

DUET

newsletter

March 2025

**ROCHESTER PIANO TEACHERS GUILD, INC. &
GREATER ROCHESTER MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOC.**

from Kathy Whitlock, Co-President

I've been using this indoor time to sort through my saved articles in the hopes of reducing that collection. I came across the following that was sent years ago by our children's elementary principal. It made me think again that we, as teachers, really don't know how our students will "turn out". We can recognize talent, but we can't always know the perseverance that's intrinsically in the child who appears not to have talent. These examples are good reminders that we should remain optimistic and teach each child as if s/he will become some-

one great. They just might!

Einstein couldn't speak until the age of 4, and he couldn't read until age 7.

F. W. Woolworth's employers refused to allow him to wait on customers because he "didn't have enough sense".

Louisa May Allcott was told by an editor that her writings would never appeal to the public.

Caruso's music teacher told him that he had "no voice at all".

Louis Pasteur was rated as "mediocre" in chemistry at Royal College.

Winston Churchill failed 6th grade.

Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper editor because he had "no good ideas".

Henry Ford was evaluated as "showing no promise".

Fred Waring once failed to get into his high school chorus.

Glen Gould's music teachers at the preparatory Conservatory program he was in said he "was a poor student and showed no promise".

So teach on, dear teachers, with hope in your hearts!



from Teddy Carr, Co-President

I'm always amazed by the collective talent, scope and reach of our RPTG membership. Congratulations to Elinor Freer and Sarah Rhee-Tirr . Elinor performed with the RPO on January 26, the "Carnival of the

Animals" by Saint-Sa ns along with pianist Chiao-Wen Cheng. Sarah Rhee-Tirr  performed with violinist Tigran Vardanyan and cellist Zachary Sweet their Faculty Recital on February 2 as the Nazareth Piano Trio. The pro-

gram included Piano Trio No.1 by Jennifer Higdon, Beethoven's Piano Trio in E-flat Major, Op. 1, No.1 & Piano Trio No.1 in C minor, Op.8, by Shostakovich.

Inside this issue:

Pedagogy Workshop: Nancy O'Neill Breth	2
Nominations for the RPTG Slate of Officers	2
American Composer Series: Catherine Rollin	2
Gold Cup Festival Report	3
from Catherine Rollin, ACS Guest	3
Calendar for March and April	3
GRMTA Junior All-Stars Competition	4-5
Recitals	6

Special points of interest:

- American Composer Series
Catherine Rollin
Saturday, March 29 at Linehan Chapel
- Junior All-Stars Piano Competition
May 31 & June 1 at Nazareth University
- Piano Pedagogy Workshop
Nancy O'Neill Breth
June 23-24 at Nazareth University

Pedagogy Workshop: Nancy O'Neill Breth June 23-24, 2025 at Nazareth University



Nancy O'Neill Breth

The Pedagogy Committee is delighted to announce that Nancy O'Neill Breth will serve as the featured clinician for this year's Pedagogy Workshop! Ms. Breth is the esteemed author of *The Piano Student's Guide to Effective Practicing* and *The Parent's Guide to Effective Practicing*. A nationally recognized pedagogue based in the Washington, D.C. area, she has earned acclaim for her expertise in piano education. Students from the Breth studio are frequent laureates in local, state, and national competitions, and several have been

featured on National Public Radio's *From the Top*.

Ms. Breth's expertise extends far beyond the studio. She has presented at numerous Music Teachers National Association conferences and chaired the Technique track at Pedagogy Saturday in 2024.

This year's Workshop will be held at Nazareth University, from **Mon., June 23rd to Tues., June 24th**. Ms. Breth's lectures will cover the following topics: "*Go Home and Practice!*", "*Technique Without Tears*", "*Sight-Reading for Life*", and "*Mapping &*

Memory." She will also lead a masterclass, and we encourage you to begin preparing your students for this exceptional opportunity. Additional details regarding selection will be shared in the coming months.

Ms. Breth's contributions as a teacher, adjudicator, and clinician are of considerable significance to the field. We are truly honored to welcome such a distinguished figure in piano pedagogy to our Workshop. Please mark your calendars—we look forward to a rewarding and inspiring couple of days with all of you!

RPTG 2025-26 Slate of Officers Nominations

The Nominations Committee has announced its slate of officers for the coming year and, as our Constitution requires, it has been approved by the Board. The ballot will be in the May Duet and on the Website, also in May. It is as follows:

President:
Sarah Rhee-Tirré
Vice-President:
Teddy Carr
Recording Secretary:
Kathie Ross
Corresponding Secretary: Elier Suárez
Co-Treasurers:
Stephanie Mercer and
Brian Preston

Many thanks to the Nominating Committee for their excellent work, as well as to these prospective officers for accepting this responsibility. The Guild is very grateful to you.

American Composer Series: Catherine Rollin

Hello Everyone, the American Composer Series with Catherine Rollin in person is just around the corner. A few friendly reminders first. Students must bring original music for Catherine to autograph. We ask that they bow before and after their performance. The schedule for Saturday March 29, at Linehan Chapel, Nazareth University is as follows:

Recitals at 10 and 11 AM

Noon-1 PM, teachers gather in the Community Room opposite the Chapel. Bring a bag lunch. (Coffee, tea and snacks will be provided.)

1-2 PM Catherine Rollin: "Human Imagination or AI" presentation.

Afternoon recitals at 2:30, 3:30 and 4:30.

Everyone is welcome, including students to her energetic presentation. Even though the deadline for the application is

March 8, 2025, it would be helpful if teachers either email or phone either of us the student and what they are playing. Every year we try to give a door prize of a solo and we try and to get one at the same level or above. Alfred publishing will be swamped early March with MTNA orders, so we may have to order their door prize earlier than before. Feel free to call either of us. Thank you, Co-chairs Teddy Carr & Diane Habeeb

**American
Composer Series**

**with
Catherine Rollin**

**Saturday
March 29, 2025**

**Linehan Chapel
Nazareth University**

Gold Cup Festival Report

Thank you to the 37 piano teachers who had their 333 students participate in the 2025 Gold Cup Festival at the Nazareth University School of Music on January 25. Congratulations to all the students who performed, and kudos to the teachers who selected and taught the music to their students. The festival was a huge success!

At the three Honors Recitals on February 1 in Naz-

areth's beautiful Linehan Chapel, 46 students performed their solos that had been selected by the judges. Each student received a beautifully personalized certificate.

The festival committee sincerely appreciates all the teachers who volunteered on festival day as room monitors, registrars, scorers, runners, and for setup and cleanup.

We are also extremely

grateful to Nazareth for providing ten rooms and foyer space in the School of Music all day for the festival, and for the all-day use of Linehan Chapel in the Golisano Academic Center to hold makeups and the Honors Recitals. We extend a special thank-you to Jacob Ertl and Sarah Rhee-Tirre for coordinating our space usage at Nazareth.

When we have all the certificates and Stadt

Stars ready, individual teacher reports printed, and gold cups and NAA trophies ready, teachers will be notified by email when they can pick up their materials.

From the 2025 Festival Committee:

Jeanne Strong
Ria Senobroto
Sarah Rhee-Tirre
Beth Fischer
Teddy Carr

from Catherine Rollin, American Composers Series Guest

She is looking forward to once again seeing so many RPTG & NYSMTA members on Saturday March 29 at 1:00 PM in Nazareth University's Linehan Chapel. Her topic to be discussed is called:

Human Imagination or AI.

She will have a model of her composing style and speak about how imagery, artwork imagery in particular, has opened up a whole world of creativity. She will be talking

about what she has seen in her students response to artwork imagery.

"I want to celebrate the potential of human imagination! I will share short excerpts of many of my pieces, including

several from the new NFMC bulletin. Students and guests are all invited."

**See you soon,
Catherine**

Calendar for March and April

March

March 7, Friday, 10 am
RPTG Board meeting
Home of Kathy Whitlock

March 8, Saturday
Deadline for ACS
Applications. Contact
Teddy Carr:
585-264-0065, or
teddycarr55@yahoo.com

March 9, Sunday
Howard Hanson Auditions, Nazareth University

March 15, Saturday
NYSMTA District 12 **SAP**
Technique Exam (in-person/zoom) Nazareth University. Contact
Bonnie Choi:
bchoi6@naz.edu

March 15 Saturday
Deadline for NYSMTA
SAP Repertoire only.

Contact Bonnie Choi:
bchoi6@naz.edu

March 23, Sunday, 7 PM
Howard Hanson Winners' Recital - Wilmot Hall, Nazareth University

March 24, Monday
Deadline for H.S. Seniors, Student and Teacher April 6th recital applications. Applications at **RPTG** website
Contact Beth Fischer:
beth@bethfischerpiano.com

March 29, Saturday
American Composer Series 2025 - Visiting Composer Catherine Rollin Nazareth University, Linehan Chapel. Contact
Teddy Carr:
585-264-0065, or
teddycarr55@yahoo.com

April

NGPT Auditions. Contact
Wendy O'Brien:
brucelegacystudios@gmail.com

April 1, Tuesday
Postmark Deadline for NYSMTA **SAP** Theory Exam. Send to: Kym Schifino, 19 Farm Field Lane, Pittsford, NY 14534

April 6, Sunday
Student and HS Senior Recitals plus RPTG Teachers Recital Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs Street, Rochester, NY 14607

April 15, Tuesday
Deadline for May Duet Newsletter.
Email submissions to
Elier Suárez:
elier@elier.com

April 27, Sunday
Postmark Deadline for Junior All-Stars Piano Competition Contact
Beth Fischer:
beth@bethfischerpiano.com

April 30, Wednesday
Deadline to apply for Laura Heilbronner Scholarship. Contact
Brian Preston:
bmp@rochester.rr.com
Further information on page 26 of the handbook

**GRMTA presents
The Junior All-Stars Competition for Piano
May 31 & June 1, 2025**

About the competition...

This event will provide a forum to represent the very highest level of achievement of Rochester Area piano students. The auditions will be Saturday, May 31st at Nazareth University's Wilmot Recital Hall. Contestants will receive brief written comments from the judges. A Winners Recital will be held on Sunday, June 1st at 3 PM also at Nazareth University's Wilmot Recital Hall.

Eligibility...

Open to all young pianists who have not yet entered their senior year in high school and are residing or studying in Monroe, Genesee, Livingston, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, or Yates Counties. Previous "First Prize" winners may not compete until eligible for the next level.

Repertoire requirements...

Each contestant will perform three memorized pieces of contrasting styles. Concertos are not permitted. There is no time limit on a contestant's program, but the length of each audition will be strictly limited. Students playing longer pieces must expect to be stopped partway through.

Please remember that Photocopied Music not in the public domain is illegal!

Levels..... Time Allowed

I.....born 2015 and after.....	6 minutes	
II.....born 2013-2014.....	7 minutes	
III.....born 2011-2012.....	8 minutes	
IV.....born before 2011*.....	10 minutes	*(but not yet a high school senior)

Prizes...

1 st Prize.....	\$60
2 nd Prize.....	\$45
3 rd Prize.....	\$30
Classical Prize for Levels II & III.....	\$25 Sonatina/Sonata movement or shorter work by: Beethoven, Clementi, Diabelli, Dussek, Haydn, Kuhlau, Lichner, Mozart, Reinecke or Spindler.

Prizes are awarded at the discretion of the judges who do sometimes withhold prizes.

Prizewinners and Honorable Mentions must perform at the Winners Recital or forfeit their prize and certificate.

Judging...

Two distinguished judges will evaluate each level based on polished performances regardless of the pieces' difficulty.

Fee: \$28.00 per student – make check payable to NYSMTA (fee is non-refundable except in the event of COVID-19 cancellation)

Postmark Deadline: April 30th, 2025 late and/or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Each contestant **MUST** send: 2 self-addressed, **stamped** envelopes (4.125 in. x 9.5 in.), a signed check made out to NYSMTA for \$28, and a completed application form.

Mail to: Beth Fischer—JASC Chair, 333 Ayrault Road, Fairport, NY 14450

Contact info: beth@bethfischerpiano.com

**GRMTA presents the Junior All-Stars Competition for Piano
May 31 & June 1, 2025**

APPLICATION

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Level Number and Date of Birth

Name

How to pronounce it

Telephone

I acknowledge receipt and review of all rules and regulations of the competition. I certify that the information provided is correct and will accept the decision of the judges as final. I understand prizes might not be awarded and that refusal to accept the judges' decision will exclude me from further participation.

Student's Signature and Date

TEACHER INFORMATION:

Name

Telephone/Email

Teacher's Signature and Date

Mail to: Beth Fischer—JASC Chair, 333 Ayrault Road, Fairport, NY 14450
Include: 2 self-addressed, stamped, white, business size envelopes, signed check payable to NYSMTA and completed application form

**ROCHESTER PIANO TEACHERS GUILD,
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**DUET is also on the Web at:
rochesterpianoteachers.org**

Recitals

Looking ahead...

Sunday, April 6th Regular student recital: 1:30pm Teacher recital: 3:00pm. Start planning your repertoire! Ensembles/solos/duets are welcome. Senior Recital: 4:00pm, reception to follow Location: Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs St., 14607 Application deadline - Monday, March 24th

Apply two ways:

1) Online application, electronic payments via PayPal @rptguild \$5.65 per student to cover processing fee

2) Paper application and check for \$5 per student, mail to Beth Fischer, 333 Ayrault Rd., Fairport 14450 ATTN: RPTG Recitals

QUESTIONS? Email beth@bethfischerpiano.com



Our annual holiday recitals were held on Sat., Dec. 14th. Congratulations to all of our performers!