



2021

April - May



President's Message

Towards the end of my presidency, I would like to express my thanks for this wonderful chance to serve as your President over the last four years. I am honored for this experience. I contributed, but I also gained and grew a lot throughout these two terms. During my presidency, my job was made easy because of the strong MCMTA board which we have. All board members are very experienced, knowledgeable, responsible and organized. Even though we were in a very difficult time the past year because of the pandemic, they still made things happen. Kudos to all of them! If there is ever an event to vote for the best non-profit board, I will definitely nominate this board!

I am extremely grateful for the unconditional support of the Past Presidents Cynthia Cathcart & Lori McCarthy and State President Junko Takahashi throughout last few years. There were times when things got complicated and seemed like no way out, but they would step in and provide the actual help. They were the best!

In addition, the MCMTA members are great. Many members were engaging, energetic and filled with many great ideas. I enjoy the interaction with the members and some friendship being built up. I just attended 2021 MTNA virtual Conference in mid-March. It was filled with topics with such great varieties. Looking at their topics is like going to a holiday buffet in a hotel with so many nice choices of gourmet food in front of me. If you want to watch all presentations, you can still pay for the conference to access it. It is not too late to join because the recordings will be available until June 1, 2021. Usually when MTNA Conference being held in person, people could only attend one presentation/workshop at a certain time frame. There were no recordings provided for people to access whatever they have missed. Please take the benefit of it!

Even though I will not be your president soon, I will be still around as Immediate Past President and the Chair of Ensemble Recitals. Sara Cronan is friendly, knowledgeable, creative, tech savvy and filled with energy. You all will be in a very good hand under her leadership as president.

Alice Ma

Contents

pg. 3 Upcoming Membership Meetings

pg. 4 Other Upcoming Events

pg. 5 MTNA Conference in Review

pg. 6 Past Recitals

pg. 9 COVID and ZOOM Fatigue/Creative Therapy

pg. 11 2021-2023 Executive Board and Committee Chairs

pg. 12 February Meeting Minutes

pg. 13 March Meeting Minutes

April 13

Taking All Students to Talent-Plus

In his book *Talent is Never Enough*, *New York Times* best-selling author John C. Maxwell identifies basic characteristics that maximize any person's talent. Whether a student is developing into a lifelong music lover or is career bound, the concepts Maxwell identifies are the same guiding principles. Through her many *Piano Magazine* (formerly *Clavier Companion*) in-depth interviews with piano world luminaries, Helen Smith Tarchalski describes common threads that carried these noteworthy pedagogues beyond their talent into stellar careers, what we can learn and apply to our own studios from their individual stories, and how some of their teaching ideas developed. Included in this presentation are teaching tips you can use in your studio right away, and starting points to explore your own ideas for helping your students make choices to become a Talent-Plus person.

Pianist **Helen Smith Tarchalski** has presented master classes, lectures, and performances throughout the United States, Canada, and in Europe. She has been featured several times at MTNA conferences, NCKP, and WPPC, and she has served on juries for international competitions. Helen has performed with members of the Metropolitan Opera, Toronto Opera, and Washington Opera companies. She is currently principal keyboardist for the Londontowne Symphony Orchestra. The *Baltimore Sun* said of her performance of the Pascuzzi one movement piano concerto *Mourning into Dancing*: "...the piece was poignant, captured by the orchestra in a sensitive performance that seemed to portray the struggle to find a voice for 21st-century concerns. That voice was found in the expressive performance of pianist Helen Smith Tarchalski."

Helen has taught many prize-winning students. Her students' performances have included televised performances, as soloists with orchestras, and as soloists at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Terrace Theater. Several of her graduated students have developed careers in music, and she is proud that the majority of her graduates continue making music for life.

She serves as president for Anne Arundel Music Teachers Association in Maryland and is past president of Montgomery County Music Teachers Association. She also currently serves on the Board of Directors for American Liszt Society and Maryland State Music Teachers Association. She was selected by the Royal Conservatory in Toronto as one of seven piano teachers from the United States to serve as a Regional Leader for the Carnegie Hall/Royal Conservatory Examination Program. Helen teaches piano in her private studio in Annapolis, Maryland and as a faculty member at Anne Arundel Community College. She has also taught at the U.S. Naval Academy.

Helen is Associate Editor for *Piano Magazine* (formerly *Clavier Companion*) where she initiated several features, including the interviews feature and *Keyboard Kids' Companion*. She is the author of many articles for magazines and textbooks, including the "Survey of Piano Pedagogy" entry for the award-winning *Encyclopedia of Keyboard Instruments* (Routledge Publishers), and of music education software.

Helen Smith Tarchalski studied at the Peabody Conservatory of the Johns Hopkins University. Her teachers included Fernando Laires, Nelita True, Roy Johnson, and Roger Pries, and she coached with Leon Fleisher. She was awarded the Master Teacher Certificate from Music Teachers National Association. She is the recipient of the 2017 Arts Educator of the Year Annie Award from the Arts Council of Anne Arundel County, Maryland. In 2019, she was awarded the first Outstanding Service Award from the Frances Clark Center National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy for "ongoing leadership in the field, highest quality expertise, and support for the advancement of piano teaching, learning, and performing." In 2020, she was included as a featured teacher and performer in the documentary short *As We Are (When Words Fail, Try Music)*, which was selected from nearly 1,000 entries in 28 countries to appear in the 29th Woods Hole International Film Festival. *As We Are* won the Audience Award for Documentary Short and was re-broadcast in October 2020 for virtual "Best of the Fest."



May 11 - Members' Concert

If you're interested in performing on this program, please send your suggestions to our VP for Programs, Immanuela Gruenberg, at igruenberg@yahoo.com. The information should include the following:

- Name of composer
- Composition
- Timing.

LIMIT: 10 minutes per performer/group

DEADLINE: April 19, 2021

Other Upcoming Events

Musical Camaraderie will be meeting on Zoom - Friday, April 16 at 10:00 am. The host will be Bonnie Kellert.

For those who would like to join in the "free" discussion, please let Bonnie know. All topics are welcomed!

Allison will send the membership a reminder earlier in the week, with a Zoom link invitation.

Tentative plans are being made to have the **Adult Recital on Sunday, May 2** at 4:00 pm via Zoom. This is a great opportunity for your adult students to play comfortably on their own pianos at home. To indicate your interest, please send a note to Linda Benoit at the.benoits@verizon.net. More information will follow.

The MCMTA Board has decided to offer a second round of COVID-19 **Teacher Relief Grants**. We have \$1,000 remaining in our initial designation of funds and are asking for members who would like to make donations to help increase that amount. We would like to be able to offer help to several more members, as needed. As we don't know the extent of the need, any money collected and not used for this purpose will be added to the MCMTA Investment Fund that supports the Weissenfluh Grants.

If you would like to make a donation, please write a check to MCMTA and send it to our treasurer Kris Butler at 6401 Marjory Ln, Bethesda MD 20817-4701 by June 1st. Please write "COVID Relief Grant" on the memo line. All donations will be tax-deductible.

MCMTA will again be offering a **grant for teachers** to get continuing education this year. If you are interested in applying, please use the application available on the MCMTA website. Applications are due by June 1, 2021. Questions? Sharon Carr at sacarr@live.com.

2021 MTNA Conference Was Virtual, but Still Packed a Punch!

I sincerely hope you were all able to take advantage of this year's MTNA Virtual conference. I have only attended one National Conference, several years ago as a blushing newbie to our associations. I remembered feeling overwhelmed by the selection of daily presentations, and was pained to have to make a decision between one or another; there were four or five presentations I wanted to see, all scheduled for the same time slot! And how exhausting the schedule was to keep up with day to day, even as a 30 something...! But I remember it was worth it, because of new skills, language, materials and knowledge I with which I returned. I am happy to say, while I might not have the same cool swag from the Exhibit Hall, I come from 2021 Conference Week with the same excitement, energy and sense of discovery that I did from the first one, just not as tired as I set the pace at home!

I think it is pretty universal that teachers love to learn, so it wasn't surprising that Awadagin Pratt's Advanced Master Class and Randall Faber's Intermediate Master Class were really well attended! I don't know about you all, but it was a comfort to see some of the same tech struggles I have in lessons during the Master Class and how the teachers continued to teach around the limitations of technology. (There were several technology related teaching presentations as well, but if I am honest, I couldn't bare to watch as I am holding my breath until we are back in person!) And, as always, they included many presentations of great teaching ideas from all over the country: "Teaching Technique Without Tears", by Nancy Breth; and "Rests--Often Harder to Teach Than Notes!!", by Ingrid Jacobson Clarefield and Todd Simmons. But there was something else I wasn't anticipating.

I was pleasantly surprised to learn that racial awareness, equity, and inclusiveness were an intentional part of the presentations this year. From "Piano Works by Latin American Women Composers: A Lecture Recital" presented by Gabriela Calderon-Cornjeho, "An Introduction to Chinese Piano Music: Creating Dialogue about Diversity" by Washington State Collegiate Chapter, to "LGBTQ who? Affirming LGBTQ students in the Music Classroom" by Hannah Fisher, "A How-To Guide for Forming Your Own Anti-Racism Task Force" from the member of Ann Arbor Local MTA. In the post George Floyd era, I have felt confused and unsure of how to affect change in my own life. I am currently reading "I Had No Idea You Were Black" by lauded cellist and University Provost Ronald A. Crutcher, mentioned during the Task Force talk, and I FINALLY ordered the book "Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent", by Isabel Wilkerson. One of the things I am excited about for the future, is to educate myself more, and try to make my studio more inclusive and diverse, more aware and open. Also, if I am lucky, I hope to find like minded people who might be up for opening a dialogue together, to discuss where we came from, where we are, and how we can make small steps towards a more inclusive tomorrow.

As Educators, we all want to improve ourselves as effective instructors and communicators, and that we strive to grow throughout our career, continually improving. This MTNA Conference was a perfect example of how, as a group, we adapt, overcome and thrive! Thank you so much to every person who made this Conference possible!

Sara Cronan

Judged Recitals

On February 7th we had five online Judged Recitals. The students were supposed to upload their videos as a YouTube unlisted link in order to participate in the Judged Recital. The entire process went very well.

We had forty-seven students from the following studios: Junko Takahashi, Svetlana Volkova, Elena Eliseeva, Mei-Yu Lin, Yeechen Pao, Lara Parris, Linda Benoit, Beatrice Ko, Sara Cronan, Lana Em, Chenli Tzeng, Jaewon Lee and Yoon Huh.

Our honorable adjudicators were Dr. Audrey Andrist and Dr. Hyun-Sook Park. The judges awarded 29 trophies and 18 ribbons. Congratulations to all the students!

I would like to thank all the teachers for participating in this event. Thank you very much for all your hard work!

Our last online Judged Recital will be held on April 18th, and sixty eight students will be participating in this event.

Stay well and healthy!

Sincerely, Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich Chair of the MCMTA Judged Recitals

Festival of Music

The Festival of Music broadcast two recitals on Zoom on Feb. 20, 2021. With the enormous assistance and guidance of Sara Cronin, our MCMT President-Elect, the recitals which consisted of 15 MCMT students were successfully aired on Zoom. These students represented the piano studios of MCMT teachers Linda Benoit, Eugenia Posey-Marcos, Sara Cronan and Guity Adjoodani.

The musical theme for this year called for “Intermediate and Advanced Arrangements of Popular Music” The selections which displayed the music of such popular composers as Scott Joplin, John Williams, Richard Rogers, Henry Mancini, Queen, and others were played enthusiastically and beautifully by each student.

The judging was done by MCMT teachers, Linda Benoit and Eugenia Posey-Marcos. Each teacher will be mailed the critiques for their students in addition to a Certificate of Performance in the Festival Recitals.

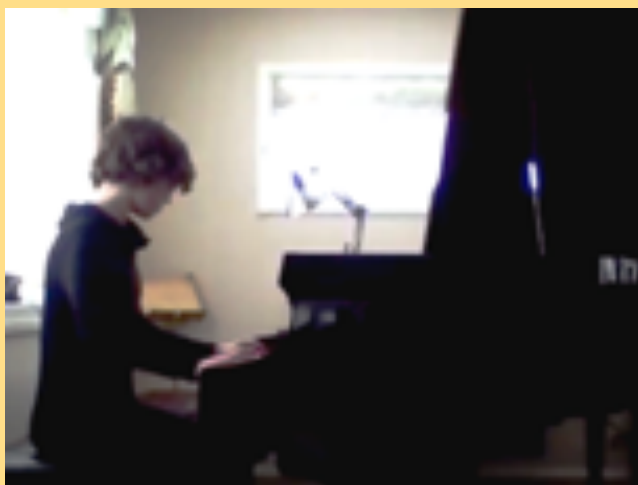
Hopefully more students will sign up to play next year where the theme will remain “Popular Music.” There are many other recitals throughout the year requiring the classical piano repertoire, but this is the only one which allows the students to perform their favorite pop tunes.

Please see attached some screen shots of some of the performers.

Guity Adjoodani & Sara Cronan



Hannah Campion



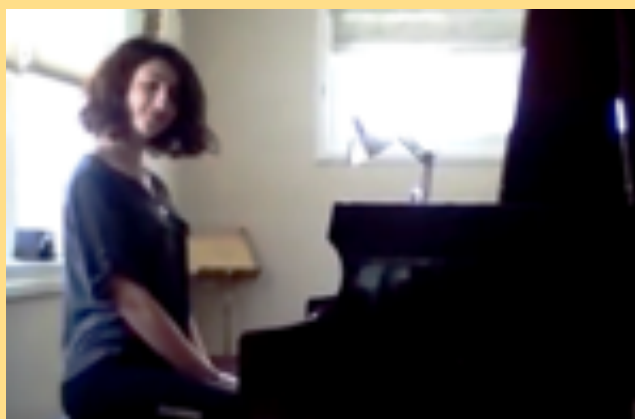
Spencer Lan



Nate Campion



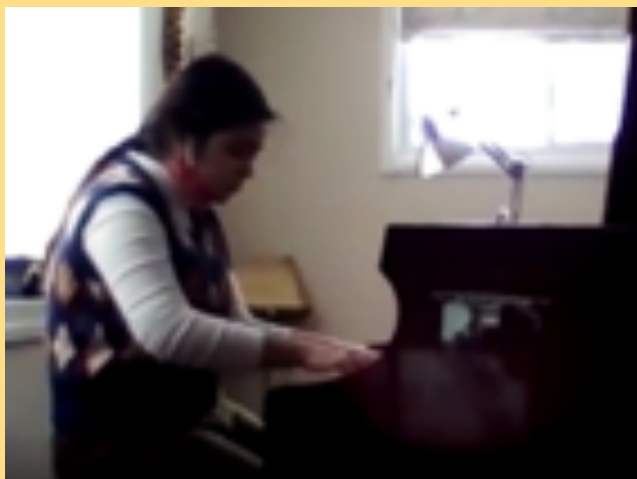
Kiana Parvizi



Cara Porch



Armitta Nafisi



Robert Tudor



Caitlin Spendley



MCMTA 2021 Ensemble Recitals were held in virtual format on the weekend of February 27 & 28. EIGHTY-EIGHT students formed FORTY-TWO teams consisting of piano, violin & cello. We had FIVE wonderful recitals (THREE Judged and TWO non-Judged). All teams were well prepared with high standard that Judges awarded high honors trophies for NINETEEN teams and honorable mention ribbons for EIGHT teams for three Judged Ensemble Recitals. Congratulations to all teachers and students for their excellent preparation and performances! The students were from the studios of Sara Cronan, Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich, Hai Jin, Jaewon Lee, Alice Ma, Lara Parris, Olga Soukhoveeva, Chenli Tzeng, and Ya-Ling Yeh. Our esteemed judges were Nancy Breth, Li-Ly Chang, Dr. Susan Ha, Dr. Adam Mayon, and Zi Liang. Thanks to all teachers who participated in this event. See you all next year hopefully in person! Take care!

Respectfully, Alice Ma (Chair) and Hai Jin (Co-Chair)

Feeling the COVID and ZOOM Fatigue?

Suggested by Tina Smith, please enjoy this article.

“Zoom Fatigue” - Why It Happens, and a Couple Things You Can Do About It

BY NOA KAGEYAMA, PH.D.

<https://bulletproofmusician.com/zoom-fatigue-why-it-happens-and-a-couple-things-you-can-do-about-it/>

Various Takes On The Difficulties Of Online Teaching

-Carol Brody

We can all recall with clarity, when we first learned that in person lessons would not be feasible in the near future. It was March 2020, a year ago.

All of us have had to make adjustments to create a virtual studio, via zoom, i phone, and cameras alike. The creativity that has ensued in how to formulate interesting lessons online has maintained the studios of many. Below are some anecdotes that a few music teachers have graciously shared for us to learn from.....

From the studio of Robin Schultz:

She shares that one of her students wrote the following lyrics about a recent virtual recital experience to the tune of Pachelbel's Gavotte and Variations, which she recently performed on their virtual Zoom Winter Recital. Robin recommends that teachers play or at least look at the Gavotte and Variations while reading or singing her students' lyrics. The student and the students' mom gave Robin permission to share, but to keep her name anonymous. Thank you Robin and her student for this submission.

I am so stressed out

I am freaking out

Take a deep breath
You can do it

I am so stressed out
I am freaking out
Take a deep breath
You can do it

Why are there so many new kids here

(This is where the variation begins):
My heart is racing racing
My palms are sweating sweating
I am going to play so badly
Everyone will cry

My heart is racing racing
My palms are sweating sweating
My hands will fall
Right off the keys

My heart is racing racing
My palms are sweating sweating
I am going to play so badly
Everyone will cry

My heart is racing racing
My palms are sweating sweating
My hands will fall
Right off the keys

I am really doing it
I know that I can master it
Just keep moving on
Just keep moving on
Forget all those mistakes and play
Forget all those mistakes and play

I am really doing it
I know that I can master it
Just keep going on
Just keep moving on
Forget all those mistakes and play
Forget all those mistakes and play

I am really doing it
I know that I can master it
Just keep going on
Just keep moving on
Forget all those mistakes and play
Forget all those mistakes and play

From the studio of Cynthia Cathcart:

Cynthia's tale is about the difficulty of remote-teaching legato pedaling.

She was trying to introduce this technique to one of her students following her usual lesson plan , but it didn't work because the way she teaches pedaling is with the child watching her foot, sometimes even sitting on the floor if they are young enough. During her first pedal lesson that she gave during the pandemic, after some frustrating sequences of " But Mrs. Cathcart, I can't see your foot, "she just said, "Oh never mind. We'll do it another time."

Later in the week, she realized she could make her foot more visible on the screen by wearing a pair of shiny shoes she had. For this students' next lesson she wore those shoes, turned on her full-view camera, and her student exclaimed, " I can see your feet now ! I want some shiny shoes!"

Thank you Cynthia...

Seemingly we are all creative teachers, whether the i-phone disconnects, the student freezes in the midst of playing their pieces, or the battery of the student's phone ceases to be charged. With patience and support we have and will continue to weather through this challenging time.

Be safe and have a good spring and summer with warmer weather ahead.



Montgomery County Music Teachers Association
Executive Board 2021-2023

Elected Officers

President	Sara Cronan
President-Elect	TBD
First Vice-President	Carol Edison
Vice-President for Programs	Immanuela Gruenberg
Vice-President for Publications	TBD
Vice-President for Organizational Activities	Carol Edison
Vice-President for Membership	Kristin Butler
Recording Secretary	Tina Sinclair Smith
Corresponding Secretary	Ingrid Mongini
Treasurer	Kristin Butler
Immediate Past President	Alice Ma

Committees

By-Laws and Parliamentarian	Ingrid Mongini
Hospitality	Carol Brody
Mentoring Program	Bonnie Kellert
Referral Service	Kristin Butler
Ensemble Recital	Alice Ma/Hai Jin
MSMTA Keyboard Musicianship Exam	Svetlana Volkova
MSMTA Theory Exam	Elena Eliseeva
Evelyn Swarthout/Patrick Hayes Piano Competition	Bonnie Kellert/Junko Takahashi
Brewster String Competition	Lya Stern
Festival of Music	Guity Adjoodani
Elementary Recitals	Olga Soukhoveev
High School Outstanding Music Achievement Award	Svetlana Volkova/Elena Eliseeva
Historian	Lois Jones
Intermediate/Advanced Recitals	Elena Eliseeva/Olga Soukhoveev
Judged Recitals	Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich
Adult Recital	Linda Benoit
High School Senior Recognition Reception	Eugenia Posey-Marcos
Margaret Weissenfluh Grant	Ingrid Mongini
Grant for Continuing Education	Carol Edison
Grant for Graduating High School Seniors	Carol Edison
Student Activities Packet	Eugenia Posey-Marcos
Technology/Web	Lori McCarthy

MINUTES FROM MCMTA GENERAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 9, 2021

President Alice Ma called the meeting to order at 10:09AM. The meeting was held in Zoom format.

Minutes from the December general meeting were sent electronically in advance.

Alice reminded everyone the deadline is February 16 to take advantage of the early bird discount to register for the MTNA Virtual National Conference.

All MCMTA events for the remainder of the year will be held in virtual formats.

Sharon Carr gave a report about the MCMTA Teacher COVID Financial Relief Grant. The Committee met Friday, January 22, and has given out three grants for \$1000 each. We are grateful, as a professional family, to be able to help fellow teachers in need during this difficult time. Sharon reiterated that the process has been kept completely confidential.

Junko Takahashi reminded members that MSMTA still has music study grants available for teachers. Those who are interested should go online to https://msmta.org/eventFiles/applications/music_study_grants.pdf

The business meeting was adjourned at 10:20AM, and Immanuela Gruenberg introduced featured speaker Marvin Blickenstaff, nationally recognized lecturer, author, and performer, who gave an informative program via Zoom entitled “Interpretation Rules of Thumb” about ways students can shape a more musical sound.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Sinclair Smith
Recording Secretary

MINUTES FROM MCMTA GENERAL MEETING

MARCH 9, 2021

Meeting called to order at 10:06 AM

Request from our President to keep our individual Zoom video set to “on” so our presenter can talk to us as a group of faces rather than static profile images.

Review of our events: it’s Spring and we have most of our events in this season. Members are advised to read the emails that are sent from MailChimp, as that’s where our notices will be posted.

The MTNA Virtual Conference begins this weekend. There is still time to register for it, even after the live conference is over as it will be available for viewing until June first. There is only the fee to pay (no early bird deductions) but you don’t have travel or hotel costs, and the Pedagogy Saturday program is included with the Conference fee. Recordings of even the live events will be available for viewing until June first. This also means that if you have to miss a session, or there are two simultaneous sessions going on, you can watch one live and the other by recording.

Immanuela Gruenberg is doing a presentation and showcase for Hal Leonard. Nancy Breth is also doing a presentation on Pedagogy Saturday with Peter Mack, and another one on Sunday.

There are also going to be the usual meetings this year, such as the State Presidents and Eastern Division. The winner’s concerts for the Competitions are also being presented during the online conference. The conference schedule is in AMT magazine, and some information is on the MTNA website.

Mini-grants were offered for students to support those who need help to pay the activity fees for our events during the pandemic. 19 to 20 families have taken advantage of this program. We invite more teachers to participate.

Carol Brody has requested that we send in fun stories about how we got through the year since we are now nearing the end of full-on virtual lessons. These can be short anecdotes that made us laugh. Stories can be sent to her email, she will bring them together into an article for the newsletter.

Peter Mack came on at 10:20. It is 7:20 am in his time zone! He is President-elect for National.

Our Spring members concert will be presented during May’s meeting. Immanuela has no MailChimp email access (yet), so send applications to one of her personal email addresses.

Immanuela is including some of Lily Chang’s music in her latest publication for Hal Leonard.

The presentation from Peter Mack was entitled “The art of the phrase” – or how we can teach our students to be more musical. It is teachable, you don’t have to be “born musical.”

The meeting was recorded, so anyone who missed Peter’s presentation, or would like to see it again, will have that opportunity.

Respectfully Submitted, Cynthia Cathcart (in the absence of our recording secretary Tina Sinclair- Smith)