

Nicole Lee, a native of Vancouver, Canada, is a pianist acclaimed as both a soloist and a collaborative artist. The Bradenton Herald lauds, “Lee is a consummate artist who exhibited a carefully honed touch with the beauty and refinement of fine porcelain”. As a soloist, she has performed at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Sarasota Opera House, the Orpheum in Vancouver, Canada, and for CBC Radio in Ottawa, Canada. She has also performed as soloist with several symphony orchestras including the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Florida West Coast Symphony, and the New Westminster Symphony. Her awards include First Runner-Up in the International Stravinsky Awards Competition, First Prize in the Pasadena Fine Arts Club Competition, and Semi-finalist in the Royal Over-Seas League Competition in London.

Ms. Lee is also active as a chamber musician. She was praised as “outstanding” by The Strad for her work with violinist Gregory Maytan in their first CD, *Scandinavia*. The recording was selected by The Strad as the top recital CD of April, 2009 and highly praised by Strings Magazine and the American Record Guide. Maytan and Lee’s second recording features the sonatas of Faure, Franck and the Chausson *Poeme*. The duo has performed on the Dame Myra Hess Concert Series in Chicago.

Ms. Lee holds B.M. and M.M. degrees in Piano Performance from the University of Southern California where she studied with John Perry. She was selected as the outstanding graduate of the Keyboard Studies Department in both her graduate and undergraduate programs. She also holds performance and teacher’s diplomas from the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto, and Licentiate and Fellowship diplomas from the Trinity College of London. She currently teaches at Valparaiso University in Indiana.

Joseph Bognar is chair of the Department of Music at Valparaiso University where he teaches piano, harpsichord, and music theory. He has served on the faculties of the Maud Powell Music Festival, Lutheran Summer Music, and the Stamford International Music Festival. As a member of the Castillon Piano Trio, he has performed in the United Kingdom, receiving acclaim for “his superb technique ... one could only marvel at this talented performer.” (Evening Telegraph, UK) His performances with the trio have aired on BBC radio. He toured China with Windiana, Northwest Indiana’s professional wind ensemble, where he appeared as piano soloist in works of Gershwin and Xian. His live performances from Symphony Center, Chicago and the Chicago Cultural Center have aired on WFMT-FM.

As a proponent of contemporary music, he has premiered piano solo works of composer Stephen Wilcox throughout the United States, including a performance at the Peabody Conservatory of Music, and has recorded Wilcox’s work for the Capstone record label. He premiered a new piano work by Wilcox in November 2009 for the Santa Barbara Arts Fund. His most recent campus performances have featured some of the most formidable 20th works, including Rzewski's *The People United Will Never Be Defeated!* and Ives's *Sonata no. 2: Concord, Mass.*

Bognar completed undergraduate studies in piano and organ at Valparaiso University where he graduated *summa cum laude*. Awarded two university fellowships, he studied piano with internationally renowned accompanist John Wustman at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he earned the Doctor of Musical Arts.

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