

Greetings from the President:

Dear Members of the MaineMTA,

It's this time of year for me to organize and publish our Spring Newsletter. This is also my last time to write to all of you as your President, as our 2022-2024 new slate of officers will be announced during our Monster Festival in April. Please check the following page for more information regarding the new slate and let us know if you have any questions, concerns, or if you would like to be part of our board in the near future.

At MaineMTA, we welcome newcomers, embrace creative ideas, excel ourselves through professional development, value diversity, equity, and inclusion within our music community, and build friendship and trust in this unique community. So, FRIENDS of the MaineMTA, please remember always, we are here for you as an organization, and we look forward to be with you all for many, many more years to come.



It has been my great privilege to work alongside our wonderful board members since 2019.

OFFICERS:

President: Gulimina Mahamuti
President Elect: Christine Kissack
Immediate Past President: Amy Irish
Secretary: Elizabeth Hasbrouck
Treasurer: Eileen Ringel
VP Membership: Carrie Clement
VP Programs: Jacqueline Savage

CHAIRS:

Certification Chair: Eileen Ringel
Commissioned Composer Chair: Anastasia Antonacos
Biennial Pine Tree Competition Co-Chairs: Amy Irish and Jacqueline Savage
Biennial Piano Monster Festival Co-Chairs: Ginger Yang Hwalek and Christine Kissack

ADMINISTRATORS:

Web Administrator: Eileen Ringel
Webmaster (Technical Issues): Edward Ringel

In the three years since 2019:

- We established the **MaineMTA Certification Club** led by Eileen Ringel to inspire our members and help them achieve their professional goals through MTNA certification process;
- **MaineMTA Job Descriptions** were updated by an ad-hoc committee consisting of Christine Kissack, Eileen Ringel, Amy Maier, Ginger Hwalek, and myself to clarify and reflect the responsibilities and guidance that board members take and provide;

- Under the diligent work of Jacqueline Savage and her team, we established the **Southern MaineMTA**;
- We successfully held two **Pine Tree Piano Competitions**, including a completely virtual one due to Covid, led by Jacqueline Savage and Amy Irish;
- Christine Kissack and Ginger Hwalek, once again, led our most popular **Monster Festival** with one more coming up in April;
- We created our **MaineMTA's first ever state-level Piano Master Class** with guest George Lopez;
- We managed two of our **Fall State Conferences**, one of which was the first ever virtual State Conference in our state history;
- We energized our **MaineMTA Facebook Page** and widened the **Teachers Connect**, so members have a platform to share ideas, news, and resources;
- We successfully hosted our **2021 Quad State Conference** featuring guest Peter Mack. 2021 also marked the first ever hybrid Quad State Conference in our Quad history.
- **Moreover**: In the most recent MTNA National Awards and Recognitions, we are so thrilled to learn that our MaineMTA's name is listed in the special announcement, as our own commissioned composer, Delvyn Case, was named the **2021 MTNA Distinguished Composer of the Year** with our commissioned work, *Psalm of Ascent*. This is such an overwhelming honor for all of us!!! I would like to thank our Commissioned Composer Chair, Anastasia Antonacos, and all of our board members for their efforts in making the 2021 Quad State Conference a smashing success.

Over the years, we have built a strong board which has undertaken great responsibilities with pride. Our wonderful long-time treasurer **Eileen Ringel** and her husband **Edward Ringel** have been there for our organization for so many years to help improve and tackle all kinds of technical issues to support and maintain our web page; our president elect, **Christine Kissack**, is always there for us if anything needed; our immediate past president, **Amy Irish**, has great insight in identifying newcomers to join the board; our vice president of program, **Jacqueline Savage**, goes beyond and above to work on each of our important state-level events; our secretary, **Elizabeth Hasbrouck**, records all of our board meetings with accuracy and details; our vice president of memberships, **Carrie Clement**, takes time to respond to our new members and writes warm-hearted emails to welcome them. I cannot tell you enough how much I enjoy working with each one of them in this amazing organization.

As I said in my first ever Newsletter in September of 2019, "We are small but mighty!" - - words from our immediate past president, Amy Irish, to which I once more would like to add, "and Mightier Together!" Yes, we are small in terms of membership, but our hearts and our love of music are big, as big as our passion to share it with the world.

Let's welcome our next slate of officers and embrace the future together!!!

Sincerely,



Gulimina Mahamuti, DMA, NCTM
 President, MaineMTA
 MTNA National Committee Member on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
www.gulimina.com

2022-2024 Slate of Officers:

President: **Christine Kissack**
President Elect: **Amy Irish**
Immediate Past President: **Gulimina Mahamuti**
Secretary: **Elizabeth Hasbrouck**
Treasurer: **Eileen Ringel**
VP Membership: **Jacqueline Savage**
VP Programs: **Maya Dumas**



2022 Piano Monster Festival (PMF)

Nine teachers, 13 adult students and 72 school-age students have signed on to participate in our MaineMTA 2022 Piano Monster Festival on Saturday, April 2 at Falmouth High School (FHS).

Twelve pianos (two grand pianos and ten digital keyboards) will grace the FHS concert stage in April. At this date, the event is “full steam ahead” with much practicing and preparation currently taking place in piano studios across Maine from Portland to Bangor.

A free, live concert will take place at 5:00 pm that day and all are invited to attend. Donations from audience members are greatly appreciated.

As for the pandemic, we will work with FHS and follow the rules that are in place on April 2nd which, most likely, will include a mask mandate for the day-long event and concert. Specific safety guidance will be forthcoming late March.

Any questions?
Feel free to contact either co-director:

Ginger Yang Hwalek
ginger.hwalek@gmail.com

Christine Kissack
ckissack@me.com



So what is a Piano “Monster” Festival?

By Dr. Carleen Graff, NHMTA
Professor of Music Emerita, Plymouth State University

It's not about spooky piano music. 'Monster' here simply means **BIG!** A Piano Monster Festival is a large, multiple piano event—an ensemble of pianos rather than band or orchestral instruments. Combining more than two pianos in a concert was a concept of the Industrial Revolutionists who believed that bigger was better and more was merrier. Thus, the "monster concert" was born.

In Vienna in 1830, Beethoven's pupil Carl Czerny transcribed Rossini's *Semiramide Overture* for a charity monster concert that aided the victims of the Danube floods. Johann Strauss Jr. conducted 18 monster concerts in Boston and New York during his American tour in 1872.

Louis Moreau Gottschalk, an American pianist born in New Orleans, was a vigorous promoter of monster concerts. In 1860 his musical extravaganzas in Havana and Rio de Janeiro “excited the musical populace to frenzied demonstrations.” In the early 1970's, the late Eugene List, a concert pianist, revived the idea of piano monster concerts. Today, many universities and teacher groups throughout the US sponsor piano monster concerts around the country.

The 2022 Biennial MaineMTA Piano Monster Festival will be the seventh co-directed by MaineMTA members, Ginger Yang Hwalek and Christine Kissack.

2021 MTNA Distinguished Composer of the Year

From Maine MTA Commissioned Composer

Congratulations, Delvyn Case!!!

Delvyn Case is a composer, conductor, scholar, writer, and educator. His music has been performed by over 80 orchestras in the US, UK, Canada and Europe; by legendary clarinetist Richard Stoltzman; the Borromeo Quartet, Grammy-winning Chestnut Brass Company; The New York Virtuoso Singers, and the Grammy-nominated Hermitage Trio.

While attending Greely High School he studied composition privately with Elliott Schwartz and piano with Elizabeth Manduca. He also participated in the various musical ensembles sponsored by the University of Southern Maine and Portland Symphony.

His frequent collaborations with the Portland Symphony have resulted in commissions for two original chamber works for the PSO's KinderKonzert program, which have been heard by thousands of children throughout the state since 2011. He is also the founder and conductor of seven seasons, Maine's only professional new-music ensemble, which gave its premiere at the Back Cove Festival of Contemporary Music in 2018.

Delvyn Case studied music at Yale (B.A. summa cum laude in music) and the University of Pennsylvania, completing his Ph.D. in Musical Composition at the age of 26. He is currently Associate Professor of Music at Wheaton College in Norton, Massachusetts, where he conducts the Great Woods Symphony Orchestra.



Local Chapter News:

Southern MaineMTA



Association Meeting and Get-Together

- Saturday April 9th, 9AM-1PM
- Starbird Music, New Location--525 Forest Ave Portland, Maine
- Presentation by Michael Beling: *How to incorporate Jazz into studios that are classically focused*

Outdoor Music Celebration

- Saturday May 21st
- Times and Venue TBD
- Studio sign up sheet to be emailed

100 Day Practice Challenge

- Southern MaineMTA is hosting a 100 day practice challenge which started on Jan. 1. Please reach out to Jacqui if you would like to join our group chat! It's not too late to jump in :) Hoping to have a performance and get-together at the end of the challenge.

Penobscot Valley MaineMTA:

Greetings from PVMTA! Fortunately, our chapter has been able to remain active and connected throughout this past fall. In October, we gathered by the Penobscot River in Bangor to visit, catch up, and discuss the wonderful music and ideas shared from the recent Quad State. In early December an impressively large group of our students participated in a day of evaluations. Students were eager for the performance opportunity! Dr. Margery Aumann from Dover-Foxcroft was our wonderful evaluator for the day and all students and teachers left with fresh inspiration and new ideas. Just recently, our group got together for a Zoom meeting that involved sharing our ideas on incorporating improvisation and composition in our weekly lessons—an element of teaching that often feels intimidating! We look forward to our final meeting of the year, where we hope to gather together for a potluck lunch and a presentation on the use of the pedal at various stages of our student's development. I am continually grateful for the support, collaboration and — Amy Irish, PVMTA President

inspiration found in our local group of teachers! Thank you PVMTA!

2021 Quad State Conference Review:

Featuring Guest Artist Peter Mack



► A review:

By Ally Hawkins (Piano Performance & Pedagogy student from USM)

On October 1st and 2nd I had the privilege of attending the Quad State Conference, this year hosted by the Maine MTA. The Quad State conference happens in conjunction with the Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont MTAs, and takes place every other year.

The 2021 Quad State featured Dr. Peter Mack, a piano teacher, clinician, adjudicator, and performer from Seattle. During our short time together (if only this was a week-long event!) Dr. Mack gave presentations, performed, and held masterclasses.

Dr. Mack's presentations stood out to me not only because of the content, but also because of the delivery. He was energized and confident, making it fun to learn and engaging to listen to. His first presentation, *Marvelous Moderns and their Needlessly Neglected Mid-Level Masterpieces*, involved a list of piano pieces for mid-level students. While all of my students currently fall into the "beginner" category, the pieces were fun to listen to and the handout with all the music titles and composers will be very helpful in the years to come. I love being able to collect information that will help me teach in the future, and Dr. Mack provided just that.

His second presentation, *Not Only Für Elise: Gorgeous Unknown Compositions by Well-Known Composers*, was another source in which I will use later down the road. It gave many different pieces of music by famous composers that were appropriate for the average student. In my early days of studying piano pedagogy, I have to admit that finding "classical" piano music for younger students is quite challenging, but now I have a resource and a list of pieces that are suitable.

Dr. Mack's final presentation of the weekend was titled, *Lower the Rear End of the Elephant Slowly onto the Keys*, which was about different metaphors and phrases that Mack uses to help his students with technique, articulation, dynamics, etc. For me, this was the most helpful of the three presentations, because having those phrases in my vocabulary is something that is the easiest to implement. Plus, we got to see Dr. Mack implement them himself during the master class.

As this was a meeting of music teachers, the weekend did not go without music. Dr. Peter Mack gave a lovely concert on Friday evening, and Saturday was the Commissioned Composer Concert. The Commissioned Composer Concert featured world premieres of pieces that were commissioned by each state. It was so good to hear freshly composed music, especially as a pianist who has spent a lot of time hearing music composed long ago.

Overall, the Quad State Conference was a great event that I am so glad I was able to attend! Dr. Peter Mack provided information and music that I can use either now in my teaching, or later down the road. The conference was also well-organized, and you could tell that a lot of thought and pride went into making sure things went right. Thank you to the Maine MTA, especially to Gulimina Mahamuti, Christine Kissack, and Jacqui Savage!

Other News:

🎵 On October 26, 2021, **Ally Kawkins** received the official letter from MTNA about her successful completion of all requirements for MTNA National Certification in Piano. Ally is now a proud member of MTNA Nationally Certified Teacher of Music. Congratulations!



🎵 Violinist **Ronald Lantz** and pianist **Laura Kargul** will return to Woodfords to present "Love and Nostalgia", featuring movements by Johannes Brahms, Antonin Dvořák, William Grant Still, Jacques de La Presle, Richard Strauss, Astor Piazzolla, and William Bolcom. This event is co-presented by Portland String Quartet Society & Osher School of Music at the University of Southern Maine and sponsored by Dr. Newell and Tenney '79 Augur. [Tickets can be purchased on the PSQS Square site here](#)***. The concert will still be held at **Woodfords Congregational Church on Sunday, February 27th at 2:00 p.m.** and a **snow date of Sunday, March 6th at 2:00 p.m.** has been reserved.

George Lopez, Gulimina Mahamuti, piano duo

Friday, Feb. 4
Guzzetta Recital Hall
Masterclass, 2 p.m.
Recital, 7:30 p.m.

The University of Akron School of Music
330-972-8301




🎵 **George Lopez** and **Gulimina Mahamuti** were recently featured at the Duet Festival at the Western Reserve MTA at the Steinway Piano Gallery - Cleveland on Saturday, February 5, 2022, where they performed, adjudicated, and gave mini master classes at the Festival. Due to the inclement weather, their guest Duo/Duet Recital at the University of Akron was rescheduled to **Friday, March 11, 2022 at 7:30 pm.**



🎵 2021 The Ocy Downs Biennial Piano Prize Competition:

❤️😊 [MaineMTA Donation Page & Amazon Smile](#) 😊❤️

Make a contribution to MaineMTA if you can through [MaineMTA Donation Page](https://mainemta.org/donate-to-maine-mta/) at <https://mainemta.org/donate-to-maine-mta/> or by shopping at Amazon Smile.

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We are a 100% volunteer organization so very dollar supports professional development for Maine music teachers and educational opportunities for students. With your help, we can continue to develop our many programs and share the gift of music with Maine students. Maine Music Teachers Association is a 501(c)(3) organization.

PORTLAND CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC
A COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL

THE OCY L. DOWNS BIENNIAL PIANO PRIZE COMPETITION

Application Deadline | March 1 2022
Competition Date | March 19 2022



For guidelines, application forms or more info go to our website or scan the QR code.



<https://portlandconservatoryofmusic.org/awards-and-competitions/>

1st Place | \$500 Prize
2nd Place | \$250 Prize

Both winners will be given the opportunity to perform in a winners recital and at the Portland Rossini Club, dates TBD.

Maine Pianists, ages 12-18, are invited to apply

First awarded in 1999, this piano prize was established to honor Maine pianist and teacher, Ocy L. Downs, who, from 1927 until 1998, generously shared her time and talent with close to 1000 fortunate students and other young musicians.

info@portlandconservatoryofmusic.org | (207) 775-3356
28 Neal Street, Portland, ME 04102

Professor **Caroline Hong** will be giving a piano master class at the **Studzinski Recital Hall at Bowdoin College on Monday, February 28, 2022 from 4 to 6 pm.** Admissions is free but proof of vaccinations for Covid-19 is required.

Caroline Hong

Hailed for her “expressive and powerful playing” formidable technique, as well as a “keen sense of lyricism and the classical style”, Korean-American pianist Caroline Hong continues to flourish in her career as an internationally active performer, masterclass teacher, and jury member of piano competitions. To that end, this season takes her to Boston University, Manhattan School of Music, UCLA, and numerous other organizations and institutions of higher learning as an Artist-Teacher and adjudicator. She has served as jury member for the Barok-Kabalevsky International Piano Competition and Aarhus International Piano Competition among others, and as a faculty for the Amalfi Coast Music Festival, Vianden International Festival and School (Luxembourg), Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Piano Academy 2021, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, and Longwood University. Currently, she is Professor and Area Head for the Piano Area at The Ohio State University School of Music.

Her training is from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University (BM) where she was a scholarship student and graduated with performance honors and an accelerated degree, the Juilliard School (MM) where she also graduated with an accelerated degree, and Indiana University (DM) where she served as an Associate Instructor in both Theory and Secondary Piano. She attended the Music Academy of the West (Santa Barbara) as a student of Jerome Lowenthal, where she won the concerto competition, and the Sergei Babayan International Piano Academy where her work was broadcast live. During the pandemic, Columbus Symphony Orchestra produced of several live broadcasts, two of her work; one with the Concertmaster in a duo program of Gershwin and Ravel, and another as the soloist in Prokofiev’s Third Piano Concerto under the baton of Maestro Rossen Milanov.

Caroline Hong serves the American Liszt Society on the Board of Directors, as the President and Co-Founder of the Ohio Chapter, and as the Executive Director of the Franz Liszt International Piano Festival and Competition.

Her recordings of contemporary piano music have been reviewed favorably by American Record Guide. Pulitzer Prize and Academy award-winning composer John Corigliano referred to her as “one of the greatest pianists I have ever heard” after a performance of his Etude Fantasy (composed in 1976). She can be heard on Fleur de Son records in all three piano sonatas of Carl Vine.

***Don’t miss this great opportunity!**