



Dear Colleagues,

It is with great excitement that we at Colorado State University Pueblo look forward to the 16th annual Pueblo Keyboard Arts Festival, scheduled to take place Nov. 5 - Nov. 7, 2026. Combining quality musical programs with educational opportunities for young and college age pianists, we hope to provide a welcoming platform for all interested in immersing themselves in the art of keyboard playing. It is my hope that participants and audience will find this Festival serves as a source of inspiration, knowledge, and one of the many elements that lead to the growth of the "complete musician."

November 6, Piano Masterclasses 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Open to Middle/High/Collegiate School Students.

November 7 PKAF Young Artist Competition, 9:00 a.m.

Offers cash prizes in the Junior and Senior, Solo and Ensemble divisions.

November 7, "Monster" Piano Concert, 7:00 p.m.

An all-piano extravaganza featuring faculty, guest artists from around the state, current CSU Pueblo students, alumni, and friends.

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Please don't hesitate to contact us: Dr. Zahari Metchkov, zahari.metchkov@csupueblo.edu, 719-565-8855

Application form and information can be found at: www.zahari.metchkov.com/festivals

2026 FESTIVAL ARTISTS:



Caroline Oltmanns is a pianist, presenter, and pedagogue known for her imaginative interpretations, refined phrasing, and engaging stage presence. Praised for her "fantasy" (Bayerischer Rundfunk) and "clear, light, and scintillating tone" (Pizzicato), she has performed widely throughout the United States and Europe. She has released seven solo CDs on the Filia Mundi label, including her 2022 concept album WIND, recorded at the Reitstadel in Germany. Recent seasons feature concert appearances in the US, Switzerland, and the UK, as well as past concerto engagements with the

Youngstown Symphony, Cleveland Philharmonic, and others. She has presented recitals at venues such as Steinway Hall and Weill Recital Hall in New York, Preston Bradley Hall in Chicago, and the Redlands Bowl in Los Angeles. A committed advocate for new music, Oltmanns has commissioned and premiered numerous works and is frequently featured on international radio and television. She is Professor of Piano at Youngstown State University, has taught master classes worldwide, and has served as a jury member for several international piano competitions. Her philanthropic work includes founding 88 Hearts for Youngstown to support student piano scholarships. Born in Germany, she studied in Freiburg and at the University of Southern California as a Fulbright Scholar. Her musical mentors were Robert Levin, John Perry, and Vitaly Margulis. She is an International Steinway Artist, a Steinway Spirio Recording Artist, and a recipient of the 2022 and 2025 Steinway Top Teacher Awards.



Zahari Metchkov, PKAF Artistic Director: Native of Sofia, Bulgaria, Dr. Metchkov is a Professor of Music at CSU Pueblo teaching applied piano, piano pedagogy, and ensembles. Zahari captivates audiences as a concerto soloist, recitalist, and chamber musician, maintaining multifaceted concert career. He has served for over a decade the Colorado State MTA in a number of appointments, including President and VP for Conferences. Under his artistic leadership, Pueblo based non-profit "Piano Conversations" has delivered over 60 concerts in Southern Colorado cultivating appreciation for quality classical live performances. He holds BM, MM, and DMA in piano performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music, Cleveland, Ohio.



Application Deadline: October 26

E-mail: zahari.metchkov@csupueblo.edu
Phone 719-565-8855

Activity

(check all that apply, but please use a separate application for Piano Ensemble entries)

Nov. 7, 2026 PKAF Solo Competition, 9:00 a.m.	Junior	☐	Senior	☐
Nov. 7, 2026 PKAF Piano Ensemble Competition, 12.30 p.m.	Junior	☐	Senior	☐
Nov. 6, 2026 Middle/High/Collegiate Piano Master Class, 6:00-8:00 p.m.				☐

Contact Information of Participant (s)

(please use additional spaces for piano ensemble group members and submit one application per ensemble group):

Name:	E-Mail Address:
Name:	E-Mail Address:
Name:	E-Mail Address:
Name:	E-Mail Address:

Contact Information of Teacher or Ensemble Leader

Name:	
E-Mail Address:	Phone:

Repertoire Presented

	Composition (full title, key, Op., etc.)	Duration
Solo Pieces		
Ensemble Pieces		

Payment Enclosed

Masterclass (\$40):	
Solo Competition (\$35):	
Piano Ensemble Competition (\$20 for each player):	
Total amount enclosed with the application:	

Mailing Address: Pueblo Keyboard Arts Festival, Attn: Dr. Zahari Metchkov, CSU Pueblo,
Department of Music, 2200 Bonforte Blvd., Pueblo, CO 81001-4901

INFORMATION AND REGULATIONS FOR PKAF 2026

1. Applications for all events must be *received by: midnight, October 26, 2026*

2. **Entry Fees:** Masterclass fee-\$40. PKAF Competition Application fees: Solo-\$35, Piano Ensemble-\$20 (per player). Entry fee is non-refundable.

3. **Please make checks payable to CSU Pueblo (Please DO NOT make checks payable to PKAF).** Please send your entry fee along with your application.

4. **Dates: The Solo Competition** will be held on Saturday, November 7, 2026, starting at 9:00 a.m., in Hoag Recital Hall on the campus of Colorado State University-Pueblo located at 2200 Bonforte Blvd., Pueblo, CO 81001. **The Piano Ensemble Competition** will be held also on November 7, starting around 12.30 p.m. also at Hoag Recital Hall. **The Middle/High/Collegiate Masterclasses** will take place in Hoag Recital Hall and Room 205 on Friday, November 6, 6:00p.m. to 8:00p.m. Please arrive a minimum of 10 minutes prior to the beginning of the class. If your travel is from a destination further than 100 miles from Pueblo, a specific Masterclass time will be issued to accommodate your travel arrangements.

5. **Eligibility:** The PKAF Piano Competition and Masterclasses are open to pianist living in or studying with a teacher residing in the State of Colorado. **Piano Ensemble Competition:** Open to any combination of two or more pianist (piano four hands, two piano duo, trios and quartets, etc.). Up to four pianos will be available on stage for participants' use at the competition.

6. Divisions:

Solo Junior (Age 11-14)

Solo Senior (Age 15-18)

Piano Ensemble Junior (Averaged age of participants in ensemble must not exceed 14 years of age)

Piano Ensemble Senior (Averaged age of participants in ensemble must not be below 15 years of age and not exceed 18 years of age)

7. Prizes for PKAF Piano Competition:

Solo Junior: Winner: \$100
Runner up: \$50

Solo Senior: Winner: \$300
Runner Up: \$100

Piano Ensemble Junior: Winners: \$100 (total award) + Performance at the 2025 Piano Monster Concert, 7.00 p.m., Nov. 7

Piano Ensemble Senior: Winners: \$160 (total award) + Performance at the 2025 Piano Monster Concert, 7.00 p.m., Nov. 7

At this point teacher/student or parent/child ensembles cannot be accommodated in the format of the competition.

8. PKAF Competition Winners Announcement and Award distribution:

Solo Competition:

Participant's certificates and division winners/runner ups will be identified and awarded at the Winner's Recital which will take place in the late morning (starting after 11.00 a.m. for example) of November 7, 2026, Hoag Recital

Hall, at a time to be announced after the application deadline of October 26. Participant's certificates and awards cannot be mailed and are automatically forfeit if participant is not present at the ceremony. At the conclusion of the award ceremony, the winners' and runner ups' parents/legal guardians will be invited to fill out brief paperwork, which will allow CSU-Pueblo to issue prize payment.

Piano Ensemble Competition:

The Winners' announcement will take place shortly after the conclusion of the Adult Division of the competition in the early afternoon. All division winners are invited to perform at the evening's Piano Monster Concert (October 25, 7.00 p.m.) where they will receive their awards and be publicly acknowledged for their accomplishment. Partaking into the Piano Monster Concert fulfills our mission to bring pianists of all generations to celebrate piano music together on stage. We encourage all Piano Ensemble competitors to plan to attend this special one of a kind event.

9. Repertoire:

Solo:

Each participant from each solo division is required to perform by memory two selections of contrasting style/era by memory (for example: Baroque/Romantic, Romantic/20th century) that best represent their abilities. It is recommended that at least one of the pieces demonstrates technical proficiency. Time limit: No participant's program can exceed 15 minutes.

Piano Ensemble:

Each Piano Ensemble must not exceed the following time limitations: Junior: 10 minutes; Senior: 12 minutes. Ensembles should perform repertoire that best reflects their musical interests and showcases musical and ensemble proficiency of the group. Evaluation will be based on musical quality of the presentation. Ensembles can perform several short pieces or one or more larger pieces, as long as they fit within the time limit for their division. No doubling of parts is allowed (Piano I, Secondo part cannot be played by more than one person, for ex.). Memorization is not required. Ensembles are responsible for their own page turners should they use ones.

Masterclass:

Repertoire will be chosen from the repertoire listed on the participant's application. Memorization is suggested, but not required.

10. Scores: Please bring original scores for all repertoire performed at the Competition and the Masterclass. The scores cannot be photocopied and will be available for return at the registration table during the scheduled breaks for the events.

11. The Juries' decisions are final. The Jury at their discretion reserves the right not to award all prizes.

12. Contact Information:

Competition mailing address:
Pueblo Keyboard Arts Festival
CSU-Pueblo, Department of Music
Attn: Dr. Zahari Metchkov
2200 Bonforte Blvd.
Pueblo, CO 81001-4901

Please direct questions regarding the application or rules and regulations to:
Phone 719-565-8855
Fax: 719-549-2969
E-mail: zahari.metchkov@csupueblo.edu