2023-2024 Performance Highlights

ANNE-MARIE MCDERMOTT
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & PIANIST
September 24, 2023 | 2:00 p.m.
MCPA Performance Hall
Soloist with New York Philharmonic
March 3, 2024 | 3:00 p.m.
MCPA Performance Hall
McKnight Chamber Music Festival
“PIANO SPECTACULAR”

ANTON NEL
PIANIST
March 3, 2024 | 3:00 p.m.
MCPA Performance Hall
McKnight Chamber Music Festival
“PIANO SPECTACULAR”

ILYA SHMUKLER
PIANIST
March 3, 2024 | 3:00 p.m.
MCPA Performance Hall
McKnight Chamber Music Festival
“PIANO SPECTACULAR”

PEDJA MUŽIJEVIĆ
PIANIST
March 3, 2024 | 3:00 p.m.
MCPA Performance Hall
McKnight Chamber Music Festival
“PIANO SPECTACULAR”

STIJN DE COCK
PIANIST
January 19, 2024 | 7:30 p.m.
MCPA Recital Hall
Guest Artist Recital

For tickets to McKnight Center and Greenwood School of Music events, go to mcknightcenter.org
Collaborative Pianists

A native of Taiwan, Pi-Ju Chiang began playing piano at the age of four. At age nine, she was accepted into the special music school for gifted children in Taiwan and was awarded first prize in National Taiwan Piano Competitions for three consecutive years. In 1998, she received her Bachelor’s Degree in Piano Performance from TNUA, where she studied with pianists Song-Jen Hsu and Rolf-Peter Wille. Ms. Chiang received her Master’s Degree in Piano Performance at The University of Texas at Austin, where she studied with David Renner and Timothy Lowrey (piano accompanist). She then received her second Master’s Degree in Piano Chamber Music and Accompaniment at Rice University where she studied with Brian Connelly. She received her Professional Studies Diploma in Collaborative Piano from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Hyejin Cho and Ana Pontemello.

As an active recital pianist and collaborative artist, Pi-Ju Chiang appears frequently in solo and collaborative recitals in Taiwan, North America, and Mexico. She made her Taiwanese debut as a collaborative artist at the annual opera gala in 1996, performing Monteverdi’s L’Orfeo. During this time, she was also the private accompanist for Angela Marensi, a voice faculty member at the Taipei National University of Arts (TNUA). Her collaborative debut concert has taken her to the Bari Opera Theater in Italy where she performed two operas in 1997— La Bohème and Il Turanatore.

Elena Lyalina began her musical training at the age of six. She holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Piano Performance from the University of Georgia and a Bachelor’s degree from the University of Northern Iowa and Nizhny Novgorod State Conservatory (Russia). Her primary teachers include Eugene Rukin, Dmitri Vlasiev, Valeriy Starinyn, and Irina Bogdanova. In the summer of 2019, Elena worked as a piano faculty member at the Heifetz Academy, a project that recently premiered and recorded a substantial new solo piano work with recent concerts across the U.S., Germany, Austria, Japan, and Korea. Her performances have been broadcast on the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series on WFMT 98.7 FM Parma Recording Live Stage and Wheaton College Artist Series among others. Her enthusiastic performances for Robert Schumann have led her to build the Robert Schumann Concert Series project that she has established in seven different states in the U.S. with the support by the Missouri Arts Council, Kate Neil Kind Memorial Fellowship and University of Michigan Research Grant.

Along with her solo career, Cho is very passionate about chamber music, having had extensive chamber music experience as the founding member of the American Prize winning Kumoina Piano Trio that performed in New York’s Carnegie Hall, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Denver. Minnesota, Alaska, U.S. It is in Europe and Osaka in Japan. Also, she frequently has been invited as a duo performer with artists such as David Halen, Yakov Kreizberg and Jonathan Biss. To whom she is known as a piano soloist in the complete works written for cello and piano has been performed in many countries under the guidance of many renowned artists. Her performances and collaboration also brought her to numerous music festivals, including the Innenkorei Institute, Maui Classical Music Festival, Brightmorn Music Festival, Anchorage Chamber Music Festival and Center Stage Strings.

In addition to performing, Cho is an enthusiastic educator teaching collaborative piano and chamber music at institutions and music festivals. She is currently on the piano faculty at Oklahoma State University. In addition, she serves on the board for the Oklahoma State University Teachers Association as Collegiate Chapter Chair. Previously, she taught piano and chamber music at Wheaton College.

Elena received her Bachelor’s degree in Piano Performance from the University of Western Ontario in London, Canada, with pianist John-Paul Bruce Langan who is known as the father of the international piano school of Canada. In the summer of 2017, Elena attended the Complete Pianist Music of Leonard Bernstein: The Complete Published Piano Music of Leonard Bernstein. Elena’s loving recording.” Jed Distler of ClassicsToday.com wrote of Touches of Bernstein: “about mainstream 20th Century piano music should seek out this superlative Plain Dealer raved: “Thomas Lanners brings exceptional detail and urgency to the repertoire. Grade: A.” American Record Guide’s review of Lanners’ Ned Romer: The Three Piano Sonatas recording read: “Astonishing performances about mainstream 20th Century piano music should seek out this superlative recording.” Jodie Dettler of Classicstoday.com wrote of Teocharis of Bernstein. The Complete Pianist Music of Leonard Bernstein: Leon’s living imitate surely holds in its own company. Warmly recommended.” His championing of American piano music was the topic of a 2009 issue in Fanfaro. Thomas received his Master’s Degree and Doctoral degrees from the Eastman School of Music. His primary teachers were Menahem Pressler, Christopher Harding, Amy H hiang, Sung I Lin Cheng, Wonmi Kim and Jung-Eun Kim. He has also received a Fulbright Scholarship award, and an Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award from TNUA, where she studied with pianists Song-Jen Hsu and Rolf-Peter Wille. Ms. Chiang received her Master’s Degree in Piano Performance at The University of Texas at Austin, where she studied with David Renner and Timothy Lowrey (piano accompanist). She then received her second Master’s Degree in Piano Chamber Music and Accompaniment at Rice University where she studied with Brian Connelly. She received her Professional Studies Diploma in Collaborative Piano from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Hyejin Cho and Ana Pontemello.

Both pianists continue to collaborate as Duo Fandango. Elena has studied with David Renner and Timothy Lowrey (piano accompanist). She then received her second Master’s Degree in Piano Chamber Music and Accompaniment at Rice University where she studied with Brian Connelly. She received her Professional Studies Diploma in Collaborative Piano from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with Hyejin Cho and Ana Pontemello. Elena’s prime winner of the University of Georgia Concerts Contest (Athens, GA), the Pro Monte Society Competition (Atlanta), two National Chamber Competitions in Syzran and Volgograd (Russia), and the American and Russian Federation Competition (Athens, GA), Elena also received the Studio Artist Jan Fowler Cross Scholarship award, Caloum Piano Scholarship award, and an Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award from the Hugh Hodgson School of Music at the University of Georgia. In the summer of 2019, Elena worked as a piano faculty member at the International Music Institute. Additionally, she has appeared as a soloist and chamber musician in Belgium, Greece, France, Italy, and Portugal.