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Dr. Chialing Hsieh, Collaborative Piano
Dr. John Price, Piano and Piano Pedagogy
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Mrs. H.D. Dear, Sr., and Alice E. Dear School of
Creative & Performing Arts
 NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY - NATCHITOCHES, LA

NSU's Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) is dedicated to creating a diverse, inclusive and equitable experience for all students, faculty and staff. CAPA will not tolerate racism or discrimination and is committed to creating a fair, empathetic, and just environment.



LMTA Piano Ensemble Festival

Saturday, October 10, 2026

Mrs. H.D. Dear, Sr. and Alice E. Dear
School of Creative and Performing Arts
 NORTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY
 Natchitoches, Louisiana

*"To play a wrong note is insignificant;
to play without passion is inexcusable."*

Ludwig van Beethoven



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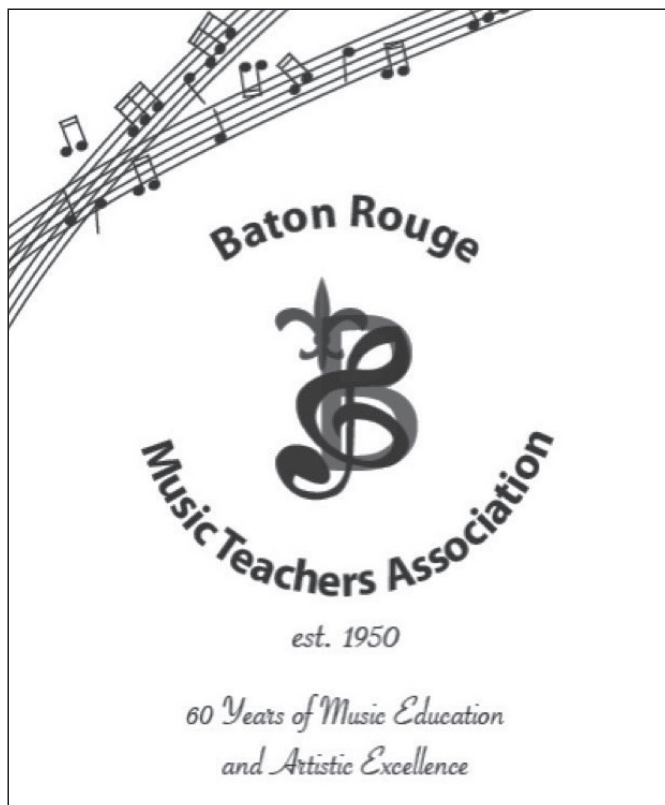
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About Piano Ensemble Festival

a note from its founder

One of my fondest memories from my childhood piano lessons is performing in the All-Ohio Piano Ensemble under the baton of composer, Robert Vandall. I had played several solos by Vandall so getting to meet him and have him conduct us playing his music, was thrilling.

In Louisiana, our students have several opportunities for competitions and other high stakes performance opportunities. Just this weekend, NSU is also hosting the MTNA State Competition. This event allows our students to play, for the sake of playing. The Piano Ensemble Festival is rewarding in that they develop musical connection with their peers. They get to experience the thrill of ensemble playing while learning to follow a conductor and gaining valuable audition, rehearsal, and concert experience. And they get to feel a sense of accomplishment when the final chord is played and all is said and done. If you have ever performed music and have felt that connection with your fellow performers, you know what I am talking about. This feeling, to me, is more important than any competition.

I would like to give a special thanks to NSU and LMTA for allowing us to host it here during the state convention. A HUGE thank you also to my committee, Sue Steck-Turner, Christine Lien, and Chialing Hsieh. Chialing, as a faculty member of NSU, was instrumental in making sure this event happened here and I could not be more grateful. To my committee, I literally could not have done this without you! And of course, thank you to the parents and students participating this weekend. We appreciate your dedication and commitment to your child's musical journey.

Megan Reilly Shannon
Chairman PEF





Mrs. H.D. Dear, Sr. and Alice E. Dear School of
Creative & Performing Arts

Welcome to Northwestern State University and the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts!

We are so happy to host this year's Louisiana Music Teachers Association (LMTA) Conference. We hope you have a wonderful stay and enjoy our beautiful campus, located in the middle of the city of Natchitoches (the oldest settlement in the Louisiana Purchase).

Our school is comprised of the academic areas of Fine and Graphic Art, Music, New Media/Journalism/Communication Arts, and Theatre and Dance. The academic areas of Art, Music, and Theatre are nationally accredited, which indicates our meeting the highest academic standards. Designated by the University of Louisiana System Board of Supervisors as an "Area of Excellence", the school strives to assist students with the acquisition of skills and knowledge necessary for professional careers in their chosen fields.

An outstanding faculty and staff seek to encourage the development of creativity and performance capabilities of students, and to provide for the cultural enrichment of the University, the Natchitoches community and beyond. Students can participate in a variety of music ensembles, perform in plays and exhibit their work in galleries regardless of classification.

Again, welcome to our Northwestern and Natchitoches communities. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you need any assistance during your stay.

Sincerely,

Scott Burrell
Director, Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts



MTGBR
Music Teachers of Greater Baton Rouge

Music Teachers of Greater Baton Rouge

**Music Teachers of Greater Baton Rouge is
delighted to support the LMTA Piano Ensemble
Festival!**

**We wish all the students and teachers a
wonderful Ensemble Camp and an unforgettable
Monster Concert!**

May your music-making be filled with joy, friendship,
inspiration, and beautiful memories as you celebrate the
power of making music together.

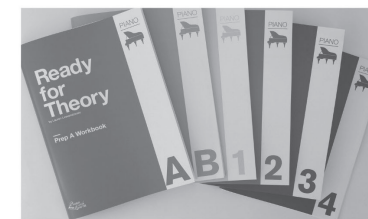
Congratulations to all the participants, and best wishes
for a successful festival!

Music Teachers of Greater Baton Rouge

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by Lauren Lewandowski, NCTM

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Mrs. H.D. Dear, Sr. and Alice E. Dear School of

Creative & Performing Arts



Welcome to Northwestern State University

On behalf of the Department of Music in Northwestern State University's Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts, I am delighted to welcome you to campus for the Louisiana Music Teachers Association Piano Ensemble Festival.

We are honored to host talented student pianists, dedicated teachers, families, and guests from across the state as we come together to celebrate musical excellence, collaboration, and artistic achievement. Over the course of the festival, participants will have the opportunity to engage in memorable performances, educational experiences, and meaningful musical connections.

One of the festival's featured events will be the Saturday evening Artist Recital, showcasing the exceptional talent and artistry of Northwestern State University's piano faculty and others. This special performance celebrates the rich tradition of collaborative and solo piano performance while highlighting the excellence of our faculty artists.

The recital may also feature select student performers, providing attendees with an opportunity to experience the next generation of outstanding musicians in a dynamic and inspiring concert setting.

Best Regards,

Dr. Terrie S. Sanders
Department Head of Music

 **NORTHWESTERN STATE**

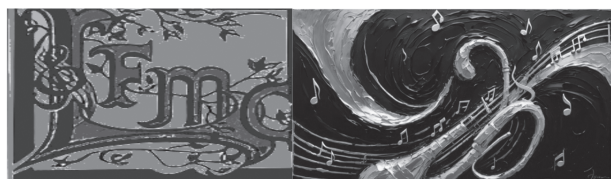
Northwestern State University of Louisiana | Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts
140 Central Avenue | Natchitoches, LA 71497 | Email: capa@nsula.edu | Web: nsula.edu/capa | Fax: (318) 357-5906

PARTICIPANTS AND TEACHERS

Student Name	Teacher Name	Level
Xinchen Wu	Chia-Ling Lien	4
Samuel Lin	Chia-Ling Lien	4
Rocky Xue	Francis Yang	2
Noah Moore	Erick Cabrera	PrepA
Sophia Dunn	Irene Gomez	PrepA
Katie Dunn	Irene Gomez	PrepA
Emmitt Maggio	Irene Gomez	PrepA
Jack Dunn	Steven Mendoza	1

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SPECIAL THANKS

With sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed their time and support.

CHAIRMEN

Megan Reilly Shannon, BRMTA
Chia-Ling Lien, BRMTA
Sue Steck-Turner, LAMTA
Chialing Hsieh, GSMTA

PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

Chia-Ling Lien
Francis Yang
Erick Cabrera
Irene Gomez
Steven Mendoza

BOOKLET DESIGNER

Daphne Hines

ALL HELPERS

Dr. Francis Yang
Dr. John Price
Belen Tenesaca Bermeo
Josue Bustillo
Erick Cabrera
Daniel Carballo
Eileen Cheng
Irene Gomez
Jose Luzuriaga Herrera
Steven Mendoza
Melissa Patino

2026 PIANO ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL PERFORMERS

His Capriccio for clarinet, bassoon, and piano was performed at the 2014 International Clarinet Association conference and Mid-America Festival and recorded by Trifecta! on the CD Cumulus Accumulation.

His arrangement of Saint-Saëns's Carnival of the Animals for saxophone quartet, piano, and percussion was released on the Centaur label in 2021. Young was the commissioned composer in 2018 by the Louisiana Music Teachers Association, composing and performing Metamorphose for two pianos.

He was also the 2016 Kentucky Music Teachers Association pedagogical composer, composing and performing Six Inventions for solo piano. He recently performed Carnival of the Animals with Rapides Symphony and previously served as president of the Southeastern Composers League.

He earned degrees in piano performance from Northwestern University and the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music.

Nathaniel Young is a senior at Natchitoches Central High School. He began studying piano at the age of seven and has received awards for his performances at the NSU Festival, the LMTA Chamber Competition, and Rally. Besides piano, Nathaniel was an active member of the cello section at both NSU Middle Lab School and Natchitoches Central High School. As a member of the NSU Middle Lab School orchestra, he had the opportunity to compete in the Festival Disney in Orlando, Florida. Nathaniel enjoys cooking, baking, and aircraft modeling.



LOUISIANA MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

Piano Ensemble Festival 2026

EVENT SCHEDULE

Time	Event
1:30 PM	Registration Begins
1:45–2:15 PM	Welcome & Icebreaker
2:25–3:10 PM	SESSION I — Rehearsal & Activities Hall: PA & Level I — Rehearsal Choir Room: Levels II & IV — Activity
3:20–4:05 PM	SESSION II — Rehearsal & Activities Hall: Levels II & IV — Rehearsal Choir Room: PA & Level I — Activity
4:20–5:20 PM	Dress Rehearsal
5:30 PM	Pizza & Fun
6:30 PM	2026 PEF Concert, Ceremony, & Picture
7:30 PM	Festival Artist Concert



CONDUCTOR BIOGRAPHY



Dr. Shane Thomas is the Director of Choral Activities and Assistant Professor of Music in the Dear School of Creative and Performing Arts at Northwestern State University where he conducts the Chamber Choir, Cane River Singers, and the Northwestern Choral Artists. He teaches courses in undergraduate and graduate vocal music education, choral methods and literature, and administrates the choral activities within the department. Thomas serves as the founder and artistic director of the Louisiana Vocal Arts Ensemble. He also serves as the Louisiana ACDA President-Elect and on the National Board for the National Collegiate Choral Organization.



2026 PIANO ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL PERFORMERS

in the state that was not a competition. Events that celebrate music, for the sake of celebrating music, reach more than just the select few. Her hope is that this event will thrive over the next few years and become a fixture in the Louisiana piano students' landscape across the state.

When she is not teaching, playing piano, or studying, she is likely spending time with her two beautiful children, Brogan and Meara, or running. She is an avid runner/cyclist/swimmer and enjoys racing half marathons and hopefully soon, triathlons.

Sue Steck-Turner is an independent piano teacher in Lafayette, LA. She holds a B.M.E from Bowling Green State University (Ohio) and a M.M. in Piano Performance from the University of Maryland. Additionally she has studied with Frank Glazer at the Eastman School of Music and with Albert Hirsh at the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria. Ms. Steck-Turner has served on the music faculties at the State University of New York at Oswego and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She has presented sessions at national and state conferences and workshops and clinics throughout Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas and has performed extensively as a collaborative pianist throughout Upstate New York and in Louisiana. She is certified as a Master Teacher by MTNA and is the recipient of the SUNY Chancellors Award for Excellence in Teaching (1982), the Louisiana Music Teachers Association's Outstanding Teacher Award (1999), and the Music Teachers National Association's Teacher of the Year Award (2011).



Michael Young is Associate Lecturer of Instruments, Composition, and Ensemble at the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts.

An active composer, pianist, and educator, his compositions have been performed throughout the United States and internationally in Korea and Taiwan at conferences and festivals of the College Music Society, Society of Composers, Inc., Southeastern Composers League, International Clarinet Association, and North American Saxophone Alliance.



2026 PIANO ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL PERFORMERS

Her collegiate honors include first prizes in the Sewanee Music Camp and LSU Piano Concerto Competitions, the Carol Bright Carlisle Memorial Award, and finalist recognition in the Grace B. Small Young Artist Piano Concerto Competition. In 1989, she received the Gina Robinor Pedagogy Award of Excellence for outstanding piano pedagogy.

Since establishing The Lien Piano Studio in Baton Rouge in 1997, she has inspired generations of students, many of whom have earned top honors in state, regional, and national competitions. She received the 2019 Outstanding Music Teacher Award from LMTA.

An active collaborative pianist, Chia-Ling has performed with instrumentalists, vocalists, choirs, and chamber ensembles and has served as a church pianist and choir director.

A certified LMTA and MTNA teacher, she has held numerous leadership positions and currently serves as Chair of the LMTA S.O.S. Fund. She is also a strong advocate for ensemble education throughout Louisiana.

Her teaching philosophy emphasizes strong musical foundations, creativity, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning. She is the proud mother of four grown children and grandmother of twin grandchildren.

Megan Reilly is piano teacher and PhD candidate at Louisiana State University. For the last 10-14 years, she has been running a full studio out of her home in Baton Rouge. She is an active member of the Baton Rouge and Louisiana State Music Teachers Association.

Megan is a native of Ohio, but moved to Louisiana two separate times and apparently, is not going anywhere! She holds a Bachelors degree in Piano Performance from Baldwin-Wallace Conservatory, a Masters Degree in Piano Performance/Pedagogy from Ohio University, a Masters Degree in Collaborative Piano from Arizona State University, and is currently working on her PhD in Piano Pedagogy/Music Education from Louisiana State University.

As a piano teacher, Megan fully believes in the power of music to enhance a child's life. She strives to provide lessons that meet each child where they're at and help bring them to their full potential as musicians and humans. She founded the Piano Ensemble Festival because she saw a need to have an event



Piano Ensemble Festival 2026 Concert Program

Conductor: Dr. Shane Thomas

Level Prep A

Blue Bird on My Shoulder
Hot Popcorn

Faber
Bober

Katie Dunn, Sophia Dunn, Emmitt Maggio, Noah Moore

Level 1

Heart and Soul
Concerto in A minor

Carmichael/M. Goldston
Grieg/arr. Matz

Jack Dunn, Rocky Xue

Level 2

Simple Gifts
Arioso

Shaker/Olson
Bach/arr. Agay

Rocky Xue

Level 4

Liebesfreud
Rhapsody Grandioso

Kreisler/Gillock
Bober

Samuel Lin, Xinchun Wu



Piano Ensemble Festival 2026

Festival Artist Recital

The Planets, Op. 32
IV. Jupiter, the Bringer of Jollit

Gustav Holst
(1874–1934)

Chialing Hsieh and Michael Young, piano duo.

Petite Suite
I. *En bateau*
II. *Cortège*
III. *Menuet*
IV. *Ballet*

Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)

Chialing Hsieh, Chia-Ling Lien, Megan Reilly,
and Sue Turner, piano eight hands.

Danse Macabre, Op. 40

Camille Saint-Saëns
(1835–1921)

Nora Bai, Chialing Hsieh, Michael Young,
and Nathaniel Young, piano eight hands.

Symphony No. 2 in E minor, Op. 27
III. Adagio

Sergei Rachmaninoff
arr. by Wladimir Wilschau
and Michael Young (1873–1943)

Chialing Hsieh and Michael Young, piano duet.

La Valse

Maurice Ravel
(1875–1937)

Chialing Hsieh and Michael Young, piano duo.

2026 PIANO ENSEMBLE FESTIVAL PERFORMERS

Nora Bai is a ninth grader at Caddo Magnet High in Shreveport, Louisiana. Having played piano since the age of 5, she has placed in numerous competitions. These competitions include the annual Solo Festival, Sonatina Festival, the LMTA Rally, and the Torgrimson/Swanzy competition. Alongside her journey playing piano, Nora is also a competitive tennis player ranked top 5 in Louisiana's 14 and under division. Lastly, she enjoys reading, creating art, and spending time with friends and family.



Chialing Hsieh is an Associate Professor of Collaborative Piano at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, where she oversees the collaborative piano program and teaches applied collaborative keyboard and related courses.

In recognition of her teaching, Hsieh received the 2024 NSU Excellence in Teaching Award.

Hailed as a "brilliant pianist" (Fanfare), Hsieh has performed recitals in Europe, Asia, and throughout the United States. An avid performer of contemporary music, Hsieh is devoted to promoting new piano solo and chamber works.

Hsieh has been a featured pianist on seven CDs for the Centaur, Innova, Enharmonic, and Ballpark record labels. Hsieh has received grants to promote new music, including Prince, Alford, and Varnado Endowed and Professorships from NSU, Artist Enrichment Grant from the Kentucky Foundation for Women, and the National Culture and Arts Foundation in Taiwan.

Hsieh earned her M.M. and D.M.A. in piano performance at the University of Cincinnati, Collee-Conservatory of Music.



Chia-Ling (Christine) Lien, a native of Taiwan, began her musical journey at an early age. She earned a Piano Performance Certificate from the National Taiwan Academy of Arts, followed by a B.A. in Piano Performance with a minor in Voice from Belmont University and a Master of Music in Piano Performance with a minor in Organ from Louisiana State University.

