

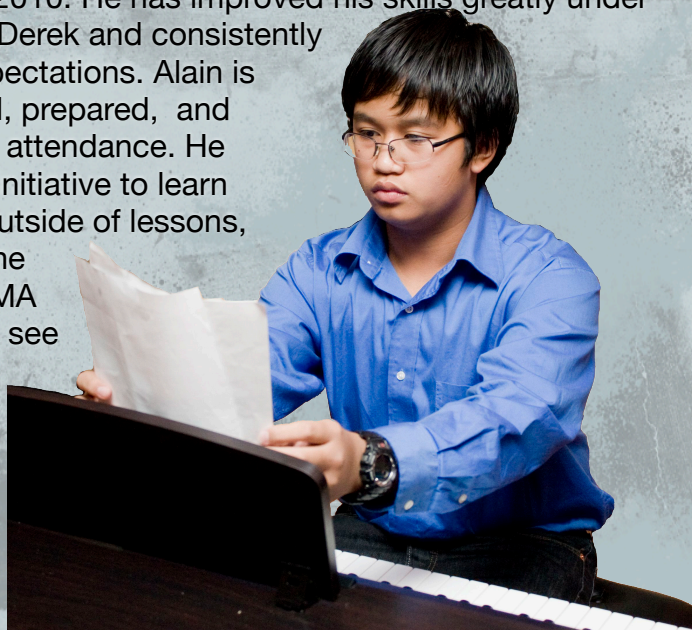
SAMA Monthly

www.samusicacademy.com

STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Congratulations Alain T.!

A student of Derek Adam, Alain has been taking piano lessons at SAMA since 2010. He has improved his skills greatly under the direction of Derek and consistently exceeds his expectations. Alain is always punctual, prepared, and has exceptional attendance. He often takes the initiative to learn several songs outside of lessons, some of which he performs at SAMA events. You can see Alain perform next at the Spring Recital on May 6th.



Symphony Trip



On Saturday, April 21st, SAMA took eight students downtown to the Majestic Theater for the Fiesta POPS show. We thank all who attended and made our 2nd trip to the symphony a success. For those of you who didn't have a chance to come, we hope you can join us on our next trip!



Spring Recital

May 6th: 12pm, 1:30pm, 3pm, 4:30pm

LOL Comedy Club

618 NW Loop 410, Suite 312
San Antonio, TX 78216

Don't Forget

- ☐ Practice
- ☐ Performance Attire
- ☐ Tune Up Instrument
- ☐ Bring Sheet Music
- ☐ Introduce Yourself
- ☐ Introduce Your Piece
- ☐ Take a bow

*Performers: Please arrive 20 minutes before your scheduled recital time.

Reminder

Got Summer Plans?

Please fill out an "Extended Leave Form" if you plan on leaving for the summer. You can pick up a copy from the lobby or request it to be emailed to you.

Congratulations

Hannah P. was awarded the outstanding soloist award for her performance with her middle school choir. Great job!



Happy 71st birthday to Bob Dylan, May 24th!

"May your heart always be joyful. May your song always be sung." -Bob Dylan



Instructor Corner

Performance Practice: *Going Beyond the Notes*

By Diane House

Hello fellow SAMA members! I am curious; how do you view yourselves as musicians? Maybe you perceive yourself as a growing student or an emerging artist. Maybe you view your lessons as a simple, fun, pass-time activity. Whether your goals are to play for the school talent show or one day perform at the MET, there is no escaping it - you are a performer! I think we

forget that performance is a responsibility that we carry as students. So think back. What made you want to take lessons in the first place? Some may wish to gain a stronger technical understanding, whereas others may wish to be on stage. The bottom line is, why make music if it doesn't mean anything more to you than doing what's on the page? When preparing for your next performance, I **challenge** you to go beyond the bare minimum and to dig deeper. Here are some points to help you with this challenge as you take the steps to becoming stronger performers.

Background Research

By researching the composer, you may figure out what motivated his composition. Usually you can find what was actually occurring during the years leading up to a work. This info can be helpful in understanding his point of view and his emotional state while composing your specific piece. Knowing the history may change your perspective of the piece or help you to understand what artistic direction to take. If you are performing a specific character or song from a larger work, you will also want to research the entire show or work. Discover what has happened immediately before the piece and what follows it. Yes, it does take time to do this extra background research. If you put the time in however, you will find that you spend less time trying to find motivation in your performance. After all, the composer did have the idea first!

Dig Deeper

Once you know the composer's intentions, you have to figure out what it means to you as well. Yes, the composer has influence on the emotion of a piece. However, you have to make that influence mean something to you. This can be difficult if you are uncomfortable expressing personal emotions. If you give a part of yourself however, the audience will understand the piece that much more. So ask the big questions: how does this song make you feel and how does it personally affect you? Go beyond, "this is a happy/sad song". Be specific and tell us the "why". If you can do that, the audience will feel it too and will care as much as you do!

Make Time

For those of us that truly love making music, no matter how busy we are, we make time to practice and do extra research! If it's your passion, you have to establish a practice routine and make it a priority just like any other routine, such as school, exercising, or work. If you have a calendar to map out your weekly schedule, pencil in your personal practice time and stick to it like you would an important appointment.

Performance Practice

Don't just practice what's on the page from start to finish. Instead, after learning the pitches and working out technical problems, practice the piece as if you were really performing it. This is a very important step to having a successful performance and must be done ahead of time. Start by performing in front of a mirror. This will allow you to see if your performance and emotions are really coming across. As performers, we want our performance to seem effortless, spontaneous, as if the emotion, words, or music came from you. The only way to create that freedom however, is to practice it until it seems free. That's why the mirror is your friend! Once you are comfortable with what's reflecting back at you, you can practice in front of a comfortable audience, such as family and friends. Even though you will probably still be nervous for the real thing, this will really help settle your nerves. Also, make sure to have your piece completely memorized a few weeks in advance so that your teacher can see your performance as well and help with creative ideas.

Although, this process may seem tedious, try doing some of these steps before your next performance or recital. I am sure you and your instructor will notice an improvement in your understanding of the piece in both style and emotion. Your instructor is also a good person to ask for motivational ideas and help in achieving freedom in your performance.