

Contents

Page 1. Monthly Highlights

Page 2. Spring Program: Jamie Shaak Presents *Nelita True's Approach to Memorizing and Technic*

Page 3. Celebrating Black History Month

Page 4. President's Message

Page 6. Editor's Note

Page 8. Student Musicale

Page 9. DAMTA's Scholarship Fund At Work: Julianne Combs

Page 10. Evelyn Billberg on "The Genius Within"

Page 12. The Wild Beautiful Orchestra Presents "Into the Spotlight: Composers of Color"

Page 13. Sponsors

Dates To Remember

February 8. DAMTA Business Meeting, 9:30-10:10am, Classic Pianos and Online (Zoom link will be sent out via Passalongs).

February 8. Spring Program with Jamie Shaak, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., Classic Pianos and Online (Zoom link will be sent out via Passalongs).

February 12. Student Musicale, 2:00 p.m., Classic Pianos and online (Zoom link sent to registrants).



LYRICS NEWSLETTER



SPRING PROGRAM

February 8th: Jamie Shaak on *Nelita True's Legendary Approach to Memorizing Music and Technic.*

Page 2.



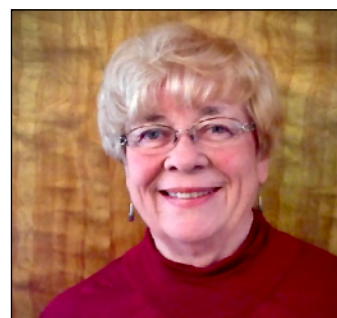
CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Notable Musicians.

Page 3.

Ben Raznick on the February Student Musicale and Resources for teaching Black Composers.

Page 8



THE GENIUS WITHIN

Evelyn Billberg on Sharing Music From One's "Genius Center".

Page 10.

SPRING PROGRAM 2023: Session 2



February 8 - Jamie Shaak

In-Person & Online

Nelita True’s Legendary Approach to Memorizing Music and the Technic Routine We All Learned When Entering Her Studio

Description: I had the great fortune of learning these highly effective memorization concepts directly from Dr. True at the University of Maryland and the Eastman School of Music. Students of Dr. True were part of our weekly group lessons, covering a wide array of topics. The memorization concepts and her wonderful technical exercises transformed all of us.

Bio: Jamie Shaak, pianist, teacher and arranger, is delighted to be back in Colorado. She is teaching with Carolyn Shaak at the Shaak Music Studio and together they have most recently finished the *Hanon Variations Technic Book*. At the Juilliard School, Jamie worked with John Browning as a Horowitz Scholar and at the Eastman School of Music worked with the renowned pedagogue Nelita True. Jamie’s piano solo “Penelope’s Dream” has been selected for the National Federation of Music Clubs’ Festivals.

Spring programs are free and open to DAMTA members and the community.

Join us, in person or online, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at Classic Pianos Denver: 1332 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80210.

DAMTA Board Members 2022-23

Ben Raznick	President
Marilyn Madsen	Vice President (Programs)
David House	Vice President (Newsletter)
Sonya Clark	Vice President (Membership)
Joshua Zabatta	Vice President (Student Musicales)
Deborah De La Torre	Vice President (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)
Nazila Nekoorad	Secretary
Carolyn Angelier	Treasurer
Kristin Jordheim	Parliamentarian
Vince Madison	Past President

Submissions

- DAMTA issues the Lyrics Newsletter monthly from September through May, with a double edition in December/January.
- Submit all flyers, announcements, or news items as an email attachment to David House, at davidhouse1@comcast.net no later than the 20th of each month. Please give emails the heading “Lyrics Submission”.

Passalongs

DAMTA’s closed Google group for members:

- Notices in addition to official DAMTA business.
- Announcements and passalong emails that may be of interest to DAMTA members.
- News of workshops, competitions, special sales, instruments for sale privately, auditions, concerts, recitals, etc.

Celebrating BLACK HISTORY MONTH

“People of African descent have been involved in this classical music since there was a classical music.”

-Lee Koonce



*Theresa May,
trumpeter,
music professor,
founder of the
Chromatic
Brass Collective*



Dean Dixon, conductor



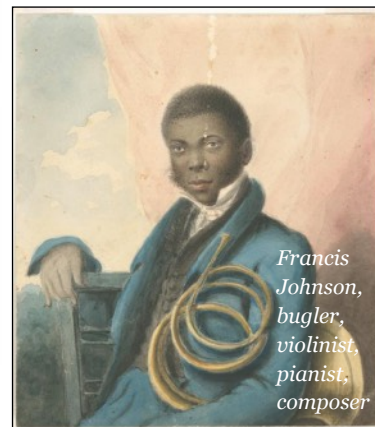
*Tai Murray,
violinist*



*Sheku Kanneh-
Mason, cellist*



*Thomas "Blind Tom" Wiggins,
pianist and composer*



*Francis
Johnson,
bugler,
violinist,
pianist,
composer*



*Samantha Ege,
pianist*



President's

Message:

Happy 2023 DAMTA! I hope everyone is enjoying a wonderful new year.

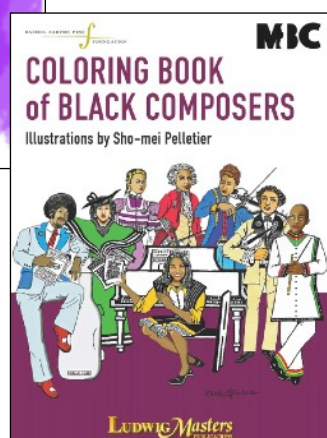
DAMTA is committed to celebrating Black History Month, an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history.

I am excited to host our 3rd Annual February Student Musicale Celebrating Black History Month, which welcomes students to perform compositions by Black composers and read aloud their biographies. While performances of Black composers are encouraged, students are welcome to perform any piece they have prepared in their repertoire. Because this event is hybrid, we do welcome performances from home which will be displayed on the TV monitor at Classic Pianos for our in-person crowd. Similar to last year, students and teachers will also be welcome to read literature, poems and share artwork. Suggested essay topics are "Why Is It Important To Continue Dr. King's Legacy?" and "What Does Black History Month Mean To Me?" As space and time permit, we invite student contributions and creative expressions they have learned for Black History Month in school. We are looking forward to student performers signing up and joining us for the event!

Here are a few resources to support your teaching of music by Black composers:

- [A Collection of Florence Price's Piano Teaching Music](#)
- [MusicByBlackComposers.org](#)
- [Sheet Music By Black Composers \(Strings, Guitar and more\)](#)
- [Coloring Book of Black Composers](#)
- [International Florence Price Festival](#)
- [Where Are All The Black Female Composers?](#)
- [Why Is My Piano Black And White?](#)

DAMTA CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH



(Continued on page 5)

Continued from page 4



Each year on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, a celebration "Marade" (which combines the word march+parade) takes place. The event begins at City Park and ends at Civic Center Park in downtown Denver with speeches and music. I took these photos this year, January 16th, 2023.



Ben Raznick
DAMTA President

Ben Raznick

I once knew a kid who had the oddest concern. He was around fourteen and had studied piano since he was six. His odd, almost fanciful, concern was this: What if there is a kid living somewhere in tribal Africa who has a talent for playing piano but doesn't know it, and can't ever know it because he doesn't even know what a piano is? He imagined a boy his age, living in a mud hut, proximate to lions and water buffalo, harboring the gift for playing Rachmaninoff like nobody's business, but destined to carry this gift, like a kind of microbe, through all his subsaharan days, oblivious to its existence. The thought made him very sad.

Looking back, I can only love this kid for the sheer weirdness of his mind, that, out of the panoply of possible sorrows, this is what he'd come up with to worry about lying in bed at night, staring at the ceiling. The false premises upon which which he built this odd concern seem almost beside the point. If only they weren't so problematic.

The first false premise was his understanding of talent. Rather than viewing talent as an aptitude paired with an affinity, the outgrowth of a fortuitous neural configuration, interactive, dynamic, it was, to him, instead, something delivered, whole and inalterable, into one's being at birth, discrete and specific as a marble. It was a romantic view of talent, a reification of the "divine spark" theory, useful in bio pics and superhero movies, but not, perhaps, amenable to modern neuroscience or theories of intelligence. And, to the point at hand, it didn't allow for the possibility that talent - that is talent for a particular thing like piano - is a cultural artifact.

Which lays bare the more insidious false

Editor's Note:

NOTES ON AN ODD CONCERN



premise underlying his odd concern. It would never have occurred to him to wonder what talent a Himba boy growing up in Namibia, following his family's herds, might have that a white middle-class American boy might also secretly possess but never realize. Presented with such a reversal, he might have been intrigued, but would, in all likelihood, not have found it the least bit sad, because, to him, the world with pianos in it was the real one, or at any rate the best one, the one that if you were not fortunate enough to have been born into you would be forever at a loss. Not that there was anything wrong with living in a tribal village in Africa, or that such a life would be without its compensations. You might, for example do some wonderful, rhythmically complex drumming. You might wear bright clothes, and live in a quaint mud hut, never far from lions and water buffalo. Excellent things, all, but, ultimately, little more than a delightful contrast to the real world in which one road in cars to school, and to piano lessons. It may have been fanciful, his worry over an African boy's unrealized gift, but it was a fantasy born of privilege.

Why he'd placed his hypothetical boy in Africa is uncertain, though perhaps telling.

(Continued on page 7)

To him, Africa was a monolith. Of course he knew that it comprised various countries, but that didn't much matter. Except maybe for Egypt. Egypt mattered because it had pyramids and mummies and hieroglyphs. But the rest of it was, in his mind, more or less of a piece. What he knew of it he got mostly from 1. National Geographic magazine, to which his father subscribed, 2. the movie *The Gods Must be Crazy*, which he loved, 3. little bits he heard on the news, which was mostly about famine and war, and 4. reports from people he knew who had gone to Africa to "save" it.

Here is racism at work: an entire continent rendered in a few salient strokes, its multitudes neatly caricatured, its diverse societies lumped and reduced to their barbarisms and needs, and the ascendancy of one's own sphere of existence unquestioned. What is more, from where one sits within that sphere, one can easily believe oneself immune to the ugliness of racist thought. Africans, and the descendants of Africans living in America and elsewhere, have repeatedly demonstrated the ability to play Rachmaninoff like nobody's business. There are those for whom this still elicits a mild surprise, to whom a black person sitting at a concert grand, playing the Rachmaninoff *Third Piano Concerto*, is a black person displaced, a black person not playing jazz. Let's be clear, these are, by and large, good people opposed to racism. "How wonderful it is," they might say, "to see black people finally ascending the heights," deaf to the note of self-congratulation they are singing. The losers in such cases are, ironically, Rachmaninoff and jazz, stripped of their virtues as art to be engaged with and loved,



reduced to mere cultural signifiers, little different from car brands.

The kid with the odd concern has not been a kid for a long time now. Many things have changed for him. Some have not. He still plays piano. Now he teaches it. He is still prone to lying in bed staring at the ceiling, formulating peculiar ideas to worry about. He knows more about Africa now, though not as much as he'd like. Over time, he has come to understand that the world is incalculably larger than his experience of it, and that, by his unwitting, even well-meaning arrogance and unconscious biases, he occasionally stands in his own way of the view. He's doing what he can. I can report that, though he was happy to write these brief reflections, he sees they are, at best, a start.

- David House, Editor



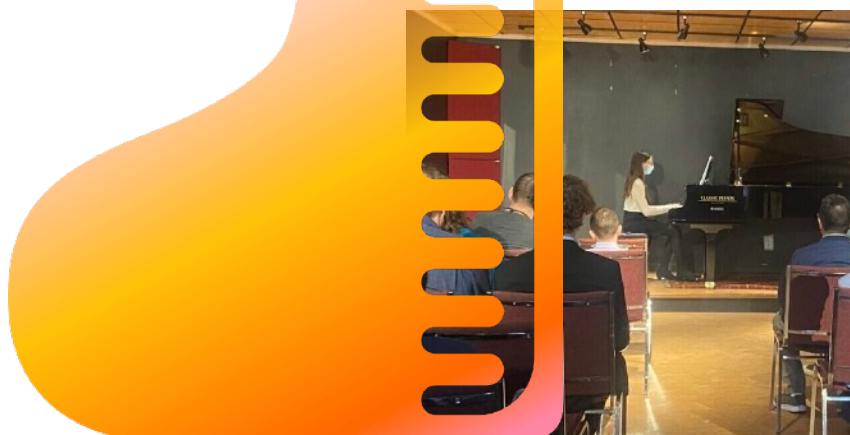
Guidelines for Participants and Teachers:

1. **Sign up to participate:** Any Interested performers can sign up through their teacher and complete the form provided:
2. **Preparation:** The student should be prepared musically, but memorization is not required.
3. **Performance Etiquette:** Teachers should prepare their students with essentials for performance, including how to walk on stage, what to wear, how to introduce yourself and your piece, and how to bow.
4. **Musicale Fee:** We encourage a donation of at least \$10 per participant. Donations support DAMTA's scholarship fund as well as its ongoing operations. You can donate using the Donate Link on DAMTA's website, or pay in person before the performance.
5. **Access & Participation:** Each participating teacher should take up no more than 1/3 of the program length. Musicales typically last no longer than 60 minutes.
6. **All Students Are Welcome and Supported:** Students of all ages, skill levels, and instruments are welcome to perform in our musicales. Every student, teacher, and audience member should be supportive of the other participants.
7. **Copyright Policy:** Copyright laws must be observed; all music must be an original publication, licensed for reprint,

Guidelines for Musicale Hosts:

See the Student Musicales page on DAMTA's website: <https://denvermusicteacher.com/students/>

STUDENT MUSICALES



DAMTA presents a Musicale once a month during the school year. Musicales give students of DAMTA teachers the opportunity to perform in a welcoming and supportive environment. **Students of all instruments, ages, and levels are encouraged to perform.** Masks are encouraged but not required. We also offer a livestream over Zoom for anyone who can't attend in person. Contact musicale chair, Joshua Zabatta, at JoshuaZabatta@gmail.com with any questions.

Get involved:

1. Sign students up to perform! (sign up form: <https://forms.gle/kywmjjhd3SkJw5ct6>)
2. Host or co-host/assist with a musicale.
3. Donate to DAMTA.

Next Musicale: February 12, 2023, at 2:00 p.m., at Classic Pianos of Denver (1332 Broadway, Denver, CO. 80210) The host will be Ben Raznick: benraznickmusic@gmail.com

Upcoming Musicales:

- March 12, 2023, 2:00 p.m
- April 23, 2023, 2:00 p.m.
- May 14, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

DAMTA'S SCHOLARSHIP FUND AT WORK

February Report:
Julianne Combs



Ben Raznick, Julianne Combs and her brother Thomas

Submitted by Julianne Combs

For the Federation of Music Clubs Festival, some of the things that I liked during this festival was being able to show what I had practiced and be able to shows how well I played. Another thing I enjoyed was having the opportunity to be judged and graded on how well I performed. All of these reasons made the experience new and exciting. The reason I think that I am deserving of this scholarship is because I practiced each week so that I could perform well. I worked hard on dynamics and making sections of my piano piece quieter and louder. Practicing with the metronome helped to get the rhythm much better then before.



Julianne performing at Classic Pianos



THE GENIUS WITHIN

by Evelyn Billberg

There is that spark within each of us that is waiting to be discovered, and it is amazing when we find the avenue which pulls the right strings and allows us to express. The "Arts" provides a wonderful vehicle for this expression. The seven areas we most frequently consider in the "Arts" category are: Painting, Sculpture, Literature, Architecture, Cinema, Music, Theatre.

My husband had a very special friendship with a wonderful lady who was a dear friend of the family. Ida Marshall was an opera singer who eventually in her career began traveling with Community Concert performances. These artists traveled throughout the United States bringing their "Art" to communities large and small. Ida explained to my husband's family members that she loved "singing the audience." She would share her operatic music with the audience and "connected" with them so dynamically that the individuals could feel the connection with her. They would talk to her after the concert, wide eyed, often in tears, the experience was so moving. Ida wrote about her experiences in her book: *Tracings of Eternal Light*, copyright 1939.

Have you ever been to a concert and felt a buzz run up your spine? Aha...the performer reached you! I have experienced this while listening to many musical styles: Pop & Rock, Jazz, Rap, Big Band, Classical and Opera. The "buzz" happens for the listener when the performers are really in tune with their music, really putting it out there from that special place within. The music "sings" within them and is heard, and felt, by the listener. This is most often experienced at live performances. It is very difficult for the performer to capture the same feeling with a recording.

All forms of the arts have the capacity to reach us in this way. It is a one-on-one experience from the "originator" to the "receiver." Have you seen paintings that really moved you? History tells us of many artists who have moved their audiences with incredible paintings. Sculpture and Architecture can be so exciting to view. We all have experienced moving feelings from literature, cinema and theatre.

As a music teacher, voice and piano, I strive to help students find that place in their performance where they can share their music

(Continued on page 11)

from that “genius center” which allows them to connect with their audience and share the wonderful joy of their music. Once the notes are learned, often memorized, the music begins to stir within the performer and they can share this beautiful music with clarity and energy, reaching the audience with their own understanding of the piece.

I recall a performance of “Oklahoma.” It was during this show that I first encountered this special “audience connection” which was amazing. I was on stage with “Curly” in “Oklahoma.” We both really felt the energy of the exchange between us, it was so amazing, so strong. When we got off stage Curly said, “What just happened.” We had created such a strong interchange with our roles that we reached the audience...the audience was with us in those moments, the energy was absolutely astounding. This was an experience beyond simply saying words and singing music.

On another occasion my mentor/piano teacher and I were putting on a small evening concert in his home. My parents had traveled to be with us. I was singing an aria from Saint-Saens’ Sampson and Delilah. I could feel the energy as I connected with my teacher who was accompanying me. Upon completing the Aria I looked my father in his eyes. He was teared, as was I.

Our wonderful concert artists are very skilled at sharing their music with the audience with accomplished performances. As musicians we learn our music, usually memorize the piece, and perform with our instrument. This is only the beginning. The performance is the time when the “Creative Artist” connects with the music and shares with the audience “all” of the music from within.

Hank Jones suggested: When you listen to a pianist (Artist), each note should have an identity, each note should have a soul of its own.



UPCOMING PERFORMANCE BY THE WILD BEAUTIFUL ORCHESTRA

Into the Spotlight: Composers of Color

REVUELTAS
(Mexican)

LÉON
(Cuban)

SORABJI
(Parsi/English)



Sat. March 11 at 7:30pm

Central Presbyterian Church

1660 Sherman St | Denver, CO 80203

Tickets on Eventbrite: \$25 / \$10 students

Vocalists: Andrew Garland, Daniela Guzmán-Égüez,
Zoë Spangler, Natacha Cónдор Guevara

Wild Beautiful Orchestra
conducted by Taylor Gonzales

wildbeautifulorchestra.org

A BIG THANK YOU TO DAMTA'S GENEROUS SPONSORS!



<https://www.boulderpianogallery.com>



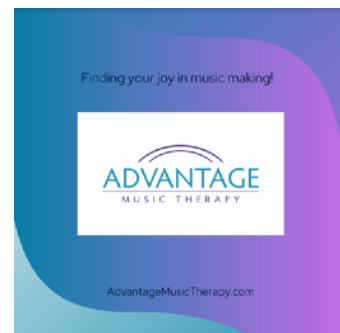
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