

Piano Prodigies

88 Keys, 10 Fingers, No Problem!

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Happy Anniversary! ~~Spring!~~

It has been a year since we moved online, and it has not always been easy. That said, there are some definite, and very impressive, accomplishments that we *can* celebrate!

Student independence: Students have gotten comfortable asking questions, taking notes, and really listening closely to my feedback. It did take a little getting used to as I'm usually the one marking up the music, but they have definitely grown through this process.

Efficiency /Convenience: You save drive time, and lessons go for the full lesson length (minimal changeover time between lessons).

Attendance at lessons and weekly practice is at an all-time high. Although it may be attributed to having fewer activities to juggle, it has made such a wonderful difference to have lessons so consistently! And I have been impressed that many students increased their daily practice time over this year. Remember: the better prepared you are for your lesson, the more you'll get out of it. The more you get out of it, the more fun it becomes. The more fun it becomes, the more you want to continue to improve, and the more time and patience you are willing to put into practicing...

It's not perfect, but I continue to be grateful for this pathway for our studio. Thank YOU for your support!

Musically yours,
Elizabeth

Featured Student: Arjun Gupta



Arjun Gupta
(age 7)

What is it about piano/music that you love? I like that piano and playing music brings me joy and brings joy to other people who hear it.

Tell us about your practice routine - how do you stay organized in practicing? I practice every day. I used to set a timer, but now I just try to play all my pieces every day and really focus on one or two each day.

What is the hardest challenge you face in practicing? How do you overcome it? I find it hard to stay on the beat when I play with the metronome. I try to really hear the beat of the metronome, and sometimes march around the room to the beat. Also, I practice perseverance and am slowly finding that it is getting easier.

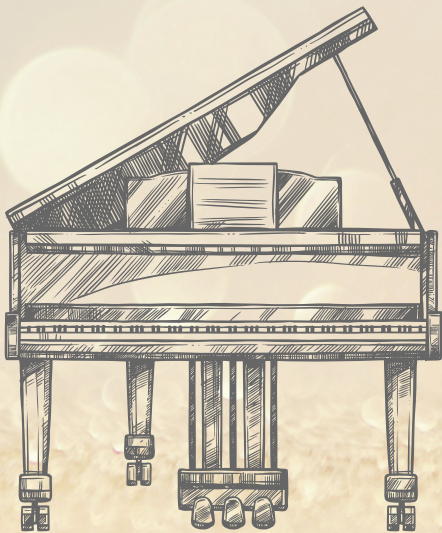
What is your favorite practice tip? I like to read the notes from my lessons and break down the parts to practice into smaller pieces.

What is your favorite piece you have played so far (and why)? I like all the pieces that I have played. I enjoy learning new music and figuring out how to make each piece sound the best that I can.

What is your dream piece you want to play? I want to learn all of Ms. Borowsky' pieces!

What is your proudest accomplishment in piano? I'm proud of my effort and hard work, doing the best I can on every piece that I play.

What are your career goals? To be the best pianist that I can be!



Featured Student: Nicole Suckow



Nicole Suckow
(age 15)

What is it about piano/music that you love? The way my fingers and mind work together to learn an insane amount of notes in a small amount of time is insane to me!

Tell us about your practice routine - how do you stay organized in practicing? I practice 6 days a week for an hour - usually after school or in the evenings. I have to make sure that there is nothing around me that might make me want to get up or become unfocused, as practicing requires a lot of focus and determination. I try and keep all of my songs in a binder and have multiple items like pencils and highlighters ready to mark my music. Over the past year I have learned to take a lot of the tips that Ms. Elizabeth gives me in lessons and apply them to every new piece I play - there is a lot of overlap and this helps make the learning process more efficient. One of my favorite practicing tips is to play the music from various points starting at the end of the piece or to use rhythm exercises.

What is the hardest challenge you face in practicing? How do you overcome it? Memorization has always been one of the hardest parts of piano for me, so using the above techniques helps get a piece into my mind faster and more efficiently.

What is your favorite piece you have played so far (and why)? I have always wanted to learn Ludwig van Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata." Last year I decided that I was ready to take the time to learn it. Now, almost a year later, I have almost completed it and am very proud of how far I have come. I love how smooth and expressive the first movement is, but then how exciting and fast the last movement is. Once I complete this piece I am hoping to find many other pieces to play that can give me the same excitement and bring out more emotion in my playing.

What is your proudest accomplishment in playing piano? What are your goals for the future? I entered my first piano competition in 2017 and I ended up winning first place. Knowing that I really could play well started giving me a lot more confidence in my playing and made me want to keep playing, and improve my piano performance. In doing so I am hoping to minor in piano performance when I get to college, to keep playing piano and to always share music for others. Piano is one of the biggest parts of my life, I love music and it helps me be free and relax even when it takes so much work. I know that all the effort I have put in now will definitely benefit me in the future in helping me take on new pieces with confidence!

Piano Prodigies: The Journey to NCTM

The majority of my professional education focused on the skills related to music performance: the study of a wide range of classical and modern repertoire, theory, harmony, ear training, and history. I started lessons at four, participated in festivals, competitions, and masterclasses along the way, and was performing internationally by my teens. A turning point in my life was when I received a graduate teaching assistantship at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University. This assistantship provided the opportunity to receive a graduate education at one of the world's best music programs in exchange for instructing group piano classes, teaching music minors, preparing music majors for the keyboard proficiency exam, and teaching advanced pianists taking music as an elective (note: among my first students: one who had recently received her master's degree in piano performance!).

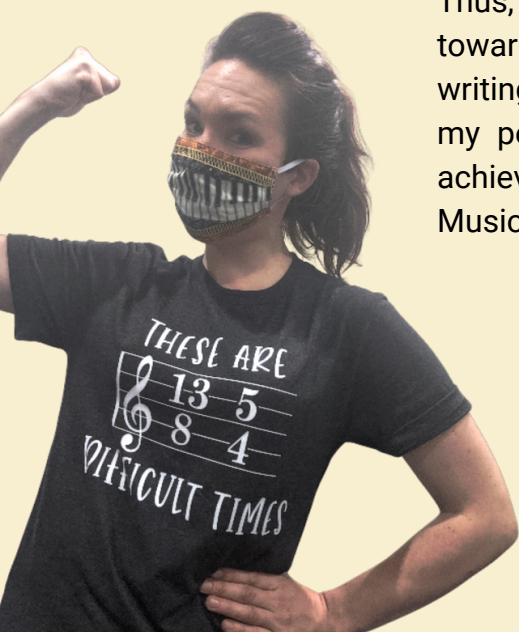
After graduating from IU in December 2007, I started teaching full time at two pre-college programs: ARTIST Music and The Maryland Conservatory alongside some teaching at Morgan State University and Towson University. Much of my teaching was based on my own studies: the process I went through and the teachers who inspired me. I also absolutely credit my parents: both have had long careers in education and I have observed their teaching many times. They balance expertise in their fields with a passion for cultivating curiosity and excellence in their students.

In 2011, I founded Piano Prodigies in Baltimore, Maryland. I soon had a full studio and was excited was wonderful to see students grow up as young people and as musicians. In 2015, I was enjoying sending these students to local festivals and competitions in (after six years of studies, many were at the point of just starting to take on advanced repertoire) when I found out that I'd be moving to New Hampshire. Starting over would be a challenge, so it seemed that now would be the time to re-invest in my professional development.

The Music Teachers National Association is one of the oldest and most revered organizations for musicians in this country. I had attended state and national conferences and heard about the National Certified Teacher of Music distinction. I was eager to balance my performance degrees with something that would reflect my dedication to teaching.

Thus, I enrolled in the certification process and began two years of working towards this distinction. This included a fair amount of assignments: reading, writing, and submitting videos of my teaching. Finally, the time came to submit my portfolio.. Weeks later I received the good news: national certification achieved! (and, thereby becoming the only Nationally Certified Teacher of Music (any instrument) by MTNA in the Upper Valley).

And... just like students engage in a long-term commitment to learning, so do teachers. We can *always* expand and grow our skills! MTNA requires that I submit a portfolio annually (indicating my professional activities and continuing education) to receive a renewal of this certification. 2021 marks my fourth renewal, received this just a couple of weeks ago. Thank you for your support and inspiration!



April 2021 Piano Prodigies Online Recital Program

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLURRwsHEp--Jqh9dmT7Q25PKVfV2wLZbZ>

Gala Norton

The Pony Cha Cha (Borowsky)

Fred Cheng

A Million Stars, Ode to Orcas (Borowsky)

Arjun Gupta

Congo River Journey, The Tiny Rocket Ship,
King of the Woods, Seventh Galaxy, When Planets Align (Borowsky)

Darius Faudie

Lemur Limerick (Borowsky)

Dash Wooten

Rampin Riff (Borowsky)

Henry Caterini

Dizzytown (Borowsky)

Nora Williams

Traversing the Ocean of Dreams (Borowsky)

Shaashwat Lavi Halwawala

Entropy (Borowsky)

Ben Hourdequin

Rondo alla Turca (Mozart)

Amalia Hickey

In Motion (Borowsky)

Liana Lansigan

Reminiscence (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.***



Check Out These Online Resources

<https://www.nyphilkids.org/>

Games about instruments, composers, musical styles, conductors and soloists.
Plus "make your own instrument and listen to concerts!

<https://www.classicsforkids.com/>

Listen! Play! Learn! Activity sheets on composers, and interactive dictionary of terms, composer your own music, ear training exercises, musical eras, and learn The Music of Freedom (songs that helped the slaves escape to the north, as well as others that celebrate freedom).

http://www.musictechteacher.com/music_quizzes/music_quizzes.htm

Games and quizzes,: instruments, composers, musical terms, note identification, and rhythm! beginner through late intermediate levels.

<http://www.emusictheory.com/practice.html>

Note and key recognition drills, rhythm dictation.
Intermediate/advanced levels.

<https://bulletproofmusician.com/>

Want to perform better under pressure? Learn how performance psychology can help you beat nerves and perform your very best on stage. Subscribe to the blog (it's AWESOME) and check out the free resources!

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 / Email: 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 / Email: 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 / Email: 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

