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About WPTA Iceland The WPTA Iceland Association is founded in January 2025. Founding members of the board are pianists and professors dr. Nína Margrét Grímsdóttir, President, Peter Máté, Vice president and Erna Vala Arnardóttir, Managing director. They are also founding members of the Society of pianists in Iceland (Félag íslenskra píanóleikara) which they initiated in 2024 with the goal of advancing the path of piano playing and piano teaching as much as possible by organizing ambitious projects in Iceland with international cooperation. “Slagharpan syngur” – the 1st festival of Icelandic piano music was the fyrst project initiated and produced by Grímsdóttir, Máté and Arnardóttir in November 2024 in cooperation with the Iceland University of the Arts and Salurinn concert hall with the town of Kópavogur. An ambitious festival where 50 pianists, professionals and students performed in 9 recitals works by 33 composers as well as lectures and forums this was well received and ignited true interest in the history of Icelandic piano works among the public and professionals. This year Grímsdóttir, Máté and Arnardóttir, as founding members of the WPTA Iceland Association have the goal of establishing the first international piano competition in Iceland in collaboration with the Iceland University of the Arts, Salurinn, Kópavogur Music School and the town of Kópavogur where young talented pianists will be able to enhance their musical achievements among professional educators and concert artists in a friendly environment.

A musician who loves all the beautiful and kind things life has to offer dr. Nína Margrét Grímsdóttir has performed in Europe, USA, Canada, Japan and China, including concertos with the Royal Chamber Orchestra in Tokyo, the Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Reykjavík Chamber Orchestra, Iceland Amateur Symphony Orchestra and the Reykjavik Wind Quintet. Nína Margrét has performed in various music festivals such as the Reykjavik Arts festival, Reykholt chamber music festival, Dark Music Days, Azaleu Festival and Whitehorse Circumpolar Festival. Nína Margrét is President of the WPTA Iceland and WPTA appointed juror. A founder and artistic director of the acclaimed international concert series Reykjavik Classics in Harpa concert hall as well as concert series in Salurinn and Cultural Center Gerduberg 2001-2019 dr. Grímsdóttir has recorded five CDs for Naxos, BIS, Acte Préalable and Skref. Her CDs and concerts have received excellent reviews in Gramophone Awards Issue, BBC Music Magazine, Glasgow Herald, Crescendo-Magazine, Xi án Evening News and High Fidelity. Her 2001 CD recording of the piano works of dr. Páll Ísólfsson on BIS Records was nominated for the Icelandic Music Awards and her published doctoral dissertation on this subject as well as her masters thesis on Icelandic piano music have aroused interest internationally on Icelandic cultural heritage. Her CDs and published book on the piano works of Páll Ísólfsson are available on Amazon.com. Her grants and honors include the British Council, the American-Scandinavian Foundation, the Iceland Ministry of Culture and Education, City of Reykjavik and an entry in the 2003 edition of “Contemporary Icelanders – the life and work of well-known people” (Vaka-Helgafell). Nína Margrét holds a D.M.A. performance degree from the City University of New York as well as degrees and diplomas from City University of London, the Mannes College of Music, the

Guildhall School of Music and Drama and the Reykjavík College of Music. Dr. Nína Margrét Grímsdóttir is on the adjunct faculty of the Iceland University of the Arts music department, Chair of the Advanced studies department at Tónskóli Sigursveins School of Music, Dir. of International cooperation Erasmus+, the Kópavogur Music School piano faculty and Examiner of the Icelandic Music Schools' Examinations Board. Previous teaching includes masterclasses and teaching as visiting guest professor University of Agder, University of Karlstad and the Reykjavik College of Music. Nína Margrét has served on the advisory board of the 2021 Nordic International Piano Competition, having served as a member of the pre-selection jury of the 2017 NIPC and currently Chair of the jury for the 2025 Northern Lights Piano Festival and Competition. She has forty years teaching experience in the field of piano and chamber music, lecturing and advising at the undergraduate level, high-school level and secondary school level. Her students include top prize winners and semi-finalists of EPTA Iceland competition 2021, 2018 & 2009; Göteborg International Piano Competition 2024, Sweden, Vienna Classic Stars International Piano Festival & Competition 2024, Austria, Young Eurigio International Piano Competition, Germany and 12th International Piano Competition for Young Musicians 2024, Netherlands and Polstjärnepriset 2025 finalist in Sweden, WPTA Spain ICC2024; VIII Odin International Music Competition 2023 Chamber music & 2022 Piano; VI Future Stars International Piano Competition 2021; Trinity International Music Competition 2021; Royal Sound Music Competition 2021; Chopin competition Iceland 2018; 2nd Junior Nordic Piano Competition 2023 & 2021 & Tapiola Youth Piano Competition 2023 & 2019 semi-finals, French Connection Academy 2023 and the 30th Amadeus International Mozart Competition 2023 in the Czech Republic.

Peter Máté Peter Máté was born in Roznava in the former Czechoslovakia. He studied with Ludmila Kojanová in Kosice and Valentina Kameníková at the Prague Academy of Music, AMU. As a student he won prizes both in his home country and at international contests such as Vercelli and Enna in Italy in 1986 and 1989. Peter has lived in Iceland since 1990. He is a teacher at the Reykjavik College of Music (MÍT), head of instrumental studies at the Iceland University of the Arts and since 2017, a piano professor. Peter has given solo recitals and chamber concerts far and wide: Iceland, Slovakia, Czech republic, Hungary, Serbia Slovenia, Germany, France, Netherlands, England, Greenland, Turkey and USA. He has performed as soloist with various orchestras, e.g. Slovak Philharmony, Prague Symphonic Orchestra FOK, Berlin Radio Orchestra, Iceland Symphony Orchestra. Peter was a member of the Reykjavik Piano Trio for 18 years and the Kópavogur Flute Trio and other chamber groups. Peter gives frequently piano and chamber music master classes, e.g. in Budapest, Chicago, Graz, Helsinki, Oslo, Stockholm, Poznan, Finland, Serbia, Slovakia and he has been a jury member of various contests. Many of Peter's pupils are now prestigious pianists and piano teachers.

Erna Vala Arnardóttir pianist is founder and artistic director of Seigla. Erna Vala's performance career is marked by solo performances with orchestras and appearances at festivals worldwide. Notable events include the Ung Nordisk Musik Festival and Nordic Music Days in Reykjavík, Culture Night, Sígildir Sunnudagar, ISO's Our Classics and Seigla at Harpa Concert Hall, Last Rose of Summer in Germany, Concertos Comentarios, SIPO, Porto Pianofest in Portugal, Við Djúpið in Ísafjörður, Fulbright Arctic Initiative in Washington D.C. and the Albignac Piano Festival in France, among others.

Erna Vala performs with various chamber groups such as the piano quartet No Name Ensemble and the Elja chamber ensemble. Erna Vala won the Young Soloists Competition of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra in 2014 and the EPTA Piano Competition in Iceland in 2015. She was awarded the White Rose, a Finnish medal of honor, by President Sauli Niinistö in 2018 and a Fulbright Fellowship in 2019. Erna Vala holds a master's degree in piano performance from the Sibelius Academy earned in 2019 under the guidance of Hamsa Juris. Additionally, she received the master's degree in music education from the Iceland University of the Arts in 2023. She also holds a bachelor's degree and a junior department diploma in piano performance at the Iceland University of the Arts, where she studied with Peter Máté. She is currently based in London working on PhD Performance Research at the Royal Academy of Music. As an enthusiastic advocate for fostering positive communities, Erna Vala serves as the founder and president of the Icelandic Schumann Society. This non-profit cultural foundation is dedicated to supporting a healthy and active music scene in Iceland. Erna Vala's website: www.ernavala.is