*******News release: December 2022*

***Southeastern Piano Festival Set for June 11-17, 2023***

For one week every June, the Southeastern Piano Festival (SEPF) transforms the University of South Carolina School of Music and the city of Columbia into a major cultural destination that draws in audiences and young piano talent from across the United States. The Southeastern Piano Festival embraces a multi-faceted personality. It is:

* a high-level training platform for the young pianists,
* a presenter of new and world-renowned concert pianists and master teachers,
* an advocate for new piano music, and
* a vehicle for exploring different roles the piano plays on stage and beyond.

Twenty of the most accomplished pre-college pianists on the piano scene today take part in a rigorous program that includes daily lessons with University of South Carolina piano faculty, master classes with guest artists, and up to five hours of practice a day. The week’s events culminate with the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition, adjudicated by a distinguished panel of judges. Winners of the competition receive cash awards and the opportunity to perform with the South Carolina Philharmonic. For music lovers, SEPF offers nightly concerts by a rich lineup of world-class pianists including Ying Li, Sullivan Fortner, Anthony de Mare and John O’Conor.

Founded in 2003 and led for 20 seasons by former USC faculty Marina Lomazov and Joseph Rackers, the Southeastern Piano Festival enters a new and exciting chapter in 2023 under the leadership of Artistic Director Phillip Bush and Executive Administrator Caroline Earp.

Acclaimed as “a pianist of poetry, elegance, and power” *(American Record Guide),* “a pianist of exceptional, cherishable finesse” *(Los Angeles Times),* and “one of those rare pianists who combine structural intelligence with a hundred color gradations” *(Village Voice),* Phillip Bush has established a performing career over the past three decades that is noted for its remarkable versatility and eclecticism, with a repertoire extending from the 16th century to the 21st.

Earp brings to the leadership of Southeastern Piano Festival her passion and experience in working with non-profits and academic institutions in both New York City and Columbia, SC. A graduate of Columbia College of SC with a degree in Vocal Performance, Earp is currently Director of Alumni and Donor Engagement for the USC School of Music.

Moving forward, the festival will continue to present a perfect symbiosis of the new generation of pianists in search of inspiration and challenge and the world-class guest artists who provide that inspiration. The attraction of SEPF lies in its versatility — be it a budding piano virtuoso, an educator or a music aficionado — the festival offers something for everyone who loves piano.

**Interview/Coverage Opportunities**

Bush and Earp will be available prior to the festival for interviews. To arrange an interview, contact Marlena Crovatt-Bagwell at (803) 777-7962 or crovattb@mailbox.sc.edu.

Visit: [SoutheasternPianoFestival.com](http://southeasternpianofestival.com/)

**Southeastern Piano Festival 2023 Schedule**

**Sunday, June 11**

**Opening Celebration Concert**USC School of Music Recital Hall • 4 p.m.

*Celebrating the opening of the week-long Festival with SEPF’s illustrious piano faculty in solo, duo and piano ensembles.*

**Monday, June 12**

**Artist Showcase: Ying Li**
USC School of Music Recital Hall • 7:30 p.m.

*First Prize winner in the 2021 Young Concert Artists Susan Wadsworth International Auditions.*

**Tuesday, June 13**

**Artist Showcase: Sullivan Fortner Trio**
Darla Moore School of Business, Johnson Performance Hall • 7:30 p.m.

*New York based GRAMMY Award-Winning pianist Sullivan Fortner brings his jazz trio to the Johnson Hall stage*.

**Wednesday, June 14**

**Artist Showcase: Anthony de Mare**USC School of Music Recital Hall • 7:30 p.m.

*One of the world’s foremost champions of contemporary music.*

**Thursday, June 15**

**Artist Showcase: John O’Conor**USC School of Music Recital Hall • 7:30 p.m.

*Irish pianist and Steinway Artist John O’Conor brings his masterful playing to the School of Music Recital Hall.*

**Friday, June 16**

**Arthur Fraser International Piano Concerto Competition**USC School of Music Recital Hall • 10:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

*Free and open to the public.*

**Saturday, June 17**

**Winners Recital**USC School of Music Recital Hall • 7:30 p.m.

*The winners of the Arthur Fraser International Piano Competition are featured in an evening of dazzling showstoppers.*