DUET

Newsletter **November 2026**

Rochester Piano Teachers Guild, Inc. &
Greater Rochester Music Teachers Assoc.

A NOTE FROM THE RPTG PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Our opening membership meeting and recital set a wonderful tone for the year ahead, bringing together colleagues to share in music and fellowship. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the gathering such a success. It was a pleasure to welcome new members and reconnect with colleagues as we begin another year together.

I am also thrilled to share that the Rochester Piano Teachers' Guild has been nominated for MTNA's Local Association of the Year Award! This recognition is a wonderful reflection of the energy, dedication, and spirit of our membership. Our Guild continues to grow and make a meaningful impact, not only within our local piano teaching community but also throughout the broader music teaching profession. This nomination is something we can all be proud of!

I look forward to seeing many of you at the NYSMTA State Conference this weekend. It is exciting to see so many RPTG members actively involved in this wonderful event, both as participants and presenters. Our members continue to share their expertise, support one another, and make meaningful contributions to the larger music teaching community.

Looking ahead, we are especially excited to celebrate RPTG's 70th anniversary at our annual banquet on November 7. This milestone offers a wonderful opportunity to honor our long-standing members, reflect on our rich history, and celebrate the generations of teachers who have helped shape our organization.

Thank you for being part of this special community. I look forward to all that this season will bring!

Sincerely,
Sarah
RPTG President



Brian, Nicole & Sarah

Gold Cup Festival
Saturday, January 30th
Nazareth Univ. School of Music

American Composer Festival
Saturday, April 10th
Nazareth Univ. School of Music

Piano Pedagogy Workshop
Mon. & Tues., June 21st & 22nd
Nazareth Univ. School of Music

2027 STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

Technique Exam
(in-person/zoom)
Saturday, Mar. 13, 2027
Nazareth University

Theory Exam
Postmark: Thursday, Apr. 1, 2027
Send completed Exam to: Kym Schifino, 19 Farm Field Lane, Pittsford, NY 14534

Repertoire Exam
(in-person/zoom/video)
Saturday, May 22, 2027
Nazareth University

Registration Fee: $33/student

Deadline: January 15, 2027 for full or partial program or March 15, 2027 (Repertoire only)

Register Online

Payment: *Check payable to*
NYSMTA District 12
Send to
Bonnie Choi
Nazareth University, School of Music
4245 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14564

CALENDAR FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

November

November 1, Sunday
National Guild of Piano Teachers Auditions deadline – To participate in Spring 2027 Auditions you must contact: Wendy O'Brien at brucelegacystudios@gmail.com

November 2, Monday
Gold Cup online registration opens - Application on RPTG website: Gold Cup Festival

November 7, Saturday. 4:00 pm social hour with 5:00 pm recognition and dinner for 70th Anniversary Celebration at Rooney's Restaurant. More information to follow. Please RSVP to Brian Preston - 58minton@gmail.com

November 13, Friday
Deadline for Howard Hanson Audition applications. Send to Beth Fischer. More information on pages 13-14 of the RPTG Handbook.



November 13, Friday, 10:00 am
Program: "Tame your Stagefright" presented by Paula Bobb. The piano is on stage, the lid fully open. Imagine you are playing it for an audience. How do you feel? Do you notice any uncomfortable sensations in your body? Any annoying thoughts? Come to this workshop with your stagefright, pain or any other stress and anxiety. Let's see if EFT Tapping and Paula can send you home a little lighter!
Location: St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church - 28 Lincoln Ave., Pittsford, NY 14534. RSVP to Sarah Barford: Barfordpiano@gmail.com

December

December 4, Friday
Deadline for December 12th Holiday/Winter Student Recital Applications. Application at www.rochesterpianoteachers.org. For more information contact Beth Fischer: beth@bethfischerpiano.com

December 5, Saturday
Deadline to submit Gold Cup Festival applications
Application on RPTG website: Gold Cup Festival

December 12, Saturday, 1:30 pm
Student Holiday/Winter Recital at Resurrection Lutheran Church
3736 St. Paul Blvd.
Rochester, NY 14617

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

HOWARD HANSON AWARD

The deadline for Howard Hanson Applications is Nov. 13, 2026. Please send the application fee of $30 to:

Beth Quimby Fischer
Phone/text: (585) 203-6030
Applications: Online / By Mail

The Hanson Auditions are Sun., 3/7/26 and the Winners Recital is on Sun., 3/21/25 at 7 PM in Wilmot Recital Hall.

RPTG PROGRAM: "TAME YOUR STAGEFRIGHT" WITH PAULA BOBB

Hi Everyone,
For the November program, please bring a pencil/pen, water bottle, and 1 or more pieces of music that would create stress, anxiety, or physical tension if you were to perform it.

If you have zero stagefright, please bring something (a thought, worry, fear, annoyance, etc.) that causes you stress or anxiety.
Thanks!
Paula

Friday, November 13 at 10:00 AM
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
28 Lincoln Ave., Pittsford, NY 14534
RSVP to Sarah Barford:
Barfordpiano@gmail.com

FROM GOLEC MUSIC STUDIO

Golec Music Studio received the following recognition in the past few months.

Recipient:
2026 Better Business Bureau Torch Award for Ethics
2026 International Association for Business Excellence Award
2026 Trusted Business Award
2026 Global Recognition Award

Finalist:
2026 ROC the City Choice Award (Best Professional Services)

Cover stories: October 2026, The BizInsight Global Magazine; September 2026, The CEO Verse Magazine; September 2026, The Leader Spheres Magazine; September 2026, The Executive Excellence Magazine; September 2026, The Executive Lens Magazine; September 2026, Silicon Magazine; August 2026, CEO World Leaders Magazine; August 2026, CEO Time Magazine; August 2026, CIO Women Magazine; July 2026, The Enterprise World Magazine; May 2026, Bold Journey Magazine (interview)

The Studio's next charity event is on 11/8/26 at 1 PM (see attached poster).



FALL STUDENT RECITAL

"We hope you will join us for RPTG's annual Fall/Halloween Recital on Saturday, October 24th at 2:00 pm. This year we are at an exciting new venue - **ARTISANworks**, located at 565 Blossom Road, Suite L. Applications are still being received. Reach out to Beth Fischer (beth@bethfischerpiano.com) with questions."



2027 AMERICAN COMPOSER FESTIVAL



Jeanine Nellis Yeager is a native of Dayton, Ohio. In high school, she was guest piano soloist with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. She attended the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, where, as an accompanist for the Conservatory dance department, she became skilled at keyboard improvisation. Her long-standing love for contemporary dance and improvisation is reflectd in her more meditative, interpretive compositions. Mrs. Yeager completed her Bachelor of Music degree in piano at Capitol University; she received her Master of Music degree in theory and composition from the Ohio State University. Mrs. Yeager has given numerous lecture-performances of her compositions. She is a member of Sigma Alpha Iota, the Dayton Music Club, and Dayton Piano Teachers Study Club. As a composer, Mrs. Yeager has had sixteen piano collections published by the Neil A. Kjos Music Company of San Diego, California. In the January 1990 issue of Clavier Magazine, the department, *Commissioned by Clavier,* featured her composition, *Silent Tears*, from the collection *Sincerely Yours*, published by Kjos. In the summer, 1991 issue of Keyboard Companion magazine, she contributed an article, as guest author, for the department *From the Inside Out: Motivation*, Joyce Cameron, editor. The article covered the topic: "What music motivates children to enjoy playing?" This is one of Mrs. Yeager's chief goals as a piano teacher - to motivate students to enjoy playing piano. She feels strongly about a teacher's responsibility to learn to know and respect each student's individual personality differences in order to select music which will speak to them personally.

Aside from teaching piano and composition, Jeanine lives with her husband, Bob, "Little House on the Prairie style," in the lower level of a home they are building. The Yeagers are definitely "happy campers" on their hillside, overlooking a beautiful valley. Their 87 acres of woods, ravines, streams, and some pasture land make their outdoor life an ever-changing pleasure, including spring wild-flower walks in the woods, berry-picking and apple cider-pressing in the summer, cutting and hauling firewood in the fall, and tromping through snowy woods in winter. Jeanine appreciates the inspirational value of this serene, secluded life style, which activates musical creativity ranging from the sensitive, meditative, introspective, interpretive type, to the more energetic, almost athletically vigorous type - and much in between! It is not surprising that composition and out-door life are Jeanine's favorite activities.

MEMORIES FROM THE FIRST PROGRAM OF THE YEAR

Celebrating the opening membership meeting and brilliant recital at Barbara Noval's followed by a splendid reception.



Elier, Brian, Stephanie, Nicole, Sarah & Teddy



Barbara

NAZARETH UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Guest Artist Recital and Masterclass -
Dr. Richard Fountain
(https://richardfountainpianist.com/)
Monday, November 9, 2026
Wilmot Recital Hall
Masterclass - 12:30 pm
Recital - 7:00 pm

Recital Program:
Bach - Italian Concerto
H. Hanson - "Desire" from Poemes erotiques, Op. 9
Ives - The Alcotts
Glass - Etude No. 2
J. Williams/arr. Fountain - Raiders of the Lost Ark
Beethoven/Liszt - Symphony No. 6 "Pastorale"



Dr. Richard Fountain

NAZARETH UNIVERSITY PIANO COMPETITION WINNERS

Featured Composer:
The American Landscape

Young Pianist Division

1st Prize - Ella Lee-Dank, Fairport, NY, student of Sarah Rhee

2nd Prize - Niya Ninova, Westbury, NY, student of Veselin Ninov

Honorable Mention - Jimmy Liu, Pittsford, NY, student of Elier Suárez

Honorable Mention - Emilia Kamiev, Manlius, NY, student of Elena Nezhdanova

Honorable Mention - Jessica Zheng, Rochester, NY, student of Jianyi Gu

Honorable Mention - Tim Zhou, Ithaca, NY, student of Jessica Cacaporizzo

Junior Division

1st Prize - Alex Chang, Pittsford, NY, student of Elier Suárez

2nd Prize - Noah Lee-Dank, Fairport, NY, student of Sarah Rhee

Diversity Prize - Alice Liu, Pittsford, NY, student of Violeta Arakelova

Honorable Mention - Alan Wu, Pittsford, NY, student of Elier Suárez

Honorable Mention - Alice Liu, Pittsford, NY, student of Violeta Arakelova

Senior Division

1st Prize - Christian Hsieh, Glen Head, NY, student of Veselin Ninov

2nd Prize - Timothy Suen, Webster, NY, student of E-Na Song

Diversity Prize- Charlotte Anderson, Fairport, NY, student of Elier Suárez

Honorable Mention - Hanwen Li, Pittsford, NY, student of Elier Suárez

Honorable Mention - Max Thiele, Pittsford, NY, student of Kym Schifino

Honorable Mention - Albert Hill, Orchard Park, NY, student of Roberta Swedien

Judges

Young Pianist Division:
Dr. Yi-Wen Chang
Dr. Claudio Espejo

Junior Division:
Dr. Bonnie Choi
Dr. Ben Hopkins

Senior Division:
Dr. Beverly Smoker
Dr. Gary Fisher

PIANO PEDAGOGY WORKSHOP

Planning is well underway for our 2027 Pedagogy Workshop! Our clinicians (yes, plural!) are the husband-and-wife team, Christopher and Katherine Fisher. Katherine is the esteemed author of The Piano Safari Curriculum, and Christopher has authored multiple books, notably Teaching Piano in Groups. Both artists work with students from young children up through collegiate students. They perform together as The Fisher Piano Duo.

Sessions will include topics like motivating students, working with parents, the transformative power of music, and pedagogical history. The Fishers will be performing a two-hand concert, as well as teaching a masterclass. Keep your students in mind for this inspiring event!

The Workshop will be held at Nazareth University School of Music, Mon-Tues, June 21-22, 2027. Please mark your calendars and prepare your students! We look forward to a motivational and educational couple of days with all of you!
Best,
Tasha George-Hinnant and Jacob Ertl
Piano Pedagogy Workshop Chairs

NYSMTA STATE CONFERENCE INVITATION

Join us this Saturday, October 17, for the 2026 NYSMTA State Conference at SUNY Onondaga Community College (Syracuse, NY)!

While online registration has closed, walk-in registration will be accepted! (Please note that lunch may not be provided for walk-in registration.)

$55 NYSMTA Members
$70 Non-members
$0 Students

This biennial, in-person NY state conference offers a full day of engaging and interactive events from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM, including:

- Conference Guest Artist: Dr. Logan Skelton
- Commissioned Composer: Pamela Sklar
- Lecture Forums: Eleanor Gummer and Bonnie Choi
- Lightning Talks Session

We look forward to seeing you in Syracuse!

Best wishes,
Tasha George-Hinnant and Asami Hagiwara
NYSMTA VPs for Conference

NEW YORK STATE MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Rochester Piano Teachers Guild, Inc.
70 years
1956 - 2026

RPTG, Inc. & GRMTA DUET NEWSLETTER

Elier Suárez, Editor
158 Highland Parkway
Rochester, NY 14620

DUET is also on the Web at:
rochesterpianoteachers.org

GOLD CUP FESTIVAL REMINDERS!

November 2 Online Application opens

December 5 Online Application closes

See Events tab for Application on the RPTG website.