

FESTIVAL FOR CREATIVE PIANISTS

JUNE 6-9, 2018

Denver, Colorado

Early bird applications will be accepted as of Sept. 1, 2017

[News of the 2017 festival](#)

2017 Events:

[Schedule of Events & Repertory](#)

[Thursday eve. program](#)

[Friday eve. program](#)

[Saturday Celebration of Students' Best Recitals](#)

[Complete program booklet](#)



2017 Contestants

Program Director: [Evelyn Billberg](#)

Founder & Artistic Director: [Dr. Arthur Houle](#)

Executive Director, Abundant Silence: [Luke Rackers](#)

- [Terms of the festival \(repertory requirements - up to 15 minutes\)](#)
 - Enrollment limit: 40 to 45, at the discretion of the directors
 - [More prizes than ever!](#)
 - Educational opportunities (details to come)
 - New renowned judge: [Evan Mazunik](#)
- See at very top for scroll-down menu ("programs") to other festival web pages
 - See at bottom for links to [application](#) pages



[News of the 2016 festival & previous years](#)

[1-page "Fact Sheet" Summary of Festival](#)

[Link to original festival website with additional info](#)

[2017 Schedule \(2018 Full schedule will be posted a week or two before the 2018 festival\)](#)



2017 Festival - Written Composition Finalists: [Charlie Graham](#), [Jacob Hon](#), [Maria Evans](#), [Page Klermund*](#), and [Desi Sliverman-Joseph](#) [*Vocalist for Maria Evans]

Since 2015, we have proudly introduced a new [Written Composition category](#) ([scroll 1/2 way down page](#)) wherein our world-class judges perform the best student "finalist" compositions in recital ([see on YouTube](#)). Young composers get to sit back and listen to their pieces being interpreted by top-notch professionals [in recital](#). As a bonus, their pieces are considered for web posting or publication by [Abundant Silence](#)!

The **June 7-10, 2017** judges were: [John Salmon](#), [Kevin Olson](#) & [Wynn-Anne Rossi](#).

They also presented workshops for teachers and students (click to links for more info):

- [Kevin Olson](#) – [Creating Awesome Arrangements](#)
- [Wynn-Anne Rossi](#) – [Seeds of Musical Imagination](#)
- [John Salmon](#) – [Arranging Jazz Standards](#)

Special kudos to [Samantha Ng](#), age 13, and [James Algermissen](#), age 11, who both won **FOUR** First prizes in the 2017 festival:

Samantha Ng:

- **ARTIST PIANIST AWARD**
- **BEST PERFORMANCE OF PRE-BAROQUE/BAROQUE WORK**
- **BEST PERFORMANCE OF A CONTEMPORARY WORK**
- **BEST PIANIST STUDYING WITH A DAMTA MEMBER**

James Algermissen:

- **BEST DEMONSTRATION OF GENUINELY SPONTANEOUS IMPROVISATION IN ANY STYLE (PIANO ENSEMBLE)**
- **BEST PERFORMANCE OF A WORK FOR 4 OR MORE HAND**
- **MOST VERSATILE PIANIST**
- **BEST DEMONSTRATION OF SPONTANEITY AND/OR IMPROVISATION (JAZZ, POP, GOSPEL OR RAG)**

UNIQUE ECLECTIC PROGRAM

This festival is the only competition of its kind in the world, encompassing classical, jazz and other musical idioms in a constructive educational setting. Students compete for standard baroque through contemporary repertory prizes, as well as for novel prizes that promote neglected but important abilities and repertory - e.g., improvisations (any style), original concerto cadenzas & classical embellishing (skills demonstrated by nearly all great composers yet seldom seen today), versatility (needed to thrive in today's competitive market), lyricism (usually overshadowed by "loud and fast" playing), original compositions (too few venues exist for young serious composers), works by female composers (underrepresented), tasteful arrangements & transcriptions (often disallowed in other venues), etc.

Peruse the [complete 2017 program booklet](#) and the [complete 2016 program booklet](#).

Interested in participating in the
2018 Festival for Creative Pianists?

- Check out [student eligibility and information](#).
- Click on the appropriate link(s) below.

- Contact our Program Director:
[Evelyn Billberg](#)
ev.billberg@gmail.com
303-629-9209



Ashley Morris*, Dr. John Salmon, Zachary Freeman* and Jacob Hon**
*2017 Winners of a free Finale program, donated by MakeMusic, Inc.
**2017 Winner: THE LUKE RACKERS AWARD FOR BEST PERFORMANCE OF ANY PIANO SOLO WORK PUBLISHED BY ABUNDANT SILENCE

**2018 Festival for Creative Pianists
locations:**

[Classic Pianos \(map\)](#)

[1332 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210](#)

[Daytime events + Thurs. evening concert]

and at nearby

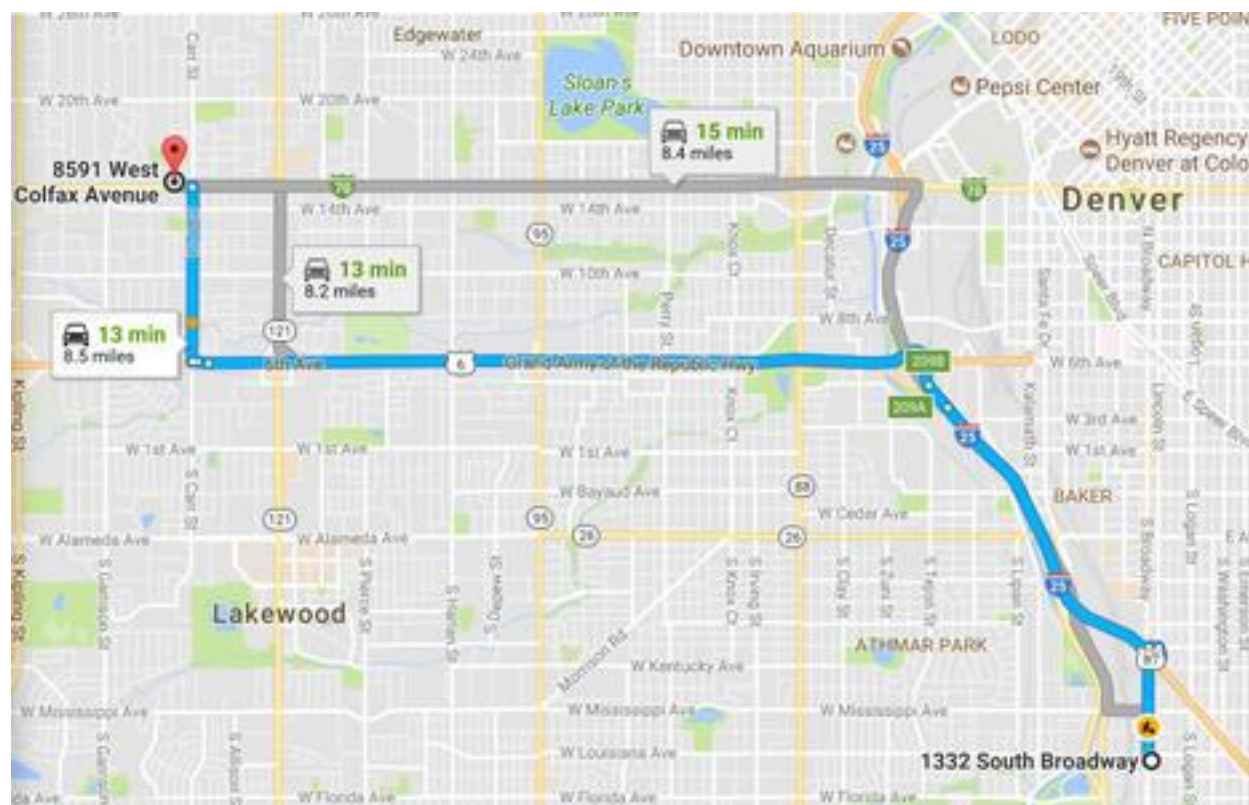
[Rockley Community Recital Hall](#)

[\(map\)](#)

[8591 W Colfax Ave., Lakewood, CO 80215](#)

**[Fri. evening concert + Celebration of Students'
Best recitals]**

**[MAP at right: Classic Pianos to Rockley
Recital Hall](#)**



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- **Learn more about our 2018 Festival Judges:**

[Dr. John Salmon](#)
[Evan Mazunik](#)
[Wynn-Anne Rossi](#)

- **Check out our expanded list of [2018 Festival Prizes](#) (more than twice as many as 2016)!**

Praise for the Festival

- The late great **DAVE BRUBECK** wrote (letter to Arthur Houle, artistic director & festival founder, 6/12/02): "What you are attempting to do in your festival is most laudable, especially in eliminating as much as possible the 'winner take all' dynamic, and encouraging improvisation in both jazz and classical music."
- The festival has been cited on NPR's [Performance Today](#), various newspapers, and in music periodicals such as [American Music Teacher](#), [Clavier Companion](#), [Piano & Keyboard](#), [Piano Today](#), and the London-based Piano magazine. It was also profiled in a major article in the April 2003 issue of Clavier magazine. Articles also appeared in the [Mesa State College \(now Colorado Mesa University\) Fall 2010 Newsletter](#) and the March 2009 issue of [Grand Valley Magazine](#). Last but not least, the festival was endorsed by the International Piano Teachers Guild "for providing an excellent competition for the piano community."

[Feedback from 2001 to present \(highlights\)](#)

[Feedback from 2017 festival](#)

We seek to foster diverse and well-rounded musicianship that goes beyond the "autonomic wizardry" that is often overemphasized in other competitions. Above all, pianists and composers are urged to develop and showcase their unique talents and perform with individuality, personality, exuberance, originality and spontaneity.



Performer Application

Basic application for students applying for performance only.

See [eligibility requirements](#) before applying.

[Apply Today!](#)



Performer + Composer Application

Application for performers who would also like to submit an original written (fully notated) composition to be considered for web posting or publication.

See [eligibility requirements](#) before applying.

[Apply Today!](#)



Donate today to support the Festival for Creative Pianists.

Your gift helps transform the creativity of young learners. Donations of any size help - from small donations to corporate sponsorships.

Many thanks to [Classic Pianos of Denver](#) & [Public Service Credit Union](#), our newest generous sponsors!

[Donate Today!](#)

See our [many YouTube videos](#) (2017 coming soon!)

Selections from the 2016 Thursday & Friday evening recitals (June 9 & 10):

- [Variations sérieuses, Op. 54 in D Minor by Felix Mendelssohn - John Salmon, piano](#)
 - [Chopin Improvisations by Luke Gillespie](#)
 - [Impressions on Color by Kevin Olson](#)
- [Spontaneous Improvisation on a Random Theme from the Audience by John Salmon](#)
- [Fughetta on 'Brother, Can You Spare a Dime' by John Salmon, piano \(Arthur Houle, 2nd piano\)](#)
- [Buckaroo Blues by Arthur Houle, piano \(joined by John Salmon, Kevin Olson, and Luke Gillespie\)](#)
 - [Autumn Leaves by Joseph Kosma - Luke Gillespie and John Salmon, pianists](#)
 - [Side Saddle Sonatina by Greta Thoreson - John Salmon, piano](#)
 - [What They Say in Space \(Dissassociative\) by Maria Ali - Kevin Olson, piano](#)

Sound clip (accessible online only):

John Salmon: Salmon Is A-Jumpin' performed by John Salmon, Arthur Houle, Luke Gillespie, & Kevin Olson 6-10-16

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