

SUSAN MERDINGER, PIANIST

HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS 60035

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QUALIFICATIONS SUMMARY

Steinway Artist with an extensive record of success in performing, recording production, concert programming and teaching. Passionate, inspirational, internationally acclaimed performer and Master Teacher, committed to a lifelong pursuit of excellence in the performing arts.

AWARDS

GOLD, SILVER AND BRONZE MEDALS: GLOBAL MUSIC AWARDS- French Fantasy, Carnival, Soirée and Four Centuries CD's	2014-15
First Prize: International Music Competition of France	2013
First Prize: Bradshaw and Buono International Piano Competition, Professional Division	2012
Special Liszt Award: IBLA Grand Prize Festival and Competition	2011
Top Honors Prizes, Solo Piano / Duo Piano – 29th Masterplayers International Music Competition	2009
Dewar's Young Artist Recognition Award in Music	1990
Artists International Young Musicians Alumni Winners Series – Distinguished Artists New York Recital	1989
Artists International Young Musicians Competition, Piano – New York Debut Award Winner	1986
Prize Winner – Performers of Connecticut Young Musicians Competition	1985
1st Prize- Westchester Conservatory of Music Chamber Music Competition, Merdinger-Greene Duo Pianists	1985
1st Prize – New York State Music Teachers Association Piano Competition (State-wide Competition)	1979
Semifinalist – New York Chopin Competition, Young Keyboard Artists Association Competition, Murray Dranoff Two Piano International Competition, American Music Scholarship Association Competition	
Competitor – Laureate of major international piano competitions including: Harveys-Leeds Competition, William Kappell Competition, Montreal Concourse de Musique Competition	

MAJOR PERFORMANCES

SOLO

- Carnegie Recital Hall Debut – Presented by Artists International 1987
- Merkin Concert Hall Solo Recital – Presented by Artists International 1990
- Solo performances in Governor of New York's Gracie Mansion, and for the Governor of Connecticut.
- European Solo Debut Recital Tour – Presented by International Concert Administration 1986
Recitals in Scottish National Orchestra Center, Scotland; Dilgentia Hall, the Hague
America House- Frankfurt, Germany; Saarbrücken Cultural Center, Germany, BRT-3 Belgian Radio
- STIM.U.LI Concert Series- Solo Recital - Presented by New Music School of Chicago May 2011
- Winners Concerts- Carnegie Weill Recital Hall- Bradshaw and Buono International Piano Competition 2012, and Alexander and Buono International String Competition, 2015.
- Latino Music Festival: Solo Recital, Chicago, Illinois October 2013.

CHAMBER MUSIC

2011-2016 Season performances:

- **Chicago Symphony Orchestra Chamber Music Series:** “Tononi Ensemble” Fullerton Hall, Art Institute of Chicago, March 25, 2011 and May 19, 2013 and March 22, 2015, **April 3, 2016**; Symphony Center’s Buntrock Hall, October 30, 2013.
- **Live from WFMT: January 4, 2016-** Piano and Strings-Field, Dvorak, and Glinka; Complete Beethoven Piano and Violin Sonatas **2016-2017**.
- **Pianoforte Salon Series:** Sherwood Conservatory, Chicago, IL. Duo Piano Concert with Irina Feoktistova, Simulcast on WFMT 98.7, September 2, 2012
- **University of Illinois- Chicago:** Noontime Series, Solo and Duo Piano Concert with Irina Feoktistova. September 19, 2011.
- **Northbrook Public Library:** Solo and Duo Recital with Charlie Pikler, October 30, 2011; Fine Arts Music Society Festival Players, September 9, 2012; “Dynamic Duos” Concert with David Yonan and Steven Greene, December 16, 2012; **October 18, 2015; January 3, 2016**.
- **STIM.U.LI Concert Series:** New Music School of Chicago. All Brahms Concert: Viola Sonatas No. 1 and 2, and Cello Sonata Op. 38, Charlie Pikler, Viola, Jocelyn Butler, Cello. December 9, 2011.
- **Northbrook Public Library Two Piano Festival:** Merdinger-Feoktistova Piano Duo, March 4, 2012; Merdinger-Greene Piano Duo, March 3, 2013; Merdinger-Feoktistova Piano Duo March 10, 2013; **Pianissimo!, March 13, 2016**.
- **Concert tours with the Elaris Duo:** Steven Elisha, Cello, Larisa Elisha, Violin. Concerts in Midwest, April 2012 and 2013. University of Wisconsin, Pianoforte Salon, Northbrook Public Library, University of Illinois, Steinway Piano Gallery-Chicago, et al.
- **Carnegie Recital Hall:** American Protege Competition Winners Concert. Collaborator with two First Prize Winners: Sarah Greene, Violist and Scott Greene, Clarinetist. May 28, 2012.
- **Mostly Music of Chicago Benefit Concert:** Duo Concert with Charlie Pikler, Principal Violist, Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Arts Club of Chicago, June 15, 2012.
- **Make Music Chicago:** Solo and Duo Piano Performance: 2011, 2012. The Five Greenes: 2014, Pianissimo! 2015

Collaborations with the following artists (1986-present):

- Chicago Symphony Orchestra: Charlie Pikler, Violin/Viola; Daniel Gingrich, Horn; Roger Cline, Bass, Daniel Katz, Cello; Fox Fehling, Violin; J. Lawrie Bloom, Clarinet; For 2016: Richard Graef, Flute; Tage Larsen, Trumpet; Gregory Smith, Clarinet.
- Chicago Symphony Chorus: Laura Boguslavsky, Alison Wahl, Ryan Cox.
- New Jersey Symphony Orchestra/Orpheus Chamber Orchestra: Jonathan Spitz, Principal Cello; Eric Weirich, Violinist/Concert Master;
- NY Philharmonic: Harry Zaratian, Violin;
- ELARIS Duo- Dr. Steven Elisha, Cello, and Dr. Larisa Elisha, Violin; Georgia Southern University
- Lincoln Trio members: Desiree Ruhstrat, Violin and David Cunliffe, Cello
- Virginia Symphony Orchestra and Highland Park Strings: Rachel Fisher, Violin
- International Concert Violinist: David Yonan
- Clarinetist: Walter Grabner, retired from Columbus Symphony Orchestra
- Larry Block, Cellist, and Founder of the Highland Park Strings
- Pianists: Steven Greene, Irina Feoktistova, Svetlana Belsky, Elena Doubovitskaya, Margarita Zelenai.
- Singers: Roberta Brickman, Lawrence Avery, Nathaniel Benjamin, Mandy Beckenstein, Sarah Greene, Stefanie Greene
- COMPOSERS: Augusta Read Thomas, Elbio Barilari, Ilya Levinson, Armando Susmano, Aaron Jay Kernis, Morton Gould, Fernando Vazquez, Victor Pichardo. Margarita Zelenai.

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SOLO ORCHESTRAL

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Collaborations with: Sony Classical Artist, Mattia Rondelli, Francesco Milioto, Glen Cortese, Ari Rudiakov, Sandra Dackow, Marvin von Deck, Joseph Glymph, Philip Simmons, Thomas Duffy, Richard Thurston, Robert Kapilow, Jerome Sala, Barry Hoffman, Francis Akos, Ron Arden, Anatol Lysenka, Michael Holian.

- The Chicago Philharmonic
- Yale Symphony
- Yale Concert Band
- Rockland Symphony
- Highland Park Strings
- Ridgewood Symphony
- Westchester Conservatory
- Adelphi Chamber Orchestra
- Westchester Chamber Orchestra
- Metropolitan Orchestra of New Jersey
- Classical Symphony Orchestra
- Lincolnwood Chamber Orchestra
- North Suburban Symphony Orchestra
- North Shore Chamber Orchestra
- Yonkers Philharmonic Symphony
- Northwest Chicago Symphony Orchestra
- 2014: FullScore Chamber Orchestra
- 2014: Highland Park Symphony Orchestra
- 2016: North Shore Chamber Orchestra

RADIO/TV

- Connecticut Public Radio
- BBC Television of Great Britain
- BRT3 National Radio of Belgium
- Live on WQXR, *The Listening Room*, with Robert Sherman
- WDAV, Classical Public Radio
- CKWR- Canadian Public Radio
- Cable Television Documentary Interview and Performance, *Bravura*
- WFMT, *Impromptu Series* with George Preston, Live performance April 26, 2011; *Fiesta! with Elbio Barilari- March 5, 2015*
- Pianoforte Salon Series- Live performance on WFMT, September 2, 2011 - Duo Piano Concert

Representative performances in Public Libraries, Universities, Schools, Museums, Community Cultural Centers:

Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Chicago, IL
Chicago Symphony Orchestra Center, Buntrock Hall
Preston Bradley Hall, Chicago Cultural Center
Fullerton Hall, Art Institute of Chicago, IL
University of Illinois, Chicago, IL
Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL
Pianoforte Salon, Chicago, IL
Arts Club of Chicago, IL
The Driehaus Museum, Chicago, IL
Steinway Piano Galleries, CA, IL, NY
Columbia College-Sherwood Conservatory, IL
Midwest Young Artists, Highwood, IL
Northbrook Public Library, IL
Highland Park High School, IL
Skokie Public Library, IL
Highland Park Community House, IL
University of Wisconsin-Parkside, WI
Ravinia- Bennett Gordon Hall, Highland Park, IL
Yale University, CT
Solomon Schecter, West Hartford, CT

Manhattan School of Music, NY
SUNY-Purchase, NY
Kosciusko Foundation, NY
Westchester Conservatory of Music, NY
Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY
SUNY-Rockland Community College, NY
Five Towns Public Library, NY
Emelin Theater, Mamaroneck, NY
Woodmere Public Library, NY
New Rochelle Public Library, NY
Tarrytown Music Hall, NY
Grace Episcopal Church, Nyack, NY
YMCA of Silver Bay, NY
Metropolitan JCC of New Jersey, West Orange, NJ
Basking Ridge/Bernards Township Public Library, NJ
Unitarian Society of Ridgewood, NJ
Westfield Presbyterian Church, NJ
Y-JCC of Bergen County, New Jersey
Unitarian Church of Paramus, NJ

CRITICAL REVIEWS

Chicago Classical Review
 The New Haven Register, CT
 The Daily Times: Westchester-Gannett Newspapers
 Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Germany
 Frankfurter Neue Presse, Germany
 Saarbrücken Zeitung, Germany
 The Glasgow Herald, Scotland
 Het Vaderland, The Hague

Classical Candor
 Audiophile Audition
 Audio-Video Club of Atlanta
 Classical Sentinel (Canada)
 American Record Guide
 Mainly Piano
 Music and Vision, UK
 Fanfare Magazine

DISCOGRAPHY

Available on iTunes, CDBaby and Amazon.

Pianissimo!: “The Chicago Debut Concert”: Works by Beethoven, Levinson, Zelenka, Saint-Saens, Gershwin, Lutoslawski, Stone. Pianists: Susan Merdinger, Irina Feoktistova, Svetlana Belsky, Elena Doubovitskaya. Recording Engineer: Ed Ingold. Editing Engineers: Ed Ingold, Svetlana Belsky and Scott Greene. Recorded LIVE at the Merit School of Music, September 12, 2015. Steinway Pianos.

Susan Merdinger and David Yonan: “Four Centuries”. Works for Piano and Violin by Mozart, Schumann, Bloch and Levinson. Recording Engineer: James Auwarter; Graphic Design: Mar Schoenberg; Label: Sheridan Music Studio. Recorded at the Merit School of Music Ann and Howard Gottlieb Hall, July 2015. Steinway D Piano. Release Date: September 15, 2015.

Susan Merdinger and Steven Greene, Piano Duo: “French Fantasy”. Works for One Piano, Four Hands by Saint-Saëns, Fauré, and Ravel. Recording Engineer: Ed Ingold. Graphic Design: Marc Schoenberg. Label: Sheridan Music Studio. Steinway B Piano. Release Date: September 18, 2014.

Susan Merdinger, Pianist: “Soirée” Works by Schubert, Brahms, Debussy and Liszt. Recording Engineers: Tim Martyn, David Schoenberg, Ed Ingold. Graphic Design: Carolyn Loxton. Recorded and edited 2012-2014. Label: Sheridan Music Studio. Release Date: July 30, 2014.

Susan Merdinger, Pianist: “Carnival!” Featuring Robert Schumann’s Carnival, Op. 9 and Faschingsschwank aus Wien, Op. 26. Recorded at WFMT Studio and Nichols Concert Hall, Evanston, IL (2011-2012). Recording Engineers: Mary Mazurek, Ed Ingold, Mark Travis. Graphic Design: Leslie Gould. Label: Sheridan Music Studio. Release Date: June 14, 2013

Susan Merdinger and Steven Greene, Pianists: “The Dynamic Duo” Works for Two Pianos by Bach, Saint-Saëns and Stravinsky (1985) Recording Engineer: Eugene Kimball. Graphic Design: Susan Merdinger. Release Date: January 23, 2013.

Susan Merdinger, Pianist: “Retrospection” Works by Bach, Haydn, Chopin, Debussy and Mendelssohn. Recorded in 1983-1984 at the Yale School of Music. Remastered by SoundLab in 2013. Recording and Editing Engineer: Eugene Kimball. Graphic Design: Susan Merdinger Label: Sheridan Music Studio. Release Date: February 27, 2013.

“Fine Arts Music Society Festival Players: Live Concert Highlights”: Works by Beethoven, Khachaturian, Ilya Levinson, Mendelssohn. Recording Engineer: Ed Ingold. Graphic Design: Susan Merdinger. Recorded live on September 9, 2012. Featuring Susan Merdinger, piano; David Yonan, violin; Cory Tiffin, clarinet; Christopher Ferrer, cello. Release Date: December 5, 2012.

Susan Merdinger, Pianist: “The Classical Style” Works by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven (1984-1988) Recording Engineer: Eugene Kimball, and Clinton Recording Studios. Mary Mazurek, CD Remastering Engineer. Graphic Design: Leslie Gould. Release Date: April 15, 2012

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

PIANISSIMO!, FOUNDER AND CO-DIRECTOR

2014-PRESENT

• **Chicago's Premier Virtuoso Piano Ensemble: Merdinger, Feoktistova, Belsky and Doubovitskaya**

SUMMIT MUSIC FESTIVAL, Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY

2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015

• **Piano and Chamber Music Faculty, Performing Artist, Coordinator of Duo Piano Program for 2012**

NEW MUSIC SCHOOL OF CHICAGO, Chicago, IL

2009 – 2013

Piano Faculty Member, Teacher of over 20 students, all ages and levels.

FINE ARTS MUSIC SOCIETY FESTIVAL at Brown County, Indiana

2012-Present

Founding Artist Faculty Member and Performer

SHERIDAN SOLISTI AND THE FIVE GREENES, Highland Park, IL

2006 – Present

Founder / Musical Director

- Established and manage non-profit organization and concert series dedicated to promoting the work of local professional musicians and composers, and contributing to noteworthy humanitarian causes.
- Established unique multi-generational family chamber music ensemble comprised of two pianists, clarinetist, violinist/violist and singer.

SHERIDAN MUSIC STUDIO OF HIGHLAND PARK, Highland Park, IL

2006 – Present

PRIVATE MUSIC INSTRUCTION, New York and New Jersey

1985 – 2003

Artistic Director, Instructor, Coach, Accompanist, Adjudicator

- Provide high-caliber curriculum planning, instruction, mentoring, and career guidance to gifted young musicians. Students have been accepted into prestigious university music programs throughout the country.
- Recruit students for all Sheridan Music Studio Faculty in Strings, Piano and Voice.
- Accompany music students at competitions, concerts, college auditions, and recordings.
- Adjudicator for several prestigious local music competitions in Illinois and Indiana
-

BOSTON LATIN PUBLIC SCHOOL, Boston, MA

2010

Consultant, Joy of Singing Initiative

- Designed and budgeted a new after-school program to increase participation in choral music and offer educational and performance opportunities for students not currently served by the music curriculum.

FOCUS ON THE ARTS, Highland Park, IL

2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015

Lecturer / Recitalist

UNITARIAN SOCIETY OF RIDGEWOOD, Ridgewood, NJ

2002 – 2003

Music Director

- Collaborated with the Reverend and Music Committee to plan and oversee music program and performances.
- Organized *Performer Concert Series*, including chamber, folk, new age, pop, and ethnic music styles.
- Directed two choruses and conducted piano and flute performances at weekly Sunday services.
- Selected all music and prepared musicians; planned and managed music budget.

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PROFESSIONAL MUSIC TEACHERS GUILD OF NEW JERSEY, Hackensack, NJ Lecturer / Performer / Adjudicator for student competitions	2000 – 2003
ELEGANT ENTERTAINMENT, New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut Founder / Music Director <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provided musical entertainment for benefits, fundraisers, weddings, country clubs, night clubs, and corporate functions in the tri-state metropolitan area; performed as pianist and flutist.• Analyzed client needs and tailored artists and repertoire accordingly to ensure a satisfying music experience.	1986 – 2003
TEMPLE BETH OR, Washington Township, NJ Organist / Accompanist	1992 – 1994
GLORIA DEI CHURCH, New Milford, NJ Choral Director / Organist	1990 – 1992
YJCC OF BERGEN COUNTY, Washington Township, NJ Community Music Lectures, Solo Recitals	1990s
TEMPLE BETH EL, New Rochelle, NY Organist / Accompanist (with Cantor Lawrence Avery)	1986 – 1989
GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT Yale School of Music, Yale University, New Haven, CT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taught Secondary Piano Lessons to Graduate Students in the School of Music	1983-1985

STUDENT AWARDS

Students have won top prizes in the following competitions: Walgreen's National Concerto, Bel Canto Foundation, North Suburban Symphony Young Artist, MusicChorale, American Protege, Barry Alexander International Voice and Violin Competitions, IHSA, IMEA, Grandquist, Chicago Symphony Youth Piano Auditions.

Students Have Been Accepted to or Attended Prestigious Music Schools & Universities Including:

- Eastman School of Music
- Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music
- Northwestern University
- Indiana University- Jacobs School of Music
- University of Rochester
- University of Pennsylvania
- Manhattan School of Music
- Carnegie Mellon- School of Music
- University of Illinois- School of Music
- Oberlin College/Conservatory
- University of Denver-Lamont School of Music
- University of Miami- Frost School of Music
- University of Michigan

EDUCATION & TRAINING

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC, New York, NY

Doctor of Musical Arts Candidate, 1986-1988

- Merit Scholarship Award Winner

YALE UNIVERSITY, New Haven, CT

Yale School of Music and Yale College

Master of Music in Piano Performance, 1985 / **Bachelor of Arts in Music**, 1983, Graduated in three years.

FESTIVALS

Yale-Norfolk Chamber Music Festival, Connecticut, Ellen Battell Stoeckel Fellowship, 1985

Chautauqua Music Festival, New York, Patricia Benkman Marsh Scholarship, 1983-1985

Fontainebleau School of Music, Fontainebleau, France, Merit Scholarship, 1982

PRINCIPAL TEACHERS

Piano – Constance Keene, Seymour Lipkin, Ward Davenny, Claude Frank, Ozan Marsh, Gaby Casadesus

Master Classes/Coaching – Byron Janis, Eugene List, Walter Hautzig, Abram Chasins, Boris Berman, Donald Currier, Peter Serkin, Karl Ulrich Schnabel, Phillippe Entremont, Tadeusz Kerner.

Composition – Martin Bresnick, Frederic Rzewski **Conducting** – Robert Kapilow, Otto Werner Mueller

Flute – Harold Jones, Thomas Nyfenger

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Steinway Artist (December 2012-present)
- The Carnegie Hall Royal Conservatory Achievement Program Founding Faculty Member candidate
- Baldwin Piano Concert Artist (1988-2012)
- *Interviewer*, Yale Alumni Schools Committee (20+ years)
- College Music Society (CMS)
- Chicago Area Music Teachers Association (CAMTA)
- Music Teachers' National Association (MTNA)
- Evanston Music Club
- North Shore Music Club
- Yale Club of New York City
- MENSA

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Conversant in Spanish
- Proficient semi-professional Flutist
- Basic computer proficiency (Mac or PC) plus Website Design and Management