

THE PIANO SCHOOL OF NYC, INC NEWSLETTER

December 2007

Volume 5 Issue 1

Greetings from the Founder

**Dear Students, Parents, Teachers, School Principals & Administration Staff, and all our Friends:
Congratulations to all students on your achievements in Piano and to the teachers for another
great year in your professional careers!**

As the founder and executive director for the past 7 years, I truly have become the ambassador for music education. I personally feel responsible for every lesson or class we organize, and seek the best teachers we could possibly find to fit all needs. Our programs have been polished through trial and error, and with careful consideration to form every curriculum designed by our talented faculty, I am truly honored to see our students blossom.

We continue to grow in Brooklyn with great assistance from our Brooklyn Branch manager. We are slowly but surely developing programs in Queens, and now with new Uptown & the Bronx manager, we hope to expand more in Uptown neighborhoods.

The Piano School programs have expanded to over 60 schools and over 1500 students.

We have been able to provide full and partial scholarships to more than 300 students this past year due to the generous donations made to our sister organization, the Piano Outreach of New York (PONY). We are eager to continue to grow our Board of Directors & Advisors, and actively seeking volunteers to join us in our mission.

Multiple thanks to all school administrations, parent volunteers for their dedication to make it work; to all parents for their support and feedback; to all students for their effort and commitments, and to our faculty and staff for their leadership and sense of excellence.

Most sincerely,

Vera Barskaya Anselmo

Executive Director

Piano School of NYC

Piano Outreach of New York



Mission Statement:

**OUR MISSION IS TO DEVELOP CULTURED AND LITERATE GENERATIONS THROUGH
THE CAREFUL AND COMPLETE MUSICAL EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN AND
ADULTS WHO HAVE THE COMMITMENT AND DESIRE TO LEARN.**



Our Administration

Christina Kulick / Brooklyn Branch Manager



Whether as teacher or student, artist or audience, behind the scenes or center stage, Ms. Kulick is a devoted advocate for Music and the Arts. As a small child eager to be like her older sisters, who twirled batons and took Piano lessons, she insisted on doing the same and thus the seeds of a lifelong habit of music were planted. After many years of equal parts voice lessons, dance class, school plays and disrupting family dinners and peaceful drives in the car with boisterous singing, she received the Minna Kaufman Ruud Vocal Scholarship to Chatham College in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Here she immersed herself in studies of Classical Voice, Piano and Theatre and received her BA in Music and Theatre in 1999, graduating Cum Laude. Honored as the only student in the College's history to write and perform two Senior Theses, she was asked to perform a song of farewell at the commencement ceremony and recalls feeling her time there had come to full circle, ending as it began, with song. Relocating to New York brought many years of enjoying the beguiling Arts scene, writing and performing original music and Jazz standards and working as the Musical Director for a large restaurant corporation in Manhattan booking Jazz and R&B bands for live entertainment and special events. In 2004, Ms. Kulick joined the faculty of The Piano School of NYC and has been committed to teaching her wonderful students ever since, through both private lessons and group Piano classes at several schools in Brooklyn. Continually inspired by her students' joy and growth, she is quite sure they have taught her to grow as well both as a Musician and as an Educator. Working with a team of collaborators, she has composed the score to "Zuly in the Last Place on Earth", a new Family Musical that radiantly promotes the positive messages of peaceful conflict resolution and being true to yourself. Through the development process, "Zuly" was under consideration in the 2006 Global Search for New Musicals and enjoyed its first public performances in 2007 in New York City in both the Warning: Not for Broadway Musical Theatre Festival and The Midtown International Theatre Festival. In addition to her teaching at The Piano School, Ms. Kulick is pleased to have joined the administrative team as Brooklyn Branch Manager to help the Piano Programs grow and bring much needed Music Education to many more deserving students. To contact, kindly e-mail Christina at christina@pianoschoolofnyc.com

To contact, kindly e-mail: christina@pianoschoolofnyc.com



Daita Ciobanu / Uptown & Bronx Branch Manager

Daita Ciobanu is a graduate of the University of Bucharest, Romania majoring in Biology & Biochemistry with a Specialization in Molecular Biology and Biotechnologies. She has received her M.A and M. Phil. from Columbia University in New York City, and is currently working towards her Ph.D. in Biological Sciences at Columbia University. As the mother of a 5-year old, she always wanted for her daughter, Claire, to be initiated in music early in life. Daita learned about piano classes offered through the Piano School of NYC at a neighborhood daycare and singed-up Claire for classes when she was 3. After a year, thrilled by the positive experience with the piano classes, Daita introduced the piano program at Claire's new preschool working as a parent volunteer. She joined the Piano School's administrative team as Upper Manhattan/Harlem Manager in June 2007. Ms. Ciobanu establishes Piano Classes Programs in the Upper Manhattan schools and after-school programs. To contact or schedule an appointment, please e-mail;

daita@pianoschoolofnyc.com



Andrew Anselmo / Assistant Director

We welcome our New Assistant Director Andrew Anselmo! Graduate from the School of General Studies of Columbia University, Andrew will continue to expand Group Classes Piano Programs throughout New York Metropolitan area. Feel free to contact him at the following e-mail address: andrew@pianoschoolofnyc.com



Non Profit Updates (PONY)

PONY Board of Directors:

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In New York City school districts, extracurricular activities for children, particularly in music and the arts, are continuously cut due to minimal funds. Schools cannot afford expose their students to the wonders of music, and often neither can their parents.

To combat this loss of music education, **Piano Outreach of New York**, a nonprofit organization dedicated to exposing music's numerous benefits and joys to children.

PONY's task is simple, strong, and effective: to provide quality piano instruction to children from underprivileged families while instilling the belief that they can, and will, succeed. To carry out its mission, PONY offers scholarships to children from underprivileged backgrounds that eliminate 50% to 80% of the cost of their group lessons. The students learn basic music skills, develop a love for the piano, and absorb music theory and history, all the while enjoying the individualized attention only possible in PONY's small classes of three to six students. And not only does PONY

bring students to the music, but it also brings the music to the students, at times providing schools with pianos or keyboards.

Considering that multiple sources, as cited on the website of The National Association for Music Education, link early music exposure to a higher rate of success in society, school, and life itself, music becomes an essential part of childhood. To continue providing the benefits of music education to young children, PONY has initiated several fundraising efforts since its founding in 2004.

THIS SEMESTER ALONE, WE HAVE GIVEN OUT OVER 300 SCHOLARSHIPS.

PLEASE CONTACT US IF YOU ARE INTERESTED TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT PONY PROGRAMS.



www.pianooutreach.org





Expanding Uptown!

Being a research assistant in Biology, someone might wonder what am I doing as an Uptown and Bronx manager at the Piano School of NYC. However, you don't need to have a musical career in order to appreciate what piano and musical education can bring to one's life.

As a mother of a 5-year old, I always wanted for my daughter, Claire, to be initiated in music early in life. My first contact with the Piano School of NYC was at a neighborhood daycare where I signed-up Claire for classes when she was 3. After a year, thrilled by the positive experience with the piano classes, I introduced the piano program at Claire's new preschool working as a parent volunteer.

This year I have joined the Piano School's administrative team as Uptown and Bronx Manager. My goal is to establish the classes in as many schools and after-school programs in the area as I can. I am a true believer in the program, especially coming into it as a parent. The program helps children tremendously in developing music appreciation and piano skills, and to experience the academic, social and cultural benefits that music education provides. It is not an easy task, and a lot of time goes into persuading the administration of many schools about the benefits of musical education especially at a time when funding for music and the arts is increasingly less available in school classes and extracurricular activities.

However, the children's joy when they go to piano classes, their sparkling eyes when they play their first song at an open class, and their lit proud faces after performing in front of everyone at the annual recital at Jazz at Lincoln Center make it all worth it.

To appreciate this you don't need a musical degree.

I invite you to learn more about us, about our music programs, wonderful students, dedicated teachers and committed staff – and hopefully you'll join our family in one capacity or another.

Sincerely,

Daita Ciobanu,

Uptown and Bronx Manager.

daita@pianoschoolofnyc.com

Hitting Some High Notes in Brooklyn

Having the pleasure of playing dual roles for The Piano School of NYC certainly keeps me on my toes. As Brooklyn Branch Manager, I am responsible for coordinating many Piano Programs throughout Brooklyn Schools, allowing me to help students grow in their Music Education by making these classes possible at their school. A vast amount of planning, phone calls, e-mails, interviews and scheduling goes into making just one school's Piano Classes a reality. I often find after a busy day of work, it is a breath of fresh air to switch gears to go work with my students! As a Faculty Member, I am actively involved in my students' instruction as their Teacher, which allows me to contribute directly to their experience of learning Piano. The students always remind me what all the hard work is for and knowing they have this special opportunity to enjoy Piano as a part of their lives is immeasurable – and what a joy to see them discover new things about Music each day!

Recently this Fall at one of my classes at The Montessori Day School of Brooklyn, I was explaining to three young students the concept of high and low on the keyboard and asked them to go up the keys to the right to find the high notes. When they only moved up a couple keys, I encouraged them to move all the way to the right and they promptly got up from the Piano and ran over to the right side of the room. Needless to say I could not stop laughing – I must say, they were very confident in knowing right and left.

Well, we promise to keep working on our high notes in Brooklyn and an abundance of thanks to the wonderful Teachers, School Administrators and everyone at The Piano School for their support and kindness!

Sincerely,

Christina Kulick

Brooklyn Branch Manager and Faculty Member.

christina@pianoschoolofnyc.com



....hope you are resting after all the recital craziness!! You guys are truly amazing pulling all of those off and I've been getting so much positive feedback from students and their families who participated!



Our family had a wonderful time at the piano recital last week. It was a really important event for her. She is learning not only about piano, but how to stick with an activity, work hard, and get results. Thank you for providing such an essential growing experience for our family.

I can see the results of these classes already in my church music and my reading is coming along well.

Note Worthy

...thanks for working so hard with the kids again this year.

I am writing to tell you that even though so little time has passed since we talked about ways to keep up the practicing, He is really beginning to change! He is genuinely working on the pieces to polish them & to really stay with the challenge, when he doesn't like how he sounds. He told me last week teacher played many pieces for him. He gets a definite far-off, dreamy look when I ask him about his playing. And I really think he is inspiring my son. It was new to see him with an exasperated, but challenged look on his face, just so determined. It was almost like getting a glimpse of him at future ages & how he might persevere in whatever the challenge might be!!

....our school is just thrilled with having The Piano School of NYC as a partner in our school community.

This is absolutely a fantastic program! My son attends it at his school, has for the past year, and did the recital at Jazz @ Lincoln Center--which was very exciting....

Just wanted to get back to you after today's class. Both of the instructors are just delightful and I think will be a pleasure to work with. Today our music teacher went home sick, along with his two student teachers, so I did not have them to help "transition" the Piano School teachers, but I think they were great, and worked well with our class assistant. Afterwards all three of them sat together and swapped notes on the classes and how they will be working. We will all have to be feeling out what will work best with the students, but right away I do like these two young people very much and feel confident we will have a strong program this year. Thank you! (After School Program Director)

Thank you for a beautiful recital day! ... Although I knew that he was loving piano, part of the self-esteem issues with him have been to downplay everything, to feel insecure and apprehensive, and to pretend to not care.

Yesterday he was truly a changed child. He said to us that after doing well, he felt "so proud" of himself that he felt "tingly in his stomach"!

Then he asked if we would change his bedroom around so he could find a special place to hang his "first ever gold medal." Then he went on and on about how he couldn't wait to go to school and talk about the recital with his friends...

Not since very happy pre-school baby times had I seen that look in his eyes of being quite so happy in his own skin. I cannot thank you enough for the impact of your program and of this day. I am sure his story is like that of all the children there.

I have completed my first lesson and it was fantastic. The teacher is great and she has opened my eyes to a new level of things I see as basic. I am looking forward to many lessons from her and I want her to have no mercy on me. I will practice everyday and I will keep a diary of all my lessons. I intend on becoming one of her great students. Thank you so very much for placing me with her.

Thank you so much! My son has clearly crossed over from being a child who plays well to a young adult who can perform. It is a thrill to watch and hear the growth month after month. And he continues to love the feeling of playing. It brings him such joy.

I feel like I had somewhat of a breakthrough where I'm beginning to feel the music more. Very exciting! I've been working on Jingle Bells but it's quite challenging. Not as simple as one would think for such a well-known song!

...thank you for your support. You were absolutely right about trying, and today somehow, out of nowhere I had a huge success with him and had him sitting at the piano for the entire 45 minutes. I did have to pick him up and carry him, but once we were at the piano it was fine. Thanks again and I'm very glad I didn't give it up!

I quizzed my daughter at dinner on 3-4 of the points from the day's lesson and she remembered every one of them.

Annual Recitals at Frederick P. Rose Hall, Home of Jazz at Lincoln Center

Held on May 20th, 30th, & June 24th 2007.

May 20th Recital: "...It's what lights up this great city" by Christine Hong.

The connotation of a recital suggests a modest to elegant setting of a small intimate concert featuring a performer who has either memorized or sight-read a piece to perform on a classical instrument for a small to large audience.

The Piano School of New York City and its charity sister organization, Piano Outreach of New York (PONY), were hosting its first set of Annual Children's Recitals on May 20th. The day started off with a bang, shouts and whistles, and anxious groups of students who were to perform at the Irene Diamond Education Center located on the 5th floor of Jazz at Lincoln Center. The Time Warner Building at Columbus Circle houses Jazz at Lincoln Center, and was about to have just a grandiose organization join the club.



The 10:00 am recital was without a doubt a great lead in to the 10 hour day of student recitals ranging from pre-K to 6 graders from public, Catholic, charter, and academy schools. While each school had a distinct program to itself, the consistency in all of the programs was the tremendous support and enjoyment shared by both the performer and the audience. For those who stuck around there was the 8pm recital of adult students which finished the day off with grace and style featuring works by Chopin, Bartok, and other classical composers.



At the 10:00 am recital, the first group of eager students was from P.S. 87. Varta Tchakarian, the teacher who gives group lessons, said Lilly Hagger of P.S. 87 is only a second semester student who seems really shy but has been opening up with her piano lessons. Lilly and Ethan Osman recently both received keyboards at home and this has made them enjoy playing music even more. The next group of students was from George Jackson mostly fourth and fifth graders. All of the students had good strong melodies and songs that were immediately recognized and really pleased the crowd. Gregory Ransom performed 'Rockin' On'

with such enthusiasm that it felt like everyone in the recital room was transported back to the 1950s for an old rock and blues concert. After each child was given a certificate award and medal for completing the school year and their performance, they happily skipped away to their parents ready to take pictures. With more energy and the anticipation growing, it was hard not to feel the tangibility of the kids' happiness.

Many kids rolled in early for the 12:00 pm recital to play on the piano, some of the young pianists ran up to the grand piano to even just practice. Two boys dressed in their Sunday best dark suits and tie began playing their pieces ahead of time just to make sure they had their notes right. When the crowd had settled and the lights dimmed, Our Lady of Martyr students began the festivities. Although some pieces were not played by a few students, the program was full of recognizable songs.

Lia Tavarez was at first very hesitant at the piano, she eventually grew in assurance with 'He's a Jolly Good Fellow' and 'Silent Night.' There were a few songs that were new mostly because some of the students were learning basic melodies from practice books. So every now and then, the crowd heard whimsical songs like 'The B Song,' 'Off to Bed,' and 'Three Note Symphony.' The P.S. 107 students seemed like the most energetic bunch because in and out of their playing, their joy to perform for the people lit up the recital hall. This energy that emanated from the elementary school kids easily transferred itself to Our Lady Queen of Mercy students. Upon watching and listening to this group of kids it made all of us realize how simple and wonderful music is. Iyanna and Elisha gave bright smiles and grand bows with their hands just so at their waist after their performances. They demonstrated there is a great satisfaction that comes from performing in front of live audience, and hearing the applause confirms their joy of bringing and sharing it with others. The Opportunity Charter School also had many students who really knew their material and played out. When asked about his goals in piano performance after his flawless playing, Chris Sanon said, "I want to play Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata." Clearly, he's ready for the big stuff. His particular instrument of choice is the piano because he says he just loves all the sound it makes. This sounds perfect for anyone who is ready to tackle Beethoven.



At the 2:00 pm recital, kids and parents poured into the recital hall, a lot of pre-kindergarten kids ran around the piano and recital hall chairs and the registration line seemed a mile long. First in the program was the International School of Brooklyn. The stage was packed with at least 15 children trying to wait patiently in their seats for their turn. Tremont United Methodist After School children were the most varying in age from four years old to ten years old kids. Simone Ferraresi who taught at Tremont smilingly said he is rather tired but uplifted at the end of his group lessons by his students. One performance stood out from the rest at Tremont. A duet of Kolby Washington and Jelvin Reynoso's rendition of 'Lean on Me' had a great rhythm to it and was well received with applause and murmurs from the crowd. And just

when you thought you heard it all, P.S. /I.S. 66 of Brooklyn brought out a young boy. He calmly sat down and his legs were just touching the ground when he placed his fingers on the keys to play 'In the Hall of the King.' It was the perfect ending to the program with the echo like reverberations of the piano pedal. Travis Hill at the end of the recital said, "My teacher helped me choose the song I wanted to play and I wanted to play, 'In the Hall of the King.' I like how it sounded and thought it was different." His choice could not have been better.

The 4:00 pm recital was a full house like any Broadway theatre would be on Friday or Saturday nights. It could have been the premiere of the Lion King all over again.

Due to the large amount of students from each school performing, an overflow room was created for each school to wait until their spot in the program.



Swarms of proud parents, friends, and guests filled every seat to the wall and were hard to settle down. Every now and then as one student performed all time favorites like 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,' the other kids would start singing or humming along, a clear sign that kids were really experiencing the music and bonding at the same time. As Vera Anselmo, the director of Piano School of New York once mentioned, the group lesson experience for many students enhances and sometimes changes children's social behavior for the better. Northside Catholic Academy in the waiting room gave a positive reinforcement of that as three girls, Jona, Aryln, and Sol played and talked with each other. Destiny Parker from the Brooklyn Charter School started the next part of the program with her teacher Vadim Neselovskyi. Like many students, she played the melody and her teacher played the chords. Unlike what everyone heard before, together Vadim's jazzy chords and Destiny's strong melody of 'Old MacDonald' enlivened the parents. It also showed being creative with a simple traditional song, kids could have more fun and learn and adapt to the music as well. Unfortunately due to the amount of students in each school the four pm recital ran late.

When the 6:00 pm recital began half an hour later, the program had to be cut short in the count of songs for each child. Every child still performed as parents and friends patiently listened to every not played whether it was the third or fourth performance of the refrain from 'Row, Row, Row Your Boat,' 'Ode to Joy,' or 'Für Elise.' P.S. 198 students Samantha Saweras and Jennie Kablar were well-prepared with their pieces, 'Alouette' and 'The Sleeping Beauty' theme and an excerpt from Dvorak's symphony 'From the New World.'



When all the kids had gone home with their certificates and medals and the hall got empty, the superficial excitement of children seemed absent but it was very much present at the 8:00 pm adult recital. The grand piano gave its real robust

round sound when Chopin's Polonaise-Fantasia was executed by Sebastian Forster the adult program piano instructor. The Argentine pianist created some wonderful dynamics and more brilliant feel to a rather iconic and over done piece. His students also played other classical pieces like Mozart's Piano Sonata in C Major and even popular theatre music.

All in all, the much anticipated annual recital brought what a person expects of music, fun, joy, peace, and the ability to enjoy one another's talents and praise the gift of music itself. All students and teachers left with a great sense of achievement and relief. The parents and friends enjoyed the first memory of their child or nieces or nephews go through the rite of passage of being a performer. Columbus Circle may just have finally received what Lincoln Center experiences everyday, the energy that flows when the music and art come together in young artists and musicians who will carry and spread the love of the performing arts. It's what lights up this great city and it all starts here with the students and teachers at the Piano School of New York. And as so-and-so said, "I can't wait to learn and play such-and-such song."



Christine Hong is a writer, musician, and off-broadway sound engineer. Having learned the piano as her primary instrument for six years and the cello for one year, a NYU graduate '04, she is honored to be a part of the annual Piano School recital. It was a great experience to witness so many kids who love to play the piano. She currently works at CBS Corporation handling music licensing and copyright issues.

May 30th Recital: "Ready to Rock" by Jason Feirman.



With the sun shining high above Columbus Circle on a warm spring afternoon, children and their families packed into the Irene Diamond Education Center at Jazz at Lincoln Center for the first of three recitals. On May 30th, The Piano School of NYC held its annual performances in the halls of the renowned musical institution. Just minutes before the 4:00 show began, performers could be seen posing for pictures, practicing their pieces, and soaking up the scene. Isha Nagella, 4, the show's youngest performer sat quietly in the front row with her teacher Mirta Gomez. When asked if she was excited, Isha nodded and proceeded to practice a melody with Mirta. Once the doors closed, The Piano School of NYC Executive Director Vera Barskaya Anselmo gave a brief introduction to the 75 attendees. "Today we come together to celebrate the accomplishments of our students and congratulate each other," she said, before thanking the performers, their

families, the teachers, and the Jazz at Lincoln Center staff. Not only was Isha the youngest performer, but she also opened the show. After Ms. Anselmo finished her introduction, Isha slowly made her way up to the piano along with Mirta. From the first note of "One Two Three Four" there was a feeling in the room that this was going to be a very special evening. With her feet dangling from the stool, and Mirta guiding from over her left shoulder, Isha breezed through her next two numbers. As she walked back to her seat, she was inundated with cheers and applause from the crowd. As the show continued, the pieces became more and more intricate. As Melissa Kornfeld's pink sandals dangled in the air, she hit each note of "Jumping Frogs" with precision. Valtyr Kjartansson, dressed in a black blazer, used pedals while he played "Greensleaves." His instructor, Rui Shi, sat beside him and encouraged him throughout his performance. Sophie Geer, with no book or teacher in sight, played perfect versions of "Love Somebody" and "Thanksgiving Turkey." The pieces played by the performers ranged from classics like Beethoven's "Für Elise" (performed twice by Nicholas Ullman and Amanda Edelman) to modern hits like R Kelly's "I Believe I Can Fly" (performed by Mary Munshower). Allegra McSweeney, wearing a beautiful white dress, performed the most patriotic set of the day with "Ode To Joy" and "America The Beautiful," while Aidan Halloran performed "When The Saints Go Marching In." Just before 5:30, Harrison Siegel closed the show with "Rondo-Toccata." Certificates and medals were then handed out to the performers, and each of them received another round of applause as they made their way up front. After the show, as parents posed for pictures alongside their talented children, the room began to clear out for performance number two.



By 6:00 the room was packed once again. Ms. Anselmo presented another hearty welcome to the new crowd stressing how excited she was to be holding the performance at Jazz at Lincoln Center. "This is a huge step forward for us," she told the audience. "It was a lot of work to organize this event, so thank you for supporting us." Zachary Lederman, dressed in a white polo shirt, opened the show with "Bounces" and "Tap Dance" alongside his instructor, Sebastian Forster. Sebastian had many students in the show including 4 year old twins David and Estevan Hoyos, who each performed "Black Keys Improvisation" with their instructor. With many family members in attendance to cheer them on, the twins were a big hit in their matching blue and white suits.



Instructor Inga Kashakashvili also had a number of students in the second recital including Simeon



Bremer, who played “London Bridge” and “The Train Song.” Inga also helped Anwen Burns, who was wearing a beautiful flower dress, through two of her songs -- “Bingo” and “The Muffin Man.” While Vincent Marinello played Bach and Celina Ticoll played Beethoven, David Zask rocked out on the keys with a tune from Led Zeppelin. Other audience favorites included Levitt Yaffe’s “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.” As his father cheered him on in the front row, he breezed through the tune alongside his instructor, Simon Ferraresi. Julius Philp performed four songs alongside his instructor George Oakley, while Joseph Ruben had the honor of performing the song with the longest title – “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious.” Before the recital was over, Joseph Lodin, dressed in black, gave a stunning performance of “Pour Le Piano: Prelude.” by Calude Debussy. As he intricately weaved his hands up and down the keyboard, the audiences looked on in amazement. Lodin gracefully hit each key without hesitation, and when the final note sounded, the crowd gave him a lengthy applause. Aaron Hoffman closed out the show, and Ms. Vera Anselmo once again presented the performers with awards and medals.

As the sun began to set over Columbus Circle, parents and children made their way up to the Irene Diamond Education Center for the third and final performance of the evening. As the performers waited for the show to begin, they restlessly ran in circles, rolled around on the hardwood floors, and popped their heads inside the opening of the baby grand piano. Once the doors closed, the crowd of 50 settled into their seats and Ms. Anselmo introduced Christina Kulick as the faculty member of several years, and also as the Brooklyn Branch Manager, -leading Group Classes programs in over a dozen Brooklyn public, charter & parochial schools. Over the past few months, Christina worked hard with each of her private students, preparing them for their solo debut at JALC. So, the show this evening was a culmination of many hours of practice and preparation. Jonathan Thomas, dressed in an orange shirt, opened the show with “Run, Mouse, Run.” Following him, Zoe Glazer and her sister Isabelle, each performed a series of pieces about butterflies including “The Caterpillar Crawl” and “Butterfly Song.” With each performance, Christina looked on with a smile plastered across her face. She could be overheard encouraging the performers as they began their pieces. “Ready to rock?” she asked one student. “You’re going to be great!” she told another. Nicolas Zarate, the show’s youngest performer, played “Two Black Keys” and Xavier DeVore, dressed in a colorful shirt, played a duet with his mother. Stella Solasz wore one of the biggest smiles of the day, as she breezed through “I’m A Little Teapot” and “Indian Dance.” Joshua Judd Porter played Green Day’s “Wake Me Up When September Ends” with Christina. Roman Fischer, wearing a green tie, even incorporated a violin into his performance. Mateo Lopez-Castillo closed the show with an original piece “The Wind-Up Toy,” a spectacular culmination to a great night of student performances. And if that wasn’t enough, Christina treated the audience to a couple of numbers from her new children’s musical “Zuly In The Last Place On Earth.” With many of the student performers curled up on the floor up front, Christina and her fellow musicians provided the audience with a sneak peak of some of the musical’s upbeat numbers. As the show came to a conclusion just a few minutes before 10:00 p.m., not only did the stars in the night sky shine high above Columbus Circle, but another group of stars piled out of Jazz at Lincoln Center and into the warm spring night.



June 24th Recital: "...with the confidence of young Beethovens and Mozarts."
by Jason Feirman.

Lincoln Center is one of the most renowned cultural institutions in New York City, playing host to the world's most talented musicians every year. No wonder the performers at The Piano School of NYC's summer recital were just a bit nervous as they made their way into the Irene Diamond Education Center at Jazz at Lincoln Center on June 24th. Over the course of 10 hours, nearly 200 performers from 28 schools exhibited their talent as part of five recitals put on by the program's Executive Director Vera Barskaya Anselmo and the Piano School administration: Christina Kulick, Brooklyn Branch Manager & Peggy Castillo Valenzuela, Queens Branch Manager.



The center was packed with performers and their guests, who awoke early to prepare for the 11 am show. As girls ran around the room in their colorful summer dresses, their male companions, dressed in suits and khaki pants, awaited their turn to perform for the crowd. Once everyone was seated, Ms. Anselmo opened up the day by thanking the performers, their families, teachers, school administrators, and those at Jazz at Lincoln Center who were able to make the recitals possible. "I'd like to give thanks to everyone who has supported us in this venture," she told the room of 75 attendees. "These recitals highlight what we've done throughout the

year, and I hope you're looking forward to today's performances." Without further ado, Karissa Shenk-Bellamy from PS 142 walked up to the piano and kicked off the recital with "Long, Long Ago." Wearing a white shirt and brown pants, she nailed every note, alongside her instructor, Christine Yang. Following six other performers from her school, students from PS 20 began their performances, as latecomers piled into the back of the room. Magdalen Flores played "Star To Star" and "Once A Man Was So Mad," as her parents watched from the front row. "This is excellent for the kids," said her father, Edsel Flores, following the recital.

"Our daughter really understands the significance of performing here at Lincoln Center." To close out the 11 am recital, 26 students from PS 146 Brooklyn New School performed an array of songs including the always popular "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" and "On The Swing." "It's been a pleasure working with your kids," said Brooklyn Branch Manager and instructor Christina Kulick, who started a program at the school this winter. One of the highlights of the set was a duet by Adelaide Gaughran-Bedell and Storm Alexander. Adelaide, dressed in a beautiful green dress, and Storm, in a matching green vest, played a perfect rendition of "Sailing Skating." Following Storm's solo performance of The Beatles' "Eight Days A Week," instructor Gabriel Hays closed the show with his own performance of The Beatles' "Blackbird." As the audience from the first recital made their way out of the Irene Diamond Education Center, guests piled in for show number two, hoping to land the best seats in the house.



Just after 1 pm, Olivia Kramer kicked off the show in her bright orange dress, as her white sandals dangled from the piano bench. Olivia, who attends the Montessori School of Brooklyn, played three songs with her teacher, Christina Kulick. Agnes Griggs followed her performance with “Mary Had A Little Lamb.” Students from St. Patrick School, Sacred Heart Highbridge, Harlem Village Academy Charter School, PS 109, and New Heights Academy Charter School performed during the recital, playing tunes such as “Old McDonald Had A Farm” and “Lean On Me.”



Eliana DeJimenez and her sister, Emily DeJimenez, wore matching dresses as they gave solo performances of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” and “Frere Jacque.” Yuliya Basis’ students from PS 109 played all of their pieces by heart, with the confidence of young Beethovens and Mozarts. After the show, students gathered around their instructors for photos, as parents snapped shots from their digital cameras and cellphones. “You’re a wonderful teacher,” one parent told Yuliya. “Thank you so much for all of your help,” said another. As the performers and their families exited the hall with smiles on their faces, it was evident that all their hard work and preparation had paid off.

The 3 pm recital was the shortest of the day, featuring 25 students from five schools: St. Brigid School, Pre-School of America, Little Day Dreamers Nursery School, PS 78, and PS 110. Prior to performing “Middle C,” three year old Yui Hatakayama played a game with Ethan Roditi and Tanaz Wagner. Their goal was to name a number of composers based on photographs that were shown to them by their instructor Mirta Gomez. Later on in the show, David Alaverdian had his students incorporate clapping and singing into their renditions of “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.” While Keisha Ndema played piano, for example, Veronique Wright, Wittney Welcome, and Lorna Kpukumu sang along as colorful beads dangled from their hair braids and their flowery summer dresses lit up the room. Mirta, who made sure that each of her students took a bow before and after their songs, played along with some students from PS 110; others performed alone. Mirta sang with Nicole Landeta, while her brother, Patricio Landeta, performed “Chimes of Westminster.” But Nicole and Patricio were not the only siblings who performed during the recital. Members of the Tubens family – Israel, Brandon, Ashley, and Melanie – played numbers towards the end of the set including “Pinches & Inches” and “Choo Choo From Chicago.” As the recital came to a close, parents flocked around their children like paparazzi chasing down rock stars. As light bulbs flashed and poses were stricken, the room began to clear for the next performance.

The 5 pm show, which featured 49 students from 7 schools, was the most crowded of the day. Not an empty seat could be found, as parents stood along the back wall of the room. Harlem Link Charter School’s Nyah Mangrum, wearing a beautiful white dress, kicked off the show with “I Love To Hoe Potatoes.” Following eight of her classmates, performers played from Community United Methodist Church After School Program, Salem United Methodist Church After School Program, Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart Of Jesus, De LaSalle Academy, and Mott Hall II.



After overcoming her nerves, Bryanna Encarnacion from Corpus Christi, performed "Clouds," as her family members cheered her on from the front row. When she received her medal and certificate following her performance, one of the biggest smiles of the day was plastered across her face. It goes to show what a little encouragement from mom can do! Many of the performers from Sacred Heart of Jesus played multiple songs without the assistance of a book or help from an instructor. Kelly Morel, for example, played "Sleepy Head" all by herself, as her beautiful red dress lit up the room.

One of the most riveting performances of the day came from 10-year-old Veronica Kuteyeva, who performed perfect renditions of three songs: "Rigaudon," "Moonlight Sonata," and "The Entertainer." Dressed in a blue velvet dress, she received a lengthy applause from the audience. "It's amazing," said her grandmother, who appeared to be in awe after the recital. "She's only been playing piano for six months. Her instructor and brothers have really been helping her along the way."

As the sun began to set over Central Park, guests made their way into the Irene Diamond Education Center for the 7 pm recital, the final show of the day. Forty-five students from 6 schools played a variety of tunes, often with the help of their instructors. Konstantza Chernov sat beside many of her students from St. Joan of Arc, including Aiden Lee, who played "Two Black Birds" and David Jimenez who played "My Hobby Horse." After each performance, the audience gave a loud applause as the performers took their bows. Adam Platt played with his students from PS 261 and PS 157. Sereia Ross played "Mary Had A Little Lamb" alongside Adam, who looked as if he was enjoying himself as much as his students. He definitely enjoyed Chase Ware's solo performance of "The Snake Dance." She sat confidently at the piano stool and hit each note with precision, as pink beads dangled from her braided hair. Later on in the set, Jonathan Castelan, dressed in a bright orange shirt, and Delia Bueno, wearing a pretty pink dress, performed a number together. Tomoko Nakayama performed with each of her students from Our Lady of the Angelus, while Sebastian Forster's students from PS 111 closed an extraordinary day of musical performances at Jazz At Lincoln Center.



Not only did students amaze their guests with their skills behind the piano, but by incorporating singing, dancing, drumming, and other forms of entertainment into their performances, they truly exhibited their artistic talents. Many of these students will return to school in the fall, eagerly anticipating the continuation of their music educations. Perhaps, the next Beethoven will one day look back on the significance of his first performance on a warm and sunny Sunday during the summer of 2007 at Jazz At Lincoln Center.



Jason Feirman graduated summa cum laude from New York University in May 2006, where he studied journalism and psychology. His writing has appeared in a number of major magazines including Psychology Today and SmartMoney. He currently works in the marketing department at the Jewish National Fund and freelances in his spare time. Although his piano playing is limited to the first four notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, he's played the guitar since the seventh grade.



Does Making Music Make You Smarter?

Back to the Future

It's not that scientists didn't recognize a connection between the process of making music and increased brain functionality. Many centuries ago, Plato said, "Music is a more potent instrument than any other for education." And today, scientists have dubbed the 1990s as the "decade of the brain" because of the explosion in brain research. Recently, dramatic new research regarding the benefits of music making might have altered Plato's views to read, "Making music is a more potent instrument than any other for education."

Scientists have long suspected a neurological connection between making music and intelligence, but it was not until recently that specific data became available directly linking the two.



Consider the following:

Research completed at the University of Munster in Germany discovered enlarged portions of the brain in children who took music lessons. An area used to analyze the pitch of a musical note was found to be 25% larger in those who participate in making music regularly than in those who have never played an instrument.

A research team exploring the link between making music and intelligence reported that music training (specifically piano instruction)

is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills—mental tools necessary for learning subjects like math and science, or for playing chess and mastering concepts of engineering. Thirty-four percent of the children performed higher on tests measuring these criteria after only six months of piano lessons.

Students with coursework/experience in music performance scored an average of 52 points higher on the verbal portion of the SAT and 36 points higher on the math portion of the SAT than students with no coursework or experience in the arts.

(continued on next page)



A research team studying first-graders from two Rhode Island elementary schools found that students who participated in a regular and structured music learning program exhibited dramatic increases in reading and math.

A study in the March 1999 issue of Neurological Research showed that after learning eighth, quarter, half and whole notes, second and third-graders scored 100 percent higher than peers who were taught fractions using traditional methods. Because of this research, we know there is a direct connection between making music and intelligence in children. But how and why does this connection take place?



Exploring the Brain

The brain's cortex, the center of our intellectual functions, represents 85 percent of brain mass. The remaining 15 percent of the brain, the limbic system, handles our emotional functions. Researchers at McGill University in Montreal found that music functions as a key link between the cortex and limbic systems, suggesting that it's virtually impossible to study or play a musical instrument without feeling a wide range of positive emotions such as joy, happiness, love and tenderness. From this research, Author Sharlene Habermeyer, in her book, *Good Music, Brighter Children*, concluded, "...and when we allow these emotions to be a part of the learning process, our education becomes richer, more meaningful, longer lasting, and has greater impact in our lives." Another study, performed at the University of Texas, found a direct relationship between the brain's ability to interpret musical notes and passages and written letters and words.



The preceding article can be read in its entirety at the following:
<http://www.rolandus.com/community/musicforlife/articles/smarter1.asp>



**Piano Classes &
Music Appreciation Classes
are offered at the following schools**

**Morningside Heights/ West Harlem/
Upper Manhattan**

Corpus Christi School
Little Day Dreamers Daycare
St. Joseph of the Holy Family School
Our Lady Queen of Martyr
Harlem Link Charter School
New Heights Academy Charter School
PS366
St. Jude School
St. Elizabeth Parish Elementary school
J. Hood Wright Park/Recreation Center
Children's Learning Center

Upper West Side

De La Salle Academy
PS 87 After School
Pre-School of America/West End

Upper East Side/East Harlem

PS77/Lower Lab
PS 198
Pre-School of America/10029
Pre-school of America/10128
Amber Charter School

Midtown

PS 111
Sacred Heart of Jesus
Pre-School of America/Tudor city

Queens

A Child's Place Preschool
Corpus Christi School
Les Enfants Montessori School
Blessed Sacrament School
Our World Neighborhood Charter School (middle)
Our World Neighborhood Charter School(elementary)
82nd Street Academics

Lower East Side

PS 20
St. Brigid School
PS 110
PS 142
Pre-School of America/Chelsea

Bronx

PS 78
Sacred Heart Highbridge School
PS 107
PS 109
PS 179
Pablo Neruda Academy
Kips Boys & Girls Club

Brooklyn

New Brooklyn School/PS 146
PS157
Brooklyn Charter School
PS107
PS20
North Side Catholic Academy
Montessori School
PS 282
PS 372
International School of Brooklyn
Brooklyn Brownsville Corps/Salvation Army
Achievement First Bushwick Charter School
PS 9
PS 10
PS58

New Jersey

River School of Newport
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