

# OMTA MUSIC NEWS

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## CONTACT & CONNECT

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### 2023 MTNA National Conference

March 25-29, 2023  
Reno, Nevada

### 2023 OMTA State Conference

June 22-23, 2023  
Southern Oregon University, Ashland, OR



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



**Liz Willis, NCTM**  
OMTA President

It's the beginning of March already, and the busy spring season is upon us. Students are prepping for syllabus events, festivals, and competitions, while also handling their academic and extra-curricular demands. We are right there with them, encouraging and supporting their time management skills while hoping to help them minimize potential stress levels.

Personally, I'm looking forward to attending the MTNA conference in Reno during this year's spring break. I am so pleased that a number of you will also be taking advantage of the close location and very reasonable hotel rates for this conference. Our Foundation Fellow this year is Mary Ann Guenther, and she will be honored at the Gala Banquet on Monday evening. Another piece of happy news is that our 2020 Foundation Fellow, Cindy Peterson-Peart, will also be honored. The 2020 conference was totally canceled, and MTNA is making up for that disappointment this year!

In addition, the new online resource "A Seat at the Piano" is being honored with the MTNA- Francis Clark Keyboard Pedagogy Award—and our own Ashlee Young is a co-founder of this valuable asset to musicians and pedagogues.

### BREAKING NEWS

I'm delighted to introduce OMTA's new Chair of Marketing, Dr. Chiharu Sai. She is the director of piano studies at Rogue Valley Community College, and also on the faculty of Southern Oregon University. Chiharu has already begun posting on our Facebook page, and I encourage you all to send the news of your districts as



OREGON  
MUSIC TEACHERS  
ASSOCIATION

you want them to appear online directly to Chiharu at [mozartpiano@gmail.com](mailto:mozartpiano@gmail.com).

Chiharu is taking the reins from Angela Kelly, who is stepping down after twelve years of dedicated work developing OMTA's printed brochures, reaching out to Oregon's colleges and universities, and developing OMTA's online presence. Angela also had the brilliant idea of creating short videos of the highlights of our most recent two conferences. Thank you so much, Angela!

May your spring break be relaxing and full of fun!



Dr. Chiharu Sai

Liz Willis, NCTM  
OMTA President

## LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear OMTA Colleagues,

Thank you for the kind messages and cards sent after the passing of my husband. I am thankful and honored to be part of this caring and supportive organization.

I look forward to seeing many of you at conference this summer.

Blessings to you all,  
Fern McArthur



The link below connects you to your local District Associations, OMTA Board of Directors, and Committee Chairs:  
[www.oregonmta.org/about/leadership](http://www.oregonmta.org/about/leadership)

### OMTA Board of Directors

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Sarah Ball, NCTM

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Ashlee Young, NCTM

**PUBLICATIONS**

Luna Thompson-Aue

**SYLLABUS**

Barbara Roberts, NCTM



# SYLLABUS



**Barbara Roberts, NCTM**  
Syllabus Chair

Spring Syllabus is just around the corner! Most teachers are busy making sure their students are well-prepared. Below are a few things that have helped me in the past.

- Hold a “mock” Syllabus with each student 3-4 weeks before the exam. Do this during the lesson but before they’ve warmed up. Ask them all the technique questions and actually grade them with the rubric the adjudicator uses. This will tell you (and them) a lot about what still needs to be learned.
- Starting now, spend 5-10 minutes each lesson practicing sight reading. At first, use extremely easy examples. After students have their hands in position, ask them to count a measure “for free” before they begin. Make sure they keep counting! Kids who count out loud while sight reading have a much greater success rate than those who do not. And despite what anyone says, everyone can count out loud if the pieces are easy enough. Once they master the counting, increase the difficulty of the pieces.
- Practice rhythm reading! You can use old Syllabus exams or other rhythm reading books. The key is to count out loud!
- 2-4 weeks before Syllabus, hold small group recitals in which each student plays all their Syllabus pieces in front of the group in the same way (memorized or with music) that they will be playing them in the exam.

Always remember that a teacher can change a student’s examination level (Evaluation, Demonstration, Audition) at any time before the beginning of the actual exam.

Good luck and enjoy the process!



November 6, 2022 | 4:00 PM

## Vadym Kholodenko

FROM UKRAINE

Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, Gold Medal 2013

February 26, 2023 | 4:00 PM

## Sofya Gulyak

FROM RUSSIA AND ENGLAND

2009 Leeds International Piano Competition, 1st Prize and Princess Mary Gold Medal

2007 William Kapell International Piano Competition, 1st Prize

May 7, 2023 | 4:00 PM

## Martín García García

FROM SPAIN

2021 Cleveland International Piano Competition, 1st Prize

2021 International Chopin Competition, 3rd Prize

### Students admitted free.

**\$25** in advance **\$28** at the door

OMTA teachers admitted free when their students attend.

LaSells Stewart Center | [corvallispiano.org](http://corvallispiano.org)  
Oregon State University, 875 SW 26th Street, Corvallis



# PORTLAND PIANO

INTERNATIONAL



## THE SOLO PIANO SERIES



## 2022 / 23 SEASON

VLADIMIR FELTSMAN GUEST ARTISTIC CURATOR

**DARIA RABOTKINA**



Russian-American

**MAR 23**

at the Reser in Beaverton

**MAR 25 + 26**

Lincoln Performance Hall at Portland State University

**ROMAN RABINOVICH**



Israeli/American/  
Canadian

**MAY 6 + 7**

Lincoln Performance Hall at Portland State University

**ALEXANDER KORSANTIA**



Georgian-American

**JUN 3 + 4**

Lincoln Performance Hall at Portland State University

PPI DEBUT

PPI DEBUT

*"Music seems to just pour out of her . . . the staggeringly gifted Russian pianist Daria Rabotkina."*

— Boston Musical Intelligencer

*"A true polymath, in the Renaissance sense of the word."*

— Lucy Jefferey  
for Seen and Heard International

Dubbed a "quiet maverick" by the *Daily Telegraph*, Korsantia has been said, by the *Calgary Sun*, to have a "piano technique where difficulties simply do not exist."

Discounted tickets for OMTA teachers and students are available. Please call the PPI office for details.

**503.228.1388 PORTLANDPIANO.ORG**



## FOOLS RUSH IN WHERE PIANISTS DARE TO PLAY!

### APRIL 1, 2023

CASTAWAY PORTLAND · 1900 NW 18TH AVENUE, PORTLAND



Join us for a Saturday evening of fabulous food, magnificent music, and hilarious hijinks with **Anderson and Roe Piano Duo**

BE A PART OF PPI'S FUTURE ON PIANO FOOLS' DAY TO RAISE CRITICAL FUNDS SUPPORTING OUR MISSION TO INSPIRE PORTLAND THROUGH WORLD-CLASS PIANO RECITALS.

FOR TICKETS AND MORE INFO: VISIT **PORTLANDPIANO.ORG**  
OR CALL: **503.228.1388**

ANDERSON + ROE



# 2023 OMTA STATE CONFERENCE

## June 22-23, 2023 · Southern Oregon University · Ashland, OR



**Heidi Evans, NCTM**  
2023 State Conference  
Chair

Mark your calendars for June 22-23 for our Ashland adventure! The OMTA Conference is full of exciting masterclass opportunities for both intermediate and advanced students, as well as soul-fulfilling presentations and recitals by The Latsos!

I'm also thrilled to introduce another conference presenter, Dr. Kevin Olson! Many of us know his compositions for students of all ages & levels. He will be presenting two workshops for us, titled *Off To a Perfect Start: the First Years of Piano Study* and *Music Fluency: Pillars of Interpretation All Pianists Should Know*.

For those who are not yet acquainted with Dr. Olson, he is an active pianist, composer, and the piano area coordinator at Utah State University, teaching courses in literature, pedagogy, accompanying, and music theory. He also oversees the Utah State University Youth Conservatory. He is an award-winning composer, and gives workshops and performances both nationally and internationally. His website is <https://www.kevinolsonmusic.com>.

Watch your email for registration to open—hope to see you there!





Willamette University  
Grace Goudy Distinguished Artists Series 2022-23 Season presents

**Arjun K. Verma**  
**with Abhijit Banerjee, tabla, and Nazan Aktas, tanpura.**

*Wednesday, March 22, 7:30 p.m.*  
*Hudson Concert Hall, Mary Stuart Rogers Music Center*

*"The future is bright for this torchbearer of the rich musical tradition of the maestro Ali Akbar Khan."*  
— *Sruti Magazine*

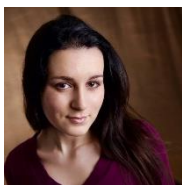


**Arjun K. Verma** is an Indian-American sitarist and composer. Beginning with his father, Roop Verma, and continuing with the legendary Ali Akbar Khan and his son Alam Khan, Arjun's meticulous training has imbued him with a rich musicality that encompasses both the profound majesty and the exhilaration of North Indian classical music.

Arjun has performed at international venues including the United Nations, the Fillmore, Prague Castle, and on the NBC TV network, collaborating with a diverse host of musicians including the London Symphony Orchestra, Swapan Chaudhuri, Alam Khan, Bob Weir (*Grateful Dead*), the St. Louis Symphony, and GRAMMY-winning pianist and arranger John Beasley. Arjun is the recipient of a Mosaic America commissioning grant (2020), a Creative Work Fund grant (2018—Haas Foundation), and a Shenson Fellowship (2007—San Francisco Foundation). <https://www.arjun-verma.com/>



**Abhijit Banerjee** is considered among the front ranking tabla players from India, Abhijit Banerjee is one of the most sought-after creative artists in the realm of Indian classical music. With decades of professional experience Abhijit has crafted a unique style and creative approach which has brought him accolades and awards from all over the world for his sensitivity, skill, and deep sense of musicality. Apart from his contributions to Indian music he has left his mark in a diverse field of crossover music both as a performer and composer.



**Nazan Aktas**, is a graduate of Sonoma State University, with a Bachelor of Music degree with a double concentration in Performance and Jazz Studies. She has studied and performed many different styles of music and has been attending Ali Akbar College of Music since 2015.

In advance of his Wednesday, March 22nd DAS concert, Arjun will give a special presentation during the Tuesday (March 21st) 11:30 a.m. music department's weekly convocation in the Hudson Concert Hall. All are welcome to attend and there is no charge.

### **Tickets**

General admission tickets are \$25; Seniors \$5; Students are admitted free. Tickets are available online, at the box office the night of the performance, or call the box office at 503-370-6221.

<https://willamette.edu/arts/goudyartistseries/das-box-office/index.html>

<https://willamette.edu/arts/goudyartistseries/index.html>

[music-info@willamette.edu](mailto:music-info@willamette.edu)

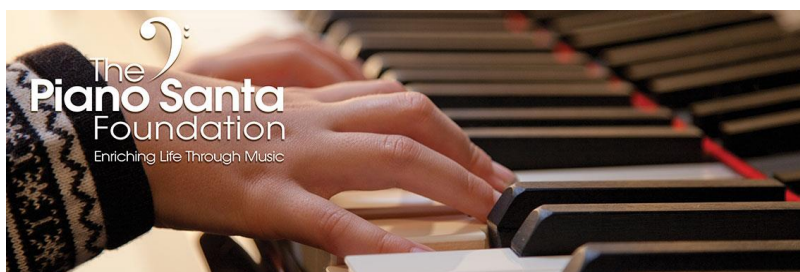
# FESTIVALS

Dr. Janet Pollack, Education Chair

I am delighted to announce that the Sonatina Festival will take place October 2023 at the University of Oregon. Marla Hansen kindly agreed to co-chair the event with me, and I cannot thank her enough for stepping forward and offering her time and expertise. The event will be in-person with entries on Leggiero. The repertory committee is currently working diligently to select appropriate sonatinas, and the full list will be placed on the OMTA website as soon as it is finalized. All future information concerning the Sonatina Festival will be placed on the OMTA website and appear in *Music News*. Stay tuned. We will still need monitors and other help the day of the event.

If you would like to volunteer, please email me at [janetkipollack@comcast.net](mailto:janetkipollack@comcast.net) or text/call 970-556-3729.

In other news, Craig Hanson and Momoko Muramatsu—co-chairs of the upcoming **Baroque Festival Honors Recital**—have everything set and ready to go. There are 71 students registered so far for the recital, which due to the inclement weather, has needed to be rescheduled. Please watch for an email with the rescheduled information. A total of 284 students from across the state participated in the district Baroque festivals.



## 2023 Grand Scholarship Competition

Presented by the Piano Santa Foundation

The winner of the 2023 Piano Santa Foundation Grand Scholarship Competition will receive the use of a grand piano for 2 years, including moving costs, annual tuning, and maintenance. The competition is open to all students, ages 12–16, who have passed at least Syllabus level 6 (or equivalent) and live in the Portland Metro area.

Applications and more information are available at [www.pianosanta.org](http://www.pianosanta.org) or contact us at [info@pianosanta.org](mailto:info@pianosanta.org) or (503) 245-6269 for more information.

Applications Due: May 22, 2023

Auditions: June 24, 2023



# MEMBERSHIP



**Andrew D'Antonio, NCTM**  
Membership Chair

At the time of this writing, we are still in the early stages of getting results from our membership survey, but participation is off to a strong start. Thank you to all of you who took the time to do this! The information you provided will be passed off to your committee chairs and district presidents. You may have found that filling out the survey sparked a question or an idea—like how maybe you've been considering pursuing MTNA certification, or maybe you have a proposal for an upcoming district meeting.

If you haven't been contacted yet by the appropriate leader, don't be shy about reaching out—I'm sure they would love to help you get more connected and involved! All of our leaders are listed on the OMTA website at [www.oregonmta.org/about/leadership/](http://www.oregonmta.org/about/leadership/).

I'm also pleased to announce all of our new members! We are thrilled to have them as part of our group:

- **Oxana Nero** is a new active member in the Rogue Valley District
- **Hyeyoung Pak** is a new active member in the Hillsboro District

- **Aubrey Harrison** is a new high school member in the Umatilla-Morrow District
- **Sarah Adams** is a new active member in the Salem District
- **Jonathan Haidle** is a new active member of the West Portland District
- **Noah Tretter** is a new active member of the Eugene District
- **Patricia Farrell** is a new active member of the Tualatin Valley District
- **Ines Raese** is a new active member of the West Portland District
- **Jennine Schmidt** is a new active member of the Central Oregon District
- **Dasol Um** is a new collegiate member of the U of O District

Welcome to OMTA! We look forward to meeting and working with you.





## GRANT PROGRAMS

### OMTA/OCF Nellie Tholen District Enrichment Project Programs: Teacher Enrichment for All!



**Karen Huntsberger, NCTM**  
Nellie Tholen Grant  
Coordinator

Make a plan to attend one or more upcoming grant programs featuring outstanding presenters and topics of interest for all teachers!

Check with the District President a few days in advance of any program to get the Zoom link: <https://oregonmta.org/about/leadership/district-presidents/>

Locations for in-person programs are listed with the event information. You're always welcome to email me at [grant.coordinator@oregonmta.org](mailto:grant.coordinator@oregonmta.org) with any questions.

Visit the Teacher Enrichment page for the latest workshop updates:  
<https://oregonmta.org/teachers/enrichment-workshops>

## MARCH 3



### Salem District

Friday, March 3, 2023, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Location: In-Person, Check with District President

#### Dr. Stephen Lewis, NCTM

*Hearing, Sight, Touch, and Proprioception: Engaging the Four Senses of Piano Playing for Optimal Learning and Performing*

We all long for ourselves and our students to learn music so well that we can perform with ease, grace, and command of ourselves and the instrument. It often feels like a mysterious, alchemical process to arrive there: how do we go from learning and struggling to real mastery? The answer lies in large part in the four senses we use when performing: hearing, sight, touch, and proprioception. All four of these senses must be engaged for stellar performances, but we often do not know how to make the best use of them or how to teach our students to do so. In this talk, Dr. Lewis will speak about how we must lead first and foremost with our hearing; how our eyes can be powerful allies or can make our practice and performance suffer; how touch and proprioception reinforce an intuitive and resilient connection between the musician and the instrument. He will discuss specific teaching and practice strategies to optimize how we use our senses. Dr. Lewis will also explore recent neuroscience research on how our brain processes sensory input and turns it into motor action and creative thought. Ultimately, this will help us better reach the place where we can feel empowered to perform creatively, boldly, and expressively.



## MARCH 8

**Hillsboro District**

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 10:30 AM–12:00 PM

Location: Calvary Lutheran Church, 937 NE Jackson School Rd., Hillsboro

**Dr. Ricardo de la Torre**

*Getting to Know our Neighbor: A Pianist's Guide to Pedagogical Repertoire*

Mexican composers have produced a wealth of piano music of pedagogical value. This lecture will offer a panorama of elementary to late intermediate teaching repertoire by Mexican composers from the 19th to the 21st centuries, discuss the repertoire's main characteristics and performance tradition, and provide information about its availability in the U.S.

## MARCH 14

**Linn-Benton District via Zoom**

Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 10:00 AM–11:30 AM

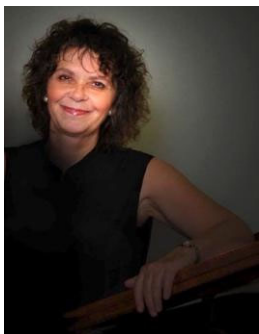
**Dr. Lark Powers, NCTM**

*Practice Smarter, Not Longer*

Practice is the most significant element which will determine a musician's success and enjoyment of their craft. However, many musicians were never taught how to practice, and some of what we think we know about learning can be updated. A few easily incorporated practice strategies can greatly increase progress and make practicing more efficient. This presentation will delve into fascinating research on how the brain learns and how this relates to music and practicing. Offering innovative and practical advice, topics discussed will

include organization, spacing, the effectiveness of interleaved (random) repetition, first-time retrieval strategies, performance preparation, and common practice mistakes. With strategies to overcome the challenge of getting started, making improvement that sticks, staying focused, and planning the next session, this presentation will suggest ideas that can make practice rewarding and effective. Strategic practice techniques create transformative changes, which can be seen in overall progress as well as in performing comfort and success.

## MARCH 14

**Umpqua Valley—South Coast District**

Tuesday, March 14, 2023, 11:30 AM–1:30 PM

Location: Roseburg Public Library, 1409 NE Diamond Lake Blvd, Roseburg

**Dr. Diane Baxter, NCTM**

*Pianists and the Brain*

How do we hear? What happens in the brain when we learn simple five finger patterns? What knowledge about brain function assists us as we learn new music? How do we process music? What does it mean "to know" a piece of music? How do we recall music? How does the athleticism of piano playing shape our behavior? This talk presents basic information about neurological functions from the performer's point of view. It is a fascinating and diverse body of information.



APRIL 1



### Mid-Columbia District via Zoom

Saturday, April 1, 2023, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Location: Zoom, for access please contact Rebecca Gooch

#### Diane Davies

*Making Syllabus Relevant: Using OMTA Syllabus Skills to Play Music*

Dianne Davies has taken a series of folksongs and Christmas carols to teach all levels of the OMTA Syllabus chord progressions and put them into music, enabling students to easily transpose the ideas into all keys and understand the concepts.

APRIL 1



### Umatilla-Morrow District

Saturday, April 1, 2023, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Location: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, 850 SW 11th St., Hermiston

#### Dr. Diane Baxter, NCTM

*Stepping into the Light: Thoughts on Performance Anxiety*

Why are my hands cold and clammy? Why is my heart pounding? Did you just say something to me? No, I can't just relax! Performance anxiety is a complex topic that involves how we think, how we feel, and how we behave. The results of it may range from mildly discomfoting to completely paralyzing. We all want to get it right when it matters most, whether we are performers, family members, or teachers. All of us have something to gain by understanding what happens as we strive to excel. This talk will introduce some of the causes of performance anxiety and will offer some tips on how to do your best under duress.

APRIL 10



### Rogue Valley District

Monday, April 10, 2023, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Location: Grace Lutheran Church, 660 Frances Lane, Ashland

#### Dr. Lark Powers, NCTM

*Practice Smarter, Not Longer*

Practice is the most significant element which will determine a musician's success and enjoyment of their craft. However, many musicians were never taught how to practice, and some of what we think we know about learning can be updated. A few easily incorporated practice strategies can greatly increase progress and make practicing more efficient. This presentation will delve into fascinating research on how the brain learns and how this relates to music and practicing. Offering innovative and practical advice, topics discussed will include organization, spacing, the effectiveness of interleaved (random) repetition, first-time retrieval strategies, performance preparation, and common practice mistakes. With strategies to overcome the challenge of getting started, making improvement that sticks, staying focused, and planning the next session, this presentation will suggest ideas that can make practice rewarding and effective. Strategic practice techniques create transformative changes, which can be seen in overall progress as well as in performing comfort and success.



APRIL 11

**Umpqua Valley—South Coast District**

Tuesday, April 11, 2023, 11:30 AM–1:30 PM

Location: 354 N. Star Ln., Sutherlin

**Dr. Alexander Tutunov***Technique and the Russian School Tradition of Piano Training*

Dr. Tutunov will share his experiences from his training at the Central Music School of the Moscow Conservatory and the Belarusian State Conservatory.

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**Other Resources:**

Access to videos of previous presentations no longer requires a separate password. Just log in to the OMTA website with your personal login and password to view past workshop videos:

<https://oregonmta.org/teachers/enrichment-workshops/>

- Programs from the 2019-2021 OMTA State Conferences: <https://oregonmta.org/teachers/conferences>

**Videos to help teachers adapt to teaching online, created in the Spring of 2020, are still available on the following sites:**

- OMTA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/oregonmta>
  - OMTA YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/oregonmta/videos>
  - OMTA Vimeo channel: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/6946123>
- 



# CERTIFICATION

**Anastasia Kitaev, NCTM** and **Sarah Barker Ball, NCTM**, Certification Chairs

Among the members of OMTA, we have a growing pool of enthusiastic applicants for National Certification. Come join us! We meet on Zoom, the first Thursday morning of each month to answer questions and discuss the projects.

Recently we celebrated with Tatsiana Asheichyk who just completed her NCTM, and asked her a few questions:

**Q: What inspired you to become an NCTM?**

A: I always strive for excellence and best results. I love learning and passing on the knowledge I learned, as well as sharing my love for music with my students. The desire to be a better teacher inspired me to become NCTM.

**Q: Which project did you enjoy completing the most, and why?**

A: I enjoyed working on #1 from this project (Teaching Videos) because I love teaching, and it was fun to do recording with my student. I also liked working on #2 (D). It was a pleasure to review the awards my students received over the years and re-read their evaluations. I was reminded of their many achievements, and I felt proud to be their teacher.

The most enjoyable of all was #3 from Project #3 (Teacher Performance) because I love practicing and performing. I cannot imagine my life without music!



Tatsiana Asheichyk, NCTM

To find out more about this exciting program and the practical, do-able steps needed to become an NCTM, please check out all the details [mtna.certification.org](https://mtna.certification.org) and contact us by visiting [oregonmta.org/teachers/certification](https://oregonmta.org/teachers/certification).

You'll be glad you did!





## BLUE MOUNTAIN DISTRICT



**Dr. Matt Cooper**

Blue Mountain District President

Blue Mountain District was treated to a wonderful presentation titled *Practice Smarter, Not Longer* by Lark Powers, DMA, faculty of Pacific Lutheran University, on February 4. Dr. Powers highlighted effective practice strategies from recent research, and included entertaining video clips and an abundance of reference materials.

After her online presentation, Dr. Powers adjudicated our district Baroque Festival, a live event which she

adjudicated via Zoom. Sixteen students were registered; four winners and two honorable mentions were chosen from Division Four. (Due to a misunderstanding of the rules for selecting winners from each age division, State Chair Craig Hanson allowed an additional two winners to be added from the lower divisions.)

Our next District event will be Syllabus and a Syllabus Honors Recital, on March 17-18.



# CENTRAL OREGON DISTRICT



**Helen Jones, NCTM**  
Central Oregon District  
Secretary

We've had fewer meetings this school year. The next meeting will take place at Melissa Barker's Prineville home March 10. Featured on the program is our own Kathy Gault presenting *Composium! – A Simple Structure for Composing with Students*, an exploration of the many resources from Leila Viss of 88 Piano Keys (one of our state conference presenters in 2016).

The Central Oregon District Winter Festival will be March 18, 2023, at the Christian Science Church in Bend. There will be two recitals in the morning featuring Romantic/Impressionistic composers (no arrangements, just original music by those composers). There will be no judge.



Kathy Gault



# EUGENE/SPRINGFIELD DISTRICT

**Dr. Janet Pollack**, Eugene District Corresponding Secretary

The Eugene/Springfield District has been active and productive these past months with festivals, recitals, excellent educational programs and more.

Our district Baroque Festival co-chaired by three of our members—Olga Aynvargi, Rebecca Laird, and Winnie Kerner—took place on February 5 with 33 participating students from 7 teachers. Although it was a successful event, there were some problems with teachers not following the rules. We urge all participating studios in all districts to please read rules and requirements carefully and to follow them in the future.

Plans for our March 12 spring recital, to be chaired by Sarah Burch, are in the works, and a Contemporary Music Festival chaired by Lucy Clevenger is planned for April 16 at the United Lutheran Church of Eugene. Syllabus will take place on April 28-30; the Soule Scholarship auditions are scheduled for April 30; our district Composition Celebration will be held at Eugene's Broadway Metro and co-chaired by Paul Safar and Nick Rieser; and our Teachers' Showcase, an annual fundraising event, is planned for May 13.

In addition, our newly formed collegiate chapter will again sponsor the University of Oregon Piano Festival on Sunday, April 30, from 12:00 to 6:00 PM. Students can participate in one of two possible tracks: 1) performance only, or 2) performance and master class (available only to students level 8 and up). The festival's theme this year is "Character Pieces." The Collegiate chapter is guided by UO

faculty member and our district's current vice president, Dr. Grace Ho.

Our chapter continues to benefit from inspiring programs. On January 16, Dr. Crystal Zimmerman, NCTM, presented an overview of *Late Elementary and Early Intermediate Music by Women Composers* at The First Congregational Church of Eugene.

On February 13, our members thoroughly enjoyed Laura Chu Stokes program *Turning Lemons into Lemonade: Ideas on Productive Lessons When Your Students Haven't Practiced*, where they received many suggestions and guidelines for how to address the lack of motivation to practice.

This upcoming Monday, March 13, is a special program presented by former MTNA president Professor Emeritus Martha Hilley—*Are You and Your Students Getting Full Value out of the Repertoire?* Distinguished Professor Emeritus Hilley served on the faculty of The University of Texas School of Music, is the recipient of numerous teaching awards, and is the author of notable articles and two college piano texts: *Piano for the Developing Musician* and *Piano for Pleasure*. This much anticipated program will take place in Berwick Hall at the University of Oregon, Eugene, from 10:00 to 11:30 AM. All members are invited to join us! If you would like further information about the program, please contact Dr. Grace Ho at [gho@gmail.com](mailto:gho@gmail.com).



# HILLSBORO AREA DISTRICT

**Holly Counts**, Hillsboro Area District President

In January, we enjoyed a presentation from Dianne Davies called *Making Syllabus Relevant*. We took turns at the piano using the chord progressions from each syllabus level to accompany well known songs. It sparked good discussion and insights.

Our March meeting will feature a presentation from Dr. Ricardo de la Torre, learning about repertoire by Mexican composers. Both presentations are provided by Nellie Tholen Grants.

From our Ribbon Festival Chair, Sarah Barker Ball:

*In early February, students, teachers and families gathered for the 2023 Westside Ribbon Festival. There was a buzz in the air as students noticed*

*helium balloons and a colorful welcome sign near the door, before proceeding on to make name tags and submit their artwork for display.*

*The wide array of creative artwork included a 3D-printed grand piano, hand embroidered musical pillows, many paintings and drawings, and even a diorama that illustrated the "Salt and Pepper March."*

*More helium balloons adorned the grand piano where the well-prepared students enjoyed playing their latest repertoire. Everyone lingered afterward to take pictures, admire artwork and enjoy carrying their well-deserved ribbons safely home.*



# ROGUE VALLEY DISTRICT

Thor Polson, Rogue Valley District Reports Chair

Our chapter met for a business meeting on Monday, January 9 at Grace Lutheran Church in Ashland, and this was followed by a presentation by OMTA President-Elect Heidi Evans, who spoke about Akiko and Forrest Kinney's *Pattern Play* series.



These books stress the importance of improvisation in developing a well-rounded musical education, and as a jazz pianist, I was naturally very interested in hearing Heidi's thoughts on how best to integrate the improvisational approaches described in the *Pattern Play* books into my students' lessons. Of course, describing the many benefits of these books is beyond the scope of this report, but I would mention the following: 1) *Pattern Play* offers students a new and spontaneous avenue to express their feelings (stormy, happy, etc.) at the piano, 2) it teaches musical skills in a creative fashion, 3) it introduces the notion of harmonic substitution as represented by the shifting chords in the accompaniment, 4) it teaches the importance of allowing a musical expression to breathe through the judicious use of rests, 5) it eventually allows the students to move from a duet format to a solo improvisation, 6) it causes them to consider the role

of each hand in constructing a melody or a harmony, and 7) it eventually makes clear the importance of intentionality in an improvisation, that is, of realizing an



impromptu conception as opposed to simply wiggling the fingers.

Heidi encourages beginning each lesson with one (or more) of the *Pattern Play* improvisations, and her presentation has motivated all of us to try out these materials on our own students. I certainly have, and I am very grateful to her for her encouragement.

On Saturday, February 25, the Joyce Stevens Scholarship Benefit Recital was held at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Medford. The performers were Brian Hall, Michele Alspach, Alexander Tutunov, Pat Daly, Tiana Wong, Anna Christina Streletz, Iryna Kudielina, and Thor Polson (pictured from left to right in the photo), and the music included works by Bach, Scarlatti, Schubert, Liszt, Brahms, Saint-Saëns, Prokofiev, Gershwin, and Coltrane. This event is held annually to raise money for a scholarship awarded to local students who plan to major in music in college, and we were very pleased indeed to see over 140 people in the audience for the concert.



Dr. Alexander Tutunov will offer a master class at Grace Lutheran Church in Ashland on Saturday, February 25. (A full report on that event will appear in the next newsletter.) We also look forward to the Sonatina Festival on March 18 and 19 and to Dr. Lark Powers' presentation *Practice Smarter, Not Longer* in April, not to mention the statewide convention in Ashland this June. We hope to see you there!





# TUALATIN VALLEY DISTRICT



**Kristen Cichoski**  
Tualatin Valley District Co-President

Hello from the Tualatin Valley District! It has been wonderful to engage with our teachers at district meetings and participate in presentations and festivals. We feel blessed to have 72 wonderful members who help our district thrive.

In January we had a Zoom presentation by Heidi Evans—*Improvisation in the Music Studio*. Heidi used Forrest Kinney's *Pattern Play* series as the basis of her discussion. She provided many great ideas on ways to utilize improvisation in lessons, to deepen syllabus skills, and to express feelings. In February, we had another great presentation by Dr. Lark Powers – *Practice Smarter, Not Longer*. Dr. Powers presented fascinating research on how the brain learns and how this can assist us in music and specifically practicing. She provided tips for practicing, identified common practice mistakes, and taught about performance preparation. Both presentations were outstanding, and we would highly recommend them.

Our Baroque festival was held in January at Rise Church in Tigard. We were pleased to have 53 students participate, with honorable mentions and winners selected for the state recital. A special “thank you” to Myrna Setiawan, Mahroo Hamedani, and our teacher volunteers who did a wonderful job organizing and staffing this event.

In February, entries for our Composition Celebration were due. We are anticipating our lower division spring syllabus in March and have 22 teachers participating with 69 students registered. Upper division will be in May. On April 22, we will have our Sacred Music recital, with the deadline for entries being March 31. Our district scholarship applications are due April 7, with auditions on April 22. Please see our website for details on these recitals and applications.

Our “Play Listen Teach Learn” (PLTL) teacher development classes, hosted by Dianne Davies, continue to be held on the 4th Friday of the month. (There will not be one in March due to our Teacher Recital.) We have enjoyed some district socials at Starbucks several times this year. Our next social will be Saturday, April 15, at 10:00 AM. Please see our website for details.

Our next district meeting will be Friday, March 17, on Zoom. We will have our business meeting from 9:00 to 9:30 AM, followed by our annual Teacher Recital. For a complete list of our meetings, festivals, programs and deadlines, please visit our website at [tvomta.org](http://tvomta.org). Our calendar will continue to be updated as we begin the planning for the coming school year.



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The submission deadline is always the 15th of the month preceding the date of publication.

<b>January</b>	December 15
<b>March</b>	February 15
<b>May</b>	April 15
<b>September</b>	August 15
<b>November</b>	October 15



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