



From the Desk of Béatrice Ellis, President

On the eve of the Labor Day weekend, we are all bracing for the rhythm of the new academic year to settle down and hopeful that in-person teaching is safe again. I just had the extraordinary opportunity to attend the first play that opened on Broadway last week. The theatre was full and the audience, while wearing masks, was highly spirited and gave a standing ovation to the three phenomenal actors. This morning, I read that the New York City ballet had reached an agreement and will indeed perform their traditional production of The Nutcracker, albeit with no children under 12 years old. The Metropolitan Opera will also launch its season before the end of September. This makes me feel optimistic that everything will be all right this year and that the performing arts will make a strong comeback on the stages of the world.

Regarding MMTA's inner workings, a lot has been achieved since June and I am happy to highlight a few points:

- The board is welcoming two enthusiastic individuals with whom it has already been a pleasure to work with:

- David Keep, PhD, who is currently faculty at Hope College, is MMTA's new Membership Chair. David has been incredibly efficient and is already on top of the job.

- Emily Beckman, a wonderful performer and teacher (flute and piano), has agreed to take on the MMTA-MTNA Foundation Chair position. She will work her magic at the conference for sure!

- Congratulations are in order for Joy Morin who secured a \$750 grant from MTNA to help support the MMTA webinar series that will be launched this month. Kudos to Yelena Wells who caught the application deadline just in time!

- Since I mentioned the creation of an SAT Advisory Committee in the June Newsletter, Jacki VanderSlik has been hard at work and gathered a very motivated group of teachers to debate and possibly implement some changes in the administration of the SAT.

- In parallel, I have asked Erin Thomas this summer to lead a committee to develop the String SAT, both by updating the string curriculum and also recruiting more string teachers in the state. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Solomia Soroka and to cellist Jason Gong for joining the committee.

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DEADLINE
FOR THE
DECEMBER
2021 MMT:
November 22

All materials must be received by this date, no exceptions!

ADDRESS OR E-MAIL CHANGE
 Send to:
 David Keep
 Membership Chair
mmtamembership@gmail.com



President's message, continued from pg. 1

- Regarding the SAT Eastern Division semi-finals, Emily Crow from Flint, has agreed to co-chair the event in April. Thank you Emily! We are still looking for another co-chair. The job, divided between the two, is much less daunting now. If you are from AAAPTG, LPTF or MDML, please consider taking this on. Michelle Mitchum will be more than happy to give you the details of the position.

- Thanks to Yelena Wells, MMTA Communication Chair, and Tina Chou, our summer intern from MSU, you might have come by very fun and informative posts on social media. I have truly appreciated reading posts about individual board members. First I discovered some of their professional specialties but also their interests outside of music. Since the board has only met on zoom this past year, these posts are a nice way to connect more deeply with colleagues. I invite you to take a look at our social media and follow @mimusicteachers.

Finally, I have heard that conference preparations are in full gear and that registrations are rolling. It was not an easy task to navigate the flow as Covid-19 kept changing its course. But Prof. Polischuk and his team hung tight to produce a series of wonderful sessions. Did you know that 15 teachers applied for the "20 min talk" sessions? The committee had the hard task to choose only 6 presentations to fit in the time frame. I think this new initiative has the potential to become a coveted event in future years. I am also particularly looking forward to the master class by Prof. Norman Krieger (Indiana University) and to the presentation by William Chapman Nyaho, pianist and editor of "Piano Music of Africa and the African Diaspora" whom I heard at the MTNA conference last March. Lastly, I am thrilled that the gala is open to all participants. We will celebrate the teachers who will receive the Teacher of the Year Awards or the MMTA Distinguished Service Awards. We will also honor members who have had 25 and 50 years of membership. And of course, there will be our traditional raffle, which always brings a smile to the many winners and their supportive colleagues.

If you have not done it yet, please sign up today for the conference, and don't forget to reserve accommodations in Ann Arbor as soon as possible. Don't be shy about asking colleagues in your chapter to carpool or share a room! By the way, have you looked into the MMTA Conference Registration Giveaway? Go to @mimusicteachers Facebook page and check it out!

Let's make this 2021 conference very special and be a testimony to the strength and power of the MMTA community.

See you very soon in person or on screen!



A call to all Chapter Presidents:

Thank you and your board of directors for helping us identify members of your chapter who would be interested in taking a more active role in MMTA. The following positions are vacant:

- Communication Coordinator (new position) – contact Yelena Wells
- MTNA Junior Coordinator – contact Laurie Marshall
- SAT Voice Chair – contact Michelle Mitchum
- SAT Semi-Finals Co-chair for the Eastern Division – contact Michelle Mitchum

2021 MMTA Conference



I invite you to attend our 2021 MMTA Conference on October 8 and 9 in Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan! This will be an inspiring and exceptional event with opportunities to learn from engaging presenters, time for networking, and great recitals. The sessions will be available both in-person at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor or via Zoom. If you haven't already registered, please do so by **September 24th**. Free registration is available for spouses and students. Please visit our website to register and for additional information. The awards dinner is included for all paid registrants. A small dinner fee applies to spouses and students. Our clinicians will be Norman Krieger, Chair of the Department of Piano at Indiana University Bloomington, Heather Shouldice, Associate Professor of Music Education at Eastern Michigan University, and William Chapman Nyaho, Ghanaian American concert pianist and editor of the anthology "Piano Music of Africa and the African Diaspora." I hope to see you in Ann Arbor in October.

-Dr. Derek Kealii Polischuk, Vice President

Conference Teacher Presentations

For the first time in MMTA history, our conference schedule will include a series of 20-minute presentations given by some of our very own MMTA members. A call for proposals was made earlier this summer, resulting in 15 proposals. Many thanks goes to Derek Polischuk and Sara Aylesworth for being part of the committee reviewing and selecting proposals. And hearty congratulations goes to our six presenters who we shall be honored to hear next month!

-Joy Morin, MMTA Teacher Education Chair

Friday, October 8, 2021

- 4:30-4:50pm | **Heather Vedder**: Practice Success for Parents: Creating Workshops to Equip the Parents of Music Students
- 4:50-5:10pm | **Adrienne Wiley**: Functional Skills for Intermediate Pianists? You BET!
- 5:10-5:30pm | **Sophié van der Westhuizen**: Two minds as one: how playing piano duets changed my performance and informs my teaching

Saturday, October 9, 2021

- 8:15-8:35am | **Debora DeWitt**: Rhythm makes you move!
- 8:35-8:55am | **Yelena Wells**: Social Media 101: Complete Guide to Marketing Your Studio
- 8:55-9:15am | **David Keep**: Why Does Brahms's Piano Music Feel Awkward to Play?



2021 MMTA Conference Registration Form October 8-9, 2021

University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance
Ann Arbor, MI

** This form should only be filled out and mailed in if online registration and payment are not an option for you. Online registration and payment is available on the [MMTA website](#). **

Conference Fee: \$100 (in-person or on Zoom)

- Spouses & Students: College students and spouses can attend this year's conference free of charge!
- College students and spouses should still submit a registration form.

Please make your check out to "Michigan Music Teachers Association" and send payment and registration form to:

Derek Kealii Polischuk
709 Southlawn
East Lansing, MI 48823

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Address:

Local Association:

Registration Type:

- Current Member (\$100)
- Non-Member (\$100)
- Student (Free)
- Spouse (Free)
- Student Gala Banquet Dinner (\$40)
- Spouse Gala Banquet Dinner (\$40)

Friday, October 8th:

- Yes, I will attend
- No, I will not attend
- I am not sure

Saturday, October 9th:

- Yes, I will attend
- No, I will not attend
- I am not sure



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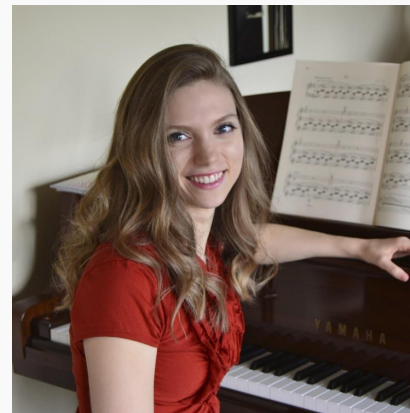
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smt.d.umich.edu/liszt2021

MTNA Foundation Chair

Emily Beckman is a piano and flute teacher of over 10 years. She is a trained Suzuki Method instructor, and keeps a small home studio. Her college level piano study was done under both Dr. Helen Marlais, and later under Mary Siciliano, while her flute study was done with Sharon Sparrow of the DSO. A passionate duo pianist, she and her sister Kristin put out creative YouTube videos under the name [PianoFource](#). In addition to her home studio, Emily works full time in management and piano sales at Evola Music.



MMTA Membership

[David Keep](#) is a prize-winning pianist, theorist, and pedagogue.

As a pianist, Keep has performed throughout the United States. An active recitalist, concerto soloist, and chamber musician, he has won prizes in the Wisconsin MTNA Young Artists Competition, the Miroslav Pansky Memorial Concerto Competition, the Kankakee Valley Symphony Orchestra Piano Concerto Competition, and Wisconsin Public Radio's Neale-Silva Young Artists' Competition. He studied piano with Derison Duarte, Anthony Padilla, Luba Edlina-Dubinsky, and Vincent Lenti.



As a theorist, Keep has devoted much of his research toward understanding how meaning is perceived in music. Keep's interests are centered on the music of Brahms, music of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the connections between analysis and performance. He has presented his research at the annual meetings of the Society for Music Theory, the Music Theory Society of New York State, and the Texas Society for Music Theory, where he won the Colvin Award for the best paper given by a graduate student.

As a pedagogue, Keep has taught piano and music theory to students of a variety of ages and skill levels.

David Keep holds a Ph.D. in music theory from the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester. Keep earned a MM in piano performance with a minor in music theory from the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University; he also holds a BM in piano performance from Lawrence University. He is an Assistant Professor of Music at Hope College in Holland, Michigan.

From the MMTA Membership Chair

I am pleased that the upcoming conference will give us the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate members who have joined MMTA respectively 25 and 50 years ago.

Two members joined in 1971: Barbara Collins of Port Huron and Vivian Kleinhuizen of Grand Rapids.

And the following eight members joined in 1996:

Holly Bolthouse, Battle Creek

Lia Jensen-Abbott, Kalamazoo

Hyesook Kim, Grand Rapids

Emilie Lin, Ann Arbor Area

Alicia Operti, Midland and Livonia

Teresa Pash, Battle Creek

Susan Rye, Mid Michigan

Victoria Sterzick, Grand Rapids



Thank you to these wonderful individuals for their steadfast support of and dedication to MMTA.

Please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any questions. My email address is: mmtamembership@gmail.com. I am looking forward to meeting you and introducing myself during my first MMTA conference in Ann Arbor.

David Keep



MMTA Treasurer Report

Included on the MMTA website (go to ---> Member Resources ---> Member Resources Login --->Financial Documents) are three documents relating to the 2020/2021 fiscal year (a final budget report, a year-end balance sheet, and a financial review/audit committee report) as well as the proposed budget for the 2021/2022 fiscal year. **Please read these documents in advance so you will be prepared to approve them during the conference business meeting on October 8.**

Overall, due to the effects of the pandemic on the organization's activities, you will see that both our income and expenses were, as expected, significantly lower than was projected in our 2020/2021 budget. The end result is that we had net income for the year and, thus, a net increase to our Chase Bank account balance of \$19,850.42. While it is great to see the excess income for the year, this is not something we should expect to continue into the next fiscal year. Much of the surplus was a result of reduced expenses for judges' stipends, travel costs, and other expenses of hosting in-person events and activities. However, rest assured that the organization is well-positioned to handle a return to in-person activity. Feel free to contact me at mmtafinance@gmail.com should you have any questions.

David Husser



An audit of the Michigan Music Teachers Account was conducted on Saturday, July 24th, 2021. We reviewed items from the general ledger, income/deposits, check payments, and funds invested from July 2020 through June 2021. We found everything to be in order.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Mitchum
Cheryl Staats
David Husser



MMTA Bylaws Changes

One of the tasks of the Past President is to review the bylaws and propose changes to the members. On October 8, at the MMTA Members meeting, you'll have the chance to vote on these changes. **Please read through the changes that are posted on the MMTA website (go to ---> Member Resources ---> Member Resources Login --->Bylaws) and be prepared to vote on October 8.**

SAT Updates: We ARE Listening!!!!

The MMTA Board recently formed a new committee, the SAT Advisory committee. This is in response to several things: the virtual testing that happened in 2020 and 2021 due to covid, concerns and questions brought up by members, falling numbers of students in the program, difficulty within local chapters in securing venues and volunteers, etc.

Beatrice Ellis appointed Jacki VanderSlik as the chair and asked her to form a group of teachers interested in working to insure the long term viability of the SAT program. Currently, the other team members include Janice Derian, Sarah Hamilton, James Hohmeyer, Maria Lisowsky, Michelle Mitchum, and Gaye Thomas. We just started meeting via zoom in early August and have had some great discussions! For 2022, we have 3 proposals we are working on that will make some exciting changes to the way SAT happens! I won't share exact details with you yet, we need to present them to the Board October 8 and get their approval first. We hope to be able to present them to everyone at the business meeting at the close of the conference and then to share with everyone immediately after that.

These 3 proposed changes are just the beginning, we want to listen to teachers from all over and really work to find ways to make it easier for teachers and include more students. I'm including my email at the bottom, feel free to send me any suggestions or concerns, also let me know if you're interested in joining our group.

Submitted by Jacki VanderSlik
jacki.vanderslik@gmail.com





FOR THE USE AND PROFIT———or HOW I HAVE SPENT MY SUMMER
Dr. Louis Nagel

THE WELL-TEMPERED CLAVIER OR PRELUDES AND FUGUES THROUGH ALL THE TONES AND SEMI-TONES BOTH AS REGARDS THE TERTIA MAJOR OR UT RE MI, AND AS CONCERNS THE TERTIA MINOR OR RE MI FAFOR THE USE AND PROFIT OF MUSICAL YOUTH DESIROUS OF LEARNING AS WELL AS FOR THE PASTIME OF THOSE ALREADY SKILLED IN THE STUDY———So opens the statement of purpose of the first volume of Bach's masterwork from 1722. He was to repeat the format a generation later and thus we have the magnificent "FORTY-EIGHT".

While playing other music for pleasure and preparing an old favorite of mine, the Hungarian Rhapsody Number 13 of Liszt for the twice postponed Liszt Festival here in Ann Arbor in October, I have worked on those few preludes and fugues from book 1 that I have never finished. And needless to say I have some thoughts I would like to share with our readers. My first one is just a gush of delight and amazement at the richness of Bach's inspiration and the virtuosity of his craft. He was a demanding and inspiring teacher in his music and I have worked very hard on two I have never played, the A Major and the (bear of an) A Minor, as well as revisiting the D Minor. With my work I realize that at this stage of my life (past forty) it is much more challenging to learn these pieces than it was earlier (before twenty).

While I am focusing on volume one, the comments could apply in most cases to volume two. The differences between the two books is not a concern for this or future columns. Let me begin by saying that this music suffers mightily from the twin curses of being obligatory and pedagogical. Obligatory because most if not all schools of music demand a major work of Bach for audition purposes, and for practicality, preludes and fugues are the most useful. In forty seven years of serving on the faculty and adjudicating many competitions, I can say that the selections are usually taken from among five or six choices. We often would hear the B-flat Major or the C Minor, or the D Minor or the C-sharp Major. And these are wonderful pieces. But there are twenty more! I do not recall in all those years ever hearing the A Major, or the B Major, rarely the F-sharp Major or F-sharp Minor, and surprisingly rarely the C Major, which I admit is a cut or two above the level of difficulty of the others I mention. Often a student would present a program with advanced repertoire such as Beethoven Op. 31/3, Chopin Nocturne in C Minor and The Ocean Etude, and maybe the Prokofiev Third Sonata but the obligatory Bach piece would one of those works, and a look at the repertoire list would reveal perhaps two others and maybe a French Suite or The Italian Concerto. This is all wonderful music but it takes me to the second of those "curses" I spoke of, that of the pedagogical. It is true that Bach wrote marvelous teaching material like the Inventions and Sinfonias and the WTC, but every one of those works is a sterling work of art and requires study and thought and experience in playing. It is not easy to voice lines at the piano,

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whether it is in the teaching repertoire of Bach or a section of a Beethoven sonata. But it must be done with an ear towards its BEAUTY, not merely technique. And more experience playing a variety of pieces by Bach trains the ear, the fingers, and the soul. It ought not to be "I need a Prelude and Fugue for my audition and they won't hear all of it anyway". That's probably true, but that misses the point of how great the musical value is of any prelude and fugue. Some of them are wonderful program openers. I started my New York Debut recital in Town Hall with the C-sharp Minor/ C-sharp Major from Book 1, and have often used the pairing of A-flat Major/ G-sharp Minor to open, occasionally the B Major/B Minor. They are all great works of art by a composer who fused the pedagogical with the aesthetic more successfully than any other composer.

A word about the A Major. I do not believe I have ever heard it performed in concert or at an audition and I do not know why. It is elusive but hardly the finger and brain stretcher that the A Minor is. I find it delightful, even humorous, as if Bach is making a joke out of the fugue. The Prelude itself is a three-part sinfonia, short, sprightly structurally clear and fairly accessible. But the Fugue is funny in my opinion. It starts with the tonic note and then silence for three eighth rests. The subject continues in a zigzag eighth note pattern, quite a different sort of subject from the usual melodic scalar subjects we see in most of the fugues. It continues in three voices very smoothly for twenty-two measures when a second subject bursts forth. It is largely scalar, as if to fill in the notes of the zigzag, and flows unabated to the downbeat of measure 42. Then he flowing passage stops and we return to the dominance of the first subject, as if it is going to end. But in measure 49 the second subject "returns from its coffee break" to join forces again with the first subject and both end smilingly at measure 54. It is a work overflowing with fun, humor and even surprise. Not the easiest, but certainly not the monster that the A Minor Fugue turns out to be. There Bach went on a stretto rampage and succeeded in cruelly frustrating me (and my poor wife who heard my profanity-laced struggles even when I was whispering or mumbling my imprecations!) As of this writing it is still very much a work in (questionable) progress!

Where am I going with these comments? I would like to share subsequent columns about my thoughts of learning this wonderful and this important music at this later stage of my career. I have just a few more that I have worked on in the past (E-flat Major, F Minor, e.g.) that I want to bring up to performance level, whether I ever actually play them in public or not. Great are the rewards of studying The Well-tempered Clavier. It is good to be continuing the lifelong ear and soul training that it offers me, ever a student. I think it is truly worth the frustration. To be in the presence of so great a pedagogue and composer as J.S.Bach is a deeply meaningful experience.