Manhattan School of Music

PIANO MASTERCLASS

James Giles (DMA '95)

Bienen School of Music, Northwestern University

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026 | 4 PM
GORDON K. AND HARRIET GREENFIELD HALL

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026 | 4 PM
GORDON K. AND HARRIET GREENFIELD HALL

PIANO MASTERCLASS

James Giles (DMA '95)

Bienen School of Music, Northwestern University

This master class is part of the Janice B. and Milford D. Gerton Master Class Series made possible by the Arts and Letters Foundation.

PROGRAM

ROBERT SCHUMANN
(1810–1856)

Kreisleriana, Op. 16
I. *Äußerst bewegt*
II. *Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch*
IV. *Sehr langsam*
VII. *Sehr rasch*

Baoqi Zhu, piano
(Student of Jiayin Li)

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862–1918)

Images, Book 1
I. *Reflets dans l'eau*
III. *Mouvement*

Yinuo Wang, piano
(Student of Jeffrey Cohen)

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN
(1810–1849)

Sonata No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 58
I. *Allegro maestoso*

Keren Wang, piano
(Student of Inesa Sinkevych)

FRANZ LISZT
(1811–1886)

Deux Légendes, S. 175
NO. 2. St. Francis of Paola: Walking on the Waves

Yuran Gong, piano
(Student of Wael Farouk)

James Giles (DMA '95), piano

James Giles regularly performs in important musical centers in America, Europe, and Asia as a recitalist and chamber musician. He is coordinator of the piano program and director of music performance graduate studies at Northwestern University's Bienen School of Music, where his class of students has featured many prize-winning young artists.

In an eclectic repertoire encompassing the solo and chamber music literatures, Giles is equally at home in the standard repertoire as in the music of our time. He has commissioned and premiered works by William Bolcom, C. Curtis-Smith, Stephen Hough, Lowell Liebermann, Ned Rorem, Augusta Read Thomas, Earl Wild, and James Wintle. Most of these new works are featured on Giles's Albany Records release entitled "American Virtuoso." His recording of solo works by Schumann and Prokofiev is available on England's Master Musicians label. He recorded John Harbison's Horn Trio with the Chicago Chamber Musicians and Timothy Dunne's Piano Concerto with the St. Petersburg Chamber Philharmonic in Russia.

His Paris recital at the Salle Cortot in was hailed as "a true revelation, due equally to the pianist's artistry as to his choice of program." After a recital at the Sibelius Academy, the critic for Helsinki's main newspaper wrote that "Giles is a technically polished, elegant pianist." And a London critic called his Wigmore Hall recital "one of the most sheerly inspired piano recitals I can remember hearing for some time" and added that "with a riveting intelligence given to everything he played, it was the kind of recital you never really forget."

He has performed with New York's Jupiter Symphony (Alkan and Czerny); the London Soloists Chamber Orchestra in Queen Elizabeth Hall (Mozart and Beethoven); the Kharkiv Philharmonic in Ukraine (Prokofiev and Rachmaninoff); and with the Opera Orchestra of New York in Alice Tully Hall (Chopin). After his Tully Hall solo recital debut, critic Harris Goldsmith wrote: "Giles has a truly distinctive interpretive persona. This was beautiful pianism – direct and unmannered." Other tours have included concerts in the Shanghai International Piano Festival; St. Petersburg's White Nights New Music Festival, Warsaw's Chopin Academy of Music; Chicago's Dame Myra Hess Series, Salt Lake City's Assembly Hall Concert Series, and in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, the Musikhalle in Hamburg, and the Purcell Room at London's South Bank Centre. He has given live recitals over the public radio stations of New York, Boston, Chicago, and Indianapolis. As a chamber musician he has collaborated with members of the National and Chicago Symphonies and with members of the Escher, Pacifica, Cassatt, Chicago, Ying, Chester, St. Lawrence, Essex, Lincoln, and Miami Quartets, as well as singers Aprile Millo and Anthony Dean Griffey.

A native of North Carolina, Dr. Giles studied with Byron Janis at the Manhattan School of Music, Jerome Lowenthal at the Juilliard School, Nelita True at the Eastman School of Music, and Robert Shannon at Oberlin College. He received early career assistance from the Clarisse B. Kampel Foundation and was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Italy with the legendary pianist Lazar Berman.

The pianist was the recipient of a fellowship grant and the Christel Award from the American Pianists Association. He won first prizes at the New Orleans International Piano Competition, the Joanna Hodges International Piano Competition, and the Music Teachers National Association Competition. As a student he was awarded the prestigious William Petschek Scholarship at the Juilliard School and the Arthur Dann Award at the Oberlin College Conservatory. He wrote for Piano and Keyboard magazine and has presented lecture-recitals at the national conventions of the Music Teachers National Association, the College Music Society, and Pi Kappa Lambda. He regularly serves on competition jury panels and has been conference artist for many state music teachers associations.

He gives master classes and lectures at schools nationwide, including Juilliard, Manhattan, Eastman, Oberlin, Indiana, Yale, and New England. During the summers he is director of the Amalfi Coast Music Festival and has taught at the Gijon Piano Festival, Obidos Master Classes, Eastern Music Festival, Bowdoin, Brevard, Art of the Piano, Colburn, Interlochen, ARIA, Pianofest in the Hamptons, and the Schlern Festival in Italy. His classes internationally have occurred throughout China as well as at Seoul National University, Hanyang University (Seoul), Ewha Woman's University (Seoul), the Royal Danish Academy of Music (Copenhagen), the Sibelius Academy (Helsinki), the Chopin Academy (Warsaw), the Royal Northern College of Music (Manchester) and the Royal College of Music (London).

Manhattan
School of Music