

# NORTH YORK MUSIC FESTIVAL 2026 ADJUDICATORS' BIOGRAPHIES

## Welcome to the North York Music Festival!

On behalf of the North York Music Festival, I warmly welcome all participants, teachers, parents, and supporters to this year's festival. As we celebrate our **18th year**, we are proud to continue a tradition that encourages young musicians to share their artistry, dedication, and love of music.

To all performers: **best of luck!** Preparing for a performance takes courage, discipline, and perseverance. Each of you has already achieved something meaningful through the hours of practice and commitment that brought you here. We hope this experience inspires you to continue growing as musicians and performers.

We would also like to acknowledge the **teachers and parents** whose guidance, patience, and encouragement make these musical journeys possible. Your support plays an essential role in nurturing the next generation of artists.

Our sincere thanks go to our **scholarship contributors** for supporting excellence and opportunity for our participants: **The Beethoven Society for Pianists, Annie Jing Huang, Sam Oziel, and the family of piano teacher Maya Djafarova**, whose generous contribution honours her memory and her dedication to music education.

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We are also grateful to our **piano sponsor, Steinway Gallery**, for their continued support of the festival, and to **ESG United Church and Hope United Church** for generously providing their facilities and welcoming our musical community.

We are fortunate to have an outstanding panel of **adjudicators**, whose expertise, insight, and encouragement enrich the learning experience for every performer. We invite you to learn more about them by reading their biographies below.

We also encourage everyone to stay for the **free workshop presented by Thrive Performance Mind Training**. This session offers valuable strategies for managing performance nerves and developing greater consistency and confidence on stage—skills that benefit musicians of all ages and levels.

As we celebrate this **18th year of NYMF**, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who continues to support the festival. Your enthusiasm and commitment help keep music alive in our community.

Enjoy the music, and best wishes to all performers! 🎵

*Elia Poretz*, Artistic Director & Founder



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### Dr. Karin Di Bella, Piano



Dr. Karin Di Bella is an accomplished pianist and educator. She has appeared as a concerto soloist with orchestras in the United States and Canada, and has an active collaborative career with instrumentalists and singers around North America and in Europe.

Previously on faculty at the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music, Dr. Di Bella is currently Associate Professor of Piano at Brock University. She is also sought after as an adjudicator for music festivals across Canada and is a senior piano examiner for the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Her areas of expertise include contemporary Canadian repertoire, particularly the works by Jack Behrens, and historical instruments and techniques of the 18th and 19th centuries. Her CD *Variants: Solo Piano Music of Jack*

*Behrens* is available through the Canadian Music Centre ([musiccentre.ca](http://musiccentre.ca)), on iTunes, or for streaming on the Naxos database.

### Norma Churchill, Voice

A highly sought-after voice teacher and adjudicator, Norma Churchill is recognized for her passion for the voice and commitment as an educator, working to establish a solid musical foundation in her students. Her teaching career spans 30 years – including her own thriving Toronto studio, Cantare Music, as well as at St. Michael's Choir School and the Kingsway Conservatory of Music – working with students of all ages and driven by a holistic approach which integrates the Alexander Technique.

Norma is also one of only a few official instructors of the Vibrant Voice Technique, which enhances vocal resonance while reducing muscle tension and subsequent vocal fatigue. Norma has coached in the Toronto District School Board and run musical theatre programs while also adjudicating at numerous festivals.

As a soprano, Norma has performed a variety of roles with opera companies across the country, as well as in chamber music and oratorio concerts in Canada, Poland, and in England, where she studied with renowned teachers Vera Rosza and Paul Hamburger of the Guildhall School of Music, in addition to studies at the Bri en-Pears School of Music, the Else Mayer-Lismann Opera Studio, and the Beethoven Musikschule in Vienna. Previously, she earned a degree in voice performance from the University of Toronto and studied music and drama at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Norma continues to work to improve her craft as both a singer and teacher, and enthusiastically follows recent developments in singing, pedagogy, and vocal health research. Norma is a long-standing member of the College of Examiners of the RCM and is also a member of NATS and NYTSA.





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### **Dr. Joseph Ferretti, Piano**

Joseph Ferretti is active as an educator and performer. His versatile career as soloist and collaborative artist has taken him throughout Canada, the USA and Europe. Some highlights include performances at the Canadian Opera Company's Piano Virtuoso Series, NUMUS, Toronto's Music Gallery, KW Chamber Music Society, Barrie's Colours of Music, The Open Ears Festival and many more. In addition to recital performances, Joseph often performs as a collaborative artist, particularly as a duo pianist with Elaine Lau, and as a member of the award-winning junctQín keyboard collective with Stephanie Chua. As a chamber pianist, he performs frequently with such ensembles as the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony, the Niagara Symphony, as well as performances with NUMUS orchestras, Quatuor Bozzini, The Talisker Players and more. His performing and recording projects have involved many wonderful collaborations with thriving composers and performers in Canada and abroad.

Dr. Ferretti is in demand across Canada as a festival and competition adjudicator, presenter, and an examiner for The Royal Conservatory of Music. He has taught studio piano in the Faculty of Music at Wilfrid Laurier University since 2003 and has held faculty and accompanying staff positions at the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts and Blue Lake Fine Arts camp. Joseph received a Contribution to Teaching Award from the Ontario Registered Music Teachers' Association in 2018 and enthusiastically teaches students of all levels and age groups. Activity as an educator has also led to such roles as course facilitator for online RCM Pedagogy Certificate Courses, and as a Teacher Advisor serving on MEDA project (Music Education in the Digital Age), a multi-institutional project that produced educational learning tools, including the Music Tool Suite.

Dr. Ferretti obtained his Master's and Doctoral degrees in Piano Performance from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where he held fellowships and scholarships. His Bachelor of Music was from the University of Colorado Boulder, where he was honoured as Outstanding Junior and Outstanding Senior in the College of Music.



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### Jill Diane Filion, Voice



Jill has had an extensive career on the music theatre, concert and opera stages. She appeared in her first musical “Oklahoma” at the age of 13 in a featured dance role. Favourite roles include Signora Naccarelli in *The Light in the Piazza*, Miss Stacy and Rachel Lynde in *Anne of Green Gables*, Eliza in *my Fair Lady*, Marion in *The Music Man*, Frenchie/2<sup>nd</sup> keyboard in *Cabaret*, Graziella in *West Side Story* and the Baroness in *The Sound of Music*. She has enjoyed 3 seasons with the Charlottetown Festival, 7 with Drayton Entertainment, 2 with Theatre by the Bay. For Bruce County Playhouse she played the role of Connie in *The Ladies Foursome* in 2017 and in 2019 was the Music Director/performance

pianist for *Nunsense*.

Before moving to Toronto, Jill toured for 3 years with the Vancouver Opera Ensemble singing the roles of Musetta in *La Boheme*, Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* and Josephine in *Pinafore*. She was the co-founder of both Kaspar Productions and Westcoast Concert Opera. She was a cast member of both the Toronto and International Touring companies of *Phantom of the Opera* and was in the original cast of *Ragtime*. Jill has been employed as a voice teacher and vocal coach at Sheridan College in the Musical Theatre Degree Program and at the Randolph Academy for Performing Arts as a choreographer and musical director as well. Jill is an active pianist, accompanying singers and musicians at concerts, cabarets and church services.

### Christopher Hwang, Cello



Canadian cellist Christopher Hwang is a dynamic and profound artist who has performed extensively as a soloist and chamber musician across North America and Asia. A laureate of numerous prestigious competitions, most recently, he is the winner of the 2023 Canada Council Instrument Bank Competition, receiving a three-year loan of a 1929 Italian Carlo Giuseppe Oddone cello. He was also a finalist at the 2021 Eckhardt-Gramatté National Music Competition, which sparked his passion for commissioning new Canadian works. In 2026, Mr Hwang will release his debut commercial recording under the Akashic Label. He will premiere three newly commissioned Canadian works for cello and piano by Kevin Lau, Kevin Zi-Xiao He, and Ron Royer. alongside Kodály’s sonata for solo cello. This project includes

collaboration with distinguished pianist Angela Park and is generously supported by the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra, the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council for the



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Arts. Mr. Hwang has appeared as soloist with the Scarborough Philharmonic Orchestra, University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Kitchener-Waterloo Youth Orchestra, CAST Orchestra, and the Yale Baroque Ensemble. His artistic development includes participation in international festivals such as the Banff Centre Chamber Residency, Great Mountains Music Festival, Toronto Summer Music Festival, and Morningside Music Bridge, collaborating with Janos Starker, Steven Isserlis, and Gary Hoffman.

Mr. Hwang studied at the New England Conservatory with Laurence Lesser and Lluís Claret, Yale University under Aldo Parisot, and the University of Toronto with Shauna Rolston. A dedicated pedagogue, he is a sessional guest artist at the University of Toronto and has adjudicated competitions including the Hong Kong Schools Music Festival, Toronto Kiwanis Music Festival, International Music Festival and CAST concerto competition.

### **Maestro Matthew Jones, Orchestral Audition**

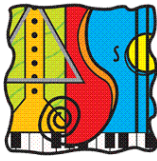
Recorder virtuoso, cellist, and music director Matthew Jones is proud that his career has spanned the length of Ontario as the current artistic director to the Kitchener Waterloo Chamber Orchestra, Etobicoke Philharmonic Orchestra and Kitchener Waterloo Symphony Youth Orchestra, and conductor laureate with Timmins Symphony Orchestra in the North East of Ontario.

Matthew graduated from Wilfrid Laurier University where he studied Cello performance. His conducting studies include the Conductor's Institute at The Hartt School, University of Connecticut, and the Oregon Bach Festival under the guidance of Helmuth Rilling.

Mr. Jones enthusiastically advocates for the Arts in the community and beyond. Under his leadership, the Timmins Symphony Orchestra was awarded the Prestigious Betty Webster Award for its contribution to Orchestral Music in Canada. Matthew has enjoyed conducting the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony on several occasions, Sault Ste. Marie Symphony, and Georgian Bay Symphony as a guest conductor and working with the North Bay Symphony.

Matthew was honoured to serve as a board member for Orchestra's Canada, Canada's national voice of the Canadian orchestral community. It has been Matthew's great pleasure to serve all Canadian Orchestras by advocating for the continued support of symphonic music at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government.





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### **Dr. François Koh, Violin and Guitar**

Dr. François Koh is an award-winning conductor, classical guitarist, and educator dedicated to bridging cultures and generations through orchestral art. Currently based in Toronto, he is the Founder and Artistic Director of Salon de Musique Canada, a concert series that reimagines popular music through a refined classical lens. As a conductor, Dr. Koh's leadership has been praised by Jonathan Crow (Concertmaster, Toronto Symphony Orchestra) for his "inspirational" enthusiasm and ability to elevate musicians of all levels. A Heinz Unger Conducting Award nominee, his accolades include winning the 2023 International Conductors Workshop and Competition in Atlanta and reaching the semi finals of the Ionel Perlea International Conducting Competition in Romania. From 2015 to 2022, he served as Music Director of the Georgian Bay Symphony, where his visionary leadership

earned the Ontario Arts Council's Vida Peene Orchestra Award. His extensive international podium experience includes performances with the Savaria Symphony Orchestra (Hungary), Filarmonica de Stat Târgu Mureş (Romania), and various professional ensembles across Canada and the USA.

Dr. Koh is a highly sought-after adjudicator and mentor. In 2026, he continues his commitment to excellence in musical standards as an adjudicator for the North York Music Festival and the Canada Virtuoso Young Artists Music Competition. His previous adjudication experience includes serving as the plucked strings specialist at the Coast Music Festival in British Columbia. An RCM Gold Medal Teacher, Dr. Koh has over 30 years of experience teaching guitar, theory, and harmony. His pedagogy is informed by his international background in Korea, France, and Canada, as well as his doctoral research into cognitive science and the "Music and the Brain" seminar at the University of Toronto. Many of his students have achieved RCM Gold Medals and successful auditions at prestigious institutions such as McGill University and Berklee College of Music. Dr. Koh holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Toronto and a Master's degree from McGill University. A passionate advocate for Canadian contemporary and Indigenous inspired music, he remains committed to fostering accessibility and inclusivity in every performance and competition he oversees.



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### **Elaine Lau, Piano**

Versatile as both a soloist and collaborative artist, **Elaine Lau** has performed as keyboardist and soloist with numerous orchestras, as a founding member of Toronto's award-winning *unctQin* keyboard collective, and as duo pianist with Joseph Ferretti. Recordings in the last few years include *reTHINK*, a CD of contemporary piano music for six hands (Redshift Records) and a recording collaboration with Montreal's Quatuor Bozzini (2024). In 2025, Elaine also joined musicians from diverse genres in the Exit Points free improv concert series at Arraymusic, recording straight to disc for release in 2026.

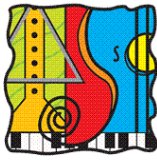
A member of the piano faculty at Wilfrid Laurier University since 2003, Ms. Lau has served as keyboard faculty at the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, Young Artist Program at the Southern Ontario Suzuki Institute and teaches at the Royal Conservatory of Music.

### **Catherine Molina, Violin**

Catherine is the General Manager of Guelph Symphony Orchestra. In this role, Catherine oversees the strategic and artistic planning, resource development, finance, and administration of the orchestra. Under her leadership, GSO has expanded its season, significantly increased government and corporate sponsorship, fundraising revenue and maintained a balanced budget. She has also broadened the orchestra's community outreach and has embarked upon many new directions in its educational programming.

Ms. Molina is the creator and curator of GSO's KidsClub, GSO's School Music Program at Sacred Heart (in collaboration with Joe Ringhofer) and the GSO POP Up Orchestra Festival, now in its third year. She has launched the "Player Adopt-a family" program and serves as the creator and costume designer for our Kinderconcerts. Catherine has over twenty five years experience as the Director of Open Strings Music Studio and the Artelli String Quartet. She is a performance graduate of both the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory of Music where she now serves as a member of the College of Examiners. Catherine was pleased to be a String juror in this year's inaugural International Classicalia Competition. Currently the principal violist of the Guelph Symphony Orchestra. Catherine has also been a principal player in the Thunder Bay Symphony and the Toronto Sinfonietta.





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### **Maestro Martin MacDonald, Orchestral Audition**



Martin MacDonald is one of Canada's most dynamic and outstanding young conductors and has been awarded both the Heinz Unger Award and the JeanMarie Beudet Award for orchestral conducting. Martin has guest conducted extensively across Canada having worked with the orchestras of Toronto, National Arts Centre, Vancouver, Victoria, Kamloops, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Kingston, Kitchener-Waterloo, London, Niagara, Sudbury, Thunder Bay, Windsor, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland.

He has served as a Cover and Guest Conductor for the National Ballet of Canada for several productions, and has worked with the Minnesota Ballet, Atlantic Ballet, and Halifax Dance. Martin

has recorded extensively for the CBC and for several commercial recordings. Most notably, Martin has served as Resident Conductor, Associate Conductor, and a regular guest conductor of Symphony Nova Scotia since 2008 with over 200 performances in a diverse range of programs and artists. Previously, Martin served as Associate Conductor of the National Academy Orchestra of Canada and has participated in several international conducting workshops and competitions.

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Martin has a Master's in Orchestral Conducting from McGill, a Bachelor's in Cello from Memorial, and has studied conducting with Alexis Hauser, Bernhard Gueller, Boris Brott, Michael Jinbo, Kenneth Kiesler, Gustav Meier, Jorma Panula, and Johannes Schlaefli. Martin's conducting activities have been generously supported by the Canada Council for the Arts. Cape Breton born, Martin is the youngest of twelve children and has a diverse musical background with a strong Celtic music tradition including extensive touring and performing with members of his family throughout Europe and North America.



### **Denise Norman, Speech Arts**

Denise Norman is an MA and MFA Graduate of York University whose singing and acting training includes a focus on Voice with David Smukler and Gwen Little, and Clown with Richard Pochinko, Sue Morrison and Philippe Gaulier. Performance credits include Dean Burry's one person musical Sweetheart as Mary Pickford; the title role in The Vile Governess Directed by Sue Miner; and Isabella in Measure for Measure at Theatre Resource Centre. Denise also teaches extensively, with 35 years of experience teaching acting students at Erindale College (University of Toronto), and Sheridan College in Oakville, McMaster University, York University, Seneca College, Randolph College for the Performing Arts, and Young People's Theatre. Her years of Professional Theatre experience includes: Acting; Producing; Directing; Dramaturgy; Singing (two produced CDs); Coaching;



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Workshop and Development. Favourite roles have included Mary Pickford in Dean Burry's one person musical "Sweetheart"; The title role in "The Vile Governess" and H.H. Holmes in "The Good Doctor Holmes and His Children of God".

### Carissa Neufeld, Piano



Carissa Neufeld, Piano Carissa Neufeld (BMUS, ARCT) is a Toronto-based pianist, vibraphonist, and educator. Early classical piano studies began with Dr. Betty Suderman and Dr. Robin Wood at the University of Victoria where she accompanied numerous choirs, vocalists, and instrumentalists. Carissa then continued her studies in jazz at Humber College under Don Thompson and Brian Dickinson.

As a jazz pianist, she has performed at Toronto venues such as the Rex Hotel and Jazz Bar, Jazz Bistro, Old Mill, Arts and Letters Club, McMichael Gallery, and Lula Lounge. Recent recordings include Toronto Jazz Orchestra's "20", the Composer Collective Big Band's "The Toronto Project", and Sarah Jerrom's "The Yeats Project".

She is a long-time member of both the Toronto Jazz Orchestra and the Composer's Collective Big Band. Carissa was the pianist for the Bach Children's Chorus from 2022 – 2024 under the artistic director of Charissa Bagan. In 2024 three BCC choirs were rewarded with first place at the Provincial OMFA competition. Carissa also performed with all the of BCC choirs at the Junior Treble Festivals and Senior Treble Festivals, Podium 2024 and various concerts and events (including an appreciation concert for Eleanor Daley). As a vibraphonist, she has appeared with the Toronto Jazz Orchestra, the Chris Hunt Tentet, and the Big Sound (a Motown band that plays at the Mod Club and the Great Hall). She recorded on Steven Taetz's album "Drink You In" and will be recording on the xylophone and vibraphone this summer 2026 with George Koller (Holly Cole) and Catherine Wilson (Ensemble Vivant) for an "Animals in Music" video series.

As an educator, she has taught award winning piano students for over 25 years and has adjudicated piano festivals in both the Yukon and Toronto. She has also been a guest improvisation clinician for El Sistema and guest lecturer for business and pedagogy classes at both Humber College and Centennial College in Toronto. Carissa currently owns "On the Off Beat Music School" together with her husband Michael Skinner which is celebrating 16 years.



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### Joe Ringhofer, Piano

Joe Ringhofer, Director of the Phoenix Conservatory of Music, began his musical life as a classical accordionist. In 1978 he won first prize in the Canadian Accordion Championship, representing Canada later that year in the Coupe Mondiale in Łódź, Poland.

A graduate of the University of Toronto and the Royal Conservatory, he has concentrated his career in the areas of theory, history, keyboard harmony, and theory pedagogy. The author over twenty publications on music rudiments, history, harmony and sight-reading, Joe Ringhofer has been a theory and practical examiner for the Royal Conservatory since 1976, and served as Chief Examiner from 2002-2007. Most recently (2016) he was a contributor to the new series Celebrate Theory (Levels 5-8). In 2017, the Royal Conservatory launched four official textbooks co-authored by Julia Galieva-Szokolay and Joe Ringhofer including Celebrate Theory: Level 9 Harmony, Celebrate Theory: Level 10 Harmony & Counterpoint, Celebrate Theory: ARCT Harmony & Counterpoint, and Celebrate Theory: ARCT Analysis.



He appears regularly with the Guelph Symphony Orchestra (with Maestro Judith Yan) serving as narrator and lecturer. Past performances include Die Fledermaus with members of the COC Ensemble, Carnival of the Animals, Scheherazade/Peer Gynt, and Peter and the Wolf (January 2017). Since 2007 he has pioneered the concept of online learning, working with students from across Canada, the United States, Bermuda, Europe, and Asia.



### Sybil Shanahan, Cello

Canadian cellist Sybil Shanahan can't remember life without a cello in her hands. A passionate chamber musician, she believes deeply in music's power to create community and embraces a wide spectrum of musical styles. Her enthusiasm for music and travel has taken her from her hometown of Toronto to concert series and festivals across Europe, South Africa, Canada, the United States, the Bahamas, and Buenos Aires. Current projects include the electrifying tango-fusion string quartet Cicada Woods and the Tadioli Duo, a collaboration with violinist Suhashini Arulanandam.

In addition to performing, Sybil is a published music arranger and the founder and contractor of Beaux Strings, a boutique Toronto-based strings ensemble specializing in event performances. Since January 2025 she has also performed regularly with the Toronto Stage Quartet for the widely acclaimed Candlelight Concert Series. An active recording artist, Sybil appears on the doubly nominated 2024



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Canadian Folk Music Awards tango album *DISTANCIA* by Solidaridad Tango. She also performed in the 120-piece orchestra for the award-winning soundtrack to the video game *Cuphead: The Delicious Last Course*, recorded in 2021 during the height of the pandemic. As string arranger and contractor, she collaborated on singer Jonathan Michael's *The Sacred Project*, broadcast on Vision TV and touring across Southern Ontario in 2024 and 2025. Earlier in her career, she recorded four albums and toured extensively across Canada and the United States with Ensemble Vivant. Her debut recording, *Caprice* (2014), with cellist Coenraad Bloemendal, features French Romantic duets. A dedicated pedagogue, Sybil serves as an adjudicator for the Ontario Music Festivals Association and the Toronto Kiwanis Music Festival. She maintains a thriving independent studio for adult cellists in Toronto and has been on faculty at Lake Field Music Camp since 2012. A frequent clinician, she recently presented workshops and concerts across Northern Ontario during the 2022–2023 season. Sybil completed postgraduate studies in Europe with renowned cellist Patrick Demenga and earned her undergraduate degree and teacher training at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, studying with Gregor Horsch.

### Dr. Laurel Swinden, Winds/Brass

Praised for “her sweet and distinct tone...breathhtaking in colour,” Dr. Laurel Swinden embraces a multi-faceted career as a performer, educator and scholar. Laurel has been an invited performer and teacher in Argentina, Peru, Belgium, Puerto Rico, the Sichuan Conservatory (China.) She has performed throughout the United States and Canada as a soloist and as a member of the NAFTA Duo and PanAmerican Flute Trio.

Dr. Swinden's Celebrating Women! recordings with pianist Stephanie Mara can be heard on Spotify, Naxos and CBC Music. As part of the Flute New Music Consortium, Laurel co-commissions and premieres new works for flute. She is the Principal Flute of the Stratford Symphony Orchestra, Associate Principal Flute/Piccolo of the Scarborough Philharmonic and has performed with the New World Symphony, Memphis Symphony, Mississippi Symphony, Symphony of the Americas and with various orchestras throughout southwestern Ontario, Canada.



A dedicated teacher, Dr. Swinden teaches flute at Wilfrid Laurier University and the Laurier Academy of Music and Arts. Laurel serves on the National Flute Association Pedagogy Committee. Dr. Swinden is an examiner for the Royal Conservatory of Music, the Glenn Gould Professional School and adjudicates at festivals across North and South America.



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### **Dr. Charlotte Tang, Piano**

A laureate of the 2024 Musica Antiqua Competition in Bruges, pianist **Charlotte Tang** is recognized for her poetic sound and distinctive approach to early 19th-century repertoire. Praised by *La Libre Belgique* as an “expressive, fine chamber musician,” she has appeared at the Banff Centre, Orford Musique, and at conferences hosted by the Westfield Center, the Historical Keyboard Society of North America, and the Cornell Center for Historical Keyboards. She was recently named the winner of the 2025 Emerging Artist Award of Early Music America.

In the 2025–26 season, Charlotte performs at the Early Music America Summit (October), Saxon Shore Early Music in Kenardington (December), the University of Tübingen (March), and the Céleste Early Keyboard Festival (June). She will also serve as Musician-in-Residence at the Banff Centre (January) and as a Sociable Fortepiano Fellow with the Westfield Center for Historical Keyboards (March). Her performance work is closely connected to her ongoing research into the expressive possibilities of soft-pedal effects on early 19th-century pianos. Her broader work on instrumental affordances in early piano music has been presented at NCKP and other international conferences.

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An active pedagogue, Charlotte regularly leads masterclasses and workshops at universities and in music communities across Canada. She is dedicated to nurturing the next generation of pianists through imaginative performance, thoughtful scholarship, and inspiring teaching. Charlotte holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance from the University of Toronto.

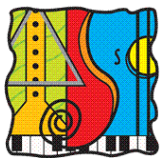
### **Erica Tran, Piano**

Erica holds a Masters of Piano Pedagogy and Piano Performance from Westminster Choir College and a Bachelor of Music Education from the University of Western Ontario, studying under both Professor Ingrid Clarfield and Professor Gwen Beamish during those years. She is an ARCT Certified teacher and was awarded the Intermediate Piano Pedagogy Gold Medal in North America.

Erica is a highly sought out piano adjudicator, most recently for the Ontario Festival Music Association at the Provincial levels, Toronto Kiwanis and Stratford Kiwanis Festivals, Sarnia MusicFest and North York Music Festival of the GTA. She is an active member of the Toronto Mendelssohn Choir and performs with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra on a regular basis.



Erica was member of the prestigious Symphonic Choir at Westminster, where she had the opportunity to perform famous works such as Ravel's *Daphne's* and *Chloe* with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the New York Philharmonic, under the baton of



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conductors Yannick-Nezet-Seguin, Alan Gilbert, and Charles Dutoit. Erica has performed in Carnegie Hall, David Geffin Hall, Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Koerner Hall and the Roy Thompson Hall. She currently maintains a private music studio in Toronto where many of her students have received awards for their performances and medals for their examination grades.



### Joyce Jing Yee Yip, Violin

Joyce Jing Yee Yip (she/her) is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. She holds an Honours Bachelor of Science in Human Biology and Psychology at the University of Toronto and a Master of Arts in Community Music at Wilfrid Laurier University. She has completed advanced studies in violin and piano through the Royal Conservatory of Music. As a teacher-researcher, Joyce has worked with patients at the Hospital for Sick Children, Mount Sinai Hospital, long-term care homes, and community strings orchestras in the Greater Toronto Area to better understand the relationship between music and health.

She is a dedicated music educator who has prepared students for recitals, competitions, and examinations, with many achieving recognitions at the local and provincial levels. She was the past journal editor of *Music Therapy Today*, and has published with *Activities, Adaptation & Aging*, *Music Therapy Perspectives*, *Barcelona Publishers*, *Oxford University Press*, *Springer Books*, and the *Canadian Music Education Journal*.

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### Peteris Zarins, Piano

Peteris Zarins is a respected studio teacher and instructor of piano, piano pedagogy, and Music History at The Oscar Peterson School of Music, The Phil and Eli Taylor Performance Academy for Young Artists, and The Glenn Gould School. He is a frequent adjudicator, clinician, and lecturer and performs regularly as both a soloist and collaborative artist.

Peteris is a Senior Examiner, Practical and Theoretical subjects, for The Royal Conservatory Certificate Program and has served as Chief Examiner, Training and Development for The Royal Conservatory, Chair of the theory department at the Oscar Peterson School of Music, and Program Specialist for The Certificate Program in the U.S. Mr. Zarins is co-author of the three-volume music history series, *Explorations*.

