



SLAMTA

Newsletter from the President

Kyu Butler, NCTM

September/October 2020

*Announcements

1. Bylaws
2. Fall Programs
3. Call for Nominations: Teacher of The Year Award
4. Attendance of MTAN Leadership Summit
5. New Members

*Member Highlight – Marlita Weiss

*Officer Directory

*SLAMTA respects and supports people irrespective of gender, race, culture, religion, nationality and identity.

SLAMTA will continue to be inclusive, providing music programs and activities for music teachers and students in St. Louis area.

Announcements

1. Bylaws

The revised Bylaws were passed and are now posted on SLAMTA homepage.

<https://www.slamta.org/about>

2. Fall Programs

a. MMTA District/State Auditions & MTNA Competitions

www.missourimta.org

District Audition Chair: Caroline Hixson (slamta.districtschair@gmail.com)

b. Guest Speaker Presentations (online)

Dr. Scott McBride Smith, Dr. Albert Kim, & Dr. Peter Henderson - Fall 2020

Please visit SLAMTA homepage for more details. www.slamta.org

Program Chair: Jennifer Spohr (slamta.programschair@gmail.com)

c. Legacy Fund Recital, Master Class, & Presentation: *Spencer Myer*

Legacy Fund events have provided great programs with wonderful pianists. Please support and spread the word! For more details, please visit SLAMTA homepage. <https://www.slamta.org/legacy-recital>

Legacy Chair: Huiyun Liang (slamta.legacychair@gmail.com)

d. Key Players

“Simply September-Shorter works by Composers from the Romantic Era”
led by new chair, Matt Safley. First meeting on 9/21, Mon, 10:30am via Zoom.

Key Players Chair: Matt Safley (slamta.keyplayers@gmail.com)

e. Virtual Playathon & Monster Concert

Natalie Mayor and Marschnee Strong are planning to have a combined event. More information will be released on the SLAMTA homepage.

Natalie Mayor (slamta.playathonchair@gmail.com)

Marschnee Strong (slamta.monsterconcertchair@gmail.com)

3. Call for Nominations for the Teacher of the Year Award

This award recognizes a member of SLAMTA for excellence in teaching and service to SLAMTA. The award will be presented at the closing program in May, 2021. The winner of this award will be determined by a standing committee of five persons appointed by the President. The members of the committee will consist of the Immediate Past President, two past presidents, and two current members of the SLAMTA Executive Board. Only one Teacher Recognition Award may be received during a teacher's lifetime. The award is purely based on achievements and service to the music community.

*Nominee Requirements:

1. be a member in good standing of MTNA, MMTA, and SLAMTA
2. have a minimum of five years of teaching experience
3. have had students participating in MMTA District and State Auditions for at least the past three years

Nominations can come from people who are not SLAMTA members.

The link for nominations: <https://forms.gle/Vu6rHAXrjpe5PNYE7>

4. Invitation of the MTNA Leadership Summit

Kyu Butler was invited to attend virtual MTNA Leadership Summit on 9/11-12 as the President of SLAMTA. If anyone want to share something with other local, state, and national officers, please feel free and contact Kyu. Slamta.president@gmail.com

5. New Members

Please welcome our new members (as of 09/09/2020):

Pavel Ilyashov – String

Dariusz Kosinski – Piano, Webster University student

Nancy Mayo – Piano, Reinstated

Jun Seo – String

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT



MARLITA WEISS

“What we do is our way of making the world a little better than we found it.”

(August 23rd, 2020)

As the Corona virus pandemic still goes on and becomes our ‘new normal’, I met with Marlita through Zoom. It would have been better to meet her in-person for the interview, but I would like to avoid any possible health issues related to COVID-19 and I am glad that Marlita agreed on that.

The main reason I decided to interview her and feature her in SLAMTA’s Newsletter is her service. Marlita is one of the longest-active members, holding on to her membership since 1975. SLAMTA was actually formed in 1974! We do not have any members who joined in 1974 unfortunately. She joined SLAMTA when her youngest daughter turned 10 years old, at which time she felt that she now had time to connect with music community. I thought Marlita could share valuable memories and stories with all SLAMTA members since she has been with SLAMTA for such a long time.

Our Zoom interview started with a greetings from Marlita's rescue dog, Kaylee. She wanted to know what Marlita was doing. It was a warm welcome. Marlita is a dog lover. She is also well-organized person. She sent me a few emails before the interview to share information about herself and her stories, so we were able to save quite some time on interview.

My first question was "Was it possible for girls to go and study far away from home at that time?" I had read her bio beforehand and was wondering about access to education for women in the decades after the second World War. She is like my grand mother's generation, and my grand mother told me that she couldn't get a college education when she was young. In Korea, parents didn't think that it would be necessary for women to go to school at that time. Marlita answered that it was acceptable for women to go to college at that time, but they were discouraged from pursuing a career, which is very different from the present.

The most important word that comes to my mind from the entire interview was "Education". Marlita mentioned it a few times in different contexts and I could tell that is where her passion for music came from. In the first sentence of her first email to share her thoughts on the interview, she wrote "SLAMTA means a great deal to me for continuing education". My last question for her was "Anything to say to young teachers who just started to teach or open a studio?" She answered, "Keep studying. Keep Learning. Be patient."

We spent some time talking about teaching, and Marlita pointed out these: To the best of the student's ability, To play appropriate performance practice, To have healthy technique, and to have a thoughts on composer's intension. Marlita owns a harpsichord. When students want to learn Baroque music, she allows them play on harpsichord to feel and hear the performance practice from the original instrument. I think that is a wonderful idea.

For Marlita, SLAMTA is important in many ways. First, SLAMTA provides great opportunities for all students: Sonatina Festival, District/State Auditions, Playathon, Monster Concerts, and Master classes etc. Second, she has met and made good lasting relationships with SLAMTA members, becoming friends with many. Lastly, Marlita joined SLAMTA because she wanted to connect with other people and organizations in this area and support them. Marlita supports Opera Theater St. Louis and the St. Louis Symphony. Marlita also mentioned the Piano Teachers Round Table, (www.pttrstl.org). This is our sister organization with which we share opening and closing programs every year. Marlita has enjoyed being friends with SLAMTA teachers so that she can discuss issues related to her students, music, and their technique.

Marlita is obviously an experienced teacher, and had this to say to the young teachers, besides education: Keep on going, Judgement comes from experience, Learn how to pace your students, and Get involved. I agreed and think these comments are a great lesson for teachers early in their career.

My very last question to her was “What did you do to maintain a good health?” She said “I am blessed on health. I walk and swim. And I am trying to be positive.” This answer is very similar to Gwen’s answer, who was featured at last Newsletter. Maybe this is the secret key to be healthy and have a long life.

I would like to say a special thank you to Marlita for her time and sharing her stories to SLAMTA members. This was the second time that I interviewed our members. I really appreciate that their hard work, love of music, and commitment for such a long period of time made possible for us now. I hope we can continue their passion and contribution and would like to see our next generation can recognize us like them.

* A letter from one of Marlita's students about to start college:

"How playing piano has the ability to bring peace and joy in a turbulent time. You gave me a love of music and the ability to treat each piece not as a shiny object to show off at competition, but a book I can go back to play at any time. Music isn't complete until it's played."

* Biography – Marlita Weiss

Marlita Weiss was born in St. Louis; the daughter of Dr. Samson Wennerman and Zelda Ellman Wennerman. Her mother was a fine quartet vocalist and her father inspired many young surgeons and was her inspiration for teaching. Marlita loved piano from the beginning at age 5. It was her company, being an only child, and during the hot pre-air conditioned summers. She opened the windows and blared the Rhapsody in Blue to the neighbors.

Her training was in journalism, social work and piano but piano won out. She attended Northwestern University and graduated from Washington University with a bachelors and masters degree. Her main piano instructors included the late Etta L. Evans, student of E. Robert Schmitz, Jane Allen, Seth Greiner Sr., Sona Haydon, and Luiz De Moura Castro of the Hartt School of Music. She has maintained a close relationship with Dr. Mia Hynes who gave several master classes to her students and taught them at Dr. Hynes' Summer Piano Institute.

She and Dr. Stuart Weiss have three children and five grandchildren.

Marlita's teaching career began in 1975 when her youngest daughter was 10. She immediately joined MTNA, MMTA, SLAMTA, PTRT, and Federation. She has presented sessions on Mozart Ornamentation and pianist wellness with staff from BJC, and duets with Sue Chiu. Among the hundreds of students she taught are 10 teachers in Israel and across the United States, a church choir director, an opera coach in Germany and movie music score composers. Many of her students attend concerts, love music and encourage their children to play piano. She has had some very talented students and some with modest talent who care.

She always tries to be kind, patient and persistent.

2020 SLAMTA Officer Directory

Executive Board

IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT (Caroline Hixson) SLAMTA.ImmediatePast@gmail.com

PRESIDENT (Kyu Butler) SLAMTA.President@gmail.com

PRESIDENT-ELECT (Sharla Bender) SLAMTA.Presidentelect@gmail.com

SECRETARY (Mihyun Lee) SLAMTA.Secretary2020@gmail.com

TREASURER (Bethany Nikstad) SLAMTA.Treasurer@gmail.com

VICE-PESIDENT OF MEMBERSHIP (Sharla Anderson) SLAMTA.Membershipchair@gmail.com

Committees

Elective Chairs

HOSPITALITY (Sharla Anderson) SLAMTA.HospitalityChair@gmail.com

WEBMASTER SLAMTA.ORG@gmail.com

Event Chairs

PROGRAMS & COMMITTEE MANAGER (Jennifer Spohr) SLAMTA.ProgramsChair@gmail.com

CERTIFICATION (Eunsil Stevenson) SLAMTA.CertificationChair@gmail.com

DISTRICTS (Caroline Hixson) SLAMTA.DistrictsChair@gmail.com

KEY PLAYERS (Matt Safley) SLAMTA.KeyPlayers@gmail.com

LEGACY (Huiyun Liang) SLAMTA.LegacyChair@gmail.com

MASTER CLASS (Soo Kyung Kim) SLAMTA.MasterClassChair@gmail.com

MONSTER CONCERT (Marschnee Strong) SLAMTA.MonsterConcertChair@gmail.com

PLAYATHON (Natalie Mayor) SLAMTA.PlayathonChair@gmail.com

SONATINA (Angela Cox) SLAMTA.SonatinaChair@gmail.com

YOUNG ARTIST (Kyu Butler) SLAMTA.YoungArtistChair@gmail.com