

# Piano Prodigies

*88 Keys, 10 Fingers, No Problem!*

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## **Happy New Year!**

At this point, we are 17 lessons into the school year, with 17 remaining. Now is the perfect time to reflect on what we have accomplished as well as what we can do to improve and grow in the weeks to come. Some questions to reflect on:

- Do I have a set daily practice time? Am I successful in getting to the instrument and using the time effectively and efficiently (without distractions)?
- Do I understand how to practice? Do I have a practice routine that incorporates all of the following: warm-up/technique work, in-depth problem-solving practice of assigned pieces, recorded play-throughs of pieces that are nearing performance level, reviewing of older pieces?
- Do I practice playing by ear - figuring out a familiar tune without using music, or improvising? AND do I work on my sight-reading skills so that I don't just rely on my ears?

*Elizabeth Borowsky*

# Featured Students

**Nate Holt**  
(age 11)



**Why do you love piano?** I love the feeling of accomplishment. I love being able to play my favorite songs, like Harry Potter, Star Wars, Indiana Jones. **What's a practice challenge you face, and how do you overcome it?** I get frustrated when I get something wrong. I'm not the best at sight-reading, so learning new music is hard. To overcome this, I practice every measure several times. **What are your favorite practice tips?** Write in the fingering. If there is a note that you don't know, write the letter next to it so that you can remember it. Work on the hardest piece first so that you are feeling the sharpest. Always do a warm-up. **What's your favorite piece you have played so far?** My favorite piece is hide'n'seek by Elizebeth Borowsky. This is my favorite piece because it is very jazzy and fun. **What's your dream piece?** I want to play a rock piece because I love rock music. I would like to play music by AC/DC, Queen, or the White Stripes. **What's your proudest accomplishment in piano?** My proudest accomplishment is playing with an orchestra in New York City, where I used to live. When I was five years old, my piano teacher invited her students to play with a small orchestra. The name of my piece was "Once I Caught a Fish" and I had to wear a tuxedo. **What are you learning towards in terms of a future career?** I don't know what I want to be when I grow up but I may want to be a marine biologist.

**Why do you love piano?** I started piano at a pretty young age (6). My whole family has played music so I was encouraged to learn. These days, I enjoy it as an exercise for mental challenge. It's great for helping me wake up in the morning, and relax in the evening. And, I enjoy the satisfaction of setting a goal and working to achieve it. **What's your favorite practice tip?** I use a pyramid structure in my practice: start with something easy and fun, then go on to the hard work and drilling that requires more attention and focus, or watching a video of myself practicing and self-critique, and then close out my practice with something easier. I borrowed this concept from my track training! **What is your proudest accomplishment in piano?** In fifth grade, I learned "We are the Champions." It's one of the first pieces I picked out by myself. I spent a ton of time on it - I really enjoyed learning it and then performed it in front of a large audience. And it went really well. I got some recognition for it, and it has led me to take on other big pieces with confidence. **What are your goals in piano?** I'd love to perform in formal settings and take on some works by famous classical composers, like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. I'd also like to learn modern and contemporary works like The Banshee, that use creative and new techniques and push me to my edge. **What are you learning towards in terms of a future career?** Right now I'm interested in business and politics, but it's a bit too early for me to say what path I'm going to take!

**Ben Hourdequin**  
(age 12)





# 5 Tips for a Better Online Lesson Experience

The pandemic has "inspired" me to work on my online teaching and technology skills. Along the way, I have picked up a few tips that I want to share with you to improve your online lesson experience. Technology isn't always perfect/predictable but we can stack the odds in our favor! I am hoping that as things improve and vaccinations roll out, we can start looking at the possibility of in-person lessons again. But for the time being, I am grateful for technology allowing us to work this way.

(1) **Maximize your wi-fi connection speed.** Consider upgrading if available, adding a wi-fi booster, or using a wired (ethernet) connection. Avoid any other devices streaming during lesson time as these tend to slow down our connection.

(2) **Set up ahead of time** (see [PianoProdigies.com/setup](http://PianoProdigies.com/setup)). Check the height of the camera - I want to see you and your hands, and I want you to see me clearly! Be sure you have your music (including theory assignments), a pen/pencil, and metronome ready

(3) **Check your Zoom settings** so I can hear you at your best. Select Original Sound before every lesson. See [www.PianoProdigies.com/setup](http://www.PianoProdigies.com/setup)

(4) **Consider wearing headphones** so you can hear me better

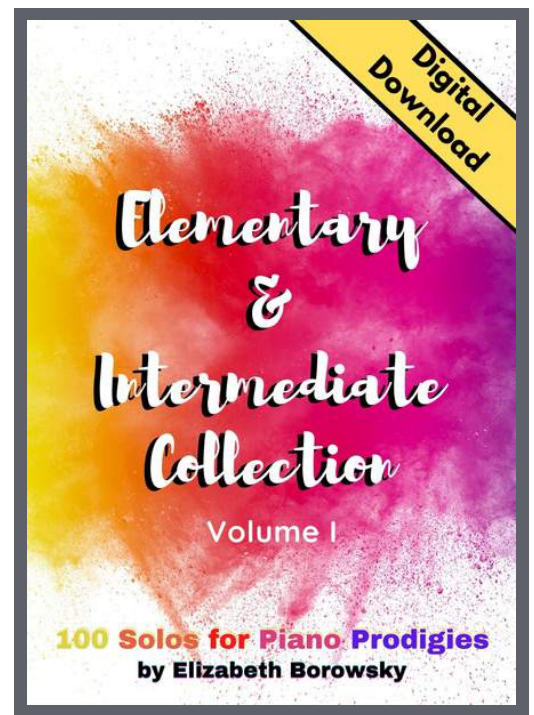
(5) **Check your online lesson log** after your lesson and use it throughout the week!



## 100 Solos for Piano Prodigies: Progress Update

Thanks to YOUR help, 100 Solos for Piano Prodigies is moving forward! **The first 20 pieces are up on the website; check it out:**  
[www.ElizabethBorowsky.com/music](http://www.ElizabethBorowsky.com/music)

For details on the project:  
[www.PianoProdigies.com/blog](http://www.PianoProdigies.com/blog)



# January 2020 Piano Prodigies Online Recital Program

LINK: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLURRwsHEp~JuvC1iQ4XYxR5H3HQBNO0>

**Gala Norton:**

**The Pony Cha Cha (Borowsky)**

**Arjun Greer:**

**Looking Glass River (Faber & Faber), Dance of the Six Chameleons (Borowsky)**

**Fred Cheng:**

**Dance Paradisaeidae (Borowsky)**

**Margaret Houdequin:**

**This Is The Day! (Borowsky)**

**Yumi Drescher:**

**Für Elise (Beethoven), Adventure of the Planets (Borowsky)**

**Henry Caterini:**

**Oh Shenandoah (Traditional American)**

**Nate Holt:**

**Theme from The Avengers (Alan Silverstri, arr. Borowsky)**

**Ben Hourdequin:**

**Mazurka Op. 24 No. 1 (Chopin), Chopin 2010 (Borowsky)**

**Nicole Suckow:**

**Dance Off! (Borowsky), Dance Off 2! (Borowsky)**

**Liana Lansigan:**

**Underwater Ballet (Borowsky)**

**Amica Lansigan:**

**Reaching for Infinity (Borowsky)**

*I encourage you to make this a family "movie premiere" event. Print out the program, set up your home theatre (external speakers encouraged for better sound quality), grab some yummy snacks, and enjoy an incredible recital by current Piano Prodigies students. Feel free to clap, shout "Bravo," and cheer for each performer! **Total recital playtime: approx. 35 minutes.***

# Violin, Viola, Cello, & Piano Lessons

***Do you know someone (child or adult) looking for violin, viola, cello, or piano lessons? Although I currently have a waitlist Piano Prodigies, as many of you know, I come from a family of accomplished professional musicians and my siblings and mom have openings in their private studios! Online lessons, with the possibility of occasional in-person lessons when they are in the area!***



## **Prof. Cecylia Barczyk - CELLO and PIANO\***

*Specializes in late intermediate and advanced cello. Great for teens seeking performance and competition preparation, and professionals seeking continuing education. Also available for elementary and intermediate piano lessons - piano students will be invited to transfer to Piano Prodigies when they have reached the intermediate level.*

- 50+ years of professional experience in cello and piano
- 38 years of teaching undergraduate and graduate cello students at Towson University
- Artistic Director: Intermuse International Music Institute
- Website: [www.CecyliaBarczyk.com](http://www.CecyliaBarczyk.com) / Email: [cbarczyk@towson.edu](mailto:cbarczyk@towson.edu)



## **Dr. Emmanuel Borowsky - VIOLIN & VIOLA**

*Dedicated and detail-oriented teacher, very patient and encouraging. Equally comfortable with young kids, teens and adult students.*

- 20 years of professional experience as soloist, chamber musician, and teacher (doctorate from University of Maryland College Park)
- Violin/Viola Faculty at Dickinson College and Towson University.
- Founder: Grace Albert Strings (<http://www.gracealbertstrings.com/>)
- Website: [www.EmmanuelBorowsky.com](http://www.EmmanuelBorowsky.com) / Email: [violineb@gmail.com](mailto:violineb@gmail.com)



## **Dr. Frances Borowsky - CELLO**

*Passionate teacher, great for beginning adult students and early intermediate through early advanced teens!*

- 15 years of professional experience as soloist, chamber musician, and teacher (doctorate from University of Maryland College Park)
- Cello Faculty at Lebanon Valley College
- Website: [www.FrancesBorowsky.com](http://www.FrancesBorowsky.com) / Email: [fgborowsky@gmail.com](mailto:fgborowsky@gmail.com)



# Writers Wanted!

Students and Parents - are you interested in writing a short piece for this newsletter? Please contact me - I would LOVE to have you share your advice and experience on practicing, performing, and making the most of your Piano Prodigies experience, or research a composer, create a listening list, take on an interview with a professional pianist or composer...

Interested? Email me at:  
[info@pianoprodigies.com](mailto:info@pianoprodigies.com)

