



## GAE NEWSLETTER

### January 2022

PRESIDENT: [Debbie Meier](#)  
VP/PROGRAMS: [Gill Cerbin](#)  
SECRETARY: [LeAnn Halvorson](#)  
TREASURER: [Joan Witte](#)  
NEWSLETTER: [Debbie Meier](#)  
WEBMASTER: [Tara Wright](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Friday, Jan. 21**  
10 am- Noon  
**Duet Piano Recital Featuring performers Dr. Stephanie Owen and Gill Cerbin, held at 231 W. Water's Edge Dr., Belleville, IL 62221**
- February**  
**AIM Theory Exams held at SWIC and SIUE**
- Friday, Feb. 18**  
10 am-Noon  
**Dr. Mark Ruff – “How the Music of Bach Helped Shape the Music of Beethoven” – Venue: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 255 Fairwood Hills Rd, O’Fallon, IL 62269**
- Friday, Mar. 18**  
**Charlie Kuhn – “Saint Louis as a Cradle of Ragtime” – Venue TBD**
- March 25-30**  
**MTNA Conference in Minneapolis, MN**
- April**  
**AIM Performance Exams**
- Friday, May 13**  
**End-of-Year Luncheon and Annual Business Meeting  
Elections, Member-of-the-Year selection, etc., Venue TBD**

## JANUARY MEETING

### **Coffee Concert Duet Piano Recital**

We are looking forward to January’s meeting event, A Duet Piano Recital performed by GAE members, Dr. Stephanie Owen & Gill Cerbin. The program includes Six morceaux Op. 11 by Sergei Rachmaninoff and Souvenirs Ballet Suite, Op. 28 by Samuel Barber. Be sure to read the program notes – it looks to be a delightful program. **Please RSVP to Gill no later than January 18<sup>th</sup>** so she has a headcount of how many plan to attend. (618) 980-5870 or e-mail [gillcerbin@yahoo.com](mailto:gillcerbin@yahoo.com).

## **PROGRAM**

### Sergei Rachmaninoff - Six morceaux Op. 11

1. Barcarolle
2. Scherzo
3. Theme Russe
4. Valse
5. Romance
6. Slava!

### Samuel Barber - Souvenirs Ballet Suite Op. 28

1. Waltz
2. Schottische
3. Pas de deux
4. Two-Step
5. Hesitation-Tango
6. Galop

## **PROGRAM NOTES**

### **Rachmaninoff - Six morceaux Op. 11 piano duets (1894)**

This set of six pieces was composed when Rachmaninoff was only 21 years old.

#### Barcarolle

The "barcarolle" format, a boat theme, is used here and also in the first two-piano suite Op. 5 written a year earlier. Rachmaninoff had developed a love of rowing on the Volkhov River as a young man. He composed his barcarolle in the key of G minor, the key same used for his Op. 5 piano duo Barcarole, creating hauntingly beautiful melodies, rich in romanticism and lyricism. Layered upon these are virtuosic filigree passages coupled with lush harmonies. The descending passages create a sense of foreboding, symbolizing loss and despair - Rachmaninoff had lost his sister to illness when he was only 12, and was in 1894 in a forbidden love relationship.

#### Scherzo

Rachmaninoff's ability to play fast is well documented and the tempo marking of this scherzo "Allegro con possibile" reflects this. It gives the piece a sense of forward momentum, and is balanced with "meno mosso" tender moments. The piece ends in a climactic gallop! The many accents and sf and sff markings, and rhythmical integrity, are true Rachmaninoff traits. The frequently changing tempi and ritardandos are a challenge for ensemble playing.

#### Theme Russe

This hauntingly tragic theme, elegiac in style, was written shortly after the deaths of Rachmaninoff's former teacher Zverev and later the composer he most admired, Tchaikovsky. It reflects the gloom that his grief had left. The repetitive, pulsating rhythms, leading to the thunderous maestoso passage and then climactic accelerando, perhaps suggest the anger and frustration he must have felt at their passing. The piece however ends with a return to calm. The bass anchor acts as a pedal, binding the piece together. Rachmaninoff spent many hours visiting churches with his grandmother, and the insistent toll of church bells feature throughout his works, and prominently in this piece with the repeatedly struck B note.

#### Valse

Rachmaninoff also used the waltz format in his second two-piano suite Op. 17. His waltzes transcend the typical ballroom dance waltz, with pulsating, driven rhythms and extreme dynamic markings. The melody is at times shared between the two players, with virtuosic passages and tempi changes.

#### Romance

Rachmaninoff includes a "Romance" piece in his Op. 5 suite. At the age of 18 he had fallen in love with Vera Skalon, but the relationship was forbidden. The theme of unrequited love features frequently in his music. The sense of yearning is felt with the beautifully haunting melodies superimposed on each other with the 3/4 and 9/8 hemiolas. The swirling 9/8 rhythm perhaps suggests the tempestuous torment of love. The harmonic progressions, learned whilst at the Moscow Conservatory, and arpeggiated treatment of these suggest longing and desperation, rising to a climax and then fading away to almost nothing, all passion spent.

Slava!

The title of the final piece translates as “Glory!”. This climactic work has punctuated, pounding rhythmical patterns indicative of the militaristic features often found in the works of Rachmaninoff, whose father was a military man. Rachmaninoff’s fondness for speed is well documented, but this should never be at the sacrifice of clarity. Despite his unusually large hands, (possible Marfan’s syndrome), which could play expansive chords, Rachmaninoff’s own recordings show us that he could also execute the most delicate filigree passages. These create a wash of color in Slava! and escalate into an extended trill, culminating in a big bang, the battle won!

### **Barber - Souvenirs Ballet Suite Op. 28 piano duets (1952)**

This set also comprises six pieces all with different dance titles. The work was written in 1952 for Barber to play with a friend, and he was also later asked to orchestrate them for a ballet. Of the work, Barber said: “Souvenirs” – remembered with affection, not in irony or with tongue in the cheek, but in amused tenderness”. The pieces are melodic, and use a variety of harmonies, but still retain their tonality. Common variations are in meter, cross-rhythms, syncopation, grace note flourished, irregular groupings of notes, and hemiolas.

Waltz

This piece begins with the usual 3 beat waltz meter, but also more modernistic sounds, such as hemiolas and 5/4 rhythms. It ends fading away to nothing.

Schottische

Although this translate as “Scottish” dance, this particular dance has more in common with the German polka. It is a folk or country dance, usually danced in sets, in duple time, which begins with a heavy, pompous sound, but there are mood, key, and rhythm changes throughout. The 5/4 meter is lyrical and lighter in mood, but interspersed with the return of the heavier polka dance. The ending of this dance is a race, as it speeds up towards an exhilarating climatic finish!

Pas de deux

In classical ballet this would be a dance performed between the prima ballerina and her male counterpart, a highlight in the ballet in which they show off their skills, often in a romantic setting. They dance together and in turn, performing slow and sustained movements in adagio fashion. This is a beautiful slow and intimate piece, reflecting the grace of the dancers.

Two-Step

This progressive country dance in duple meter has a fast pulsating drum rhythm over which the primo part plays. A two-step would be two steps in the same direction onto the same foot with a closing step in between on the other foot.

Hesitation – Tango

The most sensual of dances, the tango originated in South America, merging Argentinian, Spanish-Cuban, African, and Rio Plate influences. There is a seductive tension in the tight rhythmical opening followed by sumptuous lilting and romantic interlude, which escalates to a passionate fortissimo, and then returns to the opening theme and “vanishes” at the end.

Galop

This makes an exciting finale to the set, often the last dance of a ball, possibly of Hungarian or German origin and a predecessor to the polka. It was one of the most popular ballroom dances of the nineteenth century. Marked Allegro molto, in the A section, with a whimsical B section in the middle, we gallop our way to an exhilarating ending.

## **A.I.M. NEWS**

### **AIM Theory Exam Dates**

SWIC: Saturday February 12, 2022 and Sunday, February 13, 2022

SIUE: Saturday February 19, 2022

### **AIM Performance Exam Dates**

SWIC:

Saturday, April 2, 2022 and Sunday, April 3, 2022

Saturday, April 9, 2022 and Sunday, April 10, 2022

SIUE:

Saturday, April 9, 2022

Note that this year's Performance exams are a little earlier than usual. Plans are for this year's exams to be in-person, but in case things change due to COVID, you will be notified ASAP. We will keep you informed as we are able.

Consult your October Newsletter for additional information about AIM procedures. Always refer to your AIM Syllabus for help. If you are new to AIM or have any questions regarding AIM, please contact [Gill Cerbin](#), AIM Chairperson.

## [2021 ISMTA CONFERENCE](#)

Unfortunately, due to my unexpected trip to North Dakota to be with my dad during his last 3 weeks, I missed the entire Virtual Conference held in November. A few of our members shared some of the highlights. Thank you for sharing!

Shared by GAE AIM Chair **Gill Cerbin**:

**AIM Forum handouts** are available below if you missed the AIM session at the Virtual Conference. Click on the link below.



AIM Forum Handouts  
- November 6, 2021 .

There were video presentations made by AIM committee members which included 1. Getting Started with AIM, 2. AIM Repertoire Approval for Level 12, 3. Sight-reading Tips, and 4. Activities for AIM Review Outside of Lessons. On pages 4 & 5, you will find a list of all the AIM Repertoire in Easy Classics for Moderns vol. 27 and vol. 37 that are nicely organized by levels 3-7. These books are very useful as sightreading books or choosing AIM repertoire for AIM Performance exams.

Jennifer Cohen had some great tips to share on how she sets up games and quizzes etc. In the handouts, websites are listed with hyperlinks.

Also, from Gill Cerbin, the Certification Chair:

**Certification update.** ISMTA will cover the \$200 cost of applying for Certification for the first 20 candidates who successfully complete their certification.

And, from **LeAnn Halvorson**, who led a session of the **Independent Music Teachers Forum**:

I talked about what I do when a potential student contacts me, then we had a bit of extra time so we talked about what everybody does when a student decides to quit lessons. It went well. I liked a lot of the sessions but didn't attend all of them on Friday due to teaching. I was mentioned at the virtual banquet along with the

others who have been ISMTA members for 40 years. I didn't even get to attend the virtual banquet as I was teaching. E.L. Lancaster had some nice teaching sessions.

**Other sessions** I liked were: "Fix Your Pain" by Eric Sutz. Eric had Jennifer Cohen and her husband do a bunch of stretches and rolls while he explained why it helps. "Interleaving and Music Practice," Janet Palmberg – This was very interesting and I will watch it again.

## MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES



It is my pleasure to share this "Happy Holidays 2021 Greeting" YouTube video from the USAF Band of Mid-America showing **Amy Jo and Keith Sawyer "Rockin' around the Christmas Tree!"** They really know how to cut a rug on the dance floor!

**Amy Jo and Keith Rockin' around the Christmas Tree:**  
<https://youtu.be/UGpLj4jQJvA>

We sure have some multi-talented members!

**Dr. Stephanie Owen** reports that her student Stephen Weatherman competed for Masterclass of Rosenbaum on Saturday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, at the Steinway Gallery. He performed *Clair de Lune*.



I had a nice e-mail update from former member, **Heidi Shepherd**: "Hello again. (Commenting on the loss of my 94-yr-old father, she said): "My mom is ready to 'go be with my dad' but is still in relatively good shape for her 94 years. Grandchildren are truly the blessing that can see us through the loss of other loved ones. We just had #20 born (10 girls and 10 boys now)."

"Our Kayla who battled cancer last year is coming for Christmas with her family. She is cancer free however in time, she'll need additional treatment because the replaced cadaver bone isn't immersing itself with Kayla's bone. But she is a seemingly carefree fifth grader with lots of curls of growing hair whereas before treatments, her hair was long and straight. We currently have our son, his wife and two young sons living with us (4 & 7 yrs.) until August. My summary for this experience: it's noisier, messier and funner! Include a medium size dog with the family."



Congratulations to **Catherine Burge** who recently received two promotions: choir director at St. John UCC in Mascoutah and assistant accompanist for the St. Louis Symphony Chorus.

And, **Dr. Joseph Welch** has been busy! In his own words: I had a very full December schedule. The first event was a lecture and masterclass with DAMTA and students from Millikin University. Later that day I performed the first of two shows of Christine Brewer's cabaret "From Grand Tower to Grand Opera" at the Blue Strawberry. Later that weekend the Blackburn College Choir performed two services of Lessons and Carols (one was planned, the second was an overflow performance). Then I enjoyed my first time on stage with the In Unison Chorus and the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra. The next day my students went caroling at Carlinville Area Hospital and Heritage Health. The next weekend was a performance with Amy Prince's voice students at Tessitura Music. And as the semester closed, I wrapped up the year with Opera Edwardsville's annual December concert featuring some incredible singers. Next up is the Artist-in-Training winter residency with Denyce Graves. I was also awarded a faculty grant by Blackburn College to complete an online professional certificate in piano styles through Berklee. I start with Blues and Rock Keyboard Techniques this semester! I know this is more than a tidbit, but there's been a lot of exciting developments!

Whew! That is more than enough to make my head spin! Good thing Joe is young; he can handle it! I also noticed on Facebook that Joe's parents were able to attend all of his performances. They must be proud of him!

Update on **Marshall Gurley**: I recently chatted with Marshall on the phone and he was convalescing after cancer surgery. He sounded positive that the doctors were able to get all of the cancer. That is great news!

**Amy Jo Sawyer** would like to share that her grandson Aidan Sawyer marched in the Rose Bowl Parade with the O'Fallon High School marching band. It was one of the nicest days weather-wise that they spent while visiting family in the Los Angeles area over the Christmas break. What made the experience even more unique was that Aidan's father, Kevin, participated in the same marching band at the Rose Bowl parade 20 years ago! In addition, Amy Jo would also like to share some of the other achievements of these two talented grandsons that are also involved in A.I.M.

Nolan Sawyer, along with being a level 8 A.I.M. student in piano (taught by Amy Jo), has many achievements on the alto sax:

Selected for:  
ILMEA All District Jazz Junior Band  
ILMEA All District Concert Band, 1st Chair  
All Illinois Junior Concert Band  
Member of Fulton Jr. High Jazz Band, O'Fallon  
Symphonic Winds, Fulton Jr. High, 1st Chair

Aidan Sawyer is a level 10 AIM piano student (also taught by Amy Jo) and he plays the trumpet.

Selected for:  
ILMEA All District Senior Jazz Band - piano  
ILMEA All district Senior Concert Band – trumpet  
SIUE Bi-State Band Festival – trumpet  
ILMEA Composition Contest - 2nd place, Jazz Instrumental - "Those Were the Days"  
Marched in the Pasadena, California, Rose Bowl Parade with the O'Fallon Township High School Marching Band, Jan 1, 2022 - trumpet



Nolan Sawyer, alto sax & Aiden Sawyer, trumpet

Thanks to GAE members for sharing a few highlights!



As Illinois MusicLink State Coordinator, I'd like to welcome **Marcie Monaco** to the ranks of MusicLink teacher. She is currently giving flute lessons to a MusicLink student from Moro, IL. Thanks, Marcie, for making a difference! Again, if you have thought about teaching a deserving student in need, but don't know how to link up with one, contact your local or [state coordinator](#) for assistance. Or, perhaps you are already teaching a student for a reduced rate or no fee. That is even easier! You can register your student in the MusicLink program with one form available online through our website.

And, last, but not least, below, you will find the Treasurer's Report submitted by Treasurer Joan Witte:

January 2022 GAE Treasurer's Report

Account balance 1/5/22	\$7,684.96		
	<b>2021-22 Budget</b>	<b>Oct-Dec 2021</b>	<b>YTD</b>
<b>INCOME</b>			
Memberships	\$205.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
AIM Entry Fees	\$1,580.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Yearbook Ads	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$75.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$1,860.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$275.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
<b>AIM Expenses Total</b>	<b>\$949.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
AIM Medals	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Misc. Supplies	\$30.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Pins	\$137.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
AIM Printing & Mailing	\$120.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
ISMTA Student Foundation	\$212.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Student Award Checks	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
SWIC Foundation Arts Fund (donation for use of facilities)	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>AIM Syllabus for New Members</b>	<b>\$28.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Member of the Year Conference Expense</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>President's Conference Expense</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Printing/Mailing</b> (yearbook, newsletter, other besides AIM)	<b>\$85.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Programs</b>	<b>\$900.00</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>
<b>Teacher's Assistance Fund</b> (partial dues scholarship for new members and partial reimbursement of first time certification fee)	<b>\$128.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Website Expenses</b>	<b>\$60.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,375.00</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>