

GARIK PEDERSEN (USA)

Eastern Michigan University (Ypsilanti, Michigan)



Garik Pedersen has taught students from all over the world, producing prizewinners in international, national, and local competitions. A Steinway Artist, he has performed throughout the USA and in Europe, Canada, Central America, Taiwan and the Philippine Islands. Since launching The Victory Vertical Project in November, 2017, his schedule has included 25-30 of these concerts annually in addition to a full teaching schedule and solo and chamber music performances both on- and off-campus. He has been presented in concerts sponsored by the U.S. State Department, professional organizations in the United States, Europe, Canada, and Asia, and numerous television and radio stations. Pedersen has recorded for the Albany and Hornblower labels as well as the musical examples that accompany McGraw-Hill's popular text Music in Theory and Practice. A scholarship student of Wesley True at the University of Central Missouri, which named him its Distinguished Alumnus in Music in 2010, he was a DMA piano student of John Simms at the University of Iowa. Other major influences have been Gyorgy Sebok, Eugene Bossart, and Edwin E. Gordon. Gary is a past president of Michigan Music Teachers Association, which honored him with its Distinguished Service Award in 2016. He received the Michigan Touchstone Award in 2017 in recognition of his commitment to Michigan's artistic excellence and his advocacy for the arts.

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The Steinway Victory Vertical Project

The Victory Vertical Piano Project tells, in words and music, an amazing and little-known story about pianos built for the military during World War II. When the United States entered the war, raw materials, including iron, copper, and brass, were diverted to the war effort, and piano makers were suddenly forced to manufacture other products. The Steinway factory in New York had already begun to build gliders and coffins when Henry Z. Steinway and Roman de Majewski developed a plan to build small, inexpensive upright pianos that could be packed in a crate and shipped to soldiers, supplying music to improve morale and strengthen resolve. These 40-inch, boxlike instruments, came with sheet music, tools for tuning and repair, and handles for easy transport. The enthusiastic response to the first shipment of 405 pianos resulted in more orders for O.D.G.I. (Olive Drab Government Issue) "field" pianos, and when the project ended in 1953, 2,436 "Victory Vertical" pianos had been shipped, providing countless hours of diversion, entertainment, worship, enrichment, and outreach. The Victory Vertical Project uses many styles of music-classical, popular, boogie-woogie, jazz, and movie soundtracks-and descriptive vignettes with PowerPoint to present a remarkable account of courage, solidarity, and the power of music.

Contact Presenter

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www.victoryvertical.com

