



Pianist Marvin Goldstein is planning a Facebook Live Peace Concert on Monday, June 15 at 8 p.m.

Pianist plays for peace

Marvin Goldstein goes digital with concert to 'inoculate us from bias, disease and evil'

Amanda Sieradzki Council on Culture & Arts

There are 61 years of musicianship tucked between Marvin Goldstein's ivory keys. The internationally renowned pianist turned 70 years old at the start of the month. • As he enters a new decade of composing and performing, he feels he is hitting his stride as he endeavors to deliver positive, uplifting music experiences. • Though COVID-19 has put a pause on traveling, Goldstein allows music to transport him back to past concerts, family gatherings and childhood memories every evening. He's a firm believer in music's medicinal qualities after witnessing it unlock minds in Alzheimer's patients and bring together music-makers from every nationality on stages across the world.

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Goldstein

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“What’s needed now is anything that can inoculate us from bias, disease and evil, and a musician can offer that just as a doctor can offer medicine,” says Goldstein. “The only thing the audience has to do is to participate by listening without distractions. Most people have no idea what music can do if they would just sit in the evenings, listen and feel.”

Goldstein will provide an opportunity for deep listening during his Facebook Live Peace Concert on Monday, June 15 at 8 p.m. For the virtual performance, he hopes to be joined by special guest and vocalist Vanessa Joy.

The performance is an extension of his mission to bridge cultural, religious and political differences between people through music. He was able to accomplish such a feat during a three-week tour in Israel where he brought together Arabic, Israeli and American jazz vocalists.

“We’re having a peace conference through collaboration and music,” says Goldstein. “We feel each other’s musical abilities and interact in a conversation that is very rewarding, and the audience notices and feels this.”

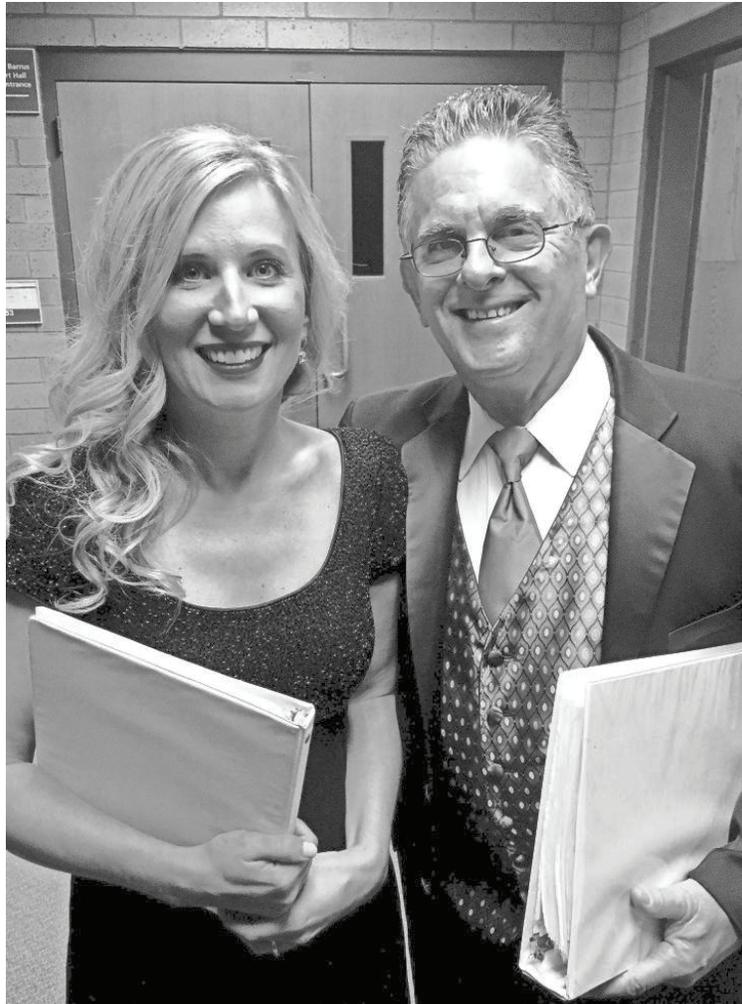
Goldstein’s first melodic conversation was through an accordion. He’ll never forget walking into his hometown bank and asking his mother to place his name in a box that advertised free lessons.

Six months later, he performed in his first ensemble concert at school. Goldstein asked for piano lessons next after calculating that the keys and buttons he had become adept at playing on the accordion would translate well. One day, a truck pulled up to his house delivering a Baldwin piano. Goldstein was shocked by the gift from his two uncles, which helped bolster his confidence to continue playing.

“Somehow it was a match made prior to me being born that said to my soul, ‘Boy, do I love playing this music,’” recalls Goldstein.

In junior high, he added the French horn to his repertoire, and would earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees on the instrument from Florida State University. Goldstein won a scholarship to Tel Aviv University during his first year in college and traveled to play with the Munich Philharmonic in Salzburg, Austria during his junior year. In 1977, he was asked to join Three Dog Night — the band that made “Joy to the World (Jeremiah Was a Bullfrog)” a hit — but turned them down to focus on his own work and family.

This resolve carries over into Gold-



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stein’s teachings during several youth enrichment programs. He emphasizes the importance of knowing the purpose behind communicating through music and reiterates how dedication is paramount to any technical abilities.

“We try to encourage youth to be passionate with what they do, whether it’s music or not,” says Goldstein. “It’s not about how many notes you have, it’s about how it’s played. Be better not for selfish reasons, but so you have something someone wants.”

Over the course of his career, Goldstein has produced more than 55 CDs and written 15 piano arrangement books. He says the library of music stored in his mind is vast, though he never plays a song the same way twice. He won’t create a setlist before perform-

ing either, and instead allows the music to flow organically from his fingertips.

His upcoming concert features everything from sacred music to pop medleys and Broadway hits. Among Goldstein’s favorites will be “Let There Be Peace on Earth,” as well as selections from “Fiddler on the Roof,” Billy Joel and Queen.

“If I’m playing in a certain key, it reminds me of another progression to another song, so I’m arranging the next song while I’m finishing the one before,” says Goldstein. “What I will also do improvisationally is make up music that night based on the feelings I have during that concert, and share with the audience something that will bring peace into their hearts.”

The pandemic has afforded Gold-



Marvin Goldstein first learned to play the accordion as a child. MARVIN GOLDSTEIN

If you go

What: Facebook Live Peace Concert

When: 8 p.m. on Monday, June 15

Contact: For more information please visit <https://marvingoldstein.com> and <https://www.vanessajoy.net>.

stein the chance to grow closer to his audience, who wouldn’t typically be able to stand up in a darkened auditorium and request a song. The chat bubbles on the virtual platform give him a unique look into the minds of his listeners and how they are responding in real time.

In many ways, he says they orchestrate the flow of the show. Goldstein says past streams have gathered nearly 60,000 viewers. This equal exchange highlights Goldstein’s belief that music is meant to be shared. He hopes listeners who tune in will also consider opening up more than just their ears.

“Peace means tolerance, beauty and collaboration,” says Goldstein. “Peace means music that soothes the soul. Peace is anything that makes life easier and makes families safe and people happier.”

Amanda Sieradzki is the feature writer for the Council on Culture & Arts. COCA is the capital area’s umbrella agency for arts and culture (www.tallahasseearts.org).