

# Oregon Musician

Sharing ideas about music and the teaching of music

## Opportunity!

The Editor's Comments



### About the Editor

Diane Baxter, pianist, educator and consultant, is the new editor of *Oregon Musician*. She is currently Professor of Music at Western Oregon University where she has received the *Faculty Honors Award for Outstanding Creativity* and the *Pastega Award for Excellence in Teaching*. Diane teaches studio piano and courses in Ethnomusicology, Performance Anxiety, and Research Methods. Off campus Diane consults and performs far and wide, often giving workshops on doing our best under pressure. "The Science of Artistry: The Fourth String" was published in *Clavier Companion* in Nov/Dec 2013. She lives, writes, plays and thinks in Brownsville, Oregon.

Hello dear readers,

The topic for this edition of *The Oregon Musician* is "Opportunity." I think a lot about opportunities and how they relate to musicians and creativity. We speak in interesting ways about opportunities. We take them and give them, we miss them or take advantage of them. We speak as though we know what they are. In order to engage fully in new opportunities, we must create space. We must give something up. We must create an opening, a threshold, a freedom to move. Sometimes opportunities arise through a closing down or a significant loss. During difficult times, learning to see the way forward may be challenging. We may inadvertently overcommit and struggle to respond to too many choices at once. In those moments, opportunities provide hope for rebirth, for what may come to be, for potential, for bright new sparks.

I think of my beloved mentor, Dr. Bela Nagy. He was an inspiration to many of us who were lucky enough to be his "piano babies." One of his students at the Liszt Academy, where he taught prior to coming to North America, wrote: "When we sat down at the piano, and he sensed talent in someone, he practically swept that person into the music: he whistled, conducted, played the piano, he made us fly. What we received in these classes, we received for a lifetime." It's absolutely true. In my teaching on this very day, and this one, and this one, he continues to inspire me. I have photos of him in my studio, markings in my scores by his hand. Dr. Nagy immigrated to Canada from Hungary in 1948. He didn't speak a word of English, yet he arrived

with his wife and three children. They were sheltered and cared for by the Holy Names nuns, and Dr. Nagy taught at the Toronto Conservatory for five years before eventually bringing his family to America. Each year in her Christmas letter, his beloved Linda Jiorle-Nagy remembers him, always managing to bring tears to my eyes. In December, 2016, Linda wrote: "This year, while mulling over a Bela story to tell, I got to thinking—my husband came to the US as an immigrant, along with his then-family. He brought playing and teaching genius to the United States. He was a world-renowned artist who won both the Liszt and the Bartok prizes from Hungary. His sons are university professors in three different fields. They were a gift to the US—not a burden. They worked very hard, studied, and became leaders in their respective fields. His two daughters do the same thing many years later. They are a credit to their immigrant father." This edition will present two interviews of immigrants who have made our lives better for their presence and gifts among us.

The first interview is with Dr. Alexander Tutunov, one of Oregon's own beloved immigrants. His personal journey is fascinating, filled with crucial points when he said "yes" to what came. As a young man he was obligated to serve in the army for the USSR. He describes a rather harrowing experience: "This service happened during the years when the Soviets were in Afghanistan. The possibility of being sent to Afghanistan was less than desirable as an 'opportunity'. At boot-camp an officer came to the bunch of the new recruits and asked if there were any musicians amongst us. I waited until he walked away, then ran after him to tell him that I was a musician. He needed a trombonist. I said, "Sure, I play trombone." Now THAT was an opportunity! I did, indeed, learn to play the instrument literally overnight, and that instrument may have saved my life! How many trombonists can say that?"

The journey that took Dr. Nagy from his beloved homeland in 1948 is one that Attila and Zsafia Cikos took sixty-seven years later. They arrived in Portland from Hungary in 2015, paralleling many of the facets of Dr. Nagy's life. They are also graduates of the Liszt Academy in Budapest, and they left Hungary due to political circumstances. They are courageous and cheerful in the face of enormous challenges for their family. Zsafia says: "The 2007–2008 economic crisis hit Hungary really hard. In 2010 political changes started to happen which we did not favor. We identified the first signs of dictatorship and nationalism driven by hatred early on. Slogans that the fascists and communists had used in the previous fifty years were reappearing. We decided to move to another country where democracy has deeper roots and where we can raise our children in freedom." When you read their story, put yourself in their shoes and imagine the strength it takes to literally begin anew.

Jill Timmons leads us through the world of grant writing and funding in Oregon. How often does someone offer to fund your dreams? That's really what she provides here. She outlines practical and deliberate ways to find resources. Her generosity in the

information shared here can provide endless opportunities for you. Her enthusiasm and optimism are born from the many success stories for clients whom she has guided. "Grant writing is something you can learn to do! It's not a special talent and if you have ever written a senior thesis or even the ubiquitous term paper, you already have the basic writing skills needed. What may be new to many musicians, however, is the style of persuasive writing that is required. You can easily master this skill along with how to prepare a budget, build a consortium of support, and search out the most promising sources for funding. In this short article I will give you the basics required to be a successful grant writer. I'll touch on the "Four P's:" Purpose, Project, Process, and Preparation! From there, you can do your own research or even enroll in a weekend grant-writing workshop! Roll up your sleeves. You can do it!"

Susan Kline's article is a continuation from the last edition. She is always wise, careful and articulate in her work. In the midst of speaking about inspiration, it is easy to see opportunity. Susan says, "in some odd moment, maybe when bone tired, maybe just sitting waiting for something—there it is! That flash of unexpected beauty, that window into a whole new idea, the warmth of something one hadn't recognized, but which had been there all along."

Enjoy these voices among us. As always, I welcome your comments and your insights, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Diane Baxter, Editor  
*The Oregon Musician*

[baxterd@wou.edu](mailto:baxterd@wou.edu)



# Music and Inspiration

## Table of Contents

Editor's Comments by Diane Baxter	page 1
How Trombone Saved My Life an interview with Alexander Tutunov by Diane Baxter	page 5
From A to Z: A Musical Conversation an interview with Attila Csikos and Zsofia Csikos Tardy by Diane Baxter	page 10
Demystifying Grant Writing: Find Funding for Your Music Projects? by Dr. Jill Timmons, NCTM	page 17
Music as Inspiration—Part II by Susan Kline	page 22
<i>Baxter's Bookshelf</i>	page 28
<i>The Poet Speaks</i> The Beginning of February by Donna Henderson	page 30

# How Trombone Saved My Life

by Diane Baxter



## About Alexander Tutunov

Alexander Tutunov is widely recognized as one of the most outstanding virtuosos of the former Soviet Union. Dr. Tutunov maintains a busy performing schedule in Europe, China, Mexico, and the United States as a recitalist and a soloist with orchestra. He is often featured on radio and television. Dr. Tutunov lives in Ashland, Oregon, where he is Professor of Piano and Artist in Residence at Southern Oregon University. A successful piano pedagogue, he continues to prepare award-winning students for careers in music. In addition, Dr. Tutunov is currently Artistic director of the SOU International Piano Institute and Artist in Residence at the University of Alaska Southeast. He has served as Director of the Chinese-American International Piano Institute in Chengdu, China, and a voting member for the Grammy Awards. His recording of the Abeliovich Piano Concerto was featured as part of the Emmy Award-winning soundtrack for The History Channel documentary *Russia: Land of the Tsars*.

*Recently I had a wonderful exchange with Dr. Alexander Tutunov, an extraordinary man and musician. I mentioned to him that the focus for this issue of the journal is around "opportunity."*

### **Please describe your education and upbringing in the Soviet Union.**

Musical training is incredibly different, and better, over there. When I was a child, the system allowed anyone, regardless of their geographic or economic position, to rise to the top. I was "discovered" at the age of three or four, and started receiving music lessons in my hometown, about 500 miles away from Moscow. At the age of six I was given an opportunity to enter a boarding school at the Moscow Conservatory, with all expenses paid. There were probably two hundred applicants and only three were selected, with six more

# How Trombone Saved My Life

chosen as alternates. Every spring we had to defend our spots at the school, as no one was irreplaceable. One may say I sacrificed my childhood for this training—but I never got tired. It simply WAS my childhood. Those were my formative years, during which time I had many opportunities to hear and to see the best music performed live before me. I met Shostakovich, Kabalevsky, Richter, Pletnev, and lots and lots of other great, iconic figures.

When the Soviet Union fell, no one knew what was coming. I decided to move to Minsk, Belarus, which was by then a separate country. I wanted to further my schooling in the capital city, which turned out to be a very good thing for me. Many opportunities came from being a “bigger fish in a smaller pond.” I had more chances to perform and to be considered for better positions. While it didn’t occur to me at the time, in retrospect I realized that Minsk was a more nurturing environment than I’d had found in Moscow, where the competition had been much more intense. My teachers in Minsk at the Belarusian Academy of Music were the former assistants of Yakov Flier and Pavel Serebryakov, some of the best representatives of both Moscow AND Leningrad schools. This was another opportunity!

Later in my life in the United States, I was once again presented with the opportunity to compare and to absorb the best piano playing pedagogy from Russian, Western European, and American traditions. To this day in my travels, I never tire of the inherent wealth and great benefits offered by these different traditions. I am still learning from this opportunity. Interestingly enough, there was a recent study that analyzed the “pedigree” of the current winners of major piano competitions around the world. Guess what? Ninety percent of the winners were the products of several pedagogical traditions—a necessity for a contemporary pianist, I think!

## **You learned to play the trombone overnight to avoid certain military assignments. Can you talk about that?**

Every young man in the USSR had to serve in the Army for two years or in the Navy for three years. While I have never felt that the military service was an “opportunity” for me, it was a fact of life. The Soviet state invested a lot of resources into my education and in making me a good musician, then they put me in the army, where I was not to see a piano for two years. Go figure! This service happened during the years when the Soviets were in Afghanistan. The possibility of being sent to Afghanistan was less than desirable as an “opportunity.” At boot-camp an officer came to the bunch of the new recruits and asked if there were any musicians amongst us. I waited until he walked away, then ran after him to tell him that I was a musician. He needed a trombonist. I said, “Sure, I play trombone.” Now THAT was an opportunity! I did, indeed, learn to play the instrument literally overnight, and that instrument may have saved my life! How many trombonists can say that?

# How Trombone Saved My Life

## **How did you end up in Texas to work with Joseph Banowetz?**

After the military service, I took a couple of years to begin playing piano again. My trombone days were over. One of George Soros' projects was to send a cruise ship down the Volga River with an orchestra on board. The plan was to perform all the Rachmaninoff piano concerti in major cities along the way. Mr. Banowetz was one of the performers, I was the other. We had a great time. I just loved his playing, it reminded me of the "old school," like Horowitz, Van Cliburn, Lhevinne, Hofmann, and Moiseiwitsch. After the cruise, Mr. Banowetz asked me to come to the United States to be his assistant at the University of North Texas. At that time we communicated mostly in German. I politely nodded, but I didn't think much would come of it. Sure enough, the papers arrived in my mailbox about three months later. Yikes! I jumped on studying English, but it took me about six months to gather even the minimal funds and a minimal vocabulary! I am forever grateful to him, that great human being, stellar musician and fabulous teacher, Mr. Banowetz. He has invited me to call him Joe on several occasions, but I still find it impossible!

## **Your doctoral degree is from Belarus. How did you end up back in Belarus?**

I realized after taking a year of doctoral coursework at UNT that a DMA in the US involved much more than just playing a few recitals. My English was still very weak, so I decided to take my research from UNT back to Belarus. UNT had provided an incredible opportunity in terms of the wealth of resources and materials to draw on. I had completed coursework for the DMA prior to leaving Texas, so I translated my research to Russian and had my degree done in nine months. Then I translated my dissertation back to English and got my MM with the same materials at UNT. Seize the day, right?

## **What kind of formal pedagogical training did you receive?**

I proudly sport FIVE degrees, four from Russian training and one from American training. The thirteen years in Moscow brought me the equivalent of a BM degree in solo piano performance, even though it was not formalized as such. The following few years brought me two Bachelor's degrees, with a lot of transferred coursework: the first was in Piano Performance and Pedagogy, and the second was in Music Theory. I have two Masters degrees, one from the Belarusian Academy of Music in Performance, Chamber Music, Collaborative piano AND Pedagogy. That one alone took five years to complete, a standard norm in Russia. Since two of those years were wasted in the army, I combined years two and three into one! Inspired by that experience, I also combined the fourth and fifth years, so it took a total of five years. The second master's degree, an MM from UNT, was in Piano Performance and Accompanying. The DMA was in Teaching and Piano Performing, with a minor in the Psychology of Higher Education. We had students in our practicum,



# How Trombone Saved My Life

and on many occasions I taught most of my professors' students. Still, I think the REAL pedagogical training started right in the field when I became a university professor. I am super-grateful to have this opportunity, to this day and beyond. Humbling and rewarding it is to be a teacher. I love it more and more every day.

## **Was it a difficult decision to leave your homeland?**

Once I heard an expression: temporary things are the ones that tend to become most permanent. I never thought I'd stay here for good. An opportunity to serve on the faculty at Illinois Wesleyan University came out of the blue, so I accepted, thinking I'd do it for a year. During that one year, I brought my mom and my only brother to Chicago. We spent our Christmas holidays in the windy city—hardly what most might consider an opportunity—but everyone loved it. We traveled a bit, saw Saint Louis and more areas of Midwest. Then I took my brother to New York City and Connecticut as I had a gig playing there. Mom house-sat back in Illinois. She liked America and the lifestyle a lot, but she'd never consider moving here. Her garden back home needed her TLC. She gave me her blessing but said she'd never understand why anyone would need a choice of fifteen different toothbrushes at every Walgreens (!). We weren't spoiled by too many options back home, not in toothbrushes, not in anything, really. I thought it was liberating not having to make so many decisions on a daily basis.

## **What do you count among the most significant turning points in your career?**

The move to Moscow at age six, the move to Minsk, then the move to Texas—those were all major turning points. Stepping in for Van Cliburn in February of 1997, on a ten-day notice was significant! I had to learn the Tchaikovsky First Piano concerto during those ten days . . . BUT it was the opportunity! How could I turn it down? I got a phone call and was asked, "Surely you play Tchaik One?" "Of course," I replied. "Then, it would be no problem for you to brush it up, right?" "Sure," I replied. The rest is history. When I walked on stage at the Oklahoma City Civic Center, even the musicians of the orchestra looked disappointed (in my frightened mind). I imagined how many of the great Cliburn's fans were returning their tickets and demanding a refund right then . . . Ironically, it helped me to settle my nerves a great deal. I guess it provided an opportunity for me to learn another technique to conquer my stage fright!

## **Are there any individuals, such as teachers or patrons, who have been significantly supportive of you over the years?**

Most certainly, yes! My first teacher, back in my hometown (rumored to be Marc Chagall's muse back in the day, for a while anyway), was the one who recognized that I may have had an opportunity and insisted I was taken to Moscow for the tryouts. She was



# How Trombone Saved My Life

an unselfish, beautiful person! We stayed in touch for many years thereafter, until her passing in the 90s. My first teacher of six years in Moscow was a former roommate with Horowitz in Ukraine back in the 1920s! She had incredible stories, wisdom, and expertise, but, most of all, a nurturing nature. I remember “hanging out” for 4–5 hours, camping under a piano in her house or her office—all of us did that. I remember playing a Bach invention with five more kids on two pianos in different octaves. I was not to race but to see if we could hear each other. There are too many others to mention but I am thankful to every single one of them. Many conversations with Raymond Foote, a great human being from Carson City, revealed that he was student of and subsequently a friend of Rachmaninoff’s. His fabulous stories told about hanging out with Eleanor Roosevelt, or partying with a bunch of Russians (Rachmaninoff’s family and friends). Eventually he donated his Imperial Bösendorfer to my school, Southern Oregon University. Even more recently, a retired engineer, Jim Havstad, became fascinated with piano after his retirement. We shared several meals together, took walks, talked, attended recitals together, then suddenly, he just reached out for a checkbook and asked, “How much for a new Steinway D?” He then wrote the check on the spot and said “Go to the factory in Astoria and pick a good one.” A handful of music lovers in the Rogue Valley who helped me establish the “Tutunov Piano Series,” now in its fifth season and going strong. My colleagues at the UO, Claire Wachter and Dean Kramer, invited me to contribute to their website, <http://www.virtualpianopedagogue.com>. So I did that, and a couple of weeks ago, six videos on the “Secrets of Russian Piano Playing” came out, both on Youtube and on the above site. Opportunity!

## **Do you find your role as mentor to your students to be an opportunity for personal growth as well?**

Being a role model to the students is of the most crucial importance. If you talk the talk but don’t walk the walk, it’s a problem. That fact motivates me to stay in a decent shape as a player. Being required to express musical concepts and ideas in words helps me improve as a person, as a musician, and as a teacher.



# From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

by Diane Baxter



## About Attila and Zsolia

Attila Csikos and Zsolia Csikos Tardy moved to Portland from Budapest, Hungary in 2015. This husband and wife team have been musical colleagues for nearly 25 years. Both graduated from the prestigious Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest. Zsolia has a Master's Degree in Music Education and Choir Conducting. Attila has a double Bachelor's degree in Jazz Guitar Performance and Guitar Teaching. Before immigrating to the United States, they performed with their jazz quartet throughout Hungary and Europe. Ten years ago they formed a jazz duo, "2-in-1." After arriving in the US, Zsolia was a temporary professor in the Music Department at Western Oregon University. Attila is currently finishing his Master of Music in Contemporary Music at WOU, where he is a Graduate Assistant. Attila and Zsolia live in SW Portland with their three "almost grown" children.

## Please describe your education and upbringing in Hungary.

**Attila:** In my family, there were no musicians, but my family felt that it was very important to study and to read, read and read! I became drawn toward music when I was about eight years old, but I was thirteen before I could start my formal guitar education. I even-

## From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

tually earned my Bachelor's degree from the world renowned Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest, Hungary. My dual degree is in Jazz Guitar Performance and Guitar Teaching.

**Zsafia:** I come from a family of musicians. My father is a conductor and church cantor. My mother is a retired soprano soloist and choir director, and a college professor who taught the Kodaly method. I started to play the cello at age five, and at age ten began to play the piano as well. I learned both for the next five years, but then I stopped the cello and continued the piano. At seventeen, I began formal voice training. I earned my dual Master's Degree in Music and Music Education as Choir Conductor and Music Teacher with an emphasis on the Kodaly-method. My parents studied at the Liszt Academy as well, and they each have the same degree that I have. Some of their former teachers or classmates were my professors when I studied there.

### **What was your personal situation in Hungary before you came to the US?**

**Attila:** Both of us were freelance musicians. My musical career involved many varied aspects. I worked as a session musician, a bandleader, a musical theater guitarist, a composer, an arranger, a music producer. I taught guitar lessons from our private home studio. I was a guitar teacher in the Hungarian public music school system for seventeen years, where I taught kids from ages 6 to 18. I was an Assistant Professor on the Gospel Faculty of the Baptist Theological Academy in Budapest. I still continue my work with this academy via Skype, and I fly back to Hungary at the end of each school year to make exams for my students. For ten years, I was one of the regular guitarists in Budapest's largest musical theater, the "Madach Theater," performing such musicals as *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Mamma Mia!*, and *Webber Birthday Gala*, just to mention the larger productions. Rather than increasing in terms of financial pay, over those ten years pay gradually declined due to a reduction in funding from the state. As a music producer and arranger, I produced several CDs. I was founder and bandleader of the "Whiteful Jazz Quartet," a band that played original compositions in contemporary jazz style around Hungary and Europe. The meaning of "Whiteful" is a play on similar sounding words in Hungarian and means someone whose ears are refined for "higher" music. For five years I was also a bandleader and guitarist in Hungary's largest gospel choir, the "Golgotha" Gospel Choir.

**Zsafia:** We were raising three young children so it was convenient that I could teach voice lessons at home. I was there for my kids all the time. They did not have to spend their afternoon at school, they could come home early. I feel truly blessed that we could live this kind of lifestyle because it was really good for our children. I had a very large voice studio because I was a very sought-after voice teacher in Budapest. Sometimes we would have 3–4 gigs per week with our jazz quartet, so I would ask one of my students to babysit the kids. As compensation, the student would receive a free lesson!

# From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

As a singer, I was active both in jazz and classical music. I was a member and lyricist for the “Whiteful Jazz Quartet” with Attila, and I was a soprano soloist in my father’s orchestras and other smaller classical musical groups. I contributed to several contemporary gospel CDs as a soloist, a background vocalist and a vocal coach. I was a section leader and soloist in the “Golgotha” Gospel Choir for ten years.

In the summer months, Attila was paid through the public school which provided an excellent opportunity to spend a lot of time together with our kids.

## **Why did you decide to come to America? Was Portland your first destination?**

**Zsafia:** The 2007–2008 economic crisis hit Hungary really hard. In 2010 political changes started to happen which we did not favor. We identified the first signs of dictatorship and nationalism driven by hatred early on. Slogans that the fascists and communists had used in the previous fifty years were reappearing. We decided to move to another country where democracy has deeper roots and where we can raise our children in freedom. We wanted a country where the values we hold as important are shared by the majority of the society: civil rights, freedom of speech, and freedom of education - which means that the government does not tell the teacher what specific books they must use and what they must teach in the classroom. Though we never were rich, the primary purpose of our desire to move was not financial; rather, it was ideological. Nevertheless, we cannot deny that after 2007 our possibilities as musicians were gradually decreasing and making a living for our family was becoming harder. We considered different parts of the world as future homes, like New Zealand (too far), Australia (too far, too!), the USA (almost impossible to get in legally) and Canada. From that list, Canada seemed to be the most likely place to move, as they have a well-developed immigration program. I studied the requirements a lot and in 2012 even flew to Toronto for ten weeks to find employment and hopefully obtain a work visa. But we also decided to enter the Green Card Lottery, a Diversity Visa Program in the United States. While I was in Canada, we were selected as winners! A door opened with this new opportunity, so we chose the USA. Luckily both of us have uncles who have been living in America for decades and we have several cousins with families. This is how we arrived in Portland in August, 2015.

**Attila adds:** My cousin has been living in this area for more than ten years. He was born in the US, so he is an American citizen. He provided shelter for us until our private music studio grew big enough to rent our own place. We lived with him for nine months, where our three kids shared a small room without any complaint.

## **How has the move opened opportunities for you?**

**Zsafia:** Before we moved here, I had sent a lot of emails to music schools, colleges and universities with our resumes. We had hoped that we could continue our professions

## From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

here. We received some kind answers without any actual job offers. But after arriving in Portland, Tom Bergeron called and offered me a temporary position for the fall term as an Adjunct Professor at Western Oregon University in Monmouth. My jaw dropped. Me, a professor at an American university? A few weeks later I started to teach Aural Skills for Sophomores and Juniors and conducted the Concert Choir. At the same time, I began to advertise for voice students in local newspapers and in shops in SW Portland. Soon my private voice studio began to grow. I went out to jam sessions to make connections with local jazz musicians. Today we know most of the finest jazz musicians in Portland, and sometimes we have been fortunate enough to perform with them.

**Attila:** I like to end commitments in a trustworthy manner, so after arriving in Portland I flew back to Hungary for three months to fulfill my various musical duties. When I returned to Portland, I realized that it is hard to earn any teaching position in higher education without a Master's degree. I was so fortunate that Western Oregon University offered me a graduate assistantship. I am very proud of this opportunity and I am happy that I can earn an American diploma in addition to my European one. I love to learn and study!

### Was it a difficult decision to leave your homeland?

**Attila:** Yes, it was a very hard and painful decision. I loved my life in Hungary as a musician and as a teacher, and I loved my duties, although they were not especially well-paying jobs. Somehow, though, when I realized that the decision to leave Hungary was about my kids' future, I was able to give up everything. Literally everything. The thought that I would restart my life in a foreign country with three children to take care of was terribly frightening. I am not a "Columbus-type" adventurer by nature, so I have not stopped wondering how I managed to step out of my comfort zone and arrive in America with two guitars, five pieces of baggage, and my family. Being admitted to WOU provided me with a tremendous opportunity to redirect my focus from my grief to other goals, to my studies. I might not be an adventurous person, but I am a perfectionist with myself and I want to give my best to WOU! There is no more time for sorrow. I am finishing the degree after nearly two years, and I think moving here was the right decision. We were given the chance and we had to seize the opportunity.

**Zsafia:** For me, it was easier. After we had decided to move, I focused on the future. Although I did mourn leaving beautiful Budapest, my favorite city, I knew that we must go. I cried once in a while but not too often. Mostly I was angry with the government because it chased us away, making it impossible to stay. We could not continue our life as we had planned. We couldn't stay if we wanted to provide better opportunities for our children and ourselves. So, in the last year before our move, the thought that I would be able to escape from Hungary, kept my soul alive. I believed that if I couldn't move and everything stayed the same, I was going to lose my mind. I don't feel homesick here. At Christmas time, I missed my parents and my brothers, but that was all. I don't miss what is going on there. The political atmosphere was (and still is) so terrible that I don't miss it for a second.

# From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

## How have your “nearly grown” children adjusted to living in America?

### **Mirtill:**

“I did not want to move, and when we did, I did not want to stay. At the beginning it was really hard because I did not know anyone, I did not know the place, English is not my first language, and I missed all my friends. But over time it got easier. I met people who became my friends, my best friends; I found a job I love and a school I like to attend. Now I would not want to go back for anything.”

### **Fulop:**

“Before we got to Portland I was really excited about everything. However, when I started going to school here, I was super nervous because of all the new faces and the new environment. But the people are so friendly and inclusive that they really allowed me to thrive both in my studies and in my social life. Since our move, I am way more comfortable with meeting new people and trying out new experiences. I love it here.”

### **Marcell:**

“I really wanted to move, but I was terrified and excited about the change. It was an incredibly sad moment when I stepped on the plane and left my beloved grandparents there. But after living in the US for a few weeks, I didn’t understand what I was afraid of before; the people are nice and helpful, the city of Portland is gorgeous.

## What do you count among the most significant turning points in your careers?

**Zsofia:** The most significant thing for me is that we moved here and we are at the starting point again. We are building everything from the beginning. Sometimes I wonder what might have happened if we had been born here or had moved here decades earlier. This occurs to me especially when I look at the jazz musicians who have known each other since their childhood. We don’t have the advantage of having known these great people for a long time. To establish ourselves, we have to prove that we are excellent musicians, that it is worth it to hire us for gigs. I know Attila misses the musical theater a lot. I wish he could find a company where he could play the guitar in shows similar to those in Budapest. He was doing an exquisite job there, the conductors and fellow musicians loved to work with him. He deserves to find something similar here.

The opportunity to work at WOU, if only for one term, opened a world where I could envision myself for a longer time. I haven’t previously considered pursuing my studies but now I am going to investigate where I might earn a doctorate. Teaching at WOU made me think about this.

**Attila:** As a jazz musician, it is amazing that we can play jazz with American musicians. It is something a lot of musicians dream of in Europe. At The Liszt Academy of Music, I learned a different approach. Now I can learn the American way. This is something very significant in my career.



## From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

**Are there any individuals, such as teachers or patrons, who have been significantly supportive of you over the years?**

**Attila:** Unfortunately, in Hungary we had almost none. It is a small country, therefore the competition is great, and the mentality is very different. I have received much more support here than ever in my life. My professors at WOU, Christopher Woitach, Tom Bergeron, Diane Baxter, Dirk Freymuth, Cindy Dickens and Charles Mueller, have all supported me. The guitar professor at PSU, Jeff Putterman, has become our friend. He even helped us to equip our house! Jazz singer David Watson and singer-pianist Laura Cunard promoted us as musicians, and we already had several gigs with them. Ron Steen was very welcoming at his jam sessions. Mike Soto, owner of Pizzario in Hillsboro, was the first to feature us in his club. A Polish friend of my cousin gave us furnishings for our house before he moved back to Poland with his family. Our neighbors are very supportive; they invite us to their house, and they introduce us to their friends so that we can connect with more people here. They even come to our gigs! We have some very helpful students who have employed us to perform at their private parties, and they keep advertising us as good music teachers.

**Zsafia:** I know that our parents always supported us and believed in us. My father tried to find ways to help us as musicians. My parents knew the Hungarian music scene well, and they knew how hard it is to get along there where everything is deeply connected with politics.

**What are some of the most meaningful performances you have been part of?**

**Attila:** I played for Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's 60th birthday in Budapest, where he was the special guest. It was rewarding and meaningful to play in the biggest and most famous musical theater in Budapest. All of the musicians are the best on their instruments. With our jazz quartet, we gave a concert at the jazz festival in Cserfo, Hungary in 2006. New York jazz clarinetist, Don Byron, played after us. Another unforgettable experience was getting acquainted with the L.A. saxophonist, Kim Hutchcroft, who came to our club concert and joined us for a set. The CDs that I have contributed to as a guitarist, arranger or producer are important to me as well.

**Zsafia:** One of my most meaningful performances was when my father called me just two days before a concert when his soloist cancelled due to illness. The music was a "first performance" and he told me that I was the only one whom he thought could learn the solo in two days. He provided me with the score on Friday, we rehearsed with his symphonic orchestra and choir on Saturday, and we performed the work on Sunday! Another performance that has stayed with me was with the "Golgotha" Gospel Choir when I sang the famous gospel song "Sweet, Little Jesus Boy." It was crucial for me that I sing it in my mother tongue, so I translated the song from English to Hungarian, then I had to



## From A to Z: A Musical Conversation

convince the leadership of the choir that this song could work not only in Hungarian but without accompaniment. It was an elevating moment when I stood in front of thousands on my own, grabbing their hearts with my voice. At least this is what they told me after the concert . . .

### **How are the musical opportunities here different than those in Budapest?**

**Zsolt:** Here there are more jazz clubs and more people love jazz music! In cafes, shops, restaurants, and malls, the background music is almost always jazz. Besides, Portland is open to new music, and this is good, because we play jazz standards and more contemporary original compositions. I see a great future for us in the Portland music scene.

**Attila:** Our opportunities gradually were narrowed in Hungary. A lot of jazz clubs closed and most of the restaurants decided to cut live music. There were fewer and fewer large productions at the musical theater. Art cannot survive without governmental subsidies, so the art scene is deeply impregnated with politics and corruption. I have received so much help and acceptance here in the US, that I hope later on I can give that back to others.



# Demystifying Grant Writing: Find Funding for Your Music Projects

by Dr. Jill Timmons, NCTM



## About the Author

Jill Timmons performs internationally as a solo and ensemble artist and has recorded on the Laurel, Centaur, and Capstone labels. With some thirty years in higher education, she continues to prepare pianists for competitive auditions and successful performances. Her best-selling career guidebook, *The Musician's Journey: Crafting Your Career Vision and Plan*, is published by Oxford University Press. Timmons is the artist/teacher affiliate with Classic Pianos at their flagship Portland store and in their satellite locations in Seattle, Denver, Cleveland, Anchorage, Las Vegas, and Albuquerque.

Grant writing is something you can learn to do! It's not a special talent and if you have ever written a senior thesis or even the ubiquitous term paper, you already have the basic writing skills needed. What may be new to many musicians, however, is the style of persuasive writing that is required. You can easily master this skill along with how to prepare a budget, build a consortium of support, and search out the most promising sources for funding. In this short article I will give you the basics required to be a successful grant writer. I'll touch on the "Four P's:" Purpose, Project, Process, and Preparation! From there, you can do your own research or even enroll in a weekend grant-writing workshop! Roll up your sleeves. You can do it!

For most musicians, the idea of asking for money for their professional projects or for ongoing support can be at times daunting given the fact that there is the possibility of rejection. For some artists, it might seem overly time consuming. After all, most of us guard carefully our practice time. For those who are in the teaching trenches, there is often little discretionary time. And without clear outcomes or guarantees, grant writing can sometimes feel like we are rolling the proverbial stone up the hill. Nevertheless, we can develop our skills and proclivity for successful grant writing, and we *can* find ample resources to fund projects that nurture and enrich our communities. It can even be fun!

There is money out there for the arts and in fact billions of dollars in the non-profit and government

# Demystifying Grant Writing: Find Funding for Your Music Projects

sectors. In addition to the IRS requirement that private foundations spend at least five percent of their investment assets each year, the government provides foundation tax returns as a matter of public record. Also, you can find a vast repository of information on the Foundation Center's website, a leading source for philanthropy, grant sources, and foundation financials ([www.foundationcenter.org](http://www.foundationcenter.org)). Think of this search process as your "Money Safari." You are hunting for the right funder for your project. Becoming a skilled grant writer can amount to literally money in the bank. A number of things, however, have to be in place if you are going to succeed in landing the support needed for your projects.

There are several general principles that govern all successful grant proposals. Before you begin developing your project and funding search as an individual, you will need an "Artist's Statement." For arts organizations seeking grant funding, usually under the non-profit status, this is the "Mission Statement." Each of these narratives is usually around one to two hundred words and gives the reader a sense of who you are, your artistic vision, whom you help, and what you bring to your community that is distinctive—it's your *purpose*. Be prepared to persuade your reader as to why anyone should care about you or your work—individual or non-profit alike.

In addition to the artist or mission statement, you will need a one-page "Project Title and Abstract." This narrative succinctly describes your *project*, the need it addresses, the project's importance and sustainability, and why you are qualified to manage it to successful fruition. Your writing style is persuasive, passionate without hyperbole, richly descriptive, and succinct. Think of Hemingway versus Proust . . . . In one page, your potential funder has a richly nuanced understanding of your proposal. These abstracts take time and usually require numerous drafts. Every word counts and there is no wandering into the weeds. A great proposal abstract prompts the reader to dive into the project budget, along with any ancillary application materials that are required by the funder.

Altruism is a central theme in all successful grant writing. Funders want their money to go to worthwhile, community-enriching, need-based, sustainable projects. In the long run, all grant writers need to answer these questions: Why should they (the funders) care enough about your project to give you (and not someone else) money? What is the difference you are making with your project? What need are you addressing in your community? Why are you the one to do it? How many people does your project serve? What are the lasting effects of your project long after it has concluded? What assessment tools will you use to measure outcomes? How is your project sustainable? If you can answer these questions through an evidence-based narrative that provides a compelling and descriptive imperative for your project, then you are well on your way to writing a successful proposal.

Like music, grant writing is collaborative. This is your process in bringing your proposal from a great idea to one that is funded. One of the joys in our industry is making music with others, sharing it with eager audiences, educating young people in this temporal art form, and serving as a conduit to future generations. It stands to reason that

# Demystifying Grant Writing: Find Funding for Your Music Projects

most musicians are already experienced and skilled in bringing people together in complex and collaborative ventures. Just think of what goes into staging a large-scale opera!

With grant writing, the collaborative process begins by building a consortium of support before submitting a proposal. Yes, it means that you have to have some sort of concrete support in place before you ask for money. This notion, however, usually stops most newcomers to grant writing. But “support” is lurking everywhere, especially if you understand that your project is not about what *you* want but instead articulates the *needs* of your community. Your project should clearly serve those needs and connect *likely* funders to initiatives with which they are excited to collaborate. It’s not about you, but without you as the grant writer, there will be no funded project.

That consortium of support that is ever present can come in a myriad of ways. There are in-kind services (for example: free printing, donated office space, etc.), individual donors, underwriters for a specific item (providing a concert grand piano for a performance), volunteers who work on your project (their time is worth money), and even partners in fundraising events (sharing the proceeds with, for instance, a local non-profit). And don’t overlook the old-fashioned bake sale/raffle/car wash/silent auction/crowd sourcing, ad infinitum. Any efforts on your part to raise money on your own show a potential funder that you care and that you are willing to do the heavy lifting. Moreover, most projects are funded by streams of support. No funder will ever provide you with 100 percent of the money you need for a project, with the possible exception of a family member, and that may come with other expectations!

With your consortium and collaborative partners secured, next comes your *preparation*. In addition to a flawless proposal narrative, you will need to have in place a detailed budget. Who is your fiscal agent (the entity that receives grant funding)? Are you applying as an individual or as a non-profit? These decisions sculpt the choices you will make in where you apply for funding. A superb budget provides concrete evidence of what you have already put in place through your consortium of support. Your budget is realistic, sensible, and defensible. Foundations will be scrutinizing every detail of your budget to make sure that their award goes to the right place. Through a well-articulated budget, you provide tangible evidence that there are already, through your funding consortium, professionals financially supporting your project. Money attracts money. In a way, your project becomes vetted by the support of other financial entities. Proof of the support you have already landed, plus a realistic detailed budget is your gateway into creating a winning grant proposal.

Whatever your project may entail, remember that it is an act of collaboration not only with your consortium partners but with your funders as well. All funders need visionaries to fulfill their philanthropic mission. Through that mission they seek to enrich their communities, and in the larger scale, the nation. You are joining with others to bring a project to fruition, one that serves the needs of society. The most effective projects are those in which all project partners benefit from the collaboration. As a skilled grant writer

# Demystifying Grant Writing: Find Funding for Your Music Projects

you will be keenly aware of how you bring diverse contributors to your efforts, demonstrating how it will benefit all. In all successful grant proposals the sum is truly greater than the parts.

Once you develop a well-honed proposal with all the detailed supporting evidence, that proposal can be submitted to many funders. Finding the right funder, however, means doing your homework—more *preparation*. Most grant proposals are turned down because the applicant did not pay close attention to the interests, scope, and mission of the foundation. You can find all this information and more online. You can also narrow the focus of your research through a number of geographic, demographic, and economic markers. And most foundations prefer to fund projects in their local community or geographic region, enriching the lives of those they serve. Here in Oregon, a great resource for aspiring grant writers is the *Oregon Foundation DataBook and Software*. A new edition comes out roughly every year. This valuable primary source lists comprehensive profiles on some 300 of the largest grant-making foundations in Oregon, with a combined asset total of over \$5.7 billion; total number of grants awarded over \$320 million. Keep in mind that this does not include local, state, or federal government granting agencies.

Remember, there *is* money available (and a lot of it!) for worthy projects that address the critical needs of communities, non-profit organizations, schools, and arts institutions. In preparing for this article, I interviewed three of Oregon's leading philanthropy professionals: Julie Diamond, Executive Director of the Oregon Jewish Community Foundation; Michelle Boss Barba, Program Officer for Arts and Culture at the Oregon Community Foundation; and Cynthia Addams, Chief Executive Office of the Collins Foundation. Each of these professionals was generous with their time and offered important guidelines and advice for the individual or non-profit seeking grant funding.

Julie Diamond, oversees an \$80 million community foundation with a focus on Jewish life in Oregon and southwest Washington. She recommends that you find out who makes the award decisions for a funding organization. Is it the board of trustees, a review committee, one person, a government agency? Find out what the funding focus is. Is it in line with *your* proposal? Be sure to research what the funding history is of the foundation/funder? Who have they given money to, what kinds of awards are typical, and what initiatives are most popular? Lastly, Diamond emphasized the critical importance of acquiring key endorsements from well-known professionals who can speak to the efficacy of your project. These are essentially leaders in the field who are able to vet the value of your project.

Cynthia Addams, CEO of one of Oregon's largest private foundations, recommends that with arts projects, the endeavor is supported with thoughtful planning; there is a clear alignment with the mission of the applicant organization; the budget is reasonable, accurate, and corresponds with the narrative; and it is clear that the board and community are invested in the project's success. She goes on to say: "It's always a joy to see trustees become just as passionate about a project's success as those who are proposing

# Demystifying Grant Writing: Find Funding for Your Music Projects

it. Our task [the foundation] often is to distinguish between the good idea hiding in a rough narrative and the unremarkable idea proposed with style and eloquence.” Ad-dams also reminds applicants that there are common mistakes to avoid: the project is not aligned with the funder’s stated interests; the project does not reflect the mission of the organization submitting the request; there are unrealistic projections for growth in the sponsoring organization or the organization itself is unsustainable; the size of the request is unrealistic; or the project budget is inflated.

Michelle Boss Barba, the lead program officer for the Arts and Culture Initiatives through the Oregon Community Foundation, offers yet another set of criteria for a well-written proposal. OCF is the largest donor-advised fund in Oregon and with that comes a large volume of applicants. She suggests that if you have any questions about a grant program, call the foundation to speak with the program staff *ahead* of submitting your application. And as she adds, “It’s free grant coaching!” She also strongly suggests that you have someone who is not very familiar with your work read your application prior to submission. As she points out, foundation staff members are not experts in every field and if they are unable to clearly understand your project then there is less chance of it getting funded.

Clearly, each of these professionals points us in the direction of the four P’s: Purpose, Project, Process, and Preparation. It’s about doing your homework, being meticulous in all documents, providing vetted support for your initiatives, aligning with your own mission and that of the funder, and speaking clearly and eloquently to the needs of your community.

Here locally, the Oregon Music Teachers Association has had considerable success as a non-profit applicant to the Nellie Tholen Fund at OCF. Awards have been given for a wide variety of projects including music festivals, teacher enrichment programs, curriculum development, master classes, and so forth. OMTA individual members have also found success in landing support for continuing education projects both locally and nationwide.

Don’t be afraid to ask for money. You have nothing to lose. And with each application you submit, you have the opportunity to hone your skills. The worst that will happen is that you will be turned down. And if you are turned down, call the foundation and find out why. Then resubmit. Be bold and ask whether or not you could submit a draft of your proposal to see if it is in line with the foundation’s mission. Consider an in-person meeting to discuss the efficacy of your project vis-à-vis the foundation’s current initiatives. If you don’t ask, you have no chance of receiving funding. Grant writing is something you can learn to do. And as you become successful in finding funding you might even have fun along the way!\*



\* Excerpts reprinted from *The Musician’s Journey: Crafting Your Career Vision and Plan* by Jill Timmons with permission from Oxford University Press © 2013 Oxford University Press.



## Music as Inspiration—Part II

by Susan Kline, Registered Piano Technician

*Editor's comment: This is the second part of Susan's article from our last edition. For most of us, inspiration becomes opportunity when we are open to it.*



### About the Author

Susan Kline, a piano technician living near Corvallis, studied at Oberlin and at UT/Austin. She has a Masters degree in applied cello. She played in the Hamilton Philharmonic (Ontario), then did two sabbatical replacement jobs on the Canadian prairies. In 1978, she attended George Brown College's Piano Technology course in Toronto. After 12 years of sweaty piano work in Stockton, California, she happily moved to Philomath, Oregon. She tunes for most concerts and festivals in the area. She has written a series of articles for *Piano Technicians Journal*.

Inspiration cannot be planned or leaned upon, to our chagrin. Inspiration is part of the wildness of life, not under our control, and always a surprise.

We can have the steady glow of work well done. One of the consolations of old age is that after decades of doing our best work we gain the confidence that we can do what needs to be done, despite adverse circumstances. We no longer need to run scared. Everything is polished and made strong and agile by practice. You'd think that musicians (and piano technicians) would get to a kind of steady state after awhile, when everything was as good as it was going to get, but luckily both music and pianos always find us more to explore and new aspects to discover. If we just keep paying attention to the subtleties of our craft, there's always more to find. But this isn't inspiration.

Inspiration—chase after it, and it will elude you. Getting oneself trapped by chewing over grudges and grievances and anxieties will bar the door against inspiration. But in some odd moment, maybe when bone tired, maybe just sitting waiting for something—there it is! That flash of unexpected beauty, that window into a whole new idea, the warmth of something one hadn't recognized, but which had been there all along. We may not be able to predict inspiration, but we can certainly remember it. If music can keep our minds open in a particular way, then, yes, one can talk about music and inspiration at the same time.



## Music as Inspiration—Part II

### Taking Out a Grand Action and Keys

You may decide that you don't want to remove a grand action yourself, but it doesn't hurt to understand how it is done.

By the time you've taken out a Steinway or Baldwin fallboard, the action is ready to remove. For some American grands, you can remove the keyslip and key blocks by removing the screws from underneath them. Once they are out, you can set them on the plate near the tuning pins. Some brands don't have the locator fittings in the key blocks (see the Steinway key block photos), but instead they put a little wooden piece over each guide pin coming out the ends of the key frame. These little wooden pieces are held in by two screws, which can be easily removed. Then the action will be ready to pull forward. Asian pianos are put together differently.

### Removing the Keyslip and the Key Blocks of Asian Grands

Asian grands (Yamaha, Kawai, Young Chang, Samick, and some Kohler and Campbell or other old American brand names now built in Asia) are put together a different way. The keyslip comes out last. First you remove the fallboard, then you loosen the key block screws, which are almost always great big thumbscrews.



Kawai Key Block Screw

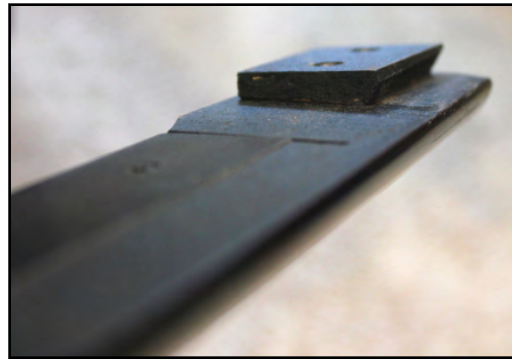
This is a big wood screw, but on some brands (mainly Samick) they are machine screws, which go into threaded metal inserts in the key blocks. Some of the thumb screws fold flat so they aren't obviously visible, while others are one piece. Some of them are designed to stay in the case (there's a washer which keeps them in) but others come all the way out. Turn out the thumb screws until they come out in your hand, or until the key block is free (leaving the screw hanging in the case.) Then you can easily lift out the key blocks.

The keyslip in Asian grands is wedged down by the key blocks, similar to how kitchen cabinets are hung on French cleats, only they are held down instead of up.

## Music as Inspiration—Part II



Kawai Key Block Wedge to Hold In Keyslip



Back of Kawai Keyslip

Once the keyslip and key blocks are out, the action can be removed. But should you try this yourself, or should you hire someone like me to do it, for a quite small fee?

Why take a grand action out of the piano? Maybe someone spilled something into the action, or something fell in but ended up further back, out of reach. If you decide to tackle this yourself, there's one hard and fast rule which you must follow without exception: You have to keep your hands (or other parts of your anatomy) off the keys. If a key goes down, a hammer goes up. A raised hammer when you're pulling an action out will grab on the plate flange holding the pinblock, and BREAK OFF. So, you pay very close attention to what your hands and arms are doing, and keep them well away from the keys. You can reach in and grab the action stack from the ends, or you can find the glide pins (which look like tuning pins) and pull the action forward with them. Once the action is forward a little bit, you can get hold of the key frame's front rail from underneath, and pull the assembly forward with that, still taking care than none of the keys are depressed.

Sometimes actions are pretty stubborn and don't want to move. If the action is sliding forward but then seems to get hung up on something, it's best to slide it back in unless you can find out for sure what is wrong. The exception to this is the kind of Asian grand where the key block thumb screws are left in the piano. Sometimes the ends can stick up a little above the key bed. You can get past them by lifting the front of the key frame just a hair.

### Before Taking the Action and Keys Out

First, find a safe location where you are going to set it down. A piano bench, somewhat removed from the piano, works well, or two chairs, or a table. An older key frame especially may have some black graphite grease on it, so don't set it down on a white sofa without an old sheet in between. It's easiest to lift and carry an action and keys with two people, one at each end. Once it's far enough out that the hammers are no longer in danger, each person can lift from below and pick it all up. The left end is heavier. There is more key lead and there are bigger hammers down there. One experienced person can lift it unaided, but it gets harder as one gets older. Having two people works better and is safer.

## Music as Inspiration—Part II

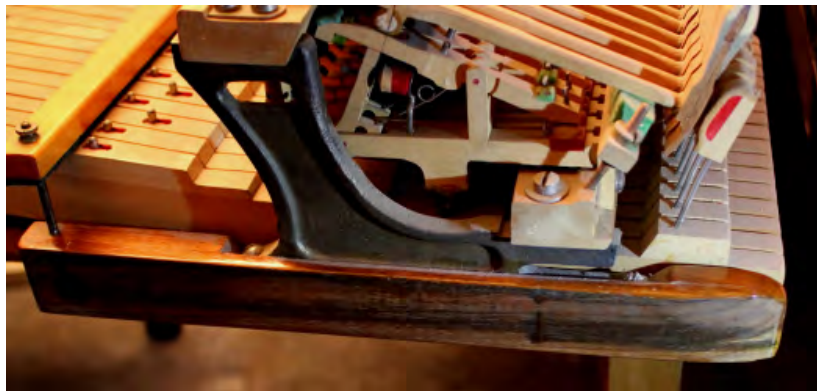
## Replacing a Grand Action and Keys

First, be sure you haven't left any tools or parts on the key bed. (I know, I know . . . what for dumb?) Second, for Steinways only, be sure that the middle pedal hasn't been pressed down. If it has, the "pitman" (the wooden dowel going through the key bed) can be raised a fraction of an inch, and the key frame will jam on it. Press it back down by hand. It is located just in front of the damper tray, between the treble and bass sections. It is supposed to sit there with the dowel end flush with the key bed.

All but the cheapest grands have a shift pedal (left pedal, soft pedal) and therefore a big strong return spring, which you must deal with when replacing the action. When you slide the action back in, first you and your helper should set it on the edge of the keybed. Then you sit down and deal with getting it in past the spring. You start sliding it in just slightly crooked, so that the right end of the key frame approaches the spring from the left instead of jamming into it from the front. Once the side of the key frame is pressing on the spring, you straighten the action up and slowly push it forward. The right side of the key frame is usually bevelled to accommodate the spring more easily. A very few grands (less than one percent) have the return spring on the left.



## Baldwin Return Spring



### Right Side of Baldwin Key Frame

## Music as Inspiration—Part II

Now, there's a parting of the ways here. The Asians are very precise and make all pianos of a given model exactly the same. If you push an Asian action in till it won't go any further, it's usually the right place. Not so with American and some European brands. Steinways in particular are individuals. If you push a Steinway action in as far as it will go, the ends of the keys often will jam on the damper parts. So, how do you find out where the action and keys should be located front to back?

There's the crass ordinary approach, and then there's the elegant but simple system used by my 93-year-old teacher, the one who taught me to tune pianos. The crass approach: you guess about where the action should be, and then you count on the slots in the key blocks to get the action where it should be. That's what they are for, keeping the action located front to back. There's a bevel in that fitting. You put it over the guide pin on the end of the key frame, and you just force it down.

See the photo of the Steinway fallboard half way out, and you can see that key block fitting, which goes over the guide pin of the key frame.

The preferred alternative is to leave the action just slightly forward of where it should end up. Then you lay the key blocks in loosely, with the locator dowels in place, but the blocks not pushed down. You gently shove the action back into the piano, and when it is the right place, the key blocks will fall of their own accord.

In this photo, you can see that the action is slightly forward (the front edge is over the black colored part of the case). You can see the guide pin coming from the edge of the key frame, and the three holes in the key bed. The middle hole is for the key block screw, and goes all the way through the key bed. The other two are for the locator dowels, and are just deep enough for them.



Holes for the Key Block

## Music as Inspiration—Part II



Action Forward Bass Key Block

Note that the key block is high and not horizontal. Press the action forward slowly, and it will drop into place.



Placement Right Bass Key Block

Everything right, ready to replace the key block screw.

### Summary

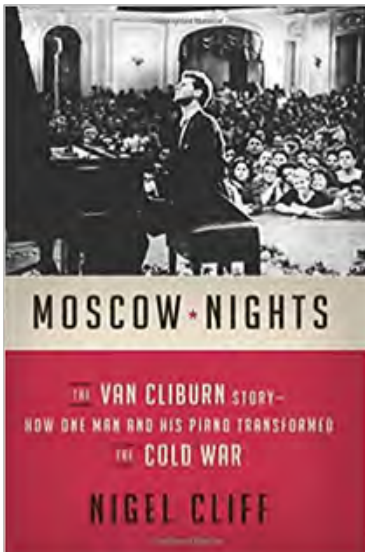
Now, let's consider what use you might make of this information. Any decent piano technician should be able to deal with getting into a grand, removing objects, and so on, more easily than someone who hasn't done it before. If something ends up inside a grand piano, I'm happy to drop by and deal with it for a very small fee. But at some point there might be an emergency, and maybe no one could come out at a moment's notice. If any of you find yourselves in that situation, it's not too bad an idea to have some notion of how to proceed. I also think it's pleasant for piano owners to know how to get into their instruments if they feel they must, instead of it all being a scary mystery. The process is much easier to master if you can just watch it being done, but maybe a raft of photographs are better than nothing.

Next issue I plan to explore the action cavity and the keybed, and we can see how the grand damper assembly works.

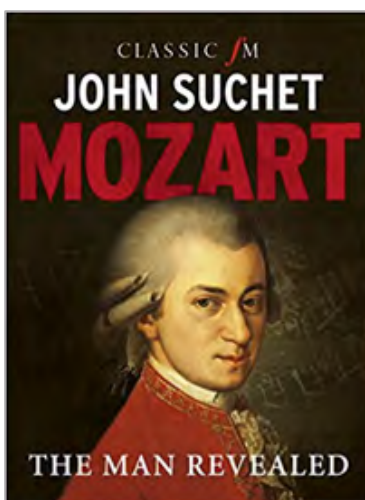




## Baxter's Bookshelf



*Moscow Nights: The Van Cliburn Story—How One Man and His Piano Transformed the Cold War* (2016) by Nigel Cliff is brilliant and engaging. The book weaves together the political tensions of the time between the USA and the USSR with the story of Van Cliburn and the 1958 Tchaikovsky Competition. This story “turned a music competition into an event of global significance . . .” The book has won high praise from critics around the country. In *The Economist*, a reviewer wrote: “Nigel Cliff . . . has written a freshly sourced account of these momentous Moscow nights. He places them aptly at the heart of the nuclear conflict and poignantly in the personal odyssey of a lanky, gay pianist from a small prairie town who never wanted to do much except play Russian music.” Van Cliburn remains the sole American to have won the Tchaikovsky competition. I have just begun this book and find it riveting.



*Mozart: The Man Revealed* (2016) by John Suchet is a fascinating and well researched book. Suchet is one of the musical hosts on Classic FM, London, a radio station we listen to on a daily basis at our house. Suchet claims that “broadcasting live, five mornings a week about my favourite subject, is a dream come true.” His goal in writing this book was to examine the “myths and misunderstandings” that have followed Mozart into contemporary history. Through this examination a new view of the beloved composer emerges.

## Baxter's Bookshelf

(Continued)



J.S. Bach's *Six Keyboard Partitas*, a double-cd set by British pianist Charles Owen, is beautiful, clear and intelligent. You can read about Charles and order copies of his recordings at [www.charlesowen.net](http://www.charlesowen.net). Charles' playing is exquisite, sensitive, and profound. He is a player whom more of us should know.

After having read Alexander Tutunov's interview, you can hear him as both scholar and performer on Claire Wachter's brilliant website: [www.virtualpianopedagogue.com](http://www.virtualpianopedagogue.com). He narrates and performs in a series of six videos entitled "Secrets of Russian Piano Playing." Don't miss them!





## The Poet Speaks

by Donna Henderson

### The Beginning of February

Now spring in its flannels  
starts its delicate tremble.

Here a treeful of catkins.  
There a cherry's risked

bursting its snug buds to bloom.  
This everything? You'd asked

on this day, half my life ago  
now, toward my pile of things

poised by the door like caddis flies  
in an eddy fence, caught between the river's

pool & swirl— the life I'd planned  
and the one I hadn't planned.

No longer separate, my things  
not yet joined—

and my yes was a kind of dying—  
the way cells, consenting to split

surrender to mystery the soul's  
containment.

Outside snow held its ground.  
Starry dark hovered over.

And more or less with you I stepped  
through the door into it—

The poem is printed here with the permission of the author.