

ten thousand stars studio

*I'd rather learn from one bird how to sing
than to teach ten thousand stars how not to dance.*

-e.e.cummings

Fall 2011

Hard to believe it is that time again. *Another fall semester.* I could almost weep at the thought. The years go by faster all the time.

But here we are. And since that is the case, it is time to get down to the business of what this fall will actually look like. I have been dragging my heels on this point, I must confess, because I would so much like to stay in the lovely sense of expansive time that summers always give me. I love teaching summer lessons---kids are more relaxed, more eager and open to new things, we usually get an extraordinary amount accomplished, which is very satisfying, and sets us up nicely for the school year and more intense lessons and practicing. I love the freedom of being able to teach at all times of the day, and the extra time I have to tackle reading new music and thinking about new ideas for performance classes and recitals. Summer is just lovely on all accounts.

In spite of my reluctance to leave the lemonade and the hammock (metaphorically), I have spent the last week pounding out the fall plans. It looks to be a good semester: field trips for performance classes, some small groups in November before our fall studio recital, and all kinds of new things I want to try out in lessons. Maybe it won't be so hard to roll into the next semester after all.

Performance Classes

Once again, performance classes will be a bit creative this semester. I like to use these classes as opportunities to expose the students to things we can't otherwise do in regular lessons, whether it be having a guest teacher, visiting a pipe organ, doing group rhythmic activities and games, attending concerts, or performing at retirement centers. This fall is no exception.

The September performance classes (Sept 9th and 16th respectively) will be held at St John's UMC. St John's recently acquired a player piano, which is quite a novelty, so we'll take some time to learn about this instrument as well as doing more regular performance class activities. Please note that for these classes, the Beethoven (4th and 5th grades) and Mozart (1st-3rd grades) will meet together on Sept 9th. The Chopin class (mid-high and high school--now my largest group by far!!) will meet on Sept 16th.

Last November the Chopin class went to the symphony, beginning what I had hoped would become an annual tradition. Alas, Albuquerque has no symphony now. And so, I have planned a different sort of concert/field trip on October 2nd, this one to attend Dr William Westney's piano recital, part of the St John's concert series. Bill is my teacher, a distinguished professor and artist-in-residence at Texas Tech University, and an amazing pianist. The concert is free, and afterwards we will spend 45 minutes there at St Johns doing our own performances and normal class activities.

Finally, in lieu of the third performance class of the semester, (the one that is always MANDATORY in order for students to play in the fall recital), we are going to do small group classes. These will be an hour in length, a mix of ages and levels, and will concentrate on pre-recital performances. I purposely want to look for chances to combine the age groups a bit, because the older kids have so much to offer to the younger ones as way of example and great piano wisdom, and yet, often the kids never really mix except at the recitals. And so, I have set aside four days and times for small groups---you choose your slot. It will be first come, first serve, no more than 8 kids per group, so get to me early and reserve your preferred time and day.

Contact Information

All updated policy information, newsletters, and studio's semester calendar can be found on my website:

www.tenthousandstarsstudio.net

I can be reached at: 505-573-5121 or at: amy@tenthousandstars.net

Make-up Lessons

Students are allowed one make-up lesson per semester free of charge. These will take place on Tuesday, November 22nd and Saturday, December 17th. Depending upon how many make-ups lessons I have, I may chose to do some make-ups in pairs of students of similar age and level. If you know in advance that your child will miss a lesson, you are welcome to ask if I have another opening that same week. If I do, I'm happy to oblige. However, many (*many!*) weeks go by without a cancellation, which means I often do not have random spots available. If this is the case, you will have to take your free make-up lesson for the semester. Any additional lessons missed will NOT be made up.

Piano Tuners

There is nothing more telling than when a student says to me, "My piano doesn't sound anything like this." I cannot emphasize enough: practicing on a tuned piano is important. Every piano holds its tune differently, but plan to tune AT LEAST once a year, ideally after a major change of season.

Jean-Luc Matton: 259 2368

Fred Sturm: 345 2154

Semester Tuitions and Schedules

There are NO rate changes this semester. As before, semester tuitions are set based on 16 private lessons and 3 performance classes. Monthly rates are divided into 5 equal payments, each due at the first lesson of the month. Tuitions received after the 10th of the month are subject to a \$25 late fee.

Lesson schedule:

Semester tuition:

Fall 2011

August 14

Fall Semester Begins

September 4-5

Labor Day Holiday

No Sunday or Monday lessons

September 9: 4:30-6pm

Beethoven and Mozart Performance
Classes (1st-5th grades)*

September 16: 4:30-6pm

Chopin Performance Class*
(Mid-high and High school)

October 2: 2-4:30pm

Chopin Performance Class**

October 14: 4:30-5:45pm

Beethoven Performance Class
(4th-5th grades)

October 15: 9-10am

Mozart Performance Class
(1st-3rd grades)

October 18:

No Tuesday lessons

October 20:

No Thursday lessons

October 23:

No Sunday lessons

November 2:

No Wednesday lessons

Small Groups Option #1***

November 7:

No Monday lessons

Small Groups Option #2***

November 11:

Small Groups Option #3***

November 19: 7pm

Fall Studio Recital

November 22:

No Tuesday Lessons

Make-Up Lesson Day #1

November 23-24:

Thanksgiving Holiday

No Wednesday or Thursday lessons

December 10:

Make Up Lesson Day #2

December 15:

Last day of the semester

December 16-January 7:

Winter Break

No Lessons

*Field Trip to St Johns UMC. See additional info.

**Field Trip to Piano Recital. See additional info.

***Pre-Recital Small Groups. **REQUIRED** in order to play in fall recital.