



The New York Flute Club

NEWSLETTER

A Flute Fair With Music in Action



Jennifer Grim, guest artist for the 2026 Flute Fair.
Photo: Ardith Bondi

Flute students of all ages, music teachers, professional players and contestants gathered on Sunday March 22 for the club’s 2026 annual New York Flute Fair, with the theme “From Dream to Reality.” For attendees, the hardest part was picking and choosing which of the two dozen sessions, presentations and performances to attend and figuring out which ones had to be skipped due to the overlapping schedules.

The event’s guest artist, Jennifer Grim, hails from the University of Miami’s Frost School of Music; she is also president of the National Flute Association. During her afternoon mastery class she gave her advice to two accomplished players. Later, at her gala concert, she filled the air with lyrical interpretations of diverse

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Our Competition Winners!



Rafael Méndez placed first in the NYFC competition for rising young artists aged 18-27. Come hear him and the two other winners at a free recital on April 12 at 5:30 p.m. at Christ & Saint Stephen’s Episcopal Church, 120 W. 69th St.

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2025-2026

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From the President



**Flutists
Unite for
Day Full of
Learning**

If you missed the Flute Fair: “From Dream to Reality” with guest artists

Jennifer Grim, well,

that’s a bummer because there was so much to see, hear, absorb and enjoy. But all is not lost. This month’s newsletter covers some of the fantastic and inspiring moments from the day. But next year, be sure to sign up and attend or risk missing out. It doesn’t all fit in the newsletter.

For me, a highlight was seeing young flutists in attendance and meeting people who were experiencing the Fair for the first time.

A few days later, John Ragusa, the improvisational flutist, shared his insights on practicing more creatively during our final online *I Just Wanna Play!* session of the season. We hope to have the workshop available on our YouTube channel soon in case you couldn’t join in.

Finally, mark your calendars to attend the NYFC Competition Winners Recital on April 12 at Christ & St. Stephen’s Church on the Upper West Side, and tune in for our last online event, *Flutes and Flutemakers in Early New York*, with Wendell Dobbs, Nancy Groce, and Michael Lynn on April 16.

~Lish

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Visit our website, www.nyfluteclub.org.

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Applause for the 2026 Competition Winners

As New York Flute Club Competition coordinator Kaoru Hinata said, all of the contestants in the Flute Club's competition exhibited inspiring passion and achievement. Judging to pick the top spots was incredibly difficult. But winners were indeed chosen, and here they are:

First place went to **Rafael Méndez**, who began his flute studies with Alaima González at the Conservatorio Nacional de Música in the Dominican Republic. He later earned his Bachelor of Music (2024) at the Frost School of Music, studying with Jennifer Grim, and is currently pursuing a Master of Music at the Yale School of Music under Tara Helen O'Connor. His honors include first prize at the Nancy Clew Ellert Artist Competition (2026), the Graduate Presser Award (2025), the Burkart Resona Piccolo Award (2022), and the Gemeinhardt Galway Crusader Silver Flute Award at the Galway Flute Festival (2019). In 2024, he was a semifinalist in the Young Concert Artists competition.

Méndez has performed with the Yale Philharmonia, Frost Symphony Orchestra, Opera Naples, Festival Orchestra Napa, and the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional of the Dominican Republic, appearing at Carnegie Hall's Stern Auditorium and Konzerthaus Berlin.

A member of Trio Ivy, he debuted at Weill Recital Hall after winning the Yale School of Music Chamber Music Competition. He has also performed with the Miami Bach Society Chamber Orchestra and musicians from the Palm Beach Symphony, and attended festivals including the Oxford Summer Flute School.

Kara Ravaschieri currently attends the Juilliard School as a second year undergraduate flutist, studying with Robert Langevin. She is a member of the New World Symphony's substitute musician roster and performed with the ensemble in March. In 2022, she was a Young Arts Honorable Mention Recipient in Classical Music and the first place winner of the Florida Flute Association High School Young Artist Competition. In 2024, she won the Palm Beach Symphony Lisa Bruna B-Major Award, New World Symphony Side-By-Side Concerto Competition, and was the third-prize winner of the National Flute Association High School Competition.

Ravaschieri was the principal flute of the New World Symphony Side By Side Program from



From left: Rafael Méndez, first prize winner, Matthew Ober, third prize, and Kara Ravaschieri, second prize. They will perform at a free recital on April 12 at 5:30 p.m. at Christ & Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, 120 W. 69th St. See program on next page.

Photo: Joe Melhado

2020-2024. She has performed in masterclasses for Robert Langevin, Jim Walker, Marianne Gedigian, Alberto Almarza, Lorna McGhee, Soo-Kyung Park, and Philippe Bernold. Her former teachers include Amanda Blaikie and Dr. Marie Jureit-Beamish.

Matthew Ober is a flutist and teacher from Silver Spring, Md., pursuing a Master of Musical Arts at the Yale School of Music. He has performed with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra, York Symphony Orchestra, Annapolis Opera Company, at the National Gallery of Art and the Brevard Music Center, and has received prizes at the South Carolina Flute Society and the Flute Society of Washington. He is a recipient of the National Federation of Music Clubs Beth McAuley Southeast Region Award and is an Omicron Delta Kappa National Leader in the Arts. Ober graduated with his Masters from the Peabody Institute of the Johns Hopkins University and earned a double degree, magna cum laude, in Flute Performance and Information Science from the University of Maryland, College Park. His primary teachers are Tara Helen O'Connor, Marina Piccinini, Sarah Frisof, and Aaron Goldman, with additional mentorship from Erica Peel. Ober has been awarded fellowships and will be attending both the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and New Music Seminar this summer.

WINNERS OF THE NEW YORK FLUTE CLUB 2026 COMPETITION

Sunday, April 12, 2026, Christ & Saint Stephen's Church
5:30 p.m. 120 West 69th Street, New York
Admission is free.

Program

Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un faune Claude Debussy (1862-1918)
arr. Gustave Samazeuilh, ed. Alice Jones

Matthew Ober, flute (third prize)
Marina Iwao, piano

Movin' On Rhonda Larson (b. 1963)

Matthew Ober, flute

Morceau de concours Gabriel Fauré (1845-1924)
Fantaisie Pastorale Hongroise Franz Doppler (1821-1883)

Kara Ravaschieri (second prize)
Siyumeng Wang, piano

INTERMISSION

Requiem Milonga Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)
Chant de Linos André Jolivet (1905-1974)
Summerland William Grant Still (1895-1978)
Terra Nova (2025) Kacper Madejek (b. 1999)

Rafael Méndez (first prize)
Marina Iwao, piano

Flute Fair 2026, “From Dream to Reality”

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compositional voices and also pushed the boundaries of flute performance with *Pirouette on a Moon Sliver*, to thunderous applause.

This year’s Flute Fair sessions included some of the Club’s ever-popular topics, such as Alexander Technique for improving body positioning and breathing, sightreading with Jayn Rosenfeld, classes

on world flutes and historic interpretations of classical playing. The 2026 offerings also branched out into jazz, music by Black composers for young students, strategies for inclusive teaching, multiphonics, and help for the nervous student—among other topics.

On these pages you will find a photo diary of the fair as well as recaps and highlights for some of the many sessions. Great thanks go to Deirdre McArdle and Kristen Gygi, co-chairs, and all volunteers.

It’s show time!

Volunteers and board members get ready for the doors to open for the annual Flute Fair on Sunday March 22. Clockwise from left: Iona Aibel, Jackie Traish, Jenny Cline, Mindy Kaufman and the Club’s president Lish Lindsey.

Photo: Lisa Vickery



Above: During her *Breathe Easy With the Alexander Technique* session, instructor Fanny Wyrick-Flax demonstrated with flutist Bill Pang how posture can affect playing.



Donald Rabin discussed careers in the arts.

Photo: Ashley Mendeke



David Wechsler, founder of the OMNI Ensemble and principal flutist of the Queens Symphony, gave a talk on intonation skills.

Photo: Ashley Mendeke

Flute Fair 2026

Guest Artist Jennifer Grim Brings Drama



During her gala performance at the Flute Fair, guest artist Jennifer Grim performed pieces by William Grant Still and Valerie Coleman and the *Miami Flute Suite* by Miguel Del Aguila (which was written for Nestor Torres, a jazz flutist who was one of the club's guest artists earlier in the season).

Grim also performed—and that is an especially appropriate verb—*Pirouette on a Moon Sliver*, by Amy Beth Kirsten. The piece isn't just sheet music written for flute, it's more of an act about a character who happens to have a flute, as captured in the photos to the side, top left and top right.

—Lisa Vickery

Below left, Jennifer Grim and pianist Michael Sheppard. Below right, Grim's mastery class with one of the students, Genesis Acosta, who played Frank Martin's *Ballade*. One of her tips: "Think about what happens between the notes."

Concert photos: Ardith Bondi; Mastery class: Ashley Mendeke



Flute Fair 2026, “From Dream to Reality”



How to Play Multiphonics

Robert Dick started his presentation by playing some intriguing multiphonics. He said his interest in multiphonics dated from his disappointment in learning, at age eight, that playing two notes at once was not the next step in the curriculum after learning to play each note individually. He emphasized the importance of curiosity and creativity as life skills, and suggested checking out two of his videos (*Your First Multiphonic* and *Three Types of Multiphonics*), and mentioned two fingerings as good starting points for experimentation (a low F with the two trill keys open, and the third octave D).

—Katherine Saenger



Above, Katherine Saenger, a scientist and flutist who loves to delve into the physics of sound creation, converses with Robert Dick in the exhibition hall. At the Flute Fair, Saenger gave a presentation on combination tones created by singing while playing, replete with charts of sound waves and spectrograms.

Right, Robert Dick and Sylvain Leroux, who gave a presentation on the Fula Flute— a traditional African flute— for the modern player.



Photos: Scott Cameron and Joe Melhado

Flute Fair 2026: “From Dream to Reality”



A Young Person’s Intro to Music by Black Composers

Alice Jones, a musician, teacher and Juilliard dean, exuberantly introduced a new book—*Music by Black Composers*—published by the National Flute Association in collaboration with the Rachel Barton Pine Foundation. The volume, designed for flute students, lays out a long history of Black composers from different eras and parts of the world. Some of the music, all of which is meant to be accessible for young students, was performed by three students from the Juilliard Music Advancement Program.

—Lisa Vickery

Students from the Juilliard Music Advancement Program, from left to right: Cielo Kiriayama, Rosy Ramirez, and Michelle Argueta, with Alice Jones.

Photo: Nancy Toff



Kristen Gygi, co-chair of the Flute Fair, gets some student assistance for the raffle drawing, the prize being a lesson with guest artist Jennifer Grim. In addition to co-chairing the event, Gygi led the session *A Teacher’s Guide to Working With Nervous Students*.

Photo: Joe Melhado



Carol Sudhalter, a New York jazz flutist/saxophonist, brought her expertise—and a cool blue beret—to her jazz workshop.

Photo: Ashley Mendeke

Flute Fair 2026: “From Dream to Reality”



The New Jersey Wind Symphony Flutes, above, were among several group performances at the Flute Fair.

Photo: Ardith Bondi

Orchestra Opus Timesaver

I went into the session titled *Orchestral Opus Timesaver* certain that it wasn't for me as a flute player. After all, I had signed up merely to be a badge checker as a Flute Fair volunteer. I am an amateur who will never need to play an orchestral opus. But to my delight, the session—led by Alabama flute professor Charles Page—was quite applicable to any player who wants to warm up appropriately for the task at hand. The instructor's handout music was daunting at first sight—passages from Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, the scherzo from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and the fast-paced bird-chirping *Voliere* from Saint-Saëns' *Carnival of the Animals*. Yikes! But then he had us focus on qualities such as resonance, articulation, breathing, posture and techniques that could help in those areas, such as whistle tones, singing and playing, tips for conserving air and opening up the nose for resonance, and tips for tonguing more rapidly. The Saint-Saëns *Voliere* was quite the articulation workout, but thank heavens it was kept under tempo.

—Lisa Vickery



Charles Page, a flute instructor at Alabama A&M University, spoke at length about getting the most nasal resonance and not being too percussive when playing rapidly.

Photo Scott Cameron

Flute Fair 2026, “From Dream to Reality”

Forbidden Voices, a Look At Composers Amid Nazis

This year’s inspiring Flute Fair provoked in me the familiar desire to be in two places simultaneously as I navigated the enticing concurrent sessions. I’ll focus this reflection, however, on one thoughtful and somber session I attended—Forbidden Voices—presented by doctoral candidate Lucy Rubin, on Dutch and German composers impacted by the Nazi horrors of World War II.

She presented brief, well-researched biographies on three composers who survived the war and she performed representative solo flute pieces by each of them: Marius Flothuis (1914–2001), Ursula Mamlok (1923–2016), and Reine Colaço Osorio-Swab (1881–1971).

She included chilling primary documents, such as concentration-camp records, and discussed the historical contributions by other musicians and composers, including Leo Smit—for whom the Leo Smit Foundation is named—born in the Netherlands

in 1900 and murdered by the Nazis in Berlin.

Included in her talk was a resource page [handout with e-links](#) to each of the pieces she performed as well as links to additional works by Leo Smit, Dick Kattenburg, and Erwin Schulhoff, composers who were killed in the Holocaust. She began and ended the session with how important it is to research and share this musical history, especially now that Holocaust survivors are dying off and the world is shifting toward Holocaust denial, authoritarianism, and governmental control over the arts.

—Gail Tishcoff



Lucy Rubin, a CUNY doctoral candidate, presented Holocaust composer biographies and played some of their pieces.

Earlier in the day, Carol Shansky gave a lecture-recital exploring similar themes.



Musings on Minuets

Patricia Harper dove into theories about what Mozart really wanted for the tempo in the third movement of his G Major Flute Concerto.

Photo: Ashley Mendeke



Mili Chang George taught curious flutists about how historical instruments affect our interpretation of works from the 16th to 18th centuries.

Photo: Scott Cameron

Flute Fair 2026: “From Dream to Reality”



Jayn Rosenfeld led a group of flutists through an ensemble reading session to warm up for the day.

Photo: Scott Cameron



Lynn Tsai celebrated the composer Tyzen Hsiao, known as “Taiwan’s Rachmaninoff.”

Photo: Ashley Mendeke



Michele Smith, an enthusiastic Flute Fair attendee.

Photo: Ardith Bondi



Samantha White performed Sami Seif’s *Miniatures From Phoenicia* during a session on Contemporary & Arabic Flute Techniques.

Photo: Scott Cameron

Flute Fair 2026, “From Dream to Reality”



Six winners of the Young Musicians Contest held on March 1 performed during the Flute Fair, including Amelia Song, above, a winner in the 12-14 age bracket.

Photo: Scott Cameron



Carla Lancellotti Auld held a class on how to tackle a brand new piece of music and make it sing as a piece of art.

Photo: Scott Cameron



Coordinator Sought for New Flute-Loan Program

The Club is setting up a Flute Loan Program and needs someone to oversee the selection of recipients and the distribution of flutes.

This is an occasional job, when the flutes are available. We need to find teachers and appropriate students, 5th grade through graduate school, and deliver a flute now and then. If you can help, please reach out to Jinni Rock-Bailey (rockbailey1@gmail.com) or Jayn Rosenfeld (jaynrosenfeld@gmail.com), co-chairs of the Education Committee.

Flutes and Flutemakers in Early New York

Join Us for an Informative Session With Three Experts on April 16

By Nancy Toff

What is the capital of the flutemaking world? Today, most flutists would say Boston, because that has been the location of the Top Two flutemakers of the twentieth century, Haynes and Powell, and of numerous small and medium-size shops that have been spun off by former Haynes and Powell employees.

But in the early 19th century, that was not the case. In fact, part of the town of Litchfield, Conn.—home to Jabez Camp; Asa Hopkins; Firth, Hall & Pond; and others—was at one time known as Fluteville. And several of those firms gravitated to New York City, not a surprise given its growing musical community in the 19th century. And it was in New York that flutemakers produced the first Boehm flutes made in America. Our online program on Thursday April 16 at 7:00 p.m. will look at the fascinating growth of musical instrument making in the city. It will feature three experts on the topic.

Nancy Groce, author of *Musical Instrument Making in New York City During the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, also a flutist and folklorist at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, will start the program with an overview of flute makers, musical instrument making, and the musical world of early New York. Flute makers in early New York City, she will explain, were part of a complex, rapidly expanding cultural and economic landscape in which the manufacturing and selling of musical instruments played a significant role.



Among the presenters on April 16 will be Oberlin professor Michael Lynn, who will discuss and demonstrate historic flutes.

On one hand, technical innovations, changes in home music making, the increased number of concert venues, the rise of flute tutors and instructors, and the ongoing arrival of migrant and immigrant woodwind makers influenced and continually reshuffled the flute world of early New York. On the other hand, during the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, the flute world was still small enough that many of the makers knew each other,

apprenticed in each other's shops, formed and dissolved business partnerships, and intermarried with each other's families.

Wendell Dobbs, professor of flute at Marshall University, will narrate the history of a family of flutists, flute manufacturers, and music publishers established by London emigrant Edward R. Riley in New York City. Riley and copperplate printer Thomas Adams formed the firm Riley & Adams in 1812. All his three sons and two sons-in-law became

music publishers, music instrument manufacturers, and retailers. Dobbs will describe various musical editions by Riley, Firth and Hall, and others. His presentation includes recordings of Riley's *Flute Melodies* and Charles Nicholson's "Variations on a melody from Paisiello's opera *Nina*," first published by Firth & Hall in New York.

Flutist, scholar, and collector Michael Lynn, professor of historical flutes at Oberlin Conservatory, will trace the history of flute making in New York in the 19th century, beginning with simple system flutes. He will demonstrate several instruments by Peloubet, using examples from Blake's *Selected Beauties* and other works of the time. He will then describe the arrival of the wood and silver Boehm flutes in New York, highlighting the role of flutist and composer Philip Ernst, and will play Ernst's *Cavatina alla Polacca*. He will also discuss early Boehm instruments, demonstrating several by Alfred Badger.

Ensemble Roars Back After Snowstorm Delay



Kneeling left to right: Bill Giannone, Prashant Kumar, Frances Lenci, Natalie Ward, Kathy Saenger, Ambika Bansal, Laura Pologe, Samantha Ostrowski. Standing left to right: Natalie Ward, Doug Ramsdell, Lily Zwanka, Gail Tishcoff, Cora Riechert, Roger Brooks, Mark Vickers, Lester Yu, Elizabeth LaBarbera, Karen Robbins, Bill Pang, Lauren Kurtz (Nathan Kurtz), Eli Gentle

Photo: Brian Klasewitz

After February’s meet-up was cancelled due to a snowstorm, the ensemble held its sixth rehearsal with 21 members (18 returning and three new) participating at Studios 353 in Manhattan on March 21.

Director Mark Vickers led the group through *Flutes and Vegetables* (arr. Cohen), *Fantasy on “Amazing Grace”* (arr. Louke), *Birdland* (arr. Lombardo), *Valoshki* (arr. Siniakova), *Sheep May Safely Graze* (arr. Giannone), and *Little Red Monkey* (arr. Farmer).

The icebreaker question was “Who was the first professional flute player you ever heard?” Jean Pierre Rampal was the man of the hour as a number of members had seen him years ago. Others saluted their college and private teachers. One member noted that her mother was her first introduction to the flute.

As we prepare for the May 17 year-end performance, the next rehearsal for the flute ensemble will be on Sunday April 19 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Studios 353 at 353 W. 48th St.

To join the ensemble you must be a current member of the NY Flute Club. No audition is required. We accept all levels of players. If you would like to participate, email Ensemble director Mark Vickers at ensembles@nyfluteclub.

2026 Annual Meeting and Ensemble Concert

The annual meeting of the New York Flute Club, Inc. will be held on Sunday, May 17, 3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. at Room 314, Pearl Studios, 500 8th Ave. (between 35th and 36th Streets), New York, NY 10018. At that time we will elect officers and members of the board of directors. All current members are eligible and encouraged to attend and vote.

The spring ensemble concert, featuring flutists who have participated in the NYFC ensemble program, will perform immediately follow the meeting.

There will be a reception following the concert.

2025-2026 Events

IN-PERSON CONCERTS

Sunday, Oct. 5, 2025, 5:30 p.m.: Robert Langevin, Church of Christ and Saint Stephen's, 120 West 69th Street, New York

Sunday Nov. 9, 3:30 p.m. mastery class and 5:30 p.m. concert with **Néstor Torres**

Sunday Dec. 7, 3:30 p.m. mastery class and 5:30 p.m. concert with **Rachel Blumenthal**

Sunday Jan. 11, 2026, 3:30 p.m. mastery class, 5:30 p.m. concert with **Jacqueline Cordova-Arrington**

Sunday Feb. 8, 5:30 p.m.: **A Celebration of American Chamber Music** with Flute Force, Bart

Feller, Reva Youngstein, Sylvan Winds and other performers; world premiere by Bonnie McAlvin. **Christ & St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St.**

Sunday March 22 all day: **New York Flute Fair,** with guest artist **Jennifer Grim**

Sunday April 12: Winners of the New York Flute Club Competition, 5:30 p.m. at Church of Christ and St. Stephen's, 120 West 69th St. Admission is free.

Sunday May 17, 3:00 p.m.: **Annual meeting and ensemble concert.** Room 314, Pearl Studios, 500 8th Ave., Manhattan.

Unless otherwise indicated, all concerts take place at 5:30 p.m. at the Allen-Stevenson School, 132 East 78th St. in Manhattan.



ONLINE PROGRAMS

Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom link.

Oct. 16, 2025: Samuel Baron's recordings of American music, with commentary by his colleagues. Hosted by **Tara Helen O'Connor.**

Nov. 13: Flutes of the World with **Tereasa Payne**

Dec. 4: An evening with flutist, multi-instrumentalist and composer **David Amram**

Jan. 8, 2026: Ragan Whiteside, soul jazz flutist (I Just Wanna Play series)

Jan. 29: The Flute Works of **Joan Tower.** Music and interviews with Joan Tower, **Lisa Bost-Sandberg, Patricia Spencer,** and **Carol Wincenc.**

March 26: John Ragusa, improvisational flutist, on jazz and blues (I Just Wanna Play series)

April 16: Flutes and Flutemakers in Early New York, with **Wendell Dobbs, Nancy Groce** and **Michael Lynn.** The instruments, flutemakers, flutists, and composers who promoted the flute, with music of Foster, Riley, and others.

All dates and programs subject to change. For more information about the New York Flute Club, including competitions, ensemble programs, education, and membership, please visit www.nyfluteclub.org



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