

The STUDIO NEWSLETTER

Helen R. Weems Piano Studio *** March/April 2017

Tip #18: Confidence in Performance



As recital and competition season ramps up, our thoughts turn to preparing for a good performance experience. Nerves are expected: No nerves, and the playing falls flat; too nervous, and hands can become discombobulated. How to find a middle ground and offer your best performance? We all can't play (or dress -- for Pete's sake, **don't**) like Yuja Wang above, but what makes her and others -- Bezhod Abduraimov, Yekwon Sunwoo, Anderson & Roe -- so confident is easy to sum up: Practice, practice, practice; prepare, prepare, prepare.

Toward a Confident Performance:

1. Learn your music by memory at least four weeks before your event.
2. Then memorize your music hands separately.
3. Then play it with your eyes closed.
4. Fall asleep at night visualizing the page.
5. Daily: play the scales, cadences and arpeggios of your pieces.
6. Play your pieces for all your friends and family -- drive them crazy with sample performances. Make every Rep Class; ask to play in all MTA recitals.
7. Daily - Practice *practice*: that is, play your music with the music in front of you, analyzing every possible mistake, fingering, phrasing. Practice slowly. Practice each mistake until you can play it flawlessly five times.
8. Daily - Practice *performance*: "perform" your piece by playing without stopping from beginning to end, at performance tempo. Assess what went well, what didn't, and go back to item 7 immediately.
9. For serious performance anxiety: Ask me for book recommendations; try meditation; or write a mastery script (again, ask me about this).



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1 *** STUDIO RE-OPENS *** STANDARD LESSONS RESUME

Sat, Mar 4	2:45 & 3:45pm	Theory Class followed by Back2Normal Rep
Saturday, March 11	all day	MSMTA Theory Testing @ Lime Kilm MS!!!
Sunday, March 26	all day	MSMTA Ensemble Comp @ UMCP
Sunday, Apr 23	3:15pm (3:30-5)	Spring Repertory Class
Wed/Fri Apr 26&28	morning	MSMTA High School Exam (Christ Mem)
Saturday, Apr 29	all day	GCMTA Spring Competition (local venues)
Sunday, April 30	3-4pm	Ralph Votapek Piano Master Class (HCC)
Saturday, May 6	all day	MSMTA Piano Solo Competition (UMCP)
Sunday, May 7	7:15pm (7:30)	SPRING CONCERT (Christ Episcopal)

whew . . .

February 2017 Summary:



I'm back, as you may have noticed, and we had a wonderful time with friends and family in rainy California. By now you all know that, indeed, you experienced warmer weather than did I. I am photographed here at the famous and huge "Morning Glory" Hole at Berryessa Dam in Napa County – the water hasn't risen high enough to drain through the hole near the dam **in over 10 years** and, yup, I was there to see it happen.

Regardless, the break from winter and schedule, the ability to drive through beautiful mustard-blooming rows of vineyards, interspersed with the opportunity to see and work with my students via FaceTime and Skype, was wonderful. I can't imagine a better vacation – it was the best of both worlds

As far as those lessons went, I was pleased with the results. Parents went out of their way to get their kids wired and ready (thank you, thank you, thank you!). The schedule and the technology worked. Best yet, my students practiced! Some students even FT'ed me ahead of their lesson!

And now the proof will be in the pudding on March 4 at the Back2Normal Rep Class . . .