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The Merion Hosts a Special Musical Afternoon with "Cinemusicale"

EVANSTON, Ill. — Music is an integral part of the culture and personality of The Merion, a senior living community in the heart of Evanston. But on August 21 at 1:30 p.m., movie clips and piano accompaniment will fill the ballroom as Dr. Marv Berman performs "Cinemusicale".

"Cinemusicale" is a live musical tour through popular movie clips. Dr. Berman recounts interesting and little known anecdotes about the movies as he improvises their musical scores on the piano. "Music is such an integral part of The Merion," said Margaret Gergen, director of leasing. "We are located in a community that values all cultural offerings, but especially, great music. And with our close proximity to Chicago and to Northwestern University, there's an abundance of great talent from which to choose."

Each week, the luxury retirement community located in the heart of downtown Evanston, features live music in the Crystal Lounge on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and weekly piano and violin concerts in the Crystal Ballroom. The Acoustic Sound Series at The Merion features entertainers including Jenny and Robin Bienemann, Freeman and Bouchard, and Mark Dvorak. Internationally acclaimed singers such as Spider Saloff perform at The Merion, as do local favorites including Ridgeville Band of Evanston.



Dr. Marv Berman

Host of "Cinemusicale" at The Merion

In addition to welcoming musical entertainers, The Merion also nurtures up-and-coming talent. Ten years ago, The Merion launched the Annual Opera Idol program, its highly anticipated vocal competition for aspiring opera singers in Chicagoland. The winner of the competition receives a full scholarship with airfare to attend the nationally recognized two-week opera workshop directed by baritone Sherrill Milnes and the non-profit VOICEperience in Savannah, Georgia. Throughout the course of the year, young opera stars perform at The Merion, and the culminating competition each spring draws a standing-room-only crowd.

"Dr. Berman's performance will be a unique and special treat for the audience," says Gergen. Berman has been a musician for most of his life, starting as a young child when he toured the country with his family as part of the Steinway (piano) Concert Artists. Berman's claim to fame is having been the official World Champion Marathon Piano Player in 1960 when he played for 73 hours, 27 minutes in Woolworth's window in Chicago to promote the movie "Song Without End."

Berman is an Equity Actor, having starred in a number of stage shows. As an ardent admirer and interpreter of music composed for the cinema, Berman can skillfully perform a large library of music dating back to the first talkies and continuing to the most current music composed for today's movie blockbusters. Berman's "Cinemusicale" program will include clips of his favorite movies, accompanied by interesting facts and anecdotes, and music. "Plato said, 'Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything,'" said Gergen. "The Merion embodies that belief."