

Ralph Votapek is professor emeritus of piano at the Michigan State University College of Music. He was the Gold Medalist of the first Van Cliburn International Piano Competition and winner of the prestigious Naumburg Award. Votapek has appeared many times with the Chicago Symphony and has played with the Philadelphia Orchestra, the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonics, the Boston Pops, and the Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Houston, Dallas, and St. Louis National Symphonies. He has toured from London to Taiwan and has made a special commitment to Latin America where he has toured for nearly 50 years. A 50th anniversary tour is planned for 2016. Votapek was the soloist on Arthur Fiedler's last Boston Pops recording. In recent years he has recorded prolifically for the Ivory Classics and Blue Griffin labels. His wife, Albertine, frequently joins him in two-piano and four-hand recitals. Votapek is now retired from Michigan State University, where he served as artist-in-residence for 36 years. Born in 1939 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Votapek began his musical education at age nine when he enrolled in the Wisconsin Conservatory. Continuing his studies at Northwestern University, he subsequently attended the Manhattan School of Music and The Juilliard School.