

Kim Stefansson
Escambia County School District
Public Relations Coordinator
kstefansson@escambia.k12.fl.us
850 469-6219 (Office)
850-393-0539 (Cell)

ECSD NEWS RELEASE

Jan. 3, 2017

**Steinway Piano Concert to Benefit the Arts in Escambia County Schools
*MEDIA AVAILABILITY THURSDAY EVENING!!!!!!***

Pensacola, FL: Dr. Kadisha Onalbayeva, a Steinway Artist and professor of music, will perform on a Steinway piano this Friday evening, Jan. 6, at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium at N.B. Cook Elementary School for the Arts. This will be a benefit performance to raise funds needed to bring a Kennedy Center Teaching Artist to Pensacola to provide two days of training on arts integration in education for teachers at N.B. Cook Elementary, as well as other fine arts teachers from around the Escambia County School District.

MEDIA NOTE: Dr. Onalbayeva will be rehearsing THURSDAY evening 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. and you are welcome to join her there --- the building will be locked up so, call or text Angela Barberi's cell for entrance at 850-261-8582.

This concert is being presented by the Escambia County School District, the Gulf Coast Steinway Society, the Pensacola Opera and the Kennedy Center's Partner's in Education program. Special recognition goes to the Steinway Piano gallery for providing the Steinway piano for everyone's enjoyment.

"We are thrilled to offer the experience of hearing Dr. Onalbayeva to everyone at N.B. Cook Elementary and their families and friends, as well as our Pensacola community," said Angela Barberi, ECSD's Fine Arts Specialist. "The training we are planning to make available to our teachers with the funds raised this Friday, will benefit our students for many years."

Admission is \$5.00 (but additional donations will be appreciated). N.B Cook Elementary School, is located at 1310 N. 12th Ave, Pensacola, FL 32503. The flyer is also available on the ECSD event calendar.

The selections included in Friday's program are:

Sonata No. 8 in A minor, K. 310, Allegro Maestoso by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

The '96 Etude (1996) by Michael Coleman

Think...Together (2007) by Kadisha Onalbayeva

Mephisto Waltz No.1 by Franz Liszt

The Lord's Prayer by Albert Hay Malotte (1895-1964) and arranged by Kadisha Onalbayeva

Rhapsody in Blue by George Gershwin

Amazing Grace arranged by Kadisha Onalbayeva

POC: N.B. Cook Elementary School, 850-595-6077

About the Artist: Steinway Artist Dr. Kadisha Onalbayeva was born in Kazakhstan and began her musical training at the age of five. She is the first pianist from Kazakhstan to be named a Steinway Artist. She attended the Jubanov Special School for Talented Children in Almaty, Kazakhstan. While at Jubanov she studied piano and composition, gave piano recitals and was involved in both piano and composition festivals and competitions. Awards include the Soviet Union's *New Talent* competition and various prizes in national piano competitions and Central Asia piano competitions. She also participated in international music festivals in Germany, Turkey, Russia, and Uzbekistan. After graduating from the Jubanov School, Kadisha entered the Kurmangazy National Conservatory of Music. She was awarded the *President's Award for Young Artists* and *Chevron's Award for Talented Students* in piano and composition.

Dr. Onalbayeva continued her performances as a recitalist, chamber musician, composer, and as an orchestral soloist. She received a *Soros Prize* for her work in development of international cultural exchanges. She earned two M.M degrees in both composition and piano performance at the University of New Orleans. She then received her Doctoral of Musical Arts in piano performance at Louisiana State University. Throughout her career, Dr. Onalbayeva has been a strong supporter of new music and she has been particularly interested in introducing the music of Kazakhstan to the United States. She has continued performances of her music and has participated in international new music festivals as composer, performer and organizer throughout Central Asia, Austria, England, Kazakhstan, Russia, Costa Rica, Bahamas and Uzbekistan. While in the U.S. she has participated in new music activities and performances as piano soloist and chamber musician in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, California, Florida, Illinois and Georgia.

Dr. Onalbayeva is a Professor of Music at the University of Mobile She is founder and currently serves as President of the Gulf Coast Steinway Society (Alabama, Mississippi and Florida). She was recently commissioned to write a symphonic poem titled *Zherym (My Motherland)* which was premiered in May, 2014 by the Kazakhstan National Orchestra and she also performed the Liszt Piano Concerto No. 1 on the same concert. In October, 2014, she performed Piano Concerto No. 1 by Tchaikovsky with the Albany Symphony Orchestra and gave multiple performances of Dvorak's Piano Quintet in A with the Zhubanova String Quartet during their tour in the United States (September & October) and in Kazakhstan in May. As part of her collaboration with the Zhubanova String Quartet, multiple performances of Dr. Onalbayeva composition *Cycle for String Quartet* were given in Kazakhstan during May, 2015. Dr. Onalbayeva also performed Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* and premiered Artyk Toxsanbayev's *Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra* with the Astana Philharmonic Orchestra in May, 2015 and she performed these two works again with the Albany Symphony Orchestra in November 2016. Toxsanbayev's *Rhapsody* is dedicated to Dr. Onalbayeva. The Minister of Culture of the Republic of Kazakhstan recently filmed a

documentary on the life and musical career of Dr. Onalbayeva titled *Independent National's Heritage* which was released in both Kazakh and in Russian in 2015. On December 20, 2016 Dr. Onalbayeva recorded four works for Steinway's Spirio recording project at Steinway Hall in New York, NY. All of these works are on tonight's concert program. Her husband is Michael Coleman, also a composer and pianist, and they reside in Pensacola, Florida with their daughter Malika.

Website: www.kadishaonalbayeva.com