



## Fall NEWSLETTER

October 29, 2014

Hello everyone:

MTNA Executive Director/CEO, Gary Ingle, who is also the Antitrust Compliance Officer for MTNA, presented the Antitrust Compliance Guide for state and local music teachers associations at the annual meeting for state presidents in Cincinnati from September 19-21. As I reported last time, on April 3, 2014, The Federal Trade Commission approved a settlement with MTNA in which MTNA agreed to assist state and local affiliates in “avoiding anti-trust acts”. Each affiliate must ensure that the following list of prohibited topics not be discussed amongst members at affiliate sponsored events such as meetings, workshops, seminars, chat rooms or networking sessions:



- Current prices or hourly rates;
- Current billing policies and procedures;
- What constitutes fair profit margins;
- Plans to increase or decrease prices or hourly rates;
- Agreements to allocate or divide territories or clients;
- Policies regarding vacation time and missed lessons;
- Terms and conditions of sales such as late charges, prompt payment discounts, or credit terms;
- Recommendations to members to implement unlawful tying arrangements such as requiring students to purchase sheet music directly from the teacher;
- Salaries of music studio employees;
- Complaints about or problems presented by other competitors or suppliers;
- Encouraging others to take retaliatory actions against competitors or suppliers, such as a boycott against a supplier that decided to offer music instructions in competition with members; and
- Efforts to influence suppliers' prices.

The following business related topics can be discussed at affiliate meetings, seminars, workshops, chat rooms and networking sessions:

- Data on past pricing levels that are compiled by an independent third party to identify average prices for historical data;
- Reports on the general economic trends in the profession;
- Discussions on how members can become more profitable by acquiring better knowledge of their costs;
- Discussing advances or problems in teaching methods and instruction;
- Education regarding various aspects of management and responding to student issues; and
- Discussions on improvements of services and educational methods.

Such mundane reading forms the cornerstone of our future direction. Please contact me at [mdjkiln@juno.com](mailto:mdjkiln@juno.com) with any questions no matter how small or trivial and I will consult with MTNA staff and/or attorney to get your questions answered.

There were other issues/topics/reports at the meeting too! Cincinnati was delightful in late September. Enjoy the fall in Vermont..

Marie Johnson, President

## 2014 - 2015 VMTA Calendar

<b>November 14, 2014</b>	BBVMTA Monster Concert Rehearsals, Trinity Baptist Church, Williston
<b>November 15, 2014</b>	BBVMTA Monster Concert, Trinity Baptist Church, Williston
<b>December 1, 2014</b>	VMTA Winter Newsletter Deadline for articles, reports and member news
<b>February 20, 2015</b>	Registration Deadline for Spring Festival
<b>April 4, 2015</b>	Spring Festival at St. Michaels College

## VMTA 50th Anniversary

The Vermont Music Teachers Association will celebrate its 50th anniversary on the weekend of October 2/3, 2015. The celebration will be held in conjunction with the Quad State convention to be hosted by Vermont. Please mark your calendars.

A planning committee has already met to begin the work of planning an exciting celebration. Those on the committee are: Marie Johnson, Elizabeth Metcalfe, Susan Nicholas, Teresa Miranda and Patty Bergeron. If you would like to join this group in the planning process please let Patty know.

On Friday evening there will be a dinner followed by a concert. All are invited to come and celebrate. We are in search of former members or family of members that are no longer with us. We'd like to invite them to the events and ask if they have memories they would like to share with us. If you can help with this information, or want to share your own memories, please let anyone on the planning committee know.

### Patty Bergeron

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## VMTA Commissioned Composer 2015



Vermont Music Teachers Association has commissioned Pierre Jalbert to compose a work to be premiered at the Quad State Convention in 2015. Pierre Jalbert is one of the most highly regarded American composers of this generation, earning notice for his richly colored and well-crafted scores.

Pierre received his undergraduate degree in piano and composition from the Oberlin Conservatory. He earned his PhD in composition at the University of Pennsylvania under principal teacher George Crumb. Pierre is currently a Professor of Composition and Theory at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music.

Pierre Jalbert was born in New Hampshire and grew up in northern Vermont where he studied piano with Arlene Cleary, Patty Bergeron's mother. He was influenced by French and English folk music as well as Catholic liturgical music from his youth.

Pierre will write a composition for solo piano. Brian Connelly will perform the premier of the composition on October 3, 2015 at the Quad State Convention. Mr. Connelly teaches piano performance and chamber music at Rice University. Brian Connelly will also perform a solo piano concert on Friday evening October 2, 2015 for the Quad State Convention.

Susan Nicholas

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## Béla Bartók's Other Microcosmos



Sylvia Parker's article entitled Béla Bartók's Other Microcosmos is found in the September 2014 issue of MTNA e-Journal. It is about Bartók's Petite Suite and includes sound clips of his field recordings of peasants singing and playing, the Violin Duos from which the Suite is derived, and Bartók himself performing.

Petite Suite for piano is the last among Béla Bartók's many settings of authentic folk melodies. A rarely played hidden gem derived from 44 Violin Duos, it is within reach of the intermediate/advanced pianist. In addition to providing engaging performance repertory, it provides also a microcosmos of Bartók's work with peasant music. This article offers an opportunity to compare directly Bartók's research, composition and performance inspired by the peasant music that shaped his musical thinking. Here his notations of authentic folk melodies appear alongside the scores of his piano arrangements thereof. Here his field recordings of peasants singing and playing appear alongside the Violin Duos and his own piano performance of Petite Suite. The author provides background context along with brief discussion of each movement. Juxtaposing the sound recordings of these folk melody "jewels," as Bartók called them, brings them to life as no verbal description can.....

You can continue reading this article in your September 2014 issue of your MTNA e- Journal or directly on this website: <http://www.mtnaejournal.org/publication/?i=225199>. Don't forget to sign in with your email address that MTNA has on file for your account. You should have received a link from MTNA with options to read the article online. If you have difficulty reading this article you can contact MTNA or [tgmiranda@comcast.net](mailto:tgmiranda@comcast.net) for more instructions.

## Teaching theory a bit differently...



Many years ago, I grew weary of theory books. Theory books can be great...they teach important things...but so many of my students would "forget" to do the lesson assigned. I tried multiple motivational techniques including assigning an extra page in hopes that this "punishment" would lead to their desire to keep up on a weekly basis. I would offer points that would lead to prizes if they completed their theory book lesson. It just wasn't working. Theory books were too much like homework.

So I decided to try theory classes, and I never turned back! I group my students into manageable sized classes and they come for a monthly 45 minute class with other students on a similar level. The students have such a good time learning that I had one little girl refer to theory class as "theory party!" There are so many ways to teach theory, and students learn in different ways, but the "hands on" approach has, in my experience, been the most effective in my students' grasp of theory concepts.

The youngest students focus on learning basic musical symbols, notes, interval recognition, etc. we use a floor staff, flash cards, and games. Once they move on to the concept of chords, they stand on my floor keyboard and take turns becoming the root, the third, and the fifth of the chord I ask them to spell. We play music bingo and go on treasure hunts on the piano, which is just silently following instructions of interval finding and hoping they land on the right note at the end!

The next level of students practice recreating the circle of keys on a table. They name key signatures via flash cards and they learn how to form major, minor, diminished, and augmented chords on the piano. We line up and practice finding the I, ii, iii, IV, V, vi, vii chords in whatever key I ask them. They do "wrap up" games to reinforce note naming and musical terms. Ear training is fun, too. We break up into teams and compete!

The advanced class plays music bingo with key signatures only and they learn to modulate and do some analyzing of four part music. We practice reading lead sheets, too.

Of course there are many other things we do, but this is just a taste of what goes on in theory class. The camaraderie this has built among my students over the years has been very rewarding. I have students from 5 different schools, but when they come to piano events throughout the year, they already know each other and have a bond because of their interaction at theory class.

A handful of students over the years have gone on to college and majored in music, and they entered freshman theory class with confidence. Every teacher must make her own decision on how she will teach theory. She has to use the method that "works" for her studio, but this is what "works" for me.

**Jina Smith**

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## In Remembrance of Ole Hansen

Sadly, Ole Hansen died Oct. 10, 2014 of esophageal cancer. Ole was a wonderful person, so kind and gentle. He was an excellent piano tuner. I first met him when I bought a Baldwin Grand from Hansen & Son in 1975. From that time on, Ole tuned my piano and kept my piano in top shape, checking bushings, hammers, etc. Ole also was very generous in supporting VMTA as a Sponsor Advertiser. He also was generous with BBVMTA Monster Concert. Ole donated a piano for the use of that event for many years. Ole Molskov Hansen's obituary was published in the Burlington Free Press on October 16, 2014. You can find it online at <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/burlingtonfreepress/obituary.aspx?pid=172832067>.

Barbara Williams

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## BBVMTA June Business Meeting



June 11, 2014 The Hilberts hosted our annual BBVMTA picnic and business meeting. Everyone attending had a wonderful time previewing the upcoming Monster Concert music in the Hilbert Pianos showroom. On Saturday, November 14-15 students from 19 studios will be arriving at Trinity Baptist Church to rehearse and then perform their Monster Concert. It is a much loved weekend of all students participating. If you have never participated in this event you should consider it in November of 2016. You are welcome to come to observe Ginger Hwalek work her magic with each group at any rehearsal Friday or Saturday. Come and bring your students to the dress rehearsal On Saturday at 3pm. Listeners are welcome!



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## Professional Development Scholarship from VMTA helps Fund a Week of Master Classes with John O'Connor at the Adamant Music School

I sincerely thank Vermont Music Teacher's Association for supporting my studies at the Adamant Music School this July with a professional development scholarship so that I could attend/perform in the John O'Connor Master Classes. The Adamant Music School is a non-competitive, supportive community for pianists of all ages located 8 miles north of Montpelier. The John O'Connor class is a 5-day session, with 4-hour long master classes each day. 15 resident performers have the opportunity to practice 6-8 hours per day, receive 2 master class lessons with John O'Connor, as well as perform in one of 2 of the concerts given at the end of the master class week. The most remarkable aspect of the Adamant experience is the wonderful musical support and camaraderie that develops over a short period of time amongst the participants. O'Connor's instruction is inspiring for me as a musician and as a teacher. He is thorough in his demonstrations on dealing with technical issues that arise within the piano repertoire. He offers advice about stage presence and memorizing music. He shares anecdotes about his own studies with his teacher Wilhelm Kempf. The time spent at Adamant Music School is restorative, as it enables me to focus entirely on music, a much-appreciated gift in my chaotic, multi-faceted life as mother and teacher.



**Final Concert at the Adamant Music School. From left to right: Dr. Matthew Manwarren, John O'Connor, and Melody Puller**

### Melody Puller

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**A**pplications for the MTNA Teacher Enrichment Grants are now available. Applications must be received by January 5, 2015, to be considered by the selection committees. All applications and supporting materials must be submitted online through the MTNA FOUNDATION website. Teacher Enrichment Grants may be used for private study, college-level course work or special projects in performance, pedagogy, music theory and composition. The grant is not intended to be used to pursue course work toward a degree, for travel funds or for ongoing projects. However, a grant may be approved for one additional year at the discretion of the Teacher Enrichment Grant Evaluation Committee. The number of grants awarded in any year is determined by the number of qualified applicants and available funds. Of special note: The Loran Olsen Endowment provides grant funds for projects that pertain to the traditional music and/or dance of American subcultures including those of Canada and Mexico, and for projects that pertain to the expansion of knowledge of the traditional music and/or dance of other cultures worldwide. For more information or to apply, go to

<http://www.mtna.org/mtna-grants/teacher-enrichment-grants/teacher-enrichment-grant-guidelines/>.

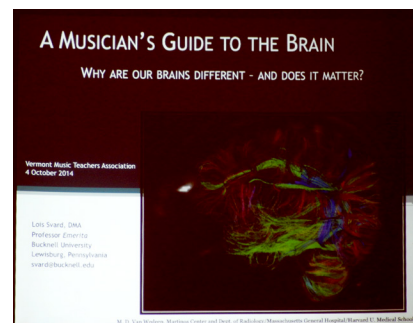
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## Fall Conference 2014

October 4, twenty teachers met at the Richmond Free Library for a wonderful presentation by Lois Svard, D.M.A. on THE MUSICIAN'S GUIDE TO THE BRAIN. Neuroscientists research shows that making music may be one of the most complex activities that humans enjoy. By understanding how music changes the brain we may become better musicians and teachers. One of the most important research areas for musicians is *plasticity*, the ability of the brain to change in response to practice. Over time and hours of practice the brains of musicians show both structural and functional changes.

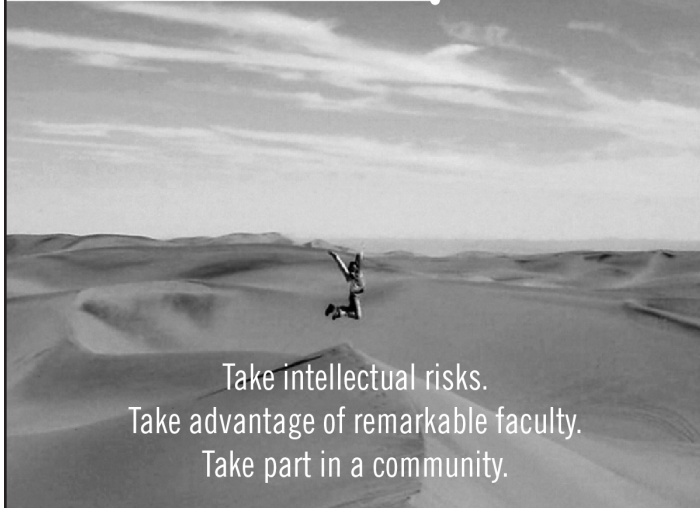


Neuroscientists have shown that the brain is larger in musicians than non musicians. To demonstrate neurons or brain cells Lois used Ramone, a stuffed animal neuron, as a prop. We learned about the auditory motor loop, showing that the more often brain cells fire together, the faster and more efficiently they will work. You could say that *Practice makes Permanent*. The more often the pathway fires, the quicker and more efficient it will work in the future. Likewise practicing incorrectly also wires in the mistakes and makes them much more difficult to correct. After the conference, I enjoyed telling my students that there is scientific evidence to prove that *it is easier to learn something correctly the first time*. In order to correct mistakes it is necessary to practice the selection intentionally and focused many more times than the selection was practiced the incorrect way.

Plasticity makes us who we are as musicians. It allows someone who is brain damaged to relearn skills. The brain can't repair damaged pathways but instead it builds new pathways. The brain can change at any age! Great progress has been made with Kinesiology or Brain Gym with special needs students. Plasticity happens most readily when an activity is linked with positive emotions. The more motivation, the more plasticity occurs throughout life.

Neuroscientists research in the realm of mirror neurons, brain cells that fire not only when we act but also when we see someone else performing the same action, have tremendous implications for musicians. These specialized brain cells allow us to understand the intentions, actions and emotions in others. Mirror neurons fire when we act, when we see someone else acting, and when we hear the word of the action. Action and Perception are two sides of the same coin. Mirroring neurons in musicians would include: Listening to someone playing your instrument, watching someone playing your instrument, watching body movements of someone playing your instrument and watching facial


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*Photo taken by Saint Michael's student  
Meredith Johnson '08 while studying abroad in  
Namibia during her junior year.*

expressions of someone playing your instrument. During all of these activities the motor areas of the brain are active. Mirroring is more effective than mimicking. The stronger the rapport, the more mirroring occurs.

One area of the lecture that was surprising to me personally, is the fact that visual information overrides auditory information. As a musician, I have always believed that the music (auditory) came first but research shows that my assumption was incorrect. As a performer we must concentrate on what we want our audience to be mirroring.

There are many ways to learn a skill: Motor Imagery, Visual Imagery, Auditory Imagery and Kinesthetic Imagery. By imagining all movements without actually executing them, we can combine physical practice with mental practice. The result will be superior to physical practice. The benefits of motor imagery facilitates learning, reduces injury, and is good for learning physically demanding music.

Some research says that we are hardwired for music the same as we are hardwired for language. There is evidence of biological roots for music in archaeology. Perhaps music came before language. 42,000-43,000 years ago in a cave in Germany they found a bird bone flute using the pentatonic scale. Newborns can detect the beat in music, prefer the singing voice to the speaking voice, can recognize the interval of the 5th, and can memorize melodies. For several months after birth infants can recognize melodies that they heard in utero.

You can read more about this fascinating subject by going to Lois Svard's blog, [www.themusiciansbrain.com](http://www.themusiciansbrain.com). You will also enjoy the article, THE MUSICIAN'S GUIDE TO THE BRAIN: HOW TO USE BRAIN SCIENCE IN THE STUDY OF MUSIC from the MTNA e-journal, February 2010: 2 – 11, and THE MUSICIAN'S GUIDE TO THE BRAIN: FROM PERCEPTION TO PERFORMANCE from the MTNA e-journal, April 2010: 2 – 11. Watch the video, Your Brain on Improv by Charles Limb online at [http://www.ted.com/talks/charles\\_limb\\_your\\_brain\\_on\\_improv?language=en](http://www.ted.com/talks/charles_limb_your_brain_on_improv?language=en). Another video that we enjoyed at the conference was 3-YR. OLD JONATHAN CONDUCTING BEETHOVEN which can be viewed online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0REJ-ICGjKU>.

The day was inspiring and gave us much to think about. I'm sure our personal practice habits and our students will benefit from Lois Svard's lecture.

**Teresa Miranda**



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## Competitive Auditions

Following the very successful Fall Convention on October 4<sup>th</sup> at the Richmond Library, the VMTA Competitive Audition results were officially announced and the Junior Piano Performance entrant, Sophie Usherwood, played her program. Sophie studies with Victoria Dobrushina of Norwich, VT, a new member of VMTA. Because she was the only entrant at the junior level, Sophie is named Vermont State Representative and will advance to the Eastern Division competition in January. She accepted our invitation to perform her program for an audience and for a "judge" who would write comments about her performance and discuss her program with her afterwards. Lois Svard, the convention clinician, was our judge/adjudicator.

In addition to her competition program pieces (Bach "Sinfonia in g minor", Haydn "Allegro from F major Sonata XVI:23" and Prokofiev "Tarantella"), Sophie also played her own composition "Prelude in D flat", which was entered in the junior level composition competition.

Benjamin Munkres of Cornwall, Vermont entered his composition "Rondo of the Clouds", in the elementary level composition competition. Ben has studied composition with Erik Nielsen at the Green Mountain Suzuki Institute. Like Sophie, his composition was the only one entered at his level, so both his composition and Sophie's will advance to the division competition as state representatives. Sadly Benjamin was not able to come to Richmond to perform his composition, but we hope he may enter another year. Composition judge Thomas L. Read evaluated and wrote comments about both compositions submitted before they were passed along to the Eastern Division composition judges.

We wish both competitors well as they represent Vermont at the competitions in January, and hope they will continue their studies in all the many areas of music in which they are interested.

### Elizabeth Metcalfe



Victoria Dobrushina was born in Odessa (Ukraine). Victoria has 30 years of experience as a music educator (piano teacher, choral conductor, accompanist). She graduated from Gnesin Musical College (B.A.) and earned her M.A. in Music from Gnesin Music Academy in Moscow in 1987, both with high honors at graduation. Victoria was one of the founders and later became a principal of the Experimental School of Arts in Moscow.

Since immigrating to the United States in 1995, Victoria worked as a piano teacher at Concord Community Music School (NH), accompanied the Concertato Singers of Handel Society at Dartmouth College, accompanied the Marion Cross School choir, and accompanied the regional and state auditions. She is a choral conductor at Montessori Children's School, and a pianist at First Church of Christ Scientist in Hanover, N. H. Victoria's main focus is in teaching: piano, recorder, music theory, vocal and instrumental ensembles to over 30 students of all ages. She has in essence been running a similar music school from her home. Her students Gala Recitals incorporate many elements of art: music, visual arts, poetry, dance and theater.

Victoria Dobrushina

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Starting balance	10,875.46
Interest Income	21.77
Ending Balance	10,897.23

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Starting Balance	1,484.86
Net Income/Expense	230.43
Ending Balance	1,715.29

**OVERALL TOTAL 12,612.52**

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Collaborative Day Event	1,530.58
Donations	1,280.58
Sponsors	250.00
Competitive Auditions Income	55.00
Performance Entry Fee	55.00
Composer Commissioning	750.00
Donor Program	200.00
Member Dues	885.00
Quad State Shared Income	142.50
Sponsor Advertisements	1,200.00
Spring Festival Registrations	940.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>5,703.08</b>

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Collaborative Day Event*	1,228.83
Facilities, supplies	262.83
Donation to Ronald McDonald House	966.00
Competitive Auditions Expense	281.20
Facilities	35.00
Performance Judge	50.00
Performance Travel Grant	175.00
Postage/supplies/copies	21.20
Composer Commissioning	1,522.01
Diane Huling	1,500.00
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Member Support	406.47
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Member Recognition	31.47
Professional Development Grants	200.00
MTNA Foundation	100.00
MTNA Nat'l Conference travel support	1,000.00
Newsletter Expense	83.58
Officer Expense	18.40
Publicity Expense	429.00
VYOA ad and directory listing	99.00
Deconstruction Event	150.00
Website	180.00
Spring Festival Expenses*	403.16
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>5,472.65</b>

**NET Income and Expense 230.43**

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Saint Michael's College - Sponsor Ad	-200.00
Tonewood Maple - Sponsor Ad	-200.00 ' - no contribution from Tonewood this year
Hilbert Pianos - Collab Day	750.00
Green Mtn Piano Movers - Collab Day	870.00
Saint Michael's College - Spring Festival Facilities	840.00
Auction item for MTNA Conference	no cost - re-gifting of a donated item
net value	<b>2,060.00</b>













## Member News



Missing: Joyce Flanagan, Gary Schmidt, Richard VanVliet

Elaine Greenfield reports: Mine was a summer filled with music, featuring a concert with long-time colleague, flutist Pamela Guidetti in June, and a Transcontinental Piano Duo performance in August for the Vermont Festival of the Arts, held annually in Waitsfield/Warren. There were also chances to attend some area concerts, which I am usually unable to do; plus, a really enjoyable trip to Maine with musician friends culminating in a lobster festival at which 300 lucky people feasted

on endless seafood and homemade delicacies, and traded stories of adventures, musical and otherwise. Former student, Natalie McKechnie of Stowe, was married in August. Norine Grant and I, her first and second teachers respectively, provided music for the ceremony, and had a delightful time at this especially meaningful event. Now it's on to the new season, with many activities planned professionally, as well as numerous events in the works for Greenfield Piano Associates. First off is a GPA concert performed for St. Paul's Cathedral Arts on Tuesday, November 4th, 12 Noon to 1. **AUTUMN PIANO POTPOURRI** features a variety of 19th and 20th century works, performed by GPA members, some of whom are familiar VMTA members as well! If you have the chance to come support a few of your fellow teachers, it would be great to have you there. Happy music making to all!


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Opera Orchestra and was a protege of Jascha Heifetz. The program will include music by J.S. Bach, Beethoven, Debussy, Kreisler, Sibelius, and the world premiere of **THE THIRD HIGHWAY** by Vermont composer David Gunn. The November 14 concert will take place at the First Baptist Church of Burlington (81 Saint Paul Street) at 7:30 p.m. and the November 16 performance will be at the Bethany Church in Montpelier (115 Main Street) at 4 p.m. Admission is free; donations are accepted.

Laurel Ann Maurer

Vermont Virtuosi will present music spanning four centuries for flute, violin, and piano in concerts on Friday, November 14, 2014, and Sunday, November 16, 2014. **TRIO ROMANTISSIMO** will feature guest violinist, Arturo Delmoni, along with flutist and artistic director Laurel Ann Maurer and pianist Claire Black. Mr. Delmoni, a frequent soloist and chamber musician at festivals in Vermont and throughout the country, is the co-concert master of the Metropolitan



ARTURO DELMONI



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