

Michigan Music Teacher

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President's Letter

Dear MMTA Members,

As I am writing this letter we are experiencing a bitterly cold weekend and I am reminded of the tune by Gustav Holst with words by Christina Rossetti "In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan, earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone, snow had fallen, snow on snow. . ." Even though the weather is frightful and it seems to be in a holding pattern, we music educators are busy with competitions, SAT preparations, festivals, classes, and auditions.

MTNA East Central Division

I had the privilege to attend the East Central Division meeting and competitions at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, January 16 – 18. It was a pleasure to participate in meetings with Presidents from Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Wisconsin. We heard wonderful performances from students representing these five states. We are extremely fortunate and proud of our fine music educators and their winning students who will be continuing to the National

Conference in Las Vegas.

Junior Piano Performance: Winner, **Katherine Lee** (Faye Mao)

Senior Woodwind Performance: Winner, **Ayana Terauchi**, flute (Amy Porter)

Senior Piano Duet: Winners, **Ting Yan Fung and Zi An Zhou** (Michael Coonrod)

Young Artist Piano Performance: Winner, **Oliver Jia** (Logan Skelton)

These Michigan students were named as alternates:

Chamber Music Strings: Broadway Trio **Rachel Rosenbaum**, clarinet, **Kellen Degnan**, cello, **Hsin-yi Huang**, piano (Christopher Harding, coach)

Junior Woodwind Performance: **Ting Ting Chang**, flute (Peiling Ho)

Young Artist Woodwind Performance: **Andrea Voulgaris** (Timothy McAllister)

And these students received honorable mentions:

Elementary Composition: **Nicole Liang** (Lan Mo-Wang)

Senior Composition: **Lucas Myers** (Catherine Rollin)

Piano Senior Performance: **Ailun Zheng** (Thomas Lymenstull)

We welcome Laurie M. Marshall as our new MTNA Competitions Coordinator. Dr. Lia Jensen-Abbott has resigned after many faithful years of service to MMTA. Laurie has been the MTNA Junior Coordinator for the past two years. We look forward to many more successful years with the MTNA Competitions.

President's Letter cont. on p. 3

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Full page \$140

2/3 page \$120

1/2 page \$95

1/4 page \$70

Less than

1/4 page \$60

Submit ads to the MMT editor
with a check payable to MMTA.
Fees are for one issue only.

DEADLINE

FOR THE

JUNE 2015

MMT:

May 15

All materials must be
received by this date

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

March 2015

MTNA is honoring two Michigan members who will be celebrating 50 years of MTNA membership. **Mary Vander Linde** of Holland Piano Teachers Forum and the Piano Teachers' Forum of Grand Rapids is currently serving as our MMTA Historian. **Ruth Vanderwerf** is a dedicated member of the Capital Area Music Teachers Association. Both of these women have contributed generously to MMTA and their local associations. MTNA will recognize them at the National Conference in Las Vegas.

2015 MTNA National Conference – March 21 – 25, Las Vegas, Nevada

This will be an outstanding conference with Sir James and Lady Jeanne Galway, the Canadian Brass, Lang Lang and Ann Schein (our state conference artist for October 2015). Please let me know if you are attending (gail@gaillytlelira.com) and would like to dine with other Michigan members on Sunday, March 22, immediately following the East Central Division reception.

MMTA

In the state of Michigan, we are privileged to be in a professional association that works collegially in all matters concerning the continuing education of music teachers and the success of educating students of all ages. It is an honor to serve such a talented, creative and productive organization. Recently I was reminded of this with the analogy of a canoe. Everyone in the canoe strives to work together to remain a float or to balance the canoe. When one person leans over to one side, another has to grab him or her so that they will not tip the canoe. If only one person tries to steer the canoe, the direction of the canoe will be very slow and unproductive. For the progress and the process of the journey to work most effectively, every member in the canoe must be aware and work collegially for a successful journey.

“If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.” [*Meditations Divine and Moral*”

— Anne Bradstreet, *The Works of Anne Bradstreet*

A Practicing Fundraiser

If you are interested in an innovative way to encourage students to practice, here is an idea by Lynette Zelis, currently the President of the Illinois State MTA. The teacher chooses one charity.

1. For 4 weeks, students record the number of minutes they practice at home on charts in their assignment notebooks. The teacher designates which 4 weeks. Students are encouraged to log in these numbers daily. The totals will be recorded at each lesson. The playing donation amount is determined by the grand total of minutes times 3 cents per minute. The teacher will be paying this portion of your donation to the teacher's designated charity.

2. Another way (optional) to raise money is by students asking their friends and families to either sponsor them for a specific amount for practicing or by making a flat donation. You may use the chart below to rec-

ord the donor names and amounts if you wish. Make all donation checks payable to the one charity. Cash is accepted. No credit or debit cards.

Students are required to bring all donations to lessons by the last day of the practicing fundraiser.

While home practice is required, asking and/or giving donations are not.

(The teacher purchased t-shirts with the charity/fundraising title and a photo was taken).

DONOR LIST FOR CHARITY		
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1	Donor Name	Amount
2		

Calendar Updates

March 14-15 MMTA Concerto Competition, Aquinas College, Grand Rapids

March 21-25 MTNA National Conference, Las Vegas

April 11 Executive and Full Board Meeting, Michigan Historical Museum, Lansing

April 18 SAT Semi Finals, West, Central and East locations

May 2 SAT Finals, Michigan State University

May 8-10, Michigan Youth Arts Festival, Western Michigan University

October 11-13, MMTA State Conference, Grand Rapids

I appreciate receiving information about the activities of our Michigan local associations and our members. It is a pleasure to serve on your Executive Board.

Sincerely,

Gail Lytle Lira, MMTA President

Chicago Duo Piano Festival Announces

2015 COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PIANO DUOS

Elementary and High School Divisions

Saturday, May 30, 2015

APPLICATION DEADLINE: APRIL 15, 2015

Music Institute of Chicago

Nichols Concert Hall: 1490 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, Illinois 60201

Cash awards, scholarships to winning duos. WFMT Radio broadcast for high school winners.

For more information: www.chicagoduopianofestival.org

Nagel, cont. from p. 6

Jose Feghali died prematurely and tragically of a self-inflicted gunshot in December of the past year. Bursting onto the scene with his 1985 Van Cliburn Competition win he had a career of over 1000 concerts and made many recordings. He loved teaching and was a popular professor at Texas Christian University. I heard recordings, but never actually his artistry live. Those who did praised his command of the keyboard, his beautiful sound and his humanity---all very nice virtues with which to fortify ones soul. Sadly and fatally, he suffered from depression. What a terrible tragedy was his illness and death.

And finally in recalling some past artists, I must mention my dear friend and great Lisztianer, Tom Mastroianni, whose sudden and totally shocking death from a coronary some weeks back stunned all who knew and loved him. Tom was a fine pianist, a devoted teacher, and a long-time faculty member at Catholic University where he had been professor, chair, and dean for many many years. As president of the American Liszt Society he organized innumerable festivals devoted to the music and milieu of that master. We had him as a guest at Michigan in the '80's, I performed on many Liszt festival programs and was a faculty member at the festival in the Amalfi Coast, in Italy which he planned and co-ran. A great man and a dear friend, he was a living example of what our art can be about at its best.

These and many more people have passed from our view, and it seems fitting to remember that we as students, performers, teachers, and perhaps artists, are repositories of all the art and wisdom we have gained from our predecessors. Their fame seems almost irrelevant since they each, in his own way, probed the depths of the music they shared with us and gave those of us who knew them and their work so much. I write this inspired by their lives, not motivated by some special "remember our pianists" day or any particular anniversary, but with the hope that they will be kept alive in our thoughts and our ears. Rubinsteins, Ciccolinis, and Mastroiannis deserve to be perpetuated!!!!!!

2015 MMTA State Conference in Grand Rapids

- The 2015 MMTA State Conference will be held October 11-13, 2015, in Grand Rapids, MI
- The conference will be held at the Hilton Grand Rapids Airport Hotel, with rooms at \$99/night.
 - Continue to check the conference website as more details become available:
www.michiganmusicteachers.org/2015-conference-information

Featured Presenters

Ann Schein, guest artist—pianist and teacher

Catherin Rollin, pedagogy clinician—recent publications

Derek Polischuk, clinician—speaker and teacher

I look forward to seeing all of you at the 130th state conference!

Charles Aschbrenner, Vice President

Musical Musings

Time Marches On

By Louis Nagel

In my forty five years of teaching I have had more than a few surprises but none exceeded the impact of the one when I was about to play a RECORD of RUBINSTEIN playing the Chopin Berceuse, and several in my smallish size class had not heard of Rubinstein nor had never heard a record!!!!!! Usually quick with a quip or comeback, I was simply speechless. A similar experience occurred fairly recently with the mention of Simon Barere, a pianist not so well known but certainly not obscure and who deserves far greater luminosity than he gets. No one I have ever heard on recording plays Islamey or Don Juan like Simon Barere. Students have just not heard of his name. And of course they are all luminaries from times past. Barere died a dramatic death in April of 1951 from a cerebral hemorrhage after performing the first movement of the Grieg Concerto in Carnegie Hall with Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. All too few recordings attest to the legend that he was. Rubinstein, a fixture on the musical scene for three quarters of a century (and more) died in 1982 at 95, having performed and recorded all his life, and having inspired hundreds of young pianists, including the one you are now reading. He was and remains the pianist I most enjoyed and from whom I learned much about our art. And I remember with vivid recall his playing of the Berceuse, in Carnegie Hall, after a recital, and four thousand people sat spell bound and breathless while he worked his indescribable magic in that lovely little miracle of Chopin.

Recently the piano world has lost some notables. On December 27th of last year Claude Frank passed away, three days after his 89th birthday. He was one of the great interpreters of Beethoven, Mozart, and Schubert, and was equally at home with solo repertoire concerti, and collaborative music. I remember a recital Julie and I heard in Huntington Long Island where among other works the program listed the Appassionata. Someone, I do not remember if he actually did or not, announced that Mr. Frank was going to replace the Appassionata with the Waldstein. We did not know why, but it was not certainly because he was less able to play Opus 57, or that Opus 53 is easier. The program proceeded and it was clear that Mr. Frank was not in the best of form. Some problems were obvious, and he just seemed removed from what he was doing. He was applauded warmly anyway and for his encore, he announced that he was going to play the Appassionata. Which he did. Julie and I left with question marks over our heads, aware that we had heard a great artist and were quite willing to allow him an off night.

Some time later I learned that Mr. Frank was playing that concert with (I was told) a temperature of 102 and was feeling lousy. He simply did not want to let down the audience with a promised piece and felt he could do it after the program was over.

Yesterday I read that the Italian master Aldo Ciccolini died near Paris at the age of 89. He was an Italian pianist with a French soul, according to one of the critics who contributed in print to his obituaries. His special affinity for the piano music of Satie was especially notable----few pianists take this composer seriously. In fact we heard him perform Satie and other French masters here in Ann Arbor at least once----perhaps more often than that. His music making was inspiring, his approach to French repertoire was clear and defined, technically secure in every way, and at the same time filled with the aura of what we like to call "impressionism"----much color and a caressing sound. His repertoire was all inclusive; he made his American debut in 1950 with the B-flat Minor Tchaikowsky and the New York Philharmonic. He seemed to have a remarkable self image: in an interview with the Los Angeles Times before an all-Liszt program he is quoted as saying, "I should be a very foolish pianist if I had to worry about reinforcing my popularity. People will not speak of me in 100 years but they will still be talking about Liszt. That's the reality." We will miss his artistry, as will the spirit and fans of Erik Satie!

Nagel, cont. on p. 5