

GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

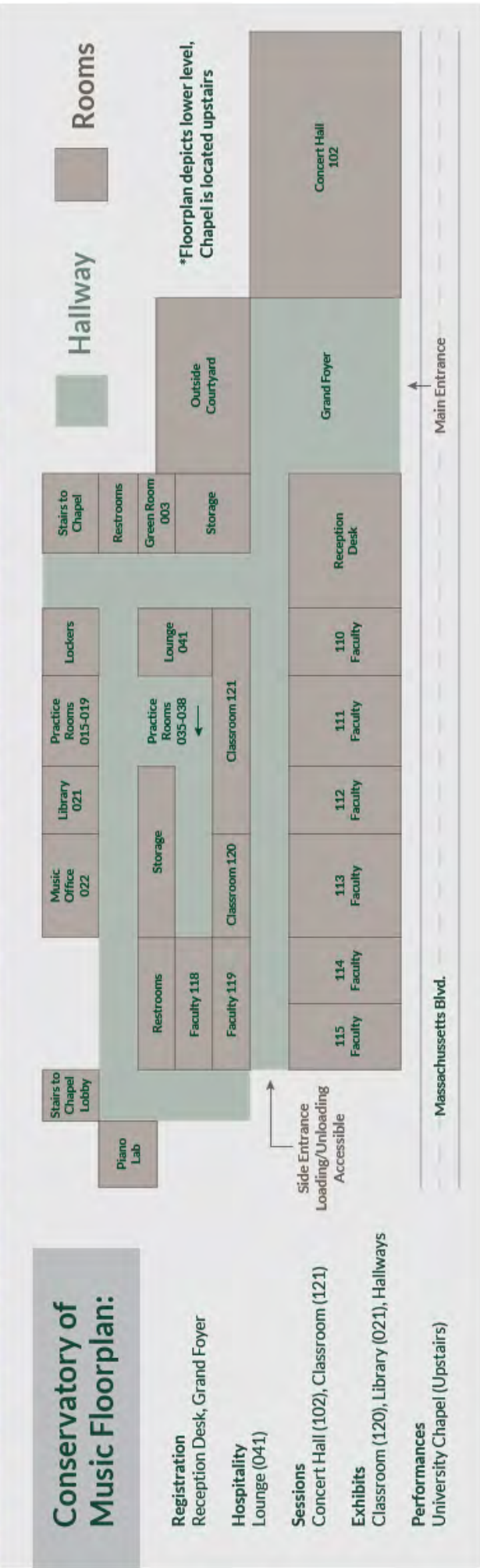
CONFERENCE



PIEDMONT UNIVERSITY

Demorest, GA

November 6-8, 2025



Georgia Music Teachers Association

Affiliated with Music Teachers National Association

Welcome to the 2025 GMTA State Conference! We are delighted to be returning to Piedmont University in the beautiful mountains of North Georgia. Joshua Pifer, our Vice President for Programs, has put together a fantastic set of headliners and session presenters, many of whom are Georgia's Own, who are sure to inspire you.

A special thanks goes out to Jeri-Mae Astolfi, our GMTA President-Elect and Piedmont's Music Department Chair, who has worked out many of the logistics for us to hold our conference here. She has also been instrumental in getting Piedmont's approval to host our MTNA Competitions and GMTA Auditions. We truly appreciate all that Jeri-Mae and Piedmont have done and continue to do for GMTA!

Our Conference Recitalist this year is Spencer Myer, Associate Professor of Music in Piano at Indiana University. Lauded for "superb playing" and "poised, alert musicianship," he is one of the most sought-after artists on today's concert stages and the winner of numerous prizes. He will perform on Friday night and serve as our masterclass clinician on Saturday.

Barbara Lister-Sink, an internationally acclaimed pianist and global leader in injury-preventive keyboard technique, is our Pedagogy Headliner. She is currently the Director of the Graduate Music Program at Salem College. In 2021 she received the Frances Clark Center's Outstanding Service Recognition Award. You won't want to miss her sessions on Thursday and Friday.

This year's Commissioned Composer is Ian Evans Guthrie, Assistant Professor of Music at Calvary University. He is a composer, performer, researcher, and collaborator, composing for acoustic and electroacoustic media ranging from soloists to large ensembles. We are looking forward on Friday to hearing his piece written for flute, horn, and piano.

We greatly appreciate the Northeast Georgia, Gwinnett County, and Athens local associations for providing hospitality during our conference. Also, a big thank you to Joshua Pifer and the collegiate members from Valdosta State for assembling goodie bags for us.

Perhaps our biggest debt of gratitude goes to Mandy Reynolds, our Executive Director, for the many tasks she performs to always make our conferences a success. Make sure you stop by the registration desk to tell her how much we appreciate her. And to all members of the Executive Board – thank you for your service! So much goes on behind the scenes to make GMTA operate smoothly and create events like this conference.

I hope you enjoy this time with your colleagues and friends, attending sessions and hearing all the wonderful performances, and that you come away feeling inspired and full of fresh ideas.



Kristi Helfen, NCTM

GMTA President



MADE FOR DISCOVERY

Piedmont University music majors and performers study and rehearse in a sparkling new 45,000-square-foot Conservatory of Music. The 10.1 million facility is equipped with 27 Steinway pianos and further elevates Piedmont's long-standing and prestigious music program

CONSERVATORY *of* MUSIC

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More about Piedmont Music Programs

- All-Steinway School
- 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio
- International guest artists and masterclasses
- Undergraduate and graduate programs



Piedmont.edu/music



Dear Georgia Music Teachers Association Members and Guests:

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the Conservatory of Music at Piedmont University and to serve as the host for your annual conference.

At Piedmont, you will find a learning community that is deeply committed to the liberal arts in general, and to the fine arts in particular. Our facilities are among the best in the Southeast, including the Swanson Center for the Performing Arts, the Arrendale Amphitheater, the Smith-Williams Art Studios, the Mason-Scharfenstein Museum of Arts, and the Conservatory of Music. As you are probably aware, the Conservatory is also an all-Steinway school, something for which we are very proud. Increasingly, Piedmont has become known as the destination for the arts in North Georgia.

In 2022, Piedmont University celebrated 125 years of providing a transformational educational experience in this region. In addition to majors in music performance, Piedmont boasts one of the largest teacher education programs in the state of Georgia. Music education majors are offered at the baccalaureate, masters, and education specialist level. In addition, we have the highest placement rate for education graduates in Georgia. I look forward to meeting all of you while you're on our lovely campus. I know this will be a time to exchange ideas and information, and to celebrate the importance of music in our lives, in our students' lives, and in the life of our communities.

Kind regards,

Marshall M. Criser, III
President



Hugh Hodgson
School of Music
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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PIANO STUDIES AT UGA



[MUSIC.UGA.EDU/PIANO](https://music.uga.edu/piano)

Don't miss UGA presenters and performers at the conference:
Aimee Li, Soyoung Jeong, Jennifer Luo (alumna), Tiffany Yin, and
Martha Thomas (professor emerita).

PIANO FACULTY

- Emely Phelps
- Liza Stepanova
- Alan Woo
- Grace Huang, pedagogy
- Greg Satterthwaite, jazz
- James Weidman, jazz

DEGREES OFFERED

- BM with emphases in Performance, Music Education, Music Therapy, and more
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- DMA Performance
- Jazz/Commercial music

OPPORTUNITIES

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- Chamber Music Athens Festival
- Multiple ensemble opportunities
- Teaching via the UGA Community Music School



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Headliner: Robert McDonald
(Curtis/Juilliard)



ugamusic | 250 River Road, Athens, GA 30602 | 706-542-2005 | Admissions: musicad@uga.edu



November 6, 2025

Dear Georgia MTA Members:

On behalf of your MTNA colleagues across the country, we add our warm welcome to the Georgia state conference. Gathering with your friends and colleagues from around the state is a very special benefit of membership—a benefit that offers multiple educational and social opportunities for you to grow as a music teaching professional.

At conferences like this, you, the music teacher, become the music student. And as you participate in professional development, new information and techniques are learned, which ultimately become the basis for new ways to teach your students and engage with your communities. These enriching relationships—of constantly receiving and giving away—are vital to your success as a music teacher, to the success of your students and to the longevity of the profession.

As you consider additional opportunities for professional development and networking, we invite you to the 2026 MTNA National Conference in Chicago, March 21–25—a landmark event, as we celebrate the 150th birthday of MTNA! This historic conference will feature more than 100 informative sessions, inspiring master classes, and an exhibit hall with the latest music, products and innovations. Acclaimed pianist Angela Hewitt will perform in the Tuesday evening recital, with more distinguished performers and talented presenters to join the roster. The 2026 MTNA National Conference promises to be an unforgettable celebration of music, education and community, so mark your calendars and stay tuned for details at mtna.org!

Again, welcome to the Georgia state conference. Please enjoy every moment of it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Chance".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Shepard".

Brian Shepard
Chief Executive Officer



Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Welcome to the 2025 Georgia Music Teachers Association Conference! I am delighted that each of you have gathered here in celebration of music, education, and community. Whether you are a long-standing member or a first-time attendee, your presence here underscores our shared passion for nurturing the next generation of musicians and educators.

This year's conference promises to be enriching and inspiring. Looking over the conference schedule I see that you will be treated to energizing sessions and meaningful opportunities for professional growth. I know you are looking forward to the sessions that will be presented by the Pedagogy Headliner, Barbara Lister-Sink, as she shares her wealth of knowledge and experience and the Conference Recitalist performance of the well respected and sought-after artist, Spencer Myer.

A conference of this caliber would not be possible without dedicated leadership and vision. I would like to extend my appreciation to Josh Pifer for his exceptional work in crafting a program that reflects both depth and inspiration. His tireless efforts behind the scenes have made this gathering a reality.

I would also like to recognize the leadership of your GMTA State President, Kristi Helfen. I have enjoyed serving alongside Kristi and know you are proud of the way she serves GMTA and MTNA. Her dedication to the organization has continued the long-standing tradition of excellence in GMTA.

Thank you for being part of this special event. May these days be filled with learning, connection, and the joy that only music can bring. I hope you will also make plans to join us at the 2026 National Conference in Chicago. It will be an exciting time as we celebrate the 150th year of MTNA.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy B. Poole".

Joy Poole
MTNA Southern Division Director

2025 Georgia Music Teachers Association Conference

Piedmont University, Demorest, Georgia

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025

12:00-5:30 Registration, GMTA/MTNA Raffles: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

12:30-1:05 Conference Split Session

Wolves, Historical Temperaments, and Keys, Oh My! How Keyboards Were Tuned Before 1920, and Why F Minor is the Key of Death

Jennifer Lohmann and Dr. Owen Lovell, NCTM, Presenters

Dr. Joanna Kim-Doyle, NCTM, Presider

Concert Hall

Keyboards were tuned lots of different ways before 1920. But this presentation is more than a discussion of historical temperaments and Bach's mysterious squiggles in his Well Tempered Clavier. Composers used specific keys to intentionally create characteristic moods and affects. Even if you don't change anything about your piano and use a "modern" equal temperament, knowing historical key characteristics can immediately open up a world of interesting possibilities for interpretation in your playing and teaching.

How Easy Is It To Teach Jazz Piano?

Adam Cole, Presenter

Sidney Johnson, Presider

Room 121

Even if you don't play Jazz, you might be surprised how easy it is to teach beginning Jazz Improvisation. Adam Cole has developed an approach which allows anyone to quickly learn basic Jazz principles, and teachers can learn to use this method even if their own skills are rudimentary. Adding these techniques to your teaching repertoire will increase your marketability and provide you with enough material to challenge and entertain your students for years.



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President

Mayu Sommovigo

NFMTAmayu@gmail.com

1st VP Programs

Portia Hawkins

portiahawkins@gmail.com

1:05-1:20 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

1:20-1:55 Conference Split Session

Piano Repertoire through the Chinese Lens: Exploring Works by Vincent Ho and Tan Dun

Wanbing Luo, Presenter

TONIC, Presiders

Concert Hall

This presentation explores two significant piano works by composers of Chinese heritage, Vincent Ho and Tan Dun. Their respective pieces, *The Twelve Chinese Zodiac Animals, Book One* and *Eight Memories in Watercolor*, blend Chinese folk music, traditional instruments, and culture with Western compositional styles. These culturally rich and vibrant pieces, one aimed toward student pianists and the other for advanced performers, serve as a modern and engaging musical portrait of China.

It's All About the Basics - MTNA Certification 101

Dr. Martha Thomas, NTCM, Rwei Hao, NCTM, and Robin Engleman, NCTM, Presenters

Tracey Wiley, Presider

Room 121

This session will focus on the basics of MTNA Certification, addressing some of the most common questions and concerns: What is the value and what are the benefits of certification? How do I become certified? What are the most challenging aspects of the process? This session will guide you through the steps and will give you the inspiration for pursuing certification.

1:55–2:10 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

2:10-2:45 Conference Split Session

Breathing Life into Music: A Joint Exploration of Breath in Vocal and Piano Performance

Dr. Joanna Kim-Doyle, NCTM and Dr. Yue Yin, Presenters

Jennifer Lohmann, Presider

Concert Hall

Breath is the lifeblood of vocal performance, shaping phrasing, dynamics, and emotional expression. While pianists do not breathe to produce sound, the concept of "musical breathing" is equally vital in piano performance, influencing phrasing and expressive timing. This session delves into the interdisciplinary exploration of breath as a unifying expressive tool in both vocal and piano performances.

An Adaptive Perspective: Benefits of Pedagogy Through the Lens of Music Therapy

Emily Kirkland and Sidney Johnson, Presenters

Adam Cole, Presider

Room 121

Innovative teaching techniques emerge when traditional pedagogical methods and music therapy approaches combine to achieve a student's musical goals. As both licensed music therapists and piano teachers, the presenters will explore various applications of music therapy techniques in a piano pedagogy environment. Such applications will include examples of adaptive music lesson techniques in a pedagogy setting, and implementing adaptive music therapy strategies in a music lesson to encourage inclusivity and accessibility for various learning styles.

2:45-3:00

Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables

Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer

Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway

Hospitality: Room 041

3:00-3:35

Conference Split Session

Voices of the World: Diverse Piano Collections by Women Composers

TONIC Collegiate Chapter, Presenters

Wanbing Luo, Presider

Concert Hall

There is a wealth of exciting solo piano repertoire by women composers, accessible and effective for use in recitals, festivals, and auditions. Join us in exploring repertoire of various musical styles suitable for different student levels! We will examine collections by master composers of the 19th through 21st centuries, including Judith Lang Zaimont, Libby Larsen, Agathe Backer Grøndahl, and others. This session includes live performances and teaching and performance suggestions.

The Melodic Mind: Understanding Music's Grip on Our Emotions, Memories, and Motivations

Tracey Wiley, Presenter

Rwei Hao, NCTM, Presider

Room 121

Join GPB Education as we explore the fascinating relationship between music and the brain with insights from neuroscience, revealing why melodies captivate, linger, energize, and soothe. From pattern recognition to earworms, discover music's influence on emotions, movements, and stress responses, shedding light on its profound effects on cognition and well-being.

3:35-4:00

Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables

Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer

Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway

Hospitality: Room 041

4:00-5:15

Conference Headliner

What is the Cage?

Barbara Lister-Sink, Presenter

Josh Pifer, Presider

Concert Hall

It is difficult to experience musical joy if we are frustrated or even tragically hindered by physical discomfort, pain and even injury from playing. Together we can define, establish and teach core principles of good biomechanics to reduce this global plague. We will also outline risk factors and review confusing, contradictory technical approaches.

5:15-5:30

Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables

Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer

Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway

Hospitality: Room 041

5:30-6:00

**Presentation of GMTA Broadhurst Awards, GMTA Nolting Composition Awards, and GMTA Student Awards for MTNA Competitions
GMTA/MTNA Competition Winners Recital**

Dr. Esther Park, Presider

Chapel

6:00-8:00

Dinner on Your Own

8:00

**2025 GMTA Auditions Pre-College Concerto Winners
Performances by GMTA Members
GMTA Social**

Kristi Helfen, NCTM, Presider

Chapel

PROGRAM

Violin Concerto, I. Allegro non troppo (excerpts)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Alexandra Cozmuta, violin

Sonny Yoo, piano

From the studio of Nadir Khashimov

**Athens Music
Teachers
Association**

Est. 1962



athensmta.org

President:
Ashley Wilson
ashleywilsonpiano@gmail.com

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2025

8:30-5:00 Registration, GMTA/MTNA Raffles: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

9:00-10:30 Conference Headliner

How Do We Avoid the Cage?

Barbara Lister-Sink, Presenter

Josh Pifer, Presider

Concert Hall

Building on our knowledge of good biomechanical principles, we will explore how to teach these principles through the time-honored step-by-step pedagogical approach—from simplest to most complex. Experientially, we will do simple, teachable exercises to cultivate greater awareness and control of our muscles, joints, and bones in general, and specifically at the instrument.

10:30-10:45 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

10:45-11:20 **Make it Official! From Basement Studio to Blooming Business**

Karen Zgonc, Presenter

Julie Groom, NCTM, Presider

Concert Hall

A Guide to Turning Your Private Music Lessons into a Thriving Business. It's time for a mindset shift from teacher to business owner. Let's set legal and financial foundations, work on branding and marketing, create systems for stability, and make goals together.

11:20-11:35 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041



11:35-12:10 Conference Split Session

Teaching Rhythm to the Rhythmless

Debra Hughes, NCTM, Presenter

Kevin Juarez, Presider

Concert Hall

Having the ability to maintain a steady beat and play rhythms precisely is essential to being a successful musician. Some students are needy in this area. Debra Hughes will present an incremental sequence of steps that teachers can use to help those individuals achieve desired results rhythmically. Don't give up on them. Instead identify, create understanding and then use the given steps tenaciously so that these students can play accurately.

Musical Collaboration Within the Private Studio

Julie Groom, NCTM, Presenter

Karen Zgonc, Presider

Room 121

This session will give teachers strategies to build musical collaboration in a private piano studio for beginners to advanced by incorporating activities such as instrumentation collaboration, duet playing, student-led learning and fostering studio culture that will cultivate creativity, and a positive personal development that will take them beyond just music skills.

12:10-1:30 Lunch

Dining Hall Lunch or Lunch on Your Own

Commons *Dining Hall*

Collegiate Chapter Members will have an informal lunch meeting at 12:20.

Commons Dining Hall - Glass Room

1:30-2:30 Conference Headliner

The Joy of Making Music Outside the Cage!

Barbara Lister-Sink, Presenter

Josh Pifer, Presider

Concert Hall

Healthful technique not only lowers our risk for pain and injury and helps us soar freely physically, it can also enhance our musical artistry. Through several styles and technical levels, we will examine its relationship to tone production, phrase-shaping, voicing, touch control, articulation, timing, rhythm, dynamic range—and, above all, to listening!

2:30-2:50 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

2:50-3:25

Conference Split Session

From the Heart of the Americas: Exploring the Music of Honduran Composer Lidia Handal

Danarieza Villa and Kevin Juarez, Presenters

Dr. Vicente Della Tonia Jr., NCTM, Presider

Concert Hall

From songs depicting the life of Honduran workers in the 20th century to songs about never forgetting loved ones, Honduran songwriter Lidia Handal is regarded as a prominent figure in the development and conservation of Honduran folk music. Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Handal's birth, this session will explore her compositions and their characteristics featuring arrangements and performances of Handal's works by Danarieza Villa and Kevin Juarez.

Teaching Baroque Dance Steps in Piano Lessons

Dr. Zhenyu Gao, Presenter

Dr. Gjergji Gaqi, Presider

Room 121

Historic dance significantly influences Baroque keyboard composition, yet students often lack connection to its role in these pieces. Learning dance steps enhances their understanding by developing steady pulse, rhythmic accuracy, and stylistic appreciation. This presentation explores incorporating Baroque dance steps into piano lessons, offering engaging activities that deepen students' connection to the Baroque style. By integrating dance with music, this approach enriches lessons and fosters a more authentic and expressive performance.

3:25-3:40

Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables

Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer

Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway

Hospitality: Room 041

3:40-4:00

General Session

Annual Business Meeting and the President's Report

Presentation of GMTA Music Teacher Grants

Kristi Helfen, NCTM, GMTA President

Chapel



NORTH DEKALB MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Yi-Fan Wu, President
407-497-6468
NDMTA.music@gmail.com

Derek Vann, VP of Membership
678-332-7076
derekcvann749@gmail.com

www.ndmta.net

4:00-4:30 Commissioned Work Performance
Martin Jones, Presider
Chapel

Above Aglow Grandeurs

- I. Overshadowed Altitudes
- II. Lake of Darkness Gleaming
- III. Grandeurs I Never Knew

Dr. Ian Evans Guthrie, composer and piano
Dr. Ziqing Guan, flute
Prof. Alberto Suarez, horn

The 2025 commissioned work is funded by Music Teachers National Association and Georgia MTA.

4:30-4:45 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

4:45-5:15 **GMTA Auditions Winners' Recital - College Level**
Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., NCTM, Presider
Chapel

PROGRAM

Toccata for Piano Emma Lou Diemer
(1927-2024)

Evan Wyatt, piano, Lower College
From the studio of Dr. Jerico Vasquez, Shorter University

"Bester Jüngling" from Die Entführung aus dem Serail Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(The Abduction from the Seraglio) (1756-1791)

Gilliane Conklin, voice, Middle College
Huu Mai, piano
From the studio of Huu Mai, Kennesaw State University

Piano Sonata Op. 1, I. Allegro con moto Henri Dutilleux
(1916-2013)

Magdalena Nikolajuk, piano, Middle College
From the studio of Dr. Esther Park, Columbus State University

"Ah! Je Ris De Me Voir Si Velle En Ce Miroir" (Jewel Song)
from 'Faust'

Charles Gounod
(1818-1893)

Marielle Mai, voice, Upper College
Huu Mai, piano
From the studio of Huu Mai, Kennesaw State University

"Poissons d'or" from Images, Book 2

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)

Tiffany Yin, piano, Upper College
From the studios of Grace Huang and Alan Woo, University of Georgia

6:00-7:30

GMTA Conference Banquet
Commons Building - ABC Room



A Life with Music

For more information
Contact
Margaret Liu
ABRSM Representative
Georgia, Florida &
South Carolina USA

(678) 523-6703
abrmga@gmail.com
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In partnership with the Royal Schools of Music in UK:



8:00

GMTA Conference Recital

Spencer Myer

Josh Pifer, Presider

PROGRAM

Fantasia in C Major, Hob. XVII:4

Franz Joseph Haydn
(1732-1809)

Miroirs (1904-05)

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Noctuelles
Oiseaux tristes
Une barque sur l'océan
Alborada del gracioso
La vallée des cloches

-----Intermission-----

Tre Sonetti del Petrarca

Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)

Sonetto 47 del Petrarca
Sonetto 104 del Petrarca
Sonetto 123 del Petrarca

Piano Sonata No. 1 (1990)

Carl Vine

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2025

8:30-12:30 Registration, GMTA/MTNA Raffles: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

9:10-9:45 Conference Split Session

American Idioms at the Keyboard: Rediscovering Dello Joio, Muczynski, Thomson, Creston, Adler, and Griffes

Dr. Vicente Della Tonia Jr., NCTM, Presenter
Danarieza Villa, Presider
Room 121

This session highlights six influential 20th-century American composers—Dello Joio, Muczynski, Thomson, Creston, Adler, and Griffes—whose vibrant, stylistically diverse works make compelling additions to student repertoire. Drawing on jazz, folk, impressionism, and modernism, these pieces support essential pedagogical goals such as technique, expression and creativity. Attendees will explore standout works—like Dello Joio’s Lyric Pieces and Muczynski’s Fables and Preludes—and leave with practical teaching strategies, graded repertoire lists, and stylistic insights into the literature of these composers.

From the Balkans with Duets: Exploring Piano Four-Hands Music of Southeastern Europe

Dr. Gjergji Gaqi and Dr. Naoki Hakutani, Presenters
Dr. Zhenyu Gao, Presider
Concert Hall

The Balkans are a culturally diverse region, musically distinguished by the use of modal scales and energetic dance rhythms. This session will introduce and explore music from the region written for the piano duet, featuring representative composers from Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Serbia and Romania. Covering pieces at various levels of difficulty, this session will present an opportunity to bring seldom-heard repertoire to one of the favored chamber ensembles in the piano studio: the duet.

9:45-10:00 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041

10:00-12:00 **GMTA Piano Master Class with Spencer Myer**

Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., NCTM, Presider

Chapel

PROGRAM

Prelude and Fugue in G Major BWV860

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

Kenneth Low, piano, Grade 9

From the studios of Daniel Liebeskind and Ping Xu, Gwinnett County MTA

Sonata in B Flat Major, Op. 22

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770-1827)

I. Allegro con brio

Chengyi Shao, piano, Grade 9

From the studio of Ping Xu, North Dekalb MTA

Etude Tableaux Op. 39, No. 6

Sergei Rachmanioff
(1873-1943)

Mitchell Kuang, piano, Grade 10

From the studio of Alexander Wasserman, Cobb County MTA

Ballade No. 4

Frédéric Chopin
(1810-1849)

Melvin Xu, piano, Grade 10

From the studio of Anne Sun, Atlanta MTA

Jeux d'eau

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)

Audrey Sun, piano, Grade 11

From the studio of Anne Sun, Atlanta MTA



*Where teachers come together to
encourage and build*

President: Kimber Kwiatkowski
404-401-0890

Membership: Debra Hughes, NCTM
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- 12:00-12:15 Visit Exhibits, Hospitality, Awards and Foundation Tables
Awards and Foundation Tables and Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer
Exhibits: Concert Hall Grand Foyer and Hallway
Hospitality: Room 041
- 12:15-1:30 **Prize Drawings for GMTA Award Fund and MTNA Foundation Raffle**
GMTA Auditions Pre-College Winners' Recital
 Dr. Vicente Della Tonia, Jr., NCTM, Presider
Chapel

PROGRAM

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Gavotte | François-Joseph Gossec
(1734-1829) |
| Esther Lim, violin, Grades K/1
Jihye Song, piano
From the studio of Sungsin Kim | |
| Concertino in C Major No. 1, III. Rondo. Vivace | Julius Klengel
(1859-1933) |
| Injae Hwang, cello, Grades 2/3
Inha Hwang, piano
From the studio of Heejung Jung | |
| Violin Concerto in G Minor, I. Allegro moderato (excerpts) | Max Bruch
(1838-1920) |
| Nan Jiang, violin, Grades 4/5
Sharon Berenson, piano
From the studio of Nadir Khashimov | |
| Grandes Étude de Paganini, No. 4, S. 141 | Franz Liszt
(1811-1886) |
| Alvina Chen, piano, Grade 4
From the studio of Anne Sun, Atlanta MTA | |
| Prelude No. 23, Op. 53: Moderato | Nikolay Kapustin
(1937-2020) |
| Chloe Jung, piano, Grade 5
From the studio of Elena Cholakova, Atlanta MTA | |

Violin Concerto in E Minor
I. Allegro molto appassionato (excerpts)

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)

Chloe Park, violin, Grades 6/7
Sharon Berenson, piano
From the studio of Nadir Khashimov

Sonata in F Major, Op. 10 No. 2, III. Presto

Ludwig van Beethoven
(1770–1827)

Ken Hu, piano, Grade 6
From the studio of Alan Woo, Athens MTA

Widmung

Robert Schumann/F. Liszt arr.
(1810-1856)

Heidi Hu, piano, Grade 7
From the studio of Anne Sun, Atlanta MTA

Sonata in C Major, I. Allegro

Muzio Clementi
(1752-1832)

Andy Nguyen and Cynthia Zhang, piano, Lower Division
From the studio of Ping Xu

Polichinelle Op. 3 No. 4

Sergei Rachmaninov
(1873-1943)

Luka Gekic, piano, Grade 8
From the studio of Courtney Gekic, Coweta-Fayette MTA

Widmung

Schumann

Elaine Han, voice, Grade 9
From the studio of Kyungmi Yang

Deh Vieni, Non Tardar

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756-1791)

Chloe Bremer, voice, Grade 10
From the studio of Yurim Choi

Mitchell Kuang, piano, Grade 10

From the studio of Alexander Wasserman, Cobb County MTA

Fantasie in C major, D.760, IV. Allegro

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

Michelle Feng, piano, Grade 11

From the studio of Alexander Wasserman, Cobb County MTA

Calming the Tempest

Kevin Olson
(b. 1970)

Alfred and Elodie Dolfen, piano, Upper Division

From the studio of Lois Finlay



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SPENCER MYER

Conference Recitalist

Lauded for “superb playing” and “poised, alert musicianship” by The Boston Globe and labeled “definitely a man to watch” by London’s The Independent, American pianist **SPENCER MYER** is one of the most respected and sought-after artists on today’s concert stages. Spencer Myer’s current season includes touring throughout the United States, highlighted by his Opening Night debut with Kentucky’s Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra. Mr. Myer continues as half of the Daurov/Myer Duo, having teamed up with the award-winning cellist Adrian Daurov in 2012. Spencer Myer’s orchestral, recital and chamber music performances have been heard throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, Africa and Asia. He has been soloist with, among many others, The Cleveland Orchestra, Boise, Dayton, Evansville, Louisiana, Massapequa, Northeastern Pennsylvania and Rhode Island philharmonic orchestras, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, ProMusica Chamber Orchestra of Columbus, the Altoona, Bangor, Baton Rouge, Bozeman, Canton, Chattanooga, Duluth Superior, Eugene, Flagstaff, Grand Junction, Greenville, Indianapolis, Juneau, Knoxville, Longmont, Macon, Missoula, New Haven, Omaha, Phoenix, Ridgefield, San Juan, Santa Fe, Springfield (MA, MO, OH), Traverse, Tucson and Wyoming symphony orchestras, Indianapolis Chamber Orchestra,



New York City’s The Park Avenue Chamber Symphony, Canada’s Windsor Symphony Orchestra, Mexico’s Orquesta Filarmónica de Jalisco, South Africa’s Cape Town and Johannesburg philharmonic orchestras and the Beijing’s China National Symphony Orchestra. Spencer Myer’s recital appearances have been presented in New York City’s Weill Recital Hall, 92nd Street Y and Steinway Hall, Philadelphia’s Kimmel Center and London’s Wigmore Hall, while many of his performances have been broadcast on WQXR (New York City), WHYY (Philadelphia), WCLV (Cleveland) and WFMT (Chicago). An in-demand chamber musician, he appeared for five summers at the Lev Aronson Legacy Festival in Dallas with cellists Lynn Harrell, Ralph Kirshbaum, Amit Peled and Brian Thornton, and enjoys a recurring partnership with the Miami String Quartet at the Kent/Blossom Music Festival. Other artistic partners include clarinetist David Shifrin, Cardiff Singer of the World winner Nicole Cabell, the Jupiter, Manhattan and Pacifica string quartets and the Dorian Wind Quintet. Festival appearances have included those of the Annapolis Chamber, Bard, Blossom, Cape Cod Chamber, Chautauqua, Colorado, Gina Bachauer, Jackson Hole, Mendocino, Ravinia, Rocky Ridge and Skaneateles music festivals, Canada’s Concerts aux Iles du Bic, Spain’s Gijon International Piano Festival and Valencia International Piano Academy, and Indonesia’s Yogyakarta International Music Festival. Spencer Myer’s career was launched with three important prizes: First Prize in the 2004 UNISA International Piano Competition in South Africa, the 2006 Christel DeHaan Classical Fellowship from the American Pianists Association and the Gold Medal from the 2008 New Orleans International Piano Competition. Additionally, he is a laureate of the 2007 William Kapell, 2005 Cleveland and 2005 Busoni international piano competitions. An enthusiastic supporter of the education of young musicians, Spencer Myer has been a frequent guest artist at workshops for students and teachers, and has served on the faculties of the Baldwin-Wallace University and Oberlin College conservatories of music. He is a graduate of the Oberlin Conservatory of Music, The Juilliard School and Stony Brook University. From 2012 to 2022, he held an appointment as Artist-Teacher in Piano and Collaborative Piano at the Longy School of Music of Bard College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Mr. Myer was the subject of the cover interview in the January/February 2019 issue of The Piano Magazine: Clavier Companion, relating his thoughts on practicing, performing, teaching and mentoring the next generation of pianists. In the Spring of 2022, Mr. Myer was appointed Associate Professor of Music in Piano at Indiana University Bloomington’s Jacobs School of Music; in the Spring of 2024 he was named the recipient of the Trustees Teaching Award. Spencer Myer’s debut CD for harmonia mundi usa - solo music of Busoni, Copland, Debussy and Kohs - was released in the fall of 2007 to critical acclaim by Fanfare and Gramophone magazines. He can also be heard on a composer-conducted Naxos CD in performances of three concerti from Huang Ruo’s Chamber Concerto Cycle and in a performance of Ravel’s Chansons madécasses, included on “Intimate Masterpieces,” a 2013 CD featuring faculty and alumni of the Oberlin Conservatory and issued by Oberlin Music. Mr. Myer’s most recent five recordings – “William Bolcom: Piano Rags,” the Brahms Cello Sonatas with Brian Thornton, the Debussy Cello Sonata and Brahms Clarinet Trio with Brian Thornton and Afendi Yusuf, Schumann’s works for cello and piano, as well as the Chopin and Rachmaninoff cello sonatas, with Brian Thornton – are available on the Steinway & Sons label. In the Fall of 2022, Steinway Classics released “Chopin: The Four Impromptus”; the album is available worldwide through all download and streaming services. In the fall of 2020, Spencer Myer was elected to the Board of Directors of the New York City-based Musicians Foundation (est. 1914). Spencer Myer is a Steinway Artist.

BARBARA LISTER-SINK

Pedagogy Headliner

BARBARA LISTER-SINK, Ed. D., internationally acclaimed pianist and acknowledged global leader in injury-preventive keyboard technique, is a graduate of Smith College, the Utrecht Conservatory and holds an Ed.D. from Columbia University. A Steinway Artist since 1977, Lister-Sink has performed and recorded as soloist and with many of the world's most distinguished musicians throughout North America, Europe, and Australia. Her DVD *Freeing the Caged Bird – Developing Well-Coordinated, Injury-Preventive Piano Technique* won the 2002 MTNA-Frances Clark Keyboard Pedagogy Award. She has taught on the Eastman School of Music Artist Faculty and was formerly keyboardist for the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. Currently, she is Director of the Graduate Music Program at Salem College when she created and teaches in the Master of Music in Performance & Pedagogy (piano & organ) with an Emphasis in Injury-Preventive Technique, the first of its kind in the US. A previewer for Oxford University Press, Lister-Sink has written articles for the *Piano Magazine*, *The American Music Teacher*, and European Piano Teachers Association *Piano Journal*. Lister-Sink was chosen by *Musical America Global* as one of America's "30 Top Professionals of 2018" who have contributed to the music profession as innovators, independent thinkers, and visionary leaders. In 2021, she received the Frances Clark Keyboard Pedagogy Center's Outstanding Service Recognition Award and has appeared as convention artist and/or clinician at over 25 state MTA conventions, and is a frequent presenter at national and international conferences such as NCKP, MTNA, ISME, AGO chapters, and PAMA (Performing Arts Medicine Association). Recent or upcoming concerts and presentations include Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX, Atlanta; Oxford, MS; Chicago; Philadelphia; New York City; London, England; Helsinki, Finland. Lister-Sink has dedicated her life to helping thousands of keyboardists worldwide remove technical obstacles and enhance their musical artistry.



Additionally, Lister-Sink is a visual artist whose work is frequently exhibited nationwide. She is also a fitness and gym enthusiast who enjoys power-lifting and ballroom dancing.

www.lister-sinkinstitute.org

TED X Talk - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KJlxFk5lA>



IAN GUTHRIE

Commissioned Composer

Currently based in the Kansas City area, **DR. IAN EVANS GUTHRIE** has received the Mile High Freedom Bands 2021 Commission, a nomination for a 2020 award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, 1st prize for the Arcady Composition Competition, and other accolades for his compositions. Many of his works have been performed around the world by yMusic, fEARnoMUSIC, Northwest Symphony Orchestra, Dakota Valley Symphony, Foothills Philharmonic, Erik Drescher, Del Sol String Quartet, Interlochen Arts Camp, and others, with works published by Verlag Neue Musik and T.U.X. People's Music.



As an educator, he is currently the Band and Orchestra Director at Summit Christian Academy, and a Piano and Composition instructor for Interlochen Online, and previously was Associate Professor of Music at Calvary University.

As a pianist, Guthrie has won awards from MTNA, the Great Composer Competition, and others, and actively accompanies instrumentalists, vocalists, and dancers, most recently at the Interlochen Arts Camp and KC Ballet.

He studied composition with Ellen Taaffe Zwilich, Stephen Montague, Mark Wingate, and others, and piano with John Owings, Gloria Lin, Heidi Louise Williams, and Renato Fabbro.

GMTA Theory Test	
January 15, 2026	Registration Deadline
GATE	
January 15, 2026	Registration Deadline
Local Auditions	
January 15, 2026	Registration Deadline - Grades 4-11 Piano
Regional Auditions	
February 25, 2026	Student and Teacher Fees Due
March 18, 2026	Region Video Submission Deadline
State Auditions	
January 15, 2025	Registration Deadline - Grade 12 Piano, Piano Duet, Pre-College Piano Concerto
March 17, 2026	Registration Deadline - College Piano, Voice, Strings, Woodwinds/Brass, Instrumental Concerto
April 17-18, 2026	GMTA State Auditions, Piedmont University

2026 GMTA Auditions

COMMISSIONED COMPOSER PERFORMERS

DR. ZIQING GUAN has been a prize winner and finalist in several competitions, including the Byron Hester Competition, the San Diego Flute Guild Young Artist Competition, the Mid-South Flute Society Young Artist Competition, the Flute Society of Kentucky Young Artist Competition, the South Carolina Flute Society Young Artist Competition, the Greater Philadelphia Flute Society Young Artist Competition, and the Southern China Solo & Ensemble Invitational Competition. In addition, she was a quarterfinalist in the 2022 NFA Young Artist Competition.

Guan has appeared in concerts at the Mid-Atlantic Flute Convention, Georgia College & State University, and Musicartissimo Flute Master Class and Recital in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. She has played with the Long Bay Symphony, Spartanburg Philharmonics, Aiken Symphony, and Rock Hill Symphony in South Carolina.



Additionally, Guan is certified by the American Council on Exercise as a personal trainer. Her doctoral document is “Injury Prevention Exercise Guidelines for Flutists.” Guan has presented workshops and classes on this topic to the South Carolina Flute Society Festival, Haynes Health & Wellness Summit, and the Mid-Atlantic Flute Convention. She founded Musician Wellness Studio in 2023 to support musicians in developing a balanced practice regimen that enhances their physical and mental well-being.



ALBERTO SUAREZ is Assistant Professor of Horn at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He was Principal Horn of the Kansas City Symphony (2006-2024). Suarez spends his summers performing and teaching at the Round Top Festival Institute in Texas.

Suarez was guest Principal Horn with the Milwaukee Symphony and the Fort Worth Symphony, a member of the New World Symphony (2002-2006), and toured internationally with the Verbier Festival Orchestra, New World Symphony, and the Pittsburgh Symphony. He is Principal Horn of the KC Chamber Orchestra, and has appeared as a soloist with the KC Symphony and the Overland Park Symphony. In 2019, Suarez was Principal Horn of the New World Symphony Alumni Orchestra at the annual Kennedy Center Honors celebrating the legendary Michael Tilson Thomas.

He is member of the Artist Council for the National Alliance for Audition Support, which seeks to increase diversity in American orchestras. Additionally, Suarez performs in the all-LatinX and black Sphinx Symphony Orchestra. In 2023, Suarez served as their Principal Horn for the 25th Anniversary tour.

Suarez has taught masterclasses at Juilliard, University of Louisville, University of Kansas, Wichita State University, University of Iowa, Baylor University, Manhattan School of Music, New World Symphony, and elsewhere.

THURSDAY NIGHT PERFORMERS



ALEXANDRA COZMUTA, a sixteen-year-old violinist and high school junior, is the 2025 Georgia Music Teachers Association (GMTA) Conference Recitalist and winner of the Outstanding Performer Award in the 10th/11th Grade Division. She has been a member of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra (ASYO) for the past three years and previously served as concertmaster of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestra (MYSO). Alexandra has also performed as a violinist in the Georgia All-State Orchestra for four consecutive years and is a dedicated leader in the Johns Creek High School Chamber Orchestra.

In the summer of 2025, Alexandra was selected as a Georgia Governor's Honors Program (GHP) finalist in music, where she served as concertmaster of the orchestra and won the GHP Concerto Competition. She continues to share her love of music by performing at nursing homes, teaching young children, and playing annually at her church's Christmas festivals.

Pianist **SONNY YOO** is rapidly gaining recognition for the uncommon versatility of his musical projects, which includes solo recitals, concerto performances, diverse collaborative projects with singers and instrumentalists alike, ranging from duos to larger chamber groups. Informed by his early composition studies, his projects also often feature many contemporary works including his own works.



Sonny was born in Gumi, South Korea. He holds a bachelor's degree in music composition and two master's degrees in composition and piano from the school where he studied piano with Dr. Donna Lee and composition with Dr. Frank Wiley. He graduated with his DMA in piano from University of Georgia, studying under Dr. Liza Stepanova. He currently is an Artist Affiliate at Emory University where he teaches piano and also accompanies students for performances.

PRESENTERS

ADAM COLE is an author, educator and Guild-Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner. He is the author of "Playing Well, Helpful Approaches to the Study of Piano." He has been teaching his unique method for Jazz instruction to children and adults for more than a decade.



DR. VICENTE DELLA TONIA, JR., NCTM, has performed across the Americas, Europe, and Asia. A recipient of the 2024 GMTA Teacher of the Year Award and a two-time Steinway&Sons Top Teacher honoree, he serves as Coordinator of Keyboard Studies and Associate Professor of Piano at GSU/Perimeter in Clarkston, Georgia. www.vicentedellatonia.com

ROBIN ENGLEMAN, NCTM, received a Bachelor of Music Education from Madison College in 1976 and has been a member of MTNA, GMTA, and GCMTA for over 25 years. A former GMTA President, Robin has served as GCMTA and GMTA certification chair and was Southern Division Certification Commissioner from 2008-2010.



Dr. ZHENYU GAO received her DMA in Piano Pedagogy from the University of South Carolina in 2025. She holds a bachelor's degree from Stony Brook University and an MM degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Texas Tech University. She is currently working at Ztunes Music Studio.

DR. GJERGJI GAQI currently serves as Assistant Professor of Piano at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. An active performer in both solo and collaborative settings, Dr. Gaqi is a sought-after masterclass clinician and adjudicator, as well as co-founder and Artistic Director of the Settenote Online Piano International Competition.





JULIE GROOM, NCTM graduated from the University of West Georgia with a Piano Performance and Pedagogy degree. She has taught piano and voice for over 20 years. She is the president of the Western Georgia Music Teachers Association and is Nationally Certified in Piano.

DR. NAOKI HAKUTANI, pianist and Associate Professor at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, regularly gives recitals, lectures, and master classes across the U.S. and Asia. He has received multiple awards as a distinguished educator, including the Arkansas State Music Teachers Association Teacher of the Year Award.



RWEI HAO, NCTM holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Tunghai University and Master of Music degrees from Northern Illinois University and Emory University. As 2016 NFMTA Teacher of the Year, she stays active as the Local Audition Chair of NFMTA and GMTA Permanent Professional Certified Teacher of Music in Piano.

DEBRA HUGHES, NCTM in voice, piano & flute, has taught music in public, private, studio, store front and home school environments. As a successful collaborative musician in many types of musical performing groups, she knows firsthand how important a strong foundation in rhythm is.



SIDNEY JOHNSON (MT-BC) graduated from Georgia College in 2022 with a Bachelor of Music Therapy. Currently, Sidney is a graduate student at Georgia State University and is earning a Master of Music in Piano Pedagogy. Sidney teaches piano at Ztunes Music in Atlanta, and teaches at her private studio in Douglasville.



KEVIN JUAREZ is a student at Valdosta State University pursuing his master's degree in music performance under the tutelage of Dr. Joshua Pifer. As an undergraduate, he studied with Dr. Beibei Lin and has received master classes with Richard Steinbach, Kumi Miyagawa, Manuel Matarrita, Wendy Freeland, and Awadagin Pratt.

DR. JOANNA KIM-DOYLE, NCTM and Steinway Artist, is an active soloist, collaborative pianist, and educator. She serves as Associate Chair of Music at the University of North Georgia. Known for her expressive artistry and diverse programming, she frequently performs, lectures, and adjudicates throughout the Southeast and beyond.



EMILY KIRKLAND, LMPT, MT-BC, is a music therapist at a day center for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and runs a private piano studio. Emily has experience teaching adaptive piano lessons in both her therapeutic work, and in her personal studio.

JENNIFER LOHMANN teaches a large independent music studio in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. She holds bachelors' degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (Collaborative Piano) and from Marshall University (History). As a freelance keyboardist, Jennifer is equally in demand as a pianist and harpsichordist. She is passionate about historically informed performance.



DR. OWEN LOVELL, NCTM, is Associate Professor of Music and keyboard coordinator at Georgia College, Georgia's public liberal arts university in historic Milledgeville. He's also a piano technician and Piano Review Editor for the Acoustic & Digital Piano Buyer consumer publication. More information and recordings at www.youtube.com/@classical_pianist, and www.pianobuyer.com.



WANBING LUO received her MM in Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Georgia. She has taught at the UGA Community Music School and is currently a piano instructor at Vivo Music and Arts Academy and at Piano Works. She has presented at the MTNA National Conference and actively performs.

MARTHA THOMAS, NCTM, Chair of MTNA's National Certification Commission, recently retired from the University of Georgia where she served as the Despy Karlas Professor of Piano. An active pianist and clinician, Martha has given concerts and presentations across five continents and is a former GMTA President and Southern Division Director.



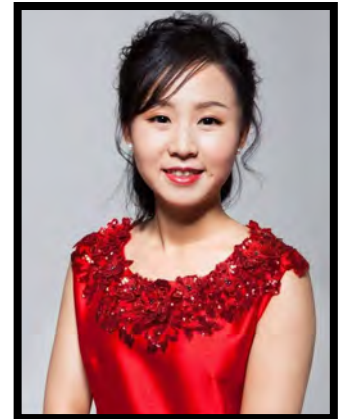
TONIC, the MTNA Collegiate Chapter at the University of Georgia, is a student-led non-profit organization dedicated to sharing, discussing, and supporting ideas about piano performance, pedagogy, and music education. Our chapter emphasizes community outreach, performances, professional development, and frequently invites guest lecturers to broaden our insights as teachers.

DANARIEZA VILLA is a soprano pursuing her bachelor's degree in music performance at Valdosta State University as a student of Dr. Susan Boddie. She has participated in ensembles such as VSU opera, concert choir and chamber singers. In 2025 she was awarded vocalist of the year at Valdosta State University.



TRACEY WILEY, GPB's Director of Education Outreach and a former teacher, brings learning to life through engaging, hands-on experiences. She has helped train over 40,000 Georgia educators, composing professional development like a symphony, layered with creativity, curiosity, and connection, to inspire meaningful learning and empower classrooms across the state.

DR. YUE YIN, Assistant Professor of Voice at the University of North Georgia, is a dedicated educator and performer. She specializes in vocal pedagogy and classical repertoire, nurturing student talent through individualized instruction and masterclasses. Her performances and academic contributions enrich the university's vibrant musical community.



KAREN ZGONC is the Director of Ztunes Music - serving 600+ students in Atlanta and Decatur. She has special interests in engaging community through music. Karen serves as recording secretary for the Decatur Music Teachers Association and on the board of the Atlanta Youth Wind Symphony.

NOTES

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal black lines, resembling notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Georgia Music Teachers Association

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