



MMTA 2024 Judged Festival - Judges' Biographies

Alison Barr

Alison Barr teaches pianists of all ages and levels in her independent studio in Hanover, Massachusetts, where her curriculum includes a Social Action component. She is Past President of Massachusetts Music Teachers Association, Music Teachers National Association's Eastern Division Director-Elect, and holds the MTNA National Certificate in Piano Teaching. Her degrees are from Boston University (Master of Music in Piano Performance) and University of Maine at Orono (Bachelor of Science in Music Education.) Every July, she co-directs the Midsummer Adult Piano Retreat, held at Endicott College in Beverly, MA. Ms. Barr is honored to teach annually at American Voices YES Academy Lebanon, a cultural exchange program for musicians from the Middle East. She has recently been named MTNA's Teacher of the Year 2024.

Yidan Guo

Yidan Guo is a young pianist living in Boston, Massachusetts. She has served as a judge on several piano competitions, including Steinway Piano Competition. She is a member of several teachers' associations and is designated as Boston Area Director by GOCAA.

As a pianist she received high praises from many master musicians such as Arbo Valdma, Robin Zebaida, Robert Sipos-Ori, George Lepauw, Donald Berman, Weihui Mao, Vadym Kholodenko, Yafen Zhu and Aylish E. Kerrigan. The famous piano educator Arbo Valdma once praised her playing as "not only with rich, solid techniques, but emotional and touching at the same time".

Many of her students have made great achievements under her supervision in their piano study. Some students are invited to perform with New York Philharmonic and Los Angeles Philharmonic. Yidan received piano teaching awards across many countries in the world.

Ivan Gusev

"He is a profound, genuine musician who makes each note live and transports you to another existence" (Allan Evans, Arbiter of Cultural Traditions)

"Ivan is an artist with much to offer" (New York Concert Review)

Pianist Ivan Gusev from Kazakhstan/Russia has performed extensively in Russia, Europe and the US. His solo recitals have been received to great acclaim in Moscow conservatory, Carnegie hall, Hunter college, Mannes school of music(NYC), Saint Botolph Club, Museum of Russian Icons(Boston), Rutgers University(Camden, NJ), and many other venues. He is a passionate music teacher and an author of educational concert-lectures for adults and children which were greeted with great success in NYC and Boston. Ivan holds Master`s and DMA degrees from Moscow Conservatory, Master`s degree from Mannes School of music at The New School (NYC). Ivan is also known for his chamber music programs with Julia Glenn(violin), Maria Ferrante (soprano) and many others.

Ivan is a winner of the 3rd Gershwin International Music Competition (New York, USA, 2017), a prize-winner of the Chopin International Piano Competition (Hartford, USA, 2018), the New York Piano Festival and Competition (New York, USA, 2017), the Mauro Monopoli Prize International Piano Competition (Barletta, Italy, 2013), the Benditsky Russian Piano Competition (Russia, 2014), the Dorothy MacKenzie Artist Recognition Scholarship Award (International Keyboard Institute and Festival, New York, 2015), and the Third International Neuhaus Piano Competition (Russia, 2015).

Ivan holds the Steinway award for outstanding Mannes graduates and was granted a fellowship(2021-2024) at the prestigious Saint Botolph Club in Boston.

In 2022 and 2023 Ivan was chosen as an artist in residence at Avaloch farm musical institution in Boscawen, NH

In 2022 Ivan started to work as a music director and organist in many churches in Massachusetts.

Currently he is the organist at First Church of Christ, Scientist in Winchester, MA

and on the piano faculty of "Star Academy for the gifted and talented", Watertown MA, He is an author of his own method of piano teaching and his students became laureates of many competitions and performed in many concerts in Massachusetts.

Isabella Li

Isabella Li has been teaching at the New England Conservatory's Prep School and Extended Education since 1997. Her students have excelled in numerous competitions, such as the Chopin International Competition in Hartford and the Young Artist Competition in New York City.

She began playing piano solo at the age of 6 and has performed concertos, solo pieces, and chamber music throughout her career. Isabella studied Piano Performance at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music and Piano Performance and Pedagogy at Westminster Choir College in Princeton (The Frances Clark Center For Keyboard Pedagogy: The New School). Her musical journey has taken her to renowned venues like Carnegie Weill Recital Hall in New York City. NEC Jordan Hall, Victoria Concert Hall in Singapore, among others. Isabella enjoys playing chamber music and collaborating with other artists.

Teaching piano has always been her passion. She started teaching in middle school and discovered that it was her life's calling. Isabella teaches students of all levels and has served as a jury member for many piano competitions, including the Steinway Competition. She also conducts masterclasses and gives lectures for music organizations, including the MTNA National Music Teachers Conference, Musicale, and private studios. Additionally, she has served as a member of the Repertoire and Artist Engagement Committee for various organizations, showcasing her dedication to teaching and the music community.

Minkyung Oh

Graduating with Distinction in Performance from New England Conservatory, Dr. Oh made her debut at age 14 with the Seoul Symphony Orchestra and her performances were broadcast on KBS FM Radio and The Classical Channel in Korea. After achieving top honors in performance from Seoul Arts High School, she gained entrance with top honors in Music department to Korean National University of Arts. In 2013, she made her first recording of recent works by the

American composer Jon Appleton, praised by Steve Reich as "...a beautiful addition to piano literature". Dr. Oh earned a BM and MM from New England Conservatory, a Post Graduate Diploma from Royal Academy of Music in London, and a Doctor of Musical Arts from Boston University. Dr. Oh was an instructor at Boston University and ASMI Summer Institute in Rimini in Italy and the Music Director for Alpha Psi Omega, the theater organization at Bentley University. She is a member of the piano faculty and the chamber coach at Rivers School Conservatory and Cremona international Academy in Italy, Winter Festival and Academy in Aix-en-Provence in France and the Weston Al Fresco Concert Series. She is invited to perform at IlShin Hall Prism Concert Series for contemporary music including the world premier of Didier Rotella 'Pantomimes' in 2024 in Korea.

Jonathan Yasuda

Music educator and pianist, Jonathan Yasuda, is the founder and director of the classical music outreach organization, Volunteer Musicians for the Arts (VMA). Partnered with Americorps, the VMA's performances at Massachusetts General Hospital inspired The Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University to create a longstanding faculty-student outreach chamber music program (Peabody String Sinfonia), serving Baltimore, Maryland shelters and venues in need. Jonathan studied composition and piano performance with New England Conservatory instructors Jean Stackhouse, Jonathan Bass, and Rodney Lister. He received full tuition undergraduate merit-based presidential scholarship from The College of the Holy Cross, professional general music studies certification from Berklee College of Music, and national recognition for his dedication to artist intellectual property rights (National Jurist Magazine) as a student of New England Law. Jonathan currently serves as piano faculty at The College of the Holy Cross, Worcester State University, and Assumption University.