



Renown composer returns to grand piano on Sanford stage

Morton Gold had a dream one night. Only that night he dreamed in song — an original melody.

That morning he began putting the notes to paper and named it “Elegy, Op. 127,” named it in memory of all those lost to the Covid pandemic this last year. And days later, so moved by his dream, Dr. Gold went to the Sanford Performing Arts Center and performed and recorded it on the Steinway concert grand piano, which was funded by the Sanford Schools Legacy Foundation in 2019.

“I was pretty pleased with the result,” said Dr. Gold. “Every piano is different, and I always enjoy playing that piano; I like the overtones and the touch. Other performers have remarked it’s the best piano in Maine, and I am not going to argue with that!”

“Gracie” the Steinway Model D is an old friend of Dr. Gold, who helped bring her to Sanford from New York City two years ago after she was retired from her music hall days. The Legacy Foundation proudly paid for the grand dame with funding from its Have-a-Seat program, ensuring SPAC become one of southern Maine’s foremost

Gracie the Steinway

Sanford’s piano, built in 2009, has been featured in live concerts at the Blossom Music Festival and Cleveland Orchestra with the Silk Road Ensemble (with Yo-Yo Ma), and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra with Wynton Marsalis. Many of our generation’s greatest pianists have performed on this piano, including Paul Lewis, Garrick Ohlsson, Stephen Hough, Joseph Grovesenor, Aaron Diehl, Jean-Yves Thibaudet and David Fray.

Dr. Morton Gold was Professor of Music at Nasson College for 18 years. He earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Boston University College of Music, then a Master of Arts in Teaching degree from Harvard University School of Education. Commissioned by the Sanford Performing Arts Center, Morton composed “Acadia: A Rhapsody in Piano and Wind Symphony”; it made its world premiere on Memorial Day 2019 at SPAC. Morton also conducted an original composition with the Boston “Pops” Orchestra. His piano concerto, with Morton Gold at the keyboard, was performed by the Portland Symphony.

live performance venues.

“Having a world-class concert grand piano has opened countless doors for us to present performances of the highest quality,” said Brett Williams, director of the Sanford Performing Arts Center. “The word is out that the finest concert piano in Maine lives right here in Sanford!”

While in New York City with Williams, Gold put seven pianos to the test; in the end, one piano stood out: #74, the piano brought home to Sanford that now lives in a custom-built storage room when not used on stage.

Springvale’s Dr. Gold is no stranger to the Sanford stage. He has often accompanied the Sanford High School and Junior High School choruses, and even performs impromptu songs when substitute teaching in the schools.

Stay tuned to the Sanford Performing Arts Center calendar of events for future shows that will feature Gracie the Steinway concert piano.

Want to leave a lasting legacy yourself? Only 250 seats remain in the Have-a-Seat fundraiser!