



## JANUARY 2011 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Wishing you a happy, peaceful and healthy New Year – may it be a good one for all!

We have several exciting programs and events in the next few months and I look forward to seeing you there. Please mark your calendars and plan on attending!

**January 14, 2011 at 09:30 at Steinway**

**DUO PIANISTS LANA AND SLAVA LEVIN**

**A COMBINED PROGRAM WITH PTRT**

Another wonderful and exciting program! Please join us to welcome the Lana and Slava to St. Louis. They will talk on the following topic:

- **The Rhythms of Polish Folk Dances in Chopin's Music (Slava)**
- **Important Aspects of Russian Piano Technique (Lana)**

The Levins are solo concert pianists from the Soviet Union, who came to the United States in November 1989. They have since resided in Overland Park, Kansas.

Slava and Lana hold Doctorates from the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory. They studied with many of the most outstanding musicians of our generation, such as Yakov Milstein, Lev Vlasenko and Michael Pletnev.

In 1993, Slava won the Simon Belsky Piano Competition in Connecticut, and in 2009, he won the first Chopin Competition for Outstanding Amateurs in Warsaw, in addition to receiving a special award for Best Interpretation of Chopin's Music.

Kansas City has heard the couple perform together and individually throughout the area (JCCC, UMKC, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Baker University, Park University, Kansas City Camerata, Kansas City Chamber Soloists series) and elsewhere in the US and abroad: Montreal,

New York 92<sup>nd</sup> street Y, Dallas TCU, Jefferson City (Community Concerts), St Louis, Litchfield, Hartford Symphony, and more.

“... a lusty performance by two superb pianists... showed what variety, colour and spice can enliven their ensemble in a repertoire that ranged across the musical spectrum from the baroque period to the 20<sup>th</sup> century... it was a tonal and musical delight”

Arthur Reed, “*Heritage Villager*”, Connecticut, June 2, 1995

In 1995, the Levins retired from piano performance and moved on to different occupations. Lana acquired a license in medical imaging and Slava worked as a financial advisor. In 2002, persuaded by a benefit concert, the Levins began to practice again and have since performed numerous concerts for various charities. Slava currently works for a private software company and Lana has returned to teaching in her private piano studio. They were also featured in the award winning documentary “*They came to play*” about the Van Cliburn International Amateur Piano Competition.

In 2009, Slava and Lana premiered “Schumann in Love” (a multi-media event) and the Chopin-Schumann Marathon (a full day of music, movies and learning) in Kansas City, dedicated to the bicentennial birthdays of the two greatest Romantic piano composers.

In summer 2010, the duo performed at “Pianestival” in Nice, France. Slava will also perform a solo concert in Shanghai, China this fall. In November 2010, Slava and Lana performed with the Kansas City Chamber Orchestra.

**February 25, 2011 at 10:00**

**Book Club discussion with Dr. Hugh MacDonald (Washington University)**

***"After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance"***

I am very pleased to announce that our February meeting will feature Dr. Hugh MacDonald, musicology professor at Washington University and frequent pre-concert lecturer at the St. Louis Symphony. We are trying out a book club idea with this meeting in mind. Dr. MacDonald has offered us a fabulous book suggestion and opportunity subsequent to our meeting. His recommendation is a book by Kenneth Hamilton, called "After the Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance", which was received with rave reviews by the NY Times and Washington Post, etc. The book is very, very relevant to our lives as pianists and teachers. Our February meeting will take place on Friday, February 25, 2011 (place to be determined) at 10:00 a.m. Not only do we have the fantastic opportunity to have Dr. MacDonald come and lead our discussion of the book/speak to us on that topic, but the following day, Saturday, February 26, Kenneth Hamilton will be at Washington University to give a symposium/discussion and an evening lecture-recital, to which our members would be invited!

Jennifer Spohr has made special arrangements for the book to be ordered for our membership at a 10% discount (bringing the total before tax to \$26.95) and held for us behind the Mall entrance Checkout at the Barnes and Noble Booksellers in the West County Mall store. It will be held for us under the name "St. Louis Area Music Teachers Association", and should be there by 10/7/2010. I encourage everyone to participate in this unique and exciting opportunity!

**PLEASE E-MAIL JENNIFER SPOHR AT [jennifer@spohrpiano.com](mailto:jennifer@spohrpiano.com) BY FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2011 SO THAT WE CAN RESERVE A VENUE FOR THE BOOK DISCUSSION.**

### **Other news and events:**

The Sonata/Sonatina Festival will be held at St. Charles Community Center February 12, 2011. Registration deadline is **January 24, 2011**. Please go to [SLAMTA.org](http://SLAMTA.org) to download the registration form.

### **News from Immediate Past-President, Dr. Cathy Benton:**

I am happy to be serving MMTA as President-Elect and on the State Board. St. Louis has an exciting opportunity this summer to host the MMTA Summer Conference which will be held at Webster University on **June 10 and 11**. We also are planning a pre-conference event featuring a night at Opera Theater on Thursday, **June 9**. More information and specific details will be announced soon. We need support and participation from the St. Louis teachers--please put these dates on your summer calendar and plan to join us!

**MONSTER CONCERT UPDATE:** We have had several setbacks in the planning of a Monster Concert for 2011. Missouri Baptist University is not available until after June 28, which puts us too close to the 4th of July holiday, summer vacations, camps, etc. Last year we had a lower participation than planned because we went later into June. (again, there were problems with vacations, camps). So we have decided to skip this year and plan for our next Monster Concert in 2012. MoBap has agreed to host us for 2012. The Monster Concert is a great event and we do want to see it continue.

Please watch this space for more information on up-coming events.

Sincerely,

Laureen Di Bisceglie  
President SLAMTA  
Secretary MMTA

