

Michigan Music Teacher

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*Affiliated with the Music Teachers
National Association*

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President's Letter

Dear Members,

The snow lies heavy on the hedge,
the cold is sharp and stinging,
outside my window, on the ledge,
I hear a sparrow singing.

Cheer up! Cheer up! I hear it sing,
through cold and dreary hours,
Cheer up! Cheer up! - Think of spring,
with sunshine and flowers.

Having grown up in a Scandinavian community just a stone's throw from Garrison Keillor's Lake Wobegone, I often sang these verses from a Danish Christmas hymn. It goes on to say that spring will come, our wishes will be granted . . . and by the time you read this that promise will be just around the corner!

Michigan Makes Marvelous Music!

MMTA is happy to announce that **Michael-Thomas Foumai**, our 2013 Commissioned Composer has been selected as the 2013 **MTNA Distinguished Composer of the Year**. Mr. Foumai will receive a \$5,000 award and be featured in a session at the 2014 MTNA National Conference in Chicago. The session is scheduled for Monday, March 24, at 2:15 in the Denver/Hous-

ton/Kansas City Room of the Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile.

His commissioned piece Flash Fiction (flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon) will be performed, followed by an interview. Please plan to attend this session to support our newest Distinguished Composer and the Composer Commissioning Program.

Combining the need in the United States to perpetuate the art of new American music and for states to have an opportunity to highlight live performances of new music, each year since 1969 MTNA and state affiliates have pooled their resources to commission new works. States initiate the process by choosing, approaching and commissioning a composer. Michigan's Commissioned Composer Chair is Charles Aschbrenner (also our 2013 Distinguished Service Award recipient). We premiere the work at our state conference and forward it for consideration in the MTNA Distinguished Composer of the Year selection process. A panel of composers chooses one composition and composer to honor as the MTNA Distinguished Composer of the Year.

Congratulations, Michael! We are very proud of you!!

And congratulations, MMTA! You continue to make marvelous music!

MTNA in Chicago-March 22-26

There is still time to join us in Chicago for the MTNA National Conference. It appears that it will be an outstanding program, with a very large Michigan contingent in attendance. Please let me know (gpeder-sen@emich.edu) if you would like to have dinner with other Michigan members on Sunday evening, March 23th, immediately after the East Central Division reception. I've already begun scouting possible venues.

Changes in MMTA Personnel

We welcome Jordan Brett as our new MTNA Foundation Chairman, replacing Jim Evola, who has assured us he will continue to serve in a supportive and advisory role. Those of you attended the 2013 conference, in which Jordan substituted for Jim, will be delighted to welcome Jordan in an official capacity. He brought energy and fun—not to mention some great prizes! —

to our Foundation raffle, which was the most successful in recent memory. The MTNA Foundation supports many worthy endeavors, all of which is made possible by your support, contributions from our partners, and the leadership of our Foundation Chair. Thank you, Jordan!

At our last meeting the MMTA Board asked me to appoint an ad hoc committee to address our gradual membership decline and look for ways to attract new members. This committee consists of Lester Castellana, Membership Chair, Adam Clark, Diana Munch, and Gary Pedersen. Please send us your ideas for increasing our membership. **We are open.** We will report back to the Board at the next meeting, May 4th.

East Central Division

I had the pleasure of attending the East Central Division meeting and competitions at Baldwin Wallace University in Berea, Ohio, January 10-11th. It was a pleasure to participate in meetings with leaders from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Wisconsin, chaired by ECD Director Gerardo Ascheri. As usual, we heard wonderful playing and singing by winners from these states. We are particularly proud of the Michigan students who participated, and the fine teaching that was evidenced in their performances. Here is a list of the students—and their teachers—who will be continuing to the national competition in Chicago:

Junior Piano:

Heather Gu (Logan Skelton)

Senior Woodwind:

Julian Velasco (Joseph Luloff)

Young Artist Woodwind:

Casey Grey (Joseph Luloff)

Michigan students who were named as alternates:

Chamber Music (Wind):

Echo Saxophone Quartet: **Matthew Tracy, Kyle Landry, Casey Grey, and Eric Troiano** (Joseph Luloff)

Senior String:

Paolo Dara (Gregory Maytan)

Senior Piano Duet:

Joseph Mutone, David Mutone (Catherine Rollin)

Young Artist Brass:

Graham Roese (Kenneth Kroesche)

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DEADLINE

FOR THE

JUNE 2014

MMT:

MAY 15

All materials must be
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CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR E-MAIL

Send to

Lester Castellana, Membership Chair: lestercastellana@gmail.com

~ or mail to: ~

Lester Castellana, 7164 Palmer St., Dexter, MI 48130

From the Vice President

Dear Members,

The **2014 MMTA Annual Convention** will be held **October 12-14** at the lovely **Henry Hotel** in Dearborn. The Metropolitan Detroit Musicians League will be our host chapter. Carol Levy and Arvi Sinka have graciously agreed to be the local conference chairs.

Panayis Lyras will be our Guest Artist. Mr. Lyras is Professor of Piano and Artist in Residence at the Michigan State University College of Music. A native of Greece, Mr. Lyras attended the Athens Conservatory at age 6, and received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the Juilliard School. Winner of the Silver Medal in the 1981 Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, he is also the first prize winner of the Gina

Bachauer International Piano Competition in Utah, the University of Maryland International Piano Competition, the Three Rivers Piano Competition in Pittsburgh, and is a silver medalist in the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition in Israel.

The conference fee will be \$65 for early registration (by Sept. 12th), and \$80 after September 12th. In January the Executive Board approved a motion for a one-day or one-session registration fee of \$50. Also a motion was approved for a \$10 registration fee for college students.

Have a wonderful spring.

Gail Lytle Lira
MMTA Vice President

President's Letter, cont. from p.1

Honorable Mentions:

Elementary Composition: **Naomi Yamaguchi** (Catherine Rollin); Senior Composition: **Rachel Epperly** (Jeanne Hanley); Senior Piano: **Yuanzhe Zhong** (Mary Siciliano); Young Artist Piano: **Hidemi Minagawa** (Logan Skelton)

Congratulations to all these students and teachers. We can't wait to hear you perform in the winners recital at our 2014 conference in Dearborn!

FTC Investigation

With the recent Wall Street Journal coverage (and a flood of subsequent publicity in the media), followed by an MTNA member advisory that was issued to all members, I have received several messages criticizing MTNA and MMTA for failing to act on its principles by fighting to save the code of ethics. Below is my response to one of these messages.

I shared your opinion. When I received the complaint against MMTA last May, it wasn't initially clear to me that it was part of a national investigation and I went to work on my own, writing a justification for our code of ethics (which was not mandatory, just "strongly urged"). I found that the cost (legal representation and multiple trips to D.C.) and time involved was more than MMTA could afford and at the same time learned that many states, and our national organization, were also being investigated.

MTNA's attorneys were willing to fight for us (they stand to gain more financially in this scenario), but they were not able to guarantee a result. The thing they could guarantee was a protracted battle that would significantly deplete the focus, energy, and coffers of the organization. I sense that the leadership of MTNA, most of whom are donating their time and are probably already exhausted, caved. The state presidents asked a few questions, but most (like me) were running scared and felt obliged to accept the recommendation of the MTNA Board of Directors.

I'm told that the Consent Decree represents a significant compromise, since the original demands of the FTC were truly outrageous. According to MTNA, code of ethics violations by MTNA members are extremely rare, and MTNA has never enforced the non-solicitation provision anyway. Based on that data, what we are giving up is more principle than practice.

Calendar update

Please note the following dates and locations and add them to your calendar if they involve you or if you are interested:

March 22-26	MTNA Conference	Chicago, IL	May 4	MMTA Bd. of Directors	TBD
March 22	MMTA Concerto Comp.	Oakland University	May 9-11	MI Youth Arts Festival	Western MI Univ.
April 12	SAT Semi Finals	Various	Oct. 12-14	MMTA Conference	Dearborn
May 3	SAT Finals	Michigan St. Univ.			

Thank you for sending me information about the activities of our association, our local affiliates, and our individual members. It's an honor to serve such a talented, productive, and effectual organization. And it's a pleasure to brag (I call it "reporting") about you at every opportunity!

Sincerely,

Gary Pedersen, MMTA President

MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Beginning in 1952

We pick up our story at the spring meeting, held at the U. of M. Rackham Building. Dean of Music Earl V. Moore welcomed the members. MMTA President Cyril Barker responded. The members heard the Dedicatory recital performed on the Rieger organ in Hill Auditorium by Robert Noehren of the U. of M. Those making presentations at the convention on piano were Joseph Brinkman, Helen Titus, and Alice Kern of the U. of M. Robert Hoffelt of Michigan State Normal College gave a presentation on voice. An item of business was the passage of a resolution involving the teaching of theory:

“Inasmuch as the study of music theory is a valuable adjunct to the instruction of all musical organization and in private study.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED by the MMTA in convention assembled that the secondary schools of Michigan be urged to institute regular courses in the study of this subject.”

Copies were to be sent to the Michigan high school principals and music supervisors. There was also much interest expressed in watching educational television development and how it could be used advantageously in music education.

At this same time, there was interest in the MTNA’s formation of the East Central Division, as Dr. Roy Underwood suggested authorizing the MMTA Board to act for the association should it be presented at the Annual MTNA Convention in Cincinnati. Also the topic of 100% affiliation with MTNA was discussed and an amendment to Article 9 of the by-laws was adopted. Previously the requirement was 50%. Members would pay both MMTA and MTNA dues, just as we do now. It took effect in September, 1953. Apparently it did not pass nationally, because it was in 1980 that MMTA passed by secret ballot (92-10) the amendment to our bylaws which read “all MMTA chapters shall have a membership that is 100% affiliated with State and National Associations by July 1, 1981.”

It was at this 1953 spring meeting that the Certification Board recommended that the one-, two-, and three-year certificates be discontinued. They were replaced by the 2-year provisional and the 5-year Certificate of Experience on August 31, 1954. At this same time they expressed concern about keeping records for posterity and questioned whether or not retyping them would destroy their historical value. I have discovered that many, many records have been safely kept and I would challenge any of our members who are interested in MMTA’s history to visit the Clarke Historical Library on the campus of Central Michigan University, either in person or online – (Clarke@cmich.edu).

The Fall Convention of that year had only 8 members attend it, so they held a discussion about how to interest teachers in joining MMTA!

At the 69th convention, 1954, held at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing it was noted that both the Saginaw Piano Teachers Forum and the St. Johns chapter had organized. The latter with 15 members.

In the spring of 1955, the convention was held in Saginaw at the Willard Avenue Presbyterian Church. MMTA boasted a membership of 448 members at the close of 1954. The Code of Ethics was distributed to every member. Also it was announced that MMTA was asked to publish our certification plan in the American Music Teacher Magazine. Dr. John S. Richardson also wrote an article entitled “Certification” for the Michigan Music Educator’s Journal. Obviously our plan was becoming known and had acquired much interest in the music education world. There was also a discussion about whether or not officers elected by the chapters need be members of MMTA. (Pre-100% affiliation!) At this time John S. Richardson was appointed to contact MTNA’s College Music Section. Was this the beginning of our college teacher affiliation with MTNA? Very possibly.

At the April 23, 1957 spring convention held in Pontiac’s First Presbyterian Church there were 110 members registered – the highest to date. MTNA raised the dues to \$4.00, so MMTA also raised to \$3.00 for an annual total of \$7.00. The spring convention was held in the summer of 1958, July 23-25. Forty-five attended.

In 1958 the 73rd Fall Convention, held at the Kellogg Center in East Lansing, marked the appointment of the Editor-in-chief of the Michigan Music Teacher. Al Fillmore was chosen to serve with no specific term indicated! He served almost until his death in 1996.

That same year Ave Case of the University of Michigan was sent to Marquette to do a workshop for them. In the fall of 1962 Mrs. St.Clair of Escanaba, also in the U.P., was elected to the MMTA board. Two years later President Olive Howell announced the

M. Vander Linde cont. on p.5

M. Vander Linde, from p.4

auditions would be held in Escanaba, Ann Arbor, Holland, Flint, Detroit, and Saginaw.

At the 1966 October convention teachers were encouraged to teach more theory following a discussion of theory questions on an achievement test for some kind of contest. This is several years before SAT. Another item of note was the Francis Clark Workshop which took place at Kalamazoo College, Nov. 11-13, 1968. In 1969 dues were raised \$3.00 to total \$8.00 per year, and in 1970 MTNA dues were raised from \$6.00 to \$8.00 per year.

Fast forward to 1973 and a quote from the April 24 board minutes. "Dr. Samuel Teeters led a discussion on the proposed Student Activities Handbook, which would show rules and regulations on state and national auditions, the fee schedule, selection of judges, guide for early years. The Handbook is only a guide [for] which many teachers are asking." The committee consisted of Mrs. Faith Gray of Midland; Mr. Samuel Teeters, Kalamazoo; Mrs. Dorris VanRingelestyn, Grand Rapids; Miss Hazel Kowalk, Lansing; Mrs. Helen Vabolis, Detroit; and Mrs. Mair Alsgard of Midland.

In Faith Gray's report to the Board, Oct. 14, 1973, she mentions responses to inquiries about non-competitive auditions and the committee's recommendation that at some point – possibly junior high- they would have two different directions a student could go – one competitive, and the other non-competitive. She credited Sam Teeters for his great amount of work assembling all of the materials to present to the board and for his work on the handbook. In 1974 student auditions were still at separate levels with only one winner at each level who could go on. This was prior to our achievement portion of SAT.

In 1974 the Student Achievement Handbook was ready to be sent to the membership. Tests were to be made with the handbook as a guide and testing was to be activated by April or May of 1975. The committee applied for a grant from the Arts Council to cover the cost of printing the handbook, tests, judges, certificates and awards. In case it failed to go through, each student was charged \$2.00.

Faith Gray presented to the board a revised edition of the Student Handbook, announcing it will be on sale for \$3.00. MMTA received a mini grant of \$1,000 from the Michigan Arts Council to help with the expenses of the pilot year of student evaluations. Each chapter received some help from this.

At the October, 1978 fall convention, President Jerre Jean McDaniel officially thanked Samuel Teeters for all his contributions to the handbook and testing process.

In the next installment I will try to fill in the gap of years in this and continue updating these programs and introducing new ones, namely: proposal for school recognition and the Michigan Zoning Ordinance.

Any of you who have important, memorable chapter activities that you would like filed in our historical materials, are welcome to send them to me. Some of you have asked me if they could send me some, and I would love to receive them for the archives. To date I have received nothing. You may also take them to the convention to give to me. They will eventually be placed in the archives at the Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan University.

Mary Vander Linde, MMTA Historian

Nagel, cont. from p.6

Applause should REQUEST encores. I know of some performers that give two or three encores whether the audience has recalled them to the stage or not. Need I say what I think of that? For years, I believed that practicing an encore was arrogant. I have modified that view of course but I do think more music ought to be really wanted, not inflicted.

Von Bülow said about his performances of the Emperor Concerto that if the audience did not applaud after his opening cadenza he had failed. And many opera arias have never been heard completely with the orchestral concluding music because the singer is being lauded with a cheering standing "O". And of course after a stirring performance of the Sixth Rhapsody of Liszt or a cascading triumph in the Appassionata, applause explodes. This is wonderful, an addicting nectar for any performer. It is heart-warming to know that we can move people to such excitement and receive their thanks with this tradition. I don't think that today people would clap after the opening cadenzas of the Emperor or Brahms B-flat concerto, but the hope is that they are stirred and inspired by the grandness of the sounds they hear. I certainly am thrilled when after a performance people applaud. What began for me at age six or seven has remained part of my motivation. I suspect that all of us who perform are thrilled to hear the staccato of many pairs of hands clapping no matter how often we have walked onto stages.

Musical Musings

Applause

by Louis Nagel

Our friend Garik Pedersen reminded me that it is "time to muse" and he added the request to write something that would warm us in this winter of our polar discontent. So let me start this little article with a reminiscence from my early early performance career. I am fuzzy on some specifics but remember the incident as clearly as my memory will allow.

I believe I was about six or seven years old and I had showed some promise as a pianist and composer. My teacher was pleased with my progress and felt he could present me in a little performance situation at a place in my home town of Louisville. It was some sort of arts club, I don't recall exactly what it was called, but I do remember I was thrilled to be walking out in front of (what stays in my mind as) a large and receptive audience. At six, what else would the audience be? Maybe skeptical? But I prefer to feel I was appreciated. I remember clearly playing a Scarlatti Sonata in C Major, a short but snappy allegro that featured much hand crossing and a need for accuracy. It was a piece I could play at that early age, and play it I did, along with a couple of my own little tunes I had composed. And the audience was sufficiently enamored to applaud. And it clapped and I bowed. And they clapped and I bowed. And they clapped and I bowed and finally my teacher, Mr. Graves, walked out to lead me off the stage gently and probably with great amusement. For later on, I had to admit that I thought the audience stopped applauding and THEN I would walk off----to disappear WHILE they were applauding seemed unthinkable rude to my six-year-old mind-----maybe I was seven? I don't really recall. And that lovely little incident was the beginning of my education about stage presence, applause, encores, and general interaction with the audience. I wonder if my love of the lecture recital format I use today was planted in some way then.

Much later in a student recital under the guidance of Mr. Anderson, I was playing a movement of a Mozart or Beethoven Sonata---I do not remember which, but it was considerably longer and more advanced. I was by that time a somewhat more seasoned performer, but not real skilled at sharing the spotlight with my fellow students. I had a habit of not sitting quietly and listening to the other students, but rather pacing and fidgeting and generally drawing attention to myself. Even though the performers were gathered in a hallway along side the recital room, we could still be seen. And I assure you I was seen. And I also made sure I was seen on stage, with some excessive movements that spoke of ME, not MOZART or BEETHOVEN. Mr. Anderson put a stop to that very firmly after I had performed that day, telling me I was to sit quietly with my peers, walk on stage with as much dignity as a 15-year-old could muster, play without histrionics, bow politely to acknowledge the applause, not try to prolong it, and walk off. Under no circumstances was I to turn it into a "look at me" show. Did I understand?

"Yes sir".

Applause is a narcotic. I admit that with hearing it at so tender an age, I became addicted. It is also a strange phenomenon: we pianists spend our lives trying to make our percussion instrument sing or play legato or sound "warm" (whatever that means) and we are rewarded for our efforts by people producing a percussive explosive sound with their hands, the definition of staccato or static in one's radio! Sometimes a non-pitched "bravo" will ring out and orchestra members, unwilling to drop their violins to applaud a soloist will instead stamp their feet. We eat it up. And we thank people for their approval by making a gesture that evokes knighthood and chivalry. And to this day, I love the sound of applause and I love the opportunity to thank people with the bow that I never really learned how to make properly, despite Mr. Raieff's best efforts to teach me in his studio classes at Juilliard.

Applause is sometimes a problem. For example, when I perform the Schumann Fantasy, I am faced with a situation where the long and discursive first movement with its yearning beauties ends quietly. On occasion people have applauded, and while I am appreciative of their thanks, I do not want it at this point. I have been told it is rude, but I do put my hand up, or, perhaps more musically, keep my hands at the keyboard hoping to forestall any efforts from the audience to clap and break the continuum of music I am hearing and feeling inside me. In the silence between movements there is music! That first movement sets up the big and robust and fearsome second movement and I must "modulate" emotionally. And after escaping with my life (if not entirely my integrity) the famous end of that movement, fuoco dissolves into the third movement's ethereal and I want that silent transition to be part of our experience. And again I will "conduct" the audience. Perhaps rude, but so fundamental to my concept of the piece I feel compelled to do what I do. And then after the final sounds of the last movement die away, I hope that we can all stay in the ethereal moment for just a few more seconds, so I keep my hands and posture in place. The piece ends when my internal response to the sounds and silences I have experienced is over. And the applause, when it does come is a release of emotion as well as thanks for all of us present.

Nagel cont. on p.5