

2016 Piano Technicians Guild Foundation Scholarship Report

Davis Dorrough

To: The Piano Technicians Guild and The MTNA National Certification Commission

I would like to extend my sincerest thanks for being chosen as this year's recipient of the Piano Technicians Guild Foundation Scholarship in the amount of \$1,000. The funds were applied toward three weeks of continuing education at the Golandsky Institute Summer Symposium and Piano Festival at Princeton University and the Saarburg International Chamber Music Festival in Saarburg, Germany. The dates of study were July 9-31st, 2016.

Golandsky Summer Symposium

While at the Golandsky Summer Symposium, I had the opportunity to study privately for four private lessons with Yoriko Fieleke in addition to attending master classes and lectures on healthy piano technique developed by Dorothy Taubman. I was also provided a practice assistant to help assimilate information gained during the lessons, which proved to be extremely beneficial. Each evening also featured a guest artist concert, and this allowed us to see the Taubman approach in action—it was especially apparent during the concert of Ilya Itin, who is a Taubman Master Teacher at the institute.

After attending the seminar I am now considering certification in the Taubman method. The experience I believe is very pivotal for my career and even my personal relationship with the instrument. Being able to play so beautifully without fatigue or pain is a huge step. I'm rethinking many things that I was taught and am working to correct and perfect my technique so that my students will benefit as well.

Saarburg Music Festival

Before attending the Saarburg Festival this summer, I had very limited experience in chamber music. This festival provided valuable coaching in this weak area. I worked with two piano teachers while at this festival, Dr. Lauren Clark from Arkansas State University and Dr. Andrew Cooperstock from University of Colorado, Boulder. In addition, I worked with numerous ensemble coaches on four pieces: Piano Quintet in C Minor by Borodin, Rapsodie for Two Flutes and Clarinet by Honegger, Serenade for Three by Peter Schickele, and Berceuse by Alphons Diepenbrock.

The festival participants had the opportunity to perform in churches and concert halls in the surrounding communities. My final concert was performed in a bell factory, where many of the historic church bells throughout Europe were made. That made for a unique performance venue!

On my free day, I visited Beethoven's birthplace and museum in Bonn. Wow! I took so much from that experience that I can now share with my students. Getting that close to a composer and his materials was really special and even a bit emotional. I left feeling more in tune with the real image of Beethoven's life and surroundings.

Conclusion

Now that I've returned from these two awesome festivals, I feel so invigorated and ready to go back to the teaching studio. My standards have most certainly been raised through these challenging experiences. Being able to focus intensely on a few specific areas without distractions was truly priceless. Thank you again for helping sponsor this segment of my continuing education. I'm sure a lot of other new experiences will continue to grow out of what I've discovered this summer.

Warmly,

Davis Dorrough, NCTM