

PIANNO JOURNAL

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EUROPEAN PIANO TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Christopher Elton in conversation

**A new festival in
Austria to celebrate
Beethoven**

**Women in music:
Nannette Streicher**

**A study of 'left vs
right' in Chopin's
Etudes**

**Teaching students
with physical
disabilities**



NEWS & VIEWS - INTERVIEWS - REVIEWS

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STOP PRESS

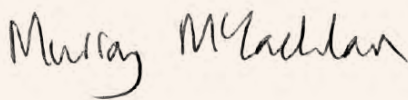
The 42nd International Conference in Bonn has been postponed to 30th October – 1st November 2020 due to Coronavirus.

EDITORIAL

It is only appropriate that in Beethoven's 250th anniversary year we look forward to many new editions, concerts and celebrations of his extraordinary, life-affirming and ever vibrant music. The EPTA conference in Bonn this coming spring will be a special celebration not only of the great composer's music and EPTA's community, but will also feature new compositions directly inspired by Beethoven's remarkable legacy. The programme of events is listed below.

Beethoven features strongly in the reviews section of this current issue, which also includes a fascinating article of crucial interest to Beethoven lovers on Nannette Streicher. Our cover feature is an extended interview with one of the most distinguished teachers active today - Professor Christopher Elton. His remarkable successes and inspiration continues apace. Elsewhere Nancy Litten makes a welcome return to our historic archives, recalling some of the exceptional features and events that this magazine has hosted in the last century. We look at ways to help students with particular needs under the wise counsel of the US based pianist-pedagogue John Mortensen, and Kris Lennox produces fascinating data and insights into Chopin's studies that have been curiously overlooked so far. Finally Nancy Lee Harper remembers the wonderful pianist Eugen Alcalay, a great friend of EPTA, who sadly died last year.

Happy reading.



Murray McLachlan, Editor



Thursday 21 May 2020

Universitäts-Club, Konviktstraße 9, 53113 Bonn

14.00 Registration

14.45 **Heribert Koch**, EPTA European President 2019/20
Welcome address

15.00 **Murray McLachlan**, Chair of EPTA UK, Manchester • **Beethoven and Youth. The spirit of discovery, renewal and freshness through the 35 Sonatas.** Lecture

15.45 **Andreas Ioannides**, Indiana State University • **The "Righini" Variations: A Window into Beethoven's Past and Future.** Lecture Recital

16.30 break

17.00 **Carleen Graff**, Plymouth State University, USA • **Beethoven's Elector Sonatas.** Lecture Recital

17.45 **Nils Franke**, Colchester, UK • **Beethoven as student and teacher.** Lecture

18.30 **Katarina Nummi-Kuisma**, president of EPTA Finland, Helsinki • **The improvisatory element in every meaningful musical performance.** Lecture

19.15 break

19.30 Reception

Friday 22 May 2020

Beethoven-Haus/
Kammermusiksaal, Bonngasse 20, 53111 Bonn

9.00 NN: Introduction to the Museum in the Beethovenhaus

9.30 **Till Alexander Körber**, President of EPTA Austria, Wilhering • **Beethoven teaches the Variations op. 27 by Anton Webern to a student**

10.15 **Luís Pipa**, President of EPTA Portugal • **Revisiting Beethoven through Vianna da Motta's interpretative scores of Piano Sonatas opp. 7 and 31 no. 2.** Lecture Recital

11.00 break

11.30 **Alberto Urroz**, President of EPTA Spain, Madrid • **Czerny Piano Sonatas – A valuable tribute to the master.** Lecture Recital

12.15 **Gregor Vidovic**, Nottingham, United Kingdom • **Beethoven and Clementi or The Conquest Of The 'Haughty Beauty'.** Lecture

13.00 break / Annual General Meeting of EPTA Presidents

15.00 **Stephan Möller**, Vienna • **Beethoven 1802: The Heiligenstadt Testament, the 'New Way' and the three Sonatas Opus 31.** Lecture Recital

15.45 **Per Törngren**, Gothenburg, Sweden • **Improvisation – a tool of gaining knowledge and awareness of structures in music.** Lecture

16.30 break

17.00 **Einar Steen-Nøkleberg**, EPTA Norway • **'fp' in the first movement of Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata.** Short Talk

17.15 **Miha Haas**, Ljubljana, Slovenia • **Beethoven's 32 Piano Sonatas: Understanding elements of the Performing Practice beyond conventional wisdom.** Lecture

18.00 break

19.30 **Dr. Mario Aschauer**, Sam Houston State University, USA • **„... da jeder Autor strebte, seine Eigenthümlichkeit zu zeigen ...“ – Diabelli's Vaterländischer Künstlerverein.** Lecture

20.15 Diabelli Project
The Performance of variations by various composers on Diabelli's Waltz in C major which were published by Diabelli under the Title „Vaterländischer Künstlerverein“
Performers: Conference Participants

Saturday 23 May 2020

Beethoven-Haus/
Kammermusiksaal, Bonngasse 20, 53111 Bonn

9.30 **Dora de Marinis**, Mendoza, Argentina • **32 variatiioni sopra un accordo de**

Beethoven: First Movement of the Second Piano Concerto op. 39 by **Alberto Ginastera.** Lecture-Recital

10.15 **Annini Tsioutis**, Paris • **Beethoven's influence on the piano works of Nikos Skalkottas.**

Lecture-Recital

11.00 break

11.30 **Justin Krawitz**, University of Northern Colorado, USA • **Hommage à Beethoven: A World Premiere.** Lecture Recital

12.15 **Susanne Kessel**, Bonn • **250 piano pieces for Beethoven. An International Composition Project for Beethoven's 250. Anniversary.** Lecture Recital

13.15 break

15.00 **Marcella Crudeli**, President of EPTA Italy • **Beethoven and Chopin in comparison: Beethoven Sonata op. 109 – Chopin brilliant variations op. 12.** Lecture Recital

15.45 **Susan Chan**, Portland State University, USA • **'Exoticism' in Selected Piano Works of Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart: Editions and Transcriptions.** Lecture Recital

16.30 break

17.00 **Anton Voigt**, Linz, Austria • **Archduke Rudolph of Habsburg as Composer of Variations on an Original Theme by Beethoven.** Lecture Recital

17.45 **Kanazava – Admony Piano Duo**, Tel-Hai, Israel • **Beethoven: Große Fuge and Variations on a Theme by Count Waldstein – Yuval Admony: Variations on Diabelli's Theme.**

Lecture Recital

18:30 break

19.00 Boat Tour on the Rhine with Conference Dinner –23.00

Sunday 24 May 2020

Beethoven-Haus/
Kammermusiksaal, Bonngasse 20, 53111 Bonn

9.30 **Tomas Dratva**, President of EPTA Switzerland, Basel • **Wellington's Victory – Beethoven's War Symphony.** Lecture recital

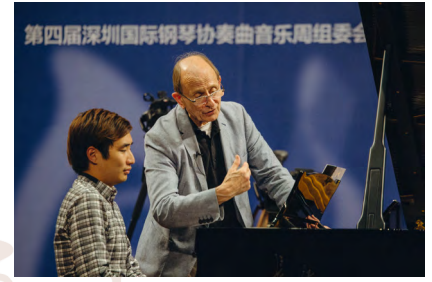
10.15 **Jan Marisse Huizing**, Amsterdam • **Beethoven: The piano sonatas – History · Notation · Interpretation.** Lecture

11.00 break

11.30 **Heribert Koch**, University of Münster, Germany • **Introduction to Fatjona Maliqi's Recital of Beethoven's Diabelli Variations op. 120**

Fatjona Maliqi, Münster, Germany **Dreiuddreißig Veränderungen über einen Walzer von Anton Diabelli (C-Dur) für Klavier op. 120 [1823].** Recital

13.00 End of the Conference
Subject to Change.



Directing in masterclasses as part of the Shenzhen International Piano Concerto Competition

Piano Pedagogue Extraordinaire:

Christopher Elton in conversation with Murray McLachlan

Murray McLachlan (MM): Tell us about your earliest musical experiences.

Christopher Elton (CE): I was brought up in Edinburgh and there were both advantages and disadvantages in this. There was a lot of music performed - not just during the Edinburgh Festival, and probably I heard more in the weekly season of Scottish National Orchestra concerts in the Usher Hall. I heard such great soloists as Curzon, Moiseiwitsch, Solomon and Cherkassky there!

There was a lot of music in our house - my sisters both played - and Judith went on to study piano at the Royal College of Music. Mother played a lot of records (78s!). The diet was largely classical - Goldberg, Brandenburg concertos and Mozart and Beethoven maybe dominated.

MM: When did you first become hooked on music and the piano? How does the 'cello fit in to the picture?

CE: I started piano lessons when I was six and 'cello three years later. I have to say that playing 'cello came much more easily to me - I never practised half as much as on the piano but I was a good 'cellist. It never came anywhere near usurping piano in my ambitions - not least because the solo repertoire for piano was so rich and limitless. Much later, when I was actually asked by the Academy if I might also like to do some 'cello teaching, I had no hesitation in declining. I had a fine 'cello teacher in Douglas Cameron but the image of him teaching the same seven or eight concertos to every student was not a path I wanted to follow.

(There is now a considerably larger concerto repertoire for 'cello, but I am talking of the early 1960s.)

However, the 'cello has certainly been a really strong formative musical part of my makeup. And for well over a decade it was - at least in purely financial terms - the mainstay of my professional musical work - mostly playing in such orchestras as the LPO, RPO and Philharmonia and London Mozart Players.

MM: Who were your Edinburgh teachers and what do you remember most about their teaching?

CE: Like most musicians, I owe a lot to my early teachers. My piano teacher was Edna Lovell - a wonderfully musical lady who instilled in me a real ear and love of quality of sound. She was less interested in developing anything in terms of real velocity or virtuosity. She was avowedly of the Tobias Matthay School - whereas the other highly regarded piano teacher in Edinburgh was Theodore Leschetizky. I do not think the two had much in common in any way! But Miss Lovell's musical interests really were strictly limited to the piano and in particular to her students and the repertoire they were playing. My 'cello teacher - Ruth Waddell - was quite the opposite! She was a much stronger **musical** influence and I loved both the repertoire I played and the opportunities I had for chamber music.

Chamber music led to many years of sharing and exploring music with probably my most formative Edinburgh influence - Hans Gal. Hans was a remarkable musician, and I was so fortunate

in having for many years been the 'cellist in a quartet which was led by his daughter, Eva. Once a month was "Gal Sunday" when we would go to be given Hannah's famous Viennese cheesecake - and (peripherally for us, perhaps!) simply to play through great quartets and be 'enabled' by Hans to get through repertoire that we really had no business to be playing, given our relatively undeveloped instrumental skills. I particularly remember on occasion latterly when we sight-read a Scherzo from one of the late Beethoven quartets - I'm sure it must have sounded awful! - but Hans said in his wonderful strong Viennese accent, "Very good. Of course, it goes exactly twice that speed." He didn't mean to cut us down to size, but it did no harm. He was a fine composer - meticulous and such a strong musical voice - even if it was one that was out of tune with expectations of the second half of the 20th century, being somewhat more in a post-Brahmsian mode. But his music is finely crafted and is, I believe, now gaining in reputation and recognition. Hans did more than anyone before or since to help me face just what "being a musician" meant - the breadth of what there was to explore and the need to constantly have an enquiring mind and a genuine wish to get as close as possible to the unattainable. I will never forget Hans's assumption that a direct correlation between the comprehension of written words and of written music was obvious. Showing me the complex score of a Mahler Symphony he said, "How is it possible that a musician cannot read and "hear" this score in exactly the same way as other people can read and understand a book?"

MM: Tell us about your experience at tertiary level education.

CE: Is it a severe limitation of my musical horizons and ambition that I have been - without break - at the same musical institution (The Royal Academy of Music) now for 58 years, as student, junior teacher, professor of piano and Head of Keyboard? Or is it, quite simply, that I believe I have been and am still at possibly the most inspiring and stimulating place for the education of an aspiring performer that there is? Even now I get something of the same sense of eager anticipation going into the building that I first had in September 1961, even if now I have much less of the anxiety of a young, relatively naïve 17-year old who had severe doubts as to whether he would prove to be "good enough" to enter the musical profession.

I did love my time as a student, though the Academy in those days bore little similarity to today. For most of my time there I had two principal studies: piano and 'cello, and there were fellows students who thought who really only knew me as the one or the other. I had two wonderful piano teachers - Robin Wood and Gordon Green - who were not just very fine musicians, but also admirable men and really distinctive in terms of their humanity and integrity. Robin was from Victoria in British Columbia and was youthful and an inspiring musical mentor. To be honest, I don't think he pushed me enough to develop a really virtuosic technique. (Or did he realise that it was already too late for that?) Gordon Green was a very special person and already celebrated as one of the teachers of John Ogdon. He gave me a really professional ability to realise just what I needed to do, especially when preparing competition programmes. If he did not inspire me musically in the same way as Robin Wood, I now realise that he did not see that as his role with me: he never doubted my musical intentions and "vision" but he wanted to try to force me to make good the pianistic limitations and inconsistencies that both hampered my performances and reduced my self confidence. Some years later, when Gordon became very ill, I did temporarily and then permanently "inherit" most of his class of the time.

I was hugely active in chamber music - both as 'cellist and pianist - and from my first undergraduate year I was chosen as Principal 'Cello in "First Orchestra". My 'cello teacher was Douglas Cameron, surely one of the two most distinguished 'cello teachers of that time in the UK, and I did thrive under him, even if the time I spent practising the 'cello was lamentably short.

I get a real joy from teaching - from trying to help young musicians not only develop as pianists, but also to mature personally.

After leaving the Academy, I worked for a few years with Maria Curcio, and certainly I feel her influence in many ways in my teaching.

MM: Tell us about your teaching career in a nutshell, mentioning some of the students and institutions that you have worked with.

CE: I have been happy to focus my teaching on my work at the Royal Academy of Music, though I also was a Visiting Professor of Piano at Yale for a semester in 2018 (a full teaching post there for this period, which I combined with maintaining my RAM work). I was, in the late 1980s offered the post of Head of Keyboard at the RNCM, but for various reasons I opted to remain at the RAM.

I enjoy giving masterclasses, and have done so in Universities and Conservatoires as well as in piano courses in the UK, Europe, Asia, the US and Australia, though my real satisfaction has been the opportunity to work with students over the course of several years, and undertake the responsibility of sharing in their musical development. In fact, with four of my most successful students - José Feghali, Freddy Kempf, Yevgeny Sudbin and Benjamin Grosvenor - I worked from an early age for between seven and ten years.

MM: What do you love most about teaching?

CE: I get a real joy from teaching - from trying to help young musicians not only develop as pianists, but also to mature personally. Of course, there is a great sense of satisfaction in helping in the training of highly gifted and successful pianists, but I really do get great satisfaction from working with students - younger and older - who may not be as ambitious or advanced, but who genuinely have a passion and an enquiring mind - and who are prepared to work with commitment. Music has been such a huge part of my life and I believe that if one is prepared to open up one's mind and spirit to embrace what it can offer, then music can be a life-changing and enhancing force - whether this is done at a "professional" level or not.

MM: Do you have a method for teaching?

CE: I do not adhere to any particular "method" of piano playing or teaching. I strongly believe that one of the essentials for a teacher is to be adaptable: adaptable to different students and to their strengths and weaknesses (be they technical, intellectual or temperamental). There are essential "core" values and precepts in which I believe and if I feel a student does not value them or really wishes to go in a totally different direction, then probably it is better for both of us if they try to work with a different teacher. No one teacher can possibly be "right" for every student and it can be better to realise this - and to accept that there is no question of "blame" on either side.

While I seldom read piano pedagogy books, I really commend some of the early chapters in the Heinrich Neuhaus *The Art of Piano Playing*. There are two sentences that seem to me just SO wise (I paraphrase them):

1. Surely it is self evident that if you are asked to give a speech, it is not just because you can enunciate words, but because you

have something to say. Why do pianists so often not think the same applies to them?

2. I believe that the first and fundamental duty of any teacher is to make his student independent of him as quickly as possible.

I have seen far too many teachers (not necessarily of piano) who seem to work by almost breaking the student down and rebuilding them along the lines of how **they** play. Both teaching and learning are as much about recognising and appreciating what is already **good** as it is about “correcting” what is **bad**! Performance is so much depends on confidence and teachers have to praise where possible as well as criticise and direct where needed.

I think one of the hardest things is to adjust one’s way of teaching with a student whom you are mentoring over many years. When young there is, of course, far more need to “impose” and to discipline along good lines both technically and musically, but increasingly one needs to recognise when and how to give greater latitude for the student to find their own “voice”. I would often far rather hear a student play to me with conviction a musical approach that I really believed “wrong” than hear the dutiful student who consistently brings merely diligent, “respectful” preparation to a lessons, and waits for me to “add” either appropriate musical direction or even inspiration. I do find most students can respond quickly to such stimulation, but those who do so most readily are often also the ones who will lose that quality quickest and revert to the “safe” when they practise afterwards.

I suppose that if there is one thing that predominates in my teaching it is probably “sound”. This may seem an obvious thing, but I value quality – and diversity – of sound above most aspects of piano playing. Mere mechanical accuracy is important, but unless it also incorporates such qualities it surely is hardly “music”. Of course all sound is not “beautiful”. Brilliance and – just occasionally percussiveness – are all part of the almost infinite resources of the piano. How such an extraordinary range of sounds can be drawn from such an apparently mechanical instrument – not least in different hands – is a constant source of wonderment.

I remember our Principal at the time of my inauguration as a Professor of the University of London saying that, “There is no one “Christopher Elton” style in which his students play”. I was immensely pleased to hear that, as I believe so strongly in the need and scope for individuality and creativity in each young musician. Of course, they vary in degrees of such talent, but they need to feel you trust them and believe in them if they are to reach their potential. (It goes without saying that the teacher has also to be prepared at times to put a kind of “brake” on such experimentation, not least if it risks veering into eccentricity or gimmickry, or if you believe it has taken a seriously wrong direction.)

MM: What are your broad feelings of being on the jury of international competitions?

CE: I have had wonderful and inspiring experiences on many juries - both in terms of the joy in hearing great performances from wonderfully talented young musicians and also in sharing musical experiences with respected and often loved colleagues. I have (but much less often) also had appreciably less happy times when the atmosphere was soured for one reason or another. I can recall one instance when a juror was much in disagreement with the pianists selected for a semi-final and for the next day refused to join the rest of the jury, opting to sit by herself at all meals! I think that is unforgivable: I do not expect fellow jurors to “agree” with my assessments (even if by and large this seems to be the case), but I expect them to respect my views in the same way I hope I respect theirs.

I do not like to see “cliques” on juries - I think it natural that we cannot share two or three weeks of music without commenting amongst ourselves, but in the end it is for each of us to be strong in our principles and believe in our individual judgment.

I can state frankly that in the vast majority of competitions (especially in the most internationally prestigious) where I have

been a jury member I have felt that – whether I concurred or not with the final results – the process was conducted with integrity and probity. We should be grateful that the judgment of musical performance should not and cannot be a mathematical or scientific thing: no one should be able to “prove” their view is right.

MM: How do you encourage the development of technical work?

CE: Of course this is an essential part of a pianist’s work at all times. I am not in favour of more purely mechanical technical work than necessary, believing that the closer the link is between technical and musical work, the more productive such work will be.

Naturally, this symbiotic relationship increases as a student becomes more advanced. Early work with Beringer or even Hanon is invaluable, Also some of the Brahms 51 Exercises. I was encouraged to work the Joseffy Exercises and found them useful, too.

Chopin Etudes are perhaps the core of piano technique - not least because they are SO exposed and also such wonderful music. I think every pianist at whatever level should play some of these all the time. But Bach – especially some of the Preludes from the “48” are wonderful – again because they combine pianistic work with musical awareness.

In my Edinburgh years I was never encouraged (or maybe even permitted!) to play Liszt or Rachmaninov Etudes. (They were somehow felt, in a rather Puritanical Scottish way, as rather vulgar!) This was so sad for me, as the development of any really virtuosic technique has to be well underway long before music college years.

Above all students should practise the technical problems in new works with a really aware sense of how they will eventually want the passages to sound, and how their technique has to be employed or adapted accordingly. It is surely wasteful of time and effort to learn anything in a way that then needs to be re-learned in a different way when musical issues have been better addressed. So perceptive **musical** intelligence is an integral part of “technical” work.

MM: How do you develop a pupil’s artistic horizons?

CE: I think I have already written about the necessity of encouraging as open-minded a musical mind as possible. To be ever searching for the “possibilities”. But also the need to be able to play something with a really high degree of polish before being able to make a firm decision as to whether it “works” or not. It is all too easy – maybe subconsciously – to reject a musical option because it does not come easily.

I do encourage students to listen to performances - probably more by dead than living pianists! Compared with in my youth, pianists now have SO much access to great recordings. We can learn so much from the likes of Cortot, Rachmaninov, Horowitz, Moiseiwitsch, Schnabel, Cherkassky, Hofmann and Friedman.

I often think that if I were now 18 and practised with the knowledge of HOW to practise that I have now gained – often through teaching – I would be a far better pianist now!

(That wonderful Ignaz Friedman Chopin Nocturne Op.55/2 is such incomparable Chopin playing!) But any attempt to “copy” must be strongly discouraged. (And perhaps the worst problems come when students try to copy either Horowitz or Glenn Gould, for they take all the obvious “eccentricities” without any coherent understanding of context.)

I encourage students to listen to as much music as possible - not least “live” in concerts. And not just piano music: Lied, opera, string quartets, symphonic works, etc.

How can they hope to perform Schubert really well without hearing *Winterreise* or Beethoven without at least some experience of the quartets and symphonies? In so much Baroque and classical music so much needs an appreciation of how potentially “vertical” piano markings are really bow strokes.

And artistic horizons need to consider and explore the correlation between music and other arts - notably visual arts. In London there are so many wonderful galleries - almost all free, too, and an afternoon spent in Tate Britain or the Wallace Collection can be of much more validity than yet another three hours’ practice!

MM: What do you feel about standards and the piano world now as opposed to what it was like when you had just finished as a student at the Academy?

CE: I think we would all accept that the technical level of piano students at the Academy and at similar institutions is unrecognisably higher than when I was a student. To some extent this is owing to the concentrated and dedicated work done at the specialist music schools here in the UK, and it is also helped by the very considerable numbers of highly gifted pianists here now from overseas. They do not only bring their pianistic expertise but also a really disciplined work ethic that is sadly often not so prevalent amongst home students.

Of course, very often our home students are artistically more flexible and developed, and so there is a healthy way in which the two groups can nurture each other.

In terms of really wonderful talent, I am much less sure if there is really much more nowadays. Such talent is a rare commodity and probably occurs relatively seldom in any generation.

MM: How do you develop organisational and practice skills in students?

CE: There is no doubt that with many students the first essential is to inculcate this sense of organisation. Ideally we should never sit down to practise a passage or a work without a clear idea of just what it is we want to improve and the most economical way to use our time to achieve this. We learn to play through memory, but memory is not a selective process. So every time we do something “wrong” it makes just as deep an impression on our memory as when we do it right. Therefore, if we repeatedly do something wrong, we have to “erase” the “bad” memory before we can start to construct a “good” memory!

I often think that if I were now 18 and practised with the knowledge of HOW to practise that I have now gained – often through teaching – I would be a far better pianist now!



Above: A free day from teaching at Festival MusicAlp in Tignes, enjoying walking at 2700m in the Alps with one of my students (and his dad, who took the photo).

Below: Holiday time with Hilary in a village café.



MM: Are there any works that young pianists should simply go nowhere near? Is there an age below which students cannot learn late Beethoven, late Brahms, extended Schumann?

CE: I do not believe that young pianists should not attempt such great and mature works. Of course, they will hopefully play them very differently in some years, but if they learn them with respect and appreciation of their greatness, this will stand them in good stead later when they return to them, or when they tackle similar works. These wonderful works should not be put on some kind of pedestal to which we genuflect! Composers wrote their music to be shared by listeners and performers and by bringing them to life to the best of our current ability we have the chance to gain from the experience. And there can be something so special in hearing a young and “innocent” first taste of great works.

However, superficial or sloppy learning of any work is abhorrent. It serves only to lead the student into further undesirable and unthinking ways and suggests a lack of respect for the music. If the pianistic demands are unreasonably difficult to manage then the learning experience can only be an unhappy and unsatisfactory one

and the teacher does need to discourage and even forbid for the immediate future. But hopefully this can be done with constructive suggestions for other repertoire that will help prepare for eventual study of the forbidden piece.

This perhaps opens up the more general issue of just when teachers should limit students to works they believe they can comfortably handle and when to risk pushing them on to a hitherto untested challenge. This is one of the hardest things for a teacher – choice of repertoire for each student – and certainly there is not time here to delve deeper into this subject.

MM: Is it wrong for students to specialise before they are 22? Should young pianists try a little of everything or be restrictive?

CE: My brief answer would be “Yes”. But there are always exceptions to any rule. But surely no musician can be complete if they have never experienced a high level of performance in multiple musical styles. Music has never been a static thing: composers and works are not isolated occurrences: they have a heritage of where they “came from” and a future of “what comes next”.

MM: Finally, do you worry about the huge number of young pianists who are trying to make solo careers? What advice would you give a young artist who is perhaps not getting past the preliminary round of competitions despite of the fact that he/she is practising extremely hard regularly?

CE: Again, the answer is “Yes”. All the more so as there are now so many extremely highly developed pianists who all have the potential to sustain some kind of performing career - a career that really can only exist in any significant sense for so few of them.

I am not sure I would take success or otherwise in competitions, though, as the main criterion for assessing one’s success. There are other ways to have a fulfilling career without this - and increasingly pianists need to look beyond thinking that a competition success will inevitably open some kind of long-term gateway to a career.

BEETHOVEN *Frühling*

3. April - 7. Mai 2020

Künstlerische Leitung:
Dorothy Khadem-Missagh



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Celebrating Beethoven

A new Festival in Austria by a new Generation

by Nancy Lee Harper

© Shirley Suarez



Dorothy Khadem-Missagh, Pianist and Artistic Director of Beethoven Frühling

...I was impressed by her pianistic ability and musicianship, dedication to music, curiosity and qualities of humanity... Martha Argerich | pianist

It is always thrilling to see young people not only take charge of their careers, but also to make significant contributions to the cultural scene. The month-long (3 April–7 May 2020) Austrian Jubilee festival, *Beethoven Frühling* (Beethoven Spring), is one such contribution. The title is synonymous with the season and the youth and vitality of its performers. The repertoire and performance venues centre on Beethoven.

The Festival's Artistic Director, Dorothy Khadem-Missagh, of Vienna, is no newcomer to the professional field, being a fourth-generation musician. I first met Dorothy in Switzerland when she was two years old. She was trilingual (German, English, Farsi) and studying violin. At age three, she began her piano studies. At age six, she entered the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, studying with Noel Flores, Jan Jiracek and others, and in Salzburg with Pavel Giliov. Martha Argerich, Rudolf Buchbinder, Elisabeth Leonskaja, Sir András Schiff and Menahem Pressler have also guided her. Today, Dorothy has an international career on several continents. A winner of international prizes, she performs with the ViennaVisionTrio. Her debut CD will be released this spring in solo works by Beethoven and Karl Traugott Zeuner (1775–1841).

I had the opportunity to do a short interview with Dorothy about her new project, *Beethoven Frühling*. She had some surprising things to announce.

NLH: You are demonstrating a fresh new look at Beethoven in this anniversary year. What prompted you to create *Beethoven Frühling*?

DKM: I have been surrounded by music my entire life. As a pianist Beethoven's music has played an important role for me since childhood. The Beethoven anniversary year serves as a great opportunity to take a fresh look at Beethoven in a bigger context.

Beethoven was a visionary beyond his music. He lived in a time of upheaval. He was independent as an artist, musician and composer and for this reason he is also a role model for taking initiatives. He shared the ideals of the French Revolution and also the view that people are equal, forming a unity in all their diversity.

As a pianist, it is important for me to take responsibility and contribute an ever-advancing cultural development beyond my own concert activities. I believe it is up to each and every one to shape the society we want to live in. Music can serve as an impulse that contributes to social development.

Beethoven Frühling is a festival that wishes to contribute in such a way that classical music in all its diversity and richness is presented in special venues to all audiences.

NLH: How long has it taken you to bring this Festival into being?

DKM: The initial idea of founding a festival has been on my mind for quite some time now. I have had the aspiration of creating something new together with my wonderful musician friends and colleagues and was waiting for the right circumstances to undertake this project, which was last summer.

NLH: Was it a difficult undertaking – to plan, to find the artists, and to get the financial support?

DKM: Beethoven Frühling is run by a young team under its own responsibility. We have been in touch with other cultural organisations with whom we collaborate, as well as donors who support our festival. Our vision is also receiving financial support in many ways and especially by the cultural department of the state of Lower Austria.

NLH: Please comment on the repertoire chosen and the artists for the first edition.

DKM: The festival programme aims to present versatile concerts and does not limit itself to Beethoven's music – but rather includes works of predecessors, contemporaries of Beethoven and later composers, building up until the music of our time, all of which is connected in one way or another. I have chosen to present music by Johannes Brahms in the first edition of the festival. Like many composers who followed Beethoven, he admired and famously once said: "You can't have any idea what it's like always to hear such a giant [Beethoven] marching behind you!" After having put together the concert programmes, I was struck when I discovered an unbelievable coincidence: the dates of the opening and closing concerts of this year's festival coincide with the dates of death and the birthday of Johannes Brahms!

NLH: Will the concerts be filmed and/or recorded for future viewing?

DKM: The festival includes different types of programmes. Not all are set in a "classical" concert setting. One of our



Beethovenhaus, Baden (beethovenhaus-baden.at)

programmes will take place in Vienna's city centre and is called "Marathon". It will stretch over a whole day and take place on 19 April from 9am until approx. 10pm. Around 15 outstanding young pianists of diverse backgrounds have united to perform all of the 32 piano sonatas by Beethoven consecutively – as a musical team effort. This will take place at the same time and in proximity of the Vienna City Marathon. The Austrian Broadcasting Corporation will stream the live performances to the running track so that the runners will also experience this very special concert. With this special event I would also like to convey an important message – that in coming and working together we can achieve great things.

We hope to be able to document many of the events taking place in this year's festival so that we can share our joy and the outstanding programmes with audiences around the world.

NLH: Will the Festival be an annual event?

DKM: Beethoven Frühling takes place in Lower Austria and Vienna. The venues – from Baden to Gneixendorf, from Wiener Neustadt to Heiligenstadt – each tell a story and show the human side of Beethoven. What unites them is the connection with Beethoven, who found refuge in this region, drew inspiration and composed some of his most significant works. There are even more places where Beethoven visited. I would like to include them in the coming years of the festival, which will be held annually as it is my wish to contribute to the cultural activities in a sustainable way. The jubilee year 2020, in which Beethoven's 250th birthday is celebrated all around the world, serves as the starting point for this festival which especially wants to reach young audiences.

NLH: What have you learned in this endeavour?

DKM: While planning and organising the festival, we as a team had to overcome many obstacles. Nevertheless, our determination to realise the vision of the festival paid off and in the end every obstacle turned out to lead to an even better outcome.

NLH: What is your vision for the future of the Festival?

DKM: It is my vision to get more and more young people engaged and to encourage them to actively take part. Beethoven Frühling aims to explore ways to open up the world of classical music.

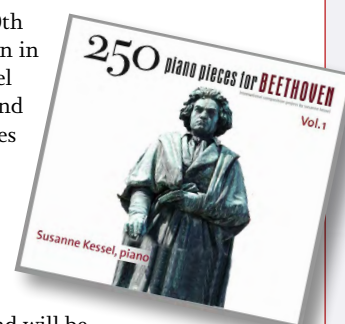
For more information, please see beethovenfruehling.at and dorothy-khadem-missagh.com.

250 piano pieces for Beethoven

During the 2020 EPTA International Conference we will have the opportunity to celebrate an extraordinary project:

For the anniversary of the 250th birthday of Ludwig van Beethoven in 2020, Bonn pianist Susanne Kessel has invited composers from around the world to compose piano pieces which refer to Beethoven.

Radio recordings (WDR) and CD productions will accompany the project. All the pieces will be published by 2020 from EDITIONS MUSICA FERRUM and will be available for the international music world.



Women in Music:



Nannette Streicher, Beethoven, and the Hammerklavier Sonata

by Rory Dowse

Background: Augsburg and Vienna

Maria Anna (Nannette) Streicher (1769–1838) was a piano maker, composer, teacher and writer who is perhaps best known for her Viennese pianos and for her friendship with Beethoven. She was born in Augsburg in 1769 into a family of musicians, and her father – Johann Andreas Stein (1728–1792) – was a renowned German piano maker. Nannette gave her first recital in 1776 in Augsburg at the age of 7, and performed for Mozart a year later. Nannette and her father were discussed by Mozart and his father in a number of letters. Although Mozart wrote of Nannette’s heavy technique, lack of steady pulse, and her grimaces and performance manner, he also stated that ‘she may succeed, for she has great talent for music’. She may have met Beethoven as early as 1787 on his abortive trip to Vienna to meet Mozart, upon the news of what would become his mother’s fatal illness. Indeed, Nannette’s experience of playing for Mozart alongside the circumstances of Beethoven’s trip to study under the composer may have roused Nannette’s sympathies for Beethoven, becoming a significant underpinning of their relationship.

After the death of Nannette’s father in 1792, she married Johann Andreas Streicher (1761–1833) in 1794 and set up a piano firm in her name in the Landstrasse in Vienna. Their house became a centre for music gatherings, and was frequented by numerous leading musicians in Vienna, including Beethoven. The firm made pianos for Weber, Beethoven, Hummel, and later, Brahms. In Beethoven’s first known letter to the Streicher family (in this case to Nannette’s husband, Andreas), Beethoven praised the Streicher piano as a ‘really excellent instrument’, and that ‘the merits of your instruments should be recognised in this country and everywhere’. In the same letter of 1796, Beethoven also jested that the piano ‘robs me of the freedom to produce my own tone’, stating his praise for pianos which permit a rich, singing tone. Incidentally, the brochure given to Streicher piano buyers from 1801 closely mirrors Beethoven’s words on the criticisms of harp-like pianos and the importance of a singing tone. Here we find that Beethoven may not only have influenced the development of the Streicher pianos though his desire for a richer tone, but may also have indirectly contributed to the marketing of the pianos!

Relationship with Beethoven

The relationship between Nannette and Beethoven is documented in over 60 letters from Beethoven between 1816 and 1817. The letters were in Nannette’s collection upon her death; however, little or no correspondence exists from Nannette to Beethoven. Despite the one-sided nature of the correspondence, one is still able to discern various characteristics of their relationship. The first existing letter from Beethoven to Nannette is typical of the others in many respects, whereby Beethoven writes to organise a get-together when he is feeling better. Beethoven’s ill health, cancellations and apologies are frequent in his letters to Nannette. His complaints of ill-health are often accompanied by concern for his worsening hearing, as well as complaints about the weather. It is possible that Beethoven was feeling quite depressed in this period, and his concern over the legal dispute surrounding the raising of his nephew may well have been a contributing factor.

Beethoven surely stirred Nannette’s sympathies, as after asking her to have an item of clothing mended, the next letter states: ‘I am making use of your permission to send you the laundry so that you may kindly attend to this’. This suggests that Nannette offered to help Beethoven with his housekeeping, and indeed Beethoven’s language in the ensuing letters often evokes sympathy, even pity. He writes, ‘I have always helped other people when I could’, in one form or another and on numerous occasions, and that, ‘how one feels when one is uncared for... can only be known from experience.’ Beethoven seems to allude to Christian fellowship in a number of letters, and on one occasion discusses the aspects of the Sabbath, marriage, the gospels and ‘love one another’ in rapid succession.

Nannette has often been described as a mother figure to Beethoven, and indeed it would seem that the patience, care, and perhaps even the love required to sustain Beethoven’s requests and frequent cancellations at this time attests to this. Beethoven also asked to borrow money from her on a number of occasions (which was often repaid late), and he seemingly asked her to calculate the distances of rooms he was considering letting in relation from the town. Numerical issues were common for Beethoven throughout his life, and may well have been a contributing factor to the difficult situation he found himself in:

Nannette has often been described as a mother figure to Beethoven

he seemed to rely on servants to meet his daily needs, but struggled with the expense.

The relationship between Nannette and Beethoven was not without humour, however, as in one such letter Beethoven plays on Nannette's marital and maiden names (Stein, meaning 'stone'; and Streicher, meaning 'prank'), as indeed Mozart did on the name 'Stein' in his letter to his father. Beethoven's criticisms of his servants also read wittily: 'May God grant that I shall not have to talk, write or think any more about them. For in the sphere of art [...] swamp and slime are of even more use to a man than all that damned nonsense!!!' On another occasion, Beethoven merely states of a servant that, 'this person can't even think!'

Beethoven's frustration at times borders on helplessness, for example, when he writes: 'What would happen if you fell ill or were away from home', or, 'I am very much annoyed by everything'. In the latter example, it seems that Beethoven's problems and struggles were highly conflated and without solution. Nannette was someone that would listen, if not provide solutions, as she had done in many forms, including providing a housekeeper.

Nannette's Contributions to Beethoven's Productivity

In this respect, the help that Nannette offered Beethoven during this period was significant, and is worthy of attention. According to Barry Cooper, Nannette was the 'only woman who figured in Beethoven's life in a positive way after he adopted Karl in 1815'. Dennis Matthews describes Nannette as a 'power of strength in helping to sort out his domestic disorders'. The manifestations of Nannette's help to Beethoven can, however, be further developed with regard to his creative outputs.

In 1988 the New Zealand MP and economist Marilyn Waring (1952–) published a seminal book, *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics*. Her conclusion was that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) systematically under-reports the work performed by women, with the premise that GDP excludes the value of non-market activity, including housework and childcare, which she states is largely performed by women. In this respect, the outcomes of GDP can be said to be greatly supported by the work of women who contribute value through various forms of (non-financial) care.

Early 1817 is widely regarded as a period of little productivity for Beethoven. However, in autumn of the same year, Beethoven had begun working on the *Hammerklavier* sonata, Op. 106, completing the first two movements by April 1818, and completing the work around August of the same year. Beethoven also made some sketches for the Ninth Symphony on 10 September 1817. Given the prominence of these works in Beethoven's compositional output, and the help that he received from Nannette Streicher during this challenging period, we must consider the value that Nannette contributed to Beethoven's life during this time. How much of Beethoven's productivity when composing the *Hammerklavier* – and indeed his other works – is due to the help he received from Nannette? Indeed, Beethoven seems to have acknowledged Nannette's contributions when he wrote: 'I am in so many respects your debtor that when I think of it I am frequently overcome by a feeling of shame.'

Conclusion

It seems that Nannette provided much support for Beethoven during this period. How much of this support Beethoven returned to Nannette is unclear, though his feeling of shame seems to indicate a feeling of indebtedness, if not gratitude. Maynard

Solomon suggested that Beethoven's relationship with Nannette came under strain from late 1817, and that their correspondence ended in 1818, 'never to be resumed'. Solomon did not, however, have access to Beethoven's conversation books, which the composer used to aid communication when he became profoundly deaf. Numerous entries show that Beethoven and Nannette were in contact from shortly after the last existing letter up until Beethoven's death.

The conversation books show that Nannette was learning the *Hammerklavier* sonata in late 1819, when she was apparently struggling to learn the first movement. This is affirmed by an entry from Nannette in April 1820 when she asks Beethoven to help her with the sonata. Nannette's name is also mentioned in the conversation books with regard to mending clothes as late as 1823, and so she may well have helped Beethoven with housekeeping well into the latter stages of his life. Solomon states that Nannette's husband visited Beethoven upon the composer's mortal illness, and suggests that Nannette's absence is further indication of the supposed strain on their relationship. A conversation entry from 1827, however, states that the Streicher family – with specific mention to Nannette – sent Beethoven 'a warm greeting'. In light of the evidence from the conversation books, it would seem that the relationship between Beethoven and Nannette carried well beyond 1818, and that Nannette and Beethoven were life-long friends.

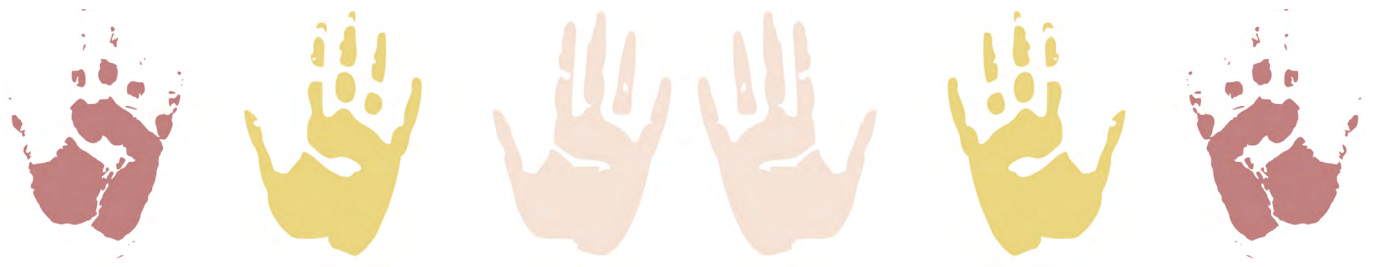
Nannette's friendship and support for Beethoven was surely a source of solace, comfort and support for him, and almost certainly aided his productivity and creative output. Incidentally, Nannette's grave in Vienna is located opposite Beethoven's as though she is still watching over him! Nannette's contribution to music, however, clearly goes beyond Beethoven. According to her husband, 'it was she alone who, for ten years, through her hard work and skill' continued to develop her piano business. Her commitments and contributions were numerous and manifest through generations of music-making through her compositions, instruments, motherhood, teaching, and, of course, through her contributions to Beethoven.



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Belfast-born pianist Rory Dowse is an accompanist at the University of Manchester and graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music. Having taught the piano since 2006, Rory prepares students for auditions and enables teachers to achieve qualifications. Rory has taught at the University of Manchester where he studied under Professor Barry Cooper, and he teaches internationally via Skype.

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“Left vs. Right”

Chopin’s Etudes: An Analysis of Handedness & Bias

by Kris Lennox

In a 2011 study by Reinhard Kopiez (et al) “No Disadvantage for Left-Handed Musicians”, light was shed on a unique aspect of handedness (i.e the dominance of one hand over the other/ the unequal distribution of fine motor skills between left/ right hand) – specifically in relation to professional-level pianists:

Irrespective of whether pianists were right or left-handed, the right hand was, in terms of precision of timing, superior to that of the left hand.

From a scholarly/academic perspective, it would be quite tempting to infer from the research that high-level pianists have less of a lateralisation tendency. But would this be an accurate inference?

As pianists, we have a natural appreciation of why the right hand is likely more accurate: most melodies are performed with the right hand, therefore more attention to detail is given. There’s also the far more obvious: is the right hand more accurate as it plays more notes?

Whilst the latter point is self-evident to most pianists, we currently lack the data to assert such a conclusion with any authority. In short: we couldn’t hold up a selection of scores in a court of law and declare the right hand to be busier as “the right hand clearly has more black dots”. Whilst the conclusion may be correct, the manner of reaching the conclusion is, at best, questionable.

A good starting point is the pure, raw data. Given how views on matters of interpretation etc are relatively fluid (one only need compare interpretational/performance cues from the 19th century to those of today), possibly the most reliable approach is to start solely from the data; information that does not change over time, providing a solid foundation to build from.

It is with the above in mind that I began an extensive/major research project looking at the output of the major composers for piano (Chopin, Liszt, Rachmaninoff etc) – of which the metric of this article (i.e handedness) is one of a large number of analytic metrics. The data is revealing, enlightening, and – at times – quite startling.

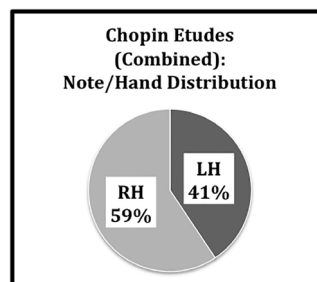
If looking specifically at handedness, it makes sense to focus on Etudes i.e works designed for the purpose of developing technique. It is only natural to assume that we will develop great equality with respect individual hand/finger activation in practising the great etudes of the great composers.

...But is this an unwarranted assumption on our behalf? We don’t know until we have the data. Until we have data, we only have opinion/speculation – which, whilst occasionally of use as a supplement to raw information – is not a replacement of raw information.

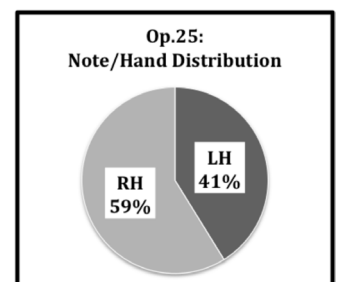
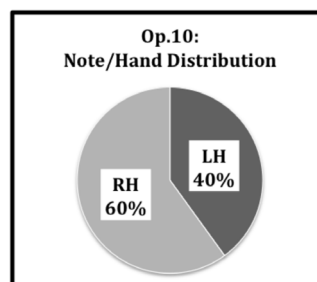
Chopin’s Etudes: In Detail

(Values have been omitted from the data below; only ratios/ percentages shown)

Looking at per-hand note distribution in Chopin’s Etudes (Opp. 10 & 25 combined), the data are as follows:



Opp.10 & 25 independently:



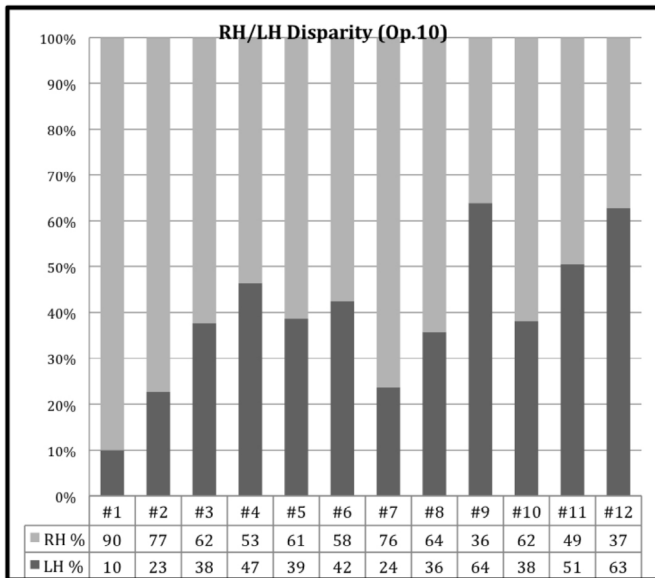
As can be seen from the high-level data, there is a clear RH bias in Chopin’s Etudes, with c.59% of the musical material performed with the RH.

The above figures may well be ‘ideal’ figures from a musical/compositional standpoint - but from a technical standpoint, Chopin’s Etudes will never produce perfect equality (in terms of handedness).

In learning Chopin’s Etudes, the pianist is, by definition, developing a RH bias. This RH bias may be desirable in performing the keyboard repertoire – but we cannot say this with authority (unless the entire piano output were analysed accordingly). What we can say with authority is: Chopin’s Etudes will develop RH bias.

Op. 10 – a Closer Look

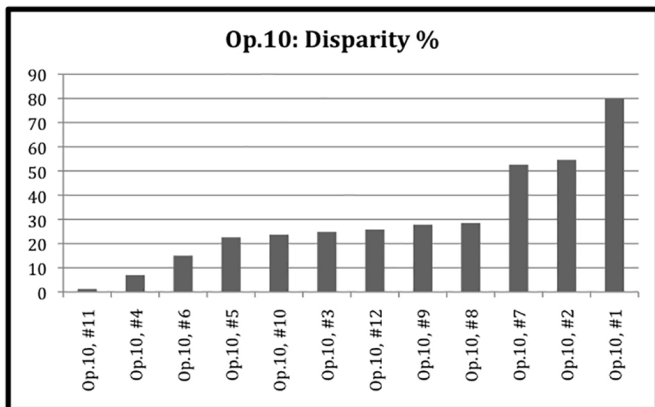
Looking at RH/LH disparity (note-count difference between hands) for each work of Op. 10:



Only three works are LH-dominant (#9, #11, and #12), with #11 only just so.

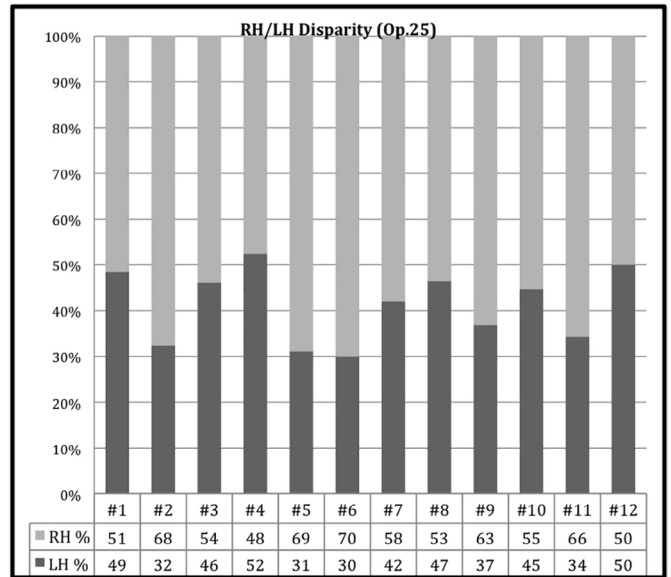
- #1 is the most disparate, with 90% of the musical material executed in the RH.
- #11 is the least disparate (i.e most even), with a 51/49 LH/RH distribution.

Op. 10 works, ordered in terms of disparity (% difference i.e most even to least even distribution):



Op. 25 – a Closer Look

RH/LH disparity for each work of Op. 25:



Perhaps most striking with Op. 25 (in comparison to Op. 10) is the greater level of evenness. Op. 25 is far less disparate/far more balanced.

In saying this, only one piece is LH-dominant; #4 (only four works in total (Opp. 10 & 25) are LH-dominant).

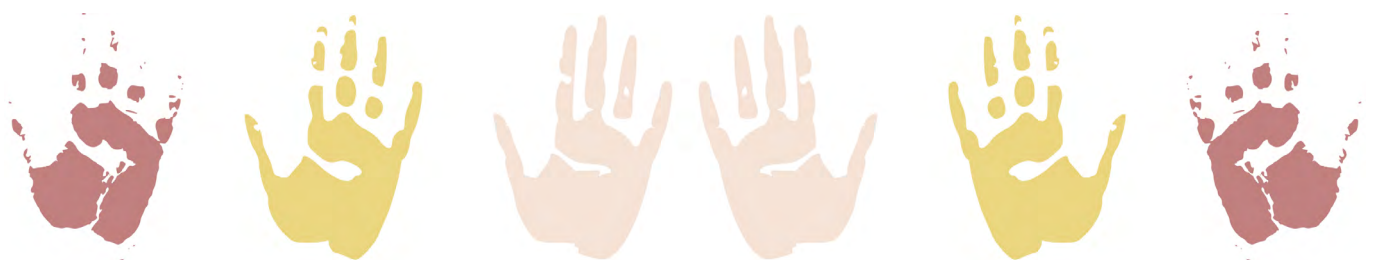
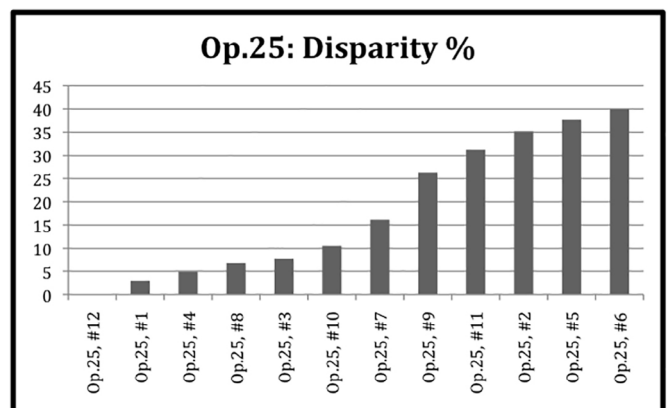
#12 is the most even piece of all, with a perfect 50/50 ratio.

Given the hands are mirrored in Op. 25 #12, the above ratio makes sense (take note – the final bar is not a literal mirroring, but the note counts per hand are equal, thus maintaining an equality of distribution).

Did Chopin intentionally place 'the perfect etude' as the final work? We can only speculate.

But it is very interesting to see the progression, i.e Op. 10 #1 the most disparate, to the perfectly balanced Op. 25 #12.

Op. 25 works, ordered in terms of disparity:



All works, ordered in terms of disparity (most even – most disparate):

Work	LH %	RH %	Disparity %	Hand Dominance
Op.25, #12	50	50	0	Even
Op.10, #11	51	49	1	LH
Op.25, #1	49	51	3	RH
Op.25, #4	52	48	5	LH
Op.25, #8	47	53	7	RH
Op.10, #4	47	53	7	RH
Op.25, #3	46	54	8	RH
Op.25, #10	45	55	11	RH
Op.10, #6	42	58	15	RH
Op.25, #7	42	58	16	RH
Op.10, #5	39	61	23	RH
Op.10, #10	38	62	24	RH
Op.10, #3	38	62	25	RH
Op.10, #12	63	37	26	LH
Op.25, #9	37	63	26	RH
Op.10, #9	64	36	28	LH
Op.10, #8	36	64	28	RH
Op.25, #11	34	66	31	RH
Op.25, #2	32	68	35	RH
Op.25, #5	31	69	38	RH
Op.25, #6	30	70	40	RH
Op.10, #7	24	76	53	RH
Op.10, #2	23	77	55	RH
Op.10, #1	10	90	80	RH

Concluding Thoughts

The data of this article reveals much interesting, useful, and surprising information ready to be harnessed by pianists and educators alike.

When seen as part of the greater whole (i.e handedness in Chopin's Etudes as a single data metric from a very large number of composers/works/metrics), the larger picture in essence reframes our understanding of piano literature.

This article acts as an introduction to the analysis, with the aim of having all data available in book form in the near future.

Kris would like to thank David McGookin for providing the edition of Chopin's Etudes used as analysis (Edition Peters), and would also like to thank Dr. Cormac Convery for initial conversations on the subject of pianists/handedness.

Kris Lennox studied music at Strathclyde University and the RSAMD before pursuing an independent career as performer/writer/producer. Currently Kris writes/records/consults for a number of mainstream artists, primarily within the Pop/Electronic scene.

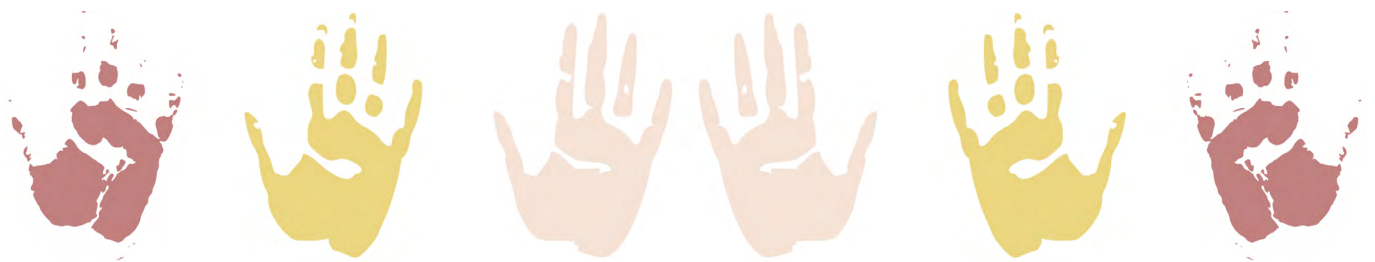
Previously, Kris occasionally performed as a recital pianist/composer, and has a number of classical works published by Music Sales, with compositions featured in publications alongside Glass/Einaudi etc.

Kris has authored around 18 books on a diverse range of musical topics, from harmony to synthesis to music education.

At the theoretical level, Kris has developed harmonic models for 24-TET composition, and has spent around two decades developing various cryptographic methods of harnessing written music as a form of steganographic cipher.

At the non-musical level, Kris has worked in security, business, & compliance as a consultant analyst, developing sector-specific computational/statistical models & algorithms.

Kris regularly posts to/can be found on YouTube.





Teaching Piano Students with Four Types of Physical Disabilities

by John Mortensen

Introduction

The traditional way of playing the piano assumes two functional hands, feet and eyes. Creating rewarding musical experiences for the physically disabled student may require alternative methods, priorities, and even definitions of success. At the same time, these students should be thoroughly challenged to meet high musical standards in all possible areas. In this article I will describe four categories of physical disability I have encountered in my students, discuss various pedagogical strategies with which we approached each student's unique advantages and disadvantages, and present first-person narrative from each student regarding the experience of playing the piano with a physical disability. (Note: First-person narratives are used with permission, and identifying features of the speakers have been obscured. Medical statements in this article have been evaluated by a physician.)

Tendonitis and Carpal Tunnel Syndrome

Tendonitis (also spelled tendinitis) is inflammation or irritation of the tendons, which connect muscles to bones. Carpal tunnel syndrome is inflammation within the wrist's carpal tunnel, which puts pressure on the median nerve, resulting in numbness or pain in the hand. These are two separate conditions, but carpal tunnel syndrome may be caused by tendonitis within the carpal tunnel. The fact that nearly everyone in the music profession seems to know a pianist with an injury suggests that these conditions are very common. Surveys suggest that anywhere from one third to one half of active pianists experience some form of playing-induced injury, usually tendonitis. (Alford and Szanto, 1996)

Thomas Mark describes the process by which pianists' injuries develop:

"Tendons become injured because of repeated tensing or from rubbing on nearby ligaments and bones. Subjected to constant stress, tendons may fray or tear apart, or become thickened and bumpy. The injured area may calcify. The tendon sheath is also vulnerable; it may produce excess fluid, causing swelling. The tendon may become "locked" in the sheath and move jerkily; the sheath may become inflamed and press on the tendon. Inflammation and swelling in the restricted space of the carpal tunnel can put pressure on the median nerve, leading to the tingling and numbness of the thumb and second finger which often indicate carpal tunnel syndrome. All this starts to sound like a catalogue of medieval tortures, and for pianists who have been injured it might as well be just that. Symptoms include aching, tenderness, tingling, soreness – in short, pain. The pain can be so severe as to prevent not only piano playing, but everyday actions as well." (Mark, 2016)

Our bodies can become used to inefficient movements as well as efficient ones, and when we are used to them, the inefficient ones feel "natural"

Mark explains how pianists unintentionally adopt harmful technical practices:

"How does it come about that a good pianist may play in a way that stresses the body? I think there are two principal reasons. First, most people's technique is not deliberately chosen. That is: the person does not analyse the movements needed to play a passage and practise those movements. Instead, the person just finds a way, by hook or crook and trial and error, to get to the right notes. With constant repetition the movements become habits. Sometimes, movements acquired this way will be efficient. But there is no guarantee. Our bodies can become used to inefficient movements as well as efficient ones, and when we are used to them, the inefficient ones feel "natural". I have heard pianists with techniques full of potentially injurious movements describe their technique as "natural" and "relaxed". The second way in which people come to move stressfully is that they are taught stressful movements. No teacher would knowingly teach harmful movements. But too few teachers understand the principles of efficient movement, and some ways of moving that are dangerous to our health are firmly established in traditional pedagogy." (Mark, 2016)

Indeed, the history of keyboard pedagogy offers too many examples of teachers (and indeed whole schools of thought) actively encouraging self-destructive activity. Concert pianist Ruth Slenczynska admonished young pianists that pain would and should accompany their daily practice:

"You will suffer physical pain and learn to endure it; pain is like a tunnel of fire that forges muscles of steel. You will emerge at the other end invigorated, with a tremendous margin of reserve, and with the knowledge of complete mastery, which is well worth the effort." (Slenczynska, 1961)

Composer and self-promoter George Antheil compared piano technique to a murderous weapon:

"A pianist's fingers are both his ammunition and his machine guns. By the time you are ready to be a concert pianist, they must have been tempered into steel... You practise slow trills until it almost kills you, until your two forearms are like sore throbbing hams, twice, three times their normal size, or so they seem. Then you wait until the soreness gets out of them. Then you start all over again. Finally, after weeks, you commence playing an octave scale... Up and down, up and down, until, at last, your





forearms seem as if they will burst again. Moreover, by this time, the pain creeps up to your shoulders, spreads over your back. You keep on. You must never stop. And so technique comes to you.” (Antheil, 1945)

A well-informed keyboard teacher cannot take Slenczynska or Antheil seriously. Clearly each indulges in braggadocio, enjoying the imagined prestige of martyrdom and superheroism. Nevertheless, their advice reflects the widespread notion of their day that piano technique consists of astonishing strength bought with aggravating pain.

Beginning with Rudolph Breithaupt and Tobias Matthay in the late 19th century, a new understanding of piano technique began to spread. Breithaupt and Matthay advocated the use of arm weight as opposed to isolated fingers. This “ergonomic” approach to piano-playing taught (or at least opened the possibility) that every gesture at the piano must derive from the human physiology’s repertoire of motions that are naturally strong and sustainable. Matthay placed special emphasis on the inherent power and flexibility of forearm rotation. He saw rotation as superior to isolated motion of the fingers from a stationary hand. It took many years and many words for Breithaupt and Matthay’s ideas to be clarified, refined, and made practical by teachers such as Dorothy Taubman. Still, these pedagogues deserve credit for introducing the notion that people ought not be forced to move like tireless factory machines, and that healthy piano technique must be comprised of innate, idiomatic, humane physical gestures. (Breithaupt, 1912, and Matthay, 1914)

Unfortunately, even after a century this common-sense approach has not sufficiently permeated the piano pedagogy world. To this day many teachers still advocate an isolated-finger technique, contributing to tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome among students.

I have met scores of students with injuries of this kind, typically when they come for a campus visit or audition. The first indication of injury is often the way they look when they play the piano. Their hands may be affected by what I call “arachnodigititis”, a reference to the tense and collapsed tarantula-shaped hand typical of isolated-finger technique. When I see arachnodigititis, my first question is, “Do you ever experience fatigue or pain when playing the piano?” Heartbreakingly often, the answer is Yes.

Obviously, piano teachers are not physicians and have no business diagnosing or treating injuries. For this reason, whenever I discover that a student has indications of an injury, I require that they see a physician and obtain clearance to continue playing the piano, along with any medication or physical therapy deemed appropriate.

At the same time, we can hardly expect physicians to have a nuanced understanding of piano technique, nor to realise that there are such things as good and bad technique. From the perspective of most physicians, the student got injured not by bad playing, but by too much playing. This is why physicians usually advise rest from the piano but do not prescribe learning healthy motions and avoiding unhealthy ones. The problem here is that when the student returns to the piano, the old technical habits will inflame the injury once again. At this point, help from a knowledgeable piano teacher may make the difference whether or not the student has a future at the piano at all.

Thomas Mark confirms this view:

“This brings us to a point that it is vital for pianists to recognise: pianists’ injuries are rarely medical problems, they are movement problems... This explains why health care professionals are rarely of much help to pianists who seek a permanent cure. An injured pianist does not need a doctor, he needs a teacher, and the solution to the near-epidemic of pianists’ injuries will come not from therapy but from education.” (Mark, 2016)

Pedagogical Strategies

As Mark points out, pianists with injurious habits may be completely unaware of their precarious circumstances. I have seen this phenomenon verified many times: even students with a confirmed medical diagnosis of tendonitis or carpal tunnel and obvious visible signs of distress at the piano may be oblivious to the fact that their suffering is self-inflicted.

Teachers must address this problem by changing the student’s sense of what “normal” feels like at the piano. I believe that many play the piano with constant stress (and even pain) but have normalised those feelings and blocked them out, just as one learns to ignore the distractions of a noisy airport terminal or a bumpy ride in a bus. They do not sense the stress they create for themselves. Worst of all, they may have been subject to ill-informed teaching that not only tolerated injurious technique but celebrated it, like Antheil or Slenczynska, as a noble form of artistic martyrdom. In one severe case, I had a student who was gravely injured in both arms as a result of a previous piano professor – at a well-regarded university, no less – who responded to complaints of distress with, “No pain, no gain.”

when the student returns to the piano, the old technical habits will inflame the injury once again

Retraining piano technique begins with retraining sensation – that is, the student’s expectation of what playing the piano should feel like. The first step is to get the student to feel comfortable and strong at the instrument, even if that means playing very simple passages, or even single notes and chords. Injurious technique nearly always involves isolated finger motion, a stationary or locked hand, and lateral reaching of individual fingers. However, stress in the hand will spread to the shoulders. Because the shoulders encompass a relatively large proportion of the body, they are a good place to start when teaching a student to feel differently at the piano.

One way to help a student detect stress is to have them sit at the piano and hold a simple triad, and then consciously release all muscular tension in the shoulders. The shoulders should move around somewhat so that the student can feel all the muscles, and then drop into a relaxed state. The student should then begin a piece of music. After a few measures, the teacher should ask the player to stop and release the shoulder tension once again. Typically the student will have accumulated significant tension during the course of a few measures, and will be quite surprised to discover it. This exercise should be repeated many times to develop awareness. The teacher may even assign the student to stop every few measures (or at sectional breaks, or wherever appropriate) and practice the shoulder release. The goals of this exercise are to awaken awareness of accumulating shoulder stress and to provide, by way of contrast, a tantalising notion of how comfortable piano playing can be.

Awareness of comfort and strength begins at the shoulder, but the teacher must address the hands and fingers as well. A full discussion of healthy piano technique is beyond the scope of this article, although an injured pianist needs to retrain technique comprehensively. As a starting point, I refer the reader to Neil Stannard’s excellent book *Piano Technique Demystified* or even his abbreviated article on similar topics. (Stannard, 2014, 2016)

To summarise in brief, the student must discard the defective technique of locking the hand in place and moving isolated fingers, and learn instead to move the whole physiology – fingers, hand, arm, shoulder, and even torso – in a coordinated and efficient manner. The goal is to solve every technical requirement with the most natural movements of the whole body, and never to force any part of the body to move in ways contrary to its design.

Because tendonitis and carpal tunnel syndrome leave the connective tissues sensitive, the injured student will be prone to re-injury even after recovery. The student should carefully observe limits on the amount of daily practice time, and the teacher should ask regularly about pain and discomfort. At any point in the retraining process, the student should see a physician if pain or numbness return.

The student should avoid virtuosic repertoire during the period of retraining. Understandably, students tend to give in to the temptation to attack the piano when playing impressive, dramatic pieces. However, aggressive practising of demanding literature elicits precisely the kind of pianistic behaviour that gave rise to the injury in the first place. Instead, students should play music of lesser difficulty, and should be carefully instructed to practice slowly and mindfully.

One of my students who has dealt with tendonitis agreed to describe the circumstances for this article.

On receiving a diagnosis and medical treatment:

“I did not receive the official diagnosis of tendonitis until the beginning of my sophomore year of college. However, I began feeling the effects of tendonitis all the way back in 6th grade. I noticed it mainly when I practised piano and had a lot of runs or groups of fast notes. As I continued into high school and college, the pain hurt enough that it kept me from helping my mom with food in the kitchen, doing homework, taking notes in class, and of course practising and performing piano. But I was stubborn and tried to fight through the pain anyways (not wise).”

“When I first went to a specialist and got a diagnosis that I had tendonitis, I was both nervous and relieved. I didn’t know what would lie ahead medically which made me feel uneasy. On the other hand, I had hope that the pain that I was having might lessen, or even go away completely. The pain that I felt (which was for the most part my right wrist) was apparently my tendons shredding while I was trying to use them as muscles when practising. I was frustrated at first when the doctor tried cortisone injections into the tendons, and nothing was working except more pain and some numbness. After I had my surgery on my right wrist, I had a lot of therapy exercises that were painful at first, but became much easier after about 5 weeks. I got my full mobility back which was the first step. Even though the surgery didn’t necessarily fix my tendons, it prevented them from getting damaged any further, and kept them from swelling.”

On the cause of tendonitis:

“I think the main cause of my tendonitis was my lack of good technique when practising the piano. I had a lot of tension through my wrists and fingers when I practised and performed, which (according to the doctor) forced my tendons to be used as muscles, and as an end result my tendons would shred under the stress. I was not using my upper arm muscles and flexibility of the wrist like I should have. This tension I allowed in my hands went on from age 5 through 19. That’s a long time to shred and damage your tendons.”

On retraining at the piano:

“After my surgery, I had to change my perspective as to how I approached the piano. I noticed that not only do you figure out how to get your hands to play the correct notes at the right time, but there is a choreography in the human body that is applied as well. I started training

my mind and my body how to ‘effortlessly’ execute a piano piece. By that, I mean I needed to find ways to eliminate a lot of little finger muscle usage, and rather use upper arm and shoulder muscles. That includes rotating the wrist, using the weight of my arms for power, centring my arms and wrists rather than twisting in awkward positions throughout a piece.”

On aspirations for the future:

“I am being kept busy with a home on a farm and a growing family. However, I would like to continue teaching piano and be able to maintain my collegiate level of performance. Later down the road when my children are older, I would really like to go to graduate school and get a masters in piano performance. But in order for me to be able to continue with piano on any level, I have to continuously do my wrist exercises in order to keep the muscles around the wrist strengthened. I also have to pay attention to how I’m using my hands in everyday things. [...] If I can do that, achieving my goals might actually be possible.” (Email interview, 31 December 2016)

Compression Neuropathy

Compression neuropathy is a condition in which a nerve is pinched (compressed). The compression may be located anywhere in the body and result from a wide variety of causes. Compression at certain locations in the upper spinal column will interfere with free and comfortable motion of the arms and hands.

In contrast with tendonitis, compression neuropathy is unlikely to be caused by technical problems at the piano. However, in common with tendonitis, the symptoms of compression neuropathy may be aggravated by incorrect playing.

Pedagogical Strategies

As the condition is not caused by piano playing, there is nothing the teacher and student can do at the piano to address compression neuropathy directly. Nevertheless, the same procedures recommended for students with tendonitis are appropriate for those with neuropathy. While the condition must be treated medically (with therapy, exercise, medication, or surgery as determined by a physician), the student will nevertheless benefit from teaching which emphasises healthy motion and self-awareness regarding tension and physical comfort.

A student of mine is currently dealing with compression neuropathy partly as a result of a serious accident. My student agreed to speak about the experience for this article.

On the causes of the condition:

“The curve of my spine in my neck is backwards, probably due to the blow to my head in my [...] accident as well as minor bad posture habits. The position of the bones, as well as my terribly tight back and shoulder muscles, has put a lot of pressure on the nerves that go to my arms. There is no nerve damage thankfully, but I have to go through a lot of [...] physical therapy in order to correct the problem.”

On discovering that compression neuropathy was affecting work at the piano:

“I was practising over spring break so that I could make a lot of progress before returning to school. [...] I was working on Scarlatti Sonatas when my right hand started feeling achy after about an hour of practice. I thought that it was just tired so I started working with the left hand for a while. [...] I tried again the next day and found it to be the same way, as well as the days after that. I tried to rest it completely, but I believe that resulted in overuse of my left [...] I guess that practice session was the straw that broke the camel’s back, so to speak.”

From an email to me from my student at the time of the injury, reporting the situation:

“My right hand does not really hurt. It just bothers me, especially my pinky and ring finger. I can just feel them moving all the way to my wrist and sometimes to my elbow. Moving my thumb up and down feels a little strange, too.”



On the process of seeking medical help:

“They did x-rays on my spine and determined that the problem is in fact my neck because it is curved backwards and will take time and effort (through exercises) to fix ... my physical therapy exercises include repetitive movement and/or stretches that focus on the muscles in my neck, shoulders, upper back, and hands/arms.”

On returning to the piano after injury:

“[...] I began to play the piano again, albeit very easy songs for only a short amount of time so that I would not overdo anything. I then worked up to playing some Disney songs which were not too difficult but required me to play at a good pace. I am still playing Disney, but, on my good days, I can play through some of my less strenuous pieces, like my Mozart and Scarlatti. This is a more recent development, though, so I still have a lot of work to do to be able to get back into playing Chopin and Bach. I am hoping that, by scheduling my physical therapy exercises into each and every day, I will continue to improve so that I can again play all of my pieces. I know that it will take a lot of time and work, but I am determined to get back on track, despite this detour [...] My arms still ache after playing a short while, but I’m encouraged because the achiness does not happen all day with everything I do. I have good days and bad with them, but I DO have good days, which is great.”

On hopes for the near future at the piano:

“I would like to be able to play at least an hour a day and not be inhibited by the issues I have mentioned. As for literature, I want to be able to play any piece I set my mind to, though I believe that it will be a long time before I am ready to try another Bach fugue (because it hurts when the music gets too complicated). I really enjoyed accompanying a violinist and a vocalist my first semester, so I would love to get back into that. I think that accompanying a choir would be a good experience, too. I would like to play in studio class sometimes and perhaps a General Recital if I am able.”

On long-term goals at the piano:

“I would like to have my own recital. Perhaps it is a lot to hope for, but somehow the nerves and enormous amount of preparation seems worth being able to say that I did it. After college, I hope to open an in-home, private piano and voice studio. I also would like to help out in church with whatever musical it has.” (Email interview, 27 December 2016)

Hypermobility

Hypermobility is a syndrome in which tendons and ligaments are looser or weaker than normal. It occurs in 10-25% of the population. (Garcia-Campayo, Asso, and Alda, 2011) Hypermobility can affect piano playing because excess flexibility in the connective tissues requires extra muscular effort to contract and maintain stability. Even simple pianistic gestures may be difficult and wearisome for a person with hypermobility.

Persons with hypermobility may be called “double-jointed”, although that is not a recognised medical term; the condition affects tendons and ligaments rather than joints. Nevertheless, joints may go beyond the normal range of motion due to lack of support from connective tissue. Physicians diagnose hypermobility through a series of tests of motion to detect which joints move beyond the expected range.

Hypermobility may affect piano playing by producing fatigue. Weaker tendons and ligaments require compensation from the surrounding muscles, resulting in the player tiring easily. In addition, the weaker tendons may be vulnerable to other injury such as tendonitis. Few teachers are aware of the condition, and are unlikely to recognise its presence and refer the student to a physician. Further, hypermobility may not have any visible characteristics; the student may not move at the piano in any ways that could suggest problems. Given the nature of the condition, one might expect the student to look “floppy”, but that may not be the case. The only reliable way to detect its presence is the student’s willingness to report discomfort and seek medical attention.

Pedagogical Strategies

Once a student has received a clear diagnosis of hypermobility, the teacher can begin to develop pedagogical strategies that address physical limitations while opening avenues of fruitful musical activity. The first responsibility of the teacher is also that of the physician: Do No Harm. The teacher must review repertoire selections, practice habits and performance situations to make sure that the student is not engaging in damaging physical activity. Repertoire choices may be limited by density of textures, speed, dynamic level, and duration. Generally speaking, music that is difficult, fast, loud, and long is probably a bad idea. The teacher will need to ask about fatigue frequently, even several times within one lesson. The instructor should also remain vigilant for other signs of distress such as non-verbal vocalisations, facial expressions and anguished body language such as wincing or recoiling. (Sometimes students get tired of complaining and just want everything to be fine, thus becoming hesitant to report problems.) The responsible teacher will want to know what lies behind a relieved “Phew!” after the last chord of a piece.

Generally speaking, music that is difficult, fast, loud, and long is probably a bad idea.

The student and teacher should work through passages together, trying different fingerings before choosing a solution. Because student feedback is the only reliable way of knowing whether any given gesture is acceptable or not, the teacher should let the student try each fingering several times before deciding upon it. Likewise, reaches of larger intervals may cause fatigue and should be checked carefully. If practical, larger chords may be redistributed between the hands for more comfortable execution. When redistribution is not possible, the teacher may offer a simplified texture as a solution, leaving out a few notes. Sacrificing absolute textual fidelity in favour of a student’s health is a good trade.

One of my students with hypermobility agreed to speak about the experience for this article.

On discovering the presence of hypermobility:

“I always knew I had lax joints in my hands and arms, especially in my fourth fingers, but the first time I noticed hypermobility becoming an impediment to my playing is when I began to play another instrument, the saxophone. A couple times every rehearsal, the joints in my fourth fingers would invert, and I had to manually put them back into place. I didn’t recall my fingers inverting when I played the piano, but I watched my piano technique anyway to catch any abnormal joint movements. I noticed the same thing happening when I stretched my hand into an octave or more, although my fingers wouldn’t “lock”, my whole hand would invert. I was taught good technique, such as to not collapse the bridge of my hand, so as long as I wasn’t playing beyond the octave, the effects of my hypermobility were not immediately noticeable.”

“I first started to notice technical limitations when I was just beginning early advanced repertoire, and was given fast pieces, or pieces with repeated octaves. No amount of memory or slow practice would help me bring them up to the right tempo. My hands became fatigued quickly, and when I forced my hands to finish the piece, my sound was strained and muddy.”

On getting medical attention:

“The biggest issue to solve in getting a diagnosis was determining if my problem was a muscle problem or a nerve problem. I did not see the





link between my hypermobility and my tightness and fatigue, so I failed to mention my hypermobility. I didn't know it was a problem in itself. At first I was just diagnosed with fatigue, and was given ibuprofen and oral steroids to combat the fatigue. When I was off the medicine, I felt fatigued again, and was referred to a specialist. My doctor believed it was a muscle problem, and I was diagnosed with cubital tunnel [compression of the ulnar nerve in the elbow], and referred to physical therapy."

"My physical therapist confirmed cubital tunnel, and then pinpointed some of the causes. She first had me do strength tests, and my strength levels came out below average. She then had me copy her in doing some mobility exercises, and she noticed that the joints in my fingers, especially my fourth and fifth fingers, my hands themselves, and to some extent my elbows went beyond the normal range of motion. Because hypermobility causes the ligaments and tendons involved to become weaker and more prone to injury, she taught me some stretches and exercises to help strengthen the weaker areas, and made casts for my arms for when I sleep. Curled up sleeping positions strain the nerves in the arms and hands, and the casts would prevent me from twisting my arms and straining the ulnar nerve."

On returning to the piano after diagnosis:

"I begin practice very slowly, and work my way up to tempo as I feel my arms warming up. Often, massaging my arms and drinking a small amount of coffee before my first practice helps speed up the warming up process. I can practise for about 30-40 minutes a day. Right now, I can practise pieces from moderato and slower. I'm pulling pieces from different time periods and styles for variation. I am hoping to play up to allegro in the future, because I have before, even with hypermobility. Quick pieces, and pieces with frequent octaves are ruled out in the foreseeable future."

On professional ambitions for the future:

"I hope to pursue a master's and doctoral degree in pedagogy, and perhaps incorporate medical training (injury treatment, therapy) and/or psychology (counseling) into my studies. Through my experiences with hypermobility and consequent injury, I am planning on tailoring my teaching to injured or disabled musicians. Because I have had direct experience in practising with an injury, I hope to help others regain strength and assess their capabilities after their injuries as well. Whether that looks like growing a pedagogy programme in a university that encompasses teaching with injury and special needs, or opening up a programme for injured musicians in my community, I desire to help heal those who are injured, prevent injury, and raise awareness for musician health wherever I serve." (Email interview, 22 December 2016)

Blindness

Unlike the disabilities discussed above, blindness does not restrict the pianist's motion, nor is there any danger that playing the piano will make blindness worse. On the other hand, blind pianists must go to considerable lengths to acquire and read music. The teacher's responsibilities are significant, as well: one must demonstrate fingerings, arm motions, release of tension in the shoulder, and everything else through tactile, aural, or verbal means.

Louis Braille (1809–1852), the inventor of the Braille system of reading for the blind, was an organist. He created a system of music notation as well, which allows blind musicians access to printed scores. Braille music uses raised dots and, to a sighted person, looks exactly like Braille text. Each line of raised dots communicates information about a note: pitch, octave, duration, dynamics, articulation, and so on. However, all these components are read one at a time. Sighted persons reading music scores are able to scan an area and acquire many layers of information in a single glance. With Braille music, one reads "single file": the pitch, octave, duration, articulation and phrasing are separate bits of information that one reads sequentially rather than simultaneously. The blind pianist reads and memorises each hand separately, and then puts them together. Generally speaking, learning music from Braille is slow, and for blind pianists no method of real-time sight-reading yet exists.

Printed Braille scores are expensive and bulky. The raised dots require heavy paper, and the three-dimensional nature of the text means that each page takes up extra space. A single measure of piano music in Braille may take up an entire page. All these factors taken together mean that the mere task of getting copies of music for a blind student requires time and planning.

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, part of the United States Library of Congress, offers blind persons free access to Braille music and recorded instructional materials. Patrons may sign up to use these services at <https://www.loc.gov/nls/reference/guides/music.html>.

Electronic Braille (or e-Braille) scores are now in development. Many blind persons already use Braille terminals, electronic devices that display Braille by means of moveable raised pins. Like video screens, e-Braille terminals are refreshable and can theoretically display any kind of text, including Braille music. The process of transcribing music into e-Braille is not yet fully standardized nor technologically seamless, though various companies are currently developing transcription software. One company, Dancing Dots, (www.dancingdots.com) offers several products to assist in creating and converting Braille scores.

most blind persons develop, by necessity, a keen sense of hearing. 60% of blind musicians develop perfect pitch

Pedagogical Strategies

Blind students prompt teachers to recognise that, despite the fact that music is sound, we use sight constantly when we discuss and make music. Blind persons are keenly aware that we live in a visual culture, and I have been surprised more than once by insights my blind student has into the world of sighted things. Nevertheless, many of the teaching methods we normally use do not work. I cannot write notes on a score, ask my student to learn a fingering by watching my hand, or demonstrate posture or hand position by means of a visual example. Again, everything must be either aural, verbal or tactile. And verbal examples cannot draw on overly visual concepts.

On the other hand, most blind persons develop, by necessity, a keen sense of hearing. 60% of blind musicians develop perfect pitch. (Hamilton, Pascual-Leone, and Schlaug, n.d.) My student has perfect pitch, and this greatly simplifies the task of communicating about notes and chords. All I need to do is play something, and my student instantly grasps the relevant pitch information. In fact, the process is often faster than describing a chord, or pointing out something in a score, to a sighted student.

Nevertheless, common tasks one encounters in lessons, such as asking the student to begin from a certain measure, almost always require more time. Blind students who play chamber music will need to plan in advance with their collaborators about designated rehearsal measures, aural cues for starting in tempo, and other necessary substitutions for visual elements of rehearsal and performance.

My student agreed to describe the experience of learning music as a blind person.

On early lessons:

"When I first started learning the piano, I was about 5 years old. We focused a lot on learning the scales (singing pitches while my teacher



showed me the note). We did a lot of hand-over-hand stuff; mainly I would play the note while she would feel what I was doing and vice versa. She also taught me to harmonise in 3rds, 4ths, fifths, etc., and taught me the circle of fifths. Conventional ways of teaching me were out of the question, considering my disability and how small my hands and fingers were. She also taught me the distance between keys, counting them, etc.”

On learning music by ear:

“I try and put both hands together, instead of trying to learn the right hand first and then the left, or vice versa. I think learning both hands at the same time is good, because it teaches you how things work together musically. If you only learn one hand at a time, it doesn’t allow you to see how things are orchestrated, thus making it slower to learn.”

On learning Braille music:

“It is difficult to get music scores and/or pieces in Braille. This is mainly because of the time and effort needed by Braille music transcribers to go through and transcribe the print into Braille. One must be certified in order to do this. There are electronic copies of pieces, but again, they are also very hard to come by.”

On aspirations for the further musical development:

“I would love to accompany anyone or play as a soloist. I think that piano is the foundation for learning music and theory. I think it would be great to teach blind and sighted students as well.”

On ways blind musicians are misunderstood:

“I think that most sighted people think that blind people are “musical” by nature, which, in actuality, is not true. I know plenty of blind people who cannot sing, and should not unless they’re alone. Forgive me for being blunt. As far as music goes, I don’t think that blind people who possess musical talents are given a chance to show them. Why should sighted students accompany choirs when people with disabilities who want to learn and are capable of learning can do the same? I had an experience once, where we were working on a song for choir. Since we’ve done the songs multiple times, I offered to accompany our group. I was turned down and told that the “accompanist” could do it. One last thing: blind people with perfect pitch do not want to be portrayed as puppets. What I mean by that is, don’t ask me to sing a ton of notes just to show people how amazing I am. With the right opportunities, people with disabilities can succeed as musicians. Don’t discourage them.” (Email interview, 21 December 2016)

Conclusion

Physical disabilities present significant challenges to both student and teacher. While the presence of a disability may limit some activities at the piano, such obstacles often spur extra determination and resilience on the part of the student. The teacher needs to learn about the disability, locate appropriate resources, and modify goals and methods as befitting each student. Despite these additional responsibilities, investing in the musical lives of piano students with physical disabilities is immensely rewarding.

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John Mortensen is a Steinway Artist and professor of piano from Ohio. He improvises complete concerts in historic styles. The U.S. State Department presented him the Fulbright Global Scholar award in 2019 for his work in historic improvisation. His forthcoming book *The Pianist’s Guide to Historic Improvisation* will be published by Oxford University Press. Mortensen’s YouTube channel offers tutorials in piano technique and improvisation. He teaches partimento-based improvisation on tour in Europe and USA; upcoming concerts and residencies include national conservatories in Lithuania, Latvia, UK, Denmark and Canada. He is the creator of Improv Planet, an online school of historic improvisation. His students include beginners, conservatory students and faculty, concert artists and members of internationally-recognised ensembles. He is currently working on a book on fugue improvisation.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Continuing our fascinating retrospective history of EPTA through a review and summary of *Piano Journal*. Pianist, teacher, adjudicator, performer, writer and educator Nancy Litten summarises and selects excerpts from issue 31 of our EPTA magazine.

No. 31 (Feb 1990)

EDITORIAL by Malcolm Troup: The Truly 'Revolutionary' Etude

Neuhaus said that it would be highly desirable if the greatest masters of the piano were to make records not only of technically easy musical masterpieces... but also of 'educational' music, such as the etudes by Czerny, Clementi, Cramer etc. Horowitz took him at his word and frequently included etudes by Czerny, Henselt and Moszkowski as encores in his recitals, and the American pianist Vivien Harvey-Slater has made a whole career out of her championing of Czerny studies.

Most of us would fall back on Czerny (pupil of Beethoven and teacher of Liszt) as the originator of the species. He had three desks laid out in his studio, so that he might carry on working on one etude while the ink dried on the other two – a pianistic assembly-line if ever there was one! It was the old story of the hare and the hedgehog – that of knowing many things fleetingly or knowing one small thing well... For the musician of the early 19th century, the etude promised to be the 'one small thing' that the fugue or fughetta had represented in the Baroque era.

Could Beethoven's Diabelli Variation no. 23, with its quickfire co-ordination and contrary motion, be his send-up of the new genre? In Brahms' 51 Exercises, with all their typical doubling in thirds, sixths and octaves, it is almost as if we get a glimpse of the old boy himself warming up for a performance of one of his concertos.

WHO'S WHO OF PIANISTS: ALDO CICCOLINI talks to Carola Grindea

A.C. SOUND comes first and foremost in my approach and I hear in my imagination all the tones I wish to bring in my interpretation of a particular work; I live with them for weeks on end until I know exactly which will be the ones to

express each particular motif, each note, the entire phrase. Just as a painter selects his colours, a pianist should plan his canvas in its minutest detail. ... When pressing the key down, imagine the strings vibrate and listen to the tone dying away slowly, while allowing the key to come up gradually. Busoni understood this more than any other pianists of his time, and he taught all his students how to make use of this specific quality to enhance the performance. This is, in fact, the essence of being a musician, learning to listen to oneself before, during and after the tone. ... I hear the sound of the piano going round the hall, reflecting against the walls and coming back enveloping me. I almost identify myself with the audience receiving my music as if we are one single unit.

I do a lot of playing myself during lessons, but I do not want my students to just imitate me. I show them a variety of possibilities of interpreting a work, or a specific phrase.

TOP DOGS AND UNDERDOGS or Knowing Your Place in Music by Joyce Rathbone

Imagine yourself to be a singer, who has devoted many years to the training of your voice and have studied your art with great thoroughness and dedication. ... You go to a music club to give a recital and are astonished, on arrival, to be more or less ignored by the club's secretary while your pianist is welcomed with flattering enthusiasm. ... After a rehearsal in which infinite care is given to the comfort of the pianist and none at all to yours, you are expected to spend the afternoon ... chatting to the locals, while your pianist is given a room in which to rest and compose himself in peace and quiet before the concert. ... The concert is followed by a party in which everyone flocks round the pianist, pouring adulation and gratitude into his willing

ears. The only person who talks to you, clearly moved by pity, says how lucky you are to work with such a great artist.

Well of course, this is all fantasy, ... but if we turn it back-to-front – aha! Now we're getting somewhere. This way round you are the pianist. But we'll call you an 'accompanist' instead.

BOOK REVIEWS ARTHUR SCHNABEL, MY LIFE AND MUSIC

Part 1 is a friendly romp through 'fin de siècle Vienna'.... There are tantalising glimpses of Leschetizky, Busoni, Rudolf Steiner, Schoenberg, Rachmaninoff. At moments such as playing cards into the night with Strauss he comments, 'I think I belong to the lazy type of man; at times I hated to be lazy, but comforted myself with the illusion, or belief, that it enabled me to be more alert in the intervals between the spells of, let me call it euphemistically, 'meditation.' ... 'If I were a dictator I would eliminate the term 'practise' from the vocabulary for it becomes a boggy, a nightmare to children. I would ask them, 'have you already made and enjoyed music today? If not, go and make music.' **Matthew Koumis**

MUSIC REVIEW

Allans Publishing: Beethoven Piano Sonatas Book 3 (op. 31 no. 2 – op. 79) Edited by Kendall Taylor

The commentaries give countless practical tips as well as imaginatively stimulating background information. Op. 31 no. 3 is compared formally with the Eighth Symphony, the *Alla Tedesca* of op. 79 with that in the quartet op. 130. The opening of the Waldstein sonata is well described as 'pianissimo throbbing' – how often has one heard an express-train effect here, complete with whistle in the right hand? I heard Paul Badura-Skoda characterise an over-enthusiastic performance of this passage as a

❖ NEW PREPARATORY TEST FOR PIANO, VIOLIN AND CELLO ❖

The new Preparatory Test has been introduced to provide an assessment for pupils after approximately six to nine months' tuition as well as to encourage the laying of good technical and musical foundations before pupils enter for graded examinations.

Ronald Smith, Chief Executive and Director of Examinations

The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music 14 Bedford Square London WC1B 3JG



Eugene Christian Alcalay

13 October 1966–26 June 2019

EPTA readers and friends around the world will have been shocked by the untimely passing of Romanian pianist, Eugene Alcalay on 26 June 2019, of a heart attack. He was 52. He left behind his mother, Gina Sebastian; his wife, Ruth Elisabeth Alcalay; and their young daughter, Juliet Sharon Alcalay.

A native of Bucharest, Romania, Eugene Alcalay began playing the piano at age two and composing at age eight. In 1984 Eugene came under the tutelage of Leonard Bernstein, who affirmed his “outstanding talent as both a performer and composer”. Eugene became the first recipient of The Leonard Bernstein Scholarship for gifted young musicians at Indiana University School of Music, where he earned Bachelor’s Degrees in both Piano and Composition. Aided by Maestro Bernstein, Eugene continued his studies at The Curtis Institute of Music and then The Juilliard School, where he attained Master’s and Doctoral degrees in Piano Performance. His teachers included Seymour Lipkin, Robert McDonald, Karen Shaw, James Tocco, Milton Babbitt and Ned Rorem. Eugene could trace his pianistic heritage back to Beethoven through Lipkin.

Eugene’s performance career took him to five continents and to major venues in the US (Alice Tully Hall and Carnegie Hall - Isaac Stern Auditorium) and abroad. In 2003, Eugene became a Fulbright Scholar, teaching at the Universidad Nacional Conservatory of Music in Bogota, Colombia. He also gave master classes and judged piano competitions in Europe, South America, Asia, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. He was a Steinway Artist. His CD, *Lyrical Liszt* (Partita Records, 2008), was praised for “poetry, sensitivity... admirable tonal variety...beautiful playing throughout” (EPTA UK).

Dr. Alcalay received full-time faculty positions at Geneva College, Pennsylvania (1999–2005); The University of Wisconsin-Platteville (2005–2015); and finally Azusa Pacific University (2015–2019). He was also on the piano faculty of the MasterWorks Festival (2002–2018) and the Crescendo Summer Institute (2015–2017). An active member of the American Liszt Society since 2011, he co-founded its Southern California chapter in 2016 and served as its first president. He enjoyed swimming, hiking, cycling and travel.

Eugene’s warmth of spirit, collegial congeniality, extraordinary musicianship and pianistic skills are irreplaceable. He is deeply missed by his family, his friends, and his colleagues.

Nancy Lee Harper

From the Archives continued...

‘Wildschwein Sonate’. Comparisons with ‘Hamlet’ in op. 31 no. 2 (with reference to Beethoven’s description of the recitatives as ‘a voice from the tomb’) and ‘Lear’ in the *Appassionata* are very much to the point. A manuscript facsimile of the *Appassionata* is shown. Legend has it that the manuscript was soaked in a rainstorm when Beethoven left the house of Prince Lichnowsky after a quarrel, and alarming blots can be seen on many pages. The writing, despite its appearance of emotion and haste, is very clear - the pianist Madame Bigot is said to have read it at sight. Beethoven’s manuscripts symbolise his struggle to conjure overwhelming emotions into a clear form. ‘Beethoven can write, thank God,’ he wrote to Ries in 1882, ‘though it is true, he can do nothing else at all.’ **Simon Nicholls**

MUSIC FOR ADVANCED PLAYERS

Bardic Editions: *Lyric Waltz and Mazurka* by Thomas Pitfield

The pieces arouse some doubt about the validity of publishing minor individual works. These are harmless enough, but they are too short to merit consideration as concert repertoire and too tricky to use as teaching material with youngsters. Fundamentally, it is not very good music.

Elegy by Reginald King

An outdated improvisation with schmaltzy harmonies, pseudo Rachmaninov figurations, and poor construction that makes me ask Bardic, ‘Who are these pieces for?’ **M.K.**

MUSIC FOR TEACHING

Faber *Dream Children* by Edward Elgar

These two charming pieces written in 1902 were inspired by a piece of prose by Charles Lamb entitled ‘Dream Children: A Reverie’. They are intended to be played as a pair – the main theme from the first piece is re-stated at the end of the second. (Grade 4–5) **A.J.S.**

Kalmus Ltd *Bruckner’s Piano Works*

These were composed specially for teaching at a time when Bruckner had occasional pupils. They are rather slight, although charming, in comparison with his symphonic works. (Grades 5–7) **N. L.**

Yorktown Music Press Inc. *The Joy of Children’s Favourites* by Denis Agay

A collection of 70 well-loved nursery rhymes, play tunes and singing games with easy piano arrangements, this book is one of the best of its kind. **N. L.**

Reviews

CD REVIEW



Warner Classics 0190295463205
Martin James Bartlett piano
Love and Death

Since winning the BBC Young Musician 2014 competition, Martin James Bartlett has performed concertos and recitals all over the world whilst continuing undergraduate studies at the Royal College of Music. This debut CD has 'Love and Death' as its central theme. Having decided on Granados' *El Amor y la muerte* from *Goyescas* op. 11 as the central work in the recital, Bartlett links appropriate works around it, beginning with Bach Chorale Preludes to start. A substantial and impressively performed selection of Liszt leads to Prokofiev's Seventh Sonata. Martin Bartlett shows that all of this music is linked with influences - and states his reasons for including each in the programme.

Bartlett plays with a depth of human emotions and maturity that are way beyond his tender years. His timing and spacing are magical and often breathtaking. He expresses a wide sphere of musical colours and plays with passion and tenderness, showing complete mastery and control throughout. Clearly a young pianist to watch.

Nadia Lasserson

BOOK REVIEWS

Facchini: Seulement 12 paroles (For finding on internet: Eduardo Vercelli Maffei, Pianiste argentin d'origine italienne, en commémoration du 25ème anniversaire de sa mort Fiammetta Facchini (2018). ISBN 9791220035866. 242 pp.)
Available at fiammettafacchini@hotmail.com

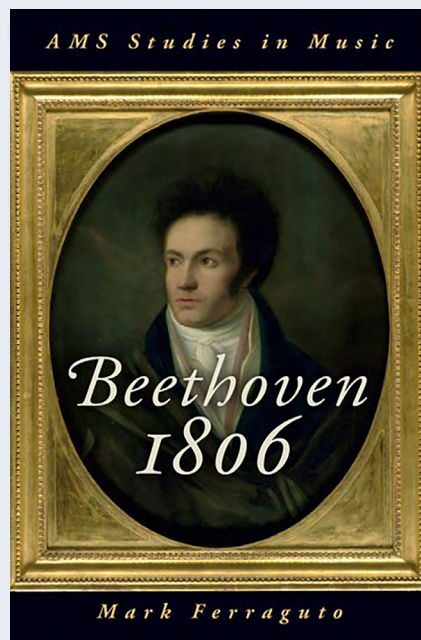
This richly and beautifully documented book is a testament to the author's devotion to her former piano teacher, the Argentine pianist of Italian origin, Eduardo Vercelli Maffei (1935-1993). Published on the 25th anniversary of the pianist's death, the book is dedicated to the author's sister, without

whom the author would have never known the pianist. Interviews with former students, as well as Martha Argerich and José Lapore, complete the vast documentation.

Born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Vercelli was a child prodigy who studied with the same teacher as Martha Argerich, John Montés.

The book is lovingly constructed to show precious details of the pianist's life and career. Painstaking reportage is given.

Particularly enlightening in this book is the author's summary of her studies with Vercelli. His oft-quoted phrase, "only 12 words" (referring to the 12 notes of an octave), emphasises that this is all that pianists in reality have! In sum, a most touching and invaluable memoir that serves as an inspiration to all pianists.
Nancy Lee Harper

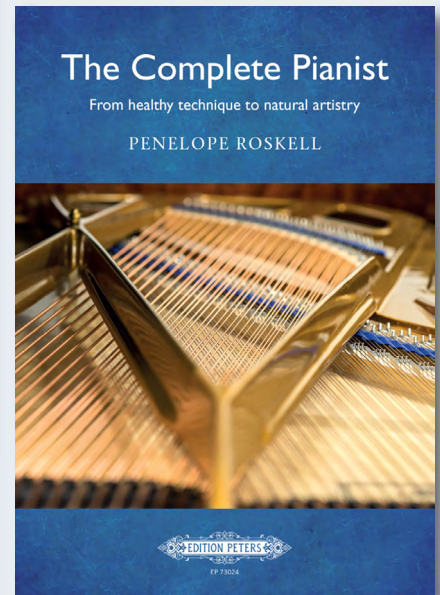


Ferraguto: Beethoven 1806
Oxford University Press

Typecasting and pigeonholing may be convenient and reassuring for some, but they are seldom historically correct when used in connection with towering geniuses and their artistic legacies. This revelatory book proves that we are wrong to categorise Beethoven exclusively as the Heroic, earth-shattering iconoclastic Titan. It delves deep into Beethoven's life with a two-pronged musicological/social-historical-analytical investigation over a twelve-month period to find fascinating insights. 1806 was the year that produced outstandingly lyrical and intimate masterpieces including the fourth piano concerto, fourth symphony, violin concerto and the Razumovsky quartets. Ferraguto sets these works next to specific social events and contexts, proving that Beethoven's style and creative motivation was influenced strongly by the demands

and aspirations of publishers, patrons, performers and critics. The sum total of the research is a refreshingly new approach, giving the reader an inspirational flavour of the musical and cultural context in the first decade of 19th-century Vienna.

Alexander Thompson

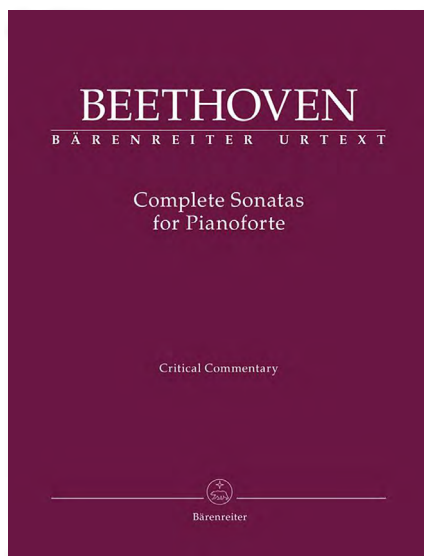


Roskell: The Complete Pianist
Edition Peters (2020)

This is an extraordinary, universal book which covers virtually everything to do with healthy piano playing, technique and development in fewer than 600 pages. Penelope Roskell is a remarkable musician, fusing over 40 years of professional performing and teaching with a knowledge and practice of Yoga, an easy-to-understand and elegant style of writing and tremendous practicality for the essentials of vibrant technical development. This work is her testament to pianists and teachers of all ages and comes complete with about 200 exercises, QR codes for direct links to excellent videos, and much humour, wisdom and intelligence. There is so much to say about this encyclopaedic work and so little space to do it justice! A few examples of its brilliance will have to suffice - Roskell's description of how to develop 'Jeu perlé' is outstanding, as is her detailed classification of how to play chords. Her original exercises and concepts include the hugely useful 'parachute touch' as well as a whole series of innovate yet natural fingerings for scales. The book includes excellent appendices on the shoulder, elbow, wrist, thumb and hand as well as an invaluable glossary which helps with every section of this monumental work.

Alexander Thompson

SHEET MUSIC REVIEWS



Ludwig van Beethoven Complete Sonatas for Pianoforte I-III Edited by Jonathan Del Mar
Bärenreiter Urtext BA 11841 Volume I
BA 11842 Volume II
BA 11843 Volume III
BA 10840 Complete Sonatas for Pianoforte Critical Commentary

Bärenreiter have published the complete set of Beethoven Piano Sonatas in time for 2020, the composer's 250th Anniversary year. All of the Sonatas have been reviewed separately, as they came hot off the press one by one, and it is a huge pleasure now to see the complete project in just three separate volumes. Each sonata includes historic background notes from Misha Donat, and Performance Practice notes from Del Mar. Appendices with all used sources that Del Mar consulted before reaching his final conclusion are included too. These are intended to offer inquisitive pianists options before drawing their own conclusions.

This edition is unique in offering performers so many different opinions before reaching conclusions. The editions are uncluttered with copious fingerings and excessive phrase markings, leaving this collection remarkably clean and clear of editorial markings and leaving the music just as it has been researched. To quote the editor, "My goal in editing the Beethoven Piano Sonatas was the same as with any other urtext edition: to present that musical text which comes as near as possible to the composer's intentions."

It is humbling to read how many pianists and music scholars Jonathan Del Mar consulted with his numerous queries before embarking on his own ideas - obviously an eternal student himself.

The Critical Commentary is a must for everyone using this edition of Sonatas. All the texts of the single Sonata editions are

now compiled into this one 313-page volume. There is little difference in the texts if pianists already have the single Sonata editions. However, the constant possibilities of referral to details of compositional processes, performing practices of the day, final decisions reached after detailed researches into various available manuscripts, illuminating reproductions of many facsimiles and, finally, a scholarly read of historic facts of the period and Beethoven's own performances, make this unique and unparalleled book a vital companion that should live on every pianist's instrument while playing and studying these masterpieces of musical history.

Nadia Lasserson



Beethoven: Klaviersonate op. 27 no. 2 'Mondscheinsonate'
Wiener Urtext Edition
Schott / Universal Edition UT 50433

This production of the *Moonlight* is interesting for its "Interpretation Notes" by Czerny as well as fingerings by Boris Bloch and the historic sources thoroughly investigated and explored by Peter Hjauschild and Jochen Reutter. Unquestionably another fine edition of Beethoven Sonatas to add to those currently in circulation... and there will certainly be more to come during the course of this celebratory year.

Nadia Lasserson

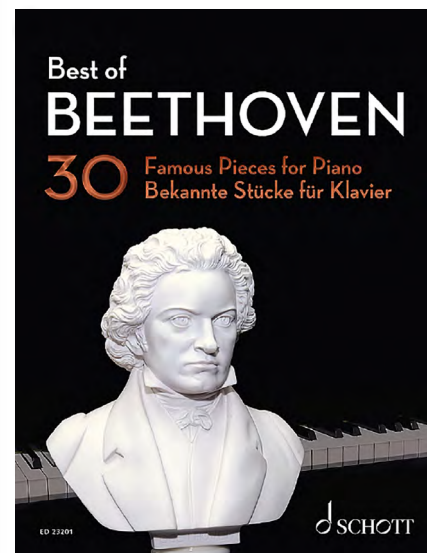
Beethoven
Piano Sonatas in G minor and G major op. 49 edited by Murray Perahia
1348 Grande Sonate Pathétique in c minor op. 13 edited by Murray Perahia
G. Henle Verlag 1327
Beethoven: Eroica Variations op 35 edited by Felix Loy
G. Henle Verlag 1200

Henle Verlag continues its new series of Beethoven sonatas with fascinating editorial commentaries and historic notes

from Murray Perahia: one learns that the "Pathétique" and "les Adieux" were actually titled by Beethoven himself and that the two opus 49 Sonatas were never intended for publication by Beethoven: his brother found the MS when rummaging through papers with intent of money-making, and so offered the two little Sonatas to various publishers until a contract was secured!

The *Eroica Variations* op. 35 date from the same time as his opus 34 *Variations* in F. Beethoven was proud of his new approach to Variation form in these two great masterpieces. With 'l'embarras de richesses' of Beethoven editions in this anniversary year, Henle Verlag is certainly a strong competitor in the market. The editions are extremely lucid, scholarly and contain helpful fingerings too.

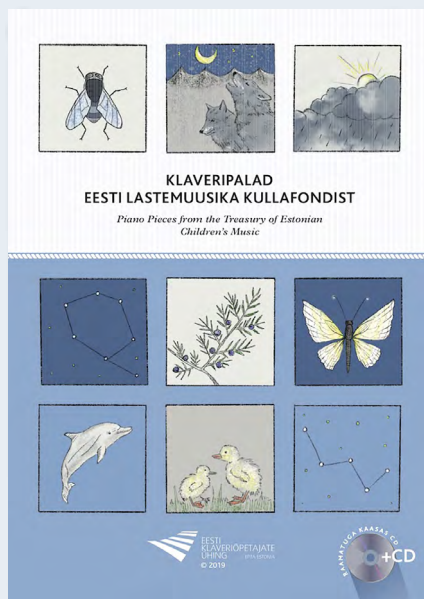
Nadia Lasserson



Best of Beethoven 30 Famous Pieces for Piano: ed Hans-Gunter Heumann
Schott Ed 23201

Here is a different type of Beethoven anniversary edition - a collection of thirty famous and much-loved pieces edited by Hans-Gunter Heumann for Intermediate pianists. Twenty original piano pieces and also ten arrangements of well-known music from his symphonies, piano concertos, violin sonatas ... and the Turkish march from *Ruins of Athens!* A joyous feast for intermediate players to peruse.

Nadia Lasserson



Collections: EPTA Estonia Eesti Klaveriõpetajate Ühing Piano Pieces from the Treasury of Estonian Children's Music compiled by Martti Raide

In 2018 mention was made of a project from EPTA Estonia to compile a volume of the most used and loved Estonian piano music for children. This book is now published and in constant daily use with teachers in Estonia and other countries. A vibrant and varied anthology that includes much that is nationalistic and immediately inspirational. Teachers from all over the world should be introducing their students to these wonderful pieces - bravo! Purchase information is obtainable via the EPTA Estonia website.

Nadia Lasserson



De Freitas: Tema e Variações para Piano, Obras musicais de Frederico de Freitas

A substantial work in the grand

manner of the Symphonic Etudes (Schumann) or Variations on a theme by Handel (Brahms), Frederico de Freitas' (1902-1980) Theme and Variations (1944) is perhaps one of the longest and most important piano works of the Portuguese literature. It is both fascinating and gratifying for the solo pianist. It could easily make a noteworthy competition piece. Freitas' fare is quite a stylistic change from the multiple piano compositions by his contemporary Lopes-Graça. It is hoped that a new recording will be forthcoming and that pianists will delight in this interesting work in a fine edition.

Nancy Lee Harper

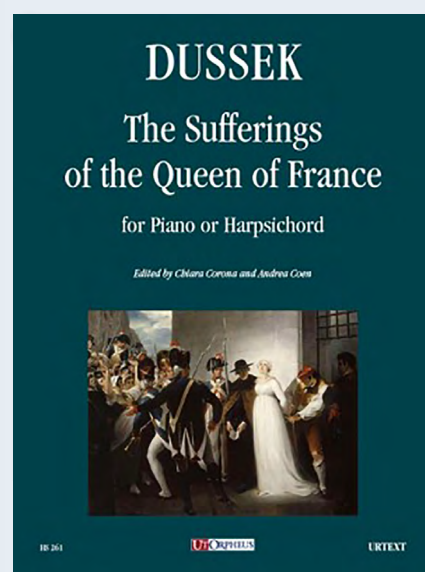


De Sousa: Alfabeto em Música (Alfabeto em Música para piano (ABC) by Berta Alves de Sousa, critical edition by Bernardo Santos, AvA Musical Editions (2018) with the Universidade de Aveiro, Portugal, and Euterpe unveiled in AvA/UA collection, as part of the project "Sons de Euterpe", directed by Helena Marinhao and published through the project "Euterpe unveiled: Women in Portuguese musical creation and interpretation during the 20th and 21st centuries" (Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, FCT), AvA Musical Editions, editions-ava.com, ref. ava171720, ISMN 979-0-55052-524-5, 15 pp., 10

Berta Alves de Sousa (1906-1997) was a multi-talented Portuguese composer, who also received accolades for her literary and artistic work. Born in Liège, Belgium, she soon settled with her family in the northern Portuguese city of Porto, where Berta graduated from its Music Conservatory with the highest classification, having studied with the notable pianist-composer Luiz Costa. Among her other piano teachers were José Vianna da Motta (1868-1948) and Wilhelm Backhaus (1884-1969). This pedagogical work, Alphabet in Music for piano (ABC), is a

delightful set of 26 short pieces - from A to Z. It originally dates from 1976 in a solo version and in a version for two pianos. Each short piece is not only assigned an alphabetical title but also a tempo/character indication of the same letter. For example, "A" should be played authoritatively ("autoritário"), "I" indecisively ("indeciso"), "S" like bells ("sinos"), etc. The pieces range from as little as six bars to a full page. The works are not progressive, per se. Their difficulty ranges from lower to upper intermediate levels. Many musical concepts may be gleaned and particularly the harmonic schemes utilised are valuable for the student. It would be interesting to hear the entire collection in order as a set.

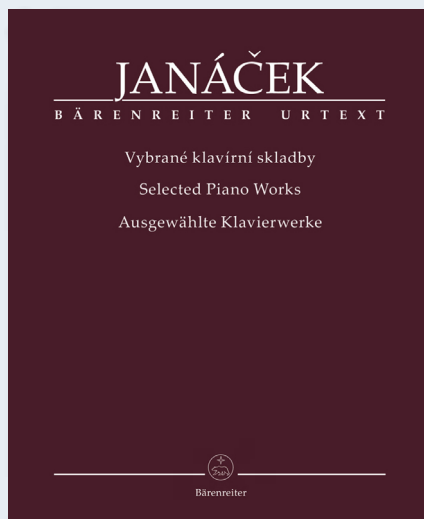
Nancy Lee Harper



Dussek The Sufferings of the Queen of France edited by Chiara Corona & Andrea Cohen UT Orpheus HS 261

We are all familiar with the Sonatas of Dussek and yet here is a total surprise: a programmatic work with vivid tone painting in numerous quasi dramatic scenes: "The Queen's Imprisonment", "She Reflects on her Former Glory", "They separate her from her Children", "They Pronounce the Sentence of Death", "Her resignation to her Fate", "The Situation and reflections the Night before her Execution", "The Savage Tumult of the Rabble", "The Queen's Invocation to the Almighty just before her Death" with the Sforzando glissando guillotine descending in this section and the final "Apotheosis". The music mostly lies around C minor, E flat and C majors with passing sections in B flat and D minor. A 'musical curio' for Intermediate students which could easily be shared amongst ten pupils to produce an entertaining musical drama in a class concert.

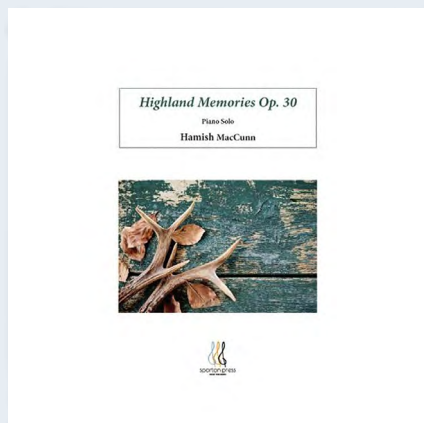
Nadia Lasserson



**Janáček Selected Piano Works
Bärenreiter BA 11545**

In all its thoroughness, Bärenreiter has published a first edition of Janáček's lesser-known piano pieces with some of the eighteen pieces appearing for the first time. The opus 1 Theme with Variations date from the composer's student years. Also included are short dances composed for indoor rehearsals of gym teams, Piano Miniatures in memoriam and four pieces from the "Autograph Book for Kamila Stösslova". These are early works and an ideal introduction to the more complex works of the Master.

Nadia Lasserson

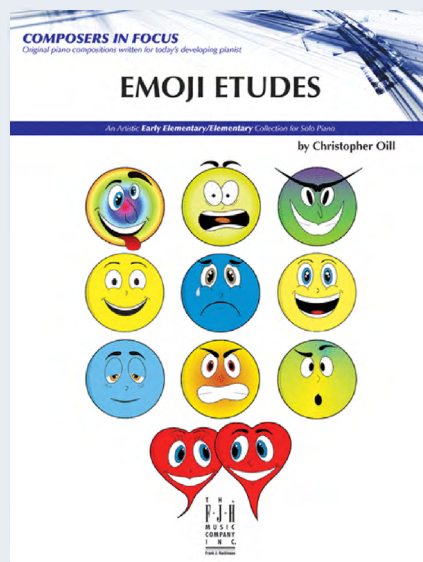


**MacCunn: Highland Memories op.30
Spartan Press SP1413**

Hamish MacCunn (1868–1916) was unquestionably one of the brightest British musicians of his generation, and though he is nowadays only remembered wisely for the stirring orchestral overture *The land of the mountain and the flood*, there are hidden treasures, including large-scale operas, awaiting rediscovery by the initiated. These three tartan-wrapped miniatures have a distinctly Victorian aroma to them. They paint a Scotland of romance, charm and branch off from Mendelssohn and Dvořák in terms of both compositional technique and

musical motivation. On the Loch has a wistful slow compound lilt, whilst *By the burnside* enjoys wallowing in D flat major. Things unquestionably liven up in the concluding *Harvest Dance*, an engaging trifle that many a post-grade 6 player will enjoy tackling.

Alexander Thompson



**Oill: Emoji Etudes
FJH Music Company Inc.
FJH 2325**

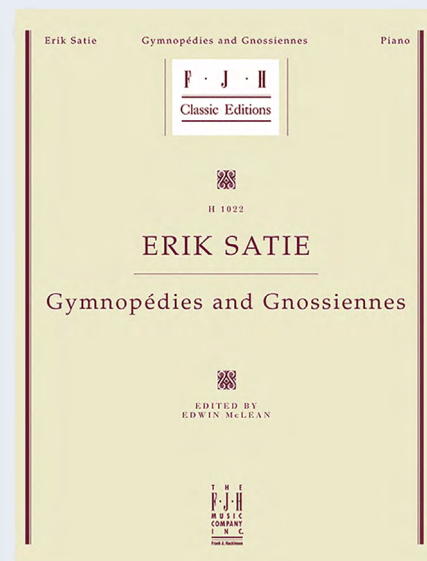
Ten delightful little studies for very young pianists. Each of the pieces by Christopher Oill has a teacher duet part to make the music really come to life. The titles are all mood-creating and include *Excited*, *Scared*, *Sleepy*, *Happy* and *Sad*. A delightful and useful selection.

Nadia Lasserson

**Ravel Jeux d'eau for Piano
Bärenreiter Urtext
BA 10824**

This great masterpiece, no doubt influenced by Liszt's *Les jeux d'eau à la villa d'Este*, needs no introduction. Bärenreiter continues its mission for new, clean editions of much of the classical repertoire with a magnificent choice of editors who reappraise these old favourites with new light. It is not the music that is new but the fascinating Preface and Sources as well as detailed Notes for Performance by Alexandre Tharaud. Tharaud's detailed fingerings should not go unnoticed and his alternative possibilities are extremely useful.

Nadia Lasserson



**Satie: Gymnopédies and Gnossiennes
edited by Edwin McLean
FJH Classic Editions
H1022**

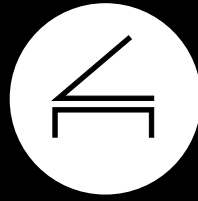
It is good to have a clear, clean copy of the *Gymnopédies* and *Gnossiennes* together in one light volume with fascinating historic notes and source details. Apparently, Satie did not select the word *Gymnopédie* and one is left to wonder how the name came about. The editor has one suggestion, leaving the pianist to ponder!

Nadia Lasserson

**Suková Piano Pieces
Bärenreiter BA 11557**

Bärenreiter clearly enjoys discoveries and this "First scholarly-critical edition of the sole surviving compositions of Dvořák's daughter Otilie" is indeed a scoop. Married to Josef Suk, Otilie was not a professional musician but, having been steeped in music all her short life, it is little wonder that a few manuscripts have appeared. She died of a heart condition aged 27 and, after her death, Josef Suk offered the manuscripts to publishers. Pianists are incredibly fortunate to have these musical gems to add to their repertoire: *Humoresque*, *Lullaby*, *Joey on the Horse* and *To Dear Daddy* are all that posterity has from this talented musician. The last composition is here published for the first time and is based on two manuscripts - one from Suk and one in her own notation. Ideal adventurous repertoire for Intermediate pianists.

Nadia Lasserson



THE CLIBURN

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**SIXTEENTH
VAN CLIBURN
INTERNATIONAL
PIANO
COMPETITION**

27 MAY–12 JUNE, 2021
FORT WORTH, TEXAS USA

CASH AND CAREER MANAGEMENT PRIZE PACKAGES VALUED AT MORE THAN \$2 MILLION USD

JURY Marin Alsop* | UNITED STATES
Jean-Efflam Bavouzet | FRANCE
Rico Gulda | AUSTRIA
Wu Han | TAIWAN / UNITED STATES
Andreas Haefliger | SWITZERLAND

* *Jury chairman*

Stephen Hough | UNITED KINGDOM
Anne-Marie McDermott | UNITED STATES
Gabriela Montero | VENEZUELA
Orli Shaham | ISRAEL / UNITED STATES
Lilya Zilberstein | RUSSIA

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
15 OCTOBER, 2020

CLIBURN.ORG

Contact information and news from the EPTA international community

EPTA - EUROPEAN PIANO TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Parent Organisation

Charity Registered Number 1094973
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Email: secretary@epta-europe.org

Founder Carola Grindea

Honorary European President

Dominique Merlet

Honorary Vice Presidents

Fanny Waterman DBE, Malcolm Troup,
Alberto Portuguese

EPTA EUROPEAN PRESIDENT (2019/2020)

Heribert Koch (President of EPTA Germany)

VICE PRESIDENTS

All Presidents of EPTA National Associations

EPTA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman: Murray McLachlan

Secretary: Nadia Lasserson

Treasurer: Derek Watson

Members of Executive Committee:

Till Alexander Koerber, Heribert Koch,

Alberto Urroz, Alan Paul & Susan Bettaney

Website: www.epta-europe.org

EPTA – the Parent Organisation – is constantly expanding not only in Europe but also throughout the world through its

Affiliations with the most important

Piano Teachers Associations:

MTNA – Music Teachers National Association

Piano Teachers National Association of

Japan, Founder: Yasuko Fukuda

Japan Piano Teachers Association,

President: Prof Akemi Murakami

Canadian Federation of Music

Teachers Associations, Co-ordinator:

Prof Ireneus Zuk

Latin American Piano Teachers

Association (Argentine, Chile, Ecuador, Brazil)

EPTA ASSOCIATES:

EPTA CHINA ASSOCIATES

Patrick Lechner

EPTA NEW YORK ASSOCIATES

Prof Salvatore Moltisanti

EPTA INDIA ASSOCIATES

Founder-Director: Prabhudas Ivanson

EPTA ISRAEL ASSOCIATES

Dr. Yuval Admony

PIANO JOURNAL – EPTA's official organ – is published three times a year. Inside: interviews with great pianists of our time;

important articles relevant to piano performance and teaching; CD, book and music reviews; news from EPTA Associations.

Available by Subscription:

EPTA ASSOCIATE MEMBERS -

Piano teachers and pianists residing outside Europe

• £27.00 or US\$60.00 Air Mail

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There is a reduction of \$10 if paid online at epta-europe.org

All **National Associations** receive the **PIANO JOURNAL**, thus it reaches a wide readership throughout the world of music.

It can aptly be said that EPTA represents **THE VOICE OF PIANO TEACHERS EVERYWHERE.**

For updated news of activities of each individual EPTA country, please see the website: www.epta-europe.org

EPTA ALBANIA

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24th–26th January 2020 EPTA Albania held the 10th Duo Piano Competition, a month later than usual, attempting to resume normality after the devastating earthquake.

5th–7th June 2020 EPTA Albania will organise the 25th “Young Pianists Festival” in the new “Tonin Harapi” Concert Hall of the Jordan Misja Artistic Lyceum, Tirana.

EPTA ARMENIA

Honorary Presidents Prof. Sergey Sarajyan,

Prof. Armine Grigoryan

President Anna Hambaryan

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Yerevan – 0032

EPTA Armenia is to be congratulated on

setting up new projects, thanks to the calmer political situation.

EPTA AUSTRIA

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Groppenberger, Prof. Anton Voigt

President Prof. Till Alexander Koerber

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Secretary Heidemarie Schneider–Klimpfinger

Treasurer Regina Seeber, Project Manager.

Claudia Berzè

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24th–27th October 2019 EPTA Austria hosted the 41st European Conference of EPTA Associations in the University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, with over 200 delegates. The Theme was PIANO AND MORE: Facets of a versatile instrument. The whole team of EPTA Austria is to be congratulated and thanked for hosting most stimulating presentations from over 30 speakers and players from over 15 countries. An exciting highlight was the recital by Stefan Gottfried and Friends in the Schönbrunner Schlosstheater, a very historic place for performances. The entire Conference was a huge inspiration for everyone.

c/o Anton Bruckner University

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www.epta-belgium.be for all information

in French, English and Flemish.

3rd–8th March 2020 EPTA Belgium Wallonie/Bruxelles' 15th “Rencontres Internationales des jeunes pianistes” in Grez-Doiceau has been **postponed until 2021** because of the Coronavirus.

EPTA Belgium Wallonie/Bruxelles celebrates its 30th Anniversary this year and the 20th Anniversary of the biannual “Rencontre Internationales des jeunes pianistes”. It was launched in 1990 by Diane Andersen and composer Jean-Luc Balthazar with five Committee members of which two still sit on the EPTA Board: Dominique Cornil and François Thiry. EPTA Belgium Wallonie/Bruxelles hosted the EPTA International Conferences on two occasions in 1995 and 2002 and organised successful annual Pedagogical Days.

EPTA BULGARIA Planning to reorganise.

EPTA CROATIA

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President Ida Gamulin
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Vice President Ivanka Kordić
Secretary Helena Herman
Trg republike Hrvatske 12, 10000 Zagreb
www.epta-croatia.hr, www.idagamulin.com

13th December 2019 EPTA Croatia organised a Laureates Concert in the beautiful Synagogue in Sisakand. The winning pianists were: Ruben Habuda, Natali Ruzic, Eva Goreta, Ivan P. Poljak, Petra Sket and Zvezdan Vojvodic playing works by Scarlatti, Liszt and Chopin.

21st December 2019 EPTA Croatia held its AGM at the Zagreb Music Academy; the most active members from Varazdin, Lea and Predrag Santek gave a full report of the 41st EPTA Conference in Vienna.

14th May 2020 EPTA Croatia will organise another Laureates Concert in the Zorn-dom Concert Hall, Karlovac, with Mia Pecnik, Zvezdan Vojvodic, Stipe Prskalo, Lucija Kasnar, Eva Goreta, Natali Ruzic and Jan Nikovic. These young EPTA stars will play pieces by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt and Rachmaninov.

7th–11th April 2021 EPTA Croatia will organise the Dora Pejacevich International Competition in Osijek.

2022 EPTA Croatia will organise the Svetislav Stancic International Piano Competition in Zagreb.

EPTA CYPRUS

Planning to re-organise.

EPTA CZECH REPUBLIC

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Vice President Dr Jitka Fowler Fraňková
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Schnirchova 25, 17000 Praha
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21st September 2019 EPTA Czech Republic organised its annual Piano seminar in the Hall of the Music School and High School of the Capital Prague. The programme included: Professor Jordana Palovicova from the University of Music and Performing Arts in Bratislava, Slovakia, in a lecture-recital of piano music by the great Slovakian composer Ján Cikker; Dr. Hana Svajdova from the Music School in Zerotin - Olomouc, Czech Republic, brought her talented students to demonstrate and talked about “Improvisation for everyone”; Professor Tatania Kozlova from the Tel Aviv Conservatory of Music in Israel brought students to explain “Specific aspects of piano education in Israel” and to talk about the balance between obedience and liberty in piano education; Professor Ivan Klansky, Dean of the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, presented specific problems of pedalling in piano literature of various music periods.

April 2024 EPTA Czech Republic is planning to organise the Ant. Petrof International Piano Competition in conjunction with the Petrof Piano Factory in Hradec Kralove and Prague.

EPTA DENMARK

President Dr Balder Neergaard
Vice president Vagn Sørensen
Secretary (Acting) Balder Neergaard
Treasurer Lise Andersen
Committee Members: Mimi Huang,
Inke Kessler, Elisabeth Holmegaard Nielsen,
Søren Pedersen
Honorary members: Anna Øland,
Tove Lønskov, Bella Horn, Arne Christensen,
Elsebeth Brodersen and Eugen Indjic
Søborg Hovedgade 150 1th
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Email: info@epta.dk

30th November 2019 EPTA Denmark held its first National Conference Klaver i Rundetaarn. An Annual Open Recital for piano students of all ages at 6pm in Copenhagen’s historic Round Tower.

26th July–1st August 2020 EPTA Denmark will hold its 19th International Piano Week at Ollerup, featuring professors Eero Heinonen (Sibelius Academy, Helsinki), Kevin Kenner (Frost School of Music, University of Miami) and Aleksandra Žvirblytė (Lithuanian Academy of Music, Vilnius). Further information and applications will be posted on epta.dk in early 2020.

EPTA ESTONIA

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Tel: +372 667 5700
www.epta.ee

The Journal of the Estonian Piano Teachers Association is published biannually.

20th–21st October 2019 EPTA Estonia held its Annual General Meeting in Tallinn at the 21st National Days of Piano Teachers and 6th Bruno Lukk Piano Conference, and included Masterclasses, and the presentation of the new piano album *Gems from the Treasury of Estonian Piano Music*. See review on pX.

21st–29th November 2019 EPTA Estonia ran the ninth Estonian National Piano Competition.

4th–5th December 2019 EPTA Estonia ran Masterclasses given by Mira Marchenko.

16th January 2020 EPTA Estonia will organise a visit and concert of the Finnish Young Pianists’ Academy.

Winter 2020 EPTA Estonia will run its regional piano days.

EPTA FINLAND

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Tuomas Mali (editor of “Pianisti” which is distributed to all members),
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9th–10th February 2020 EPTA Finland organised the annual conference in Mikkeli.
www.eptafinland.fi

EPTA FRANCE

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Vice-President *Élodie Meurt*
Treasurer *Julie BECHET*
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March 2020 EPTA France was officially re-launched.

Spring 2021 EPTA France will organise its first International Piano Competition.

EPTA GEORGIA

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President *Nino Khutsishvili*
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Dolidzestr 28, ap. 87, 0115 Tbilisi, Georgia
Vice Presidents: *Sidonia Arjevishvili, Ketevan Badridze, Maka Baqradze* and *Levan Inashvili*

EPTA Georgia continues to grow and has offered patronage to help several piano teachers and students from the problematic region of Abkhazia who are refugees in various regions of Georgia.

EPTA GERMANY

Presidium: *Andreas Eschen, Prof Linde Grossman* (Berlin), *Heribert Koch* (Langerwehe), *Jens Hamer* (Altenberge), *Marilia Patricio* (Köln)
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www.epta-germany.org

EPTA Germany continues to run bi-annual Conferences in different regions to enable the greatest number of members to attend.

21st–24th May 2020 EPTA Germany will host the 42nd European Conference of EPTA Associations: “Beethoven 2020: a Theme With Variations” on the celebration of 250 years since his birth. It will take place in the Kammermusiksaal of the Beethoven Haus and the University Club, Bonn, all within walking distance of the Rhine. For more information, please visit epta-deutschland.de or email conference@epta-deutschland.de

The title “**Beethoven 2020: A Theme with Variations**” aims to lead in two directions: 1. A focus on Beethoven’s music and legacy. Teaching and playing Beethoven: pedagogical approach and concepts of interpretation through the centuries.

2. A focus on the principles of **theme and variation** in any musical connotation: Principles of permanent variation in (new) music. Variation cycles by other composers. Improvising with themes/patterns.

B – performing in the framework of the Diabelli-project EPTA Germany intends to present as many as possible of those variations which the composer and publisher Anton Diabelli had commissioned and published under the title “Vaterländischer Künstlerverein”: Variations by 50 different composers on Diabelli’s own waltz in C major which Beethoven later used in his op.120.

Exploring these composers and their music will provide us with a kaleidoscopic view on Beethoven’s period. In addition, this project is an opportunity to have many more active presenters than the available time slots for individual lectures would allow.

So take your chance to perform in Beethoven’s home town in his anniversary year and contribute to this project by playing one or several variations! A public domain score is available for download at www.imslp.org
www.epta-deutschland.de

EPTA GREECE

President *Natalia Michailidou*
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Vice Presidents: *Dora Bakopoulos* and *Kalliopi Germanou*
Secretary *Sofia Dousia*
Treasurer *Kostas Tourkakis*
Public Relations *Stefanos Theodoridis*
Member of executive committee *Sara Galanopoulou*

9th–11th January 2020 EPTA Greece organised Masterclasses with *David Lively* culminating in a successful concert given by all the participants.

EPTA HUNGARY

President *Mariann Abraham*
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www.parlando.hu

January–April 2020 EPTA Hungary and The Hungarian Music Teachers Association organised programmes in the cities of Pecs, Debrecen, Szeged and Győr for different instruments and also solfège.

Throughout the year, EPTA Hungary and the Music Teachers’ Association run “MUSIC TEACHERS FOR TALENTS” with concerts given in the Hungarian Radio’s “Marvany terem” (Marble Room) concert hall. Special prizes are awarded by the Teachers’ Association to the pianists who perform here.

EPTA ICELAND

Honorary President *Halldor Haraldsson*
President *Ólöf Jónsdóttir* olofjon@hi.is
Treasurer *Brynja Gísladóttir* brynjapiano@hotmail.com
Secretary *Einar Bjartur Egilsson* einarbjartur@gmail.com

EPTA wishes to welcome *Ólöf Jónsdóttir* as the new President, although she is no stranger to the Board of EPTA Iceland, having been the Treasurer for several years. EPTA looks forward to collaborating with her for many good years.

November 2019 EPTA Iceland organised a Conference which was the last event of four to celebrate their 40th anniversary.

September 2020 EPTA Iceland will run a Piano Day.

epta@epta.is
www.epta.is

EPTA IRELAND

Patrons: *Frank Heneghan, Philip Martin, John O’Conor, Hugh Tinney*
President *Owen Lorigan*
Committee *Victoria Whittam* and *Nicolas Puyane*
Administrator *Eithne Gallagher*
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EPTA Ireland has launched a new advisory panel to assist members with specific teaching queries and is delighted to welcome *Réamonn Keary* and *David Mooney* as specialist advisors.

26th January 2020 EPTA Ireland organised a day on the RIAM Local Centre Senior Grades Syllabus in Leeson Park.

23rd February 2020 EPTA Ireland ran a Masterclass with *Peter Tuite*.

15th March 2020 EPTA Ireland organised a day on Motivation in Leeson Park.

8th–10th May 2020 EPTA Ireland will hold its 9th EPTA Ireland Piano Competition with *Mary Beettie* as Adjudicator.

EPTA ITALY

President *Marcella Crudeli*
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Secretary *Silvia Rinaldi*
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Tel +39 06 507 3889
Committee: *Lear Maestosi, Carla Giudici*
www.chopinroma.it/eng
www.eptaitaly.it
eptaitaly@libero.it

EPTA Italy organised 30 concerts for members in different venues in Rome.

Marcella Crudeli continues her popular monthly Salon concerts in her home and in the Cultural Centre of the Banca d'Italia, now in its eighth year with another two concerts at the Marcello Theatre, Rome

The Alfonsi Pianoforti. hosted a series of monthly concerts for young pianists and singers. The collaboration with the Liceo Classico "Francesco Vivona" in Rome has also been renewed, with concert opportunities for its students,

EPTA Italy started an Advanced piano course for six young pianists coming from all over Italy, sponsored by the Rotary Club Roma Ovest. Two students were offered a Concerto and Recital.

December 2020 EPTA Italy will continue its patronage with UNESCO in the XXX Chopin Roma Competition.
www.chopinroma.it.

EPTA LATVIA

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<http://www.music.lv/epta/events2017.htm>
www.music.lv/epta/welcome.htm

19th–21st February 2020 EPTA Latvia, in cooperation with Pāvuls Jurjāns Music School and Riga City Council Education, Culture and Sports Department, organised the VIII International Piano Competition "Young Virtuoso" for piano students aged 6–18 in Riga.

13th March 2020 EPTA Latvia, in cooperation with Jelgava Secondary Music School, organised the 4th International Competition for Young Pianists "Music Rainbow" in Jelgava.

14th March 2020 EPTA Latvia, in cooperation with Jazeps Medins Riga 1st Music School, organised the X International Brothers Medins Competition for Young Pianists for piano students aged 6-18 in Riga.

18th–19th March 2020 EPTA Latvia, in co-operation with Sigulda School of Arts "Baltais fligelis" L. Garūta's foundation and Sigulda Municipality, organised the 6th International Young Pianists Competition of Lūcija Garūta in Sigulda.

29th April–4th May 2020 EPTA Latvia will run the XXI International Academic Music Competition "Jūrmala" in the Dubulti Concert Hall, Jūrmala, Latvia. This extremely popular competition attracts well

over 60 participants aged 6–19 from Latvia and neighbouring countries and traditionally offers those in the 2nd round the opportunity of performing with a chamber orchestra.

August 2020 EPTA Latvia is planning annual piano Masterclasses for high school and university piano students, as well as piano teachers in Jūrmala Secondary Music School.

EPTA LITHUANIA

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5th–6th March 2020 EPTA Lithuania held its 39th Annual Conference in Klaipėda over five days with the first few days organising Masterclasses in the Music Schools of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipėda, Šiauliai and Panevėžys with famous teachers from Lithuania and abroad.

EPTA MACEDONIA

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There are plans to organise a new branch of EPTA Macedonia in Bitola.

EPTA MALTA

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EPTA NETHERLANDS

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www.eptanederland.nl

2nd February 2020 The annual study day about the National Piano Exams took place

in Utrecht. This day was for all teachers, jury members, jury chairpersons and coordinators. Also teachers whose students have not yet participated were welcome. The guest speaker was David Kuyken.

21st–22nd, 28th–29th March 4th–5th, 18th–19th April 2020 EPTA Netherlands held Piano Exam Days.

10th May 2020 EPTA Netherlands will hold a One Day Conference in conjunction with the AGM.

All EPTA Netherlands Members receive the Piano Journal as well as the Piano Bulletin (Editor Christo Lelie, Broerhuisstr 44, 2611 GD Delft, Tel/Fax: +31 15 212 6695).

EPTA Netherlands' Documentation & Study Centre (EDSC) Amsterdam

A large collection of books, music, LPs, CDs, tapes and many other valuable materials are housed in the Public Library of Amsterdam (Openbare Bibliotheek Amsterdam, OBA) near the Central Station of Amsterdam. EPTA members and other music scholars can make use of the Centre, as it was intended, for research and reference. The Centre collaborates with EPTA UK's Information Centre at the Royal College of Music.

EPTA NORWAY

Honorary President Einar Steen-Nøkleberg
President Elin Persson
Vice President Radmila Stojkovic,
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Treasurer Otto Graf,
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www.epta.no

Autumn 2019 EPTA Norway launched a "Competition for Young Musicians", with regional rounds.

January 2020 Finals of the competition were held in Oslo.

March 2020 EPTA Norway held its Annual Conference with focus on Beethoven as well as Piano Pedagogy.

EPTA POLAND

President Karol Radziwonowicz

Since 2013, the Artistic Educational Centre and Public Primary Music Schools in Warsaw have been organising frequent Nationwide Individual Piano Masterclasses.

Karol Radziwonowicz is now aiming to involve many more Polish piano pedagogues in EPTA Poland as well as to bring music education back to the Polish state primary and secondary schools.

Please see www.kurspianistyczny.com for further events organised in cooperation

with EPTA Poland, the Polish Ministry of Culture, and The Artistic Educational Centre.

EPTA PORTUGAL

Honorary members: Artur Pizarro, Fernando Laires and Helena Sá e Costa (both deceased)
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18th–25th July 2020 EPTA Portugal is organising the 6th edition of EPTA Piano Festival & Masterclasses. Luís Pipa (President of EPTA Portugal) and Murray MacLachlan (EPTA UK) will direct masterclasses in the beautiful guesthouse “Quinta de Albergaria” in Ponte de Lima. During this week, Luís Pipa and Murray MacLachlan will also perform in the festival “Percurso da Música” and will join other guest musicians such as Pavel Gomziakov (cello).

Applications are open until 2nd June.
For more information visit:
<https://eptapianofestivalandmasterclasses.blogspot.co.uk/>

Application form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1lQJrNfTEIL3xL4ViXInSGTVpSKkArHXyQQYM_FKefmU/viewform?usp=send_form

EPTA ROMANIA

There are plans to re-organise EPTA Romania.

EPTA RUSSIA

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EPTA Russia Structure:
Chelyabinsk (Ural) – Chairman *Andrey Nechaev*
Kaliningrad – Chairman *Vladimir Slobodyan*
Petrozavodsk – Chairman *Victor Portnoy*
Rostov-on-Don – Chairman *Vladimir Daych*
Samara – Chairman *Sergey Zagadkin*
Sochi – Chairman *Tatyana Agafonova*
Tambov – Chairman *Irina Tsareva*
Tver – Chairman *Galina Solodova*
Ufa – Chairman *Rustam Gubaydullin*

EPTA Russia has published Issue number 80 of its “Fortepiano” journal.

EPTA SERBIA

Honorary Presidents: *Arbo Valdma* and *Dušan Trbojević*
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Tel: +381 11 362 1170

9th May 2020 EPTA Serbia will hold its AGM to elect new Board members.

10th May 2020 EPTA Serbia will organise a Round Table Discussion with Music Schools’ Heads of Piano and Professors from the Belgrade Faculty of Music on “How to get better communication between different levels of piano pedagogy, from elementary to University level?”

7th–13th September 2020 EPTA Serbia will organise a Masterclass given by Igor Lazko, Professor at Scola Cantorum, Paris, and teacher of Alexander Kantorow, Winner of the Tchaikovsky International Piano Competition.

24th–27th December 2020 EPTA Serbia will run its 12th EPTA Serbia Piano Competition.

2020 EPTA Serbia will start a pilot project, “EPTA AT YOUR SIDE”, bringing together eminent pianists and pedagogues from all over Serbia with Masterclasses, Teachers’ Forums and Discussions. The idea is for the EPTA Serbia Board members to work in closer collaboration with piano professors and teachers from all over the country and to get support from the Ministry of Education and, at the same time, increasing EPTA membership. Another intention is for Piano Schools to raise their levels and gain entry to the Universities.

EPTA SERBIA–VOJVODINA

President *Tatjana Vukmanović*
EPTA Vojvodina, Isidor Bajić Music School, Njegoševa 9, 21000 Novi Sad
uklapev@gmail.com

August 2019 EPTA Serbia-Voyvodina organised the summer edition of the Music Colony Omnibus Musicus, Isidor Bajić Music School, Novi Sad. There were Masterclasses taken by *Rita Kinka*, *Ninoslav Živković*, *Dorian Leljak*, *Lidija Stanković*, *Ljiljana Vukelja*, *Milan Miladinović*, *Jelena Simonović Kovačević*, *Vera Hofman-Momčilović*, *Olga Borzenko*, *Biljana Dabić* and *Natalija Tomić*.

EPTA SLOVAKIA

President *Ida Černecká*
Head of Keyboard and Dean of the Music Faculty at the Bratislava Academy.

EPTA Slovakia continues to organise annual events.

EPTA SLOVENIA

Honorary president *Dubravka Tomšič Srebotnjak*
Honorary member *Majda Jecelj*
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Secretary *Suzana Zorko* – DKPS EPTA, Ižanska 12, 1000 Ljubljana
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Committee members: *Nuša Gregorič*, *Miha Haas*, *Božena Hrup*, *Dejan Jakšič*, *Davorin Dolinšek*, *Sanja Šehić*, *Julija Kunova*, *Jana Stojnšek*, *Sanja Šehić*
Address: Društvo klavirskih pedagogov Slovenije EPTA, Stari trg 34, 1000 Ljubljana
www.epta.si, www.epta.si/eng

Pianissimo 2019/2020:

The concerts for this season were performed by three winners of Slovenian and international piano competitions: *Lara Oprešnik*, *Aleksandar Raos* and *Larisa Rojnič*. Recordings at the end of the season took place at the specialised recording studio Pianoroom (www.pianoroom.com). The 2020 concerts will be given by *Vid Ibič*, *Anastasija Češnjegar* and *Matija Drogenik*. Eight concerts are planned.

EPTA Slovenia published the 7th edition of its Journal *Virkla, Tradition Today*. The specialised journal includes articles by Slovenian and foreign professionals who specialise in piano pedagogy and lectures from Slovenian and International Conferences. Issue no. 8 “I feel therefore I play” is in preparation. Copies can be browsed on www.epta.si/virkla
EPTA Slovenia celebrated its 20th birthday in 2019.

November 2020 EPTA Slovenia is planning its Jubilee 20th Annual Conference to take place in Piran.

EPTA SPAIN

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President *Alberto Urroz*
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Treasurer *Paloma Molina*
Young EPTA Spain *Francisco Fierro*
www.epta-spain.com

19th December 2019 EPTA Spain organised a Christmas Concert for the winners of the competition in the beautiful Museum of Romanticism, Madrid.

9th–12th September 2021 EPTA Spain will host the 43rd EPTA International Conference with the topic: “Connecting Continents and Traditions” in the Royal Conservatory of Music in Madrid. Spain is a key country in the history of western civilisation due to all the influences it received from, and had on, Europe, Africa and America in both directions. The conference will reflect this through the music from ancient, Jewish, Arab, African, Sephardic, Gaelic, Native American cultures in Spanish culture and subsequently, on classical music and the inspiration that classical musicians from all over the world found in that important legacy.

EPTA SWEDEN

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Secretary Ecaterina Wehlander
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Vice Secretary Martin Tell
Treasurer Johan Sandback
Committee: Viktor Westergren, Natalia Kazimirovskaia, Vesna Mattsson, Eva Lundgren and Irina Krjutjkova Lind
www.sppf.net
EPTA Sweden has made a few changes to its Board as listed above.

24th February 2020 EPTA Sweden organised a piano teachers’ training day in Sundsvall.

31st May 2020 EPTA Sweden will hold a Spring Concert in the Royal College of Music, Stockholm.

3rd- 4th October 2020 EPTA Sweden will hold its Annual National Congress in Stockholm: “Beethoven 250 and more”.

27th October 2020 EPTA Sweden will organise a Piano teachers’ training day in Uppsala.

EPTA SWITZERLAND

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Vice-President Saori Miyazaki
Committee members Wolfgang Clausnitzer, Kathrin Schmidlin, Susanne Maria Schwarz
Secretary Mrs. Margot Müller
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mamuemusic@bluewin.ch

EPTA Switzerland continues to organise two Congresses each year:

9th May 2020 EPTA Switzerland will hold its meeting “Inspired Beginnings” in Schaffhausen.

7th November 2020 EPTA Switzerland will hold its meeting on “Motivation” in Baar.

2024 EPTA Switzerland will host the 45th EPTA European Conference to celebrate its 40th Anniversary.

EPTA is most grateful to Prof. Jean-Jacques Dünki for his seven years as President of EPTA Switzerland and for all his stimulating presentations at Conferences as well as running the home Conferences bi-annually. EPTA welcomes Tomas Dratva as the new president of EPTA Switzerland and wishes him many happy and successful years as he leads his new and young committee.

epta.ch bluewin.ch
info@epta.ch
www.epta.ch

EPTA UKRAINE

Planning to reorganise.

EPTA UK

Founder Carola Grindea
Patron Piers Lane
Chairman Murray McLachlan
Administrator Carole Booth
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4 Guildford Road, Dukinfield, Cheshire SK16 5HA
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www.epta-uk.org

12th May 2019 EPTA UK organised its Composers Competition The Adjudicator was Camden Reeves.

18th September 2020 EPTA UK will offer outstanding performers from the EPTA UK Piano Festival Days to play in St Martin-in-the-Fields.

9th–12th August 2020 EPTA UK will join ESTA in a second Chichester **Summer School Conference**, at the University of Chichester, which will include a huge variety of presentations from leading music educators including ABRSM and PTC: **Pedalling and Making a Beautiful Sound, Developing a Tension-free Technique, Mindful Teaching and Learning, Improvisation, Spontaneity and Creativity, The Adult and More Advanced Learner** and also opportunities to book a private piano lesson with one of the tutors.

EPTA UK is delighted to announce EPTA EDUCATION and continues with one-day events:

1st March EPTA UK held an ABRSM EPTA Development Day at St Paul’s Girls’ School, London

14th March EPTA UK ran a day with Samantha Coates, author of “How to Blitz! Sight-reading”, and Elena Cobb in a Performance Festival at Chetham’s, Manchester.

10th May EPTA UK will offer an “Piano Teacher Survival Guide”, an all-supporting test for all exam boards, at Chetham’s, Manchester.

14th June EPTA UK will run a further ABRSM EPTA Development Day at St Paul’s Girls’ School, London.

5th September EPTA UK will hold an educational day with Karen Marshall and Mark Tanner in Banks Musicroom, York.

EPTA’s Archives are rehoused in the Library of the Royal College of Music, London.

These contain a valuable reference collection of books, music, teaching methods, audio and video tapes which members of all EPTA Associations are welcome to consult. Members are invited to peruse the valuable archives of the EPTA Netherland ‘**Documentation and Study Centre**’ (EDSC, Curators Frans Schreuder and Albert Brussee).

EPTA CHINA ASSOCIATES

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1st–10th October 2019 EPTA China Associates organised lectures and workshops with Jyrki Tenni (EPTA Finland), the author of “Keyboard accompaniment and improvisation”, which has been translated into Chinese by EPTA China.

10th–13th October 2019 EPTA China Associates held a booth at the Shanghai Music Expo.

24th–27th October 2019

EPTA China Associates took Chinese teachers on a tour to participate in the 41st EPTA International conference in Vienna.

October–December 2019 EPTA China Associates organised another tour for Irina Gorin, with her method for young beginners “Tales of a musical journey” newly translated into Chinese. New cities: Chongqing, Haikou, Xi’an, Hefei.

There are plans to organise a piano competition.

EPTA INDIA ASSOCIATES

Founder/Director Prabhudas Ivanson
prabhivan@hotmail.com

The French pianist Marouan Benabdallah gave concerts and Masterclasses in the Lyra Music School in Chennai, in collaboration with the Academy of Western Music in Delhi, in conjunction with the Delhi Music Society and in the Art Chamber, Calangute, in Goa. Prabhudhas Ivanson organised the series of concerts, now in their 21st year.

EPTA ISRAEL ASSOCIATES

Chairman Yuval Admony
Committee Miriam Boskovich, Dr. Einat Fabrikant, Prof. Eitan Globerson, Prof. Emanuel Krassovski., Dr. Ron Regev, Dr. Michal Tal
Secretary Natalie Yontov
Academy of Music and Dance, Jerusalem;
Buchman – Mehta School of Music, Tel-Aviv University
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Tel-Aviv Regional Branch is organised by Ifat Zaidel (Israel Conservatory of Music, T-A).

EPTA Israel Associates continue the “Teachers’ Forum” initiated by the Piano Duo Tami Kanazawa and Yuval Admoniy – which meets regularly at their home in “Neve Shalom” – “Peace Oasis”, a village of co-existence between Jews and Arabs.

3rd January 2020 EPTA Israel Associates invited Professor Gilead Mishori from the Freiburg Musikhochschule to present “My Grandpa and I” - 10 Children’s Pieces for Piano.

Beni Miller presented the invention “Multi-Touch”, a device invented by pianist and piano tuner. Zenin Alexander talked on “controlling the resistance of the keys”, ranging from very heavy and difficult touch to very soft and easy, and in between with practice tips and how to work on different pieces.

7th February 2020 EPTA Israel Associates presented The Etude Booklet of Maayan Tal: *Perpetuum Mobile*, in public lessons given by EPTA members.

14th February 2020 EPTA Israel Associated launched Yuval Admony’s new pedagogical book “The Wonders of Music”: Four-Hand Pieces for Pupil and Teacher with Fabulous Fables of Music. 15 Teachers and their Students performed and narrated the fables.

6th March 2020 EPTA Israel Associates held its Annual Conference with Michael Damian presenting Bartók’s *Mikrokosmos*; “The Art of song accompaniment” was presented by Zvi Zemel and Ido Ariel from the Jerusalem Academy of Music.

3rd April 2020 EPTA Israel Associates organised a visit to the Piano Shop of “Singing Instruments” to hear about the latest in Non-Acoustical Pianos.

ALAPP Argentina (Association of Latin American Pianists and Pedagogues)

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Tel: (54-11) 4784-0583
Secretary Estela Telerman
Treasurer Lilia Noguera

Members: Alfredo Corral and Ana María Mondolo
Deputy Members: Martha Bongiorno and Guillermo Carro
Auditor Gloria Diograzia Val
www.musicaclassicaargentina.com/surif,
www.valentinsurifpianist.com

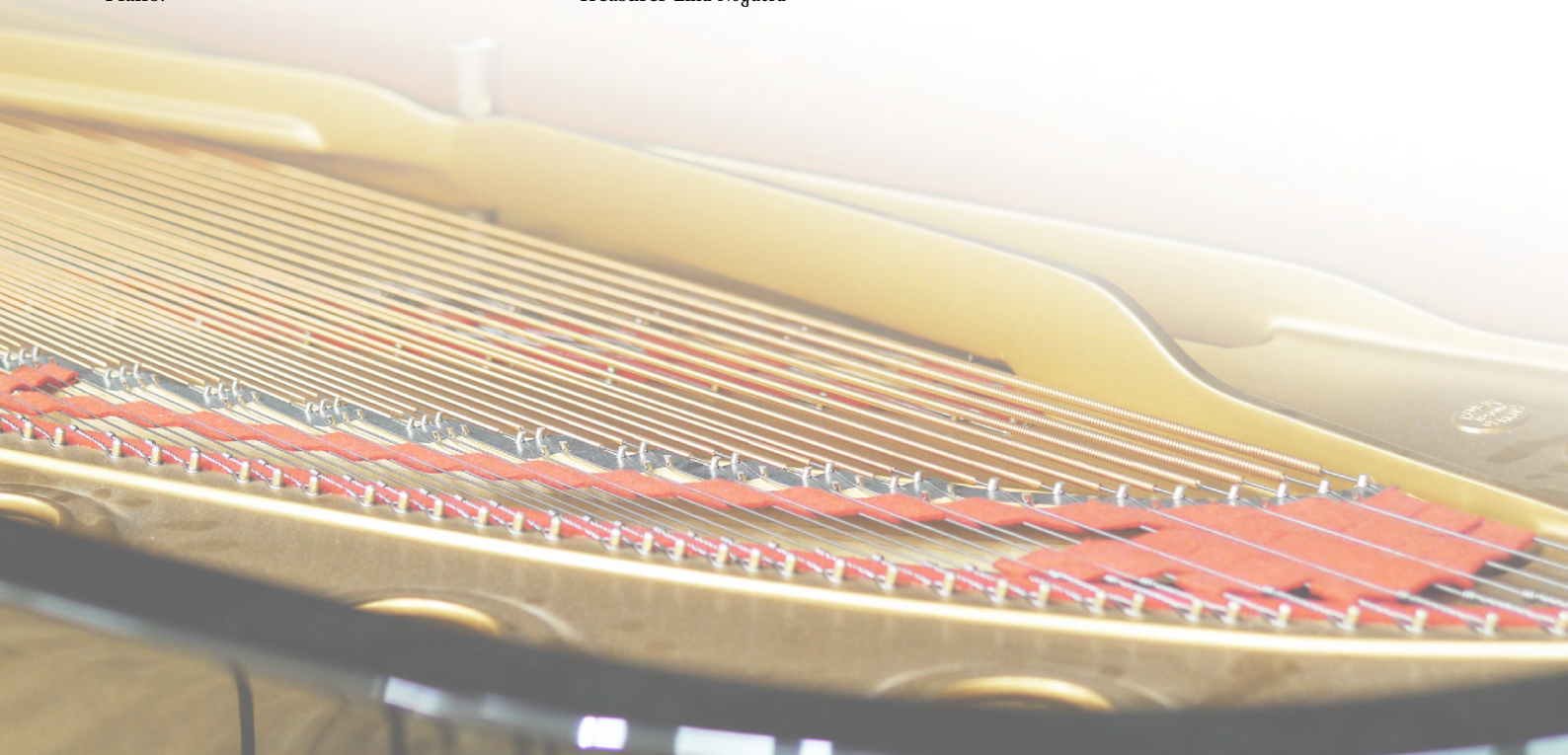
ALAPP Argentina sponsored a Competition of Bach Concertos for Harpsichord and Orchestra, granting five awards to the best Argentinian Pianists; the Winners’ concerts took place in the Auditorium of the Faculty of Law, Buenos Aires, and the Argentine Hall, CCK Music Centre.

Other concerts took place in the auditorium Jorge Luis Borges of the National Library and the auditorium of the Council of Professionals of Economic Sciences as well as young artists’ concerts in the Liszt Cultural Centre and the Fernandez Blanco Museum.

MTNA Music Teachers National Association

21st–25th March 2020 The MTNA held its Annual Conference in Chicago, Illinois and welcomed EPTA members.

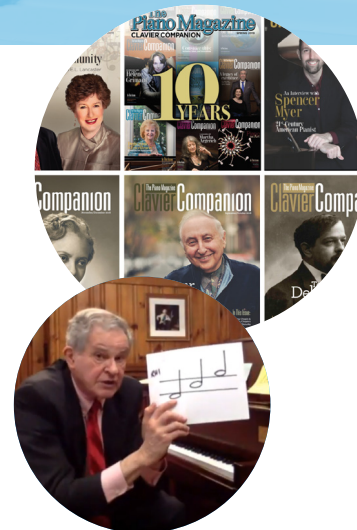
13th–17th March 2021 The MTNA will hold its Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. EPTA members are welcome <https://members.mtna.org/conference2020/index.html>



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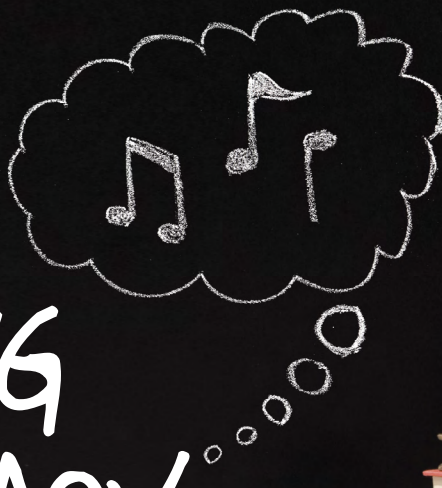
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