

# Michigan Music Teacher

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**PUBLICATION OF  
THE MICHIGAN  
MUSIC TEACHERS  
ASSOCIATION**

*Affiliated with the Music Teachers  
National Association*

**Vol. LVIII No. 1 September 2011**

Dear MMTA Members,

August has arrived with summer now officially half over, and these last few weeks will undoubtedly be in “fast forward” mode until the new season is upon us, which is when this letter will be read. The highlight of the upcoming season for MMTA is the 126th State Conference, a well-planned event put together by Vice President Gary Pedersen. The conference is hosted by the Capital Area Music Teachers Association (CAMTA), and we invite you to join us at the downtown Lansing Radisson from noon on Sunday, October 16 through noon on Tuesday, October 18 for informative sessions, inspiring concerts, and MMTA-style camaraderie!

Speaking of camaraderie, the MTNA theme for membership recruitment in

2012 is “Each One Reach One,” with a call for each MTNA member to reach out to a non-member who would benefit from belonging to MTNA. This call brings to mind my early contacts with MMTA members, and of how beneficial this association has been to my teaching career. I’d like to share some of those experiences with you, beginning with the influence of my teacher and mentor, Jean Hull, an incredible coach who taught not only me, but my daughters as well. Jean’s tutelage inspired me to pursue degrees in applied piano pedagogy and choral education at Michigan State University. For many years choral music was my focus, and although I did teach class piano at a middle school, the inspiration to begin teaching piano privately came from sitting in on my daughters’ lessons with Jean. She also encouraged me to join MMTA when I did begin teaching, and it was Jean who asked me to consider serving as an officer in CAMTA...she’s very persuasive!

So often it’s a personal conversation that makes a difference for a teacher who is considering MMTA membership. At the first CAMTA meeting I attended Judy Ellis said hello, and described CAMTA’s theory program to me. Her warmth and personal interest were inviting, and from that initial encounter my CAMTA colleagues have become dear friends who have shared many teaching ideas and suggestions.

My first exposure to MMTA’s SAT program was as a parent, and I recall watching with interest as Mary Jane Miller efficiently directed the event, never dreaming that I would be doing the same in just a few years. She was very helpful when I entered students

for the first time in SAT, and my husband, who hand-delivered the application envelope to Miller Music Studio, marveled at the number of SAT applications in the room.

The first call to judge SAT came from Jill Christian. When I informed her that I had not done so before, she said that adjudication sheets would be checked early in the day with suggestions given if necessary...inspection passed! Though I’ve had many occasions to evaluate since then, I did need a substitute one year in Ann Arbor due to an emergency surgery, and found a CAMTA teacher who would take my place if approved by the chapter. Imagine my surprise when flowers arrived from Kelley Benson (Ann Arbor judges’ coordinator) with best wishes for recovery. That same year CAMTA colleagues gave lessons to my students for the weeks (just before SAT!) that I was unable to teach.

Attending our state conferences has been an enriching experience, from the insights of nationally-recognized clinicians and the memorable musical moments to the enjoyable conversations with MMTA members. Concerning the latter, I’ve conversed often with Marcia Viegelahn, who teaches in Lake Linden in the Keweenaw Peninsula, birthplace of my mother. I relish the yearly opportunities to “catch-up” with Marcia, who will have a round trip drive of 1,000 miles should she attend this year’s conference! I also met Natalie Matovinovic at a conference, and our conversations led me to accept an invitation to visit her lovely home with my Croatian family history in hand.

**President’s Letter cont. on p.3**

**NOTE** Information regarding submission of articles and ads may be found on page 2.

Please send all copy to the editor by the due date.

# MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHER

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**MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Affiliated with  
**MUSIC TEACHERS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

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Submit ads to the MMT  
editor with a check payable  
to MMTA. Fees are for one  
issue only.



**DEADLINE**  
**FOR THE MMT IS**  
**NOVEMBER 10**  
**FOR THE**  
**DECEMBER ISSUE**

**All materials must be  
received by the due date**

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR E-MAIL

Send to

Cheryl Cameron, Membership Chair: [cheryl@cheryls-music-studio.com](mailto:cheryl@cheryls-music-studio.com)

~ or mail to: ~

Cheryl Cameron, 5514 State Road, Fort Gratiot, MI 48059

### **President's Letter, cont. from p.1**

These reminiscences of the inspiration and kindnesses from fellow MMTA members will long be remembered, i.e., encouraging words from a mentor, an invitation when you are the stranger, the process of observing a leader in action, the "you'll be just fine" message when embarking as an adjudicator, new-found friendships emerging from the discovery of common bonds, and flowers!

Membership in MMTA often leads to service as a local chapter committee or board member and/or state board member. Service increases our understanding of how the organization works, and gives us direct contact with colleagues, which is especially important for independent teachers working in isolation in private studios. Service provides an opportunity to participate in fine-tuning or changing programs if deemed necessary, to evaluate procedures, and to give back to an organization that exists for us and the students we teach. Through the communicative aspect of service I've come to know other MMTA members well, and that personal contact is priceless.

The benefits of membership in MMTA are obvious to us. Our individual recruitment efforts on behalf of the organization will strengthen MTNA at the local, state and national levels and put the membership goals of MTNA within reach. To our Michigan members, best wishes as you embark on the 2011-12 teaching season, and I look forward to reconnecting with members attending the 126th MMTA Conference!

Sincerely,

Penny Draper  
MMTA President

### **From our Vice President**

Dear MMTA Members,

It gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the MMTA Board of Directors and the Capital Area Music Teachers Association, to invite you to Lansing for MMTA's 126th State Conference. The conference will feature outstanding sessions, exciting performances, and stimulating discussions of important issues in music pedagogy.

The Radisson Hotel Lansing at the Capitol is a beautiful facility, with a staff that is eager to welcome us and accommodate our unique schedule and needs. Incidentally, for those concerned about the difficulty and price of parking downtown, the hotel is providing complimentary valet parking for hotel guests and complimentary onsite parking for all conference attendees.

In this issue you will find detailed information about the upcoming conference as well as registration forms for both the conference and the hotel (for your convenience, you may also choose the online option at our conference website: <http://www.michiganmusicteachers.org/conferenceRegister.php>). I hope you will peruse the schedule and find much that will attract you. Registering early will save you a bit and aid us in planning, so please don't delay!

Sincerely,

Gary

Garik Pedersen, NCTM  
MMTA Vice President

**CONFERENCE-IN-DETAIL**  
**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16**

**1:00 p.m. Opening Remarks: Dr. Penny Draper, MMTA President**

**1:15-2:30 p.m. General Session 1: Christopher Azzara, Conference Clinician**

**“Developing Musicianship through Improvisation”**

Improvisation in music is the spontaneous expression of meaningful musical ideas – it is analogous to conversation in language. As presented here, key elements of improvisation include personalization, spontaneity, anticipation, prediction, interaction, and being “in the moment.” Interestingly, we are born improvisers, as evidenced by our behavior in early childhood. This state of mind is clearly demonstrated in children’s play. When not encouraged to improvise as a part of our formal music education, the very thought of improvisation invokes fear. If we let go of that fear, we find that indeed we are improvisers. Improvisation enables musicians to express themselves from an internal source and is central to developing musicianship in all aspects of music education.



Pianist, arranger, author, and educator, **Christopher Azzara** has made important contributions to advancing the understanding of creativity and improvisation in the music learning process. An innovator in the area of music teaching and learning, Dr. Azzara is Professor and Chair of Music Education and Affiliate Faculty of Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media

at the Eastman School of Music. Teaching and performing internationally, he is the author of numerous articles, arrangements, and books, including *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation*.

His research and publications are concerned with meaningful relationships among listening, creating, improvising, reading, composing, and analyzing music in vocal and instrumental settings. Dr. Azzara's work has appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Music Educators*

*Journal, Early Childhood Connections*, and in *The New Handbook of Research on Music Teaching and Learning* (MENC/Oxford). He performs as a soloist and in various ensembles, including the *Chris Azzara Quartet*, and has played on and produced many studio and educational recordings.

In Rochester, he performs with free-lance musicians, members of the Eastman School of Music Faculty, and members of the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. An active teacher and clinician, he has presented and performed extensively throughout the United States, and in Canada, Germany, France, Lithuania, Poland, and Japan. He has presented clinics and workshops in a variety of settings, including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and leading music schools in this country and abroad.

Dr. Azzara's sessions will focus on developing musicianship through the use of personalization, spontaneity, anticipation, prediction, interaction, and being "in the moment" in the context of improvisation.

**2:30-2:45 p.m. BREAK**

**2:45-4:00 p.m. General Session 2: Chris Azzara, Conference Clinician**

**" Teaching Improvisation: How to Get Started"**

According to the National Standards for Music Education, everyone should be teaching improvisation. How do students learn to improvise? Where do I start? This session will provide a common sense approach that improves your musicianship and that of your students—making connections for general, vocal, and instrumental teachers at all levels of instruction and experience. Participants will be introduced to practical techniques designed to: (1) improve musicianship; (2) develop improvisation skills in a variety of musical styles; (3) include improvisation as an integral part of teaching and learning; (4) define relationships among improvisation, reading, and composition; and (5) assess student learning.

**4:00-4:15 p.m. MMTA Business Meeting I: Treasurer's Report**

**4:15-4:30 p.m. BREAK**

**4:30-5:45 p.m. MMTA/MMTA Winner's Recital**  
**Margarete Thomsen, MMTA-SAT Auditions Chair**

**MTNA and MMTA Winners' Recital**  
**Sunday, October 16, 2011**  
**4:30 p.m.**

**Program**

Waltz in E Minor, Op. Posth.	Frederic Chopin
Isabelle Lian MMTA SAT Finals, Intermediate Piano Izabella Vilensky, teacher	
Allegro (Sonata in F Major, Op. 10, No. 2)	Ludwig van Beethoven
Caleb Lei MMTA Concerto Competition, Junior High Mary Siciliano, teacher	
Nocturne in C-sharp Minor, Op. Posth.	Frederic Chopin
Naomi Yamaguchi MMTA Concerto Competition, Elementary 1-3 Catherine Rollin, teacher	
<i>Une barque sur l'océan</i>	Maurice Ravel
Elizabeth Xiong MTNA East Central Division Junior Piano Catherine Rollin, teacher	
Scherzo in B Minor, Op. 20	Frederic Chopin
Heather Gu MMTA Concerto Competition, Elementary 4-6 Mary Siciliano, teacher	
<i>Waldenrauschen</i>	Franz Liszt
Yuanshe Zhong MMTA SAT Finals, Junior Piano Mary Siciliano, teacher	
Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Op. 45	Frederic Chopin
Heather Shen MMTA Concerto Competition, High School Logan Skelton, teacher	
Sonata No. 1 (1990), First Movement	Carl Vine
Scott Sherman MMTA SAT Finals, Senior Piano Catherine Rollin, teacher	
Nuclear Child Games (1995) 2. An Old Love Song 4. About Life	Babur Tongur
Akropolis Quintet: Tim Gocklin, oboe; Kari Dion, clarinet; Matt Landry, saxophone; Andrew Koepp, bass clarinet; Ryan Reynolds, bassoon MTNA Senior Chamber Music Competition Jeffrey Lyman, teacher	

**6:00-8:00 p.m. DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

**8:00 p.m. Recital featuring Daniel Knaggs, 2011 MMTA Commissioned Composer (Charles Aschbrenner, Chair), followed by**

***Scherzi senza complicazione,*  
featuring local artists (see performer's photos and bios below; program will  
be available at the conference)**

Capitol Area Music Teachers Association invites you to a reception following the recital in the Concierge Lounge, directly across from the elevators on the eleventh floor of the hotel.

### **Program**

**Streams for String Quartet (String Quartet No. 1)**

**Daniel J. Knaggs**

**2011 MMTA Commissioned Composer**

(Names of performers not available at press time)

"In many ways, *Streams* is about the process and mystery of inspiration. I spent a good portion of three consecutive days, simply trying to begin... and nothing would come to me until the third day. What came to me on the third day of my struggle to start this piece was a musical depiction of the sudden-like nature of inspiration: it can come when you least expect it and it can be far from you when you want it most (as in this case). So the beginning of *Streams* portrays this "being-visited" by the Muse in surging, wave-like phrases of music that give way to a simple and initially fragile motive which is to gradually emerge as the unifying DNA of the piece.

"The textures of *Streams* occasionally thicken with unisons between the four instruments in rising and falling motions which suggest rapids or crashing waves. At other points the textures evaporate into sprays, droplets, and mist... rippling and glistening splashes of color that can all be characteristic of streams of water. Thus,



*Streams* is somewhat of a meditation on the mysterious "streams" that flow from within the one who is inspired..."

**Daniel J. Knaggs** (b.1983), native of southeast Michigan, is a concert composer, arranger, producer, and vocalist working in a wide range of media and styles. He has lived in France, Mexico, and Nicaragua and many aspects of these diverse cultures and languages find their way into his music.

As a concert composer, Daniel's work has received multiple awards

from ASCAP. He was awarded first prize in the 2011 International Musica Sacra Composer Competition, resulting in performances in Poland, Lithuania, and the UK of his *Hic est discipulus ille*. In the blindly-judged 2010 International Sacred Music Competition for Composers, he won four out of the six prizes, resulting in four premieres at the Basilica of the National Shrine, Washington, D.C. in 2010. As winner of the Centenary Hymn Competition for the Diocese of Toledo, his *Magnificat* (2009) was televised on a national broadcast by EWTN on October 7, 2009. In addition, his *Quem Pastores Laudavere* (2006-10) won the 2010 Indianapolis Symphonic Choir Commission Competition, leading to the piece's premiere and performances in three cities in Indiana. Three of his compositions were winners to be performed in Boston Metro Opera's 2011 Contemporary Americana Festival. Daniel's thesis composition *Hope Reaching Beyond the Limit*, received the BGSU Graduate College's 2010 Distinguished Thesis Award. Additionally, his *Amen Alleluia!* received honorable mention as a finalist in the 2010 Commissioning Competition for the Choral Arts Ensemble of Rochester, Minnesota. His *Three Nature Songs* were chosen to be performed at the 2010 New Voices Festival at Catholic University of America and his *Flujo y Reflujo* (2008) was featured on The Electronic Arts & Music Festival of Miami, Florida. He was also named a finalist in the Young New Yorkers' Chorus 2011 Composer Competition and second place winner in the Third Millennium Ensemble's 2011 Composer Competition.

Recent commissions include *Streams* (2011) for string quartet by the Michigan Music Teachers Association, *Iucunda Lux* (2011) by the Young New Yorkers Chorus, *Quem Pastores Laudavere* (2010) by the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, *Anastasis for violin and piano* (2010) by St. Anastasia Church's 2011 Festival "Art for God's Sake", *Three Nature Songs* (2008) by the Xanthos Ensemble of Boston, *Alla Luna* (2008) by soprano Sara Emerson, and *Songs of Life and Time* (2006) by soprano Dr. Kirsten Kunkle.

Daniel completed his master's degree in Music Composition at Bowling Green State University in 2009 and graduated in 2007 from the University of Michigan with bachelor's degrees in voice performance and Spanish. His composition teachers include Bright Sheng and Marilyn Shrude. He is presently a full-time Spanish teacher at Fr. Gabriel Richard High School in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

**CONFERENCE-IN-DETAIL**  
**Monday, OCTOBER 17**

**9:00-10:15 a.m. General Session 3: Chris Azzara, Conference Clinician (find Christopher's bio at General Session 1)**

**“How was my solo? Learning to improvise Meaningful Solos”**

Using repertoire as a foundation, this hands-on session will provide practical, accessible ideas for learning to improvise. It will address specific sequential techniques for teaching and assessment, including learning repertoire, patterns and hearing chord changes, spontaneity, interaction, improvising melodic phrases, developing musical ideas, and seven skills for learning to improvise.

**10:15-10:30 a.m. BREAK**

**10:30-11:30 a.m. Teacher Education Session, Sara G. Carriere, Chair**

**“Online Video Pedagogy at the University of Michigan”**

The UM Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) awarded a grant to Prof. John Ellis to create the Online Video Pedagogy Program. The program has equipped all the teachers in the pre-college program (PPLP) with digital cameras so that they can create instructional videos for their students and post them on a custom-made, interactive webpage. The Online Video Pedagogy Program uses digital video technology to encourage learning and teaching to continue throughout the week. Graduate Student Instructors in the program will demonstrate how they have used this technology in their teaching.

**11:30-1:00 p.m. LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

**1:00-2:15 p.m. General Session 4: Chris Azzara, Conference Clinician**

**“Music Literacy that Goes Beyond the Page”**

This interactive session will explore the relationships among music listening, improvisation, reading and composition. With an understanding of how these skills are related, participants will be able to implement sequential curriculum that will help their students learn how to improvise, improve reading comprehension, compose original ideas, gain deeper understanding of literature, and sing and play with better intonation and rhythm.

**2:15-2:30 p.m. BREAK**

**2:30-3:15 p.m. Independent Music Teachers Forum Session, Thea Hoekman, Chair. Three invited presentations by selected college student members:**

- 1. “Piano Pedagogy Outreach: Inspiring Young Pianists in Urban Detroit”**
- 2. “Absolute Pitch Development in Children and Adults”**
- 3. “Using the imagination to improvise”**

**Piano Pedagogy Outreach: Inspiring Young Pianists in Urban Detroit.** This presentation will explain the unique opportunities provided to Piano Pedagogy students at Michigan State University by working at the Cornerstone School in urban Detroit, while exploring the possibilities of outreach opportunities like this at other institutions in Michigan.

**Absolute Pitch Development in Children and Adults.** A presentation of field research to test a method (developed by the presenter) of developing absolute pitch in both children and adults through the use of learned melodies. Absolute pitch, commonly known as “perfect pitch,” is the musical ability to perceive auditory stimuli so as to produce and/or label sound(s) without the aid of an external source.

**Using the imagination to improvise.** Just as there are many definitions and kinds of improvisation, there are many different reasons to improvise. My students and I improvise because it is fun! It also helps us understand rhythm, melody, and harmony in context, and makes building greater vocabulary (content) meaningful. It frees us to “play” in the true sense of the word, giving time and place for developing good technique in a creative way. The repertoire used for this presentation includes selections of nursery rhymes, folk tunes, and gospel songs

**2:15-2:30 p.m. BREAK**

**3:30-4:15 p.m. College Student Chapters Breakout Session, Adam Clark, Chair.**

**“Questions and Answers with college student presenters”**

**3:30-4:15 p.m. Student Achievement Testing Breakout Session,  
Diana Munch, Chair**

**“Choosing Repertoire for SAT: Beyond Clementi, Op. 36, No. 1,” Dr. Adrienne Wiley, presenter.**

**4:15-5:00 p.m. Certification Breakout Session, Debra Culver, Chair.**

**“Preparing for the Pedagogy and Fugue Analysis Exams”**

**5:00-5:30 p.m. BREAK**

**5:30-6:00 p.m. Cocktail Reception – Cash Bar**

**6:00-7:45 p.m. Gala Banquet**

**8:00 p.m. Gala Concert: Douglas Humpherys, Conference Artist**

**DOUGLAS HUMPHERYS, Pianist  
MMTA Conference Artist**

**Program**

Fantasia in C Major H. XVII: 4	Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809)
Sonata in A Minor D. 784 Allegro giusto Andante Allegro vivace	Franz Schubert (1797-1828)
Choral et Variations	Henri Dutilleux (born 1916)
pause	
Adagio in B Minor K. 540	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)
Sonata in B Minor	Franz Liszt (1811-1886)

**Douglas Humpherys – Conference Artist**

Douglas Humpherys was the Gold Medalist at the inaugural Gina Bachauer International Piano Competition. Since then, his performance career has taken him across Asia, Europe, North America, and South America. During recent years, he has performed solo concerts in many of the major cities of Asia, including Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Seoul, Tokyo, Cheng-Du, Chongqing, Dalian, Guangzhou, Shenyang, Wuhan, Xiamen, Xian, Taipei, Kaohsiung, and Tainan. In Europe, he has concertized in the cities of Berlin, Hamburg, Moscow, Novgorod, Prague, Venice, and Dublin, with additional concert engagements in Germany, the Czech Republic, Montenegro, and Serbia. He has presented concerts throughout the United



States and Canada, and in the summer of 2008 he traveled to Buenos Aires to perform, teach and adjudicate for *Teachers Del Norte-Pianists del Sur*, a project sponsored in part by the United States Embassy in Argentina.

In high demand as a teacher, he has taught literally hundreds of master classes at universities, conservatories, music academies, and festivals throughout the world. In addition, he has presented lectures to the European Piano Teachers' Association, the Music Teachers' National Association, the World Conference on Piano Pedagogy, and the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy.

In addition to tonight's concert, Dr. Humpherys will teach a master class and present a session entitled "Notation = Character: Using the Details of Notation to Develop Personal Expressive Qualities in Performances of Classical Repertoire."

## **CONFERENCE-IN-DETAIL**

**Tuesday, OCTOBER 18**

**9:00-10:15 a.m. General Session 5: Douglas Humpherys, Conference Artist  
(find Doug's bio at Gala Recital above).**

**“ Using the Details of Notation to Develop Personal Expressive Qualities in  
Performances of Classical Repertoire”**

Current piano students are faced with the challenge of meeting the expectations of audiences that have become used to listening to "note-perfect," and frequently highly-edited recordings. In search of ways to demonstrate individuality and spontaneity in performance, young artists are tempted to impose a personal agenda on music that was written two hundred years ago. In actuality, close attention to the details in the score provides an endless source of possibilities for expression and communication in performance. This lecture will discuss several selected works by Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven in terms of finding ways to translate notation into expressive character.

**10:15-10:30 a.m. Business Meeting 2**

**10:30-11:45 a.m. General Session 6: Master Class with Douglas Humpherys,  
Conference Artist.**

**11:45-12:00 noon. Conference Wrapup**

**See you next year in Ann Arbor!**



**MICHIGAN MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**  
**126<sup>th</sup> Annual State Conference**  
**October 16, 17, and 18, 2011 ~ Lansing, Michigan**  
**CONFERENCE AND MEAL REGISTRATION**  
(note online registration also available-  
<http://www.michiganmusicteachers.org/conference.php>)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Association: \_\_\_\_\_ Certification: State National

**REGISTRATION FEES:**

Advance Conference Registration: MMTA Member  
(registration after October 6 - \$ 65.00) \$ 60.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Advance Conference Registration: non-MMTA Member  
(registration after October 6 - \$ 75.00) \$ 70.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Registration: MMTA Member's spouse \$ 35.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Student Registration Waived \_\_\_\_\_

**MEAL RESERVATIONS:**

Monday Evening Banquet: \$ 28.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Please select one Banquet Entrée: Tax and gratuity are included in price

\_\_\_\_\_ Pecan Chicken: Pecan, Mustard Crusted Chicken Breast, Leek Mashed Potatoes, Vegetable Medley, Madeira Jus

\_\_\_\_\_ Grilled Chicken Breast: Spicy Couscous, Fennel-Aople Marmalade, Glazed Carrots, Cumin Jus

\_\_\_\_\_ Atlantic Salmon: Roasted with Wild Mushroom and Fingerling Potato Ragout, Green Beans, Vegetable Coulis

\_\_\_\_\_ Tricolored Tortellini: Tricolored Tortellini sautéed with Fresh Spinach in Marinara Sauce, Asparagus

Entrées include Market Salad, Assorted Bread Basket and Sweet Creamery Butter, Dessert, and Freshly Brewed Starbucks\* Coffee and Decaffeinated Coffee and Selection of Bigelow Teas.

**TOTAL ENCLOSED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONFERENCE AND MEAL ADVANCE REGISTRATION DEADLINE: October 6, 2011**

Please mail this registration form and check (payable to MMTA) to:  
Diana Spitnale Miller, MMTA Treasurer, 3352 W. River Dr., Gladwin, MI 48624-9730  
For more information, contact: Garik Pedersen, MMTA Vice President and Conference Chairman  
Phone (734) 487-1427 Email: [gpedersen@emich.edu](mailto:gpedersen@emich.edu)

**Michigan Music Teachers Association  
126<sup>th</sup> State Conference  
October 16 –18, 2011**



**RADISSON HOTEL LANSING**

Radisson Hotel Lansing at the Capitol  
111 N. Grand Ave.  
Lansing, MI 48933

**Directions:** From 496 west, take exit 7A to Grand Ave. Hotel is on the left.

**Parking:** Complimentary valet parking provided for Conference attendees

**Check-in:** Reserved rooms are available by 4:00 p.m. on the day of check-in. Baggage storage available at the front desk.

**Reservation Information**

- **To receive group rate, you must identify yourself as a Michigan Music Teachers Association participant when calling to make your reservation.**
- Room reservations received after 9/15/11 will be subject to availability and higher room rate.
- **To Reserve Room, call** Radisson reservations at 1-800-333-3333 or call the hotel directly at 517-482-0188. Reservations may also be made by logging on to the web address at [www.radisson.com/lansingmi](http://www.radisson.com/lansingmi). Use the **Promotional Code: MMTA11** to receive the discounted group rate.
- **Radisson Hotel Lansing at the Capitol is a 100% non-smoking facility**

**Group: Michigan Music Teachers Association - October 16- 18, 2011**

- Please Reserve: \_\_\_\_\_ Rooms for \_\_\_\_\_ # of people **(Credit Card or Advanced Deposit required)**
- Request room with: King Sleep Number/Sofabed \_\_\_\_ Two Double Sleep Number Beds \_\_\_\_ Rollaway \_\_\_\_

Name:	<b>Rates</b>		
Address:	Single: 89.00	Double: 89.00	
Phone:	Triple 89.00	Quad: 89.00	
City	State:	Zip:	Plus state & local taxes, 13%
Will arrive:	Day	Date	Total per night: \$100.57
Will depart:	Day	Date	
Indicate payment type:	Credit Card	Check	Money order
Credit card type, number and expiration:			
Signature of card holder:			

## **“Manna from Heaven”**

Many, many months ago our immediate past President Adrienne Wiley asked if I would serve MMTA in some capacity akin to being “College Faculty Representative” or something to this effect. It seemed like a good idea and the plan was to try and start a regular column about the perceived “disconnect” between private teachers who often send their more successful and motivated students on to the collegiate teacher’s applied studios across our state. My job was to try and address the issues at hand and perhaps provide a forum to help clarify and improve communication and ultimately create more pedagogical contact between these seemingly disparate groups of teachers. Our current President Penny Draper has asked me to publish this in hopes of starting a discussion among MMTA members.

I confess to have struggled with the worst case of writer’s block on this subject, initially unsure how or where to begin. Perhaps due to the hectic work load that has not let up since joining the faculty at Albion College, I was clearly intimidated how to accomplish the task of writing this column. After a recent conversation with a close and respected private teacher colleague at MMTA, I joked about how it seemed that perhaps the supply of prospective talented piano students is more akin to “Manna from Heaven”, yet more and more, we face a generation where multi-tasking and serious concerns abound in the minds of young musicians who understandably worry in this economy about how they can financially sustain themselves through professional careers in music.

We all know that the number of students presently pursuing classical music has declined precipitously over the past few decades. Should we have cause for concern? Obviously. What can we as teachers (both college and pre-college) do to help address this problem? Clearly if there was a magic answer, someone could undoubtedly sell it for a tidy profit!

I remember years ago when I was first hired as a relatively “green” assistant professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, my well known and long tenured predecessor did me an enormous professional courtesy by writing every teacher in the state MTNA, introducing me and letting them know of his unwavering support for me as his replacement. When I subsequently learned that recruiting had essentially dried up at this institution following the gradual retirement of four full-time tenure/tenure-track piano faculty down to one, I immediately wrote my own personal letter volunteering to come to their city, local teacher’s organization, or even their individual studio to meet with them and/or their students. My idea was to volunteer to serve in any capacity that they wished whether it be performing, teaching, talking to teachers individually or as a group about any topics of interest to them, or any combination of the above. I received a fair number of positive responses but not as many as hoped— again emphasis on my “inexperience” at the time! What I did learn then and months afterwards through letters I received as well as casual conversation, was that many teachers were impressed, and happy to know that a professor from the flagship state University was willing to come out of their “ivory tower” and meet with them. Imagine my surprise and shock after going to one city in the most western part of Nebraska, and discovering that the local teachers there had not had ANY contact with faculty from my institution in 15 years!

One of the many marvelous benefits with membership in MMTA is the Lecture Bureau which provides members a list of lectures on a variety of topics presented by both private and collegiate teachers. By participating in this program, I became acquainted with members in many local associations and ultimately developed an enormous respect for the many outstanding teachers that I have come to know here. After judging our annual Albion Piano Festival last Fall, Tim Shafer of Penn State University told us that he felt the level of pre-college piano students and teaching here in Michigan was overall superior to that of his own state!

Clearly these lectures and potentially any individually organized visits by collegiate faculty are positive steps to strengthen and develop greater ties between the pre-college and collegiate instructor. But isn’t there more that could be done?

This is the point where Penny, Adrienne, and I all earnestly hope to solicit your feedback and ideas. What can we as private, pre-college teachers and college professors do to develop a professional relationship that is mutually beneficial and potentially even more fruitful for all concerned? Certainly this forum could be a platform for members to share pedagogical topics and teaching tips. I’m sure there are many of you out there who have much to contribute!

Clearly we are all stronger when working together as one unified teaching group with a mutual goal—that of helping to develop as many outstanding young musicians as possible. I welcome your ideas and implore you to write me directly by email at: [dabbott@albion.edu](mailto:dabbott@albion.edu) This will undoubtedly be a short-lived column without the critical input of your ideas necessary to move this process forward. With a little member support and interaction, we could all benefit from new insights through the experience of others. What better way to develop our organization than by sharing a lively exchange of ideas that affect us all so directly on a daily basis? I look forward to hearing from many of you soon!

-David Abbott

## 2012 SAT Semi-Finals and Finals

Margarete Thomsen has been working hard on the SAT audition process and procedures. All the procedures are available now in EPUB format (e-reader) as well as in PDF and Word. In addition, a checklist is available so that every procedure is covered in a timely manner.

Semi-finals are scheduled for Saturday, April 14, 2012. While the deadline for semi-final applications is midnight, April 1, 2012, we encourage online registrations to take place as soon as possible after the local SAT testing. The locations for semi-finals will be available at the October Conference. Finals will be at the Michigan State College of Music on Saturday, May 5, 2012.

Finals rule change: at the summer board meeting the motion was made that every teacher with a student at the finals – not just those with 2 or more students – will need to be at the finals or provide a qualified substitute.

### Teacher Education Corner

At this time of year we are probably all giving interviews to prospective students. We do these interviews for several reasons. First; to determine if the child is ready for piano study and if you are a good fit for him/her. Also we like to find out what kind of environment the child has at home and how supportive the parents will be. We often have to educate the parents as to all that is involved in piano study. If the student is a transfer we look for their skill level development. The best way to answer the above questions is to give a mini lesson. Play a rhythmic game, play play-backs on the piano, sing a well-known song, and teach them a simple rote song so they have something to take away from your meeting. With transfer students we ask them to sight read a piece and play something they have prepared. Probably we use past SAT tests to check their knowledge of theory and keyboard skills or by asking questions about their piece. Parents appreciate a teacher who is professional and business-like so make your policy very clear. Stress the need to honor your time schedule and fee structure. It saves time when it is possible to send parents your policy before the interview. They often come with prepared questions. The interview should feel open-ended, with time for discussion and evaluation at home before a decision is made. Lastly, try to do all of this in 30 minutes..... Good Luck!

Sara Carriere  
Teacher Education Chair

### I AM INTERESTED IN THE MMTA CERTIFICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

***Make Check for \$5.00 Payable to MMTA***

Send to:

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2635 PERRY LAKE ROAD  
ORTONVILLE, MI 48462  
(248) 793-3060  
culverpianostudio@gmail.com

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October 27-30, 2011

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Barry Snyder and Natalya Antonova  
from the Eastman School of Music

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Piano Duo
- Beginning / Early Intermediate  
Intermediate  
Late Intermediate / Advanced

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Contact Lisa Reed (517)-629-0481  
[lreed@albion.edu](mailto:lreed@albion.edu)  
[albion.edu/music](http://albion.edu/music)  
Registrations due October 18