

2023–2024 | February & March

Project 88

MAGAZINE

Concert series

February

Dominic Johnson,
viola and
Matthew Lorenz,
piano

March

Jordan Thomas,
harp

Soirée Concert Series

Piano Concert

Peter Saltzman,
piano

**Cello and Piano
Concert**

Anita Graef, cello
and
Louise Chan, piano

In memoriam:

Lucile Evans



February 10

Dominic Johnson, Viola &
Matthew Lorenz, Piano

In this *issue*

UPCOMING UNITY LUTHERAN CONCERTS

pg 4

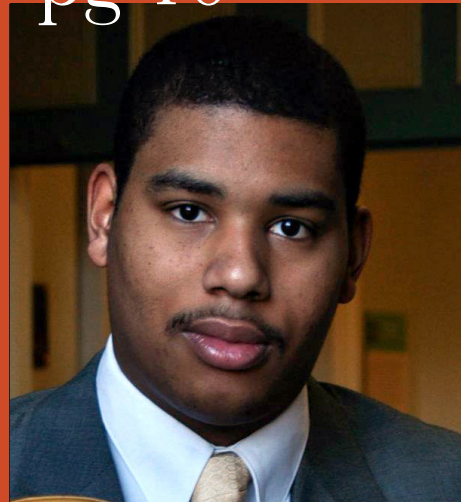


Dominic Johnson,
viola and Matthew
Lorenz, piano

02/10/24

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pg 10



Jordan Thomas, harp

03/09/24

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pg 14



Peter Saltzman,
piano

02/17/24

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pg 16



Anita Graef, cello
and Louise Chan
piano

03/16/24

[Get your tickets](#)

A Note from the

Artistic Director	20
Board of Directors	22
Director of Operations	23

Project 88 Music Academy

About the Academy	25
Our History	28
Staff, Faculty & Board	34

In memoriam:

Lucile Evans	36
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Ways to give

Become a Friend	38
Become a Partner	40

<i>Upcoming concert & events</i>	44
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February 10



Dominic Johnson,
viola

RECITAL PROGRAM

“Pavane pour une infante défunte”

Maurice Ravel. (1875-1937)

arr. V Borisovsky

Sonata for Viola and Piano

Rebecca Clarke. (1886-1979)

INTERMISSION

Sonata for Viola and Piano

Vladimir Kryukov. (1902-1960)

**Sonata for Viola da Gamba no. 1
in G Major BWV 1027**

Johann Sebastian Bach.

(1685-1750)

Dominic Johnson has called Chicago home for over 20 years, and hails originally from the Pacific Northwest. In the 90's he played viola in an indie-rock band based in Chicago and Louisville called Rachel's, and subsequently felt the Windy City's magnetic pull draw him into its heady artistic orbit. Career highlights have included co-founding and executive directing the New Millennium Orchestra from 2005-15, performing his silent film score *Beats, the Bauhaus*, and *the Birth of Abstract Film* at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in 2016, and spending three seasons in the music department at Comedy Central's Emmy-nominated TV show *Drunk History*. Freelance engagements of note have included performing with Brian Wilson, Stevie Wonder, Renée Fleming, Father John Misty, Lupe Fiasco, and a tag team DJ set at the Kennedy Center with Composer-in-Residence Mason Bates. Other relatively recent musical activities have included membership in the University of Chicago's Grossman Ensemble for the 2021-22 season and creating arrangements, music directing, and performing for Sudan Archives' 2020 NPR Tiny Desk concert. More about Dom can be found at www.dominicjohnson.me

February 10



Matthew Lorenz,
piano

RECITAL PROGRAM

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Matthew J. Lorenz is rising to prominence as a pianist in the

American Midwest, aiming to usher the art of piano performance into the 21st century. As a big supporter of Project 88 and especially its founder, Elider DiPaula, Matthew is privileged to feature regularly on Project 88’s concert series, jury panels, and masterclasses.

Matthew began his studies in Fargo, North Dakota at the age of 9 and made his debut in 2015-16 performing Liszt’s concerto Totentanz with 3 different local orchestras. Currently based in Chicago, IL, he is engaged in solo performances and frequent collaborations, studying with Adam Neiman. In his upcoming cycle of recitals you can catch Matthew in his project “CONCERTO” which features Adam Neiman’s 1st, Rachmaninoff’s 1st, and Mozart’s 20th all on the same program.

Matthew is on the piano faculty at the New Music School, Chicago’s premier music academy in the Gold Coast. You can keep up to date with Matthew at his website mlorenzmusic.squarespace.com!

About the music

DOMINIC JOHNSON, VIOLA AND MATTHEW LORENZ, PIANO : FEBRUARY 10, 2024

Born in 1875, Maurice Ravel displayed musical talent as a youth, and at age 14 he enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire, where he went on to study with French composer Gabriel Fauré. During his early years, Ravel was not accepted by the French musical establishment and was twice expelled from the Paris Conservatoire, but by the 1920s, he was recognized as France's greatest living composer.

The popular *Pavane pour une infante défunte* actually dates from Ravel's student years; written in 1899, it was commissioned by Ravel's patron, Princesse Edmond de Polignac, heiress to the Singer sewing machine fortune. Although it is an early work, the composition already demonstrates Ravel's ability to combine a vivid musical imagination with exquisite craftsmanship. The piece is based on the pavane, a slow processional dance that was popular in sixteenth-century Europe, and according to Ravel, it was intended as "an evocation of the pavane that might have been danced by such a little princess as painted by Velázquez."

British musician Rebecca Clarke was both a virtuoso violinist and an accomplished composer. She studied violin as a child but switched to viola after being admitted to London's Royal

College of Music in 1907. At that time, she also began her composition studies, which continued until 1910, when her abusive father expelled her from the family home. In 1912, she obtained a viola position in the Queen's Hall Orchestra, and in time became one of the world's leading violinists. Throughout her career, she performed with many prominent musicians including Pablo Casals, Myra Hess, Guilhermina Suggia, and Arthur Rubinstein.

As a composer, Clarke first achieved recognition for two pieces, the *Sonata for Viola and Piano* (1919) and the *Piano Trio* (1921). In recent years, the *Sonata for Viola and Piano* has been performed more frequently, and many now consider it to be a masterpiece. The sonata's colorful first movement shows hints of Debussy's influence with its modal passages, whole-tone excursions, and lush harmonic writing. Rhythmic interplay characterizes the upbeat second movement, which extends the timbre of the viola by calling for harmonics and pizzicato. The lyrical final movement is more contemplative, as expressive melodies unfold and build in intensity. Near the conclusion, material from the first movement reemerges, and after briefly returning to pensive territory, the sonata builds to an intense and technically dazzling finish.



BY DAVID A. POWERS,
PROJECT 88 VOLUNTEER

Although little known in the West, Vladimir Kryukov was an important figure in Soviet musical life. During his lifetime, Kryukov directed the Moscow Philharmonic and was head of composition at the Gnessin Institute. Today he is best known for his opera, *The Station Keeper*, and for his *Concerto-Poem for Trumpet*.

Dedicated to Russian violist Vadim Borisovsky, Kryukov's Sonata for *Viola and Piano* was written in 1920. The one-movement piece begins with a slithering chromatic melody in the viola over dark piano harmonies; soon, the viola launches into the main theme, as it intones a lyrical melody that floats over the piano's rhythmically intricate arpeggios. Throughout the rest of the piece, the main theme is developed and transformed as the music moves through a variety of moods and tempos. At one point, an ominous low chord thunders out from the piano's depths and brings the music to a standstill; later, we hear a sparse variant of the main theme in the viola over dramatic piano chords, as the music builds to a climax; finally, we reach the conclusion, and the music gently fades away.

Johann Sebastian Bach was known primarily as a German organ virtuoso in his lifetime but is now regarded as one of history's preeminent composers. Bach spent most of his life as director of church music in Leipzig, but for many years, alongside his official duties, Bach led Leipzig's Collegium, which gave free weekly concerts at Gottfried Zimmerman's coffeehouse. It was for the Collegium that

Bach wrote his three *Sonatas for Viola de Gamba*, along with other well-known works including the six *Sonatas for Violin and Keyboard*, the *Violin Concerto in A minor*, the *Double Concerto in D minor*, and the "Coffee Cantata."

The *Viola da Gamba Sonata No. 1* was originally performed on a six-string, fretted instrument comparable to the cello. In typical Baroque sonata style, the sonata has four movements that alternate between slower and faster tempos. The piece demonstrates Bach's complete mastery of counterpoint, harmony, and form; throughout the sonata, right and left-hand keyboard voices work together with the viola to create intricate polyphonic textures. The graceful opening Adagio features long lyrical phrases from the viola and piano. The majestic second movement is more lively; a mournful, chromatically inflected minor Andante follows, which features canonic imitation. The last movement is a fugue, and its vigorous bourrée dance rhythms and exciting interplay bring the sonata to a joyful conclusion.

March 9



Jordan Thomas,
harp

RECITAL PROGRAM

Impromptu Caprice

Gabriel Pierné
(1863-1937)

En Bateau

Claude Debussy
(1862-1918)
Transcribed by Yolanda
Kondonassis
(1963)

**Dance from Mother
Goose Suites**

Maurice Ravel
(1875-1937)
Transcribed by Vera
Dulova (1909-2000)

Pièce Symphonique

Henriette Renié
(1875-1956)

INTERMISSION

Rhapsodie

Marcel Grandjany
(1891-1975)

Fantaisie

Jacques Ibert
(1890-1962)

L'Heure Exquise

Reynaldo Hahn
(1874-1947)
Transcribed by
Jordan Thomas
(1990)

Scintillation

Carlos Salzedo
(1885-1961)

International and Grammy award winner Jordan Thomas has been described as “a profoundly intelligent musician, capable of being both sensitive and powerful,” Jordan has spent his whole life performing. After starting piano lessons at age 5 and harp at age 9, he was thoroughly committed to music. Jordan joined the Keystone State Boys Choir at age 10 touring all 7 continents, being constantly exposed to musical excellence in many styles all around the globe. By the time he was in high school he was an award-winning harpist of considerable stature, winning regional and national gold medals in the NAACP ACT-SO Competitions as well as awards from the local American Harp Society Competitions. At the start of his studies at Peabody Institute of Music, he was appointed principal harpist of all the orchestras at the institution as well as regional orchestras. He also took part in masterclasses with Natalia Shamayeva, Sivan Magen Jana Bouskova, Susan McDonald, Judy Loman, Elizabeth Hainen and Dan Yu. By his junior year he embarked on his first multi-state solo concert tour.

Other special opportunities came in the form of winning the position of being the only harpist invited to play in the Kennedy Center Conservatory Marathon Project. Jordan would later attend the Aspen Music Festival, working with Nancy Allen and Gillian Stella Bennet. He has been featured on several professional recordings, most recently with the Keystone State Boys Choir in a performance tour of the Britten “Ceremony of Carols”, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the composer’s birth. Jordan’s performance was heralded as “stunning and elegant.”

In the Spring of 2013, he won first place in the American Protege International Jordan Thomas Concerto Competition and performed the third movement of the challenging Ginastera Harp Concerto in the Weill Recital Hall of Carnegie Hall in March of 2013. He was then invited to appear as a guest artist on the Composer’s Forum of the USA International Harp Competition during the summer of 2013. He presented works that made the finals of the Composition Contest that accompanies this performance competition. Jordan started his master’s in music studies at Peabody in the fall of 2013 and continued to perform all over the Tri-State area.

He now resides in Chicago where he attended the Chicago College of Performing Arts where he pursued a Professional Diploma in Orchestral Studies under the guide of Lyric Opera of Chicago Principal Harpist Lynn Williams, as well as Principal Harpist of the Civic Orchestra of Chicago under the tutelage of Chicago Symphony Orchestra Principal Harpist Sarah Bullen. He was personally selected to be a guest soloist for the World Harp Congress Hong Kong in a presentation of the Composition Forum along with members of the harp studio of the Peabody Institute of Music. While in Chicago, Jordan gave the world premiere of Heidi Joosten’s Appetite Concerto for Harp and Wind Symphony with the Chicago Wind Philharmonic, the first of its kind. During the pandemic, Jordan was personally selected to accompany Jennifer Hudson in CBS’s John Lewis: Celebrating a Hero TV special, in which he was featured in her rendition of “Bridge Over Trouble Waters”. In 2021 he commissioned and premiered a song cycle entitled “Unsaid Prayers” for Harp, Soprano, and Baritone by upcoming composer Nico Gutiérrez. He has appeared with the Lyric Opera of Chicago as Guest Principal, the Chicago Philharmonic, FulcrumPoint, and the Matt Jones Orchestra just to name a few. He continues to perform both solo performances and orchestra concerts in Chicago, as well as work with the Lyric Opera of Chicago as an Arts Administrator.

About the music

JORDAN THOMAS, HARP : MARCH 9, 2024

Gabriel Pierné was a French composer, conductor, and organist who performed on organ at Sainte-Clotilde Basilica in Paris, was chief conductor for the famous Parisian Concerts Colonne, and conducted the legendary 1910 world premiere of Igor Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite*. His *Impromptu Caprice* was commissioned in 1900 by the Paris Conservatory for use in their public exam, and has since become a favorite of harpists. The piece as a whole has the feeling of an improvisation as it alternates between virtuosic flourishes and lyrical melodic passages.

Born in a Parisian suburb in 1862, Claude Debussy demonstrated an early talent for music, and in 1884 won the prestigious Grand Prix de Rome for his cantata *L'Enfant prodigue* ("The Prodigal Child"). From this point on, Debussy engaged in a continuous process of musical exploration, introducing many harmonic, rhythmic, timbral, and structural innovations in masterpieces such as *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, *Nocturnes*, *La Mer*, and *Jeux*. *En Bateau* ("In the Boat"), the first movement of Debussy's *Petite Suite*, was originally written to be played by four hands on the piano. It is inspired by French Symbolist Paul Verlaine's 1869 poem of the same name, and fittingly conveys the dream like quality of the poem, which ends with the lines "Meanwhile, up comes the moon; the bark / Gaily sails round the little park / Over the water, dreaming, dark."

Born in 1875, Maurice Ravel displayed musical talent early on, but at first struggled with the French musical established for acceptance, and was twice expelled from the Paris Conservatory. Nevertheless, by the 1920's, he was recognized as France's greatest living composer. Ravel's the *Mother Goose Suite* originated in 1910 as a four hand piano work written for two children. The piece "Dance" makes extensive use of pentatonics and modal harmonies; it begins and ends with a lively rhythmic theme which contrasts with a more introspective middle section.

A prominent French harpist and composer, Henriette Renié is especially known for her "Complete Method for Harp," which was written during WWII and is still highly regarded by today's harpists. Considered to be a musical prodigy, Renié won many prizes as a performer during her career, and composed several pieces which have become part of the classical harp repertoire. In *Pièce Symphonique*, we hear a single theme undergo numerous transformations as we move from the introductory funeral march, through a middle section marked "Passionate," and finally arrive at a beautiful final episode in which "the thought of future hopes doesn't erase the pain, but transfigures it."



BY DAVID A. POWERS,
PROJECT 88 VOLUNTEER

Marcel Grandjany was a French-born harpist who demonstrated remarkable talent from an early age—at age 8, he studied with Henriette Renié; at age 13, he won the Paris Conservatory's *Premier Prix*; and by the age of 17, he had given his first solo recital and performed with the Concerts Lamoureux Orchestra. Later in life, he moved to the United States and became the head of the Juilliard School's Harp Department. Grandjany's technically challenging *Rhapsodie* takes full advantage of the grand harp's possibilities as it uses all 47 strings and all 21 positions of the seven pedals, plus harmonics, glissandos, and *pres de la table* (the technique of playing with hands close to the harp's soundboard).

Like many of the composers featured in this program, French composer Jacques Ibert studied at the famed Paris Conservatory. A prolific composer, Ibert is best known for orchestral works such as *Escales* and *Divertissement*, and for film scores including the score to Orson Welles's 1948 film *Macbeth*. Ibert's *Fantaisie*, the last movement from his *Six Pieces for Harp*, maintains an improvisatory feel throughout as it conjures up a variety of impressionistic moods.

Although born in Venezuela, composer Reynaldo Hahn moved to Paris as a child, and it was there that he wrote the many *mélodies* ("French Art Songs") for which he is known. His song *L'Heure Exquise* ("The Exquisite Hour") is

based on a poem by Paul Verlaine. The song's simple but enchanting melody perfectly captures the mood of the lyrics, which proclaim, "Let us dream, it is the hour."

Carlos Salzedo was a French-American harp virtuoso who performed with Toscanini at New York City's Metropolitan Opera House, co-founded the International Composers' Guild along with Edgard Varèse, and established a harp department at the Curtis Institute for Music. Through his compositions and method books, Salzedo demonstrated that the harp was not just a novelty instrument, but rather a vehicle for serious performance on a par with the piano. Salzedo's masterpiece *Scintillation* draws inspiration from Latin America and utilizes the full range of harp techniques as it evokes rhythmic dances including the tango, rumba, and sarabande.

SOIRÉE CONCERT PIANO

February 17



Peter Saltzman,
piano

FEBRUARY SOIRÉE
CONCERT

Featuring

Peter Saltzman, piano

The program will feature interpretations of works by Duke Ellington along with a Peter Saltzman original “Improvised Sonata”.

It started at age 4, seated at the piano, trying to pick out tunes he heard on the family’s stereo, and morphed through the years, becoming Peter’s unique musical language. His organic fusion of qualities—the distinctiveness and improvisation of jazz, the soul of blues, and the compositional technique of Bach, Beethoven, and other classical composers—led to an emergence of new sounds, a new feel, a new purpose.

Peter’s broad career as a composer, pianist, singer-songwriter, music educator, and screenwriter started as a budding teenage jazz musician in Chicago. He studied jazz at the Bloom School of Jazz (Chicago, IL), majored in jazz at Indiana University (Bloomington, IN), and majored in composition and piano at Eastman School of Music (Rochester, NY). Later, he studied film scoring at UCLA-Extension (Los Angeles, CA). Recently, he has completed a full load of courses in screenwriting at various institutions in Los Angeles and New York City.

Over his career, Peter’s prolific musical work has run the gamut—solo piano, orchestral, chamber, theatrical/film, choral, and pop. Various ensembles have performed and

recorded his work globally—the Czech National Symphony Orchestra recorded his orchestral dance suite “Walls” (1996), and the Dallas Black Dance Theatre performed “Walls” during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

Peter’s concert work is published by Oxford University Press; his film and television work is published by Wild Whirled Music. His music has been licensed for television shows, jingles, and industrials, including My Name is Earl (NBC, 2006).

In the mid-to-late 1990s, Peter led the Revolution Ensemble, a group that broke new ground with its adventurous mix of jazz, classical, Latin, and pop genres. Since 2001, he has headed the Peter Saltzman Band as lead singer, pianist, songwriter/arranger—and produced CDs/demos for Chicago-area artists.

From 2006 to 2014, Peter was an adjunct professor of music at Columbia College Chicago, where he developed and taught a series of courses entitled “Technology for Musicians” and taught piano and theory. He continues to teach piano and composition in his own studio and at Project 88 Musical Academy.

Media Reviews

“Powerful stuff”

from Dallas Morning News

“Ambitious, richly layered, wonderfully accessible”

Chicago Sun-Times

“Jaws drop when Saltzman sits at the piano and plays.”

ChicagolandMusicalTheatre.com

March 16

SOIRÉE CONCERT CELLO AND PIANO



Anita Graef,
cello

MARCH SOIRÉE CONCERT

Featuring

**Anita Graef and
Louise Chan**

American cellist Anita Graef has garnered praise as a musician of “superb artistry” (Pasadena Now) who plays with “high energy and polish” (WQXR). She has appeared both nationally and internationally in concerto, recital and chamber music engagements, while establishing a reputation as an artist who is equally at home exploring traditional as well as contemporary works, along with a deep commitment to service, outreach and education. Notable appearances include features in Strings Magazine, as well as Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, the Dame Myra Hess Memorial Concert series, and “Concerts from the Library of Congress.” She has also performed as a guest of various radio programs, including WQXR, WFMT and NPR, among others.

As the winner of the 2022 Gheens Young Artist Award and the 2021 American Prize, recent seasons have seen concerto debuts from Ms. Graef with the Louisville Orchestra, the Arkansas Philharmonic, the Riverside Symphony, the Miami Valley Symphony and many others. She recently concluded an appointment as the 2023 Duncanson Artist-in-Residence for the Taft Museum of Art. Upcoming recital and chamber music appearances include engagements with the Norton Museum of Art (West Palm Beach, FL), Saugerties Pro Musica, the Turner Center for the Arts (Valdosta, GA), Musica Sierra (Lake Tahoe/Reno, NV), the Adirondack Lakes Center for the Arts, and the Partnership for the Performing Arts (Brookings, OR), with return appearances to Chicago’s “Live from WFMT” and others. Ms. Graef has appeared at numerous festivals, most recently including the Victoria Bach Festival, Green Lake Festival of Music, along with Artist-in-Residence positions at pianoSonoma and Lake George Music

Festival. In 2023, Anita assumed the role of Artistic Director for Tallgrass Chamber Music Festival.

Ms. Graef also serves as the Artistic Director of the Juliani Ensemble, an inventive, multi-faceted chamber ensemble, with whom she performs extensively both on tour and in residence in Chicago, directing their Saturday Salons series. In 2023, along with the other core members of the Juliani Ensemble, she helped to launch an outreach program in collaboration with the Mayfair Arts Center providing free music instruction, lessons and resources to students of all ages and backgrounds in Chicago’s South Side neighborhoods.

Born into a family of professional musicians, Anita grew up surrounded by music. Her introduction started with piano studies, while beginning to study cello at age four, later making her concerto debut at the age of twelve. She went on to obtain a Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Michigan’s School of Music, Theatre, and Dance, where she studied with professor Anthony Elliott. Following this, she received her Master’s Degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music as a CSO/CCM Fellow, under the tutelage of Ilya Finkelshteyn.

When not making music, Anita enjoys reading, cooking, crocheting, weight lifting, hiking, horseback riding, any kind of dance training, spending time with friends and family, volunteer work and exploring new cities.

Ms. Graef performs on a modern Italian cello by Ferdinando Garimberti, dated 1923. For more information, visit anitagraef.com.

SOIRÉE CONCERT PIANO

March 16



Louise Chan,
piano

MARCH SOIRÉE
CONCERT

Featuring

Anita Graef and
Louise Chan

Louise Chan, a native, of Ottawa, Canada, is a versatile pianist with experience as a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral keyboardist. She is a founding member of the Blue Violet Duo with violinist Kate Carter, and their duo has enjoyed repeat performances at the Myra Hess Memorial Concert Series. Their critically acclaimed debut album, *American Souvenirs*, was featured as WFMT 98.7's Album of the Day. The duo's second album, *Strike, Strum and Stride*, will be released by Centaur Records in January 2023. Dr. Chan is dedicated to performing new music; recent performances in her home base of Chicago have included appearances at the Ear Taxi Festival and the George Crumb Festival, and with Fulcrum Point New Music Project and The Zafa Collective. She was the former principal pianist for the Madison Symphony Orchestra, and was a regular keyboard substitute for the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra for several years. She has appeared as a soloist with the Music Institute of Chicago Community Orchestra, the Evanston Summer Orchestra, and the National Arts Centre Orchestra.

As a music educator, Dr. Chan maintains a busy studio of young and adult piano students at the Music Institute of Chicago. She is a member of the Royal Conservatory of Music's College of Examiners, and travels throughout North America as an adjudicator. She has served on the faculties of the Chicago Chamber Music Festival and the Chicago Duo Piano Festival. Her degrees are from the Eastman School of Music and Northwestern University.

www.louisechanpianist.com

A note from the



Artistic Director

It feels a bit surreal that we are celebrating the 6th season of our Concert Series!



I am filled with profound gratitude as I reach out to express my heartfelt appreciation for your unwavering support. As we embark upon our 6th Season, I find myself reflecting upon the incredible journey that Project 88 Music Academy has undertaken. It is with great pride that I acknowledge the pivotal role each of you has played in shaping our success. Whether serving on our esteemed board of directors, offering guidance on our board of advisors, contributing your time as dedicated staff, faculty, or volunteers, fostering young talents as parents, students, or individual donors, or collaborating as cherished partners, your collective efforts have been instrumental.

This season marks a significant milestone in our story as we expand not only in terms of enrollment but also geographically. Our new home at St. Nikola Serbian Orthodox Church in Lyons represents our commitment to extending exceptional music education to a broader and more diverse community. Simultaneously, our Project 88 concert series at Unity Lutheran Church of Berwyn and the Soirée Concert Series at Beacon Arts & Music in Uptown Chicago have become beacons of artistic expression, casting the radiance of our mission and musical artistry far and wide. One of the most gratifying developments

this season is the maturation of our student body. It is with immense pride that we showcase a growing number of our exceptionally talented students during our professional concert series. This not only highlights the exceptional talents nurtured at Project 88 Music Academy but also underscores our mission to bridge the gap between established musicians and the rising stars of tomorrow.

What truly distinguishes Project 88 Music Academy is our steadfast commitment to providing transformative opportunities through music education. We go beyond mere instruction; we create a platform for our audiences to experience the profound magic of music, in the company of both renowned musicians and emerging virtuosos. Our concert venues serve as stages upon which our future students can envision themselves, not merely as spectators in the short term, but as esteemed guest artists in the grand tapestry of classical music. We empower our students with opportunities that transcend financial limitations. On average, our students receive an exceptional 2.5 hours of weekly instruction, encompassing a comprehensive range of musical disciplines, from composition to performance classes, and private tutelage in piano, violin, or cello.

It is noteworthy that every one of our students is a recipient of a full scholarship, a testament to your steadfast support. We aspire to broaden this significant opportunity, extending its reach to more students and communities. We yearn to expand our horizons and ensure that the transformative power of music remains within reach for those who might otherwise be deprived.

In memory of our beloved founder and supporter, Lucile Evans, who passed away a few months ago, we dedicate this season of concerts to her memory. Lucile was not only esteemed but held a special place in my heart personally. We extend our heartfelt condolences to her family.

At Project 88 Music Academy, our impact is not solely measured by the music we create but by the expansive scope of our mission. We stand steadfast in our commitment to reinvigorate classical music by diversifying our audiences, amplifying performance opportunities for musicians, and nurturing a vibrant new generation of artists. Through your enduring generosity, we have been able to dismantle barriers and carve a more inclusive realm of music, where talent knows no bounds.

As we warmly welcome the 2023/2024 season, I invite you to celebrate our collective journey and look forward to a brighter future. Your continued support is an invaluable asset, and together, we can continue to craft a profound impact on the world of music and education. I extend my deepest gratitude for your indispensable role in Project 88 Music Academy's extraordinary narrative.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Élida DiPaula

Executive and Artistic Director



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Branka Matevich

President,
Board of Directors



What a joy it has been to watch how Project 88 has grown and flourished since its inception.

We now serve over 50 students at the academy and have a concert schedule filled with amazing talent, thus continuing our mission to provide musical education to children, while giving access to the community with our concert series, all of which are funded by donations.

This semester we moved to a new facility, thanks to a partnership with St Nikola Serbian Orthodox Church in Lyons, Illinois. The new site is larger, giving us more room for expanding our academy. I would like to thank St Nikola for this opportunity.

I want to thank Élider DiPaula, Desirae Contreras, the staff, our parents, volunteers and Board of Directors for all that they have done and continue to do for Project 88.

In order for Project 88 to continue with its mission as well as to be able to grow and provide for more students at the academy, please donate at our concerts, go online and donate, or join Friends of Project 88. We are also in need of volunteers to help out with a variety of tasks.

Our 2023/2024 year will hopefully be another year of growth for the academy and a year of fabulous music. Thank you to all of you who support us.

Branka Matevich
Past-President, Board of Directors



Director of Operations

Welcome to the sixth season of the Project 88 concert series!



Our magazine has received a visual refresh, and in many ways, that represents the energy that is present at Project 88 this year.

Building off of our past success, we have had many changes occur over the past few months, and we are excited to see what this holds for our organization in the coming year. This season, we are offering an expanded concert series, with a set of soirée concerts added to the line-up. We are excited to offer our traditional concerts series, with concerts in the suburbs, along with these soirée concerts in the city of Chicago. Please read through this magazine to see the slate of artists scheduled to delight your ears, minds, and hearts this season.

Our Music Academy has also moved locations; we are still close by, but at a new facility in Lyons. We thank St. Nikola Serbian Church for partnering with us to offer a larger-capacity space to house our ever-growing body of students. We celebrated with a very successful Open House event at the end of August, and classes began in September. Families are loving the new facility, and our teachers are happy, too!

Operationally, our staff is a small, but mighty group, and we are proud of the services we are able to provide to the community. Our Board members have service hearts, and they support us in our visions and endeavors. Our Academy families are helpful and grateful, and they are the reason we do all of this. To you, our patrons, we thank you for continuing to support Project 88 Music Academy. You, too, are part of the impact we are having on the community. I look forward to seeing you at many events this season!

Desirae Contreras
Director of Operations





“*Music is more than just an organization of sounds, it’s the vehicle to transcribe our life experience and share with others that resonate the same frequency.*” **Élider DiPaula**

About Project 88

BY CATEY SULLIVAN,
PROJECT 88 VOLUNTEER

Mere survival is never sufficient. Yet in times of budget cuts — in effect, essentially all the time — the arts are the first on the chopping block when schools strive to save money. And that invariably sells short kids who might not otherwise learn about the sheer joy of learning to make your own joyful noise.

Learning to translate those bulbous black and white markings and squiggly symbols is like learning the alphabet of your native language. They are a conduit to new worlds. Debussy’s Preludes can take you to rainy-day Paris. Joplin’s rags right to the cusp of the great Harlem Renaissance Jazz-era NYC. Theresa Carreno, the Venezuelan artist who played for President Lincoln at age 9 and was dubbed the Valkyrie of the Piano as an adult, will take you directly to Planet Empowerment.

about project 88 is continued on next page

about continued

Education is the prerequisite to gaining access to the infinite worlds that music education offers. Access to that education? Whether it's Beginning Flute, Advanced Music Theory, or a Masterclass, access usually comes with a price tag that can and does translate into gate-keeping.

Élizer DiPaula knows that first hand. Growing up in Anápolis, Brazil, Project 88's Founding Artistic Director had a one-way commute of two hours, on foot, to get to his piano lessons. And those lessons, which he treasured, were only accessible to him at all because he was offered a patchwork of financial aid and scholarships and affordable pricing.

"I know first hand how this kind of help can change someone's life," he said. "When I was younger, I received a parcel of the type of support we've been trying to gather for our students. We want all of them to have access like I did," he said.

Project 88's Music Academy could not have gotten off to a rockier start. It was slated to launch in Spring, 2020. In January that year, the board had hired a program coordinator for the Academy. After a February Open House, the first student applications were accepted. In March, the Academy's opening was moved to August. In August, it was moved to September.

Students are making their way back as we, like everyone in our community, work to rebuild. At present, there are roughly 16

students in the Project 88 Music Academy Preparatory Program. The students meet with their instructors via zoom and in person. There is a formal curriculum in place for Academy Operations Director Desirae Diehl's team of string, and keyboard artists. Students follow it, but it can be tailored to individuals as needed.

"The dedication and support I've received from my colleagues, combined with the passion I witness from students, has moved me to be better as a teacher and in my everyday life," said teacher Nayelii Duran. "I joined the Project 88 team on a whim during its beginning and I'm so thankful I've been able to stay part of it since."

Students receive an average of 2.5 hours a week of instruction including instrument private lessons, composition, ensemble, and studio classes, DiPaula said. "That forms a solid foundation for their artistry and the understanding of music-making. Along with the academic portion of our organization, the students have the opportunity to watch and meet artists that come to our concert series and have a feeling for what is the career of a professional artist," he said.

That's precisely the point, said DiPaula. "At Project 88 Music Academy, we instill inspiration to become a complete artist not just an instrumentalist. Music is more than just an organization of sounds, it's the vehicle to transcribe our life experience and share with others that resonate the same frequency."





Our history

BY TIFFANY ROBERTS,
PROJECT 88 BOARD MEMBER, SECRETARY

Project 88 began with Élider DiPaula's vision to provide top-tier classical music concerts to the community and to make high-quality, comprehensive music education accessible to students at all income levels. Today, that vision is a reality as the organization marks its fifth anniversary. Here are some of the major mile markers on Project 88's road to success.



August

2017

Élider DiPaula moves to Chicagoland to serve as music director at Unity Lutheran Church in Berwyn.



September

2018

Through support from Unity Lutheran Church Pastor Julie Boleyn, DiPaula receives approval to turn the church sanctuary into a concert hall on Saturday nights. DiPaula & Boleyn form a board for the fledgling non-profit, negotiate the use of a state-of-the-art Steinway Grand and launch the True Unity Concert Series. At the debut event, German pianist Henning Vauth performed for a full house. Tickets were by donation, setting the template for all the concerts to follow.



November

2018

Project 88 amps up its offerings with the first Lucile Evans Music Festival. Named for one of Project 88's most ardent, early supporters, the festival includes seven nights of concerts culminating in a performance by Edward Auer, the first American to win a prize in Warsaw's prestigious International Chopin Piano Competition.



March

2019

With Desirae Diehl joining as operations manager, Project 88's second season begins with a multimedia concert of Igor Stravinsky's "The Soldier's Tale," a seven-piece chamber orchestra performing the score, accompanied by the 16th Street Theater actor Eddie Dzialo as the multifaceted narrator and a series of illustrations by Berwyn's Julie Freeney. The production, which is directed by Élider DiPaula, conducted by Kyle Dickson, and the scenery designed by Mike Garon, is praised by the Chicago Tribune as "whimsical and fanged."



Fall

2019

Project 88 continues its trend of featuring artists from across the globe in its concert series. In October, it hosts Turkish pianist Eren Yahsi. In November, violinist Lúcia Barrenechea and cellist Hugo Pilger travel from Brazil to open the second Lucile Evans Music Festival. And in December, a joyous brass concert celebrates the holidays with Project 88's program of ecumenical hits. In all, Project 88 hosts 20 events in its first 16 months of existence, including concerts, masterclasses and youth programs.



January-March

2020

In January, Patricia Gill joins the organization to serve as Program Coordinator for the Project 88 Music Academy. In February, a series of open house meetings for interested parents and students yields a wealth of applications. In March, the COVID-19 pandemic brings all events and programming to a halt.

our history continued



2020

In response to the ongoing pandemic, the third season of Project 88 concerts is shifted online, starting with an August performance of American composers, and continuing with a celebration of Beethoven's 250th birthday. The Music Academy curriculum is fine tuned and in September launches predominantly online with the first cohort of 16 students learning piano and violin in what will become known as the apprentice program.



2021

Project 88 kicks off its fourth season with a new live-stream format for concerts and an expansion of the Music Academy to include an entry-level preparatory program for students in grades 1-2.



2022

In celebration of 200 years of Brazilian independence, Project 88 forges a partnership with the General Consulate of Brazil in Chicago that includes the sponsorship of performances highlighting Brazilian music. The first concert of this commemoration features Brazilian guitarist Pedro Rogerio Aguiar performing the works of influential composers from his native country.



January–April

2023

In the midst of its fifth season, Project 88 celebrates the 150th birthday of Russian composer **Sergei Rachmaninoff** with a series of concerts featuring his works. The academy, now with 44 students at various levels of study, continues to grow with the addition of cello to its instrument offerings.



May

2023

Three students from the first cohort of the academy complete the **three-year apprentice program**, marked by the premiere of the annual Rising Stars concert featuring one of its graduates. Project 88 launches the Soriée Concert fundraising series in partnership with Beacon Arts and Music in Chicago.



September

2023

To kick off its sixth season, in partnership with **St. Nikola Serbian Orthodox Church**, Project 88 Music Academy moves to the church's facility in Lyons, IL. The academy, now at 52 students, adds a new Developing Artist Program, a four-year advanced course of study. On the concert side, Project 88 hosts its inaugural fundraising Skyline Concert on a rooftop terrace in downtown Chicago.



from parents and students

“I like the fact that Project 88 gives you a challenge while still being fun.”

Lola, *student*

“Project 88 music academy affected me by inspiring me to compose music.”

Nani, *student*

“The thing I most like about Project 88 is how they are able to teach and share how to show my passion for music by playing an instrument. As well as showing their own ways of how they show their passion for music.”

Maggie, *student*

“My favorite part of music class is playing games. My favorite game is jump on the staff. It’s soooo much fun!”

Evelyn, *student*

“My favorite parts are the music games and making new friends. It makes learning so much fun. I can’t wait to go to class!”

Noah, *student*

The biggest effect that Project 88 has had on my children is that they learned how to read music which has opened up an entire world of opportunities. They no longer have to rely on YouTube tutorials, they can look up any song and learn to play it from standard notation.”

Angela, *parent*

“I appreciate the time that you have been spending teaching my children there. Another thing that I love about Project 88 is the quality of professionalism that every person has, and the way how they interact with the kids [which] results in the children’s engagement. Project 88’s work will change the future of many children in our community. One more time THANK YOU PROJECT 88 for everything.”

Adriana, *parent*

“In the three years we’ve been a part of Project 88, I’ve seen tremendous growth in my son. He has become passionate about practicing the piano every moment possible. He has discovered enjoyment and confidence in playing before others. And he has developed a deep knowledge of music theory and the skill to compose award-winning pieces.”

Tiffany, *parent*



our people

staff



Élider DiPaula
Executive and Artistic
Director



Desirae Contreras
Director of Operations



Wen Chin Liu
Music Academy
Supervisor



Rick Torres
Music Academy
Program Coordinator

faculty

Not pictured:
Ingrid Schimnoski, Violin



Élider DiPaula
Piano and Composition
Faculty



Nayelii Duran
Violin



Fernanda Gilbertsen
Preparatory Program



Francisco Malespin
Cello



Miguel Fabian-Sauceda
Ensemble and
Performance



Peter Saltzman
Piano

board of directors

Not pictured:
Karaline Feller



Andrew Halverson
President



Branka Matevich
Past-President



Mike DeLonay
Vice President



Jonathan Adamczewski
Treasurer



Tiffany Roberts
Secretary



Janna Fiester



Mary Kitzberger

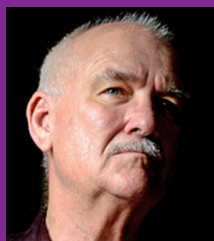


Carol Lin-Murphy



David Olson

volunteers



Bill (William) Calvert
Volunteer, Photographer



Catey Sullivan
Volunteer, Writer



David A. Powers
Volunteer, Writer

In memoriam

Lucile Evans

BY CATEY SULLIVAN,
PROJECT 88 VOLUNTEER



Even in a room of hundreds, Project 88's founding godmother Lucile Friese Evans was impossible to miss. It wasn't just her outward sense of style, which was impeccable whether she was sporting a floor-length golden gown or a snappy suit.

Lucile carried her own light, and it illuminated every room she entered. She could be deceptively soft-spoken, but when she became passionate about something she wanted to make happen in her beloved community, she found a way to make it happen. Her legacy to Project 88 will reverberate indefinitely. Lucile died August 6, 2023, at 94, in her sleep, in her Berwyn home of over 70 years. We hope to honor her through our music.

Lucile's crucial involvement in Project 88 dates back to September 17, 2017, when she attended an informal piano recital at her longtime house of worship, Berwyn's Unity Lutheran Church. In what seems, in retrospect, like a fateful coincidence, the concert happened to occur on the very same Sunday Project 88's Artistic Director Élider DiPaula reported for his first day of work as Unity's new music director.

The church was reasonably full, and Lucile — ever a passionate supporter of the local arts community — sat in the fourth row, avid and beaming. When DiPaula broached the wildly ambitious idea of a local music academy, she listened carefully. The amateur concert, he pointed out, had drawn close to 100 people. Think of what a concert from world-class musicians could create.

DiPaula's vision for the academy was two-fold: Establish an academy that provided top-tier music instruction to children regardless of their ability to pay, and be a producing entity that would bring world-class talent to concertize Berwyn.

Lucile believed in it from the start. Her support took many forms. She helped in a myriad of ways. She talked Project 88 up and brought friends to the concerts. She helped establish a fund for scholarships. She was a one-woman marketing team, sharing about Project 88 at grocery stores and city council meetings. Early on, she opened her home for epic Project 88 holiday parties. The Dunham House, as it's officially known on the National Registry of Historic Places, was the perfect place for the kind of 'everyone-around-the-piano' sing-a-longs reminiscent of a Judy Garland movie. Everyone who could play did, and those who didn't sang. Participation was mandatory, Lucile gleefully insisted. It was also raucous and wonderful.

Lucile attended every Project 88 concert and event right up until the pandemic. We weren't alone in benefiting from her generosity. Her largesse toward Project 88 was indicative of her deep roots in the community.

As DiPaula and Director of Operations Desirae Contreras were taking Project 88 from dream to reality early in its very first season, Lucile was awarded one of Berwyn's highest honors – the Robert Teeter Award, bestowed annually for remarkable service to the community. She invited DiPaula and made sure he met everyone she knew, talking up his musicianship and Project 88's goals with all of them.

As Lucile's obituary noted, she went to high school locally, a graduate of Morton. She left town to earn two college degrees, first a bachelor's in education from Carroll College and then a master of education from Chicago State University. She returned to marry Arthur Dunham in 1952 and then taught P.E. in Berwyn for decades. It didn't matter where you went with Lucile in Berwyn. She'd run into friends, whether at a tiny railroad station café or in line to renew vehicle stickers at city hall. She served on too many civic boards and committees to list here, including libraries, parks, after-school programs, and local arts organizations. When Lucile decided she was behind something, you could be sure it would get done. She'd link elbows with you, pull you in, and make you believe. She had an indomitable vision and was a profound influence.

We'd like to believe that now she can hear the music of the spheres.

Thank you, Lucile.

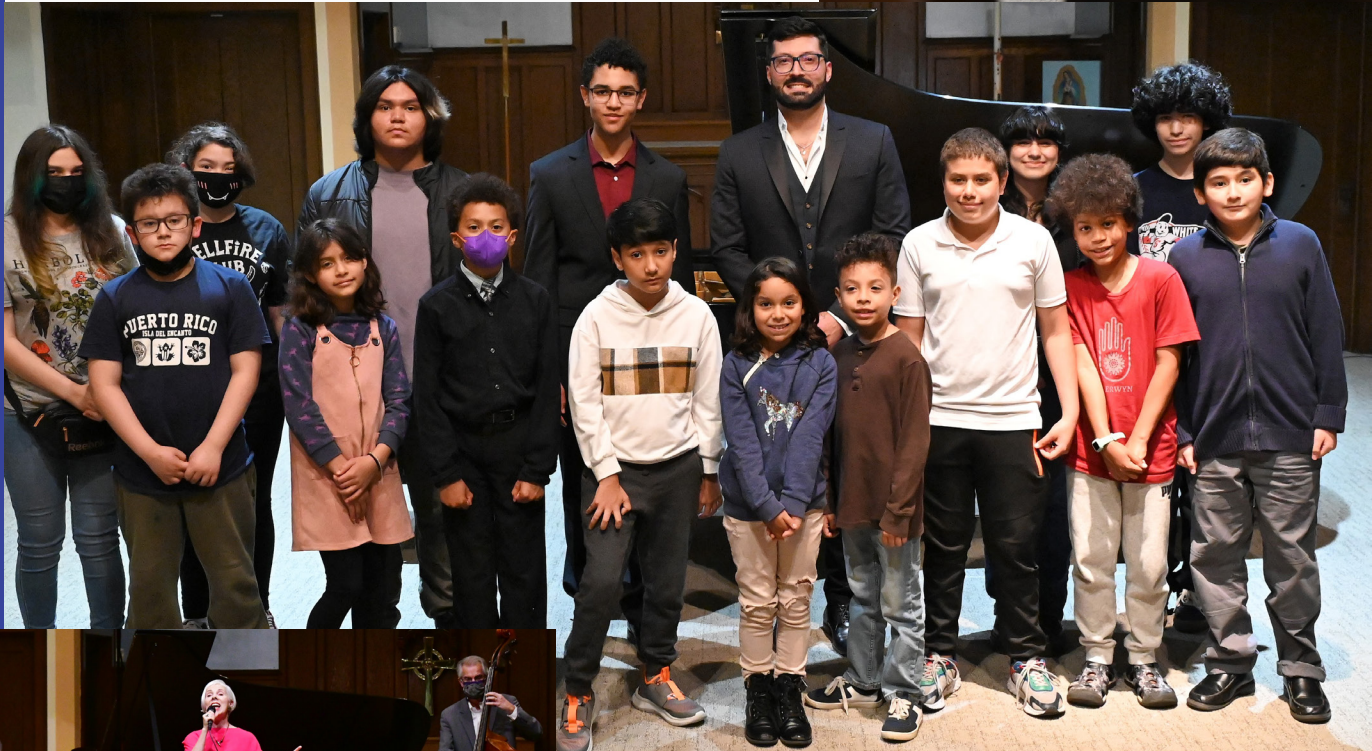


ways to give

Become a friend

By becoming a Friend of Project 88, you will play a critical role in helping sustain our mission and make our work possible.

Your support ensures that we can continue our mission of making classical music accessible to our community through our free Concert Series and Music Academy. By becoming a Friend of Project 88, you will play a critical role in helping sustain our mission and make our work possible.



Project 88 has made a very positive impact in our community and with your help, we can do more.

As a Friend of Project 88, your generosity makes an immediate impact. And, as a thank you for your support, you will also enjoy special benefits to enhance your Project 88 experience.

Allegro

\$10 or more/month or \$120 annually

Provide 3 hours of instruction for a student in the Music Academy.

- ✓ **Watch Project 88 concerts** either in-person or live online
- ✓ **Access to all archived concerts** any time
- ✓ Invitations to **Project 88 special events**
- ✓ **10% Discount** on Project 88 merchandise

Vivace

\$25 or more/month or \$300 annually

Help keep the Project 88 Concert Series free to the community.

- ✓ **Watch Project 88 concerts** either in-person or live online
- ✓ **Access to all archived concerts** any time
- ✓ Invitations to **Project 88 special events**
- ✓ **15% Discount** on Project 88 merchandise
- ✓ **A one-time 10% discount** at Project 88 Community Partner businesses

Presto

\$50 or more/month or \$600 annually

Provide a semester-long scholarship for one student in the Music Academy.

- ✓ **Watch Project 88 concerts** either in-person or live online
- ✓ **Access to all archived concerts** any time
- ✓ Invitations to **Project 88 special events**
- ✓ **Discounted tickets to Project 88 special events** (Soriée Concerts, Artist Dinner/Receptions, Matinees, etc.)
- ✓ **20% Discount** on Project 88 merchandise
- ✓ **A one-time 20% discount** at Project 88 Community Partner businesses

Want to be a Friend of Project 88?
Visit the [Project 88 website](#) to learn more.

ways to give

Become a partner

Your Support Matters

The support of the local business community is critical to our vitality and stability. By partnering with Project 88 through a corporate sponsorship, local businesses help sustain our mission and play an essential role in enriching and inspiring our community through the power of music.

As a valued sponsor, your company will receive exposure across multiple platforms that will allow you to expand your reach and build brand recognition in the community—all while supporting a worthy cause.

Your Brand Exposure By the Numbers

- ✓ **Over 1,000 followers** on social media
- ✓ **Email distribution list of 355** individuals and growing
- ✓ On average, **1,267 website page views each month**
- ✓ **133 magazine reads** (digital magazine) in last month
- ✓ Our **concert series caters to an audience of about 1,000 people per season**, allowing your brand to be associated with well established and top emerging artists
- ✓ Our concert series has featured **artists from 16 different nations, including several Grammy award winning artists and the first American finalist in the Chopin International Competition**
- ✓ Our productions have been featured in the **Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Suburban Life**, and have been sponsored by the **Consulate General of Brazil in Chicago**

Corporate Sponsorship Opportunities:

Project 88 Music Academy offers a diverse range of sponsorship opportunities to meet your business and philanthropic objectives:

- 1. Sponsor an individual concert**
- 2. Support student** educational initiatives
- 3. Participate as a Community Business Partner by offering a discount** to Friends of Project 88

OR

- 4. Maximize your impact by becoming a Season Sponsor** of our Concert Series that runs from September–May

Your sponsorship of our Concert Series or individual concerts helps showcase renowned artists from all over the world and keeps the concerts free to the community!

For more information, or if you have questions on a corporate sponsorship investment, please email contact@project88musicacademy.org and your message will be directed to the appropriate individual.

our partners

We are grateful for our current partners who help us achieve our mission within the communities we serve.



[St. Nikola](#)



[Unity Lutheran Church](#)



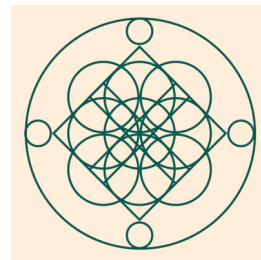
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UPCOMING UNITY LUTHERAN CONCERT

concerts



Julimar Gonzalez,
violin Francisco
Malespin, cellist, and
Élder DiPaula piano

04/13/24

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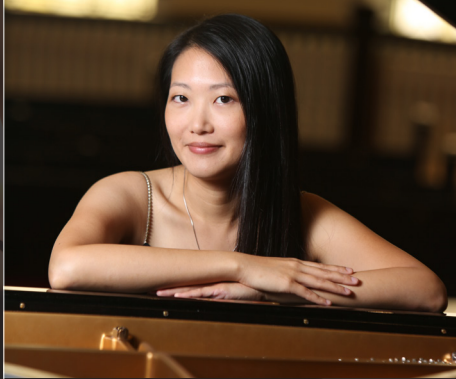


May Student
Showcase Recital

05/11/24

UPCOMING SOIRÉE CONCERT SERIES

soirée concerts



Anita Graef, cello
and Louise Chan,
piano

03/16/24

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Jordan Thomas,
harp

04/20/24

[Get your tickets](#)

Vision Statement

Revitalizing classical music by diversifying audiences, enhancing performance opportunities for musicians, and nurturing a new generation of artists.

Mission Statement

Project 88, named for the number of keys on a piano, aims to bring new musical opportunities to Berwyn and surrounding areas.

Our mission is threefold:

1. Make classical music accessible to the community
2. Promote artistic development in the area
3. Instill a commitment to hard work and camaraderie in young people through affordable, high-quality music education

We live out this mission through our Concert Series, Lucile Evans Music Festival, and Project 88 Music Academy. We infuse our values into the work we do. Through our concert series, we are able to support artistic development and engage the community. Through our music festival, we are able to offer additional learning opportunities to students in the area. Through the music academy, we seek to foster discipline, commitment, respect, and accountability, while also developing successful minds and building authentic character.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Find @project88musicacademy
on these social channels



October–November, 2023

Project 88 Music Academy is a 501(c)(3) organization.