international piano festivals including the European Summer Piano Academy and Orbifold International Piano Festival and Competition, as well as serving as a regular piano faculty member at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp. She has also given master classes in universities and conservatories throughout China and the U.S. Dr. Wang received her degrees in Piano Performance, Collaborative Piano, and Piano Pedagogy from Eastman School of Music and Michigan State University.

Adrienne Wiley is currently Professor of Music at Central Michigan University where she teaches and administers the piano pedagogy program at the bachelor's degree level, teacher applied lessons, and teaches class piano. Dr. Wiley received her bachelor's and master's degrees in piano performance from the University of Kansas, and her doctor of musical arts in piano performance and pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Wiley's dual focus on performance and pedagogy keeps her active in both areas: she maintains an active performance career as a soloist, collaborative pianist, and also gives workshops, presentations, and lectures at the state, regional, national, and international levels.

In her spare time, Dr. Wiley has authored articles that have appeared in the American Music Teacher Magazine, Keyboard Companion, Clavier magazines, and the Clavier-Companion (Clavier and Clavier-Companion are now PIANO). In addition, she is a frequently invited reviewer of piano music and books for the Music Teachers National Association's American Music Teacher magazine and the PIANO, and recently joined the PIANO as a staff reviewer. Her CD of piano works by women composers for one hand has been released through Centaur and is streaming on platforms.



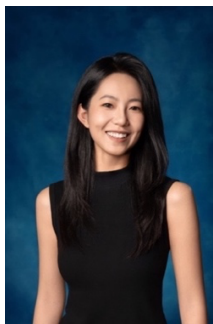
Tennille Woodward is an award-winning educator, leadership coach, and systems strategist with over 20 years of experience spanning K–12 classrooms, school leadership, and district administration. She is a certified member of the Maxwell Leadership Team and President of Grow Lead Empower, where she equips educators and organizations to lead with clarity, build strong systems, and create exceptional outcomes.

Dr. Woodward holds a doctorate in Education Systems Improvement Science and has led leadership development initiatives across public schools, higher education, and the arts. As a lifelong advocate for the power of music and creativity in education, she brings a unique perspective that bridges instructional excellence with strategic leadership. Her work focuses on helping educators grow their influence—whether in classrooms, studios, or communities—by aligning their values, vision, and daily practices.

Known for her calm, confident style and ability to turn big ideas into action, Dr. Woodward inspires educators to lead from where they are and create environments where both teaching and leadership thrive.



Ning Zhang, a violist pursuing a Bachelor of Music at Central Michigan University (anticipated graduation December 2025), has performed at the Tianjin Concert Hall in China and been featured in the Tianjin Jinwan Evening Newspaper. A recipient of the CMU International President's Award and the José Luis Maúrtua Orchestra Strings Scholarship, she has served as principal violist with the CMU and Tianjin Conservatory orchestras. Ning has delivered solo performances at CMU's Honors Convocation, faculty-nominated showcases, and international festivals. She is an active member of the Tianjin Musicians Association Viola Committee and has participated in masterclasses with the Dover Quartet and Harlem Quartet.



**Michigan Music Teachers
Opening Concert Program
Chia-Ying Chan and David Brickle**

Binary for Piano Four Hands (2021)	Victoria Bon (b. 1945)
The Cloudy Sky	Chen-Yu Huang (b. 1983)
Kickapoo Snake Juice (World Premier)	Catherine McMichael (b. 1954)
Piano Sonata for Four Hands I. Very Slowly – Moderately Fast II. Slowly III. Fast	Harold Shapero (1920–2013)
Sabre Dance	Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978) arr. Anderson and Roe

*Thank you to MMTA,
Saginaw Valley State University
and MMTA for a great
2025 conference!*



Music Teachers National Association and Michigan Music Teachers Association provide opportunities to engage, network, and advance your professional development through performance and composition competitions.

Participate in the most competitive and exciting event in Michigan. Stay informed on competition literature, learn performance strategies and techniques, network with some of the finest professional music educators in the nation.

Join the MTNA Michigan Performance and Composition Competition Team. Volunteer a minimum of two hours over the 3-day event at the 2025-2026 MTNA Michigan Performance Competition. Learn by participating!

Western Michigan University, Dalton Center, Kalamazoo, MI
November 14-16, 2025

[For all things MTNA and MTNA Michigan Competitions](#)

Saturday: Junior and Senior String, Young Artist Piano, Young Artist Woodwind.
Sunday: Junior and Senior Piano, Senior Piano Duet, Senior. Woodwind



Lora Kolean
Young Artist Coordinator



Karen Feilla
Senior Coordinator



Karen Johnson
Junior Coordinator



Michael Zutis
Composition Coordinator

[Contact](#) Laurie M Marshall
Director of Competitions



**Michigan Music Teachers Association
Annual Student Honors Recital
Saginaw Valley State University
October 11, 2025**

MMTA Concerto Division I Winner

Impromptu Op. 90, No. 2 in E-Flat major Franz Schubert
Aiden Yunzhi Lu, Piano
Natalia Bezuglova, teacher

MMTA Concerto Division II Winner

Etude (Moscheles-Fétis) No.1 in F minor Frédéric Chopin
Brandon Zhao, Piano
Gerardo Ascheri, Teacher

MMTA Concerto Division III Winner

Fanasiestücke (Fantasy Pieces), Op. 731. Robert Schumann
I. Zart und mit Ausdruck (Tender and with expression)
II. Lebhaft, leicht (Lively, light)
III. Rasch und mit Feuer (Quick and with fire)
Joseph Kim, Cello
Amir Eldan, teacher

MMTA Concerto Division IV Winner

Ballade No.3 in A-Flat Major, Op.47 Frédéric Chopin
Hailey Culp, piano
Kara Huber, teacher

MMTA State Finals Elementary Division Piano Winner

Arabesque No. 2. Claude Debussy
Mujing Jiang, piano
Yucheng Tian, teacher

MMTA State Finals Junior Division Piano Winner

Andante and Rondo Capriccioso in E Major Op.14 Felix Mendelssohn
Nathan Wen, piano
Mary Siciliano, teacher

MMTA State Finals Senior State Winner

Allegro, Op.8

Robert Schumann

Issac Sung, piano

Jinah Lee, teacher

MTNA Michigan and East Central Junior String Winner

Scherzo-Tarantelle, Op. 16.

Henryk Wieniawski

Daniel Liu, violin

Eun-song Koh, teacher

MTNA Michigan, East Central, and National Senior Woodwind Winner

Walking on the Ceiling

David Biedenbender

I. Heavy

II. Floating, Breathing

Diego Chapela-Perez, saxophone

Joseph Lulloff, teacher

MTNA Michigan and East Central Young Artist Piano Winner

Fantasiestücke, Op. 12

Robert Schumann

I. Des Abends

II. Aufschwung

III. Warum?

IV. Grillen

V. In der Nacht

VI. Fabel

VII. Traumes Wirren

VIII. Ende vom

Elizabeth Low, piano

Christopher Harding, teacher

MTNA National Chamber Ensemble String, Third Place

Trio sur des mélodies populaires irlandaises:

Frank Martin

I. Allegro moderato

Trio Laval

Jordan Bartel, violin, Sarina Zhang, cello, Sean Yang, piano

Amy Cheng, teacher

Michigan Music Teachers Association
2024-2025 MTNA Michigan Competitions Results
Michigan State University, November 8-10, 2024

Junior Division

Piano:

Winner, Ethan Mihaescu	Teacher, Catherine Rollin
Alternate, Max Peng	Teacher, Faye Mao
Honorable Mention, Sophia Zhan	Teacher, Logan Skelton
Honorable Mention, Fayfay Sheng	Teacher, Arthur Green
Judges: Christopher Harding, Sheryl Iott, and Derek Kealii Polischuk	

String:

Winner, Daniel Liu	Teacher, Eun-sun Koh
Alternate, Evan Chung	Teacher, Hongyi Mo
Honorable Mention, Claire Kim	Teacher, Paul Wingert
Judge: Andrew Koehler	

Woodwind:

Representative, Haylee Kulak,	Teacher, Henning Schroeder
Judge: John Sampen	

Senior Division

Piano:

Winner, Keliang Yao	Teacher, Logan Skelton
Alternate, Hailey Culp	Teacher, Kara Huber
Honorable Mention, Natalie Yu,	Teacher, Logan Skelton
Judges: Svetlana Belsky, Yu-Lien The, and Sylvia Wang	

String:

Winner, Maya Fu	Teacher, Amir Eldan
Alternate, Lilliana Wodziszc	Teacher, Renee Skerik

Honorable Mention, Jayden Im,
Judge: Andrew Koehler

Teacher, Derek Weller

Woodwind:

Winner, Diego Chapela-Perez

Teacher, Joseph Lulloff

Alternate, Maddox Lewis

Teacher, Gary June

Honorable Mention, Sebastian Cruz

Teacher, Jeffrey Heisler

Honorable Mention, Irene Wang,

Teacher, Walt Puyear

Judges: Rebecca Hoven, Nathan Salazar, and John Sampen

Young Artist Division

Piano

Winner, Elizabeth Low

Teacher, Christopher Harding

Alternate, Jiyeon Lee,

Teacher, Logan Skelton

Honorable Mention, Trinity Fan

Teacher, Christopher Harding

Honorable Mention, Jiani Wu,

Teacher, Logan Skelton

Honorable Mention, Wanwan Yang

Teacher, Eric Zuber

Judges: Svetlana Belsky, Sylvia Wang, and Susan Wiersma Uchimura

Woodwind

Winner, Samuel Dishon,

Teacher, Timothy McAllister

Alternate Entrant, Marie Humburger

Teacher, Henning Schroeder

Honorable Mention, Roberto Campa

Teacher, Timothy McAllister

Honorable Mention, Michael Keeler

Teacher, Joseph Lulloff

Judge: John Sampen

Composition Coordinator, Michael Zutis

Junior Division Coordinator, Karen Johnson

Senior Division Coordinator, Karen Feilla

Young Artist Division Coordinator, Lora Kolean

Director of Competitions, Laurie M Marshall

Music Teachers National Association 2024-2025 National finals Michigan Results

Junior Division

Chopin Award: Ethan Mihaescu, Piano

Teacher, Catherine Rollin

Senior Division

First Place, Diego Chapela-Perez, Woodwind

Teacher, Joseph Lulloff

Young Artist Division

First Place, Ryan Lofland, Brass

Teacher, David Zerkel
University of Michigan

Chamber String

Third Place, Trio Laval,

Jordan Bartel, Violin

Sarina Zhang, Cello

Sean Yang, Piano

Coach, Amy Cheng
Trio Laval
University of Michigan



Fire Up, Chips!

Audition Dates

- Friday, January 16th, 2026
- Friday, February 13th, 2026
- Saturday, February 14th, 2026
- Friday, March 20th, 2026

Piano Day

- Sunday, February 15th, 2026

Instrumental Workshop

- Friday, November 14th, 2025

162 Music Building,
Mount Pleasant, MI 48859
Email: musicadmit@cmich.edu
Phone: 989-774-3281



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Michigan Music Teachers Association 2025 Concerto Competition Results

Division I

First Place: Aiden Lu, Piano,
Alternate: Darwin Chen, Violin,
Alternate: Ryan Xiao, Piano

Teacher, Natalia Bezuglova
Teacher, Susan Mercy
Teacher, Mary Siciliano

Division II

First Place: Brandon Zhao, Piano,
Second Place: Anderson Roland, Violin,
Third Place: Aiden Yang, Violin,
Alternate: Minh-Tri Le, Piano,
Alternate: Yi Sun, Piano,

Teacher, Gerardo Ascheri
Teacher, Megan Crawford
Teacher, Haewon Oh
Teacher, Larisa Soboleva
Teacher, Mary Siciliano

Division III

First Place: Joseph Kim, Cello,
Second Place: Mark Shilakes, Piano,
Third Place: Claire Kim, Cello,
Alternate: Fayfay Sheng, Piano,

Teacher, Amir Eldan
Teacher, Derek Polischuk
Teacher, Paul Wingert
Teacher, Arthur Greene

Division IV

First Place: Hailey Culp, Piano,
Second Place: Serafima Bezuglova, Violin,
Third Place: Mia Safdie, Piano,
Elizabeth Beland, Violin,

Teacher, Kara Huber
Teacher, Tigran Shiganyan
Teacher, Kara Huber
Teacher, Tigran Shiganyan

Judges: Takeshi Abo and Gail Lytle Lira
Wendy Wan Hsing Chu, Concerto Competition Chair



Michigan Music Teachers Association 2025 State Piano Final Results

Intermediate Division

First Place: Mujing Jiang,	Teacher, Yucheng Tian
Second Place: Jolie Zhen,	Teacher, Mary Siciliano
Third Place: Ron Yu,	Teacher, Sookkyung Cho
Honorable Mention: Raymin Zhu,	Teacher, Susan Uchimura
Honorable Mention: ory Thompson,	Teacher, Yucheng Tian
Judges: Sophié Van Der Westhuizen and Eric Van De Vort	

Junior Division

First Place: Nathan Wen,	Teacher, Mary Siciliano
Second Place: Naomi Alderink,	Teacher, Jinah Lee
Third Place: Darshan Khandavalli	Teacher, Jinah Lee
Honorable Mention: Claire Liu,	Teacher, Pinlin Liu
Honorable Mention: Sophia Jin,	Teacher, Nai-Wen Wang
Judges: Sheryl Iott and Justin Colwell	

Senior Division

First Place: Isaac Sung,	Teacher, Jinah Lee
Second Place: Evelyn Cao,	Teacher, Catherine Rollin
Third Place: Raymond Chai,	Teacher, Elizabeth Dianis
Honorable Mention: John Hawver,	Teacher, Ruth Goveia
Judges: Sophié Van Der Westhuizen and Eric Van De Vort	

Gerardo C. Ascheri, SAT Auditions Chair

Michigan Music Teachers Association Annual Student Honors Recital Student Winners

Diego Chapela-Perez is a sophomore at Michigan State University, where he is pursuing a BM in saxophone performance. As a native of Houston, Texas, Diego studied with Dr. Scott Plugge before traveling to East Lansing to study under Professor Joseph Lulloff. As a soloist, Diego has been featured with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and won top awards in the VSO young artist competition and National MTNA Competition. An avid chamber musician, Diego is the tenor saxophonist of the Odigo Quartet, and was previously a member of the Halcyon Quartet. Diego's groups have medaled in competitions including the Fischhoff, Barbara Wagner, and Houston Underground Chamber Music Competitions.



Hailey Culp, a senior at Interlochen Arts Academy, is an acclaimed pianist from Atlanta, Georgia, recognized internationally as a Grand Prize Virtuoso of the Brussels International Music Competition. A two-time Franklin Pond Chamber Music Competition winner and Fischhoff quarterfinalist, she has earned top honors from GMTA, MTNA, and the Georgia Federation of Music Clubs. She soloed with the Atlanta Community Symphony Orchestra and performed at venues including Carnegie Hall and Spivey Hall. A pianist for the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra, Hailey studied at Brevard, Tanglewood, and the Governor's Honors Program, performing in masterclasses with Olga Kern, Emanuel Ax, and others.



Mujing Jiang began studying piano at the age of five with Yucheng Tian. In just four years, she developed remarkable technical skills and musical expression, which led to numerous top prizes such as the MMTA SAT Elementary State Competition (Elementary Level Winner), Schoolcraft Bach Festival Honor Recital (2024, 2023), Schoolcraft Sonatina/Sonata Festival (2024, 2023) and OU Piano Competition (Division I, Honorable Mentions). In addition, she has received perfect scores at the MMTA SAT (levels 4 and 6) and participated in many concerts. In her free time, Mujing enjoys fencing, swimming and reading.



Joseph Kim, a 15-year-old student at Pioneer High School, began studying cello at age eight with Hyeyeong Yoon after first learning piano and violin. He currently studies with Amir Eldan, professor of cello at the University of Michigan, whose mentorship has deepened his passion and commitment to the cello. Joseph has won several competitions, including the 2024 and 2025 MMTA Concerto Competitions and the Irvine International Virtual Competition. He served as First Chair in the 2024 All-State Orchestra. A winner of the 2021 Golden Classical Music Awards, he performed at Carnegie Hall in 2022. He also enjoys jazz and plays trumpet, double bass, and guitar.



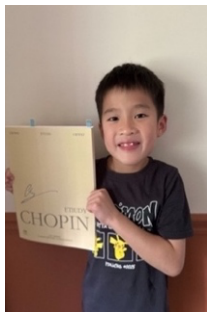
Daniel Liu is a 12-year-old violinist from Michigan who began studying the violin at the age of four. He is currently a member of the Detroit Symphony Youth Orchestra, where he has served as concertmaster for two concerts. Daniel is also part of the Slatkin Quartet, coached by Hai-Xin Wu; in 2025, the quartet won first place at the MASTA Chamber Music Competition. That same year, he was named both the Michigan and East Central Division Winner of the MTNA Junior String Competition. Daniel studies violin with Malcolm Lowe, Eun-song Koh, and Kyoko Kashiwagi. His former teachers include the late Jan Sloman, Hong-Yi Mo, and Sharon Rothstein.



Belarusian-Singaporean pianist **Elizabeth Low** holds degrees from Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music (MM) and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore (BM). Mentored by Christopher Harding, James Giles, and Thomas Hecht, she has also worked with Maria Pires, Stephen Kovacevich, Jerome Lowenthal and others in masterclasses. She has won the MTNA East Central Division Young Artist Piano Competition (2024), Farwell Award of the Musicians Club of Women Award Competition (2025), and placed in the Thauv-Isaak piano competition (2024) and the Indonesia International piano competition (2019). Currently pursuing a Doctorate at the University of Michigan with a graduate assistantship position, Elizabeth is also a semi-professional photographer, piano technology enthusiast, and painter.



Aiden Yunzhi Lu is a third grader at Hiawatha Elementary School in Okemos. He is eight years old. He started piano when he was five. His first teacher was Denise Taylor. Now, his teacher is Natalia Bezuglova. Piano is one of Aiden's favorite hobbies. His favorite composer is Chopin because he plays a lot of Chopin music and he likes the style. He likes coming up with his own ideas. He also likes to write his own music!



Isaac Sung (18), a senior at Grand Rapids Christian High School, began his piano journey when he was 9 years old. In 2021, 2022, and 2025, Isaac won the Grand Rapids Musicians League FAME Scholarship Competition. Additionally, in 2023, he had the honor of performing with the St. Cecilia Youth Symphony after winning the concerto competition. That same year, he also won 1st place in the MMTA Concerto competition and 2nd place in the Junior Division MMTA State Finals. Last summer, he attended the Vancouver Piano Sessions, where he had the opportunity to interact with peer pianists and clinicians



from around the world. Isaac will continue to play piano through college and is excited to see where his passion for the instrument takes him in the future.

Trio Laval consists of Jordan Bartel (violin), Sarina Zhang (cello), and Sean Terada Yang (piano). The three met during their graduate studies at the University of Michigan through the mentorship of Amy I-Lin Cheng and Kathryn Votapek. They have been presented concerts through the Texas Chamber Music Institute, Berlin Philharmoniker Education Programme, Castleman Quartet Program, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, and Redfish Music Festival. Since performing their first concert in September 2024 in Ann Arbor, MI, the trio has performed in venues ranging from the Van Cliburn Concert Hall to the Langlois Cheese Factory. They can be reached at triolaval.contact@gmail.com.



Nathan Wen is a 14-year-old student at Northville High School. He comes from a large family with four siblings, which keeps his life lively and full of activity. Nathan has been playing the piano with Mary Siciliano since the age of five and has gradually grown a love for music. Nathan enjoys spending his free time playing the flute and soccer.



Brandon Zhao is a student at Kinawa Middle School in Okemos, Michigan. He has played the piano since the first grade, which has helped him develop a love and hobby for music. He is also a dedicated member of his school's orchestra, where he plays the violin. When he's not focused on music, Brandon enjoys a variety of other activities. He stays active by playing tennis and soccer, and he has a great interest in astronomy and loves solving problems in math.



**Michigan Music Teachers Association
2025 Distinguished Service Award
Jacki VanderSlik**



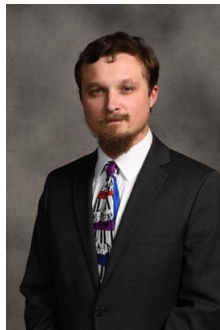
Jacki VanderSlik has been an active member of MMTA and the Holland Piano Teachers' Forum since 1982. She started teaching while in high school under the mentorship of her teacher, Catharina Hillebrand. She then obtained her B.A. in Music at Calvin University where she studied with Marilyn Slenk. In 1999, she earned state certification. She has been honored as Teacher of the Year by HPTF and MMTA in 2000, 2012, and 2023.

Jacki enjoys teaching a wide range of students from young to “senior” ages who also vary in ability from beginner to advanced. Her students participate in SAT, with many being eligible for the local Honors Recital and Semi-finals & Finals each year. Many also attend and perform regularly at the Holland Piano Club and enter its annual competition. They also enjoy playing for masterclasses whenever HPTF offers them.

Jacki has served both HPTF and MMTA in several capacities. In HPTF, she is currently the SAT chair and scheduler and just recently took on the job of treasurer. In the past, she has served multiple years as SAT chair, as vice president and president for 2 terms each, and as a Piano Club committee member and Competition chair. For MMTA, she has worked on the SAT Piano Handbook & Testing committee since the early 1990's and has been chair of that committee since 2018. She also chaired the SAT Advisory committee for several years and is now on the MMTA Assessments and Auditions committee.

Michigan Music Teachers Association 2025 Local Associations Teacher of the Year Award

Michael Zutis is a pianist/composer based in Kalamazoo, MI, with a Bachelor's of Music in Composition. Currently, he is the keyboard chair for the Suzuki Academy of Kalamazoo, the immediate past president of the Kalamazoo Area Music Teachers Association, and the music director at St. Thomas More Catholic Student Parish. Additionally, he is the president and co-founder of Arts In Action, a non-profit organization seeking to raise money for charitable causes through artistic expression and performance.



Dr. Iott is an active solo and collaborative performer, speaker, teacher, and adjudicator. She is a member of the College of Examiners for the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto, for which she also works as a facilitator for their online pedagogy courses and as a Subject Matter Expert in piano and piano pedagogy.

Frequently published in music education and piano pedagogy books and magazines, her book, *Thinking and Playing Music: Intentional Strategies for Optimal Practice and Performance* has been published recently by Rowman & Littlefield.



Cheri Verhey has been chosen as the Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids 2025 Teacher of the Year. Cheri has been an active part of PTFGR since joining in 2001. Cheri has maintained a piano studio while homeschooling her large family and doing other volunteering. She has an amazing amount of energy, which she shares in different ways with PTFGR, including running the Theory Room for SAT, and organizing and running the annual PTFGR Scholarship Competition. Her PTFGR colleagues note that Cheri is very professional, is completely dependable and works hard while maintaining a cheerful disposition. PTFGR is thankful and privileged to have Cheri as a member.



James Hohmeyer retired as the 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 & former students have been finalists in the SAT competition. Jim has directed over 85 musicals and was the conductor of the Hollywood Concert Orchestra on a national tour with Shirley Jones. Hohmeyer was named the Midland's Musician of the Year, is an adjudicator for the Michigan School Vocal Music Association. For the Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association he conducts the annual Keyboard Festival and chair of the SAT program.



Born into a musical family, **Sarah Kim**, has won numerous awards, performed, and appeared as soloists with orchestras. As a collaborative artist, she has collaborated with many soloists and ensembles. While still in college, she worked as a staff accompanist, then later, was appointed as a Junior Opera Coach at Aspen Music Festival. Her teaching experience began in high school, and her students have been prize winners of numerous competitions such as SYMF, AGM, and SAT Final of MMTA among others. She holds MM in Instrumental Accompanying from Manhattan School of Music. Her former teachers include



Haksoon Swiatkowski, Antoinette/John Perry, and Heasook Rhee.

Nyla Hensley has been teaching piano and organ in Saugatuck for the past 26 years. She graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a B.Mus. degree, with a major in organ performance. She held positions as organist in churches throughout the Midwest, and was vocal music director for a central Illinois school district. In 1999, she and her husband moved to their beloved Michigan where they had spent many years vacationing at the family cottage in Ludington. An avid supporter of the Student Achievement Testing program, Nyla is proud to be a member of the Holland Piano Teachers' Forum, and cherishes the friendships and professionalism of its members.



ADVERSITERS INDEX

Albion College	79
Ann Arbor Piano Teachers Guild	25
Battle Creek Association Music Teachers Association	75
Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp	78
Capitol Area Music Teachers Association	53
Central Michigan University	59
Faber Piano Adventures	2
Grand Valley State University	81
Hooktheory	73
Hope College	77
Hunan Restaurant	74
Interlochen Center for the Arts	84
Kalamazoo Music Teachers Association	74
Lake Michigan MTA, The Children's Academy, and Lake Michigan Concert Series	71
Livonia Area Piano Teachers Association	76
Mid-Michigan Music Teachers Association	34
Michigan State University, College of Music	82
Oakland University	80
Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids	75
Port Huron Music Teachers Association	44
Schoolcraft College	83
Sight Reading Factory	72
University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance	85

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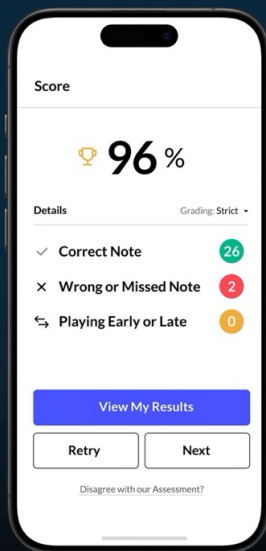




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