

THE ADAMANTER

In This Issue:

- *Interviews with Angela Cheng/Alvin Chow and Dr. Franklin Larey, pp 2-3*
- *New Faces on the Adamant Campus p. 4*
- *Adamant Summer Sessions and Application Information, p. 5*

Message from Our President

Now that spring is here, the Adamant Music School campus is buzzing with activity! Major work is being done on Barney Hall, the main building of Adamant Music School and on Henry House, an 11-bedroom residence. Water damage over many years caused the deterioration of the building foundations. Renovation consists of lifting the structures off their present foundations, pouring new concrete, and waterproofing to prevent future water damage. The result: strong, supportive foundations, dry basements, and mold-free buildings.

With annual flooding every spring, the Conference Center has also seen water damage. A sump pump is being installed, and the basement is being encapsulated to stop further deterioration.

The Community Club, site of classes and concerts, has a brand-new ramp, making it accessible for all. The building will be air-conditioned, as will the dining room in Barney Hall. The kitchen in Barney will have a new 3-bay sink to be code-compliant and will also have two new refrigerators



All our buildings are being brought up to code with the installation of fire alarms. The Fire Marshall has approved the work and has declared all bedrooms safe for sleeping except for two in Barney, whose windows are too small for a safe escape in the event of fire. These rooms will be used for storage.

All the buildings will be thoroughly cleaned, painted as needed, and treated for mold abatement. We look forward to welcoming students back to a safe and beautiful campus.

Alex Last



Angela Cheng and Alvin Chow Piano Masterclass August 18-22

Known around the world for their performances and their teaching, Angela Cheng and Alan Chow, return to Adamant for piano master classes Aug. 18-22. Since 1999, they have been members of the artist faculty at Oberlin Conservatory of Music, where Alvin is currently chair of the Piano Department.

The Adamanter (TA): Please tell us about your time at Indiana University and the influence of your teachers there.

We both spent 7 glorious years at Indiana University studying with the incomparable Menahem Pressler! It is impossible to put into words all that he did for us. He opened our ears, opened our hearts, and opened our imaginations to the wonders that were present in every piece of music we studied and performed. As a teacher, he was indefatigable – unceasing energy and incredible love for both the music and the student he was working with. We remember vividly his vocabulary, his ability to conjure feelings with just the right words, inspiring us to explore the piano for all the colors it could produce. Even more importantly, we recall how we felt after each lesson, floating from the “high” that he engendered from the insights he shared with us week after week. Even though it has been decades since we were his formal students, Mr. Pressler’s impact lives on in our daily lives of practice and teaching.



TA: Your performance careers include solo piano, concertos, chamber music, duo piano and piano with three performers. Which genre presents the most challenge, and which is the most fun?

This is like being asked “Which of your children do you favor more?”! Each performance, no matter the medium, is the most challenging *and* the most fun! (This reminds us of one of Mr. Pressler’s memorable and wise statements, where he said “The best thing is receiving an engagement to perform. The next best thing is the *postponement* of that engagement!”)

The challenge comes from bearing the responsibility of communicating the magic within each piece to an audience hungry for beauty and meaning. It is an obligation that we take very seriously, motivating us to practice, practice and practice! Of course, making music is mostly a solitary endeavor for pianists, so the opportunities to perform with each other (and Alvin’s brother, Alan) are a special pleasure.

TA: What do you love about teaching?

When we were very young, we enjoyed the experience of going to places like Disneyworld – the fascination and joy of all of the attractions and exciting rides. What was even more memorable, however, was taking our daughters to the same places and re-experiencing that same wonder and pleasure through *their* eyes! That is what teaching is like to us. When we share what we know and hear with our students, we delight in seeing them discover that same joy we felt. This in turn reignites our own passion for the music. We often marvel at the wonder that teaching a piece like Beethoven’s *Appassionata* Sonata never tires, because every time we teach it, it is being interpreted through a unique vessel – that student with their own distinct personality. That’s the joy of the art of teaching – it is never static.

TA: What would you say to someone considering an Adamant Masterclass?

We encourage anyone and everyone to experience the distinctive atmosphere of Adamant – whether for the first time or after repeated return visits! The non-competitive spirit is foremost. Everyone who attends, whether as a performer or auditor, should be striving only to be a better version of themselves. We look forward to seeing old friends, and to forming many new friendships this summer!

Dr. Franklin Larey, Traditional Session Teacher, July 16 – August 6, 2002

Dr. Franklin Larey is well-known to the Adamant Music School community, having served as Coordinator of the Traditional Session from 2007-2019. He is currently Director and Professor of the School of Music at Illinois Wesleyan University in Bloomington, IL. Larey previously served as Director of the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town, and as Professor of Piano there until 2019. In 2003, he was awarded a prestigious Fulbright Research Award and spent six months in residence at the University of Cincinnati, where he studied with the renowned artist-teacher, Frank Weinstock.

TA: Beyond your work at Illinois Wesleyan, tell us about your schedule this year.

Franklin Larey: I presented an online lecture entitled "How to Listen to Music" for the Business School at the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa. In March I was keynote speaker at the annual conference of the College Music Society with a lecture titled "Truth, Healing and Hope," where I shared my reflections on race, moral progress, and how we need to work together to fulfill the American promise. In January, I was keynote speaker at Illinois Wesleyan University's Martin Luther King Celebrations, and I continue to serve on the Diversity Committee of the Frances Clark Center for Keyboard Pedagogy.



I served as a judge for Concerto/Aria competitions at Illinois State University and Milliken University, and I was a faculty member at the Illinois Chamber Music Festival, where I performed chamber works by Mozart. I also judged the Seattle Young Artist's Festival in March of this year and will be an adjudicator at the Robert Buchanon Beardsley Prize Piano Competition in Indiana in July. I continue to serve on the Editorial Board of the accredited Journal of the Music Arts in Africa, and I am on the Board of Trustees for both the Illinois Symphony Orchestra and the Pratt Foundation.

TA: Please tell us about your early piano training in South Africa. What led you to pursue study in the United States, and how did that impact your career?

I started playing piano very late - at the age of sixteen. I knew immediately that I wanted to pursue a career in music. I never thought that I would become a concert pianist. My bachelor's degree was in Music and Psychology. After graduating I was appointed at the University of the Western Cape, becoming the youngest faculty member at the university at the time. I was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, where I was awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2003. My studies in the US had a major impact on me, and the trajectory I took. I returned to a post-apartheid South Africa where I could, finally, perform on the main stages of my native land. Through all of this, I am grateful to have Frank Weinstock, Professor of Piano at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, as my mentor.

TA: What do you think makes the Traditional Session unique?

Certainly, it is the individual attention within the environment of a non-competitive and supportive community, along with the fact that Adamant is primarily a school for pianists. I encourage anyone who loves piano music, and who wants to grow as a musician and person to attend the Adamant Music School this summer.

Campus Updates – Exciting New Personnel Developments

After 25 years of exceptional service to the Adamant Music School, Piano Technician **Tom McNeil**, is stepping down. Tom said it wasn't easy to reach this decision, but he felt it was time to enjoy the beautiful Vermont summers with his wife, Liz Fitzgerald and their family. Tom and Liz are owners of Vermont Piano Restoration in Barre, VT where they offer piano tuning and repair services to the local community.



Tom, we will remember you for your supportive presence, kindly manner and for your magic in realizing the depth and beauty of tone that makes the Steinway concert grand the preeminent keyboard instrument in the industry. Thank you!

We are happy to welcome **Cameron Steinmetz** as Piano Technician-in-Residence at the Adamant Music School. A graduate of Green Mountain College and a member of the Piano Technicians Guild, Cameron received his training at the Randy Potter School of Piano Technology. Coupling studies with real-world, hands-on experience as Assistant to Allan H. Day RPT.



Cameron is the owner and proprietor of Steinmetz Pianos. Specializing in tuning, voicing, regulation, cleaning, and general piano maintenance, Cameron will be busy preparing the 40+ instruments in our "piano fleet" before our reopening in June of 2022. Welcome aboard, Cameron!



Everyone comments on the breath-taking beauty of the Adamant campus, especially the wildflowers, and the fact that everything is so beautifully groomed and yet natural all at the same time. Who is responsible for this? It's **Steve Justis**, former Senior Agricultural Development Specialist with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. Since his retirement, Steve has shared his passion for gardening at the Adamant Music School.



Steve enjoys dogs, photography, and reading. In the winter months, he uses his expertise in grant writing for local businesses and organizations. He's a member of East Montpelier's Resilient Roads Committee and the Development Review Board. During the spring, summer and fall, Steve works at Adamant Music School planting, pruning, weeding, brush and hazardous tree removal. Steve and his wife Laurie have lived in nearby East Montpelier for 40 years, where they keep horses, dogs, cats and chickens.

Please mark the date!

The Board of Adamant Music School (Behre Piano Associates) will hold its **Annual Membership Meeting on Sunday, June 5 at 5pm (EDT)**. We hope that those of you who are members will join us for this important meeting, which will be held virtually on Zoom. This meeting will be a significant milestone on our way to reviving the school and its governance. A formal invitation and agenda will be sent out well in advance of the meeting, in accordance with our By-Laws, but please make a note of this meeting in your calendar.



SUMMER 2022 SESSIONS

Matthew Manwarren, Artistic/Executive Director

June 27 - July 1

John O'Connor

Piano

Masterclass

July 6 - 10

Christopher Elton

Piano

Masterclass

July 16 - August 6

3-week

Traditional Session

with

Elaine Greenfield

Franklin Larey

Deirdre O'Donohue

Roberta Rust

Jose Ramos Santana

Victor Rosenbaum,

Artist-in-Residence

August 9 - 13

Jeffrey Cohen

& Lucie Robert

Piano Solo

Piano/Violin Duo

August 18 - 22

Angela Cheng

& Alvin Chow

Piano

Masterclass

visit www.adamant.org for application and tuition information

The Adamant Music School was founded in 1942 in the unincorporated village of Adamant, Vermont and promotes non-competitive piano study in an atmosphere of cooperative living.



We are a wonderful, small, unpretentious, cooperative, supportive school for pianists.

This is all we want to be.

Edwine Behre, Founding Teacher

