## VIRGINIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Organized and affiliated on October 18, 1964, with Music Teachers National Association

Volume 45, Number 1, Spring 2009



Debra Gunnerson, NCTM President

Lisa Withers President-elect

Denise Adkins Vice President, Membership

Julie Slingerland, NCTM Treasurer

Sarah O'Brien, NCTM Secretary

Martha Smith, NCTM Certification

Wanda M. Hall, NCTM Immediate Past President

Jeanette Winsor, NCTM NewsNotes Editor

# NewsNotes

#### President's Notes

Debra Gunnerson, NCTM, VMTA State President

#### HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!

It's 2009 and the American People are worried. We as teachers should be concerned with the state of the financial community as well. How many of you have a smaller studio this year? Is it because the average American family is cutting back on extras? Are you considering a part-time position in addition to teaching to supplement your income?

These questions are running through my mind as unemployment rises. The professions that provide services continue to be the hardest hit. I find myself being a little more lenient with parents who break policy rules for fear of losing income if they pull their student from lessons.

This is the time VMTA members need to show the importance of music as a valuable educational experience for students. It is not an extra to be eliminated. It is education! Parents seek quality educational experiences for their children. You must be that cherished teacher who develops and nurtures the musical spark in each and every student.

Take pride in a job well done, and do your job well. ■

#### **MTNA CONFERENCE**

MTNA Conference, March 28 – April 1, 2009. Come and join our VMTA members in Atlanta, Georgia. Go on-line and check your MTNA web-site for further information regarding this great Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Support our newest Foundation Fellow, Content Sablinsky. ■

# SPRING CONFERENCE: JUNE 6, 2009 WESTMINSTER-CANTERBURY OF THE BLUE RIDGE

VMTA Conference 2009 plans are being finalized for the venue and Gary Ingle, the MTNA Executive Director, and Gail Berenson, the MTNA National President will be amongst the featured clinicians. The information about the venue will be posted on the VMTA website before the end of February so that everyone can make their plans.

#### Agenda

9:30 Meeting of the Executive Board
11:00 Meeting of the VMTA Administrative
Board

12:00 Tracy Cowden, music lecture 1:00 Lunch

#### **Directions**

Westminster-Canterbury of the Blue Ridge 250 Pantops Mountain Road Charlottesville, VA 22911 (434) 972-2622

Toll-free: (877) 682-9227

From Roanoke, Crozet and all places west of Charlottesville, take I-64 East to exit 124. Make a left off the ramp onto Rt. 250. About one-half mile ahead, make a right onto Pantops Mountain Road and proceed up the hill to the WCBR gatehouse.

From Richmond and all places east of Charlottesville, take I-64 West to exit 124. Make a right off the ramp onto Rt. 250. About one-half mile ahead, make a right onto Pantops Mountain Road and proceed up the hill to the WCBR gatehouse.

#### **SOUTHERN DIVISION COMPETITIONS**

Jeanette Winsor, Southern Division Competitions Adjudicator Chair

Many thanks to David Schaffer-Gollshalk and Virginia State University and RMTA for successfully hosting MTNA Southern Division Competitions on our behalf. This was my 7th Southern Division Competitions and from my stand point, was the best hosting job done by the school I have witnessed. VSU and the music faculty went over and above the call of duty to make everything work!

## Certification Profile: Julia Sansone

by Anne James, NCTM



only in partner lessons," says Julia Sansone. "I set goals for each one and they really got better. They sightread duets at a little under their playing level and learned to keep going. They also mastered harder repertoire. The two months of weekly partner lessons with games and flash cards added to the mix significantly boosted their

sightreading and ensemble skills, challenged them, enhanced their musicianship and added a social dimension to the lessons."

"Last summer I offered group classes on improvisation. I rented an extra keyboard and for two months once a week we covered topics such as harmonizing, transposing, accompanying, and improvisation from chord symbols. The classes included theory, scales and chords, and I got out my guitar to accompany the students."

Amherst teacher Julia Sansone began teaching piano at age 14 with mentoring from her teacher, Dr. Rebecca McCord, and joined Central Virginia Music Teachers Association when she was 16. Over the years she has served as its Hospitality Chairman, Treasurer, Student Events Chairman, Festival Chairman, Vice-President and Program Chairman and President.

In 2004 Julia applied for certification by examination. As Dr. McCord's student she had taken piano and other courses for credit at Sweet Briar College and also at Liberty University but had no bachelor's degree. She found she could easily fulfill the performance requirement using solo and duet programs reflecting her extensive experience during her high school years.

To prepare for the first of the proficiency tests, a Music History exam, she studied *The Enjoyment of Music* by Joseph Machlis, a very comprehensive book and CD which covered everything she needed to know for the test.

After taking that test in November 2005, she prepared for the May 2006 Music Theory test, using *Tonal Harmony* by Stefan Kostka. This book also comes with a CD and she used the first half of the book to get ready for the test.

For the Pedagogy exam early in 2007 she studied MTNA's sample questions. Several books were helpful in preparing for this test: *Practical Piano Pedagogy* by Martha Baker-Jordan, *The Well-*

Tempered Keyboard Teacher by Marianne Uszler, Jane Magrath's The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Literature, and James Bastien's How to Teach Piano Successfully. Julia found she needed more time to complete all the exams and didn't want to rush through the last two. An appeal to the National Certification Board was successful and she was granted a one-year extension.

While three hours were allotted for each of the tests, it was only for the Certification exam itself, in December, 2007, that she used the full three hours. She had received a comprehensive list of study questions. She prepared and wrote out answers to every question and memorized her answers. Her teacher, Dr. McCord, and fellow CVMTA member Beverly Henkel helped her prepare for the test. "I still refer back to those answers. It's almost like I have my own textbook. It's a fat notebook." She passed each exam on the first try, and enjoyed the convenience of taking them at her local Thompson Prometric Testing Center. "I would be happy to help anyone become certified. I learned so much in the process and I'm really glad I did it."

In addition to her piano studio, where she teaches beginners and intermediate-level students, Julia Sansone is accompanist and assistant organist at Rivermont Presbyterian Church. "I believe music is a gift from our Creator and that the pursuit of musical excellence and the teaching of music is an honorable and nobel endeavor... This education will include instruction in technique, music theory, sightreading, playing and performing the classical literature from all periods, ensemble playing and the ability to play and improvise church music... Each student is gifted in unique ways and deserves my very best attention and efforts. In this studio every student is my very favorite."

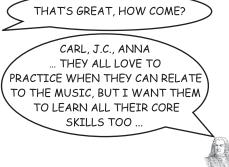
#### **HMTA THEORY AND SIGHT READING TESTS**

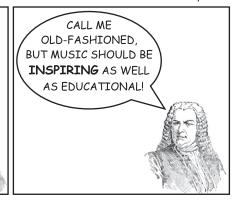
Saturday, March 7th, 9 a.m.–Noon Room 318, Music Building, JMU

Postmark deadline for entries Friday, February 13th entry forms available via email from Pat Brady (bradypl@jmu.edu)

The Novus Via CN/SMS







2 NEWSNOTES

## MINUTES .....

#### VIRGINIA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION GENERAL BOARD MEETING

November 8, 2008

SHENANDOAH UNIVERSITY • WINCHESTER, VA

Submitted by Sarah Reaser O'Brien, Secretary

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dee Booth, Catherine T. Valley, Martha Smith, Denise Adkins, Nitza Kats, Jeanette Winsor, Lynne S. Kessler, Roma Scriven, Lynn Kleisler, Anne James, Lee Seatton, Wysor Gearhart, Suzanne Guy, Pat Davis, Dot Stevenson, Sharron Whealton, Donna Halleck, Josephine Jones, Kama Miller, LeeAnn Dransfield, Sharon Stewart, David Shaffer-Gottschalk, Betty Ann Spiers, Debra Gunnerson, Sarah O'Brien, and Wanda Hall.

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The General Board meeting was called to order by President Debra Gunnerson at 3:36 p.m..

A motion was made and seconded to accept the agenda as printed; the motion passed.

Martha Smith moved to accept the minutes of the June 7, 2008, General Board Meeting as printed in NewsNotes. The motion carried.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**

President Debra Gunnerson. Southern Division will take place Petersburg, VA. David Schaffer-Gottschalk is leading this event. Debra asked Sharon Stewart, Hospitality Chair, to give a report on hospitality for this event. There is a budget shortfall for hospitality, and Sharon requested assistance from VMTA. There is a requirement at Virginia State University that we must use their outsourced services for hospitality. David says we are underfunded for this. Sharon moved that VMTA supplement the hospitality budget of \$1000 provided by MTNA with up to \$876.36 if we are unable to get these funds from MTNA or other sources. The motion was seconded and passed. President Gunnerson announced that Judy Leonard, former composition chair, passed away this week.

**President-Elect** Lisa Withers. No report.

Vice President/Membership Chair Denise Adkins gave the membership report. Total membership as of September 30 was 840: 689 active, 132 seniors, 18 students, and 1 star member.

Secretary Sarah O'Brien. No report.

Treasurer Julie Slingerland was not present. President Gunnerson distributed copies of the budget and made one correction. The budgeted amount under Proposed Web Site budget should be \$500 rather than \$300. \$1895 should be the net income in the proposed budget. The budget was unanimously approved.

Certification Chair Martha Smith reported that there was a certification lunch meeting this afternoon. She reported that we had no test-takers scheduled for this conference. Northern Virginia recently did a targeted mailing promoting certification which resulted in five members actively seeking certification. Virginia has 12.5% of its members certified which ranks the state 36th out of 50.

IMTF Chair Samantha Luck. No report.

Local Associations Chair Galla Matekova. No report.

MTNA Junior Performance Competitions Chair Tracy Cowden. No report.

MTNA Senior Performance Chair Lise Keiter-Brotzman. No

MTNA Young Artist/Chamber Music Competitions Chair Jeffrey Brown. No report.

MTNA Student Composition Chair Elizabeth McConnell. No report.

VMTA Concerto Competitions Co-Chairs Anna Ouspenskaya and Suzanne Guy. Virginia Weslyan College, not Christopher Newport as previously published. The competition will take place on May 9, 2009, and the application deadline is April 2, 2009. Suzanne Guy expressed gratitude to Anna Ouspenskaya, (continued on page 4)

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#### **Minutes...** (continued from page 3)

her co-chair, for her assistance. Sarah O'Brien read a recommendation from the Executive Committee to reword the requirements in the yearbook on page 14 as follows:

- High School Division is for students in 8th through 12th grade at the time of the competition.
- College division includes students who are enrolled in college at the time of the competition.

These changes would take effect immediately.

Suzanne Guy moved that the executive committee motion be amended to include seniors with the high school section, and to call it Section A, and call the college division section B. The motion was seconded and passed.

Wanda Hall moved that the wording on the application form be changed to be in accordance with the yearbook guidelines. The motion was seconded and passed.

VMTA District Auditions Coordinator Ellis Dunton. No report.

VMTA State Auditions Chair Gabriella Ryan. No report.

VMTA Theory Test Chair Virginia Moore. No report.

VMTA Keyboard Skills Test Chair Lynn Kleisler. No report.

VMTA Sightreading (Single Line) Tests Chair James Tobin. No report.

VMTA Sightreading (Piano) Tests Chair Fay Barss. No report.

VMTA Instrumental Skills Chair Kenneth Lee. No report.

Music Link Chair Martha Smith. No report.

MTNA Foundation Chair Belinda Stevens was not present. Debra Gunnerson reported that we have three Virginia tables at the national conference and congratulated Corky Sablinsky for being Virginia's newest foundation fellow.

**NewsNotes** Editor Jeannette Winsor asked that any submissions to *NewsNotes* be submitted to her electronically by January 15, 2009.

Parliamentarian Betty Ann Spiers presented proposed revisions to the State bylaws. She distributed copies of these changes, and lead a discussion about them. A copy of the proposed revisions is attached. She noted that any revisions we vote to accept during the conference will also have to be approved by MTNA. Betty Ann moved to adopt the revisions to the minutes as printed and amended. The motion was seconded and passed.

Advertising Chair Kim Peachy. No report.

Yearbook Chair Bonnie Western. No report.

Webmaster John Winsor. No report.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

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1. Jeannette Winsor reported that forms for all VMTA events except the theory test are in the member area of the website.

#### REPORTS FROM LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

The following associations presented brief oral reports.

Blue Ridge (Lisa Withers, Pres.)

Central Virginia (Dee Booth, Pres.)

Charlottesville (Laura Hoffman, Noriko Donahue, Pres.'s)

Harrisonburg (Kama Miller, Pres.)

Highlands (Sonya Ho, Pres.)

Northern Virginia (Julie Slingerland, Pres.)

Roanoke Valley (Lynne Kessler, Pres.)

Shenandoah (Lee Ann Dransfield, Pres.)

Tidewater (Josephine Jones, Pres.)

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 1. Election Committee Chair Roma Scriven reported that the committee is preparing for upcoming nominations.
- 2. Jan. 15, 2009 is deadline for submitting items to NewsNotes.
- 3. Southern Division Competitions will be January 16-19, 2009, VSU Petersburg.
- 4. Dates for the National Conference in Atlanta, GA, are March 28-31, 2009.
- 5. VMTA is applying for State Affiliate of the Year.
- 6. MTNA health insurance can be learned about on the MTNA website, mtna.org.
- 7. Wanda Hall urged all members who are responsible for getting information into the yearbook to do so in a timely manner for next year.
- 8. Wanda Hall announced that she is working on updates to the handbook.
- 9. Spring Conference will be in Charlottesville, at Westminster Canterbury of the Blue Ridge, June 6, 2009.
- 10. Deadline for the VMTA Yearbook is July 1, 2009
- 11. Deadline for the Fall issue of the NewsNotes is July 15, 2009

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM.



NEWSNOTES

# Reports .....

#### VMTA MEMBERSHIP REPORT NOVEMBER 8, 2008

Denise Adkins, Membership Chair

The membership processed through September 30 gives a total of 840. Membership categories are 689 active, 132 seniors, 18 students, and 1 star member. Since I have not received the October membership from MTNA yet, I downloaded an updated file that reflects our membership as of November 6 is 866.

## STATE CHAIR FOR LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS REPORT VMTA FALL CONFERENCE, 2008

Galla Matekova, State Chair for Local Associations

The VMTA local association presidents met on Friday, November 7, 2008 for their annual meeting during VMTA Fall Conference at Shenandoah University. Six presidents and two representatives were present from Blue Ridge, Central Virginia, Charlottesville, Highlands, Northern Virginia, Roanoke Valley, Shenandoah and Tidewater.

After introductions and information about the chapters represented and exchanging yearbooks, the chairman distributed copies of helpful material from MTNA's website.

The VMTA president Debra Gunnerson had reported updates and information from the recent executive board meeting.

Certification Chairman Martha Smith was sharing information that VMTA needed more teachers to become certified and Certification Board would encourage all members who are interested to start the process.

There was sharing of ideas our chapters are implementing, like membership, best meeting day/time, and workshops websites.

Presidents were reminded about upcoming Spring Conference and MTNA conference in Atlanta, Georgia are March 28–April 1, 2009. ■

#### **VMTA STATE AUDITIONS**

Gabriella Ryan, Chairman

The 2008 VMTA State Auditions were held November 8th at Shenandoah University during the VMTA Fall Conference. The competition was a day-long event, from 9 AM to 5 PM, including 25 students from 15 teachers. Forty piano students were eligible for entry, including the first place and alternate winners of each district in four grade levels. In addition, there was one Strings entry. There were no other single line entries. The winners in each level are as follows:

#### Level IA (K - Grade 4) David Carr Glover Elementary Auditions

1st Place — Beatrice Liang-Gilman, student of Jolanta Scewczyk
2nd Place — Jonathan Ko, student of Rosita Kerr Mang
Honorable Mention — Annie Cao, student of Jolanta Scewczyk
Honorable Mention — Yilong Peng, student of Kim Cho

#### Level IB (Grades 5-6) David Carr Glover Elementary Auditions

1st Place — Lyric Yu, student of Marjorie Lee

2nd Place — Evelyn Mo, student of Jun Yang

Honorable Mention — Angela Chang, student of Helen Heifets

Honorable Mention — Cinyu Chi, student of Jolanta Scewczyk

#### Level II (Grades 7-9) Donald Truesdell Junior High School Auditions

1st Place — Alex Li, student of Marjorie Lee

2nd Place — Eison De Guzman, student of Paul Hanson

Honorable Mention — Jessica Shen, student of Marjorie Lee

Honorable Mention — Devin Li, student of Paul Hanson

#### Level III (Grades 10 - 12) Donald Bolger High School Auditions

1st Place — Alexander Stabile, student of Nancy Breth 2nd Place — Meghan Rader, student of Suzanne Guy

The 1st Place Winners performed at the Winners Recital on Sunday, Nov. 9th, 2008. The 2nd Place Winners participated in Distinguished Visiting Artist John O'Connor's Master Class on Sunday. First Place winners received \$75, and Second Place winners received \$50. All participants received a certificate. Thank you to our wonderful judges: Dr. Karen Walker, Galla Matekova, and Rosanne Conway.

Congratulations to all the winning students and their teachers!  $\blacksquare$ 

(continued on page 7)

## 

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Visit www.ecu.edu/cs-cfac/music/keyboard/competition.cfm online for details.

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To schedule an audition or request information, contact the School of Music, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353, 252-328-6851 (voice), 252-328-6258 (fax), or e-mail Debbie Gardner at gardnerd@ecu.edu.

#### **Our Faculty Is Key**

East Carolina's School of Music offers comprehensive programs in piano performance, piano pedagogy, and accompanying.

#### Colin Andrews, organ, sacred music

- Literature Licentiate and ARAM, Royal Academy of Music, London
- Diplome Virtuosité. Geneva Conservatoire
- Internationally performing musician as a soloist and in concert with Janette Fishell, award-winning performer, frequent recorder, and active teacher and church musician

#### Charles Bath, keyboard

- AmusD, University of Michigan
- MM, Eastman School of Music
- BM, University of Michigan
- · Active performer with violinist Joanne Bath, the Bath Duo

#### Kerry Carlin, piano pedagogy

- DME, MM, Indiana University
- Certificate in piano pedagogy, New School of Music Study
- BM, Cleveland Institute of Music
- Active author, clinician, panelist, and adjudicator for the Music Teachers National Association

#### Henry Doskey, piano, department chair

- DM, Indiana University
- MM, BM, Southern Methodist University
- Award-winning performer, active recorder, and the authoritative interpreter of the music of composer William Gillock

#### John O'Brien, keyboard

- DMA, MM, BM, University of Southern California
- Conductor of the Eastern Carolina Youth Orchestra, codirector of the Early Music Ensemble

#### Keiko Sekino, keyboard

- DMA, Peabody Conservatory
- MM, Yale School of Music
- BA, Yale College
- Internationally performing soloist and chamber musician

Visit www.ecu.edu/music for more information on our programs, faculty, and auditions.

An equal opportunity/affirmative action university, which accommodates the needs of individuals with disabilities.

#### **Reports...** (continued from page 5)

#### **FALL FESTIVAL RESULTS**

Debbie Sacra, VMTA Fall Festival Coordinator

Thanks to the hard work and devotion of the local MTA Chairmen and members, approximately 843 students registered and 752 students played in the five Fall Festivals across the state in 2008. Thank you all for making the Fall Festival so successful!

#### **Lynchburg (CVMTA) November 15**

Registered: 6 Teachers; 2							
Level	Sup.	Ex.	VG	Good	Fair	Not Rated	TOTAL
TOTALS Played:							35

#### Northern Virginia (NVMTA) November 15

Registered: 65 Teachers*;	585	<u>solos</u> *	; <u>All</u>	piano*;	<u>585 S</u>	Students*	
Level	Sup.	Ex.	VG I	incomplete	Fair	Not Rated	TOTAL
TOTALS Played:	323	158	29	2			512

#### **Richmond (RMTA) November 15**

Registered: 18 Teachers*;	All <sub>1</sub>	oiano	*, 88 s	solos*; 1	l duet	; <u>90 stude</u> 1	nts*
Level	Sup.	Ex.	VG	Good	Fair	Not Rated	TOTAL
Level 1A	15	3	1				19
Level 1B	18	4					22
Level 2	19	11	1				31
Level 3	9	2					11
Level 4	1	1					2
TOTALS Played:	62	21	2	0	0	0	85

#### Roanoke (RVMTA) November 15

Registered: 16 Teachers*	; <u>All r</u>	oiano (	*; <u>111</u>	solos*	; <u>111 S</u>	tudents*	
Level	Sup.	Ex.	VG	Good	Fair	Not Rated	TOTAL
Level 1	35	7	1				43
Level 2	35						35
Level 3	14	7	1				22
Level 4	1						1
TOTALS Played:	85	14	2	0	0	0	101

#### Winchester (Shenandoah) November 22

Registered: <u>4 Teachers</u> *;	All pi	ano*	; <u>22 sc</u>	<u>olos*; 22</u>	2 Stud	ents*	
Level	Sup.	Ex.	VG	Good	Fair	Not Rated	TOTAL
Level 1A	3	1					4
Level 1B	5	1					6
Level 2	4	2					6
Level 3	2	1					3
Level 4							0
TOTALS Played:	14	5	0	0	0	0	19

#### STATE TOTALS

Registered: 109 Teachers\*; All piano\*; 808 solos\*; 2 duets; approx. 35 solos; approx. 843 students

Sup.	Ex.	VG I	ncomplete	Fair	Unknown	TOTAL
484	198	33	2	0	35	752

<sup>\*</sup>Underlined entries marked with an asterisk represent registration information. ■

# Visit VMTA's web site at www.music-usa.org/vmta

#### **WINNERS' CONCERTO CONCERT REPORT**

Suzanne Guy, co-chair Anna Ouspenskaya, co-chair

Led by conductor Jan Wagner, the Shenandoah Conservatory Symphony Orchestra played host to four remarkable young soloists Friday evening, November 7 at the VMTA Conference.

It was a glorious night of music for an enthusiastic audience and a thrilling experience for these accomplished musicians.

Yangbo Xu played the first movement of Mendelssohn's Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 for Violin and Orchestra. He is a student of Olga Kroulevitch.

A student of Alan Weinstein, David Feldman played the fourth movement of Elgar's cello concerto in E Minor, Op. 85.

Jonathan Keener, student of Lori Piitz, played Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43 by Rachmaninoff.

Pianist Rebecca Zhang played the first movement of Prokofiev's Concerto in C Major, Op. 26. She is a former student of Dr. Marjorie Lee.

Congratulations to "all of the above," their parents and their teachers.  $\blacksquare$ 

#### **SOUTHERN DIVISION RESULTS**

#### Junior Division

String: Annika Jenkins, student of Dora Mullins, Honorable Mention

Woodwind: Clarinet, Edward Cai, student of Kenneth Lee, Winner

#### Senior Division

Piano: Fifi Zhang, student of Marjorie Lee, Honorable Mention Woodwind: Clarinet, Hyun Jong Moom, student of Kenneth Lee Winner

Young Artist: Brass, Nathaniel Lee, student of Ross Walter, alternate

#### **COMMISSIONED COMPOSER WINNER**

Dr. David Shaffer-Gottschalk, Chairman

Congratulations to composer Thomas Albert of Winchester. He has been selected to receive the commission for a new work in the 2008-2009 Virginia Music Teachers Association/Music Teachers National Association Composer Commissioning Program. Dr. Albert's entry was one of seven entries from throughout Virginia. Judges for the competition were Kent Holliday of Blacksburg, Geraldine Boone of Chesapeake, and James Wiznerowicz of Richmond. Dr. Albert's new composition will receive its premiere at the 2009 VMTA Fall Conference.

**Thomas Albert** has been an active composer for more than four decades; his music has been performed throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Brazil, Japan and Korea. He received a grant form the National Endowment for the Arts for *Lizbeth*, a oneact music drama, which was a finalist in the National Opera Asso(continued on page 8)

#### Reports... (continued from page 7)

ciation's Chamber Opera Competition. Two of his works, A Maze (With Grace), and Devil's Rain, are included on the CD, On Edge, by the Philadelphia new music ensemble, Relâche; the group's version of Devil's Rain was developed with the composer during a joint residency at the Charles Ives Center for American Music.

His music has been described as "absolutely stunning" (*The Washington Post*), "transporting and exquisite" (*Pittsburgh Post Gazette*) and "fanciful, glistening and sparky" (*Plain Dealer*). His best-known work, *Thirteen Ways*, was the first commission offered by the Grammy-winning ensemble, eighth blackbird. The piece wi based on Wallace Stevens' poem, "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," from which the ensemble derived its name and is the title work of their premier recording for Cedille Records, *Thirteen Ways*. Eighth blackbird also commissioned his incidental music for the Cincinnati College-Conservatory's production of *Angels in America*, *Part One: Millennium Approaches*.

In 2006, the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble commissioned *Night Music* for its 30th anniversary season, and released a recording of the work a year later.

Other recent commissions include *Illuminations* and *The Devil's Handyman* for the 21st Century Consort, *Anonymous Fame* for the Washington Saxophone Quartet, and *Ave Maris Stella* for the Shenandoah Conservatory Choir's 2001 European tour. O *Magnum Mysterium*, for treble choir and organ, was commissioned by the Virginia Music Teachers' Association in 2003.

Albert is Professor of Music and holds the Harold Herman Chair in Musical Theatre at Shenandoah Conservatory in Winchester, Virginia, where he teaches composition and musical theatre. He has served as music director and conductor for more than 100 musicals and revues and has composed incidental music for several Shenandoah productions including *The Caucasian* 

Chalk Circle, The Lark, The Crucible, Dark of the Moon, and We Have Always Lived in the Castle. His arrangements and orchestrations of theatre music include the recent Shenandoah production of Stephen Schwartz's The Baker's Wife, and, for eighth blackbird, a thirty-minute set of songs by Stephen Sondheim for Chicago's summer 2006 Sondheim in the Park festival.

Thomas Albert was born in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. He was educated at Barton College and the University of Illinois. His principal composition teachers were William Duckworth, Paul Martin Zonn and Ben Johnson. He is a member of the Southeastern Theatre Conference, Musical Theatre Educators Alliance and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers.

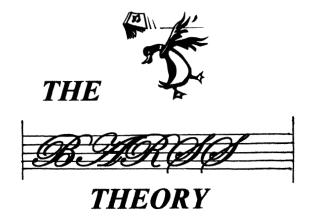
#### 2009 VALLEY DISTRICT AUDITIONS

Saturday, April 25th at James Madison University beginning at 9 a.m. Room 318, Music Building

Postmark deadline for entries

Friday, April 3rd to Dr. Pat Brady 671 Confederacy Drive Penn Laird, VA 22846

(forms on p. 18 of the 2008-9 VMTA Yearbook)



### FROM PRIMER TO LEVEL XII

These books follow the VMTA Theory Syllabus. For further information please contact Fay Barss at 802 282 7725 or faysmusic@comcast.net

8 News Notes

# VMTA Fall Conference Highlights at Shenandoah University



Bryant & Lisa Moxley, session presenters



Beth Tomassetti, session presenter



David Shaffer-Gottschalk and Kent Holliday, Commissioned Composer



Kent Holliday, Composer, and the James Piano Quartet



John O'Connor, Master Class Clinician



Ryan Barry, Composition Winner & his teacher Nathalie Steinbach



Members from Tidewater Music Teachers Forum

## HOLLINS

Announcing the 2009 Guest Artist for the

15th Annual Galbraith Master Class

## John Cobb

Van Cliburn Competition Winner

#### Friday, April 3

- Hollins University student master class
- Preparatory division student master class

#### Saturday, April 4

- Teachers' workshop
- Recital of Roanoke Valley students

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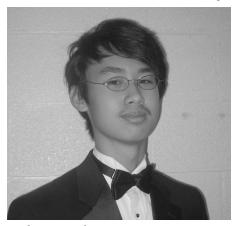
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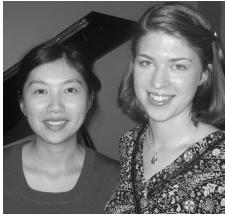
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