

CONCORDIA COLLEGE

NEW YORK

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CONCORDIA CONSERVATORY ANNOUNCES NEW ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PIANO AND STRING DEPARTMENT HEADS

Bronxville, NY- Concordia Conservatory is pleased to announce its new administrative positions effective July, 2009. Brook Packard has been named the Assistant Director of Concordia Conservatory. From 2009 through 2011, Melissa Alexander and George François have been appointed to co-head of the piano department, and Rami Vamos will lead the String Department.

Brook Packard is a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College studying with Sheila Schonbrun. From 1990 on, she recorded two critically well-received children's albums, working with George Wurzbach, Tom Paxton, Robert Mirabal, and Larry Campbell. Brook was in the original casts of "Swingtime Canteen" and "Cowgirls" as well as performing in regional theater, and cabaret. She has been an editor and author for Music Sales Corporation and worked as Music Specialist in early childhood education with schools in New York City, Greenwich, CT, Pelham and New Rochelle. Her administrative experience includes several church music positions with youth and liturgical programs. She has served on the Concordia Conservatory voice faculty since 2005.

Melissa Alexander is active as a collaborative artist, vocal coach, soloist and educator in the tri-state area. She is a member of the eclectic quintet MUSICORA of which she and the soprano Marigene Kettler are founders. She is assistant music director of Grace Episcopal Church in Nyack, NY. An energetic educator, Melissa has initiated and directed summer piano camp programs at both Rockland Conservatory of Music in Spring Valley, NY and Wharton Music Center in Berkeley Heights, NJ. Ms. Alexander is on the faculty of the Rockland Conservatory of Music, Westchester Community College and Concordia Conservatory. Ms. Alexander studied at the Mannes School of Music and received her Master of Music in piano performance and pedagogy from the Hartt School of Music.

George François has performed as a soloist and collaborator in Africa, Europe, and extensively in the United States. In New York City he has played at Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center, The Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum, Yamaha Piano Studios, Trinity Recital Series, and The Alfred Lerner Hall among other venues. Prizes include second place in the 2002 Bartok-Prokofiev-Kabalevsky International piano competition, and the Kathryn G. Obenshain Award in the same competition. Mr. Francois lectured in the music department at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville from 1999-2002, and currently teaches at Manna House Workshop in East Harlem, Concordia Conservatory and at the Manhattan School of Music as an associate teacher. Recent international engagements have included command performances for the President of Ghana in 2007 as well as solo recitals and master classes in St. Lucia. Mr. Francois is managed by NIA Production Company, Inc. He received his music education from the University of Ghana, The Royal Northern College of Music in the United Kingdom, The University of Texas at Austin, The Juilliard School and SUNY, Stony Brook.

Combining his talents as guitarist, composer, songwriter and educator, **Rami Vamos** shares the stage with other musicians and actors to bring original material to audiences of all ages. His children's musicals include *Monsterland*, *The Amazing Tale of Prince Pickles*, *Once Upon A Time Signature* and *Introducing: Wolfgang Amadeus Schmutzinberry*, *Egbert The Scaredy Cat*, and *Marsha The Martian*. In the fall of 2006, Vamos was commissioned to write a musical entitled, *The 12 Days of Christmas*, through a grant from the NY State Music Fund for Concordia Conservatory. Mr. Vamos has performed and written for Pacifica String Quartet, members of the St. Louis Symphony, Marc Teicholz, Keith Underwood, Amy Oshiro, Mark Stewart, The Newman and Oltman Guitar Duo, and members of the Turtle Island String Quartet. Mr. Vamos holds a Master's of music education from Queens College, M.M. from Yale University, and B.M. from Oberlin College Conservatory. He is on the faculty of the Colonial and Siwanoy Schools in Pelham, as well as Concordia Conservatory and is a teaching artist with Chamber Music Society at Lincoln Center.

Concordia Conservatory's mission is to inspire, instruct, and enrich lives through music for all people, regardless of age, ethnic origin, or financial situation and to serve as a musical education resource for the southern Westchester County community.