

2022 Winter Festival Alumni Newsletter
Pierrot Chamber Music Festival

41st Season - July 11 to July 22, 2022

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Maris and Eric Albinder were first introduced in the summer of 1987 performing at the Pierrot Chamber Music Festival. Maris was completing her masters in music education while Eric had just completed his undergraduate degree at Ithaca College. They were placed together in two ensembles, Concertino for Flute, Clarinet, & Piano by Bloch and Choros No.2 for Flute & Clarinet by Villa-Lobos and the rest was history! Maris went on to complete her masters degree at Post and had a 32-year career as a music educator in the Levittown and Hauppauge school districts. Eric is currently in his 36th year in music education, working in Kings Park, West Hempstead, and currently, West Islip. Eric & Maris perform regularly in various concert bands, orchestras, chamber music, and pit orchestras as well as maintaining a private woodwind studio. In addition, Eric serves as conductor for the North Shore Pops Concert Band since 1995. Their three wonderful children all continue to be fully immersed in the arts with careers in teaching music, creative writing, and performing musical theater on national tours!



Maris and Eric Albinder (Marked, 1987)



Brandon Allen is an alum of LIU Post and is working towards his masters at NYU for Music Technology. Brandon was a member of the LIU Post Orchestra, LIU Post String Ensemble, Merriweather Consort, and the bass section leader for the Long Island Sound Vocal Jazz. Brandon was also a member of the LIU Post Chorus where he had the privilege of performing at Carnegie Hall in collaboration with the Cecilia Chorus under the direction of Dr. Mark Shapiro. In the summer of 2018, Brandon had the opportunity to perform at the Sydney Opera House in Australia as a percussionist in the Long Island Honor Band. A year later, he went on tour to Spain to perform with the Long Island Sound Vocal Jazz, where they performed in San Sebastian, Frias, etc. He has also been a past member of Chamber Singers, the Jazz Ensemble, an alumnus of the Chamber Music Festival and LIU Post's Piano Showcase. Outside of LIU, Brandon has played in the Off-Broadway

musicals, Songs for a New World, 13: The Musical, on bass, Heathers on violin, and Spring Awakening on Guitar etc. He has also sung in the Community Unitarian Universalist Congregation, under the direction of Lisa Meyer. Recently, Brandon taught Chorus and General Music in the Middle Country district as a leave replacement. Currently, Brandon is teaching privately while being a part of the Huntington Choral Society, under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Scott Miceli while he finishes his master's program. He is also producing music and is planning on releasing a single later this year.

Manny Alvarez, the new and current president and owner of Kolstein's has had the "honor and privilege" to participate in two seasons of the Festival during his youth. Manny said, "It was life-changing for me. I never had an opportunity to meet, see, and be inspired by so many wonderful faculty and peers like that before. After experiencing the festival, I knew that being a part of the music world is something I wanted to do for the rest of my life. Thank you for the wonderful experience and wishing you much success on your 41st season!"

Kolstein, (www.kolstein.com) a New York-headquartered eighty-year-old manufacturer, dealer, appraiser, and restorer of high-quality string instruments and bows, is a proud supporter of the Pierrot Chamber Music Festival. Kolstein's South is located in Baldwin, Long Island for the last 50 years and in December 2021, Kolstein's launched a major center by Carnegie Hall in "billionaires' row", New York City.



Cellist **Camden Archambeau**, 20, is a native of Weston, CT, and a Junior in the Harvard-NEC Dual Degree Program. He recently served as Principal Cellist of the New York String Orchestra under Jaime Laredo and has served as Principal Cellist of the Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra, Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra, New York Youth Symphony, Juilliard Pre-College Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra USA. Camden is Assistant Music Director of the Harvard Bach Society Orchestra and Assistant Conductor of the Harvard-Radcliffe Orchestra. In the spring of 2022, he will perform in a quartet residency at the Accademia Stauffer in Cremona, Italy.



Camden studies with Paul Katz at the New England Conservatory and studied previously at the Juilliard Pre-College Division. At Harvard he is pursuing a concentration in History and Germanic Languages and Literature. “As a young Conducting Fellow at the festival, I cherish the summers I spent learning from Dr. Deaver. My first time conducting the Festival Orchestra, and my first time conducting was certainly not the best performance of Haydn's "Drumroll" Symphony, but it reinforced my dream of conducting and working with orchestras. I am grateful for the unique opportunities to conduct and perform and Dr. Deaver's endless encouragement and wisdom over my two summers at the Festival.” Camden attended Festival in 2015 and 2016 as Cellist and Conducting Fellow, and performed *The Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33* by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky as Winner of the Festival Concerto Competition.



Argentine bassoonist, **Cindy Baez**, has been surrounded by music throughout her life. She has studied under Gili Sharett, Keith Kreindler and Christin Schillinger. Cindy completed her undergraduate degree in Bassoon Performance with an Education Certification at the Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College (2015). She holds her Master's Degree in Education from Ithaca College (2019). She attended the Pierrot Chamber Music Festival during her undergraduate year in 2012. Her favorite memory about this festival is being introduced and being able to perform the *Poulenc Trio*, which is still one of her favorite works! In her seventh year of teaching, Cindy is an avid educator of the musical arts with a passion for promoting diversity and musical discovery. Cindy currently teaches Orchestra in Levittown, Long Island. She now shares the joys and experiences of participating at this Festival with her students in order to encourage them in their musical journeys.



Rebecca Cho is a senior at Jericho High School in Jericho, NY. She is currently studying with Ms. Clara Minhye Kim at The Juilliard School's Pre-College Division. She was named a 2021 National YoungArts Finalist in the Classical Music Division and New York All-State Symphony Orchestra's Principal Cellist. She has placed at several competitions including the Great Composers Competition, Camerata Artists International Competition Concerto, the Manhattan International Music Competition, the International Virtuoso Competition, the International Grande Music Competition, the New York Music Competition, the New York International Competition Prize Winner, and the National Young Musicians' Showcase. She has taken master classes with John Kadz at the Orford Music Academy, Maureen Hynes at the LIU Post Chamber Music Festival, and Caleb Vaughn-Jones at National

YoungArts Week. Rebecca attended the Festival from 2012 to 2016, and her favorite Festival memory was experiencing her first performances as a part of a large orchestra at Tilles Center.

Anastasia Christofakis enjoys an active career as a soloist, chamber musician, and educator. Anastasia is a co-founder of the chamber ensemble *Meraki*, dedicated to awakening cultural compassion through music. She is also an advocate of new music and believes strongly in the commissioning of new works. Her new music ensemble *What is Noise* aims to build community through the performance of works by living composers. The ensemble's debut album was released by Centaur Records in March 2019. Anastasia is the recipient of several awards, most recently an artist residency through the National Parks Arts Foundation. She was granted the Presser Foundation Music Award for her project on Armenian music, where she studied and conducted research in Armenia on both their traditional and contemporary music. Dr. Christofakis is on faculty at Furman University and at the *InterHarmony International Music Festival* in Acqui Terme, Italy. She received her Doctor of Music degree in Clarinet Performance at Florida State University, her master's degree from Roosevelt University and bachelor's degree in Music from James Madison University. She is a Royal Global Performing Artist. She attended the Pierrot Chamber Music Festival in 2005 and won several awards at the Festival.





AJ LaBarca, 20, began cello at the age of 3½ and studied under Ivy Chatanow for 13 years. He has performed as soloist with the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra (2015), Island Symphony (2018) and Sound Symphony (2019). He is a Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey scholarship recipient (2017) and a Long Island Scholar Artist (2018). He was named a Tilles Scholar at the 2015 Pierrot Chamber Music Festival and was invited to perform with the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey (BONJ) in Grace Church (2016, 2017). He was selected for All-State, All-National (alt) and All-Eastern Honor's Orchestras, and was a regular participant in the Long Island String Festival, Metropolitan Youth Orchestra, New York Young Musician's Ensemble and New York Youth Symphony, serving as principal cellist on multiple occasions. He is currently principal cellist at the University of Rochester Symphony Orchestra and winner of the 2022 concerto competition. An avid chamber musician, he has performed as a winner at Alice Tully Hall, Carnegie Hall and in Paris. He has had master classes for cello with Igor Volochine and Maureen Hynes. When he is not playing the cello or piano, AJ plays the alto sax and has appeared with the Paul Effman Jazz band as well as the

Nassau Suffolk Jazz Ensemble and the All-County Jazz Festival. When he is not playing cello, he is studying astrophysics, writing code, playing the organ or learning the Carillon.

Earl Maneein (b. 1976), a “kick ___ artist who pushes the creative boundaries”, (Robert Trujillo, Metallica) is a violinist and composer whose artistic output stands at the unlikely crossroads of Western Classical music, Heavy Metal, and Hardcore Punk. He is the founder of and main composer for the string quartet SEVEN)SUNS, a group that reflects this nexus of musical styles, and a member of the Vitamin String Quartet, whose recent music was featured in the Netflix show "Bridgerton". Earl received a Bachelor of Music Degree from Queens College and a Master of Music Degree from the Mannes College of Music, where he studied with Daniel Phillips of the Orion String Quartet. Earl has received commissions and performances from Carnegie Hall's LinkUp, Rachel Barton Pine (international concert violinist), Tito Muñoz (music director of the Phoenix Symphony), The Dillinger Escape Plan (pioneering hardcore band), The Dance Theater of Harlem, and a consortium of national youth symphony organizations, among others. He lives in Brooklyn, NY with his wife (and SEVEN)SUNS cellist) Jennifer DeVore and daughter. He proudly attended the Festival in 2002 and 2003.





Currently based in New York, **Machiko Ozawa** is a versatile violinist whose latest album "Mi Oblivion" recorded a top seller at Composers Concordance Records in 2018. She graduated from The Juilliard School, Guildhall Music School and Tokyo Gei Dai. After graduation, she served as a concertmaster at Sinaloa State Symphony in Mexico. Machiko has performed at major venues such as Lincoln Center and Kennedy Center among others. Subsequently she has performed as a soloist with the Presidential Symphony in Turkey, the Pan American Symphony Orchestra and the American Philharmonic Orchestra, among others. Machiko Ozawa is a Yamaha performing

artist playing YEV104. Machiko attended the Festival in 2000 and states that her best memory at the Festival is having performed Mozart's Concerto No. 3 with Festival Chamber Orchestra. She is thankful for the performance and says that "It was an amazing experience!" www.machikoozawa.com

David & Francisco Salazar (Writers/Directors/Producers) are award-winning filmmakers and media creators whose first feature "Nowhere" was selected into twenty Film Festivals including Outfest Fusion, Outshine Film Festival, Cinequest Film Festival and the Woods Hole Film Festival where it was the runner up Jury Award winner and Second Runner Up for the Audience Award. It was honored with five awards and nominated for two Colombian Academy Awards. They have also directed five short films which have been screened all around the United States. They are also the founders of the popular opera online magazine OperaWire which Forbes called "a leading industry publication" and which has collaborated with many major opera companies and began a weekly show for the Dallas Opera. You can find out more information on operawire.com and lacuartaproductions.com David and Francisco Salazar attended the Festival from 2003 to 2007.



Francisco's favorite memory is the time he won the concerto competition and played the Saint-Saëns Cello Concerto while David's favorite memory was being able to meet different people and working in a chamber music setting as a violinist.



Felicya Schwarzman is the Orchestra and Guitar Director at Half Hollow Hills High School East. Felicya holds a Bachelor of Music Education from Ithaca College and a Master of Music Education with an Advanced Certificate in Bilingual/Bicultural Education from Teachers College, Columbia University. In 2021, her Guitar Ensemble was featured as a performing ensemble in the NYSSMA Winter Conference and was recognized in the Long Island Music Hall of Fame High School Recognition program. She also received the SCMEA Music Educator Innovator Award. Felicya is the President Elect of NY ASTA. Her experiences as a clinician include the SCMEA All County Festival and the NYSSMA Summer Conference where she discussed non-traditional methods of playing the cello and how to develop contemporary ensembles in public schools. Felicya attended the Festival in the summer of '11 and '12 and her favorite memory was when “Dale Stuckenbruck told me that no two running eighth notes should ever sound the same. They should always be going or coming from somewhere. That comment revolutionized my playing.”

Avery Scott studies violin performance and English at Boston University. He has worked as a teaching assistant with the Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, was Assistant/Associate Concertmaster of the Long Island Youth Orchestra (LIYO), was a winner of the LIYO Concerto Competition, and received the Baroque Orchestra of New Jersey’s Cynthia Platt Scholarship. A prolific composer, Avery’s works have been performed at the Long Island Composer’s Alliance, Pierrot Chamber Music Festival, and Boston University School of Music. He studies violin with Yuri Mazurkevich (previously Anton Polezhayev and Agnes Kwasniewska) and composition with Martin Amlin (previously Sunny Knable). Avery attended the Pierrot Chamber Music Festival from 2017-2019, where he was an intern and alumni newsletter editor and received the Rex Chao Memorial Prize and Tilles Scholar Award.





Xining Zhang has always been musically inclined from a young age when she started playing the violin, even though she works as a senior data analyst and received her Master's Degree in Statistics at Stony Brook University. She has attended many festivals including playing violin with the Festival Chamber Orchestra in 2019 at the Pierrot Chamber Music Festival. She has been a member of the North Shore Symphony Orchestra since 2018, the Brooklyn Symphony Orchestra since 2021, and the Litha Symphony Orchestra since 2021. She also performed with the Stony Brook University Orchestra under the direction of Susan Deaver from 2016-2018. Besides her musical activities, she enjoys travelling, filming, taking photos and painting oil and acrylic landscapes in her free time. She also enjoys volunteering at events like the TSC New York Marathon.