

The Times

Classical Music: Golandsky International Piano Festival & Edward T. Cone Institute Concert emanating from Princeton

By Ross Amico

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Belying conventional wisdom that the dog days of summer are a time to kick back, two New Jersey institutions are about to launch into an intensive week of study and performance.

The Golandsky Institute will commence its annual summer symposium and international piano festival on Sunday. Concerts, lectures, interactive clinics and master classes will continue through July 18.



The institute is the preeminent center for teaching the Taubman Approach, which emphasizes natural movement and healthy technique, giving pianists (and now string players) the tools to play with brilliance and ease.

Robert Durso, who is a cofounder and one of the senior directors of the institute, emphasizes that Golandsky's mission is broader than its reputation to minimize pain and repetitive stress injuries would suggest.

"It really appeals to pianists who are curious and want to challenge themselves to reach a new level," he says. "Anyone who is very eager and hardworking and curious can de-

rive an enormous amount of benefit, because it's going to take you from wherever you are and, with the right instruction and the right amount of work, put you on another level, playing pieces in a better way, like being able to control sound and having facility and clarity to your playing, as opposed to playing harder pieces in the same old way."

The method was pioneered by Dorothy Taubman, who died in 2013, at the age of 95. Durso worked with Taubman and was a faculty member of the former Taubman Institute. He has been involved with the approach since 1983. Edna Golandsky, who co-founded of the Taubman Institute in 1976, established of her own organization in Princeton in 2003.

The roster of this year's Golandsky International Piano Festival may be the most impressive yet.

On Sunday, Ilya Itin will return with one of his characteristically demanding and always high-quality recitals, performing works of Scriabin and Rachmaninoff. (Live streaming of the event will be available at www.golandskyinstitute.org.)

Monday will bring a rewarding concert of Scandinavian chamber music and song, as performed by tenor Alex Richardson, cellist Sophie Shao, and pianist Thomas Bagwell, including Edvard Grieg's Cello Sonata and Magnus Lindberg's "Santa Fe Project."

On Tuesday, the remarkable monk-pianist Father Seán Duggan will perform works of Bach and Beethoven, including the mighty "Hammerklavier" Sonata.

This year's young artist debut, on July 16, will introduce Chinese pianist Wei Luo, who will be heard in sonatas by Haydn and Prokofiev, Brahms' "Paganini Variations," and works by Bach and Ravel.

Keyboard legend Dick Hyman will make a special appearance, on July 17, in an evening of jazz with selections announced from the stage.

The series will conclude with one of the world's foremost clarinetists, Richard Stoltzman, and Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Yehudi Wyner at the piano, in sonatas by Hindemith and Brahms, as well as one of Wyner's own compositions, on July 18. (Wyner is one of the beneficiaries of Durso's instruction.)

All concerts will be held at Princeton University's Taplin Auditorium in Fine Hall – with the exception of the Ilya Itin recital, which take place at Richardson Auditorium in Alexander Hall – at 8 p.m.

A number of the musicians participating in the series are beneficiaries of the Taubman Approach. A few have gone on to achieve their own certification. Some are teachers at the Golandsky Institute.

"We work with a lot of really fine musicians, pianists, who want to express their musical ideas better, and haven't found answers in the traditional approach," Durso says. "Our approach is very tailor-made to each pianist, to take a look very individually at their needs and address them. I think that's why it's been really successful with people, because they've gone beyond what they thought they could do."

Another opportunity for musicians to stretch their wings will be presented by the Edward T. Cone Institute. Conductor JoAnn Falletta and Princeton University Music Department chair Steven Mackey will be assisted by musicians of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and industry leaders in shepherding four young composers through the development of original compositions for public performance at Richardson Auditorium on July 16 at 7:30 p.m.

Selected from an international applicant pool, the composers will participate in five days of intensive workshopping, rehearsal and industry immersion, beginning on Sunday. This year's participants will include Luke Carlson, who resides in Philadelphia; Brendan Faegre, from Portland, OR; Shuyin Li, from China; and Venezuelan-born Reinaldo Moya.

The program will culminate in a concert featuring Carlson's "The Burnished Tide," Faegre's "Dirt to Gold," Li's "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night," Moya's "Siempre Lunes, Siempre Marzo," and Mackey's "Urban Ocean."

Falletta, music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic and the Virginia Symphony, has recorded dozens of albums, many of them consisting of new music and works that languish somewhat off the beaten path. Compact discs of works by French composer Florent Schmitt and Arnold Schoenberg's arrangements of song cycles by Gustav Mahler are forthcoming from the Naxos label.

"The idea is for these young composers... to get the most out of their experience with an orchestra," Falletta says of the institute. "It's more like a lab, in a way, that culminates in a public concert. They'll get a lot of rehearsal time and a lot of chance to interact with both the orchestra and with me about the rehearsal experience. It's quite an intensive week, and invaluable, to be able to have this kind of experience for them. For me, it's

refreshing to be in the middle of really new music – I mean composed by young composers who are discovering their voice. That's very exciting."

IF YOU GO:

GOLANDSKY INTERNATIONAL PIANO FESTIVAL

What: Ilya Itin (Sunday), Alex Richardson, Sophie Shao & Thomas Bagwell (Monday), Father Seán Duggan (Tuesday), Wei Luo (7/16), Dick Hyman (7/17), Richard Stoltzman & Yehudi Wyner (7/18)

When: Sunday-7/18, 8 p.m.

Where: Most concerts at Taplin Auditorium, Fine Hall, Princeton University (Ilya Itin concert, 7/12, at Richardson Auditorium)

How much: \$25 (students and seniors, \$15)

Contact: www.golandskyinstitute.org, or 877-343-3434

EDWARD T. CONE INSTITUTE CONCERT

What: Four new orchestral works

When: 7/16, 7:30 p.m.

Where: Richardson Auditorium, Alexander Hall, Princeton University

How much: \$15

Contact: www.njsymphony.org, or 1-800-255-3476

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