

Classical Music: Guardian of Health - EAMA Students Perform at NIH, St. Jude, and Leading Hospitals Nationwide

Dr. Oster's "Classical Music: Guardian of Health" initiative brings the healing power of piano performance to patients, visitors and healthcare workers

SILVER SPRING, MD, UNITED STATES, February 28, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The night before his daughter's surgery at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, a father sat in the lobby of Ronald McDonald House in Memphis and listened to a young pianist perform Chopin. The concert, he said, gave his family "something beautiful to carry" into the next day.

Moments like this are why Dr. Bella Eugenia Oster established the "Classical Music: Guardian of Health"

initiative. Through this program, young pianists from the [European Academy of Music and Art \(EAMA\)](#) in Silver Spring, Maryland perform at leading medical institutions nationwide by volunteering and bringing the therapeutic benefits of live classical music directly to patients, families, and healthcare workers.

The Science Behind Musical Healing

Dr. Oster's understanding of music's healing power receives substantial support from medical research. Studies published in Health Psychology Review demonstrate that music therapy has a significant effect on stress-related outcomes in healthcare settings. Neurological research reveals that classical piano music activates the brain's reward centers while reducing activity in the amygdala, the region associated with fear and stress. Harvard Medicine research shows that music activates emotional responses through memory and governs pleasure, motivation, and reward.



EAMA students at NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children's Hospital, Columbia University Medical Center.

For patients of all ages, these effects are especially strong when performed by young musicians, creating connections that medical staff consistently describe as transformative.

“Classical music activates the brain’s healing mechanisms in ways that complement medical treatment,” said Dr. Bella Eugenia Oster, Principal and Professor of Piano Performance at EAMA. “Our students bring that therapeutic power directly to patients who need it most.”



EAMA students at Target House, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, TN.

The performers are Sarina Li, Daya Wampler, Victoria Zhong, Ahana Rao, Brian Liu, and Jayden Zhou. All are students of Dr. Oster and 2025 winners of the International Association for Musically Gifted Children’s International Piano Contest, ages 10 to 16 and hailing from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

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They present works by Beethoven, Bach/Busoni, Rachmaninov, Chopin, Liszt, Schubert, Schumann, and others.

Impact on Patients and Healthcare Workers

Medical professionals have taken notice. A representative at the National Institutes of Health observed: “Your music provided a much-needed moment of respite and relaxation for our patients, staff, and visitors. Your talents and generosity have truly made a difference, creating an atmosphere of calmness for all at the hospital. We are

thankful for your dedication to our mission, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with you again in the future.”

Following a performance honoring National Pharmacist Day, one healthcare worker wrote: “Thank you for sharing this beautiful and inspiring performance. The children are incredibly talented and it was just the medicine I needed to end my day.”

A National Reach

Throughout 2025, EAMA students have volunteered by performing at the National Institutes of Health (Bethesda, MD), St. Jude Children's Research Hospital (Memphis, TN), Massachusetts General Hospital and Tufts Medical Center (Boston, MA), The Mount Sinai Hospital and New York-Presbyterian/Columbia University Irving Medical Center (New York, NY), The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center and Nationwide Children's Hospital (Columbus, OH), Temple University Hospital (Philadelphia, PA), National Rehabilitation Hospital, Sibley Memorial Hospital/Johns Hopkins Medicine (Washington, DC), Suburban Hospital/Johns Hopkins Medicine (Bethesda, MD), Holy Cross Hospital (Silver Spring, MD), MedStar Good Samaritan Hospital and Mercy Hospital (Baltimore, MD), and Jack C. Montgomery VA Medical Center (Muskogee, OK).



EAMA students at the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington, DC.

Each performance requires months of preparation for advanced works such as Bach/Busoni's Toccata and Fugue in D minor and Schumann/Liszt's Widmung, during which students develop not only musical proficiency but also the emotional maturity to share their education with patients and families facing difficult circumstances. This initiative strongly develops interpersonal relationships and strengthens empathy between students, their performances, and patients' wellbeing.

Dr. Oster's "Classical Music: Guardian of Health" program will continue annually, building on established partnerships while developing new relationships with healthcare institutions nationwide.

Where Music Meets Medicine

From Silver Spring's diverse community, these young musicians become ambassadors of healing across the country. Their classical music education equips them to serve patients in Tennessee, veterans in Oklahoma, children in Ohio, and medical communities from Boston to Memphis.

Under Dr. Oster's guidance, students have developed skills that allow them to tackle repertoire typically reserved for conservatory-level musicians. Dr. Oster's five decades of experience in music education have established EAMA as an institution where students regularly advance to perform at world-renowned venues including Carnegie Hall (NY), Royal Albert Hall (UK), Teatro

Colón (Argentina), Bastille Opera House (France), Dubai Opera (UAE), and numerous others. Earlier this year, [EAMA students performed to great acclaim at Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires.](#)

This represents strong American values in action: excellence in education combined with service to others. EAMA students demonstrate that musical education, when approached properly, develops citizens who understand their responsibility to serve.

About the European Academy of Music and Art

Founded in 1991, the European Academy of Music and Art is located at 15420 New Hampshire Avenue in Silver Spring, Maryland. Under the leadership of Dr. Bella Eugenia Oster, the academy provides comprehensive piano education for students ages 3-18, combining advanced technical training with music theory and performance opportunities. Students have performed at prestigious venues worldwide and have gained admission to leading universities including Harvard, MIT, Yale, Columbia, Cornell, Stanford, Duke, UC Berkeley and other elite institutions.

About the International Association for Musically Gifted Children

The International Association for Musically Gifted Children (IAMGC) supports the intellectual and artistic growth of children through classical piano study with international and national concert performances. The organization conducts annual international piano contests and provides performance opportunities for young musicians worldwide.

Dr. Bella Eugenia Oster and Lisa Vora

European Academy of Music and Art

+1 301-908-6928

[email us here](#)

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