

**From the desk of Beatrice Ellis, President**

In one month, according to our organization's bylaws, the MMTA membership will vote for a new slate of officers. While I will remain on the Executive Committee as Past President for the next two years, the fact that the wheel is almost at the end of its rotation cycle presents me with an opportunity to reflect upon my term as President as I write my last newsletter article.

Except for my June contribution, which was written with a heavy heart just a few days after the massacre of elementary school children in Uvalde, Texas, I hope that I was otherwise able to present you with an accurate view of where MMTA was in terms of financial and membership stability, to introduce recently appointed board members, to keep you abreast of new initiatives, and to give you examples on how MMTA was evolving through the work of various committees. I also tried to encourage and inspire all of us to keep up our spirits in the face of the many challenges posed by the relentless and ever-changing COVID pandemic that first came upon us in March 2020. I sometimes shared what gave me comfort or helped me to regain my energy.

On the eve of Labor Day 2022, as we are getting in gear for a new academic year, I thought I would share with you some snapshots of my summer. They will be the "happy places" that I will conjure up when I need to get out of the inevitable rough patches that may arise in the coming year. Moreover, they remind me how incredibly lucky I am to be in the music education profession and how music is such a vital unifying link between people of various backgrounds and faiths. While these memories are very personal, I hope you will feel some connections to them and that you can transpose the feelings they conjure up into your own summer reservoir of "happy places". So just try to visualize:

- A victorious picture of my 84-year old student as she finished a 10-day hiking trail around the Mont Blanc in the Alps going through France, Italy and Switzerland.
- The peaceful sound of cowbells, gently waking us up in the French Alps.
- A family gathering in the French country side to honor my sister's passing last December, where my husband, my daughter and I engaged all siblings, nieces and nephews and their significant others to sing together around my grandmother's piano.
- Our daughter singing some of her father's favorite Simon and Garfunkel's songs.
- The smile on many faces when John and I played some of Mozart's four-hand repertoire, some of which my grandparents might have played on the same Erard piano.
- My first ever garage sale, where an adult student came by and saw my face for the first time. We had been both wearing masks during our lessons starting in January. Since we were outside, she spontaneously gave me a hug!

**Continued on pg. 3**

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**DEADLINE**  
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**DECEMBER**  
**2022 MMT:**  
**November 25**

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

**ADDRESS OR E-MAIL CHANGE**  
 Send to:  
 David Keep  
 Membership Chair  
[mmtamembership@gmail.com](mailto:mmtamembership@gmail.com)



## President's message, continued from pg. 1

- A last lesson a week ago with a student I have taught for 12 years: he came in with a huge stack of music and simply wanted to play through all his favorite pieces from his first year to his last before leaving for Chicago to start his university studies. We started with a Twinkle Twinkle Little Star duet ... and almost two hours later we ended up reminiscing on his very last studio recital performance where he played a movement of a Mozart concerto with his mom.
- From a lapsed student in the 11th grade now, who plays violin, double bass and viola: "This year, instead of taking viola lessons, I made the choice to take weekly piano lessons again."

And I can't resist adding:

- A most delicious blueberry tart baked in a restaurant in the middle of nowhere.

So here I am, ready to resume teaching my full studio and continue my work with MMTA. I hope you are all energized from the summer and I look forward to greeting you at the MMTA conference hosted by Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, on October 7 and 8. This will be your chance to witness MMTA's vitality and mingle again with colleagues while discovering new talents and new topics. *A bientôt!*

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## Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee was comprised of Wendy Chu, Christie Otter, Yelena Wells, and Lia Jensen-Abbott as chair.

The Nominating Committee is submitting Laurie Marshall as the candidate for the Office of Vice President.

The Nominating Committee is submitting Alisha Snyder as the candidate for the Office of Secretary.

Submitted by Lia Jensen-Abbott



## 2022 MMTA Conference Schedule

Dear MMTA Community,

We invite you to attend our 2022 MMTA Fall Conference in Kalamazoo on the beautiful and vibrant campus of Western Michigan University. This will be an inspiring and thought-provoking event with opportunities to learn from engaging presenters, time for networking, and great recitals. If you haven't already registered, please do so by September 23rd for the early-bird rate of \$100. Free registration is available for spouses and students. Please visit our website to register and for additional information.

Our clinicians will be Eric Zuber, award-winning pianist and newly appointed Assistant Professor of Piano at Michigan State University, Karen Salvador, Assistant Professor of Music Education at Michigan State University, and Yu-Lien The, Assistant Professor of Keyboard Studies at Western Michigan University. Additionally, Deborah Moriarty, chair of Keyboard Studies at Michigan State University and Dr. Yoojin Noh will unveil a prototype of a new technology for note reading for the blind. Xavier Davis, Associate Professor of Jazz Piano at Michigan State University will provide teachers with an introduction to jazz improvisation. There will also be presentations by MMTA teachers and students from Universities across Michigan.

We look forward to seeing you in Kalamazoo!

Derek Kealii Polischuk, Vice President

### October 7

9-10: Executive Board Meeting (closed session)

10-10:30: Registration

10:30-10:45: Opening Remarks

10:45-12:00: "Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Learners," Karen Salvador

12-1:15: Lunch

12-1:15: SAT Lunch (closed session)

1:15-2:30: "The Culturally Sensitive Music Teacher: Fostering An Inclusive Learning Space," Yu-Lien The

2:30-4:30: Break

2:30-4:30: Full Board Meeting (closed session)

4:30-5:30: Presentations by MMTA teachers

5:30-6: Full Meeting

6-8: Break/Dinner

6-8: Chapter Presidents' Dinner (closed session)

8: Recital, Eric Zuber

## October 8

8:30-9:15: Presentations by college and university students from the state of Michigan

9:15-10:30: Presentations by MMTA teachers

10:45-12: An introduction to jazz improvisation, Xavier Davis

12-1:30: Lunch

1:30-2:45: Masterclass, Eric Zuber

2:45-4:00: "You Can Feel The Music," Deborah Moriarty and Yoo Jin Noh

4:15-5:45: Student Winners Recital/Commissioned Composer Recital

6-8: Awards Dinner



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### Just a few notes!

#### **SAT Semi-Finals and Finals Dates**

Semi-finals is tentatively set for April 22, 2023, and Finals will be May 6, 2023.

#### **Member/Chapter Highlight**

We're excited to launch MMTA Member's Corner! In each newsletter, we will acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of our outstanding chapters and their members! Simply fill out this form to share your news with us. <https://bit.ly/MMTAspotlight>

#### **Member Directory**

Our member directory is now available online. You will need to log in at <https://michiganmusicteachers.org/member-resources/>

If you are a current member and haven't yet logged in, please follow the steps for "Lost your password?". Please check your email for "Welcome to Michigan Music Teachers Association" from WordPress as it will have instructions to reset your password. This may be found in your Spam Folder.

If you have already logged in, please go to this page to get back to member resources:

<https://michiganmusicteachers.org/private/> If you are a new member or need additional help, email [support@michiganmusicteachers.org](mailto:support@michiganmusicteachers.org).



## Student Achievement Testing: What's New This Year?

The SAT Advisory committee has kept busy this summer working to improve our already wonderful SAT program! We presented several proposals to the MMTA Board in July. Here's a short summary of what revisions were made:

1. The new memorization requirement that was passed last year as a pilot program has been extended. It will continue for 2 more years, 2023 and 2024. We would like to collect more data and teacher input before making a permanent change.
2. The sight-reading revision made last year as a pilot program has been made a permanent change.
3. Metronome markings have been added for all levels of Aural tests for the melodic dictation and rhythm questions.
4. On the technique tests, the language describing the dynamics of the triads with inversions (levels 4,5,8,11) has been simplified.
5. The rest of the revisions are clarifications.

A full summary of the July revisions and replacement handbook pages are on the MMTA website. The link below will take you right to them. You might want to print the "Summary of July 2022 SAT handbook revisions" to refer to as you start preparing for next year's SAT. And if you print the "Replacement Handbook pages" you can add them to your handbook. This document covers ALL the revisions made in 2021 and 2022.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BM0BUarSDDegHwhjPO9WqX6yyuw5Bfg1>

We will be presenting a couple more proposals to the Board in October, so watch for further updates.

Thanks to everyone on this committee for your time and expertise! Members serving were: Gerardo Ascheri, Janice Derian, Sarah Hamilton, Jim Hohmeyer, Maria Lisowsky, Michelle Mitchum, Gaye Thomas, Jacki VanderSlik, chair.





## Treasurer's Report and Audit Information

Included on the MMTA website (go to ---> Member Resources ---> Member Resources Login --->Financial Documents ) are two important financial documents: a 2020/2021 final budget report, as well as the proposed budget for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. Please read these documents in advance so you will be prepared to approve them during the conference business meeting on October 7. If you have any questions, you can contact Treasurer David Husser at [mmtafinance@gmail.com](mailto:mmtafinance@gmail.com).



An audit of the Michigan Music Teachers Account was conducted on Monday, Aug 8th, 2022. We reviewed items from the general ledger, income/deposits, check payments, and funds invested from July 2021 through June 2022. We found everything to be in order.

Respectfully submitted,  
Linda Budge  
Amber Allmen

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Dr. Veena Kulkarni-Rankin, Lead Instructor at the Faber Piano Institute, has accepted to be MMTA's liaison regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Veena has been serving on the MTNA DEI committee for the last two years. Her role within MMTA will be defined in the next few months but you can expect a contribution from her in the next MMTA newsletter. In the meantime, you might want to read again the article "A How-To Guide for Forming Your Own Anti-Racism Task Force" published in the June 2021 newsletter and check her bio.

<https://www.kuwentomizik.com/about>





## 2022-2023 MMTA Interactive Webinars

MMTA is pleased to host our second season of the MMTA Interactive Webinars. The mission of the MMTA Interactive Webinars is to create an interactive and inspiring learning community within MMTA that equips members to meet the diverse needs of all students. Join us for an exciting lineup of incredible speakers and to experience a vibrant community of fellow Michigan music teachers! All webinars are free to members of MMTA and scheduled from 11:30am-1:00pm on Fridays.

September 16, 2022

Music Literacy that Goes Beyond the Page with Christopher D. Azzara

October 14, 2022

SAT Updates with a Closer Look at Aural Awareness with Jacki VanderSlik, Janice Derian, James Hohmeyer

November 4, 2022

Ukrainian Music: The Story of Passion, Struggle, and Hope with Solomia Soroka and Arthur Greene

December 2, 2022

Composing: To Wait or Not to Wait for In-spiration - That is the Question with Catherine Rollin

January 13, 2023

DIY Teaching Tools with Leila Viss

February 3, 2023

Ornaments: The Interior Decorations of the Baroque with Louis Nagel

March 3, 2023

Metacognition in Piano Teaching with Chad Twedt

April 14, 2023

MMTA Member Chat: Practice Edition

May 5, 2023

Zoom In, Zoom Out: Practical Wellness Strategies for Music Teachers with Elaina Burns

Register Here:

<https://michiganmusicteachers.org/webinars/>

For any questions please reach out to:

Joy Morin, Teacher Education Chair at [joymorinpiano@gmail.com](mailto:joymorinpiano@gmail.com) or

Emily Suszko, Teacher Education Committee Member at [suszkopiano@gmail.com](mailto:suszkopiano@gmail.com)





## YES, I DO MISS TEACHING

By Dr. Louis Nagel

School is starting now. Ann Arbor, East Lansing, and many other college towns throughout Michigan are beginning fall classes, and studio music teachers are meeting their new students, greeting their returnees, and thinking about all those staff meetings they are going to attend! I am spending my seventh year on the sidelines missing the action and hoping to become more active as a teacher and presenter. There is no business like teaching, and while it is ever challenging, it is also ever rewarding.

In this column I want to write about the music teachers in my life, people who inspired me and pushed me to be my best. I want to identify them and express my admiration for who they were and what they did. A couple of these names are familiar, most probably are not. All are bright inspirations to me today even as I age.

My schooling before Juilliard all took place in the preparatory department of the University of Louisville School of Music. Louisville, I should emphasize, was a wonderful city “west of the Hudson River” for a young person to grow and develop musically. We had a small but fine orchestra (I heard my first Beethoven Ninth with that 50 piece group and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary choir), as well as life-changing performances by Rudolf Serkin, Clifford Curzon, Sidney Harth, Alice Ehlers, and the Amadeus and Juilliard Quartets. I often spent my Saturday afternoons in the music section of our public library where I read at a desk for the first time the Prokofiev First Piano Concerto, the Schubert Wanderer Fantasy and the Strauss Burlesque. That was the environment I enjoyed. Those afternoons shaped me as much as the teachers I am about to identify.

My first teacher was a gentleman named Grant Graves. He was a faculty member at the music school, a father and a firm but encouraging teacher for a kid who had some talent and a large dose of attitude. He brought me up through the then ascendent Diller-Quaile series as well as some of the earlier pieces by Mozart and Haydn and Beethoven. Before I was ten he worked with me on all the Two-part Inventions and the Haydn D Major Concerto, the last movement of which I gleefully played with the Louisville Orchestra. I recall (ruefully, not proudly) that our great conductor Robert Whitney began my performance conducting in two, and somewhere in the middle metrically modulated to one as I was having a blast!! He made sure I knew and understood basic theory and analytic concepts. Mr. Graves also shepherded my first ever solo recital. And memorably he invited me to share the piano with him in a performance with his church choir of the first book of the Brahms Liebeslieder. To this day I remember those gorgeous songs and the joy I had participating in such a variety of sounds He was a great teacher.



In time however, a change of studios was advisable and I went to study with the dean of the music school and a well-known teacher, critic and pianist Dwight Anderson. Mr. Anderson was a powerful influence on me and started the process of teaching me what it was to PRACTICE and LISTEN to what I was doing. Sheer talent was not enough and while it took me a bit of time to accept that fact, he was insistent and demanding and I eventually started to respond. He insisted I listen to music other than the flash of Tchaikovsky or the comforting sounds of Schubert, and demanded I attend chamber music recitals and listen to vocal repertoire. Sadly I let him down with the vocal part, that love came much later. But I did hear quartets, trios, duos and four hand, the last being in a class he taught with other students forming partnerships to read thru Beethoven symphonies, Mozart and Schubert and Schumann four hand repertoire. I had the distinct pleasure of turning pages for Mieczyslaw Horszowski in a performance of the Schumann Quintet with the Budapest String Quartet. I confess having to look up Mr. Horszowski's name for spelling, but I will always remember what a beautiful performance (and how easy he made it look) I was hearing. I think Mr. Anderson arranged that for me although he never admitted it. He observed that my demeanor before a student recital was to pace the hallway off stage where I could be seen and generally try to be noticed. After one such ego trip, he gently but VERY firmly sat me down and gave an on the spot lesson in unobtrusive stage presence from beginning to end. I have never forgotten this! And one last comment about Mr. Anderson that has truly shaped my life and I have told it many times. He invited me to his home to listen to a recording of Schnabel playing the Beethoven Sonata Opus 26, which I was then learning. Mr. Anderson and his wife were childless, but for some reason he had in their den a small child's record player. He put on the recording and I listened. After a while he asked me "Louis, what do you hear?" I had never been asked such a silly question before, and I was unable to reply. He let it go. A few minutes later he repeated the question "Louis, what do you hear" and I knew I had to say something. So I mumbled "Well, the record is scratchy". BINGO! He scored with the most important lesson he ever gave me. "Louis", he said with a mixture of seriousness and compassion. "don't listen to the technology of the record, listen to the MUSIC. What did you hear in the MUSIC?."

I have never forgotten this. Mr. Anderson was a great teacher.

In time he went on sabbatical and I went to study and prepare for my Juilliard audition with Benjamin Owen. Mr. Owen and his wife were Juilliard graduates from the 1930s, and both had worked with Rosina Lhevinne. He arranged for me to audition for her when she visited them Louisville. I played the Beethoven Third Concerto, both parts, my solo and the orchestral tutti. Mrs. Lhevinne was sufficiently impressed to promise me a spot in her class. At that time I hadn't the slightest idea who she was, and I was pleased but not overwhelmed. And while Mr. Owen was less a teacher than a coach, he was a superb pianist and I heard him play many contemporary works as well as my first hearing of the Franck Symphonic Variations. And he ushered me through much of Hindemith's gargantuan Ludus Tonalis, all of which he performed in a recital one Sunday afternoon. He was the first concert pianist/teacher I had and he was a great model for me.

Off to New York in the fall of 1960 to begin a new stage in my career. I suspect it will take up more space than this column needs, and I would like to save it for another time. But I want to conclude this part with some observations: One, I was very fortunate in my education to have teachers that knew music thoroughly and could handle a talented and pretty self-absorbed youngster. They put up with me knowing that in the two or three hours a day I SHOULD have practiced, I spent more than half of that time “playing” and improvising. What was left over I learned some of the repertoire they hoped I would absorb and a little of the technique I never have absorbed. Two; They assigned me excellent repertoire and did not praise me when we all knew I was “getting by”. (I couldn’t play pool or ping pong so well either, activities that often took precedence over Czerny, scales, and The Well-tempered.) And three: they left me with a growing love of music that continues to this day to motivate me. They all were inspirational teachers and models. Next time, I want to share with you the turbulent years of the sixties.



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### **A call to all Chapter Presidents:**

Please help us identify members of your chapter who would be interested in taking a more active role in MMTA!

The following positions are either vacant or need to be filled:

Media Communication Coordinator: contact Yelena Wells.

MTNA Michigan Performance Division Coordinator: contact Laurie Marshall.

For the following positions, please contact Béatrice Ellis at [octbb47@sbcglobal.net](mailto:octbb47@sbcglobal.net):

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