



# GEORGIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024

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## GMTA TEACHER OF THE YEAR 2023

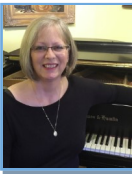
### JOE CHAPMAN

Dr. Joe Chapman, 2023 Georgia MTA Teacher of the Year, began his teaching career fifty years ago when—at the age of sixteen—he inherited a handful of piano students from his oldest sister who had just graduated from college. He says he's not sure what, if anything, those students learned over the next couple of years, but he learned quite a bit about pedagogy, psychology, and perseverance. His teen years were enriched by participation in a well-established music program at Hixson TN High School, where he marched in the band, performed in musicals, and toured Europe as the choir accompanist. After high school he commuted to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga where he earned his first of three degrees in piano performance. While at UTC, he continued teaching piano, served as pianist at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, and accompanied two college choral ensembles and the Chattanooga Boys Choir.



**GMTA President-Elect Kristi Helfen with the 2023 Teacher of the Year Dr. Joe Chapman at the Conference Banquet**

Joe's graduate school experience at the University of South Carolina featured piano study with noted Canadian pianist, Raymond Dudley. His assistantship as the arranger and assistant director of Carolina Alive, the university's pop choral ensemble, provided further opportunities to tour both domestically and to Central America and Africa. After completing his master's degree, Joe returned home to Chattanooga where he balanced four



## 2023 TEACHER OF THE YEAR, CONTINUED

BY KRISTI HELFEN, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT-ELECT

part-time music positions for the next two years. In 1983, he accepted a full-time teaching appointment at the University of North Georgia (then North Georgia College) where he remains today. During his early years at North Georgia, he completed course work, recitals, and dissertation for a doctorate in piano performance at USC. He says those were the hardest years of his life, career, and marriage – that they don’t call it a terminal degree for nothing!



2023 TOTY Joe Chapman with his students at the Conference Banquet

Over the past forty years at UNG, Joe has taught music theory, conducted choirs, bands, and orchestra, and, of course, served as the instructor for a variety of piano-related courses. He is the founder and director of the All-American Piano Celebration (now in its 36<sup>th</sup> year), which provides an opportunity for pianists of all levels to participate in the promotion of live performance of American piano music. Additionally, he has directed various church and community choirs, accompanied numerous soloists and ensembles, and presented over one hundred solo piano concerts for arts

associations, schools, churches, and colleges throughout the state of Georgia. He has served the profession in a variety of roles, including a term as president of GMTA. He is currently the president of the Northeast Georgia Music Teachers Association and an advisor for the Georgia Musicale Group. Joe and his wife Janey have five adult children with diverse careers: firefighter, research analyst, mechanic, and two professional musicians. He says his teaching goal – now as always – is to make a positive impact on the next student who walks through his studio door.

After reading the student letters that came in his support, one can certainly attest to the fact that he has achieved this goal and much, much more. Our heartfelt congrats to you, Joe, on being selected as our 2023 Teacher of the Year!

You can read more about Joe Chapman at the [GMTA Teacher of the Year website](#).

Joe’s Teaching Tips appear on [page 10](#) of this newsletter.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

CATHY THACKER, NCTM, GMTA PRESIDENT

Happy New Year and best wishes for success in 2024! I hope that 2024 will be your greatest year ever.

Thank you to my wonderful board members for your willingness to serve GMTA and your local associations; I truly appreciate your giving spirit. Thank you, also, to our Executive Director, Mandy Reynolds, for your many contributions to our association. All of us depend upon Mandy for her expert knowledge.

The 2023 GMTA State Conference was wonderful, thanks to our VP of Programs Dr. Jeri-Mae Astolfi, NCTM, her committee, and Executive Director Mandy Reynolds! Shorter University, Dr. Jerico Vasquez, Professor Amy Neal, and the Shorter collegiate MTA chapter were very hospitable and accommodating, and we thank you for hosting us. Congratulations to the Shorter Collegiate Chapter for being honored as GMTA’s 2023 Collegiate Chapter of the Year. Congratulations to Middle Georgia MTA for being chosen as GMTA’s 2023 Local Association of the Year.



Shorter University MTNA Collegiate Chapter

Our conference at Shorter University was well attended by 128 members, including 57 collegiate members, who were enthusiastic assistants at Dr. Kageyama’s sessions. His presentations focused on practice and performance strategies, topics helpful to both teachers and students. Simone Dinnerstein was our Conference Recitalist and Master Class Clinician. She gave an amazing concert Friday evening and was very insightful with the Master Class participants the following morning.



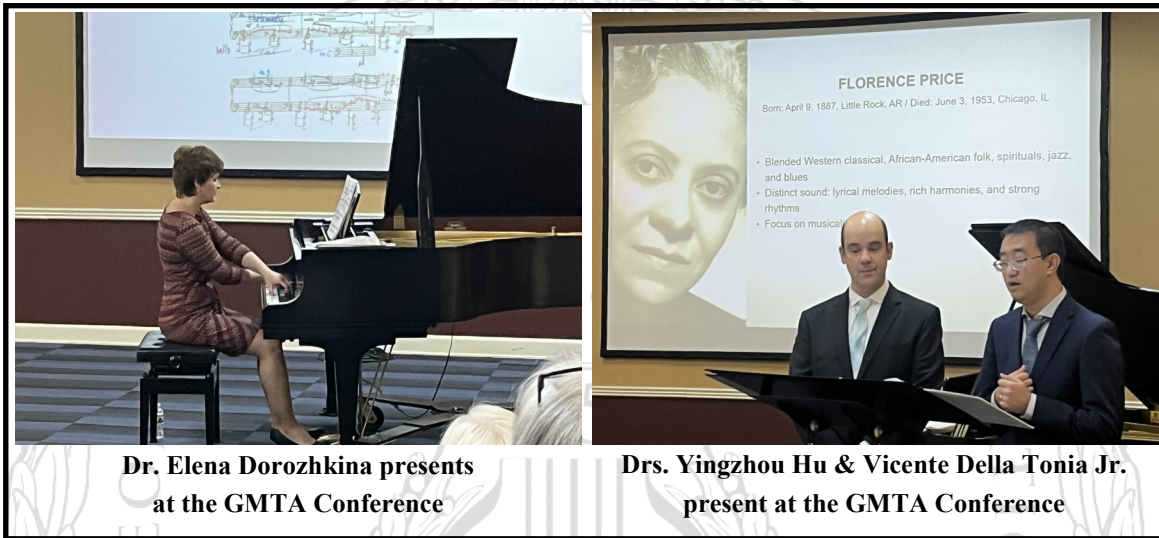
Noa Kageyama Session at the GMTA Conference



Simone Dinnerstein Recital at the GMTA Conference



Our Georgia’s Own presentations offered great variety in both subject matter and presenters; some sessions were pedagogical in nature, and others focused on repertoire or composers. At the Friday afternoon business meeting, four \$400 GMTA Grants were given. These grants have an easy application process, so please consider applying for one next year. The business meeting was followed by the premiere of the commissioned work, *Stages, A Student’s Journey*, by Brandon Walker, scored for saxophone and string trio. Numerous talented students were highlighted in the various MTNA and GMTA Winners’ Recitals.



Dr. Elena Dorozhkina presents at the GMTA Conference

Drs. Yingzhou Hu & Vicente Della Tonia Jr. present at the GMTA Conference

The Friday evening banquet was held in the Price Learning Center on Shorter’s campus, where we enjoyed a delicious meal. One newly certified member, Graceanne Starr, NCTM, was recognized, as well as two 50-year members: Susan McDuffie and Mary Owens, NCTM. Dr. Joe Chapman of Northeast Georgia MTA received the much-prized GMTA Teacher of the Year Award for 2023. Joseph “Joey” Hokayem, NCTM, of Athens MTA, and David Watkins, NCTM, of Cobb County MTA, were honored as upcoming 2024 MTNA Foundation Fellows.

Speaking of conferences, we are already making plans for next year’s conference, to be held on November 7-9, 2024, venue TBA. Mark it on your calendar, and I hope to see you there!

The 2023 MTNA Competitions were organized by Dr. Yanni Chan and held on the campus of Piedmont University. It was my pleasure to assist on Saturday at these competitions. Congratulations to all of our students and teachers who represented GMTA in the MTNA Southern Division Competitions. Thank you to Piedmont University for hosting the competitions.



GMTA President Cathy Thacker with David Watkins at the Conference Banquet



Looking ahead, GMTA offers Auditions, GATE and GMTA Theory Tests for your students. Please pay close attention to all registration deadlines for these events. You can find complete information online at our website under the Student Activities tab. Always look for your Constant Contact each month to stay up-to-date on important news. Additional information can also be found online within our newsletters at the GMTA website.

The 2024 MTNA Conference will be held in Atlanta on March 16-20, 2024, and I look forward to representing Georgia there. I hope that many of you will attend as well. Please email me ([president.georgiamta@gmail.com](mailto:president.georgiamta@gmail.com)) if you plan to go to the Gala, as we have reserved two tables for GMTA members. The aforesaid members, Joey Hokayem and David Watkins, will be honored as MTNA Foundation Fellows at the Gala. At the annual business meeting, Middle Georgia MTA, President Chenny Gan, will be honored as MTNA's 2024 Local Association of the Year. We are proud of the accolades that our state is garnering.



GMTA President Cathy Thacker celebrates a successful GMTA Conference with Jerico Vasquez and Amy Neal



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## 2023 CONFERENCE REPORT

JERI-MAE ASTOLFI, NCTM, GMTA VP OF PROGRAMS

The 2023 GMTA conference was held from November 2-4 on the beautiful campus of Shorter University in Rome, GA. Many thanks to Shorter University and the Edith Lester Harbin Department of Music for hosting us, especially to professors Jerico Vasquez and Amy Neal along with their students and colleagues who not only helped to prepare for the event, but who were also on hand to help during the event (including the student shuttle chauffeurs!). Thank you, also, to members of the Rome MTA for the wonderful hospitality they provided throughout the conference.

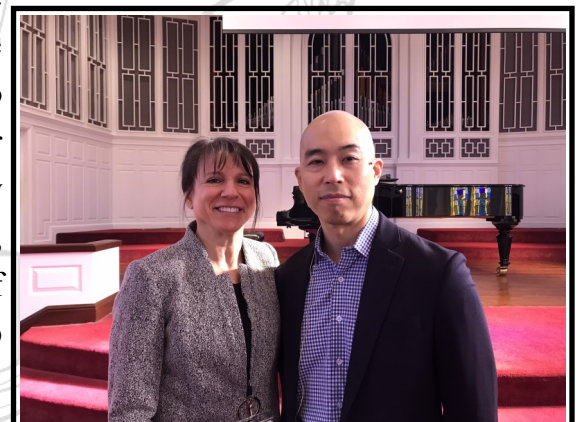


**Dr. Geoffrey Haydon (left) and Dr. Owen Lovell (right) present at the GMTA Conference**

It was a full and inspiring few days for the nearly 130 attendees (which included almost 60 collegiate students)! Throughout the course of the conference, 16 general sessions were offered by GMTA members and non-members, including four sessions that involved ten collegiate members. Session topics ranged from studio management tips to pedagogical approaches and ideas, to repertoire and composer explorations.

Our Pedagogy Headliner, performance psychologist Dr. Noa Kageyama, author and founder of *The Bulletproof Musician*, kicked off the first of his three interactive sessions (thank you, fearless audience volunteers!) with “Practice that Sticks” where we explored research and experimented with various practice techniques used by elite performers to improve more quickly and to become more confident in their ability to play their best on the first try. The second session, “Becoming More Pressure-Proof,” explored two causes of “choking” under pressure and two ways that inner chatter can be quieted so that states of flow can be more consistently achieved. Dr. Kageyama’s final session on Friday morning, “Beating Performance Anxiety” led us through the components of performance anxiety and a three-part strategy designed to help students perform to their full abilities under pressure. Dr. Kageyama’s sessions were thoroughly engaging, entertaining, enlightening, and addressed issues relevant to the broad scope of our audience.

Our Pedagogy Headliner, performance psychologist Dr. Noa Kageyama, author and founder of *The Bulletproof Musician*, kicked off the first of his three interactive sessions (thank you, fearless audience volunteers!) with “Practice that Sticks” where we explored research and experimented with various practice techniques used by elite performers to improve more quickly and to become more confident in their ability to play their best on the first try.



**GMTA VP of Programs Jeri-Mae Astolfi with Pedagogy Headliner Noa Kageyama**



On Friday afternoon, following the GMTA business meeting, we were treated to the premiere performance of the new composition written by GMTA’s 2023 Commissioned Composer, Brandon Walker, *Stages, A Student’s Journey*. This four-movement work for soprano saxophone (Brandon Walker), violin (Ben Cork), viola (Amanda Zhang), and cello (Fayha Polite), depicts four stages of student learning: The Discovery, The Exploration, The Mastery, The Celebration. The performance was followed by dialogue with the artists and questions and answers between the audience and the artists.



Brandon Walker (right) joins premier performance of *Stages, a Student’s Journey*



Cork, Zhang, Polite, and Walker with GMTA Commissioning Chair David Peoples



Simone Dinnerstein performs at the GMTA Conference

Our Conference Recitalist and Masterclass Clinician, American pianist Simone Dinnerstein, mesmerized us with her performance on Friday evening. The program featured pieces by François Couperin, Phillip Glass, Erik Satie, and Robert Schumann, all from Dinnerstein’s 2022 album, *Undersong*. Dinnerstein explained to the audience that the pieces she was about to perform consisted of musical forms that had a refrain, as rondeaus, and therefore, the pieces would be performed without a break between them. The repeated

curtain calls and standing ovation from an enthusiastic and appreciative audience yielded the performance of Phillip Glass’ Etude No. 6 as an encore.

The following morning, Ms. Dinnerstein returned to conduct a piano masterclass of Grades 9-11 student winners from the 2023 GMTA State Auditions. Akin to her performance on Friday evening, Ms. Dinnerstein’s suggestions were both thoughtful and thought-provoking.



Simone Dinnerstein with GMTA Master Class participants



Alongside all of these incredibly inspiring performances and sessions, the conference was peppered with student winner performances, showcasing students from grades 2 through collegiate who were winners at the 2023 GMTA State Auditions and/or the 2023 GMTA/MTNA Competitions. A special thank-you to Dr. Vicente Della Tonia (GMTA VP of Auditions) and Dr. Yanni Chan (GMTA VP of MTNA Competitions) for coordinating the many logistical details of these student concerts. Another special thank-you is also due to Shorter University’s music faculty for their varied and engaging vocal and instrumental performances on Thursday evening with selections ranging from Gounod to Gershwin to Piazzolla.



**GMTA President Cathy Thacker at the Conference Banquet**

Other highlights of the conference include those who received special recognition. During the Banquet on Friday evening, which was held at Shorter University’s stunning Price Learning Center, Dr. Joe Chapman was named the 2023 GMTA Teacher of the Year, Dr. David Watkins and Joey Hokayem were each named MTNA Foundation Fellows, Susan McDuffie and Mary Owens were acknowledged as GMTA 50-year members, and Graceanne Starr was recognized as GMTA’s newest Nationally Certified Teacher of Music. At the business meeting earlier in the afternoon, Po Kwan Enman, Peter Fielding, Heather Hancock, and Gloria Park were each awarded with GMTA Grants.



**Exhibitors at the GMTA Conference**

And of course, throughout the conference, Mandy Reynolds (GMTA Executive Director) and Mary Ann McTier (GMTA Awards Committee Chair and MTNA Foundation Chair) were on hand at the Registration Table and Awards Table, as were all of our friendly exhibitors over in the Art Gallery.

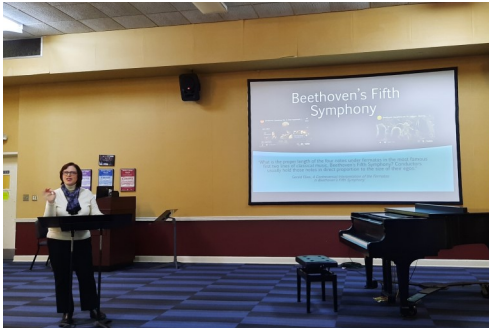
Finally, but certainly not least, there is a special trio of GMTA personnel who must be acknowledged and thanked, for without whom, this conference would not have been the success it was: GMTA President, Cathy Thacker, who was instrumental in

conference planning (even before my term began!) as well as throughout the event; GMTA President-Elect, Kristi Helfen, who, having served as the VP of Programs for the previous two years, was always available and willing to help or advise throughout the planning process and event; and of course, GMTA’s Executive Director, Mandy Reynolds, who, besides tending to the many conference details associated with her role, kept us all informed and on task – thank you, all!

Plans have already begun for the 2024 conference which will be held on Nov. 7-9—please make plans to join us!



## GEORGIA'S OWN PRESENTATIONS



## CONFERENCE BANQUET



## CONNECTING WITH FRIENDS & COLLEAGUES





### *What do I need to do to get my student ready for college?*

Having taught piano at the University of North Georgia for forty years now, I have developed an appreciation for this earnest question arising from the heart of a dedicated studio teacher. And having been the recipient of a plethora of new students with wildly varying backgrounds over the years, I can truly say – as far as I am concerned – that there is no such thing as a “typical” entering freshman pianist. Occasionally I find a well-rounded student but, more often than not, that eager face gracing my door is one-dimensional:

“The entire focus of my piano lessons was prepping for that next competition.”

“I don’t read notes very well, but I’m perfectly happy if you put me in front of a chord chart.”

And more recently . . . “Hey dude, I’m just like totally into video-game music, you know.”

Whether the student is looking for a music career as a teacher or performer or whether the academic goal is elsewhere and music is intended only to provide an expressive outlet for lifelong enrichment, my Christmas wish as an instructor would be to find a stocking filled with a variety of small goodies, rather than one beautifully wrapped package, no matter how big it may be. With that in mind, here are my “teacher tips” for pre-college teachers of piano and - by extension - teachers of any medium. For rememberability, I borrow from the age-old academic principle of covering all of the Three R’s of education.

#### *Three R’s*

**Reading** – Help me avoid that disheartening audition moment after listening to a well-played sonata, only to discover that my new student can’t sightread his way out of a paper bag. Please, please, please teach your students to sightread. For best results, do not allow them to look at their hands while sightreading. Cover the keys with a foam board or poster paper lodged between the keyboard lid and the music rack. Give students lots of material to digest by having them read through an entire method book (a grade or two lower than the student’s level) in one week. Tell them to play each song only once, no matter how good (or bad) it is and then turn the page and move on. Encourage them with whatever incentives you have available.



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#### **NORTH DEKALB MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

Miao-Fen Lin, President  
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Derek Vann, VP of Membership  
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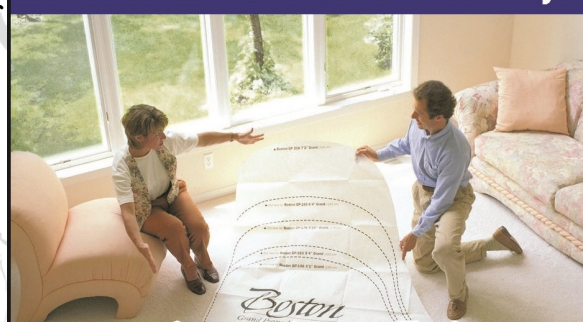
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**wRiting** – In addition to encouraging students to try their hand at writing their own compositions, this category could include music theory training of any kind. Entering students in GMTA theory events, preparing scales, arpeggios and chord progressions (musicianship phases) for Guild, and including discussion of form and analysis in weekly lessons are all great ways to expand musical horizons. You would be surprised to learn how many college freshmen don't fully understand how musical expression is affected by things like non-chord tones, chromaticism, and cadences. Further, learning the art of improvisation can provide a great complement to theory and composition study. Encourage your students to go beyond the printed page – unless of course you're working on Mozart at the moment.

**Repertoire** – Yes, I am perfectly aware that 'Rithmetic is the third R, and yes, I acknowledge that a certain amount of mathematical acuity is necessary for musicians to be able to negotiate rhythms and meter, but it seems more appropriate here to end with a discipline-specific finale. A richly-rounded repertoire consisting of a broad mix of popular music (perhaps including the aforementioned video-game soundtrack), church music, classical selections from different periods, and student compositions and improvisations provides a wonderful preparation for an aspiring collegiate musician in my opinion. Spreading the love around to a variety of genres probably means that the student arrives at my door having learned sonatinas rather than sonatas and mazurkas rather than a ballade, but I (for one) am never disappointed when I inherit a learner with a diverse background of intermediate literature experiences who is ripe and ready to roll.

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MARY ANN MCTIER, GMTA AWARDS CHAIR

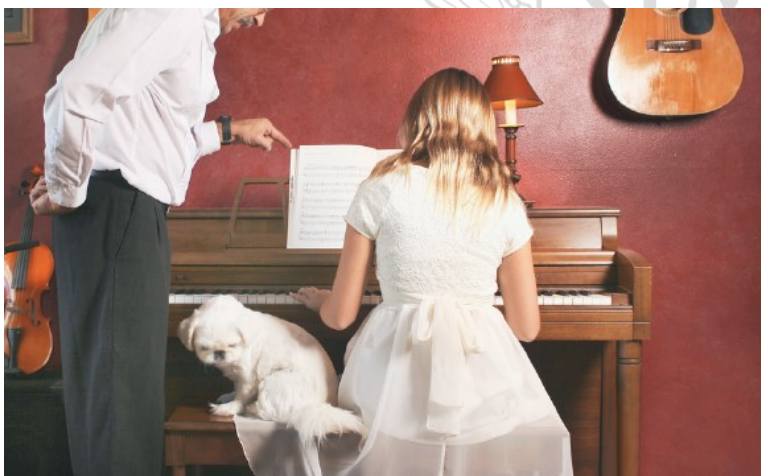
**GMTA GENERAL AWARD FUND RAFFLE:** Teachers gathered expectantly for the raffle held on Saturday of the state conference at the conclusion of the master class. Thanks to our local associations, we had two tables filled with baskets, envelopes with gift cards and other prizes waiting to be chosen for about 20 lucky teachers! Cathy Thacker drew names, and excited winners began to peruse the goodies in search of their treasure. Many thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets in support of the GMTA Awards Fund. These funds provide student awards at the GMTA Auditions and MTNA Competitions. Senior winners from the 2023 MTNA Competitions were Stephanie Kim, Eugenie Lim, and Maria Sara Maghiar.

**GMTA NOLTING AWARD IN COMPOSITION:** This award is given at the GMTA Conference each year to first-place winners in the MTNA Student Composition Competitions for the state-level competitions in each age category: elementary, junior, senior, and young artist. Each student receives \$100. This year's winners were Mitchell Kuang, Brody McLaughlin, and Peter Hellewell.

**GMTA BROADHURST AWARD IN PIANO:** This award is presented annually at the GMTA conference to the winners of the MTNA Junior and Senior Piano Performance Competition. Each student receives \$200. This year's winners were Ryan Eugene Lee and Kimiko Kathryn Darcy. **GMTA BETTY H. WHITE AWARD FUND:** This \$400 award is presented annually at the GMTA Conference to one of the GMTA Teacher Grant recipients for a student in financial need. The recipient for this year was Gloria Park.

**MTNA FOUNDATION RAFFLE:** Through the generosity of Piano Works, we were again able to raffle a hydraulic piano bench for our MTNA Foundation raffle. The ticket holder who received this year's bench is Ruth Mantooth! Thank you to everyone who purchased a ticket to support MTNA Foundation.

**EDUCATOR GRANTS:** The GMTA annual budget provides for several teacher grants each year. Members submit an essay outlining their desired use for the monies should they receive them, and the executive board reviews the essays and determines the winners. Our GMTA teacher grant recipients are Po Kwan Enman, Peter Fielding, and Heather Hancock. Congratulations to these teachers!



*We are committed to supporting piano teachers and students on their musical journeys!*



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## GMTA is excited to announce James A. Devor as the 2024 GMTA Commissioned Composer

James A. Devor is an American composer, sound artist and double bassist whose music searches to implement an array of experimental sounds while grappling with human emotions. He recently completed his MM in music composition at The Hartt School – University of Hartford in 2023 and has received BMs in music theory/composition and music education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania. James' private instructors include Libby Larsen, Robert Carl, Ken Steen, Daron Hagen, Robert Maggio, and Gilda Lyons. He has been a participant at Song Source – MNSong, New Music on the Point, Wintergreen Composer's Retreat, Sō Percussion Workshop, Sewanee Winterfest, and the European American Musical Alliance.



Most renowned for his lyrical yet modern approach to American art song, James has had his music performed across the globe. Most recently, his work has been heard at NACUSA National Conference, the Annual Research on Contemporary Composition Conference at University of North Georgia, and the Contemporary Music Lab at the European University of Cyprus.

Above all, James' music implements a vast set of experimental sounds, timbres, and colors, all the while being solidly focused on collaborating with performers and audience engagement. His recent work has delved into how live electronics can enhance and supplement the sound of musicians in real time. Find more at

[www.jdevormusic.com](http://www.jdevormusic.com).

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bleaptrott@brenau.edu  
678.613.8723

**COLLABORATIVE PIANO**





The 2023 MTNA state competition were held at the Piedmont University Conservatory of Music on October 27-28th. Special thanks to Dr. Jeri-Mae Astolfi, Kimber Kwiatkowski, Grace Li, and Dr. Yingzhou Hu for their tremendous support in organizing the competition and help with hospitality and on-site duties.

There were 96 entrants participating this year, including 7 composition entries. We were pleased to have a great Winners Recital with 4 performers during the GMTA conference at Shorter University in November. Southern Division results will be posted on the [GMTA website](#) soon.

Georgia had 13 winners and 3 state representatives move on to the Southern Division video round. The deadline for submitting videos was December 6. The winners of the Southern Division will proceed to the final round at the National Conference, March 16-20, in Atlanta, Georgia.

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Congratulations to all GMTA Audition teachers and students who shared their talents at the GMTA Conference this past November! What incredible performances in the masterclasses and recitals, bravo everyone!



**GMTA Auditions Pre-College Winners  
with Dr. Vicente Della Tonia  
at the 2023 GMTA Conference**



**GMTA Auditions Concerto Winners  
at the 2023 GMTA Conference**

We are happy to announce that the State Auditions will take place on April 12-13, 2024, at Piedmont University, in Demorest, Georgia. Regional Auditions will continue with the virtual format, while the Local Auditions are at the discretion of each Association, so please consult with your Association.

For Auditions this year, we will be using a new platform called Tenuto. We encourage you to submit your students' applications earlier to allow yourself time to be familiarized with this new platform.

Please be aware that the registration deadline for GMTA State Auditions Pre-College Piano Concerto, Piano Grade 12 and Piano Duet, along with Local Auditions, GMTA Theory Test and GATE is **January 15, 2024**. For additional information about GMTA Auditions, visit the [GMTA Website](#) and click on "Student Activities." Information about the required GATE (Georgia Auditions Theory Exam) is available [here](#). I'm looking forward to your students' participation in the State Auditions!

## NORTH FULTON MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

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**Amy VanderLugt, NCTM**  
**NFMTA2224@gmail.com**

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## MEMBERSHIP

BEIBEI LIN, GMTA VP OF MEMBERSHIP

Georgia Music Teachers Association currently boasts 591 active members. Thank you to our returning members for renewing your membership and encouraging your colleagues to do so as well. I fully recognize that it is *your* work and *your* personal relationships with one another that are the root of our sustained membership numbers. Thank you for investing in one another's lives through the GMTA network.

This past semester, six episodes of the GMTA podcast were published and made available on the [GMTA website](#) as well as on podcast apps such as Apple Podcast, Stitcher, and Spotify (search: Georgia Music Teachers Association). If you have not had a chance to listen to these episodes, please give a listen to the inspiring stories and insights of our colleagues. May they encourage you in your teaching, professional development, and personal life.

As new members continue to join our organization to take advantage of the professional development offerings and opportunities afforded to their students, I know they will also find the friendships, camaraderie, and networking opportunities that you provide them to be an integral asset and benefit of their membership. I wish all of you a successful new year, and I look forward to seeing GMTA grow into 2024!



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- Friday, November 10, 2023
- Saturday, February 24, 2024
- Friday, March 8, 2024
- Saturday, March 23, 2024
- Friday, April 12, 2024



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## LOCAL ASSOCIATION HIGHLIGHT—ATLANTA MTA

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VICENTE DELLA TONIA, NCTM, PRESIDENT

The Atlanta Music Teachers Association would like to congratulate all 2023 Romantic and Impressionistic Piano Competition participants and their teachers! The judges commended the high level and refined artistry displayed in the competition, Congratulations, everyone!!!

In 2023, we were honored to host concert artist Kemal Gekić's recital and masterclass, Dr. Fen-Fang Chen's presentation, and Dr. Chenny Gan's masterclass and presentation.

This year, we would like to extend our invitation to the GMTA community to join us on **January 28** for the Advanced Masterclass with Dr. Grace Huang (UGA), on **February 9** for the Presentation "Music and Brain" with Dr. Jeri-Mae Astolfi (Piedmont University), and on **February 10** for the Atlanta Piano Festival. For more information, please visit our page: <https://www.atlmta.org/>

Hope you can join us for these events!



## LOCAL ASSOCIATION HIGHLIGHT—ATHENS MTA

AMANDA SACCHITELLO, PRESIDENT

**Fall 2023 semester:** We had a teachers' potluck brunch to kick off the season in August, as well as a program meeting in September with an improvisation presentation by Dr. James Naigus. In October, we had one of our most popular AMTA student events, the Sonata & Sonatina Festival. Community events such as November's AMTA Fall Recital allowed our students and teachers to share their music locally.

We enjoyed attending the GMTA state conference this November. To end the year, we had a teachers' holiday gathering and luncheon.

**Spring 2024 semester:** A short "welcome back" Zoom meeting in mid-January will lead to the UGA Piano Symposium later that same month. We also have our annual Intermediate and Advanced masterclasses, both in February. Also in February is AMTA local auditions at UGA. Student festival events during the semester will include the AMTA eFestival in March and Athens-Oconee Federated Festival in late April. We will also hear a presentation from Dr. Alan Woo in March.



I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the GMTA Collegiate Chapters, encapsulating the highlights and progress made during this year’s State Conference.



Collegiate Luncheon at the 2023 Conference

### ANNUAL COLLEGIATE CHAPTERS LUNCHEON AT THE STATE CONFERENCE

This year, our annual Collegiate Chapters luncheon was hosted at Shorter University, a notable event that marked both our commitment to fostering musical talent and the collaborative spirit within our community. The luncheon, generously catered and hosted by Shorter University's MTNA Collegiate Chapter, "The Ivory Keys," was a resounding success.

### RECORD ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

A significant highlight of this event was the unprecedented attendance we witnessed. A record number of 60 members from various chapters across the state graced the luncheon, reflecting the vibrant and growing network of our collegiate chapters. This remarkable turnout not only signifies the growing interest in our programs but also underscores the importance of music education and collaboration among collegiate musicians in Georgia.

### IMPACT ON THE STATE CONFERENCE

In a testament to the increasing influence and involvement of our collegiate chapters, roughly half of the total attendees at this year's State Conference were collegiate members. This substantial representation is not only a point of pride but also an indicator of the vital role our collegiate chapters play in the broader musical landscape of our state.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND LOOKING FORWARD

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to The Ivory Keys and their advisors, Amy Neal and Dr. Jerico Vasquez, for their exceptional hospitality and support in making the luncheon a memorable event. The enthusiasm and dedication displayed by all chapters and members are indeed the driving forces behind our continuous growth and success.

As we look ahead, it is clear that the GMTA Collegiate Chapters are thriving and expanding, bringing together young musicians and educators in a dynamic and nurturing environment. This growth not only enriches our association but also contributes significantly to the musical culture of Georgia.

In closing, I am immensely proud of the achievements and progress of our Collegiate Chapters. Together, we are making a substantial impact on the musical landscape of our state, nurturing the next generation of music educators and performers.



GMTA Collegiate Members at the 2023 Conference



## GEORGIA'S OWN

CAMERON FUHRMAN, GMTA ARTS AWARENESS & ADVOCACY CHAIR

Did you present at the 2023 GMTA Conference? Consider adding your presentation to Georgia's Own, a list of members who are willing to present their program or workshop to local GMTA associations. To add your presentation to the list, email Cameron Fuhrman at [88keys.cameron@gmail.com](mailto:88keys.cameron@gmail.com). To view a list of current GMTA members who are willing to present topics through workshops and programs, visit the [GMTA Website](#).



*Where teachers come together to encourage and build*

President: Gloria Park  
678-677-5913  
Membership: Debra Hughes, NCTM  
770-978-9680  
[gcmta.org](http://gcmta.org)



## THEORY REPORT

DIANE BOYD, NCTM, GMTA THEORY CHAIR

The fall 2023-2024 GMTA Theory and GATE tests are being graded at this time and a new Auditions Exemption List will be made and posted soon. You can find the current guidelines for how to exempt the GATE under the GATE guidelines on the website. The spring tests will use the same curriculum and guidelines that are posted on the website. Remember that students must either be exempt from their level or pass their correct GATE level to be able to participate in Auditions. GMTA exemptions are permanent, but the GATE must be taken every year.

### Deadlines:

- January 15: Registration deadline for spring GMTA and GATE tests
- February 26: Deadline for GATE scores to be received by the GMTA Executive Director and GATE Administrator (Colette Keogh)
- March 16: Postmark deadline for GMTA spring tests to be returned to GMTA Theory Administrator (Trudi Norman)

After this, look for changes that will be made to the theory portion of the website. Revised curriculum will be posted and will be in effect for the 2024-2025 year.

If you have questions, please call or e-mail me. Thank you for participating in the GMTA theory program!

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As the new year looms and we start to think towards planning next school year's events for our associations, I want to highlight grants available from several organizations who champion arts awareness and advocacy.

National Endowment for the Arts: The National Endowment for the Arts is, to quote their website, "the largest funder of the arts and arts education in communities nationwide and a catalyst of public and private support for the arts." Over the past five years, the NEA distributed over 32 million dollars in federal funding in the state of Georgia. They offer grants for an enormous variety of arts projects—small or large, for rural or urban communities, including any part of the process of the creation, presentation, and consumption of art. Applying for an NEA grant is a large project, but the reward can be immense: grants range from \$10,000 to \$100,000! Some of the musical grants given by the NEA in Georgia include:

- Educational performances and masterclasses by internationally renowned musicians for college and high school students
- A series of concerts featuring a winner of the International Sphinx Competition (a competition promoting the careers of African-American and Latino string players) presented for students and community members in rural areas of Georgia
- Field trips to performing arts centers to introduce students to performances by some of Georgia's premier musical ensembles
- Music performance and education programs for veterans
- Sensory-friendly concerts that adapt classical music performance for community members with autism and sensory sensitivities.

You can find information about applying for an arts project grant from the NEA [here](#).

South Arts: Headquartered in Atlanta, GA, South Arts supports artists and arts organizations in the southern region of the US. They believe that the arts elevate our communities and create connectedness within them, allowing them to serve as a catalyst for change. [Here](#) is a list of types of grants provided by South Arts. Two likely to be of particular interest to our local associations include:

- Presentation Grants — these grants provide funding to present a Southern artist in both a public performance and a educational/community engagement component.
- Express Grants — these grants supply organizations in rural communities (50,000 people or less) with awards to support the presentation of a touring artist

Please note that most of the grants provided by South Arts are limited to non-profit organizations.

Georgia Music Foundation: The Georgia Music Foundation aims to create cultural, educational, and economic benefits in Georgia through their advocacy for music.

The Georgia Music Grants are provided to Georgia-based schools and non-profit organizations to support music education, preservation, and outreach. The grants are eligible for expenses associated with projects including music instruction, teaching artist or artist residency fees, music technology and software, instructional materials, and instrument repair and purchase.

The GMTA Teacher of the Year Award is presented annually to a member of GMTA in recognition of lifetime achievement as a music teacher, with excellence in teaching, musicianship, professional activity, and service to the community and/or state. Any GMTA member may nominate any other GMTA member for the Teacher of the Year. The GMTA Teacher of the Year will be selected from nominated applicants and entered in the MTNA Teacher of the Year competition.

**The online submission form will require the following information:**

- Teaching/professional achievement
- Number of years of teaching experience
- Evidence of teaching excellence (i.e. students' successes)
- Accomplishments/contributions to MTNA
- Participation in local, state, and/or national MTNA programs
- Community involvement
- Former student and/or parent letter(s) of support
- Professional colleague letter(s) of support
- Nominating letter from the state organization

Nominations must be submitted by **Monday, September 9, 2024**. The online form is available [here](#). The winner will be recognized at the 2024 GMTA Conference Banquet. With so many excellent teachers in Georgia, please consider nominating one of your favorites!

For a list of past Teachers of the Year, and to read their Teaching Tips, visit the [GMTA Website](#). Nomination questions? [presidentelect.georgiamta@gmail.com](mailto:presidentelect.georgiamta@gmail.com)

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## January 2024

- 15 Registration deadline for local auditions, GMTA Theory Test, and GATE
- 15 GMTA State Auditions Registration Deadline for Pre-College Piano Concerto, Piano Grade 12, Piano Duet

## February 2024

- 26 Deadline for local associations to submit local ratings and GATE scores to GMTA Executive Director
- 28 Deadline to pay Teacher/Student Regional Audition fees

## March 2024

- 11 GMTA State Auditions registration deadline for College Piano and Instrumental
- 16 Postmark deadline to mail GMTA Theory Tests to Trudi Norman
- 16-20 MTNA Conference in Atlanta, GA
- 22 Regional Auditions video submission deadline
- 27 GMTA State Auditions volunteer form/fee due

## April 2024

- 12-13 GMTA State Auditions, Piedmont University

## May 2024

- 1 Graded GMTA Theory Tests (not GATE) and Certificates mailed to participating teachers
- 1 Deadline for Presenter Proposals for 2024 GMTA Conference
- 15 Deadline for articles to be included in the GMTA Summer Newsletter

## June 2024

- 1 Deadline for all GMTA Expense Reports to be submitted to the GMTA Executive Director for reimbursement
- 30 Membership renewal deadline: Membership year runs July 1-June 30

## August 2024

- 15 Deadline for articles to be included in the GMTA Fall Newsletter

## September 2024

- 1 Deadline to apply for GMTA Commissioned Composer Award
- 9 Application deadline for GMTA Teacher of the Year
- 9 Application deadline for GMTA Teacher Grants
- 30 Student Membership renewal deadline: Membership year runs October 1-September 30

## Executive Board:

GMTA President	Cathy Thacker, NCTM	<a href="mailto:president.georgiamta@gmail.com">president.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
President-Elect	Kristi Helfen, NCTM	<a href="mailto:presidenelect.georgiamta@gmail.com">presidenelect.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
VP of Programs	Jeri-Mae Astolfi, NCTM	<a href="mailto:programs.georgiamta@gmail.com">programs.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
VP of Membership	Beibei Lin	<a href="mailto:membership.georgiamta@gmail.com">membership.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
VP of Newsletters	Amy Neal, NCTM	<a href="mailto:newsletters.georgiamta@gmail.com">newsletters.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
VP of GMTA Auditions	Vicente Della Tonia, NCTM	<a href="mailto:auditions.georgiamta@gmail.com">auditions.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
VP of MTNA Competitions	Yanni Chan	<a href="mailto:mtnacompetitions.georgiamta@gmail.com">mtnacompetitions.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
Secretary	Fernando Ramos	<a href="mailto:secretary.georgiamta@gmail.com">secretary.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
Member-at-Large	David Watkins, NCTM	<a href="mailto:davidw48@comcast.net">davidw48@comcast.net</a>
Member-at-Large	Portia Hawkins, NCTM	<a href="mailto:portiashawkins@gmail.com">portiashawkins@gmail.com</a>
Immediate Past President	Jan Adams, NCTM	<a href="mailto:FAC.georgiamta@gmail.com">FAC.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
Executive Director	Mandy Reynolds	<a href="mailto:georgiamta@gmail.com">georgiamta@gmail.com</a>

## Committee Chairs:

Arts Awareness & Advocacy	Cameron Fuhrman	<a href="mailto:88keys.cameron@gmail.com">88keys.cameron@gmail.com</a>
Certification	Robin Engelman, NCTM	<a href="mailto:englemanr@bellsouth.net">englemanr@bellsouth.net</a>
Collaborative Performance	Chenny Gan	<a href="mailto:cgan@wesleyancollege.edu">cgan@wesleyancollege.edu</a>
College Faculty	Jerico Vasquez	<a href="mailto:jvasquez@shorter.edu">jvasquez@shorter.edu</a>
Collegiate Chapters	Huu Mai, NCTM	<a href="mailto:huutmai@gmail.com">huutmai@gmail.com</a>
Commissioning	David Peoples, NCTM	<a href="mailto:commissioning.georgiamta@gmail.com">commissioning.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
Finance/Advisory	Jan Adams, NCTM	<a href="mailto:FAC.georgiamta@gmail.com">FAC.georgiamta@gmail.com</a>
GMTA Awards	Mary Ann McTier	<a href="mailto:mam0609@comcast.net">mam0609@comcast.net</a>
Independent Music Teachers Forum	Eric Clay	<a href="mailto:ericcranstonclay@gmail.com">ericcranstonclay@gmail.com</a>
Judges List	Michelle Peck	<a href="mailto:michellenews@hotmail.com">michellenews@hotmail.com</a>
Theory	Diane Boyd, NCTM	<a href="mailto:dianelboyd@comcast.net">dianelboyd@comcast.net</a>
Wellness	Debra Ramsey Dickensheets	<a href="mailto:dickensheetsmusic@gmail.com">dickensheetsmusic@gmail.com</a>

**Local Association Presidents:**

Athens	Amanda Sacchitello	<a href="mailto:amanda@keyspiano.com"><u>amanda@keyspiano.com</u></a>
Atlanta	Vincente Della Tonia	<a href="mailto:vdellatonia@gsu.edu"><u>vdellatonia@gsu.edu</u></a>
Augusta	Colette Keogh	<a href="mailto:cakeogh16@gmail.com"><u>cakeogh16@gmail.com</u></a>
Cherokee	Laura Lozier	<a href="mailto:laura@lozierstudio.net"><u>laura@lozierstudio.net</u></a>
Cobb County	Joe Camillo	<a href="mailto:jfcamillojr@gmail.com"><u>jfcamillojr@gmail.com</u></a>
Columbus	Tracy Xian	<a href="mailto:tracyxian9@gmail.com"><u>tracyxian9@gmail.com</u></a>
Coweta-Fayette	Fernando Ramos	<a href="mailto:neverfall@peoplepc.com"><u>neverfall@peoplepc.com</u></a>
Decatur	Charles Hutton	<a href="mailto:chpianostudio@bellsouth.net"><u>chpianostudio@bellsouth.net</u></a>
Gwinnett County	Gloria Park	<a href="mailto:gloriapark4@gmail.com"><u>gloriapark4@gmail.com</u></a>
Middle Georgia	Chenny Gan	<a href="mailto:cgan@wesleyancollege.edu"><u>cgan@wesleyancollege.edu</u></a>
North DeKalb	Miao Fen Lin	<a href="mailto:lukewashington@gmail.com"><u>lukewashington@gmail.com</u></a>
North Fulton	Amy VanderLugt	<a href="mailto:vanderamy@yahoo.com"><u>vanderamy@yahoo.com</u></a>
Northeast Georgia	Joe Chapman	<a href="mailto:joe.chapman@ung.edu"><u>joe.chapman@ung.edu</u></a>
Rome	Shelley Reid	<a href="mailto:ladyshelmarie1@aol.com"><u>ladyshelmarie1@aol.com</u></a>
Savannah	Cameron Fuhrman	<a href="mailto:88keys.cameron@gmail.com"><u>88keys.cameron@gmail.com</u></a>
South Georgia	Angela Duncan	<a href="mailto:angelawong844@gmail.com"><u>angelawong844@gmail.com</u></a>
Western Georgia	Dawn McCord	<a href="mailto:dmccord@westga.edu"><u>dmccord@westga.edu</u></a>



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## Submittals

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## Editors

Amy Neal, NCTM, VP of Newsletters [newsletters.georgiamta@gmail.com](mailto:newsletters.georgiamta@gmail.com)

Cathy Thacker, NCTM, President [president.georgiamta@gmail.com](mailto:president.georgiamta@gmail.com)

## Proofreaders

Jan Adams, Immediate Past President

Mandy Reynolds, GMTA Executive Director