



Building Lifelong Pianists

July 2023 Newsletter



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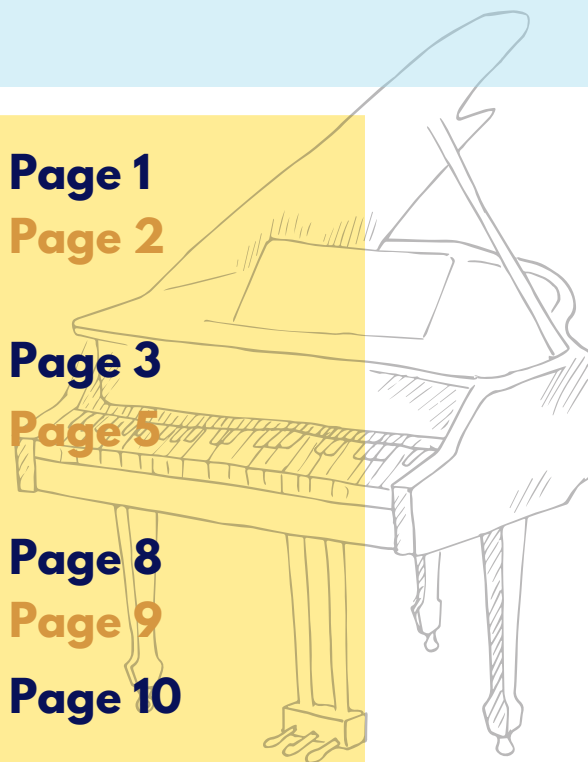
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Student of the Month: Radha K.



Q: What has been your favorite experience at Triad Music Academy?

A: I like getting guidance from Alek and following up with practice at home. I was very excited to finish the first Music Tree book!

Q: What do you like most about playing the piano?

A: I like the beautiful sound while playing chords. It is very comforting and relaxing to me.

Q: Which musicians do you look up to or like to listen to?

A: I like Beethoven. I also like beach music and tropical songs.

Q: Why did you decide to take piano lessons?

A: I wanted to learn a musical instrument. Piano was my first choice and I always enjoyed music. I'm really happy that my dad choose Alek as my teacher!

Q: What other activities do you do besides playing the piano?

A: I do swimming and Indian Classical Dance. I also enjoy cycling with my friends!

The Four Elements of Each TMA Lesson Package

Triad Music Academy offers lesson packages crafted to meet the needs of your student. Here are the four elements of every TMA lesson package:

1. Weekly Lessons

This is the starting point for all piano instruction. TMA students receive 30, 45, or 60-minute lessons based on their needs. Lessons are offered once or twice weekly, also based on student need.

2. Semesterly Recitals & Masterclasses

TMA students enjoy three recitals yearly to hone their performance skills. Recitals are open to all TMA students. We also offer three masterclasses per year with guest instructors, typically from local university piano faculties. Masterclasses are offered to students who show outstanding preparation and provide unique opportunities to learn from those at the pinnacle of the piano field.

3. Exclusive Online Piano Learning Resources

Thanks to our recent switch to [My Music Staff](#), TMA students have access to a growing volume of exclusive resources to supplement their learning. Need some more practice on white key note names? There's a pamphlet for that! Want to play pieces written with specific technical ideas in mind? We have those, too!

4. Unlimited Lesson Support

All TMA students enjoy unlimited lesson support. This means they can text and email directly with Lead Instructor Alek Wasserman with any questions about the piano. Any amount of support you need comes complimentary with your lesson package. Whether you need help with practice techniques, music theory, musical interpretation, or anything else, you've got it!

New Piano Instructor Shannon Lindegren



Shannon Lindegren

**BS in Music, Columbia
International University**

Triad Music Academy is extremely fortunate to welcome another new piano instructor to our staff, Shannon Lindegren!

Shannon is a highly qualified piano educator with over twenty years of experience. I knew TMA needed to have Shannon from the very start of her interview - the first topic she brought up was developing a proper piano hand shape. Shannon's commitment to technique will be integral in the development of our lifelong piano learners.

Shannon also brings some unique experiences to the table that our students will surely benefit from. Prior to the pandemic, she operated her own private piano studio in Lexington, NC, and she's built up quite the career for herself in Davidson County. She has also held Music Director positions at both Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Edward C. Smith Civic Center.

New Piano Instructor Shannon Lindegren, cont.

Shannon will be starting off this summer mainly as a substitute before establishing a regular schedule in the fall. She is currently accepting students to pre-register into her studio, and expects to specialize in daytime lessons for homeschoolers, retirees, and working professionals.

This is what Shannon had to say about jumping back into piano lessons with TMA:

"Hans Christian Anderson once said 'Where words fail, music speaks.' I believe that learning to play the piano is learning a new language; the notes are the music vocabulary, and the piano is the voice. I thoroughly enjoy developing talent within each of my students, teaching them about reading and playing music, and hearing the masterpieces they create as a result of their hard work. My hope is that each student will discover a lifelong love for playing the piano... and that they will learn to 'speak' where words fail."

Clearly, these are words from someone who has spent a lot of time honing her skills as a piano educator! Away from the piano, I have known Shannon since 2018. I taught 3 of her 5 children when I was a public school music teacher, and she and her husband were always among the friendliest faces in the carline!

Finally, I would like to reiterate a point to our audience from last month's newsletter. All new TMA instructors must pass State, Federal, and National Sex Offender Registry background checks in order to be welcomed onto the team. It is my priority to ensure your student's safety and wellbeing as they continue their piano journey with us.

If you are interested in piano lessons with Shannon, please reach out to me via (336) 497-1136 or alek@triadmusicacademy.com and we'll be more than happy to get you on her schedule!

-Alek Wasserman
Founder & Lead Instructor

Duets: The Open Secret of Successful Pianists



**By Alek Wasserman,
Triad Music Academy
Instructor/Founder**

Ask anyone who's been to a Triad Music Academy recital, and they'll tell you we play a lot of duets, more than most other piano studios. There are many reasons why this is, especially when it comes to less experienced pianists.

From a performance perspective, there is one simple reason: I don't want very young students (or new pianists, regardless of age) to feel like they have to go on stage alone. Playing the piano in front of a room full of people can be extremely nerve-racking, so it helps to have your teacher by your side.

From a social perspective, duets are a pianist's best friend. Compared to other instrumentalists, we play a very solo-oriented instrument. We don't always fit neatly into an orchestra or a band, so small ensembles are our best bet. It's even better when your ensemble partner plays the same instrument, so they intimately understand your role in the ensemble.

On that note, at our recital last month, we even had a father-son duet performance! This is a fantastic way to build a family passion for the piano, and I encourage it heavily. There's even a video somewhere out there of me playing my first recital performance with my own mom as my duet partner.



**Father-Son Piano Duet in Recital at
[Piedmont Music Center](#)**

Duets: The Open Secret of Successful Pianists, cont.

I take duet playing so seriously that this September, we're even going to have a masterclass just for middle school-aged students to play duets together. These students will receive coaching sessions with TMA instructors prior to their masterclass with Duke University Associate Professor of the Practice, [Ieva Jokubaviciute](#).

Our middle school students will be able to socialize with their pianist peers (a rarity among in-house piano programs), and they'll get something even more important than everything else out of the experience: control over their playing!

Think about it - how many times have you heard a student play a piece of music with inexact rhythm or a tempo that kept creeping faster and faster? As they love to say in music school, "rhythm is technique." Translation: timing and control are one and the same on the piano.

The harsh reality is that ensemble playing, even between only two pianists, cannot function without control. Duets simply fall apart if one pianist doesn't have a handle on a tricky rhythm, or the other pianist can't maintain a steady tempo.

Some students struggle with duet playing because they can't go back and fix wrong notes, like they could (but still shouldn't) while playing solo. It is by embracing this struggle that they grow tremendously as musicians. Students who can play duets together achieve physical control over the piano, and we should not be afraid of the "tough love" that comes with the journey of rehearsing each duet.

So why did I call this an open secret? It's because every college piano major knows the information presented in this article, but it is so rare that I see other studios emphasizing duet playing like we do.

Duets: The Open Secret of Successful Pianists, cont.

I have been riding the duet train since long before I started TMA. In both college and grad school, I played in piano four-hands ensembles (the fancy name for piano duos). Prior to TMA, I taught at another, multi-studio institution for five years. We had mixed recitals twice a year with students split from among the various piano teachers. I was regularly either the only teacher who played duets with my students, or the teacher with the most frequent student duet performances.

Thus, I have been wondering my whole career why this aspect of piano playing isn't emphasized more. My best answer is that it takes more preparation to play with others than it does to play alone, at least when the music is not memorized.

Forgive the cliché, but at TMA we don't back down from the hard parts of developing lifelong pianists. We embrace the extra work of duet playing, and I've already seen the results with ALL of our students.

I am very fortunate to say that the piano instructors I've brought on at the time of writing are very likeminded when it comes to duet playing. I eagerly anticipate all the ways they will come up with to enhance our mission of building lifelong piano skills with their ensemble playing abilities.

Here's hoping every pianist can find a duet partner!



My Mom Playing the Piano with Me Circa 2001 - Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin

Spring Semester Recital Recap

On June 3rd, twenty-three Triad Music Academy students performed in recital at [Piedmont Music Center](#) in downtown Winston-Salem. All did a splendid job and some students performed as many as two or three pieces. Here are some highlights from the performance. Bravo to all of our wonderful, lifelong pianists!



Performers On Stage Together



Pianist Bowing



Piano Duet in Recital

AMERICAN INGENUITY & CRAFTSMANSHIP
THAT STANDS THE TEST OF TIME.

PRE-OWNED AMERICAN MADE PIANOS
THAT ARE AS GOOD AS THE DAY THEY WERE
BUILT.

SPECIAL PRICING FOR ALL TMA FAMILIES
IN THE MONTH OF JULY



Steinway & Sons ★



Baldwin



Mason & Hamlin



Kohler & Campbell

Upcoming Events!

Triad Music Academy Child Student Summer Recital

Saturday, Aug 26th @ 4:00 PM

[Piedmont Music Center](#)

Recitals open to all Triad Music Academy child students. Email alek@triadmusicacademy.com with any questions!

Triad Music Academy Adult Student Summer Recital

Saturday, Aug 26th @ 5:30 PM

[Piedmont Music Center](#)

Recitals open to all Triad Music Academy adult students. Email alek@triadmusicacademy.com with any questions!

Ieva Jokubaviciute Masterclass

Saturday, Sep 23rd @ 4:30 PM

[Piedmont Music Center](#)

Select Triad Music Academy students will be chosen to perform. Email alek@triadmusicacademy.com if you would like to watch!