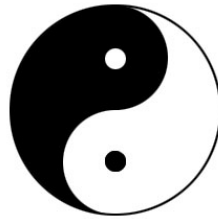


Ying & Yang

The contrasting harshness of Winter weather just gone with the arrival of such an early Summer, has created an amazing energy about the place these days! And similarly with all the doom and gloom in the news, the incredibly joyous celebration of the recent Royal Wedding was indeed perfect timing, as the whole World looked on! I find it exciting to think that the weather can change people's outlook or that a single joyous event can unite people's hearts.



And on a more local level, with Summer concerts, exams and 'end of year' Festivals just around the corner, it is also a time for a more *focused* type of piano practice, when all the year's work can suddenly come together! I have put together some tips for those parents who are not sure of how to get the best out of their child in these last few weeks before the important performances! Perhaps your child has been playing something for a while, with all the notes learned and so they now have the opportunity to really 'go for it', not worrying about the notes, as they may have spent many months perfecting just that...

(See page 2 for Practice Tips)

The **Piano Academy of Ireland** plays a significant role in the expansion and advancement of Ireland's pianistic educational programme contributing to society as it enables students of all ages, levels and abilities to allow music to play an important role in their lives.

With a proud passion for teaching of more than 12 years as a source of quality and excellence in musical pedagogy, our ongoing inspiration is found in our students from all corners of Dublin and beyond and in the commitment, energy and expertise of our teachers.

We are deeply dedicated, through music education, performance and appreciation, to inspiring and motivating students of all ages, enabling them to shine through music and in turn contribute to humanity.

Dates for your Diary

Easter Holidays: Classes resume Tues 3rd May

Last term: 3rd May – 18th June

RIAM Summer Exams: Mon 23rd May

Final Day Priority Enrollments: Fri 27th May

Summer Concerts & Reception: Sat 28th May

~1:30pm Children's concert including 'Sharp Kids' Pre – Instrumental

~4:30PM Adult Concert

Venue: Christ Church, Rathgar, corner of Highfield Road

ABRSM Theory Exams: Sat 18th June

#Sharp Kids Summer Camp (age 3-8 yrs) July 11-15 & 18 -22nd



- Rhona and Archie Chen

PERFORMANCE PREPARATION TIPS

1. **Have your child come up with a story about the piece of music they are playing.** Maybe they are playing it so long that it is now sounding a little bit stale! This is a really good way to get the child to take a fresh look at the character of the music and bring that to life. All children will look at the title and draw upon that...but some titles have nothing at all to stimulate the imagination, ie *Sonatina*, or *Andante* etc...so it is the *music itself* that will determine that story. Is it fast? Is it slow? Is it high or is it low? How does the music make you feel? When do those feelings change? Now how do you feel? Close your eyes and tell me what colours you see? And *now* what colours? Music is constantly changing, even within a single bar!! Start with identifying the 'feeling', then give the story a theme & one or two characters, then after another few days, maybe with the help of the child's teacher, this can be sculpted into a more *detailed* story. Then after another week, the child will come back to the lesson with the most incredible detailed story of bars in between....even certain *notes* will stand for certain events in the story! The music will all of a sudden begin to come alive! **And so, the more detailed that story is, the more that piece of music will touch those that are listening!** The audience may not have a clue that you are imagining 'a princess walking on tightrope' at that moment in the music, but they will hear music that comes alive, and they will have their own idea of what it represents for them!
2. Fingerwork can become a little sloppy after playing a piece for a while, as we stop listening at the same level and so along with stimulating the imagination with a 'story', it is essential that the proper ground work is done with **hands separate practice**. After months of playing both hands together, by taking the hands apart, any un-evenness in the *rhythm/tone* can be immediately heard and therefore fixed!
3. **Practise with the metronome.** Hands separate (and both hands) with the metronome, at different speeds (don't forget slow!) is also essential for tightening up rhythm.
4. Have you thought about **playing from memory?** Often a student will be amazed how much of a piece they *already* have from memory..and with a little push they can thoroughly memorize it during the last month! It is not absolutely essential, but there is undoubtedly a greater air of confidence with someone who plays from memory than someone with the music in front of them, and they tend to be able to put more *emotion* into the music.
5. **Practise good Stage Presence.** Practise walking to the piano, bowing, clearly announcing the name of your piece, performing to your family/friends, then bowing and smiling and walking back to your seat. Even if you felt your performance had some flaws, practice hiding this! Your audience should not be aware! And remember, *your performance starts from the moment you leave your seat until you return to it!* The audience is very appreciative of your efforts and so you too must be gracious to them!
 >**This also takes PRACTICE, and so after practicing in your living room, arrange as many 'performances' as possible with your family and friends and on as many different pianos as possible, in the weeks coming up to a public performance.**

Easter holidays have been a wonderful time to recharge...also a great time to write and update everyone on what's been happening at PAI! Please read on....

Coming in September... Choir at PAI, for girls & boys 6 – 12 years

We are very excited that our students can now join together and Sing together! It will be of enormous benefit to everyone, instantly improving their sight singing and their ears, aiding their piano sight reading (if they can learn to more easily to 'hear internally the notes one sees on the page')..... Being a part of any musical ensemble automatically improves ones rhythm as we have to 'stay together'! It develops greater musical sensitivity to phrasing, as we breathe when at the end of a phrase and not whenever we feel like it! As piano teachers, you will find us always singing along...as it allows us to feel the music more as the phrases ebb and flow...this also comes naturally to students that sing in a choir!

Day: Thursdays 4:30pm (- in between musicianship classes) Cost: Only €160 for the year!

Conductor: Lynsey Callaghan



5 Benefits of Singing in our Choir:

1. Develops musicality and *sensitivity* to phrasing, helping students to 'feel' the phrasing of any music they play on the piano.
2. Develops the *ear* like nothing else, for pitching and tuning in to harmonies.
3. Improves *rhythm*
4. Good for the *Soul*....releases tension, one feels balanced and rejuvenated after a good session of singing! Raises the vibrations around us! (World Governments should insist everyone sings, for greater peace☺)
5. It is *Fun* to share music together!

Standardization of Books for Beginners

After considerable research in Summer 2010, we chose the '**Piano Adventures**' as the optimal series for beginners of piano for their first 3-4 years of learning. The series includes wonderful tips on how to practice; has large colourful notation and attractive tunes with attractive names; both hands playing together almost immediately (unlike other tutors that spend too long on right hand); a fantastic technique book to accompany each lesson book, with very explicit directions about 'How' to play the piano (no other series has this and so teachers have to draw from other sources to teach technique); has some lovely teacher/parent accompaniments to go along with many of the tunes; and a fantastic 1st book for the pre-reader, **enabling students as young as 4 yrs to commence learning piano at PAI.**

"With students at **4yrs and up**, piano teaching becomes an adventure for both the child and the teacher. We've set aside our seriousness and inhibitions to join the child's world in a playful exploration of music and the keyboard. Through imagery, metaphor, and a diverse world of sound, we seek to develop a foundation of aural perception, eye tracking, and physical coordination. There is special opportunity to develop perceptual ability at a young age. Skills unfold while we engage the child's inherent love of music."



Coming in September – Introducing Piano to Students as young as 4 yrs!



If your child is 4 by September... and has already completed one year of pre-instrumental and is approved by Lynsey, then he/she may **begin learning piano!** No more need to hang about til age 6 or 7!! Our new Piano Adventure Pre-reader books help take care of that! We are offering 2x15 mins lessons p/w for this age group, as we feel 30 mins is too long and once per week not frequent enough for reinforcement at this young age!

With many children around the world, eg China etc, commencing lessons at age 2 and 3, practicing for up to 3 hours a day even at such a young age (we are not suggesting that your child should by the way!!) However we feel that if a child has sufficient exposure to music from a toddler, is showing an interest and has good parental support for practicing at home, then why wait until the child is 7 years old? Start them early for goodness sake!! They will get ahead of their peers and the early learning will be of great benefit in their overall development!

What to look for when purchasing a piano?

First, keep in mind that you will be listening to, and looking at, your piano for a long time. The average lifetime of a piano is about 40 years, and you will probably have it long after you have sold your present furniture, house and car. **Pianos depreciate very little.** A used piano built 10 years ago and maintained well will cost almost as much as a comparable new piano. So buy the best piano you can afford. Especially, **don't try to economize** on a piano for a child who's starting lessons. Making good music on a quality instrument is the best way to keep a young pianist interested. **Which type Of Piano Is For You?** Almost since the first piano was built, manufacturers have been trying to make it smaller. This has been no easy task, because good tone in a piano requires certain minimums in length of string and size of soundboard. First, the size of the original grand piano was cut by the use of stronger frames and an innovative system of cross-stringing. Then, in the late 1800's, the upright or vertical piano was developed, sending the space-consuming bulk of the instrument up along the wall, rather than out across the floor. This was so successful that today some larger professional-quality uprights can have equal or better tone quality than many small grands. Eventually, even the upright was shortened, and in some cases ingenious scale design compensates in tone for the loss of size. Still, this rule of thumb generally applies:

The larger the piano, the better the tone. We recommend looking at Yamaha U2 or U3, Kawai K2 or K3, Petrof uprights.

Here are some basic things to listen, look, and feel for when inspecting a used piano:

- Feel the hammers for softness (if they feel dry and hard, the sound will be thin and bright) and look for wear. If the grooves are more than 1/8" deep, they can't be reshaped very successfully.
- If there are no grooves in the hammer (if the strike point is flat and looks as though it has been shaved off), the hammer flange pin is probably loose and needs to be repaired.
- Do the hammers look as though little bits of them are missing? Are there holes in the felt? If so, the piano has been home to moths at some time.
- Watch for wobbles/bobbles in the hammers when playing softly. Not a good sign.
- Listen for clicks and buzzes while playing at a moderately loud volume. Clicks can indicate loose glue joints in action parts. Buzzes can point to separated soundboard ribs (check the glue joints along the ribs).
- Can the piano be played softly and consistently, or do some notes not play at low volume? If not, it requires regulation.
- As you play from one end to the other, is the tone quality pretty consistent? That's what you want!
- Is the tuning pretty consistent from one end to the other? Are the octaves tolerable? (Play the same note in four different octaves simultaneously to really check that.) Are there many notes that are badly out of tune with themselves?
- Are any strings missing? Are the broken strings in the piano so they can be spliced back together? Reuse the old ones, if possible.
- Do you hear a "zing" when you release the key? Often means that the dampers are hard and need to be reconditioned or replaced.
- Can you move the keys sideways to the point that they hit each other? That indicates worn-out key bushings.
- Do the wooden parts of the keys look as though they have been chewed? Are there stains on the wood? The piano has been moused.

Musicianship at PAI

With *almost* 100% of children attending Musicianship this year, we are absolutely delighted, finally, to see everyone benefit from the combined Piano-Musicianship training! It can take a little time to develop some of the more advanced skills, but I'm sure many parents will notice a greater 'musical intelligence' in their child and showing greater confidence in general! Lynsey is extremely satisfied with the results that she is achieving with the children. *Wonderful to see so many little Einsteins!* Many have chosen not to sit the formal ABRSM exams but 17 students *are* going ahead from grades 1-4 next month! As all the skills acquired are an accumulation over the years, it is imperative to keep the Musicianship attendance up while learning the piano. We hope to see All of you attending next Sept!



Adult Musicianship

Adult Musicianship, led by Grainne Dennan, has been a fantastic support to the 10 students that chose to take it this year! With greater numbers enrolling for this class *September 2011*, it will be easier for us to structure courses that cater for the beginner *and* the more intermediate student. We would therefore, invite All you adults to seriously consider committing to Monday evening Musicianship! It could mean all the difference to your overall progress and satisfaction, especially for All you beginners!! Remember it is *never* too late to expand knowledge & skill and enrich ones life...

SEPTEMBER 2011

Adult Beginner Musicianship: Monday 6:15-7:15pm

Adult Intermediate Musicianship: Monday 7:15-8:15pm

Led by Grainne Dennan



#SHARP KIDS SUMMER CAMP ages 3 to 8 years

With Lynsey Callaghan, Rhona & Archie

Week 1: July 11th-15th

Week 2: July 18th-22nd

Due to popular demand PAI will host a *one* -week course for our younger students and for new students. **Musical Activities designed to create #Sharper Kids & Little Einsteins!**

Application forms available online or from the Office. **Cost only £80 per week!**

STAFF BREAKING NEWS!

Congratulations to **Lynsey Callaghan** on her recent achievement of Trinity 'Schol' – an incredible 5 year *Scholarship* to include fees and on-campus accommodation, amongst many other perks as Scholar. We are very proud of her and wish her continued success for a wonderful career in music!



We would like to welcome our newest member of staff, **Michelle Orr**, who has just last week begun a 6 month Internship with us as Office Administrator, Mon-Fri 9-5pm. We are delighted to have this additional support and would welcome all parents and students to come and meet her. You will be happy to know your calls will be returned a lot faster now!



*Congratulations to our newly wed **Grainne Dennan** who walked down the aisle on Feb 12th! Wishing Grainne and her husband Steven all the joy in the world for a wonderful life together!*



STAFF PERFORMANCES



***Lina Kiva** performs in the John Field Room on Friday 17 June at 1:05pm*

April 1st - A wonderful performance of Schumann's Dichterliebe was enjoyed with baritone Benjamin Russell and **Yukman Pak** in the NCH's Kevin Barry Room.

April 5th – **Lynsey Callaghan's** debut as Conductor of the Trinity College Boydell Singers was a roaring success. Someone definitely to watch out for in future concert listings!

June 17th – Still in time for **Lina Kiva's** solo recital at the NCH John Field Room. Programme to include Liszt's B minor Sonata and works by Chopin and Korngold! Not to be missed! Lunchtime concert starts at 1:05pm. Tickets €14 (€12 concessions/ €10 children)

NCH Box Office Tel: 01 417 0000/www.nch.ie

SUMMER CONCERTS

Summer Concerts & Reception – Saturday 28th May

~1:30pm Children's concert including 'Sharp Kids' Pre – Instrumental

~4:30PM Adult Concert

Venue: Christ Church, Rathgar, corner of Highfield Road. We look forward to meeting ALL of you there!

STAGE PRESENCE 101



Some Observations from a Professional Pianist....

"I was recently watching a student recital and was amazed by the lack of professionalism and stage presence by so many of the performers. One of the pianists in particular caught my attention as he walked on the stage. He walked on the stage slowly, dragging his feet with his shoulders slumped over and looking down at the floor the whole time (he looked like he had just been given a death sentence!) When he sat down, he acted like he was afraid that somebody might see him. While he played he showed no emotion whatsoever, neither physically nor musically. He looked like a statue with a soundtrack playing. At the conclusion of the performance, the young musician neither bowed nor acknowledged his audience. He then turned around and slowly walked off the stage looking totally defeated. Not once did he look at the audience. Obviously, this was a very inexperienced musician when it came to stage etiquette." says Archie. "A few pointers and tips would have gone a long way toward helping this young musician.

Let's face it! Whether we like it or not, even though we perform classical music, we're still entertainers. I'm not advocating bizarre outfits or mannerisms, but a few final touches in stage presence could enhance your performance. Here are some tips that can help to enhance your performance.

1. **Always walk on stage with your shoulders back.** Walk like you belong there. It even helps to look at your audience and acknowledge them with a smile and/or nod as you enter the stage. This puts everyone at ease.
2. **Don't feel rushed when you sit down.** Be sure to adjust the bench height properly and if playing from memory put the music rack down! Remember to breathe!
3. While performing, **don't look stiff or like a statue.** Try to stay loose--this will help to relax your performance.
4. **Enjoy your performance** (by being prepared!). A little body movement may add to your performance.
5. At the conclusion of your performance take a moment to allow the audience to begin their applause, then step in front of the bench and **take your bow.** If you are a female, slightly bend your knees and take a moderate bow from your waist (keeping in mind what you are wearing).
6. Walk off stage with the satisfaction of a **job well done.**

One last area should be discussed at this time. Traditionally, classical musicians dress up for the part. Ladies should wear the appropriate apparel for the formal occasion taking into account that the length of the dress should not be too short (remember, you will probably be on an elevated stage). Another factor is that the front of the dress should not be cut too low (remember that for when you take your bow!). Guys, you should wear semi-formal attire such as a dress shirt and slacks (not jeans!). Make sure everything fits properly. Appearance is important! Nothing looks more strange than a "grease monkey" playing the piano!

By combining good appearance, proper stage etiquette, and a little showmanship with a superior performance, you have a winning combination!

- Archie Chen



Congratulations to our recent prizewinners at the ESB Feis Ceoil!

Congratulations to **Yukman Pak** on the winning of both the Pigott Cup and the Esposito Cup at this year's ESB Feis Ceoil. Pak has recently begun studies with John O' Conor and we wish him continued success in his performing career!

- Ellen Duffy – 1st place Larchet Memorial Cup
- Siofra Coveney – 2nd place Fritz Brase Cup
- Stan O' Beirne – VHC (3rd place) Junior Pianoforte Solo E
- Orla Birkett – VHC (3rd place) Junior Pianoforte Solo C
- Christopher Ellis – VHC (3rd place) Junior Pianoforte Solo B
- Christopher Ellis – HC (4th place) John Field Cup

Congratulations to all the Prize winners at our recent 2nd Annual PAI Festival!

Adjudicator Prof Reamonn Keary, RIAM



Best of luck to all those participating in Newpark Music Festival!

(May 3rd – 8th)

Under 8	Stan	O' Beirne
Under 8	Joe	O' Grady
Under 8	Jeanine	Guerero
Under 8	Mia	Smyth
Under 10	Sam	Connolly
Under 10	Conn	Mc Girr
Under 10	Daniel	Windle
Under 10	Rachel	Low (age 7)
Adult Solo	Doireann	Hanley
Adult Solo	Ailish	Mc Garrity
Senior Sonata	Doireann	Hanley
Senior Sonata	Ailish	Mc Garrity
Under 16	Siofra	Coveney
Under 18	Emma	Boylan
Under 18	Ellen	Duffy
Coakley Fuller Cup	David	Boylan
Senior Piano Sonata	David	Boylan
Adult Pritchard	Daire	O Shea

Best of luck to those participating in the Navan Festival!

(May 7th)

Under 9	Joe O' Grady
Under 9	Stan O' Beirne
Under 9	Rachel Low

BEST OF LUCK!

~To our 18 participants of
Newpark Music Festival

~To our 17 **RIAM Summer Exam** students (grades 1- 8 & Senior Cert)

~To our 17 **ABRSM Summer Theory** students (grades 1-4)
Sat June 18th

~To Jake Richardson and Emily Crowley, both sitting **Junior Cert Music** this coming June.

PIANO FACULTY



Rhona Gouldson



Archie Chen



Tetyana Vlasyuk



Lina Kiva

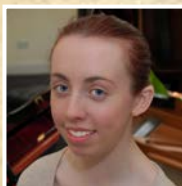


Pak Yukman



Noramarie Noone

MUSICIANSHIP FACULTY



Lynsey Callaghan



Grainne Dennan

OFFICE ADMINSTRATOR



Michelle Orr