

Michigan Music Teacher

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From the Desk of Lia Jensen-Abbott, President

Well, dear friends and colleagues, our Fall 2018 State Conference has come and gone all too quickly, not unlike our fall weather evidently. It was wonderful catching up with many of you in Novi. Many thanks to Janice Derian and the entire LPTF membership for their hard work, as well as to Shannon MacLellan, Lynn Zwinck, and Béatrice Ellis for their assistance this year. Thank you also to Dr. Adrienne Wiley who has guided us through the last two years as President and who has been a wonderful advisor as I assumed the role of Vice President.

I find myself now in a new position as your president, and I hope to help MMTA and its membership continue to be a strong and vibrant professional organization. It was my pleasure to attend the MTNA Leadership Summit in September where I met many state presidents and division directors. It was so evident that the staff of MTNA works tirelessly to serve its entire membership. Furthermore, MTNA's goals are to grow our organization and to reach new populations of students guided by the belief that music education is vital in a child's (or adult's) life. Of course we all know this, but it's nice to know that MTNA as a national entity is working behind the scenes to promote this message to as many people as possible in society.

It is my sincere hope that teachers attending the conference gained new knowledge, teaching ideas, made new professional contacts, and visited long-time friends. Thank you to all of our presenters:

Dr. Kevin Chance, Dr. Alan Huckleberry, Dr. Mary Dobra-Grindahl, and Dr. Yelena Wells. I know I learned a great deal from each of them. It was also wonderful to have our division director, Janice Rezaq, also in attendance.

We do important work every day, and I am more keenly aware of this as my little boy, Charlie, has now started kindergarten. The adults and teachers in a child's life are true heroes. To that end, as I try to navigate and balance my own life of raising a son, being a wife, professor, pianist, president, and sometimes triathlete, every week my son brings home new reading challenges from school. Each day I read to him and then I fall asleep reading myself. Teaching students to practice is not just about learning music, as we all know. It's about teaching discipline, perseverance, responsibility, honesty, and how to achieve and think about long-term goals. These are values practiced and taught in sports as well as music, and they are valuable and crucial life skills. To that end, if you have not read Daniel Coyle's *The Talent Code*, I highly recommend it. In this book, he seeks to codify what is talent, and deep practice is one part of this process. I will try with each letter to give you something from my personal reading list as a hopefully helpful resource for your own teaching or private library. Please know you are a gift to your students and what you do is remarkable. Thank you to each of you for your time and talent for your students, your parents, and for MMTA. Please let me know if you will be attending the National Conference, March 16-20, 2019, in Spokane! Have a wonderful finish to your teaching semesters!

With Gratitude,

Lia

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FOR THE

MARCH 2019

MMT:

February 18

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 Desk of Adrienne Wiley, past president

Greetings Fellow Colleagues!

The State Conference has come and gone and it was truly a great success! Many thanks to Lia Abbott and her Conference Committee, Shannon MacLellan and Lynn Zwinck, for pulling together an outstanding Conference!

It is with a certain degree of sadness that we say goodbye to some of our board members: Carol Conklin, Secretary, Diana Spitnale Miller, Treasurer, Lia Abbott, Vice President, Beatrice Ellis, Teacher Education Chair, Jeanne Hanley, Local Associations Chair and Independent Music Teachers Forum Chair, and David Abbott, College Faculty Forum Chair. They have served our Association with their hearts, time, and talents to further the work that we undertake. They are moving on to a new chapter in their lives, and of course, we wish them well.

Coming to the MMTA Board are Angela Biedenbender, taking over as the Teacher Education Chair, Lia Abbott, as incoming President, Deb DeWitt, as Secretary, Kathy Richardson, as Local Associations Chair and Independent Music Teachers Forum Chair, Matthew Younglove, as the Chamber Music Chair for the MMTA/MTNA Competitions, and Tom Nobel, as Treasurer. We are excited to have them with us and continue in the tradition of service to the Association.

If you have not yet marked your calendar, DO take note of the National Conference. This time it will be in Spokane, Washington, March 16-19, 2019. Hope to see some of you there!

It has been an honor to serve MMTA again as President. As of this newsletter, I will have stepped aside (in the words of Parliamentarian Christie Otter: "being beige") and supporting Lia Abbott in her new role as President of MMTA. Thank you to everyone for your continued support of the Association and its membership!

Lastly, Cameron. Fall brings the purchase of yellow golf balls (so many leaves..... white balls can never be found!) and checking the weather daily to see what days he can still play outside before the courses close. His love of Florida intensifies during the winter time (go figure.....) and he hopes to get some time down there over the break to refine his golf skills to come out strong in the spring. Practice, practice.....

Again, thank you and have a wonderful fall!

Best- Adrienne

Farewell to my Favorite Financial Assignment!

I am grateful to have been able to serve the Michigan Music Teachers Association as your treasurer and resident agent for the last ten years. I remember back in the spring of 2008 hearing that Millie Muller had decided to retire after 21 years. I had already served as Ensemble Festival Chair for 8 years and Technology Chair for seven so I knew the organization. But I had also been serving in another organization as a treasurer at two different levels so I knew how to do those kinds of things. So I got in touch with the nominating committee and asked if I might be considered for the position. I sent them a resume mentioning these things. And they asked me to do it. It has been an amazing 10 years. I have been able to digitize just about everything related to data collecting and reporting. And I have been able to use online banking. I am glad to have been a part of getting the 501.c.3 designation for MMTA. Because I have an interest in history too, I have been able to use information that Millie had collected and add to it during my tenure so that there are historical timelines for various activities that take place in the organization. I have enjoyed working with all the chairs of those activities. I have appreciated all the persons who have come and gone on the Executive Board and the Board of Directors. And by a twist of fate Adrienne Wiley was President my first two years and has been again the last two years. So it is time to go. I am comfortable with Tom Nobel who is taking over. We have started the transition process that we hope to have in place by the end of the year. Thank you to everyone!

Diana Spitnale Miller

Piano:

Winner, Xiaoya Liu	Teacher, Christopher Harding
Alternate, Jingjing Wan	Teacher, Christopher Harding
Honorable Mention, Robert Levinger	Teacher, Logan Skelton
Honorable Mention, Rong Sui	Teacher, Christopher Harding

String:

Winner, Andrew Gagliu, Cello	Teacher, Bruce Uchimura
Alternate, Xinyu Zhu, Violin	Teacher, Fangye Sun

Woodwind:

Winner, Connor O'Toole, Saxophone	Teacher, Timothy McAllister
Alternate, Andrei Mazanko, Clarinet	Teacher, Arthur Campbell
Honorable Mention, Benjamin MacDonald, Saxophone	Teacher, John Nichol
Honorable Mention, Evan Harris, Saxophone	Teacher, Joseph Lulloff
Honorable Mention, Matthew Koester, Saxophone	Teacher, Timothy McAllister
Honorable Mention, Robert Stine III, Saxophone	Teacher, Timothy McAllister

Chamber Ensemble Wind:

Winner, Kariros Saxophone Quartet Kaylee Bernard, Alto Kyle Pokropowicz, Baritone Aaron Rajewski, Tenor Emmet Harris, Soprano	Teacher, John Nichol
Alternate, Sapphirus Quartet Chad Lilley, Soprano Andrew Hasher, Alto Connor O'Toole, Tenor Matthew Koester, Baritone	Teacher, Timothy McAllister
Honorable Mention, Kynetik Jeffery Leung, Baritone Connor Mikula, Soprano Evan Harris, Tenor Tyler Young, Alto	Teacher, Joseph Lulloff
Honorable Mention, Conviviality Trio Amy Ige, Piano Brendan Ige, Tuba James Long, Euphonium	Teacher, Kenneth Kroesche

Mary Ann Anschutz, Composition Coordinator
 Karen Feilla, Junior Division Coordinator
 Steven Mastrogiocomo, Senior Division Coordinator
 Ruth Goveia, Young Artist Division Coordinator
 Matthew Younglove, Chamber Ensemble Coordinator
 Laurie M. Marshall, Performance Competition Chair

Local Association Meetings and Topics

Within the state of Michigan, MMTA has 17 local associations and listed below are some of the program dates and topics of these associations. To find out more information about these programs, go to the local association's website.

Holland Piano Teachers Forum: hptf.org

Meetings held at First Reformed Church, 630 State St., Holland, MI

January 18, 2019: "Helping Our Students Stay Motivated", Amber Kao & Veena Kulkarni-Rankin, Faber Institute, 10:00 am

February 11, 2019: Masterclass with Lori Sims, Professor, Western Michigan University. 7:00-8:30 pm

March 15, 2019: Book Discussion of "Beethoven's Hair" by Russell Martin, 10:00 am

Livonia Area Piano Teachers Forum: laptf.org

January 9, 2019: Technique and Sight-Reading Judges Training, Evola Music, Canton, 9:30 am

February 6, 2019: The Dalcroze Method, Dr. Soonghee Ha, Steinway Piano Gallery, 9:30 am

March 13, 2019: The Complete Character Work of Johannes Brahms, Dr. Joel Schoenhals, Eastern Michigan University, Evola Music, 9:30 am

April 3, 2019: Classical Composers of African Descent, Gail Davis-Barnes, Steinway Piano Gallery, 9:30 am

Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids: ptfgr.org

December 14, 2018: Baroque Music on the Piano: Piano Practice Issues-Matthew Bengstong

January 11, 2019: The Skilled Pianist, Thomas Lymenstull

February 8, 2019: It's Not too Early to Start! Introducing Catchy Classics-Clara Christian

March 8, 2019: More than "Just a Game!"-Sherry VanOveren

April 12, 2018: Members' Round Table Discussion, "Studio Organization"

Metropolitan Detroit Musicians League: mdmlonline.org

January 21, 2019: Amy I-Lin Cheng

February 25, 2019: Louis Nagel

March 25, 2019: Sookyung Cho

April 29, 2019: Arthur Greene

Capital Area Music Teachers Association: capitalareamta.org

Meetings held at Marshall Music, Lansing unless otherwise stated

January 15, 2019: Round Table Discussion, “Studio Policies”, 9:30 am

February 12, 2019: Master Class, Dr. Young Hyun Cho, 9:30 am

March 5, 2019: Round Table Discussion, “Surviving the Winter Slump”, 9:30 am

April 16, 2019: “Creating Summer Income” and Showcase Tour of REACH Facilities, REACH Art Studio, 9:00 am

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Musical Musings

A Short Column

By Louis Nagel

Written on Monday, November 5, 2018

Last week was a terrible time for this country and for Julie and me personally. We attended a funeral for a dear friend here in Ann Arbor. We followed the ever intensifying vitriol on radio, television and in the papers leading up to tomorrow's fateful midterm elections. We were angered and disgusted by the man who sent bombs through the mail to Democratic politicians and supporters of Democratic candidates. And we wept over the massacre of eleven fellow Jews at the Tree of Life Synagog in Pittsburgh. Where does one begin to process much less make sense of this deluge of tragedies?

I was running errands in my car when the Pittsburgh news came over my car radio. I was stunned. We all were. And my immediate wish was to be at the piano where I could express my feelings in some way far more eloquently than with words. At that moment I could not do so, but as I was driving to complete whatever (now unimportant) errand I was on, I played through in my mind the Allemande from the Bach D Major Partita. It was comforting. For me this is the single most beautiful movement of all the keyboard suites. Doing this helped me, allowing me to think beyond the tragedy to the point of hope. Later, alone in my house, for myself, I played through the entire Partita. It was calming for me. As I prepare to perform the entire suite this weekend and again during the coming week, I was reassured by the Allemande as well as rest of the music. Its beauty was an inspiration to me.

Music has the power to assuage our emotional wounds. Its non-verbal language offers us truths that are as enduring as any words. There is a reason why we sing at religious services, at joyous occasions, and at funerals. And we felt its power at two services, one at the beginning of the week at Temple Beth Emeth and another at the end of the week at Beth Israel Synagogue. Both were attended by large and diverse congregations of worshippers from different faiths and traditions. In both services we heard words of wisdom and inspiration from religious and lay speakers offered by Jewish, Christian, and Muslim leaders in our community. And in both we sang. Music was there to unite us all at this tragic time. And I believe it will be there as long as we have times of joy and sadness.

Of course when we perform we are concerned with ourselves and the integrity with which we can present our programs. But we might keep in mind that our work can have a powerful affirming effect on people in the audience. people about whom we know nothing. I remember playing a performance of the Pathetique Sonata, not very well, and feeling quite annoyed with myself. After the performance I wanted only to get away from the venue and people and "mope". A woman came up to me at that point and told me her uncle was in the hospital undergoing a very serious cancer surgery, and she was so grateful to me for my playing. Needless to say I had a lump in my throat the size of Boston. That was an early lesson that informs me today as I write this short column on the power of music.