

Catskill High Peaks Festival: Artist Biographies

The Catskill High Peaks Festival welcomes some of the most esteemed artists in the performance world today.



Yehuda Hanani's charismatic playing and profound interpretations bring him acclaim and reengagements across the globe. An extraordinary recitalist, he is equally renowned for performances with orchestras such as the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Berlin Radio Orchestra, Israel Philharmonic, and BBC Welsh Symphony, to name a few. He is a frequent guest at the Aspen, Chautauqua, Pablo Casals Prades Festival (France), Finland Festival, Oslo Festival, Ottawa Festival, and the Australia Chamber Music Festival. He has collaborated in performances with preeminent fellow musicians, including Leon Fleisher, Aaron Copland, Christoph Eschenbach, David Robertson, Dawn Upshaw and Vadim Repin, among others. This distinguished artist made the first recording ever of the monumental Alkan Cello sonata, receiving a Grand Prix du Disque nomination.

"one of the most polished performers of the post-Starker generation and is a consistently expressive artist."

-- *The New York Times*



Pianist **Dr. Dianna Anderson** is on faculty at Minot State University, Minot, North Dakota, where she serves as an instructor of piano and music theory. In addition to teaching, she maintains an active career as a performer. With her husband, Erik Anderson, she has accumulated an extensive repertoire of works for cello and piano, and recently performed a series of recitals covering the entire works of Beethoven for this instrumentation, sharing the stage with cellist, Yehuda Hanani, as well as Dr. Anderson. A founding member of the piano trio, Luminus, with violinist Jon Rumney, and cellist Erik Anderson, she has performed throughout the Mid-west at public concert venues and outreach concerts for elementary through high-school students. She is also a founding member of Musicians at Play, with Erik Anderson and Adam Estes, an ensemble specializing in jazz and chamber music for clarinet or saxophone, cello, and piano. As a soloist she has given numerous recitals in the Minot area with repertoire ranging from Bach to the present day. She enjoys the study and performance of new music and has recently performed several world premieres. Her interest in the music of Beethoven has led to the pursuit of a cycle of all thirty-two of his piano sonatas, which will be completed in 2015. She is on faculty at Dakota Chamber Music and International Music Camp. Her degrees are from the University of Idaho, and Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. Her teachers include Janeen Larsen, Jay Mauchley, and Frank Weinstock. She lives in Minot with her husband and four sons.



Dr. Erik Anderson, a native of Washington State, began his cello studies at the age of three, earned his BM and MM from the University of Idaho, and completed his DMA at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. His principal teachers have been Wayne C. Smith, William Wharton, and Yehuda Hanani. In 2003, after seven years as a free-lance cellist, assistant conductor, and business owner in Cincinnati, OH, he joined the faculty at Minot State University (Minot, ND) where he currently resides with his wife and four sons. Regionally, he performs frequently with his piano trio, Luminus, and in recital with his wife, Dianna, and has been featured as soloist with the symphonies of Minot, Grand Forks, and Bismarck. Dr. Anderson has just begun a three-year project of study, performance, and teaching that will culminate in a lecture recital tour and recording of the Bach suites. In addition to classical study and performance, he plays upright bass in a jazz combo. He has served as the director of Dakota Chamber Music since 2006 and will join the International Music Camp in 2012 for an ninth season. Apart from music, Dr. Anderson loves to cook, golf, cross-country ski, play games with the family, and chase any type of ball as though his life depended on it.

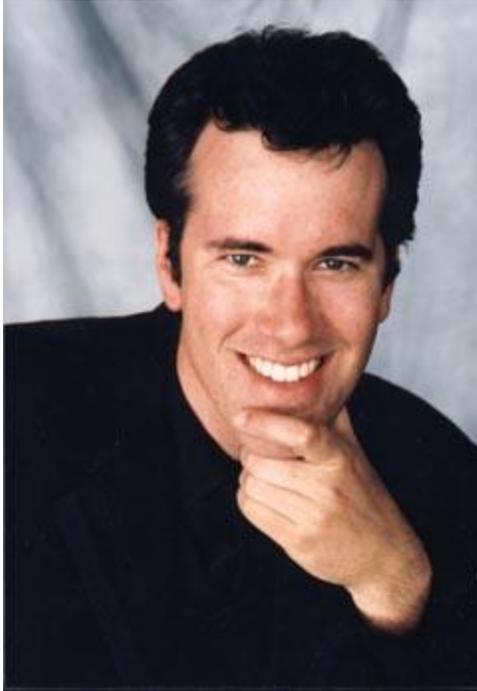


In a feature article on **James Cammack**, *Bass Player Magazine* reviewer Richard Johnston nicknamed James, who was at the time a Chicago resident, "Chicago fire," for his hard-driving, creative approach to playing both acoustic and electric bass. At rehearsals of even the most complicated jazz pieces, Cammack just puts a finger on his instrument to find the key, asks for the general feel, and takes off. An extremely sensitive player, Cammack is an excellent sideman and his own solos demonstrate both virtuosity and musicality.

It's no wonder. For the past 28 years, James Cammack has performed continuously with legendary pianist Ahmad Jamal. Cammack has visited more than 30 countries backing Jamal and has also toured with singer Nancy Wilson, tubist Howard Johnson, and singer Vanessa Rubin. He has performed in some of the world's most famous jazz clubs such as the Village Vanguard in New York City and Yoshi's in San Francisco; and major jazz festivals, including the Montreal Jazz Festival, Italy's Umbria Jazz Festival, and the North Sea Jazz Festival in Holland.

Cammack has several recordings with Ahmad Jamal under his belt, including *Rossiter Road* (Atlantic), which reached the number-five position on the jazz chart billboard and the last release is *It's Magic* (Dreyfus). There is also a new DVD just released, *Ahmad Jamal Live In Baalbeck*. He has also recorded with pianist Chris Neville, Russian actress Natalia Nazorova, tubist Howard Johnson, and Senegal super star, to name a few.

A piano and trumpet student in his early years, Cammack is largely self-taught. He became interested in playing the bass through an uncle who was also a professional musician. Later, by the recommendation of a high school teacher, Cammack was accepted into the West Point jazz band following an audition. During his stint in the military, Cammack had ample opportunity to play weddings, shows, and jazz gigs in the New York area and learned his trade. A great music associate, pianist and mentor, the late Frank Richmond, mentioned Cammack's name to Ahmad Jamal, who snapped him up right after West Point.



Pianist **Michael Chertock** has fashioned a successful career as an orchestral soloist, appearing, among others, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, l'Orchestre Symphonique du Montreal, the Cincinnati Symphony, and the Toronto Symphony. He made his debut at seventeen, performing the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto No. 3 with Andrew Litton conducting, and has toured Asia with the Boston Pops and the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra. His 2003 performance on the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra's recording of Petrouchka with Paavo Järvi turned in rave reviews in Gramophone and American Record Guide. He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 1999 with the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra, performing Duke Ellington's New World A'Comin'. In June 2005 with the Boston Pops Orchestra, he performed the world premiere of a work by Todd Machover, commissioned by the Boston Pops expressly for him.

"Chertock revealed himself as a first-rate pianist and an interpreter of noticeable interest through the freshness that he brought to these familiar scores ... (he) displayed the sensitivity of a Chopin interpreter."

-- La Presse (Montreal)



Percussionist **Arti Dixon** studied drum set concepts with the legendary drummer Jack DeJohnette. With folk-pop singer Janis Ian, he has performed in most major concert halls in the United States and toured Israel, Japan, Australia, Holland, Belgium, Spain and South Africa. He has also appeared with pianist Ahmad Jamal, throughout Europe as well as at Tanglewood, Saratoga, and Carnegie Hall and has worked at the the Foxwood Casino with Harry Connick and the Nelson Riddle Orchestra.



Awarded as Serbia's "Brand Personality of the Year" for 2010, pianist **Stefan Milenkovich** is a unique artist with an extraordinary productive longevity, professionalism and creativity. His musical philosophy as well as lifestyle are a true definition of eclectic, exploring general human and musical heritage and experience in order to connect directly with the audiences and provide fun, engaging and energetic performances. Mr. Milenkovich is a violinist who is recognized internationally for both exceptional artistry and his lifelong commitment to humanitarianism. He has performed with orchestras all over the world. An avid chamber musician, he performs regularly in the Jupiter Chamber Music Series in New York City and is the founding member of Corinthian Piano trio, as well as recently joining the Formosa Quartet.

Mr. Milenkovich is deeply committed to international humanitarian causes. Most recently, he received the 2003 "Most Humane Person" award in Belgrade, Serbia.

Mr. Milenkovich started his career at a very young age, performing with his first orchestra at the age of 6, performing his 1000th concert at age 16. By age 17, he was a prizewinner in the International Violin Competition of Indianapolis (USA), the Queen Elisabeth Competition (Belgium), Hannover Violin Competition (Germany), Tibor Varga Competition (Switzerland), Rodolfo Lipizer Competition (Italy), Paganini Competition (Italy), Ludwig Spohr Competition (Germany), and the Yehudi Menuhin Competition (England).

Mr. Milenkovich's discography includes four commercial releases on the Italian label Dynamic and numerous recordings for the Yugoslavian label, PGP. He taught in collaboration with Itzhak Perlman at the Juilliard School before accepting his current position as an Associate Professor of Violin at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

"Milenkovich is a star, and that's something that comes along only a few times in a century. I may not know much, but I know magic when I hear it."



Jennifer Rivera has earned a spot as one of the most sought after and versatile lyric mezzo sopranos of her generation by consistently delivering exceptional vocalism, superb musicianship, and a powerful stage presence. While still a student at Juilliard, Ms. Rivera was invited to join the roster of the New York City Opera, and after winning their prestigious Debut Artist of Year award, went on to sing several roles with the company. A favorite among living composers, Ms. Rivera created the starring role of Sharon Falconer in the critically acclaimed World Premiere of Robert Aldridge's Elmer Gantry, which premiered at Nashville Opera in 2007. Ms. Rivera's concert work has included recitals with the Marilyn Horne Foundation in several venues throughout the U.S., a concert with Ms. Horne at Carnegie Hall, performances at Avery Fischer Hall, and with the Berkshire Choral Festival and the L'Opera Français de New York. She has received prizes in several competitions.

"Jennifer Rivera ... displayed a ravishing mezzo-soprano bloom from top to bottom, effortlessly negotiating the filigree with grace."
-- Opera News



William Schimmel, virtuoso accordionist, teacher and lecturer, received his diploma from the Neupauer Conservatory of Music and his BM, MS and DMA degrees from the Juilliard School. Mr. Schimmel has performed with virtually every major symphony orchestra in America and enjoys a longstanding relationship with the Minnesota Orchestra. He is founder of the Tango Project, which appeared with Al Pacino in the film *Scent of a Woman*, won the Stereo Review Album of the Year Award, received a Grammy nomination, and rose to number one on the Billboard Classical Charts. An authority on the music of Kurt Weill, he has recorded all of Weill's music that employs the accordion and has written many new works for concert hall as well as Broadway and off-Broadway.

"Accordion player the star"
-- *The New York Times*