



# KANSAS CITY MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

KCMTA Newsletter Vol. 9, #5  
Feb. 2009 · Julia Scherer, Editor

Joyce Berg, NCTM, President  
Lisa McCluer, President Elect

## Heads up—Look here first!

### Calendar of Events

- Feb. 3** **KCMTA Meeting & Teacher Workshop:**  
**Elaine Bernstorf**  
“Welcome to Holland: Planning Tips for Teaching Special Learners”  
**9:15 a.m. at Schmitt Music (p. 2)**
- Feb. 3 Board Meeting  
11:30 a.m. at Schmitt Music
- Feb. 8 Concerto Recital (p. 2)
- Feb. 13 Master Class with pianist Simone Dinnerstein  
6-9 p.m., Grant Recital Hall, UMKC (p. 8)
- Feb. 14 Multi-Piano rehearsal  
The Lied Center, Lawrence, KS
- Feb. 14 Students of Robert Weirich in all-Ravel recitals  
2:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. at Village Presbyterian (p. 4)
- Feb. 14 Simone Dinnerstein, pianist  
8:00 p.m. at the Folly Theater (p. 8)
- Feb. 15** **Deadline: MTNA Survey (p. 6)**
- Feb. 15 Multi-Piano Concerts  
2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. (p. 3)  
The Lied Center, Lawrence, KS
- Feb. 15 KCMTA UMKC Student Chapter Benefit Recital  
3:00 p.m., Southwood United Church of Christ (p. 4)
- Feb. 22 Karen Kushner, pianist  
2:30 p.m. at Village Presbyterian Church (p. 4)
- Feb. 22 Mary Bronaugh Davis, organ & piano  
3:00 p.m. at Barry Christian Church (p. 4)
- Feb. 23** **Deadline: Music Progressions (p. 3)**
- Feb. 27 KMTA Sessions at KMEA In-Service Workshop  
Wichita, KS (January newsletter, p. 5)
- Feb. 28** **Deadline: UMKC Junior Piano Auditions (p. 5)**
- Mar. 3 **KCMTA Meeting & Teacher Workshop:**  
**Dr. Matthew Edwards**  
“The Great 48: Preparing For and Studying Bach's *Well Tempered Clavier*”  
**9:15 a.m. at Schmitt Music**
- Mar. 10 Board Meeting  
9:15 a.m. at Toon Shop
- Mar. 16** **Deadline: Achievement Auditions**
- Mar. 28-  
Apr. 1 MTNA Conference  
Atlanta, GA
- Mar. 29 Concerto Competition Winner's Recital  
Park University

## President's Corner

Tim Werts gave a wonderful technology presentation. We were treated to valuable information on outstanding teacher websites, studio policies, teaching forums, sheet music, music theory and an informative presentation given by Diana Stocksedale on Sibelius. Also helpful was the information shared by attending members. Kudos to Tim for putting together another great workshop! I will be making links to the websites Tim presented on our Website at <http://kansascitymusicteachers.org/links.php>

I invite everyone to attend the February workshop on special learners. Perhaps we can all learn something about the learning process itself and add to our arsenal of teaching techniques.

Congratulations also to our very active UMKC KCMTA Student Chapter who presented a recital on January 25 and now we find that two of its members, Gulimina Mahamuti and Erika Kinser, have been selected by MTNA to do a presentation for the Atlanta Convention! Please try to support these students by attending their events. Unfortunately, no one came to the January recital.

I would like to invite everyone to witness the Concerto Recital on Feb. 8 at Schmitt Music even if you don't have a student participating, just to hear the repertoire and see what the recital is like.

I want to thank Martino Tirimo and Kanaka Ito in advance for judging at our Concerto Competition on January 31<sup>st</sup> and Tatiana Ioudenitch for organizing our most competitive event at Park University with a first prize of \$1000 and alternate prize of \$500.

We're looking forward to the Multi-Piano event in mid February at the KU Lied Center. The Concerto Competition and Multi-Piano event are made possible by grants from the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Foundation.

I told a student recently that lessons weren't just about learning some piece that you may not care for. It's about how you approach life and the living of it. It's understanding how music can actually change how you function and how the study of music can coordinate the parts of your brain. If it is approached with intensity, it can coordinate all parts of your life.

He's been having some good lessons lately.

—Joyce Berg, NCTM

## Our February Workshop

### *Welcome to Holland: Planning For the Special Learner*



*Dr. Elaine Bernstorf*

One of the biggest challenges a music educator faces is creating curriculum to fit the learning styles and capabilities of each student. This is an especially difficult when teaching a student that could be categorized as a special learner. The benefits of music study reach far beyond the area of performance aptitude. Success in the study of music can be a springboard for special learners to tackle difficulties such as reading comprehension and problem solving. Music is an area where children who face obstacles such as dyslexia or Asperger's syndrome can be successful. Please join us on February 3 for "Welcome to Holland: Planning For the Special Learner" presented by Elaine Bernstorf.

Elaine Bernstorf serves as Associate Dean for the College of Fine Arts and Professor and Director of Music Education at Wichita State University. Her degrees include the BME and MME in Special Music Education and a PhD in Communicative Disorders and Sciences. She taught Elementary General Music and Special Music Education in the Wichita Public Schools (1976-1990) and has taught at WSU as an adjunct instructor (1984-1992) and as a faculty member of the School of Music (1993-current). In her current administrative position, Dr. Bernstorf oversees the College of Fine Arts, including the Schools of Art and Design, Music, and Performing Arts (Theater and Dance). As a professor and researcher, Dr. Bernstorf's specializations include elementary vocal music, special music education, early childhood arts education, speech pathology (especially in the areas of voice, fluency and child language), literacy development and curriculum development. Dr. Bernstorf is co-author of the book *The Music and Literacy Connection* (2004) published by MENC (National Association for Music Education). Locally, she assists a speech-language preschool (WSU Kaleidoscope at the Metro-complex) with their early childhood fine arts program.

—*Timothy Werts*  
Workshop Chair  
[timothy.werts@gmail.com](mailto:timothy.werts@gmail.com)

## Achievement Auditions

This is a reminder that Achievement Auditions will be held on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, April 17, 18, and 19, 2009. (Please note that Friday will be used as an overflow day.) They will take place at Schmitt Music at 119<sup>th</sup> and Metcalf. The enrollment deadline is March 16, 2009. The Honors Recital will be Sunday, May 3, 2009 at 2pm in the Steinway Salon at Schmitt Music. Achievement Auditions are 15-minute private auditions with an adjudicator where the student plays technic and two to three memorized contrasting solos. Please check out the website for more details and for the technic and repertoire syllabus. For the website enrollment form: [http://kansascitymusicteachers.org/studentprograms/achievement\\_auditions2009\\_enrollment\\_form.pdf](http://kansascitymusicteachers.org/studentprograms/achievement_auditions2009_enrollment_form.pdf)

Just a note about the repertoire syllabus: the last update was in 1989, so some editions are out of print. It is still helpful, though, in planning your students' repertoire selections. Please feel free to call or email Hemdah Salonimer-Horner or Linda Kennedy for any questions you may have about the Auditions or the syllabi.

—*Hemdah Salonimer-Horner*  
816-836-4438  
[hemdahsh@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hemdahsh@sbcglobal.net)  
*Linda Kennedy*  
816-836-4438  
[lrkennedymusic@hotmail.com](mailto:lrkennedymusic@hotmail.com)  
*Co-Chairs, Achievement Auditions*

## Concerto Recital

February 8, 2009  
1:30, 2:30 and 3:30 p.m.  
Schmitt Music

This event is open to all. If you haven't enrolled a student, come and hear your friends' students play. You might want to enroll some of your students next year.

—*Marles Dudley*  
Concerto Recital Chair  
[marlessd@yahoo.com](mailto:marlessd@yahoo.com)

## Missing Rating Sheet

Linda Khadavi is missing a Fall Festival rating sheet for one of her students: Arnob Mukharji. He played at Vaccaro's on Sun., Oct 19th in the morning. She has his certificate and ribbon, but no rating sheet.

If you find it, please contact Linda at: 913-652-0220  
Email: [LKhadavi@hotmail.com](mailto:LKhadavi@hotmail.com)

## Treasurer's Report



As of January 22, 2009, KCMTA's combined checking account balance was \$34,319.17.

--*Janice White, Treasurer*

## Multi-Piano Update

Come see the 2009 "Opposites Attract" Multi-Piano Concerts February 15, 2:00 & 4:00, at the Lied Center in Lawrence. Tickets are only \$5.00 at the door. If you have never participated in Multi-Piano, come see what all the fun is about!

T-shirts and other Multi-Piano themed merchandise may be ordered on-line at [www.cafepress.com/kcmta](http://www.cafepress.com/kcmta) after our artwork winner has been announced (on or about January 27).

### Advertising Opportunities

New this year, we are offering parents the opportunity to purchase space in the program to congratulate their students, much as they might in a school yearbook. Purchasing ad space not only helps support the concert, but is also a special way to tell students "thank you" for all of their hard work. Parents may submit a message of up to 30 words, at a cost of \$15. Attached to this email you will find an order form. Please run off copies and hand them out to your students before the first rehearsal. Forms and payments may be turned in at the rehearsal or mailed to me.

Teachers will again be able to place studio recognition ads in our program and on the pre- and post- concert projector space for half-off our normal advertising rates. (Please note: These "ads" are intended to recognize and reward participants, not to promote specific studios over another or solicit students from other teachers). Teacher pricing for the ads is as follows:

Full Page (5.5 x 8.5") - \$50.00

Half Page - \$40.00

Quarter Page - \$25.00

Projector space – 1 slide shown 3 times before and after each concert (total of 12 viewings): \$50.00

A 25% discount is available on top of the special teacher pricing for anyone wishing to purchase both program and projector space. The projector ads were a HUGE hit with students last year – please feel free to get in touch with me if you'd like ideas on putting together a projector slide.

All ads and payments need to be submitted by no later than February 1st. Ads may be submitted as pre-formatted Word, .pdf or graphics files (please call if you have any questions about formats), or may simply include the text you would like to have appear. Those of you wishing to purchase projector space may even send pictures of students to be included in your note of congratulations! Please email all ad materials to [jenn@jenspianostudio.com](mailto:jenn@jenspianostudio.com). Payments may be mailed to:

Jennifer Fink  
625 N. Mahaffie  
Olathe, KS 60661

Thanks to all of you for your continued participation and support of this wonderful event!

—Amy Ludwig  
VP-Multi-Piano  
[injoy@kc.rr.com](mailto:injoy@kc.rr.com)

## Music Progressions

*Enrollment Deadline: February 23*

Teachers, it is still not too late to consider enrolling your students in KMTA's wonderful Music Progressions program. This annual non-competitive program consists of 10 levels which evaluate a child's overall musicianship in performance, theory, sight playing, ear training, scales, chords, arpeggios and more. Participating students will receive a certificate of appreciation, a written adjudicator's critique, and the results of all tests. The requirements for repertoire are extremely flexible as both method pieces and arrangements are allowed. Two solo pieces in contrasting style are performed, but only one must be memorized.

Students LOVE Music Progressions, and most come back year after year. Teachers LOVE Music Progressions because of the flexibility and accountability to outside teaching standards. Levels One and Two are accessible for most first year students, and, if you are unfamiliar with the program, you might consider starting there with any level student to keep yourself in the comfort zone.

The event will be held April 3-4-5 at Schmitt Music. Each student will receive a 25- or 35-minute slot depending on the level enrolled. Enrollment deadline is February 23. PLEASE USE THE ENROLLMENT FORM AND TEACHER WORK FORM FOUND AT THE KCMTA WEBSITE:

<http://kansascitymusicteachers.org/studentprograms/musicprogressions.php>

Your Music Progressions chairpersons are here to help. Please email Lisa Studtmann or Kellie Harvey with any questions.

—Kellie Harvey

[ksymns@kc.rr.com](mailto:ksymns@kc.rr.com)

—Lisa Studtmann

[lkstudtmann@hotmail.com](mailto:lkstudtmann@hotmail.com)

*Music Progressions Co-Chairs*

## Fall Festival Plaques

The plaques have been placed at Schmitt Music for pick-up. They are clearly labeled and are in boxes on or near Julia's old desk (she has moved into one of the offices at the back of the store).

—Cynthia Duckworth

*Fall Festival Co-Chair*

913-962-0227

[notebynote@kc.rr.com](mailto:notebynote@kc.rr.com)

## MTNA Divisional Auditions

Patricia Plake is happy to report that one of her voice students, Grace Lairmore, who represented the State of Kansas, was awarded Alternate in the MTNA High School Voice competition at Divisional level held in Minnesota on Sunday, January 18, 2009. First Place was awarded to a young baritone from another state. Grace lives in Spring Hill, KS and started her voice (and piano) lessons with Patricia four years ago.

—Patricia Plake

## Our Members Perform

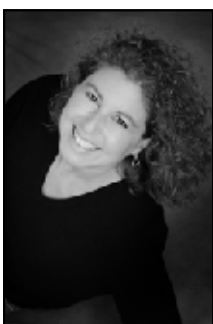


Feb. 15 **KCMTA UMKC Student Chapter**  
Benefit Recital  
3:00 p.m.  
Southwood United Church of Christ  
7904 Raytown Road  
Raytown, MO  
816-353-9090

This recital is a fundraiser to benefit the Raytown Emergency Assistance Program (REAP). The theme of the recital is "love."

—*Vania Todorova*  
DMA candidate  
Piano Performance  
816/506-9176  
[vjt8t2@umkc.edu](mailto:vjt8t2@umkc.edu)  
[vaniatodorova.com](http://vaniatodorova.com)

Feb 22 **Karen Kushner, piano**  
2:30 p.m.  
Village Presbyterian Church  
67th & Mission Road  
Prairie Village, KS



Program includes Mozart's *Sonata in F* KV533/494, Grieg's *Ballade*, and Schubert's *Sonata in D*, D 850

Karen Kushner (The Juilliard School, MM; Northwestern University, BM) is active as soloist and chamber musician (Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall; Kosciuszko Foundation;

Chopin Foundation; United Nations; National Gallery of Art; Phillips Collection; Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum; Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series). She toured internationally, recorded and taught with the late Igor Kipnis as a member of the Kipnis-Kushner Duo, Piano: Four Hands. She participated in summer festivals (Aspen, Newport, Ravinia); and in Europe, festivals in Spain, France, and Poland. She has been featured nationally on radio and television. A respected teacher, Kushner taught at the prestigious Mannes College of Music and Turtle Bay Music School in New York. She is sought after as a writer of articles and book reviews, program notes (Carnegie Hall) and liner notes.

(cont'd next column)

(Karen Kusher, continued)

Kushner's recordings for Connoisseur Society; Epiphany; VAI and Albany Records, as well as recordings by the Kipnis-Kushner Duo (Parnassus, Palatine) have been highly recommended by *Newsday*, *Fanfare*, and *Stereophile*. Her newest solo recording (Brahms, Clara and Robert Schumann) was just released by Palatine Recordings (2006) to great critical acclaim (from the *Washington Post's* Pulitzer Prize-winning head critic, Tim Page: "Kushner's playing is exemplary throughout the album, but I am especially happy with her rendition of Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, eight miniatures welling over with fantasy and invention that demand a pianist who will not only read the notes but give herself entirely to the composer's opulent, idiosyncratic cosmos. This is a beautiful disc."

Feb. 22 **Mary Bronaugh Davis, organ & piano**  
"Fat Sunday"  
3:00 p.m.  
Barry Christian Church  
1500 NW Barry Road (just west of Highway 169)

Mary Bronaugh Davis will present a 3rd annual "Fat Sunday" Pop Organ/Piano Concert, deliberately set for the Sunday before Lent, when frivolity is still permissible. (Once Lent begins, the church traditionally observes a much more solemn mood that lasts until Easter Sunday.) All selections played will be strictly for entertainment purposes. Circle the date on your calendar and be sure to invite your neighbors and friends!

## Weirich Students in Two All-Ravel Programs

The UMKC Conservatory piano students of Robert Weirich will present the complete solo piano works of Maurice Ravel in two recitals on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The Conservatory's Bösendorfer Imperial will be moved to the Village Presbyterian Church at 6600 Mission Road for the occasion. The first recital begins at 2:30 p.m., and the second at 5:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served during the break between programs. Two recently published Ravel works, his *Serenade grotesque* and his *Menuet in C-sharp Minor*, may be receiving first performances in the Kansas City area!

### Quote of the Month:

A beautiful thing is never perfect.

~ Egyptian Proverb

## Spring Festival At UMKC

It is my pleasure to invite your students to participate in the 2009 UMKC Conservatory's Community Music and Dance Academy Spring Festival Adjudications on Saturday, April 25. The annual Spring Festival has been a Community Music and Dance Academy tradition for over 15 years. Both student musicians and instructors have enjoyed and benefited from this experience, which includes a detailed written critique and rating from highly qualified adjudicators. This year, we will have a variety of adjudicators from the Conservatory faculty to judge winds, strings, voice, piano and composition. The entry fee is \$25 and open to non-CMDA students and teachers. Scholarships, however, are limited to CMDA students. This year, we will hold adjudications all day. Spring Festival 2009 will culminate with a performance featuring the top-rated students from the day's adjudications.

Though the primary goal of Spring Festival is to share music-making with one another and to provide constructive feedback for students and teachers, the Academy also rewards superior progress and skills in each of the various level categories. The following merit-based scholarships are available for CMDA lessons, classes and/or summer programs.

**The Emily White Scholarship in Pre-Collegiate Music Performance** is awarded to a pre-collegiate CMDA student studying instrumental music who demonstrates superior performance skills and who in addition exhibits dedication and promise for a future career in music.

**The Dorothy Zimmer Scholarship(s)** is awarded to one or more CMDA students demonstrating a strong potential in music.

**Academy Talent Scholarships** are awarded to CMDA students demonstrating superior performance or composition skills.

Please note that any scholarship awarded is applied on a per-lesson basis, and is not given to the student in the form of cash. The judges may use their discretion to award partial scholarships as they see fit.

This year, the Academy faculty has selected Cameron Dibble to chair the Spring Festival adjudications. Please contact him for any specific questions about the adjudications at [dibblec@umkc.edu](mailto:dibblec@umkc.edu). In order to register, please call Cheryl Melfi at 816-235-2741 and/or [music-ce@umkc.edu](mailto:music-ce@umkc.edu). Application forms, deadlines for registration, complete festival rules, and more details will be posted on our web site as they become available: [http://conservatory.umkc.edu/community\\_academy/spring\\_festival.aspx](http://conservatory.umkc.edu/community_academy/spring_festival.aspx)

Hope to see you in April!

Mara Gibson, Ph.D.  
Director, Community Music and Dance Academy  
UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance  
(816)235-2741  
[gibsonmb@umkc.edu](mailto:gibsonmb@umkc.edu)  
<http://conservatory.umkc.edu>

## Media Library Has Moved

KCMTA's Media Library is now housed at Schmitt Music. We have two new additions to our library:

*Recreational Music Making (RMM)* is a four-DVD set featuring 6 presentations given by teachers who teach recreational music for older adults (please see p. 4 of October 2008 newsletter for article about this).

*Coaching for Performance: Helping Pianists Get Out What is in Them* is the presentation given last summer to MTNA by sports psychologist Bill Moore on performance psychology. Bill Moore is the NCAA Division I coach, Associate Professor of Sport Psychology and Director of a PGA/PGM program. Approached by Dr. Barbara Fast from OU, he has become involved in coaching musicians, finding many similarities in our discipline. If you'd like to see more of what he does please go to: <http://mooreperform.com>

For check-out rules and a list of materials, go to:

<http://kansascitymusicteachers.org/library.php>

—Joyce Berg  
President

## KCMTA Service Project

Service project certificates are available to the students of any KCMTA teacher that use music to serve the community. Examples of services would be performance at a senior citizens' center or nursing home, using music to enhance a community event such as a Martin Luther King celebration, or even participation in a worship service. Contact Heidi Wiens at 913.780.6887 to make arrangements for certificates; they can be picked up at KCMTA meetings or at her home in Olathe. Be creative! There are many ways to use music to enrich the community and give students the opportunity to give the joy of music to others.

—Heidi Wiens  
913-780-6887

## UMKC Junior Piano Auditions

**Date:** Sunday, March 8, 2009

**Who:** Students currently in Grade 11 in high school.

**What:** The piano faculty of the UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance invite high school juniors to present a "trial" piano audition. Junior year high school students will have the opportunity to:

- Perform a sample audition and receive valuable comments from members of the piano faculty
- Learn how to prepare for a college career in music
- Receive information on the UMKC admissions process, music scholarships, and financial aid
- Tour our facilities

**Application Deadline: Saturday, February 28, 2009**

**For more information or to participate please contact:**

Dr. Jane Solose  
(816) 235-2962  
[solosej@umkc.edu](mailto:solosej@umkc.edu)

**Link to online info and application:**

[http://conservatory.umkc.edu/the\\_conservatory/junior\\_piano\\_trial.aspx](http://conservatory.umkc.edu/the_conservatory/junior_piano_trial.aspx)

## Handbell Competition



Entries for the Ruth Morse Wilson Missouri State Handbell Competition 2009 must be postmarked by April 1, 2009. Please contact Mary Davis for more information.

—Mary Davis  
816-436-1419  
[bronaughdavis@yahoo.com](mailto:bronaughdavis@yahoo.com)

## Newsletter Reinstated at KCMFTA Website

We have revised our procedures in order to make it cost effective to continue to post the newsletter at our website. We are pleased to announce that our members will continue to be able to refer to the archive for current and past issues.

—JS

## Deadline Extended for Pipe Organ Encounter

This is to notify you of a change in the early-bird registration deadline for the Kansas City Pipe Organ Encounter. **April 1st is now the deadline, rather than March 1st** (see October newsletter for article). For an updated brochure, please contact Julia Scherer. Nothing else has been changed from the previous brochure.

—JS

## Scholarship Auditions at MWSU

The Missouri Western State University Piano Department will be holding scholarship auditions on Friday, February 20. Students are asked to perform at least 2 contrasting works from memory; a theory placement test will also be given. Please contact Dr. Matthew Edwards, Director of Keyboard Studies, to set up an audition time.

—Dr. T. Matthew Edwards  
816.271.4431  
[tedwards7@missouriwestern.edu](mailto:tedwards7@missouriwestern.edu)

## YouTube Corner

Meet two musical savants who are both blind and in the autism spectrum:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U\\_GUPcg25OI&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U_GUPcg25OI&feature=related)



—JS

## MTNA Professional Music Studio Survey

We are proud to announce that, for the first time, two UMKC student chapter members of MTNA under advisor Dr. Diane Petrella, have been selected to present their research results at the MTNA National Convention this spring. The proposal submitted by Gulimina Mahamuti (second-year DMA student under Dr. Robert Weirich) and Erika Kinser (first-year DMA student under Dr. Robert Weirich) to the MTNA committee is one of the two selected proposals nationwide. We will present the results of our research in a lecture, "Survivor MTNA Edition: Promote, Manage, Excel" at the 2009 MTNA National Conference at Atlanta, Georgia on March 29th.

We are currently doing research for this presentation. The research question is: "How the Present Economy Has Affected Private Music Teaching."

We are looking for private music teachers of any instrument to take 10 minutes out of their busy schedules to complete an online anonymous national survey to help us with our research for our session presentation in Atlanta at the end of March. We would greatly appreciate it if you could participate in our survey and could also forward this on to other teachers and encourage them to participate as well.

Please feel free to send this link to any private music teachers that you know:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=WHXP\\_2bsgy1ASCvcsp\\_2bWOyaw\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=WHXP_2bsgy1ASCvcsp_2bWOyaw_3d_3d)

*Survey Deadline is Feb. 15.*

This is one of two proposals selected by the MTNA Committee to be presented on March 29 from 2:15-3:15 p.m. at the Westin Peachtree Plaza Vinings Room. The presentation, "Survivor MTNA Edition: Promote, Manage, Excel," by Gulimina Mahamuti and Erika Kinser will be presented with economist Evin Kinser. Results of the survey will be included.

Thank you so much for your time and your responses!

—Gulimina Mahamuti  
[gmc42@umkc.edu](mailto:gmc42@umkc.edu)  
Erika Kinser  
[edkfyb@umkc.edu](mailto:edkfyb@umkc.edu)

## Teachers Seeking Students

*Linda Kennedy has openings for piano and voice:*

**Linda Kennedy School of Piano & Voice**  
913-221-5913

## A Conversation With Steven Spooner: Part Two



Part One of my September 25<sup>th</sup> interview with Steven Spooner, dealing with his childhood music study and his teaching philosophy, was printed in the January newsletter. Herewith, the conclusion. Enjoy!

—Julia Scherer, Editor

*JS: Please tell me about your relationship with the music of Liszt.*

SS: It's interesting. People think of me as a Liszt specialist. At one point I was considered a Chopin specialist, at one point, a French specialist. I won first prize as most outstanding pianist in French music at the Paris Conservatory.

I had an interesting road with Liszt. I didn't play a single Liszt piece until graduate school. I was never attracted to Liszt. When Perahia went to Horowitz, he suggested, "My boy, if you want to be more than a mere virtuoso, you must start by being a virtuoso." The biggest influence for me was my teacher in Russia, Nodar Gabunia, who asked me if I'd like to play the *B Minor Sonata*. I said, "Not particularly." He replied, "Every serious pianist needs to play Liszt. If you will trust me, I will show you." That was such a powerful, formative experience. I can still barely talk about it. The illumination of the Liszt Sonata took place over a very long period of time.

Once when I played for Earl Wild, he advised, "Never back down from your guns." He, too, had the difficulty of being typecast.

Liszt was a remarkable man. He was the inventor of the piano recital and of Impressionism and became the model of greatness as a pianist. One of the wealthiest private individuals in Europe during his peak, he gave nearly everything away—often anonymously—and died poor.

Artur Rubinstein had something very insightful to say about Liszt's music: "People think that if you play Liszt, you have to have great technic and to play Brahms, great sensitivity. The truth is the reverse." And Brendel had this to say: "Liszt must

be protected by two groups of people: People who hate Liszt and people who love Liszt too much."

I'm eagerly awaiting the release of Rubinstein's Liszt album.

*JS: Could you tell us about some of your current projects?*

SS: Well, one is my Historical Recital Series, which recreates Anton Rubinstein's historical recitals of 1885. I've constructed 17 different recitals, each dedicated to one composer. The project will be recorded in two volumes. This is one of the best things I could have done as a pianist. It really gave me a breadth of stylistic experience. [Editor's note: You can see and hear clips of these programs if you go to his website [www.stevenspooner.com](http://www.stevenspooner.com) and click on "Historical Piano Recital Series" on the far left side of the home page. Volume 2 of the two-volume recording of the series was released on September 8 and is available at the website. Volume 1 will follow.]

*JS: Would you mind sharing some of your hopes and dreams for your time at the University of Kansas?*

SS: I want to be there and, with the aid of my colleagues, establish the finest piano department in the country and recruit the best students from all over the world.

As a pianist, I would like to play the entire Beethoven sonata cycle. I've played 23 of them so far. When I did my historical recital series, I wasn't satisfied with my efforts with Beethoven. That shows me I need to do this. I'm reminded that Miles Davis once asked a young band member, "Hey, man, do you know why I don't play ballads anymore? Because I love to play ballads so much." There's no growth in doing over and over what you already know how to do.

Another thing I'd like to do is a recital series dedicated to [Artur] Rubinstein. In 1961, Rubinstein played a series of 10 concerts at Carnegie Hall within the span of 40 days. All the proceeds went to charity. First will be an all-Chopin recital.

*JS: Is there anything I haven't asked you that you'd like to talk about?*

SS: Well, I'd be remiss in not mentioning the American Liszt Society National Festival, which the University of Kansas will host on April 3-5, 2009. There will be 200-300 in attendance. One of the highlights will be a master class by John Perry and performances by Frederic Chiu. By the way, KU has an interesting connection to Liszt: His last concert grand, an 1886 Bechstein, is housed at the Spencer Museum of Art, on the KU campus. I recorded a DVD on that piano—which still holds its tune magnificently!

*JS: Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me. You are a treasure and we are privileged to have you in our community!*



**Dr. Steven Spooner** currently serves on the piano faculty at the University of Kansas, the National Board of the American Liszt Society, and is a Steinway Artist. His complete biography was printed in the January 2009 newsletter and can be found at his website: [www.stevenspooner.com](http://www.stevenspooner.com)

## Warm Up with a Passionate Valentine's Day Concert!



The Friends of Chamber Music presents the exclusive Kansas City debut of charismatic pianist and Brooklyn native **Simone Dinnerstein** on **Saturday, February 14, 8:00 p.m.**, at the Folly Theater. Since her triumphant New York recital debut at Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in 2005, Dinnerstein has performed with great acclaim to sold-out audiences around the globe. Her

solo debut recording of the Bach *Goldberg Variations* hit **No. 1 on the Billboard Classical Chart** in its first week of sales, and appeared on "Best of 2007" lists including those of *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Time Out New York*, several radio stations, iTunes "Editor's Choice Best Classical," Amazon.com Best CDs of 2007, and Barnes & Noble's Top 5 Debut CDs of 2007 (along with Amy Winehouse, Andy Davis, Chrisette Michele, and Grace Potter!). Her Valentine's Day recital promises an **evening of passionate music**: Schubert Impromptus, (Op. 90), Bach's *French Suite in G Major*, American composer Philip Lasser's set of variations on a chorale by Bach, and Beethoven's last piano sonata, Op. 111.

For tickets or information, call The Friends at 816-561-9999, or visit [www.chambermusic.org](http://www.chambermusic.org)

### Special Invitation to Series-Subscribing Piano Teachers and Students!

The Friends of Chamber Music cordially invites you and your students to the annual **Piano Teachers and Students Pizza Party**. This party is given exclusively for our piano teacher and student subscribers as our **little** way of saying a **big "Thank You!"** to each and every one of you for making our piano series a success, and for teaching your students the immense value of the concert-going experience.

This year the party will be held **following** Simone Dinnerstein's recital, **Saturday, February 14, at 8 p.m.** in the Shareholder's Room at The Folly. Be sure to attend, as we will give out **prizes to teachers** that have the most subscribing students for the 08-09 season! Also, Simone Dinnerstein will drop in to chat, sign autographs, and pose for photographs.

R.S.V.P. to The Friends' Pizza Party by **Monday, February 9 at noon** to Mikaela Garrett at 816-561-9999 or email [mikaela@chambermusic.org](mailto:mikaela@chambermusic.org). We hope you will join us!

### Master Class With Simone Dinnerstein

All are invited to observe a **free master class** featuring pianist **Simone Dinnerstein** and students from UMKC and KU at Grant Recital Hall, UMKC Campus, on Friday, February 13, from 6:00-9:00 pm. Master classes are being presented by all four Master Pianists in the 2008-2009 Friends season, and are co-sponsored by The Friends of Chamber Music, the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory, and the University of Kansas. No reservations are required. For more information, please contact The Friends at 816-561-9999.

## Upcoming on Harriman-Jewell

**Danielle de Niese**, 29-year-old lyric-soprano sensation, will sing her **first American recital** at **7:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 4**, at the Folly Theater. The evening's program will include arias and songs by G.F. Handel, Edvard Grieg, Hugo Wolf, Francis Poulenc, Samuel Barber, and Georges Bizet. The Harriman-Jewell Series has **previously presented 18 American recital debuts** by prominent classical musicians: The first was tenor Luciano Pavarotti in 1973.



At **8 p.m. Saturday, February 21**, the world-acclaimed **Academy of St. Martin in the Fields** and sensational violinist **Julia Fischer** will take the stage at the Folly. The evening's concert that **celebrates the famed ensemble's 50th year** will include **Bach's** violin concerti nos. 1 and 2, **Walton's Sonata for Strings**, and **Britten's Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge**. The Harriman-Jewell Series previously presented the ensemble in 1989, 1999, 2001, and 2006.

**Free tickets** for pianist **Yevgeny Sudbin's** March 19 recital at the Folly Theater are now available online at <http://www.hjseries.org/events/sudbin.htm> Those without Internet access can call 816-415-5025 to request tickets. Please encourage teachers to tell students of this opportunity!



—Tim Ackerman  
Marketing Manager

**Sign Up to Receive Fiona's List!**
  
 To stay abreast of *all* cultural events in our community, I highly recommend visiting (and bookmarking!) *Fiona's List* at [www.kcmetropolis.org](http://www.kcmetropolis.org). Once at the KC Metropolis website, just click on "Fiona's List" to see the current week's events. While there, you can sign up to receive *Fiona's List* via email every Monday!
   
 —JS

## February Birthdays

- 2 Anne Becker
- 3 Steven Spooner
- 4 Jack Winrock
- 6 Susan Huber
- 6 Robert Weirich
- 11 Donna LaBach
- 14 Lisa Studtmann
- 16 Elaine Barnard
- 18 Becky McCleod
- 21 Becky Briggs
- 21 Tatiana Ioudenitch
- 29 Hemdah Salonimer-Horner

