

PIANO

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE STUDIO OF DR. JOVANNI-REY DE PEDRO
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO'S LIONEL HAMPTON SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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Upcoming Events

January 6, 4pm: Recital. St. Andrew's Church. Laoag City, Philippines

January 26-27: Presentation and master class for Boise Tuesdays Musicale

January 28, 4pm: Stars of Steinway Recital Series. Dunkley's Music. Meridian, Idaho

February 6, 7pm: Solo Recital. Southwestern Assemblies of God University. Waxahachie, Texas

February 7, noon: Solo Recital. Southern Methodist University. Dallas, Texas

February 7, 4pm: Solo Recital. Texas Women's University, Denton, Texas

February 10: UI AUDITION DAY!!

February 17: Master class. Steinway Gallery of Spokane. Details TBA.

February 20, 7:30pm: Solo Recital. University of Idaho

February 25, 2pm: Solo Recital. Englewood Church. Yakima, Washington

The Hills Were Alive with *Musik Zentral!*

After a recent master class, the father of a very talented 12-year old asked me, "When did you 'get it'?"

Looking back at my own pianistic upbringing, I don't think I can pinpoint with absolute certainty one moment in time when it all made sense. When all the planets aligned and made me the person I am today. But I do believe that who I am now is the result of a series of unforgettable, life-altering experiences. I believe this is true of everyone.

My first trip to Europe was one such experience.



Me with Professor Ward at the 2013 Concerto*Fest

Robert Ward, my masterful high school piano teacher, was in love with Vienna. He traveled to the Austrian capital as a Fulbright Scholar in the 1970's and had been back nearly every year since.

I was finishing my sophomore year at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts in 1998 when Professor Ward, along with the Dutch pianist Martijn van den Hoek (who was teaching at the Vienna Conservatory at the time), and conductor (and then-UCLA dean) Jon Robertson established a summer music academy outside the hills of

Salzburg that would give participants an experience like no other festival prior (and very few since). They realized that concerto playing and the true understanding of Classical style was an often-neglected but essential part of the training of every young artist, and founded *Musik Zentral* to fill this void. Their vision gave pianists young and old, amateurs, professionals, students, and everyone in between the unique opportunity to study and perform Mozart concertos with a professional European chamber orchestra.

Although I didn't have a concerto at that time, Prof. Ward invited me to audit the festival to take piano lessons with Prof. van den Hoek, and conducting lessons with Dr. Robertson. So my mother and I boarded a British Airways flight bound for Vienna and spent the next two week soaking up and enjoying everything we could – the lessons, the rehearsals, the lectures, Alexander Jenner's opening recital, the typical Austrian cuisine (I remember we used to joke about the hard breakfast *semmeln!*), the quaint town of Bad Aussee located in the beautiful *Salzkammergut*, and the people.

Looking back on this experience, I realize that the value of my education that summer was not solely from what I learned from a teacher, or a lecture, or a master class, or even how much I practiced. At any other summer festival, I would have met very talented, like-minded people close to me in age. I would have made friends. But at *Musik Zentral*, I didn't only find friends; I found mentors and people I idolized, and was inspired by just *being* in the same place where Brahms, Mahler, Mozart, and so many others worked.

Musik Zentral has gone through a few changes over the past twenty years, but still stays true to the core of its original mission. Now called *Concerto*Fest*Europa*, the festival is open to participants of any instrument or voice wishing to perform a classical-era work with **orchestra**. Mr. Ward has additionally moved the location to the picturesque Slovak capital of Bratislava in order to keep a closer proximity to Vienna. I did go back as a full participant in 2008, and again in 2013 as the concerto rehearsal pianist and chamber music instructor. This year, I am thrilled to officially join the festival as the director of the Academy for Advanced Piano Teaching and Performance, where I hope to provide its participants with one of many life-altering experiences.

Learn more at www.ConcertoFestEuropa.com

Bratislava and Slovakia at a glance

Present-day Slovakia was part of the Habsburg Dynasty (1526-1804) last ruled by Empress Maria Theresa in Vienna, the Austrian Empire (1804-1867), and the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1867-1918). After World War I, communist Czechoslovakia was formed. Slovakia became an independent state in 1993.

Slovak is the national language.

Slovakia's capital is Bratislava (ca. 500,000), formerly called *Prešporok*, then *Pressburg* until 1919. Also known as *Pozsony*.

Bratislava and Vienna are the two closest capitals in the world (60km).

A museum in Bratislava is dedicated to pianist-composer Johann Nepomuk Hummel, who was born there in 1778.

At "the request of Hungarian nobility," a six-year-old Mozart performed in Bratislava's Pálffy Palace in December 1762.

Franz Liszt, whose grandparents came from the current Slovak-Hungarian border region, visited Bratislava 15 times!

Beethoven composed his Piano Sonata, Op. 7 (1796) in Bratislava (his apartment is marked within Keglevich Palace in the Old Town).

Bratislava's culture strongly influenced Bela Bartok's development as a young man. He once wrote, "*It is Bratislava where I start to really live.*"