

AN ARTIST'S CORNER

featuring

Dr. Artina McCain



Described as a pianist with “power and finesse” (Dallas Arts Society), “beautiful and fiery” (KMFA Austin) and having a “sense of color, balance and texture” (Austin Chamber Music Center) **Artina McCain**, has a built a three-fold career as a performer, educator and speaker. Recent performance highlights include guest appearances with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Oregon East Symphony, and the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. As a recitalist, her credits include performances at the Mahidol University in Bangkok, Hatch

Recital Hall in Rochester, Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens in Jacksonville, FL and the Desoto Arts Commission in Desoto, TX. In 2022, she will have her debut at Wigmore Hall in London performing the works of Fred O.

McCain's performances have been heard on radio CKWR Toronto, KMFA Classical Austin, and Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK). Television appearances include features on CSPAN for the MLK 50 Commemoration. McCain is a three-time Global Music Awards winner including collaborative projects "I, Too" (Naxos), with soprano Icy Monroe, focused on African American Spirituals and Art Songs and "Shades" a collaboration with her husband and duo partner Martin McCain.

Dedicated to promoting the works of Black and other underrepresented composers, McCain curates Black Composers Concerts for multiple arts organizations **and is an American Prize winner for her solo piano recordings of these works and won a Gold Global Music Award for her recent album project Heritage.** She has also won performance awards for curating the Austin Chamber Music Centers' Black Composers Concert from the Austin Critics Table. In 2021, Hal Leonard will publish her transcriptions of African American Folk Songs.

McCain was a featured inspirational leader in the award-winning PBS documentary series Roadtrip Nation: Degree of Impact in an episode exploring the real-world impact of professionals with doctoral degrees in and outside of academia.

After years of battling a performance injury and now enjoying 10 years of full recovery, McCain is an advocate for musicians' wellness. Her article on performance injury and Muscle Activation Techniques was published in Clavier Companion and she is a regular contributor for the Piano Magazine. To help other musicians, she hosts an annual Musicians Wellness Forum in Austin, TX which explores the benefits and options for alternative care. McCain has presented on these topics and others at the Music Teachers National Association Conference and the National Conference of Keyboard Pedagogy.

McCain has performed and served on the faculty of numerous summer festivals including the Austin Chamber Music Festival, the Illinois Summer Youth Music, the Gateways Music Festival in Rochester, NY, and the Walled City Music International Piano Festival and Competition in Ireland. McCain graduated cum laude from Southern Methodist University. She received her Master of Music from Cleveland Institute of Music and holds a doctoral degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

Currently, she is Assistant Professor of Piano and Coordinator of Keyboard Studies at the Rudi E. Scheidt School of Music at the University of Memphis and Co-Founder/Director of the Memphis International Piano Festival and Competition.

Artina McCain is a Yamaha Artist.

www.artinamccain.com

How old were you when you began playing your instrument? Did you start playing another instrument before your current one?

9, I played clarinet also starting at age 12

What equipment do you primarily use?

Yamaha Pianos! I'm a Yamaha artist and love the sound of the Bösendorfer and CFX are my favorite

What are some of your favorite highlights of your career?

So many! This year definitely performing virtual for the MTNA 2021 conference with the McCain Duo and soloing with Dallas Symphony

What are some of your favorite and most influential albums that you have heard?

One of the most influential albums I heard in my college days was Dark Fires by Karen Walwyn and Emil Gilels Brahms Ballades. Karen introduced me to the world of Black Composers and Gilels plays Brahms like they were best friends! So much depth of emotion in both albums

Who inspired you to play your instrument?

My parents and grandmother

How have your practice habits changed over the years?

Definitely, I had an injury that revolutionized my thinking about practicing. I am much more efficient now practicing less and learning more!

What qualities do you think are important for being successful in life?

Prayer and devotion. My faith is a huge part of remaining sane and being focused on my purposes, how I interact with others and how I make decisions.

What do you want your legacy to be?

I definitely want to leave a legacy of mentorship and hope many people's lives are changed for the better because of their interactions with me.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Drinking tea, trying new restaurants and enjoying friends and family

With whom did you study?

Anton Nel, Kathryn Brown, Carol Leone

Do you remember when you decided that you were going to be a professional musician?

In high school I went to Dr. Phillips in Orlando, FL which was a performing arts institute that was so inspiring. I went to school with now famous people like Amanda Seales and Michael James Scott. Being in such an environment with go getters and people who were passionate about their craft really influenced my hunger for music as I developed as a young musician.

How much do you practice on a typical day?

I don't have specific amounts of time anymore. How ever long it takes me to get my tasks complete that day. If I am working towards a specific concert it depends on what practice objectives I need to complete in order to present a polished project that could be 20 minutes or 2 hours!

Do you have a website? If so, what is the address?

www.artinamccain.com

What are some of your favorite etude books?

I love so many etudes! No favorite a few go to's are Chopin, Czerny, H. Leslie Adams, MacDowell and Heller for my younger students.

Do you use any apps when you practice?

Drumbeats plus!

If you could go back in time and give yourself any advice, what would it be?

Marry your trials with your talent and your pain with your purpose (podcast quote!)
Don't be discouraged your story will inspire and motivate many people.

Where is your favorite place that you have traveled to?

Prague and Bangkok

Who are your main influences in your life?

My family and my husband Martin McCain

Please give some tips for freelancing.

Relationships! Build relationships with like-minded musicians and be kind. We are all connected and anyone can be a good connection for the next gig.

Is anyone else in your family a musician?

My grandmother played piano and sang in church

Where are some of your favorite places that you have performed?

Meyerson with Dallas Symphony and Hatch Recital hall at Eastman. Beautiful instruments (important for a pianists) and amazing acoustics

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

As a top tier artist teacher and entrepreneur

What advice would you give to someone interested in majoring in music in college?

Find a mentor(s) and absorb everything you can from them

What are you listening to currently?

Tobe Nwige ☺

Do you have a favorite genre of music?

I'm a fan of BAM (Black American Music) and all types of classically inspired music around the globe.

What non-music courses in college helped you with being a musician?

Theater and history

Do you ever get anxious for a performance? What advice would you give for dealing with nerves?

Establish a strong routine that calms you down. For myself that's prayer, listening to something not classical and visualizing a successful performance. The adrenaline rush usually takes care of the nerves for me on stage and keeps me coming back for more. Be sure to have fun!

What advice can you give about mental wellness?

Find a counselor or other mental health provider and make them apart of your team.

If you couldn't have a career in music, what would you do instead?

I think I was born to do what I do. There was nothing else I have ever considered

Do you like to teach? Why or why not?

Yes I love teaching and mentoring budding musicians to becoming the best version of themselves as a human and artists.

What are some of your favorite books that are helpful for musicians?

Beyond Talent by Angela Beeching

Do you memorize your music? Do you have any advice for young players on how to memorize?

Yes! Listen and score study. Be sure you know your theory and can analyze the score

What advice can you share about physical wellness?

Find a health provider that you trust and make them apart of your team. For me that has been muscle activation techniques to keep my muscles function at their highest level of functionality.

What is your favorite food?

I LOVE food! Perhaps that would be the only other career I would have as a famous chef. I love the cuisine of Southeast asia. It is some of the best!