

Huntington Piano Lessons Newsletter

April 2012, by Helena Almborg

Quote of the month

“Do you know why piano playing is so difficult? Because it is prone to be either affected or else afflicted with mannerisms, and when these two pitfalls are luckily avoided then it is liable to be dry!” -- Anton Rubinstein

From my Piano Bench



Thank you to all of my students, their parents, relatives and guest for a very successful recital. I think I will keep having it every year.

Several parents talked to me asking about guidelines of recital behavior. I actually thought about giving a little speech before the recital about that, but didn't think it was the place or the time. But this newsletter is perfect for it.

Let's start at the beginning, be on time. Some venues will not allow late comers to enter until intermission. Of course, the severity will always depend on the seriousness of the performance. Give yourself time to find the place, park the car, traffic, etc. You should be on your seat at least 5 minutes before performance starts.

Once seated, turn off your phones or any other buzzing, ringing devices, it's quite embarrassing to have your phone ringing. Such faux pas made national headlines when “the unmistakably jarring sound of an iPhone marimba ring interrupted the soft and spiritual final measures of Mahler's Symphony No. 9 at the New York Philharmonic on Tuesday night. The conductor, Alan Gilbert, did something almost unheard-of in a concert hall: He stopped the performance.” People talked about this for weeks!

At my recital, I encouraged parents to take pictures and film their children. I think it makes great memories. During professional performances refrain from using any flash or light device, it distracts the performer(s). Don't forget that your phone's screen might create glare, I would just turn the whole thing off. No texting.

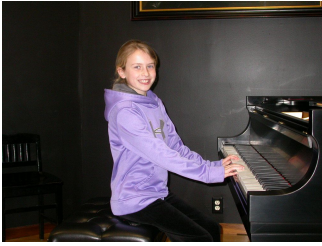
Big topic: when to applause? When in doubt try not to be the first one, or you might end up being the only one clapping. When attending classical music performances Emily Post suggests these appropriate times for applause: when the conductor, concertmaster and guest artists walk on stage. Once the conductor steps on the platform and raises his or her baton, all clapping ceases.

During our recital some pieces had more than one movement and you should'n clap between them. In our case I told the audience when the pieces were longer than one movement, but most performance programs will list the sections in each piece. At the end of the piece the conductor may turn immediately to the audience, but some don't, so if you are not sure follow the audience's lead.

Finally, just use common sense. Avoid snap, crackle and pops, muffle your cough or sneeze, and if you have small children you should try to get a seat near an aisle or exit, just in case.

Once again, thank you for a wonderful recital, you were all a very good audience. I applaud!

Featured Students of the Month



Caroline Ambriano: Piano student since October 2009. Caroline attends 5th grade at Lloyd Harbor School in Huntington. She loves to play the piano because of new pieces, especially the challenging ones. Caroline is an excellent student in school, straight A's. She loves skiing and ice skating she also plays soccer and lacrosse in addition to swimming. Caroline was a finalist at her school Spelling Bee competition. Wow, talking about sound mind in a very sound body.



Nicholas Banai: Piano student since September 2009. Nicholas attends 6th grade at West Hollow Middle School in Melville. He is a big fan of Star Wars, (who doesn't remember his great Darth Vader performance?) and now he is learning to play The Cantina Band. He is in the High Honors Roll at his school and he loves, I mean LOVES baseball and all that comes with it, playing, collecting cards, watching, etc. Nicholas wants to be a baseball player one day and if he practices baseball as much as he practices the piano, we will all hear about him soon.

On a lighter note, take the Concert Etiquette Quiz (source: www.nafme.org)

- 1. You should enter the auditorium/cafeteria**
 - a. As loudly as possible
 - b. Quietly
 - c. Walking backwards
- 2. It is always a good idea to arrive**
 - a. A bit early
 - b. Just as the performance is beginning
 - c. Only in time to catch your child's performance
- 3. If you must arrive late, it is best to enter**
 - a. Whenever you arrive
 - b. During your child's performance
 - c. Between musical selections
- 4. During the concert, it is a good idea to**
 - a. Discuss the performance
 - b. Sit quietly and listen
 - c. Eat dinner
- 5. For mobile phone usage during a performance it is best to**
 - a. Answer your phone quickly and speak quietly
 - b. Leave the room to use the phone
 - c. Turn the phone off, or better yet, leave it in the car
- 6. Applause should be given when**
 - a. The performance is completed and the conductor faces the audience
 - b. Your child has completed his or her part
 - c. Any time something is done well
- 7. After the performance is over**
 - a. You should leave your seat and rush up to the stage to find your child
 - b. Exclaim loudly how tired you are
 - c. Sit and wait until all the children have cleared the stage
- 8. On the way home it's a good idea to**
 - a. Critique the performance
 - b. Offer your praise
 - c. Offer your sympathy

Go To the following link to see how you did!

<http://www.menc.org/resources/view/rules-for-concert-etiquette>