

KEY Issue

November/December 2016



Letter from the President

Christmas Already? Christmas is my favorite holiday! Hot chocolate, Christmas music and the glow of the Christmas tree. Everyone seems so happy, even when it snows! I wish this time of year would last forever. It always seems too early to start handing out Christmas music but before you know it we will feel the recital crunch. I am sure many of you have a piece or two that you don't enjoy teaching as much as others or maybe you refuse to teach it. However, I think it is important to look at music through the eyes and ears of your students. For many of them it will be their first time learning that Christmas piece, but your 100th time teaching it. How can you keep those same Christmas pieces fresh and new? Try a new arrangement! Make your own arrangement!

Christmas is a time for you to channel your inner child, so have fun with those silly Christmas songs. Do you remember your favorite Christmas pieces you learned as a child? I remember feeling so much joy after learning Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. It was so much fun to see my fingers zip across the keys!

When your students are ready for their recital, remember SPPTA offers many recitals over the year that your students could perform in. SPPTA recitals are great if you only have a handful of students performing so you don't have to worry about filling up an entire recital. It is also a great way for your students to meet other kids their age. Students also earn ribbons and medals for participating in recitals, so that is even more incentive for your students to get up on that stage.

Sarah Mensen



Sarah Mensen
SPPTA President 2016-2018
Sarah Mensen, SPPTA President

Calendar of Events NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

Monthly Programs

10:00 Social Time
10:20 General Meeting & Guest Speaker
10:30 Presentation
11:50 Board Meeting

November 8, 2016
Schmitt Music, Roseville
“Overcoming Barriers To Teaching Popular Music”
Presented by Doug Rohde

December 13, 2016
10:00 Holiday Tea
Home of Helen-Marie Plourde: Saint Paul
Guest Artist: TBD

Book Club - 10:00 am Cafe Latte, Saint Paul 3rd Tuesday of the Month

Nov. 15

No Book Club in December, next is meeting Jan. 17

Upcoming Recitals

Schmitt Music, Roseville, MN

November 19 - Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Deadline: November 5
Monica Allen

December 10 - Saturday
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Deadline: November 18
Rebekah Richards

Membership Directory Updates

WELCOME to these new or reinstating members of SPPTA! Please update your directory with their contact information, as needed.

Susan Bennefeld
1401 Kelly Dr.
Golden Valley, MN 55427
763-544-4772
violinist1000@hotmail.com

Alyssa Bernardo
1938 Bowsens Lane
Woodbury, MN 55125
651-285-6734
abernardo@wisc.edu

Denis V. Evstuhin
10060 Dogwood St. NW #B8
Coon Rapids, MN 55448
651-815-7578
evstuhin@hotmail.com

Oleg Levin
1632 Summit Hill
Eagan, MN 55122
612-382-0190
Levin@pianofever.com

Cynthia Mortensen
48 Suzanne Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55127
651-724-8094
cynthiamo.mortensen@gmail.com

Pamela Sohriakoff
179 Little Canada Rd. E. #234
Little Canada, MN 55117
952-594-5506
psohriak@gmail.com

Jose D. Uriarte
614 N. 1st St. #406
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-333-1512
arteuria0001@yahoo.com

Concerto Competition, by the numbers...

10 minutes are allotted to each of the
18 contestants performing during the Preliminaries on December 3rd.
16 unique concerto, by
10 different composers will be heard, providing great variety throughout the event.
2 daytime judges will provide valuable critiques for all participants from 11am-5pm.
8 teachers are represented,
3 who will accompany their own students, and
2 accompanists - whose fingers will be very busy that day - accompanying the other
14.6 finalists will be selected when the preliminaries are complete.
1 additional judge will join us for the Finals Competition at 7:30pm.
2 hours later, the 3rd, 2nd, and 1st place winners will be known.
5 finalists will be invited to be guest artists at the SPPTA meeting on Tuesday, January 10th.
1 winner will perform with the Mississippi Valley Orchestra at 3pm on Sunday, February 26th.
0 people should miss these exciting events! They are wonderful, and all open to the public.
Still Needed - 1 Timekeeper Enjoy a day full of great music, with lunch and snacks provided.

Volunteer Needed

Who is up for a day of free, fantastic music?

Join us as Timekeeper for the Concerto Competition on Saturday, December 3rd from 10:45am to 5:00pm. Your responsibilities consist of handing the music to the judges, and starting the timer so we know when each performer's 10 minutes is complete. Lunch and tasty snacks are provided to accompany the melodies of these amazing musicians. Volunteer hours documented. EVERY year is stunning. Contact me and be an important part of making this year a success!

Contact Beverly Olson with any questions.
(651) 341-0353
Bev@BenchandBow.com



Beverly Olson
Concerto Competition Chair

Salon Se Lève

Submitted by Deanna Andersen

Since 1999, this monthly performance series presents, supports and encourages Minnesota's most gifted emerging young artists, utilizing the 19th century ambiance of a salon concert. Pre-college musicians are chosen to perform in this series after winning a major regional, national or international competition in the previous school year. These recitals are presented by the Wirth Center for the Performing Arts, in partnership with Salon se Lève's Volunteer Council/Contributing Membership and the Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church in Downtown, Minneapolis. As has been our tradition, all concerts (except the Benefit Concert) are free and open to the public. The program is funded through generous donations of its contributing members.

Announcing the 2016-2017 Concert Season!

Hear the world's greatest music played by some of Minnesota's finest young artists in a setting as it was first meant to be heard ... the "salon!" The Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, in partnership with the Wirth Center for the Performing Arts and the Salon se Lève Contributing Members are proud to present six recitals, featuring our amazing young regional artists in an intimate venue – reminiscent of old world salons. Offered in the Art Gallery at HAUMC, this "up-close-and-personal" setting brings the music and performers directly to the audience, stirring hearts and arousing emotions and imaginations as only a true salon atmosphere can! Join us for these exciting Sunday afternoon concerts as we encourage Minnesota's own emerging young artists in the 2016-2017 season:

November 20th, 2:30 PM:

"A Pre-Thanksgiving Musical Feast!"

Showcasing two of Minnesota's finest that are sure to satisfy your musical tastes! Pianist Zhen Tu, 1st Prize winner of both the prestigious Minnesota Orchestra Concerto Competition and the Thursday Musical Competition will dazzle us with her virtuosic drama, and the supremely musical oboist Sarah Bushara, 1st Prize winner of the nationally renowned Schubert Club Competition and the Thursday Musical Competition will return from the world famous Curtis Institute of Music to give us an exhilarating opening to our season... You won't want to miss this one!

January 8th, 2:30 PM

"The Larson Memorial Recital"

Presenting our Larson Award winner, the stunning pianist Daniel Eras, first prize winner of the MTNA National Piano Competition - with the Chopin prize for the best lyrical Chopin performance awarded as well, and [already!] internationally known for his lyricism in Russian, French, and Costa Rican venues as well as international prizes... Our "most outstanding performer" from last season has already won our hearts with his story - and amazing pianism! This will be a big highlight of our 2016-17 Season, and one of our best of all time!!

February 5th, 2:30 PM:

"A Very Special Strings and Hammers Valentine"

Featuring two fabulous young artists in their debut performances for us: Pianist Margaret Wang, a 1st Prize winner of the coveted Schubert Club Piano Scholarship Competition will show us how to make hammers sing!... And we will also be delighted to hear violinist Emma Richman, 1st Prize winner of the prestigious Schubert Club Strings Competition and a seasoned young artist who will certainly pull our heart strings with her passionate playing! This Salon se Lève concert promises to be especially heartfelt - with hammers, and felts, and strings!!

March 19th, 2:30 PM:

"A Real Schubert Club Showcase!"

Salon se Lève presents two more sensational 1st Prize winners of the prestigious Schubert Club Competition: Cellist Madeline Sheard, Junior High First Prize winner of the 2015 Schubert Club Competition will return this year again to enrich our lives with her beautiful musicianship and gorgeous tone... And pianist Abigale Arkley, the 2016 Schubert Club Senior High Piano 1st Prize winner will make what promises to be a stunning debut for us with her very special firebrand virtuosity! Bring a friend and treat them to a fabulous musical afternoon in the intimate Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church Art Gallery!

April 30th, 2:30 PM:

"A Fittingly Fabulous Finale!"

Come join us for our stunning finale, as we present two astonishing young artists in their Salon se Lève debuts: Pianist Collin Jinks, 1st Prize winner of the Thursday Musical Competition and the Rising Star Concerto Competition in LaCrosse will astonish us with his pianistic flair... And the young violinist Katia Tarsarczyk, 1st Prize winner of the Schubert Club Competition and already highly praised by the St. Paul Pioneer Press - "Violinist wows Landmark crowd!" - will end our season in head-wagging wonderment!

May 21st, 2:30 PM:

Benefit Concert TBA

"Chamber Chamboree and Alumni Extraordinaire!"

Come and hear our wonderful emerging young artists AND (a new tradition!) our AMAZING ALUMNI!... play some of the world's greatest solo and chamber music, filling the HAUMC Art Gallery with a resonance to be remembered and our hearts with joy! This event is ticketed, and ensures our Salon se Lève series the financial security it needs! Please come and support Salon se Lève, now in its 15th season! This will be an exciting event!!

<http://www.wirthcenter.org/salon.html>

Clavier Companion closely examines some of the apps, computer programs, and websites focused on piano instruction.

(excerpt from the September/October 2016 issue of Clavier Companion magazine)

Submitted by Helen-Marie Plourde

Not too long ago (say, way back in the 1990s), if you wanted to learn to play the piano, you basically had two options: you could find a teacher and take traditional lessons, or you could buy a book and try to teach yourself. With the growth of the internet and the arrival of smart mobile devices, those opportunities have expanded considerably. What does this mean for piano teachers? What does it mean for students? Are there viable options for self-instruction? If so, are they a threat or a boon to established teachers?

Our goal in this article is to present you with information that you can use to evaluate and make informed decisions. Whether you plan to use any of these resources with your students or not, it is probably wise to know about their existence and their capabilities. The landscape of these products does seem infinite, and there is no way we can cover even a fraction of what is available. For each review, we have asked a piano teacher who has no affiliation with the product to put it through its paces with real students. Below is a preview of each review. - Pete Jutras, editor-in-chief

Piano Maestro is a digital music-learning app available for the iPad, and it functions as a virtual teaching assistant. It turns learning to read music at the piano into a fun, engaging, and innovative game. For each song, the student plays music as it scrolls across the screen along with a backing track. The app “listens” to the student and instantly analyzes whether the student has played the correct notes and rhythm. The notes turn green when the app hears the note played at the correct time; notes turn red when the app detects a mistake.

At the end of the challenge, the student receives a grade and earns points. The object is to accumulate as many points as possible. - Todd van Kekerix

OVERVIEW:

PRICE: Varied tiers ranging from free to \$14.99/month (with annual subscription). Top tier includes unlimited access to all content for teachers and all of their students.

SYSTEMS: Only available on the iPad

EQUIPMENT: Just a keyboard or piano. Note: no special cords or interfaces are necessary to use this app.

WEBSITE: www.joytunes.com

Piano Marvel combines a traditional piano method and library of repertoire with software that provides feedback to students while they practice. This feedback shows students if they pressed the correct key at the correct time and provides a score for their performance. High scores are rewarded with in-game bronze, silver, and gold trophies. The combination of instructional materials, repertoire, and, feedback software is a bargain at \$15/month or \$99/year. Teachers who use Piano Marvel in their studios receive a discount if multiple students register. - Michael Rushing

(continued next page)

OVERVIEW (Piano Marvel)

PRICE: Free for level 1 materials. Premium account (\$15/month or \$99/year) provides full access to all levels. Some repertoire must be purchased in addition to the subscription.

The teacher and student both need subscriptions. Students are “linked” to teacher accounts upon subscription.

EQUIPMENT: Requires MIDI enabled piano/keyboard/MIDI controller, Mac or PC computer

WEBSITE: www.pianomarvel.com

Playground Sessions offers ways for students to learn skills, concepts, and full songs to achieve ratings and stars. Playground Sessions utilizes both popular and classical repertoire segments to introduce a concept. There are forty-two lessons in Rookie Bootcamp, thirty-seven in Intermediate, and twelve in Advanced. The very first Rookie lesson starts using middle C as a keyboard reference, and playing the opening of Five for Fighting’s Superman by rote while watching pianist David Sides explain the learning process step by step. While there is an emphasis on pop music in all levels, some classical staples are present. Rookie Bootcamp includes arrangements and short classical excerpts such as Pachelbel’s Canon, Beethoven’s Ode to Joy, Dvorak’s New World Symphony, and J. S. Bach’s Prelude in C but also the Beatles, Sam Smith, Beyoncé, Frank Sinatra, and other popular artists. - Kristin Cahill

OVERVIEW:


PRICE: \$9.99/month (billed annually); includes \$20 in song credits \$17.99 for a single month; includes one free song, or \$269.99/lifetime membership; includes \$40 in song credits *All subscriptions have full access to Playground software, community features (social media, leader boards), free Bootcamp lessons for all levels, and discounts on songs and sheet music.

EQUIPMENT: Mac or PC computer, digital piano with MIDI/USB capability

WEBSITE: www.playgroundsessions.com



*Henry Vo and Jeffrey Huang
October SPPTA Recital*



Holiday Tea Party

December 13, 2016

10:00 am

Bring treats to share!

Home of Helen-Marie Plourde: Saint Paul

ASSOCIATION
TEACHERS
PIANO
Saint Paul



SPPTA Publicity Chair
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