

# NVMTA Candidate Bios for 2017

## **President 2017-2019**

René Johnson, NCTM



René Johnson, NCTM, a member of NVMTA since 1991, teaches piano in Arlington, VA. She served as an Achievement Day Co-Chair prior to 2000 and currently serves as a Theory Mastery Day Co-Chair for NVMTA, a position she has held since 2008. René led the development of NVMTA's scheduling system (mtfest) from its inception in 2013. She continues to serve as the liaison between Dorian Business Systems and NVMTA event chairmen in resolving technical issues and creating better solutions for chairmen. She was honored in September 2013 by the NVMTA President as "Most Valuable Member" for her work with mtfest. René served as Member-at-Large on the Executive Board in 2016.

In 2005, René's article titled "My Road to Certification" was published in American Music Teacher magazine. Its purpose was to share her experience of achieving certification with a non-traditional approach, and to encourage other teachers to seek certification with MTNA.

René served as a MusicLink teacher for over 10 years. She is an accompanist for instrumentalists, vocalists, and has accompanied her church choir for the past 20 years. She is also a church organist. René earned a B.S. in Medical Technology from Brigham Young University. In addition to music, her personal interests include backpacking, hiking, biking, travel, Spanish language and tutoring, science fairs, running a church camp for a week in the summer for about 100 teenage girls, and the activities of her four sons.

"NVMTA has been such a great professional resource to me. I have become a better teacher by participating in NVMTA events, through attending helpful and informative meetings, and becoming friends with many wonderful people. I hope others can gain as much from NVMTA as I have."

## **President 2017-2019**

Ann Lee, NCTM



Ann Lee, NCTM, a native of Northern Virginia, is a classical pianist, pedagogue and scholar. Ann received her Master of Music in piano performance from George Mason University, following an undergraduate degree in Philosophy from The American University. Ann performed regularly at Mason as a scholarship recipient and winner of departmental honors. Ann is a Nationally Certified Teacher of Music and an active member of MNTA, VMTA, NVMTA, CMS, RCM, and SAA.

Ann continues to perform as an accompanist and soloist. She interned under Dr. Joseph Holt with the U.S. Army Chorus; served for 12 years as Assistant Music Director for two choirs at Springfield United Methodist Church, and continues beyond 14 years as staff pianist for St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School. Recent solo performances include performances at The Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., The Lyceum in Old Town Alexandria, featured performer for three years at *Steinway: The Next Stage for Mason*, "Art Uniting People" in Old Town Alexandria, and as guest artist/soloist with the Old Bridge Chamber Orchestra.

As a pedagogue, Ann has maintained a large private studio for over 15 years, and has taught in public and private studio settings since the age of 14. In addition to applied piano, Ann tutors for AP Music Theory. She is a mentor for pedagogy students in the Master's program at George Mason University, and a member of the MusicLink Foundation. She is a certified teacher of Music Mind Games and a regular contributor to *American Music Teacher*, reviewing new composition and pedagogy materials. As a member of NVMTA, Ann has served on the Executive Board; as Chair of the Keyboard Skills and Sight Reading exams for 3 years; and as a contributor to the monthly newsletter. She has served as adjudicator and grader in Fall Festival, Theory Mastery Day, and Bach-Baroque Festival, and has been hired as a judge for private studio festivals. Ann's students have continued to study music at Eastman School of Music, New England Conservatory, University of Missouri, Florida State University, and MIT. Other student accolades include winner of First Night Alexandria competition; composer CAPPIE Awards; and local and state-wide excellence awards through RCM.

Ann's interest in relevance of the arts and interdisciplinary studies has precipitated work in the local community and scholarship. Ann created and produced concerts in a series that included "A Night of Poetry and Music" with Dana Gioia and The U.S. Army Chorus and "Serving Through Music" with The U.S. Army Brass Quintet. As a writer, Ann has published articles in *Music Reference Services Quarterly* about music and comparative literature, art and analysis. Ann was recently chosen to present "Bach and Bernini: The Baroque Aesthetic" to the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Conference of the College Music Society.

## **Recording Secretary 2017-2019**

Faith Zúñiga



Faith Zúñiga has a thriving private studio at Potomac Arts Academy. Her students have won six prizes in the American Protégé International Competitions in 2016-17 and have performed at Carnegie Hall. Her students have also won the Potomac Spotlight Auditions and performed at the Fairfax Town Hall. Additionally, her students are active in the NVMTA Spring Festival and the Sonata Festival. Faith is active as an adjudicator and has judged for competitions and festivals such as the Robert & Frances Allen Young Artist Competition, the NVMTA Spring Festival, the Sonata Festival, and the Potomac Spotlight Auditions. Faith was also on the faculty of the inaugural Mason Summer Piano Camp in 2016. She serves on the faculty committee at Potomac Arts Academy, in addition to the planning committee for the inaugural Potomac Music Competition of 2017. She is an enthusiastic teacher and loves inspiring her students to play their best!

Faith performed Prokofiev Concerto No. 1 and Beethoven Concerto No. 5 with the Mason Symphony Orchestra in 2014. She was a 1st Prize winner in the 2014 George Mason University Concerto Competition. She also won 1st Place in the 2013 UIUC Clara Rolland Undergraduate Piano Competition. Additional competition awards include Semifinalist in the Victor Elmaleh Concert Artists Guild Competition, Semifinalist in the Byrd International Piano Competition, and 2nd Place in the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition.

Faith took part in the inaugural edition of the Valencia International Piano Academy in Spain, where she studied with teachers from Juilliard, Peabody, and the Madrid Escuela Superior de Musica Reina Sofia. A native of Illinois, Faith has performed in Costa Rica, Italy, Spain, and the United States.

Faith is a Doctor of Musical Arts student at George Mason University, where she studies with Dr. Anna Balakerskaia and teaches as a Graduate Lecturer. She has also studied at the Conservatory of East Central Illinois; the Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan; the Instituto Superior de Artes in San Jose, Costa Rica; the Conservatorio Benedetto Marcello in Venice, Italy; the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Indiana University at South Bend.

## **Member-at-Large 2017-2020**

Jan Bode



Jan Bode has been involved with NVMTA for the past 17 years and would bring to the Board the unique qualities of seeing NVMTA from both a parent's and a teacher's perspective. Two of her daughters (Lana and Katie Bode) have been prize winners of multiple NVMTA events, including competing in MTNA finals. Lana received a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance with High Distinction at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and subsequently settled in London, where she completed a Master of Music with Distinction at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in 2014, and was awarded the prestigious Concert Recital Diploma. Katie is currently pursuing her Bachelor of Music degree in Piano Performance at Biola University studying with Dr. Lishan Hung, and was just awarded the First Place Piano Duo Winner (College Students/Professionals Category) of the American Protege International Piano and Strings Competition. Jan maintains her private piano studio, teaching 23 students from her home in Hamilton, Virginia.

## Member-at-Large 2017-2020

Eric Himy



Eric Himy is one of those pianists whose performances are rare gems. He has been hailed as a throwback to another era, a colorist with a technique that transcends normal barriers in the pursuit of the rare magical combination of music with meaning, yet alive with visceral energy and passion and he excels in exploiting the resources of the instrument to create something totally new and out of the ordinary going beyond the score. His playing has been described by **The New York Times** as “flawlessly poised, elegant and brilliant.” **The Revue Musicale De Suisse Romande** wrote: “There is some Horowitz in those steel wrists and those rubber fingers: a feline approach to the keyboard, alternating caressing velvet paws and nervous strokes of claws, a sensually gourmand exploitation of sonorities, a high-level eloquence, virtuoso.” His compelling artistry has intrigued audiences around the world and he has received critical acclaim in the United States, Canada, South America, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Morocco, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, and Slovenia. Mr. Himy has been heard most notably at The Kennedy Center, Carnegie Recital Hall, The Frick Collection, The Phillips Collection, Teatro Amazonas, Salle Cortot and Salle Gaveau in Paris and on NPR “Performance Today.” A champion of contemporary composers, Mr. Himy commissioned “*Gargoyles*”; by the American composer Lowell Liebermann and gave the world premiere at his debut recital in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall (this American work has gone on to become one of the most popular contemporary piano pieces and it has been recorded and performed by many pianists including Stephen Hough and also Yuja Wang who performed it in Carnegie Hall in 2013). A Juilliard graduate, Mr. Himy began piano studies at age six, giving his first concert at age 10. He was guest soloist with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra at age 15, and at 19 he made his National Symphony Orchestra debut under Hugh Wolf as well as performing with conductors Russell Stanger, Serge Baudo, Kenneth Schermerhorn, and with Antoni Wit, who was making his American debut. Mr. Himy went on to win numerous competitions and awards including the Gold Medal at the 1988 World Piano Competition in Cincinnati, the Kosciuszko Chopin Prize in New York, and top honors in the 1991 Milosz Magin International Competition in Paris. He has replaced ailing soloists on many occasions such as Pascal Rogé and Alain Planes. Himy studied biochemistry and music at the University of Maryland, and received a Master of Music degree from the Juilliard School in New York, having studied with Thomas Schumacher, Adele Marcus and Josef Villa. He was featured on the cover of the 2006 May/June issue of *Clavier* and in *Musical Opinion* May/June 2007. Mr. Himy was invited by the Bernstein family to celebrate the 90th anniversary tribute to Leonard Bernstein in a Gala concert at the 2008 Lukas Foss Music Festival in the Hamptons. His recordings include an all-Ravel CD for Ivory Classics about which the **BBC Music Magazine** April 2003 wrote: “If you want Ravel’s two piano cycles, *Miroirs* and *Gaspard de la Nuit*, I have no hesitation in recommending this. As for the *Miroirs*, I have never heard the five

pieces done better.” Paul Turok of the **New York Times** wrote: “Pianist Eric Himy’s name is hardly a household word among music lovers, but if he plays other composers as well as he plays Ravel, it deserves to be.” He also recorded the original manuscript version of *Rhapsody in Blue* in an all-Gershwin CD which features brilliant Gershwin transcriptions of his own and those of Earl Wild. **Classics Today 2005** wrote: “There’s no denying Himy’s virtuosic flair, this is a fascinating disc.” His Schumann CD was chosen by **BBC Music Magazine** as CD pick of 2007. In 2010, Mr. Himy celebrated Chopin’s 200th Anniversary by performing more than 40 concerts worldwide including an appearance on MPR (Minnesota Public Radio) performing a Chopin recital. He also gave several performances of the Chopin *Piano Concerto no. 1*, one notably at the 2010 Marienbad Chopin Festival in the Czech Republic, and made his debut at the Bayreuth Steingraeber Festival in Germany. In 2011, Mr. Himy celebrated Liszt’s 200th Anniversary and performance highlights at the Salle Molière in Lyons, France and Carnegie Hall, NY, and at the famed Teatru Manoel in Malta. **The Times** critic wrote: “Few who were at the Manoel Theatre on Sunday will ever forget this American gentleman’s recital. It will remain one of the years’ highlights and probably many more to come.” Mr. Himy performed in the 2012 Pietrasanta Music Festival, Italy for the King and Queen of Belgium and Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli with violinist Michael Guttman, cellist Wendy Sutter and baritone Stephen Salters in an all-American program which featured some of Eric Himy’s acclaimed “*Gershwin in Paris*”. In 2013, Mr. Himy performed with Saint Petersburg Symphony in Russia under Vladimir Lande who re-invited him in 2014 to perform the *Rachmaninov Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini*. He was also invited in 2013 and 2014 to perform in Brussels by friends of the pianist Martha Argerich, and the performance was an exciting success resulting in invitations to Summer Festivals such as the 2014 Pietrasanta Music Festival in Italy and Napa Music Festival Orchestra. In 2017, Mr. Himy will be performing with pianist Shaun Tirrell in various concerts including Bayreuth and with pianist Glenn Sales in *Philip Glass - Four Movements for Two Pianos* with the Washington Ballet. He has recorded 15 CDs, 3 DVDs and his website is [www.erichimy.com](http://www.erichimy.com)