



# Newsletter

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**Fort Worth Music Teachers Association**

**Volume 10 No.22**

**September 2019**



The beginning of each academic year transitions us from the brilliant sun-filled, languid days of Summer into the autumnal glow of

Fall; vivid colours and balmy temperatures add to the palatable anticipation this beautiful season brings with it.

This sense of anticipation is further heightened every two years as FWMTA members welcome a new President and a new slate of Board members. (See our incoming President, Dr. Evan Mitchell's message to members, page 2.)

Among the incoming Board members are Anne Smith (who just relinquished duties involved with serving as Co-Chair of the Piano Solo Contest), and Dr. Gloria Lin (who served as VP for Programs some years ago). Together, they will serve as VPs for Programs over the next two years, 2019-2021.

Planning programs that are informative and of interest to us members requires much thought. Judging from the programs to be presented at the general meetings for the 2019-2020 academic year, it is evident that Anne Smith and Gloria Lin have made every effort to make our meetings informative and of value to us members.

So you may plan well ahead and keep the dates of the meetings boldly displayed on your calendar, here they are:

**Saturday, August 24, 2019,**

**10 A.M. - 12 Noon:**

**"Starting the Year Together!"**

Ed Landreth Hall stage, TCU, Fort Worth.

**Saturday, November 16, 2019,**

**10 A.M. - 12 Noon:**

**"Meet the Composer"**

Presentation by Mike Springer, local composer, teacher and performer, with student performances of his pieces.

Martin Hall, Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth.

**Tuesday, February 11, 2020,**

**10 A.M. - 12 Noon:**

**Joint Meeting with Forum and Mid-Cities Music Teachers Association.**

Presentation by Dr. Alexander Wasserman, Artist in Residence at Reinhardt University (GA).

The Woman's Club of Fort Worth, 1316, Pennsylvania Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas. 76104

**Sunday, April 19, 2020,**

**2-4 P.M. -**

**BookNotes**

Discussion led by Dr. Jill Sprenger on Stewart Gordon's book, *Etudes for Piano Teachers: Reflections on the Teacher's Art*. Fort Worth Conservatory of Music and Fine Arts, 2816 Hemphill Street, Fort Worth, Texas. 76110

A personal invitation from Anne Smith and Gloria Lin to our first meeting states:

*"As we "Start the Year Together!" on August 24, we will have the opportunity to connect with colleagues, meet our new Board and new members, get in on exciting plans for the upcoming year as committee chairs take us on a sweep through the calendar, learn of brand new programs, mix and mingle and more! You will be recharged, informed, and inspired. You won't want to miss the first meeting of the year!"*

The first meeting on Saturday, August 24, 2019, provides an opportunity to acquaint ourselves with incoming Board members, show our appreciation to those who have graciously opted to continue serving in previously held Board positions, and to greet new and renewing members.

All positions, including Chairpersons and their committees, are held by members who give of their time, energy and skills on a **volunteer** basis. Being present at, and hence participating in meetings, displays our sense of pride in belonging to a local music organization with state and national affiliations. The energy infused by members who give of their time in running our Association and the general membership's collective participation in activities offered by FWMTA, are the major contributing factors to our success at the local, state and national levels.

Rosemary Solomons  
Editor

**Saturday, August 24, 2019,**

**10 A.M. - 12 Noon:**

**"Starting the Year Together!"**

**Ed Landreth Hall stage, TCU, Fort Worth.**

## Message from Dr. Evan Mitchell, President FWMTA



*Since moving to Fort Worth in 2011, pianist **Evan Mitchell** has cultivated a diverse performing career, with numerous appearances for Cliburn at the Modern, Fort Worth Opera, and with the Dallas and Fort Worth Symphony Orchestras. Evan serves on the Board of Directors of Mount Vernon Music, and is a TCA Texas Touring Roster Artist. He has also worked extensively with Cliburn in the Classroom and Texas Winds Musical Outreach.*

*Evan's students have won first prize in the FWMTA Solo Competition, UTA Fall Contest, and others. He has given masterclasses at Texas Wesleyan University, Texas Woman's University, Southwestern University, the University of Florida, and Western Kentucky University, and has adjudicated for the TMTA Performance Contest, Carrollton MTA Solo Contest, and Dallas International Piano Competition (selection jury).*

*Evan received his DMA from TCU, and MM and BM from Indiana University. His principal teachers have included John Owings, Arnaldo Cohen, and the late José Feghali. He teaches privately and at Tarrant County College.*

Welcome back to the start of another year! I hope everyone had a wonderful summer. Mine was indeed an opportunity to relax, reflect, and recharge. In between family time, trips to the beach, and my teaching and performances, I spent three days in June at the TMTA Convention in Houston. I'm glad to report that FWMTA was well represented! Our wonderful ensembles performed under directors Jimmy Angeles, Twila McCown, and Jennifer Clarkson; Spring Seals, NCTM, was installed as TMTA VP for Business Activities; Dr. Jill Sprenger gave a presentation on the RCM Certificate Program; and Dr. Martin Blessinger was honored as the TMTA 2020 Commissioned Composer.

FWMTA continues to innovate this year – among other initiatives, we build on the success of our inaugural BookNotes meeting held last spring – with perhaps the most impactful change being the launch of our new outreach program. Spearheaded by immediate past co-president Jennifer DeSantis, the first of our outreach performances will take place December 10-12, 2019, at the UT Southwestern/Simmons Cancer Care Center, in the Moncrief Cancer Institute. Due to the nature of the facility, this particular outreach event will be open only to those 18 and older. Start spreading the word to your college-age and adult students. We hope our members will consider dropping in to play something themselves, too! Watch for details about additional outreach opportunities for students of all ages.

If the health and well-being of our community benefits from musical outreach, the health and well-being of our association depends on what we might call “in reach.” Just as we aim to spread the joy of music to as many others as possible, whether at Moncrief or elsewhere, I've personally resolved to focus just as much of my energy this year back inward toward FWMTA, and I invite you to join me in this resolution.

I share this not because I've always served the association to a great extent, but rather the opposite: I confess I haven't always attended meetings with much regularity, consistently signed up all of my students for SA or engaged as many of them as possible in FWMTA activities, or sought out ways to serve. I accepted the nomination to serve as President with this in mind, and with the feeling that this is a chance to change my outlook, and to start giving back in whatever small ways I can.

Perhaps (likely, even!) readers of this newsletter are already heavily involved in serving FWMTA and have been for far longer than I have. Whether those who have recently rotated off our Board, and have done so well to support those of us who are new; those still serving on the Board or as committee chairs, who continue to devote their time and energy to these tasks; or those stepping into new roles, we thank you!

But perhaps there are some reading this who, like me, subconsciously assumed the association would always be there, that things would always function properly, and that *my* help isn't relevant, isn't needed, or isn't enough. Increasing engagement throughout FWMTA, increasing the number of members who are involved in serving the association, is always needed. There's no amount of service that is too little, or that goes unnoticed.

Whether Saturday will be your first meeting or your hundredth, FWMTA is you; your talent, time, ideas, and dedication make our association what it is. On that note, I look forward to seeing many of you soon, and to making the coming year a happy, successful one together!

**Lori Christ**, Director, Preparatory Division, TCU, has read several books on music-related topics over the years. **BookNotes**, which appears in this issue of the FWMTA Newsletter, is the first in a series of articles by Christ in which she shares her recommendations on books that we may find fulfilling as musicians.

**BookNotes - by Lori Christ**



First of all, thank you to those of you who read the book **The Perfect Wrong Note**, by William Westney, and participated in the discussion for our **BookNotes** session at the FWMTA April 2019 meeting.

Recently it occurred to me that I have read quite a significant number of books over the years with music-related themes. Starting with this newsletter, I will share thoughts with you about some of those selections. My goal is to provide recommendations for a variety of reading material, perhaps straying into areas outside your everyday scope. At best, I would like to think that these choices can inspire you as a musician and teacher, and

at a minimum simply provide interesting or enjoyable reading.

A common thread in much that I have read is a search to find meaning in music—whether in general, or as it affects us in our lives. The book at the top of my stack in this regard is *The Joy of Music* (Simon and Schuster, 1959), by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990). While many of us are acquainted with Bernstein primarily as a conductor and composer, he was also a talented pianist, lecturer, and author. Bernstein's remarkable musical genius comes through in each of these areas. If you have seen any of his Omnibus television shows from the 1950s, you know how masterfully he used his expertise and charisma to educate his audience.

*The Joy of Music* is a collection of writings by Bernstein; a benefit of that format is the freedom to pick and choose segments to read, if time does not allow for the entirety. The writing is engaging, scholarly, funny, and sometimes irreverent. But even the irreverent moments are tongue-in-cheek and illustrate a point. The introduction alone is worth checking out for its overview of how we "explain" music, whether to other musicians or non-musicians. Bernstein continues on with imaginary conversations about music, followed by

more pointed topics straight from Omnibus. Some of my favorite portions are the chapters about Bach and Beethoven; these will make you want to listen anew to masterpieces such as Beethoven's symphonies or Bach's Brandenburg Concerti.

Bernstein, in his journey to find musical meaning, speaks to novice or non-musicians, but it never feels like he is talking down. It is inspirational to musicians as well. He explores general concepts as well as the more detailed, evidenced by many musical examples which are included. When he jumps into specific musical works, his roadmaps are like a whirlwind which is both enlightening and entertaining. What can be better than getting inside the brain of a musical savant to experience music? With Bernstein in the driver's seat it's definitely a fun ride. I find his ways of communicating and ideas surfacing as I think about music and work with my own students. To convey even a fraction of such vast knowledge and enthusiasm to another generation of music-lovers or musicians would be a great accomplishment.

*BookNotes* features a memoir in the January 2020 issue of the Newsletter. Watch for it!

**The reading of Westney's book, *The Perfect Wrong Note*, generated these comments from members:**

"Thought-provoking and inspiring."  
-Sarah Alexander

"...thanks for organizing and moderating the book talk! ...a thought-provoking read, and a good basis for discussion."  
-Evan Mitchell

"Wonderful comments and exchange of ideas with age groups who were there."  
-Maureda Travis

FWMTA extends a warm welcome to the following new members and reinstating members. We look forward to their involvement in our Association and to what they have to offer as teachers and musicians.

Jennifer Clarkson  
Jeff Lankov  
Keji Sanchez (Collegiate)  
Nathan Ryland (Collegiate)

Donna Hopson (Reinstating)  
Rachel Leeke  
Larissa Alves Mulligan (Reinstating)  
Annett Ross (Reinstating)

## EVENTS CALANDER

### AUGUST

**24** Starting the Year Together!”,  
10:00am-12:00pm,  
Ed Landreth Hall Stage at TCU

### SEPTEMBER

**11** Fall Festival: Jazz and Romantic  
Registration Deadline  
**13** Student Affiliate Enrollment  
Deadline

### OCTOBER

**5** Open Recital - Texas Wesleyan  
University, Martin Hall  
**10** Fall Theory Test Registration  
Deadline  
**12** Fall Festival: Jazz and Romantic  
TCU, Ed Landreth Hall  
**15** Original Composition  
Deadline for Entry  
**26** Chamber Music Festival  
registration deadline. Joint event  
with Mid-Cities MTA and Tarrant  
County College-Northeast.  
Register at <https://mcmta.org/>

### NOVEMBER

**1** Student Affiliate Late Enrollment  
Deadline (Fee Assessed)  
**2** Fall Theory Test - Broadway  
Baptist Church  
**9** Open Recital with *Forum* at Texas  
Wesleyan University, Martin Hall  
**16** “Meet the Composer”, 10:00am-  
12:00pm, presentation by Mike  
Springer, composer, teacher, and  
performer, with a student recital  
of his pieces. Texas Wesleyan  
University, Martin Hall.  
**23** Chamber Music Festival: piano  
and instrumental at TCC-NE. For  
more info and registration, please  
visit <https://mcmta.org/>  
**TBD** Original Composition Contest  
Recital at Steinway Hall  
Enrollment Deadline  
Fee Increased

### DECEMBER

**1** Youth Duo Piano Competition  
Registration Deadline  
**1** Local Publication Competition  
Deadline  
**1** Local Video Contest  
Deadline  
**6** Student Affiliate Extended Late  
Enrollment Deadline  
Fee Increased

### JANUARY

**9** Spring Theory Test Registration  
Deadline  
**TBD** Local Performance Contest  
Registration Postmark  
**TBD** Original Composition Contest  
State Deadline

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## Executive Board Members 2019 - 2021

### PRESIDENT:

Evan Mitchell

### VP for PROGRAMS:

Gloria Lin / Anne Smith

### VP for MEMBERSHIP:

Jae Kim

### VP for STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

MaryAnn Fritz

Jennea Potter

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Cricket Hackney

#### TREASURER:

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Jill Sprenger

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Ilka Araujo

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### HISTORIAN

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### NEWSLETTER EDITOR:

Rosemary Solomons

### GRAPHICS:

T. L. Helmick (non-member)