



MUSIC ERA FESTIVAL

Baroque Classical

Romantic 20th - 21st
Century
Contemporary

An Edmonds Music Teachers Association Event

20th/21st CENTURY MUSIC ERA FESTIVAL

Saturday and Sunday, October 31st and November 1st, 2026

LOCATION: Hartley Mansion, 2320 Rucker Ave, Everett, WA 98201

AN EDMONDS MUSIC TEACHERS ASSOCIATION EVENT

Dr. Yelena Balabanova & Allan Park, Festival Directors

Jeffrey Gilliam, 2026 Festival Adjudicator

Festival Dates and Registration Period:

Festival Dates: Saturday, October 31st, 2026 from 9 am to 7 pm and Sunday, November 1st, 2026 from 10 am to 3 pm (Please do not request specific days or times). Please keep your weekend open.

Location: Hartley Mansion, 2320 Rucker Ave, Everett, WA 98201

Registration period: September 1, 2026 to October 1, 2026.

NO LATE REGISTRATIONS WILL BE PERMITTED.

This event is ONLY for the students of the teachers of the Edmonds Music Teachers Association

IMPORTANT FOR 2026: Piece(s) used for Jazz, Rags, and Blues Festival may NOT be used for Music Era Festival. A different piece may be used.

Prizes:

- All students will receive feedback and mini-lesson by the adjudicator.
- All students will receive accomplishment certificates. Only memorized performances are eligible for awards (except for adult amateur/working professional group)
- Seals of Excellence will be discreetly placed on the certificate for outstanding performances.
- Several Gold and Silver Certificates will be given for excellent performances (announced and emailed to the teachers ONLY at the completion of the festival).
- Several recipients of Gold Certificates will be selected as Best of Festival winners and will be awarded a personalized Grand Prix Medal at the 2025 EMTA Award Gala.
- Divisions: Solo, duet, chamber and concertos welcome. Please note: Concertos is YouTube link format. Same adjudicator will provide written feedback.

Award Chart:

- Best of Festival (performance at end of year EMTA Gala Concert and medal)
- Gold Certificate (PDF emailed to teachers)
- Silver Certificate (PDF emailed to teachers)
- Gold Seals (placed on participation certificate)

Dr. Yelena Balabanova and Allan Park, Co-Chairs

Questions? Please contact: yelenabalabanova@gmail.com or allanpark@me.com

Our 2026 Adjudicator: Jeffrey Gilliam



Prior to joining the piano faculty at Western Washington University, Jeffrey Gilliam taught at The Juilliard School; The University of Michigan School of Music; and at The International Menuhin Music Academy in Gstaad, Switzerland. He has performed and taught all over the world, including guest university teaching positions in Thailand and South Africa, as well as receiving two Fulbright awards. He has recorded with violinists Yehudi Menuhin, Alberto Lysy, and Ruggerio Ricci for the EMI, Dinemec Classics, and Opus 111 labels respectively. Originally from Akron, Ohio, Jeffrey Gilliam studied piano with Cécile Genhart at The Eastman School of Music, and with Theodore Lettvin at The University of Michigan. He also studied collaborative piano with Martin Katz and Margo Garrett. He has performed in master classes for Leon Fleisher, György Sebök, John Perry, Maria Curcio Diamand, Tatiana Nikolayeva, György Sandor, and Dorothy Taubman.

In addition to teaching piano and collaborative piano at Western, he is Artistic Director of Western's Sanford-Hill Piano Series. In 2015 he established the Jeffrey Gilliam Piano Scholarship Endowment Fund. His students have gone on to distinguished piano performance programs at Stony Brook, New England Conservatory, Rice University, and Eastman.

The 20th and 21st Century Music

Music of the twentieth and twenty first centuries is known for its creativity, diversity, and constant change. Unlike earlier periods such as the Baroque, Classical, or Romantic eras, composers in modern times often experimented with completely new sounds, ideas, and technologies. Because of this, music from these centuries includes many different styles rather than one single dominant style.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, many composers wanted to move away from the traditions of Romantic music. Romantic composers focused on emotional expression, large orchestras, and rich harmonies. Modern composers began searching for new musical languages. Some explored unusual harmonies and scales. Others experimented with rhythm, tone color, and form.

One important movement in early twentieth century music was **Impressionism**. Composers such as Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel created music that focused on atmosphere and color rather than dramatic storytelling. Their music often sounds dreamy and mysterious, using soft harmonies and flowing melodies that suggest images of nature, water, and light.

Another major development was **atonality**, a style that avoided traditional keys and tonal centers. Arnold Schoenberg was one of the most influential composers in this movement. His music and the music of his students explored new ways of organizing sound that did not rely on major or minor scales.

Rhythm also became an exciting area of experimentation. Igor Stravinsky shocked audiences with powerful rhythms and bold orchestration in works such as *The Rite of Spring*. Jazz also had a strong influence on twentieth century music. Composers like George Gershwin blended classical traditions with jazz rhythms and harmonies, creating music that reflected modern city life in America.

Another important feature of modern music is global connection. Composers and performers can easily share ideas from different cultures around the world. As a result, music today reflects a wide range of traditions and artistic voices.

In summary, twentieth and twenty first century music is defined by innovation, diversity, and experimentation. Instead of following one set style, composers explore many different directions, constantly expanding what music can sound like. For young musicians and listeners, this period offers an exciting world of discovery where creativity has almost no limits.