

The Well-Prepared Pianist Institute

INSTITUTE GOALS & PROGRAM SUMMARY

GOALS of THE WELL-PREPARED PIANIST

To train teachers to teach a goal-oriented program where the objectives are:

- 1) For students to become independent pianists and independent learners in 5 years of study and before they embark onto their busy high school lives.
- 2) To equip students with:
 - a) The basic muscular motions not only to play the instrument but also to control its tonal colors.
 - b) The basic pianism to create the different styles of piano music.
 - c) Pianistic musicianship which begins with the stockpiling of commonly used keyboard patterns into the eyes, ears, mind and hands. These keyboard patterns are the vocabulary of piano music, which is the musical language of the piano.
 - d) The independence of self-learning and practicing new piano scores without the aid of teachers.
- 3) To develop extemporaneous musicianship or “on-the-spot” musicianship much like the intuitive musical responses of jazz musicians.
- 4) To develop the motions, musicianship and score-reading ability of students in sequential steps so that after five years of lessons they can choose to either stop piano lessons and become independent pianists forever or use what they have learned as a foundation for the WPP high school program. The WPP high school program prepares students either to learn and enjoy the most popular piano pieces ever written, or to enter college music programs as piano majors.

A SUMMARY of THE WELL-PREPARED PIANIST PROGRAM

- 1) Develops comfort and freedom of moving over the entire piano keyboard from the very beginning.
- 2) Deposits the major styles of piano music — baroque, classic, romantic, impressionistic, and contemporary— into the hands and ears of students within the first 2-1/2 years of study (the preparatory level).

- 3) Builds keyboard musicianship by stockpiling commonly used keyboard patterns into each of the four playing partners — eyes, ears, mind and hands. Piano music is a language that consists of vocabulary (patterns), phrases and language syntax.
- 4) Teaches a program of specifically created recital etudes, standard literature and exercises specifically targeted towards total mastery of keyboard freedom, accumulation of standard pianistic patterns, score reading, and mastery of basic muscular motions for control of pianistic colors in sequential gradual steps.
- 5) Teaches score reading (rather than just note reading) from the very beginning, which tandemly builds into each student a knowledge of “alive musical theory” in everything they play rather than offering a seemingly unrelated “written” theory.
- 6) Instills an internalized control of the piano’s velocity sensitivity — a quality required of all artists which comes from an understanding of the instrument’s responsive behavior to the “touch” of the pianist (one’s combined use of weight, speed, distance, posture and motion).
- 7) Develops the basic major muscular motions of piano playing:
 - a) From simple up-down finger motions to circular wrist, fast and slow finger speeds, etc.
 - b) From on-the-beat pedalling to the intrinsic use of pedal for romantic and impressionistic colors.while at the same time nurturing an internalized connection between the motions and the resulting colors so that each student acquires the ability to predict the resulting tone color and the motions needed before playing — the mark of a true artist.
- 8) Teaches both the right and left brains, thus developing the four playing partners (eyes, ears, minds and hands) independently and cohesively to result in the acquisition of multi-sensory memories — visual, aural, tactile and analytical memories.
- 9) Teaching lessons that lead to students’ multi-sensory memories of every piece in the repertory results in a performable set of recital pieces ready for a program at the end of each level. Multi-sensory learning eliminates the need to mechanically memorize each piece. Multi-sensory memory is an ability of successful professionals in every field.
- 10) Develops extemporaneous musicianship through PianoTeams® rehearsals, performances and competitions. Contrary to “playing and counting together” of monster concerts, PianoTeams® train the ensemble participants to match breath, rhythm, color and intensity as well as cue each other without a conductor. This team experience also develops camaraderie among players — an experience which is generally missing in solo piano lessons and practice.