



Dear MCMTA Members,

We're off to a strong start of our year with two successful events so far, the first Judged Recital and the "Magic Autumn" Elementary Recital. The Judged Recitals were filled with well-prepared students, and I especially appreciated the words shared by the judges in-between the recitals and the distribution of the awards. Their words of empathy, wisdom, and encouragement, were exactly what the students needed to hear! And what fun it was to see the costumed performers at the Elementary Recital. Where else can you witness Pikachu and Batman perform on the piano?! Thank you, Yuri Chayama, Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich, David Yacubovich and Olga Soukhoveev for organizing and running these events – more details specific to these events can be found in this newsletter.

Two membership meetings have occurred at our new location, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville. We had insightful discussions about various pedagogical topics in our first meeting and a wonderful presentation on different keyboard skill levels that Michiko Yurko utilizes in her studio – a methodical, thorough process that prepares students for pieces of any key and lays the foundation for theoretical knowledge. It was inspiring to see how learning keyboard skills can be transformed into a fun incentivized process. Please keep reading to find out what our VP for Programs, Immanuela Gruenburg, has in store for us at this month's meeting!

If you haven't done so yet, please check out MCMTA's new website. [mcmta.msmta.org](http://mcmta.msmta.org) I think you will find it to be a wonderful improvement on what came before.

And finally, I'd like to remind everyone about our Groups.io account. This is a platform for our members to email each other, address members as a whole, advertise upcoming concerts/recitals, ask for substitute teaching or accompanying availability, etc. If you'd like instructions on joining this platform, please click [here](#).

Best wishes for a wonderful Holiday season.

Sincerely,

Debra E. Merritt, NCTM  
MCMTA President  
[dmerritt8@unl.edu](mailto:dmerritt8@unl.edu)



## **Upcoming Membership Meetings**

Location: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville (UUCR)  
Founders Hall  
100 Welsh Park Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

9:30 am Networking/Set up  
10:10 am Meeting  
10:30 Presentation

November 14, 2023

February 13, 2024

April 9, 2024

December 12, 2023

March 12, 2024

May 14, 2024

## **Registrable Upcoming Student Activities**

"Holiday" Elementary Recital	Sat Dec 16, 2023	Virtual format via "Zoom"
MSMTA Keyboard Musicianship '23 Exam	Sun Dec 17, 2023	Washington Adventist Univ
Online Inter/Adv Recital	Sat Jan 20, 2024	Video submission
Festival of Music: Dances	Sat Feb 3, 2024	Calvary Lutheran Church
Online Judged Recital	Sun Feb 11, 2024	Video Submission
MCMTA Ensemble Recital: 2-Day Event	Sat Feb 24/Sun Feb 25, 2024	Korean Baptist Church
MSMTA Theory Exam	March 10, 2024	Watkins Mills HS
Inter/Adv Recital	Sun Apr 7, 2024	Calvary Lutheran Church
Judged Recital (in Person)	Sun Apr 14, 2024	Calvary Lutheran Church
Swarthout/Hayes Piano Competition	Sun Apr 14, 2024	Piano Craft
"Spring Fling" Elementary Recital	Sat Apr 20, 2024	Calvary Lutheran Church
Adult Recital	TBA	TBA
Senior Recognition Awards Day	Sat May 4, 2024	Gaithersburg Public Library

## **2023 FALL JUDGED RECITALS**

The first Judged Recitals were held in person on Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at Calvary Lutheran Church in Silver Spring. There were four recitals with a total of 34 students participating.

Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich and her husband, David Yacubovich, generously helped to run this event due to my absence on the day of the event.

Our Honorable adjudicators were Yoon Hun and Dr. Kent McWilliams. They provided supportive comments to our students. The Judges awarded 20 High Honor Trophies and 13 Honorable Mention Ribbons.

We had students from the following 13 studios: Audrey Andrist, Sara Cronan, Irina Gurevich, Vivian Kwok, Jaewon Lee, Hsien-Ann Meng, Olga Soukhoveeva, Junko Takahashi, Chenli Tzeng, Svetlana Volkova, Guity Adjoodani, Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich, and Pangji Du.

Our next event will be held on Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, in person at the same location. The registration was closed a little earlier on November 1<sup>st</sup> due to reaching the maximum number of the participants (43) and length of pieces. Please note that due to limited time, applications will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. If the maximum amount of time allotted for each recital has been reached, the registration will close earlier than the given deadline.

There will be another in-person Judged Recital, to be held on April 14, 2024. Please be sure to sign-up early before registration fills up.

I look forward to hearing the performances in December!

Submitted by Yuri Chayama

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## **Elementary "Magic Autumn" Recitals**



A total of 4 recitals were held on October 28th, at Calvary Lutheran Church in Silver Spring, with 62 students participating, from the following studios:

Dr. Svetlana Volkova  
Elena Eliseeva  
Hai Chi  
Pangju Du  
Meri Gugushvili  
Vivian Kwok



Submitted by Olga Soukhoveev

## **Intermediate and Advanced Recitals**

The upcoming Intermediate/Advanced Recitals are planned for November 11th. There will be four groups with a total of 47 students. The participating teachers are: Olga Soukhoveeva, Beatrice Ko, Elena Eliseeva, Dr. Svetlana Volkova, Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich, Sara Cronan and Junko Takahashi.

We are fortunate to have guest judge, Li-ly Chang for all 4 recitals, as well as two participating teachers, Elena Eliseeva and Beatrice Ko, who will provide valuable comments for our students.

Submitted by Olga Soukhoveev

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### **Come join us at the next Membership Meeting!**

Tuesday, November 14th at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville  
10:30 Presentation by **David Plylar, PhD**

### **Orchestrating at the Keyboard: Performance Transcriptions as Musical Portals**



The art of transcription is highly personal, and the relative successes and failures of an attempt depend on the goals of the endeavor, the imagination and problem-solving abilities of the arranger, and the sensitivity of the performer to the needs of the adapted music. At its best, transcription offers a transformation of music that celebrates the original in a new medium, faithful to the spirit, if not the letter, of the text; at its worst, it can be a soulless rehash that does little more than string together the pitches one finds in the original version. In this talk we will explore a few aspects of different approaches to transcription using examples from my own work and a few masters of the craft like Busoni, Liszt, Stradal and Brassin. A special emphasis will be given to my own and Busoni's piano transcriptions of Liszt's organ work Fantasy & Fugue on the chorale "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam."

David is an accomplished composer, scholar, pianist and educator. He currently serves as a senior music specialist and concert producer at the Library of Congress. From 2010-2012 he was the Artistic and New Music Coordinator of the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra in South Africa. There he worked with composers, musicians and conductors from around the country and internationally to facilitate the creation and presentation of new music and other compelling programming. David's award-winning compositions range from solo pieces to large orchestral

works and independent film scores. He holds degrees from Duke University, the University of Louisville, and the Eastman School of Music, where he earned his PhD in composition.

David is an active pianist and writer, focusing on new and 19th-century music, with a focus on Liszt and his contemporaries. He is also known for his large array of transcriptions for solo piano and wind quintet, in addition to arrangements for other forces.

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### **Proposals for the December 12th Members Concert**

If interested in performing, please email your proposals to me at [igruenberg@yahoo.com](mailto:igruenberg@yahoo.com). Proposals should include the following:

- name of composer
- title of work
- timing (limit: 12 minutes)
- name(s) of performer(s)
- deadline: November 30th

All instruments and styles are welcome!

Immanuela Gruenberg  
Program Chair

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### **MINUTES FROM MCMTA BOARD MEETING JUNE 6, 2023 (APPROVED 9/26/23)**

President Debra Merritt called the meeting to order at 10:04AM. The meeting was held via Zoom format.

Present were: Guity Adjoodani, Carol Brody, Kris Butler, Cynthia Cathcart, Yuri Chayama, Sara Cronan, Carol Edison, Elena Eliseeva, Miri Frenkel-Yacubovich, Immanuela Gruenberg, Hai Jin, Bonnie Kellert, Alice Ma, Debra Merritt, Tina Smith, Olga Soukhoveev, Junko Takahashi, and Svetlana Volkova.

The Agenda was distributed electronically in advance. Sara made a motion to accept the Agenda, it was seconded by Carol Brody, and the members voted to accept the Agenda.

Minutes from the April 18, 2023 board meeting were circulated in advance. Sara made a motion to accept the minutes, Carol Edison seconded, and the members voted to accept the minutes.

Regarding her comments in the April board meeting about notifying judges who have reached a \$600 income level, Cynthia suggested a change in policy to notify judges who are approaching a \$600 income cap. The procedure would be once a chair decides which judge to use, they would contact Cynthia before contacting the judge.

## President's Report

Debra thanked the members for giving her the opportunity to serve. She said she appreciated the trust they've placed in her, and the friendly encouragement and advice, which she hopes will continue. She looks forward to getting to know everyone.

Technology/Web Chair Lori McCarthy is resigning from the Executive Board at the end of the fiscal year, June 30. Sara said at the first board meeting of the year, the board should revisit whether the position is still needed.

## Treasurer's Report

Cynthia will be creating a standardized reimbursement form for chairs to fill out. She receives checks in many different formats. The new form would be one place to look for all the information, and could be printed out.

After nearly a year of working with T. Rowe Price, we are getting close to having access to our funds. The main issue was the name of the account, as "Margaret Woolley-Martin Fund" is not a legal entity.

At MSMTA's annual conference, Cynthia received information about the various benefits available to members. In addition, as an organization, MCMTA has liability coverage through MTNA that covers our events and meetings, but only musical-related, Not officer insurance.

A liability certificate can be emailed quickly from MTNA. Cynthia made a motion to cancel our liability insurance coverage with Harford, and use the insurance provided through MTNA. Sara seconded the motion, and the members voted in favor.

Cynthia reported that a new batch of 32 membership renewals came in.

## Student Activities Event Dates & Locations

Eugenia sent a message that the deadline for receipt of information for the Student Activity Packet is July 15. She will be sending a notice to Student Activity chairs soon.

## Elementary Recitals

Olga reported that the Elementary Recitals will be held Saturday, October 28 at Calvary Church, Saturday, December 16 in Zoom format, and Saturday, April 20 at Calvary Church. All the recitals will run from 9 AM to 4 PM.

## Judged Recital

Miri reported that Yuri will be taking over as Chair of the Judged Recitals, and she will continue to Chair the on-line recital. The dates are October 22 in-person, December 3 in-person, February 11 online, and April 14 in-person, with all in-person events held at Calvary Church. She requested to increase the time limit for the February 11 recital, from 18 to 20 minutes per studio. Shipping of trophies by Crown Trophy has become very expensive, so Miri is volunteering to go to Jordan Kitts to distribute them to the teachers after the recitals. The fee for Calvary Church has risen from \$225 to \$250.

Miri made a motion to increase the time limit for the online recital from 18 to 20 minutes. Guity seconded and the members voted in favor of the motion.

## Celebrating Music Festival & Festival of Music

The Celebrating Music Festival is a competition requiring use of the score. The Festival of Music is non-competitive where participants receive a critique sheet. Chair Hai-Chi reported the date for the Festival of Music is Saturday, February 3 from 2-5 PM at Calvary Church. The Celebrating Music Festival will be held Sunday, November 5 at Calvary Church from 1:30-7:00 PM.

There was an extended conversation about choosing the theme of the Festival of Music. The pros and cons of having movie music as a theme were discussed, and whether a second classical piece could be allowed, to encourage as much participation as possible. A suggestion was made to have the theme Popular music, which can include computer game music or movie music. There was general agreement that if a second category of Classical music is included, it must be original, and at Intermediate or Advanced level, with a maximum of two pieces allowed per performer. Another idea was to have the theme of Classical dances.

Hai Chi said she welcomed suggestions. Since the theme could not be decided, it was suggested tabling the matter to allow the Chair to consider the options. Debra agreed to table the discussion to a later time.

## Intermediate/Advanced Recitals

Olga reported dates for the Intermediate/Advanced Recitals. They are Saturday, November 11 from 9-4 PM at Calvary Church, and Saturday, January 20, by online video submission. Elena will Chair the Recital on Sunday, April 7 at Calvary Church from 2-6 PM. The time may be extended depending on the number of applicants. Miri said the earliest the church could be used was 1:30 PM.

## MSMTA Keyboard Musicianship Exam

Svetlana is still awaiting an answer regarding venues and whether the event will be in-person. She will try to confirm the information by July 16.

## Ensemble Recital

The location is still TBD. Dates selected for the two-day event by Alice and Co-Chair Hai-Jin are Saturday, February 24, from 5-8 PM, and Sunday, February 25, from 2:30-7:30 PM, at Calvary Church.

Alice said that Jordan Kitts will not be doing in-person recitals anymore. However, she was able to get them to agree again to allow a recital with no audience, and one team at a time in the room. She polled the teachers who participated in the past, and more than half of them prefer an audience format. To include duos, two pianos are needed. Steinway Gallery is too expensive. In addition, the trophies have become too expensive. Alice is open to finding a new venue. They are considering the use of the Korean Baptist Church, and opening it to ensembles with any instrument, with or without the piano. There have been very few duos performed in the past. Alice made a motion to change the format to ensemble performance of any kind, and eliminating ensembles that require two pianos. Sara seconded the motion, and the members voted to approve the motion.

## MSMTA Theory Testing

Elena said the event will be in-person. She is awaiting confirmation in August, so the dates will be announced in the Fall. The school location may be changed. It will probably be in the early part of March. A decision will be made after the Maryland State ensemble date is announced.

## Swarthout/Hayes Piano Competition

Junko said the date will be Sunday, April 14 at Piano Craft, probably in the late afternoon.

### MSMTA Gail McDonald High School Exam

Junko said the event will probably be virtual, and around the same time as last year.

### High School Outstanding Achievement Award

Svetlana said she found a less expensive supplier for the plaques online. She will share the information.

### Senior Recognition Day

Eugenia sent a report that it would be held again at the Gaithersburg Library. The date is TBA.

### Adult Recital

Tina is Chairing this event. The Recital held on June 4 at Gaithersburg Library went well, with six students and three teachers participating. She hopes to encourage more participation next year, and possibly add an additional date. She will research the possibilities.

### Weissenfluh Fund

There is no information yet as Ingrid was not in attendance.

### Grants for Continuing Education and Graduating High School Seniors

Carol Edison said she has received no applications. She questioned what the budget would be this year. Last year \$500 was budgeted for each grant. Last year there were three applicants for the Grant for Continuing Education, and she was only able to award it to one. There were no applications for the High School Grant. She can accept them if applications are postmarked within the next week. She said students pursuing a music major or minor can apply if they are in the second year of college.

### MSMTA Brewster Competition

At this time, it is not planned to be held.

### Event Programs to Corresponding Secretary and Historian

Event chairs should scan and email Ingrid Mongini by June 23 a copy of their event program, so that she can forward it to MTNA for copyright compliance. They should also scan and email a copy to Yuri Chayama.

### General Meeting Dates

September 12, October 10, November 14, December 12, February 13, March 12, April 9, May 14

### Board Meeting Dates

September 19, November 21, April 16, June 4

### General Meeting Venue

Debra has received feedback from members that our current meeting location is difficult. She presented a spreadsheet showing the pros and cons of various, more centralized locations including their usage fees. She has tried to negotiate lower fees with staff members at the locations. The average fee is around \$100-200.

The fee for the Korean Baptist Church is a donation. Last year it was \$350. Debra proposed increasing it to \$600. Cynthia thought this was a good idea and seconded the motion, and the members voted to approve the increase.

#### MCMTA Covid Policy

Hai Jin said that masks are now optional at the Church. Sara suggested that we continue to encourage responsibility by following MSMTA's Covid policy, which is that masks are optional but strongly encouraged. Debra made a motion to change MCMTA's Covid Policy from "masks are required" to "masks are optional but strongly encouraged." There was also discussion about changing the name from "Covid Policy" to "Masking Policy" to reflect the changing focus away from Covid, while recognizing that other ailments can be prevented through masking in general. Sara seconded and the motion passed.

Debra adjourned the meeting at 12:13 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tina Sinclair Smith  
Recording Secretary