

# PIANO

# NEWS

October 31

*Scary Group Class*

November 15

*FALL RECITAL*

November 30

*Winter Quarter Begins*

"The gift of music lasts a lifetime, transcends all generations, and is an investment in the future!"

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# FALL RECITAL NOVEMBER 15, 2 PM. CHAPEL IN THE PINES

*Students should be  
seated by 1:45 pm.*



Top: Hannah Hardin, practicing

## Recital Details:

The highlight of our Fall Quarter will be our recital on November 15th. As always, the performance will be held at Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church, at 2 p.m.

**WHEN TO ARRIVE:** I will be there at 1:30. Students should plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the performance begins to be seated.

**DRESS:** Students should wear dressy clothes appropriate for a special occasion. Girls should not wear extremely high heels or platform shoes in order to use the pedal successfully.

**MEMORIZATION:** Memorization is encouraged but not required. Students must obtain my approval prior to playing by memory.

**AFTER THE PERFORMANCE:** An award ceremony will follow the performance.

**REHEARSAL:** The chapel will be opened up 30 minutes before the performance. Come early if you would like to practice in the sanctuary.

**PRACTICE TROPHIES:** Practice trophies will be awarded at the Spring Recital only and will reflect a student's

practice record for the entire school year. Students who kept a record of their practices every week, including a parent signature, will be eligible for a trophy. Students who maintained an average of seven days a week will be rewarded with a first place trophy. A six-day average will earn a second place trophy. A five-day average will earn a third place trophy. Students can make up for sick and vacation days by practicing more than once a day.

**RECITAL FEE:** A \$7.00 recital fee will be added to the tuition statements in the beginning of the Fall and Spring Quarters. This certainly won't cover all recital expenses, but it will help.

**CHAPEL  
ADDRESS:**  
2269 Chapel  
Road, Hoover,  
AL, 35226



Michael Qu returns from China to find his practice trophy waiting.



# Schedule

The studio schedule for the entire year can always be found on our web site, [bkac.net](http://bkac.net).

To clear up any confusion, the week of October 12 - 16 was originally our Fall Break. Early in the quarter I missed four days of lessons when I was sick with pneumonia, Tuesday through Friday. In an effort to avoid over crowding the makeup week, I cancelled my plans and taught Tuesday through Friday students during our Fall Break.

## Fall Quarter Schedule 2015

October 12: Fall Break. No Lessons.

October 13 - 16: Tu, W, Th, F Students makeup teacher sick days. (Formerly Fall Break Week.)

October 31: Scary Group Class. 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Please RSVP.

November 2 - 6: Tuition Installment #3 Due.

November 15: Fall Recital. 2 p.m. Chapel in the Pines.

November 10 - 16: Last Week of Fall Lessons. (November 16 is added in to compensate for the Labor Day Holiday.)

November 17 - 23: Fall Makeup Week.

November 24 - 27: Thanksgiving Break. No Lessons.

## Winter Quarter Schedule 2015 - 2016

November 30 - December 4: Winter Quarter Lessons Begin. Tuition Installment #1 Due.

December 19: Holiday Hits Group Class. 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. Please RSVP.

December 21: January 1: Winter Break. No Lessons.

January 4 - 8: Lessons Resume. Tuition Installment #2 Due.

February 1 - 5: Tuition Installment #3 Due.

February 12 & 15: No Lessons. Instructor out of town.

February 16 - 19: Last Week of Winter Quarter Lessons.

February 22 - 26: Winter Makeup Week.

February 29: Monday students makeup February 12th absence.

March 1 - 3: No Lessons. Winter Flex Week.

March 4: Friday students makeup February 15th absence.

## Studio Makeup Policy

- Missed lessons due to teacher illness or absence will ALWAYS be rearranged or made up during the makeup week. I make every effort not to miss lessons but every now and then, like most professionals, I need a personal day or become ill. In the interest of public health, I will not teach when I am sick. The makeup week is built into the schedule to provide me with flexibility to cover any absences that I incur.
- Makeup lessons cannot be carried over to the next quarter. Teacher absences will take priority during the makeup week. The remainder of the week may be used to makeup excused student absences. That means that

any excused student makeups that will not fit into the makeup week will be forfeited and are, therefore, not guaranteed.

- Excused absences must be approved in advance. If time permits, they can be made up during the makeup week only. Excused absences include: illness, family vacation, and death in the family.
- A maximum of two missed lessons may be made up per quarter.
- Missed time for late arrivals will not be made up or refunded.
- Unexcused absences are not eligible for a makeup. (Please don't ask!)
- You may use the swap list to avoid absences that you are able to predict in advance. It is available on our web site, under the schedule link on the navigation bar. The page is password protected. The password will be given to you in a separate email.
- Students may take their lesson via Skype, to avoid missing.
- Please remember that most teachers do not offer make-up lessons at all because they create an avalanche of scheduling complications. Therefore, this is a generous compromise. Bear in mind, college courses do not offer makeups for students who miss class; nor do dance/gymnastic studios, or little leagues. I hope to continue offering this option, because I never want students to feel pressured to attend lessons when they are sick.

## Group Classes

Group classes are held in the studio. They are geared toward elementary and middle school age students. My intention is to provide students with a low-pressure performance experience and a chance to socialize with their peers. After a group lesson, each student will then be given the opportunity to share/perform something they are working on. Students who attend group classes consistently feel more prepared for our larger recitals.

Please RSVP for each class so that I can accurately arrange snacks and best gauge the lesson material.

**I regularly provide and prepare the majority of snack and craft supplies,**

routinely purchase new lesson materials, and offer my preparation and class time on Saturday morning free of charge. Please help reduce the expense of supplies by making an annual \$10 family donation to the group class supply fund.

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### *Scary Group Class October 31 10:00 - 11:00 am in the studio*

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Our Scary Group Class on October 31st will be a Halloween Party of sorts. Students have been given a Halloween solo to prepare. Performers may wear

their Halloween costumes if they like. If you have a special Halloween Treat that you would like to prepare for the group, please let me know. Your help would be greatly appreciated.

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### *Holiday Hits Group Class December 19 10:00 - 11:00 am in the studio*

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During our Holiday Hits Group Class, we will perform sacred and secular holiday music of the student's choice, followed by a Christmas Party.

**Give your parents a mighty BIG SCARE:**  
Practice the piano every day in October without being asked. Make sure you do your best zombie impersonation as you creep up to the piano. When they ask if you are feeling ok, say nothing! Hum a haunting melody instead.



## Incentives

I'm forever searching for creative ways to motivate students through the daily grind of practicing. As parents who have witnessed the birth of the



internet, I'm sure you've noticed the rapid changes the *well of instant information* has brought to society. While having the whole world at our fingertips is truly a miraculous thing, there is a downside. We seem to be



collectively growing less tolerant of processes that require a repetitive effort over a long period of time. As our smart phones ding with every urgent notification imaginable, it can be difficult to turn down the noise. (Yes, I love my smart phone too.) Piano provides our students with a contrast to this rapid-fire, distracted pace. They *have* to slow down. They must focus. And they certainly have to spend a LOT of time just slogging it out. Any musician will tell you that mind-numbing repetition is an unavoidable part of the process.

Growing up, I remember my mother exalting the concept of *life in balance*. Maintaining balance may be one of the greatest parenting challenges we face, but I sincerely believe it is worth the effort.

## Race to the Recital

I designed two interactive posters for our studio that have proven to be engaging for all. Students who practice a minimum of five times during the week are permitted to move their car forward a space, racing towards the recital. Indeed, they have been racing in the front door of the studio each week, excitedly checking their position on the racetrack.

## Keys to Success

Sometimes when an idea comes to me, I fail to factor in how labor-intensive the execution will be. Thankfully, I was too far into this project to turn back before realizing what I had taken on. Our new technique easel features hooks for personalized key rings. As students complete scale routines, they earn a "key" for each key signature mastered. Over 700 keys were cut, laminated, and cut again. The student reception has been phenomenal, making every single blister worthwhile.



# Web Site Makeover

Have you had a chance to explore our new web site? All of the photos have been updated, and I've added a few new features that I hope you will find very useful.



## Online Payment Options

While our online payment options are not new, some of you may not have discovered them yet. The **PAY TUITION** link will allow you to add tuition installments, recital fees, and even late fees to a Paypal cart. You'll notice that the tuition amounts on this page are slightly different than listed in our policy. Paypal charges a 2.9% + 30 cent transaction fee for me to receive credit card payments. This amount is reflected in the tuition prices.

## Studio Facebook Page

Follow our Facebook page for reminders, current news, student photos, and videos.

## The New and Improved [bkac.net](http://bkac.net)

Creating an online password protected swap list has been on my agenda for several years. I was just waiting for the inspiration to strike as I had to figure out how to write a custom java script. As a young music student, I had no idea that I would need computer programming skills one day.

## Swap List

Under the **SCHEDULE** heading in the navigation bar, a drop-down menu presenting two options now appears: our calendar for the year, and a password protected swap list. You may use the swap list to avoid absences that you are able to predict in advance. The page is password protected. The password will be given to you in a separate email. Please follow all instructions listed on the page when rearranging lessons.

### TUITION PAYMENT

- The Birmingham Keyboard Arts Center accepts credit card payments through Paypal, an online payment service. Use this page if you would like to pay for your tuition by credit card. If you do not have an account with Paypal you will be prompted to create one upon check out. Don't worry - it's secure and creating an account is free.
- Simply click on the "Add to Cart" button to select the tuition installments that you want to pay today. If you are paying tuition for multiple students you will have to add the tuition for each student individually.
- Paypal charges a 2.9% + 30 cent transaction fee for me to receive credit card payments. This additional amount is reflected in the tuition prices you see below.
- Tuition can also be paid in the studio, by cash, personal check, or credit card (via Square).

### Fall, Winter, & Spring Quarter Tuition

You may pay the entire quarter tuition in full or choose from the installment plan options. Please be sure to select your correct lesson length and quantity before adding to your cart. Your cart will open in a separate window.

**Fall, Winter, & Spring Quarter Tuition in Full**  
30 minute lesson - 275.04

Quantity:

[Add to Cart](#)

<b>First Installment</b> 30 minute lesson - 91.88	<b>Second Installment</b> 30 minute lesson - 93.04	<b>Third Installment</b> 30 minute lesson - 93.04
Quantity: <input type="text"/>	Quantity: <input type="text"/>	Quantity: <input type="text"/>
<a href="#">Add to Cart</a>	<a href="#">Add to Cart</a>	<a href="#">Add to Cart</a>

### Initial Installment

New students are required to pay an initial installment equal to one month of lessons. This amount is refunded to you, or applied to outstanding tuition, when notice of termination is given one month in advance. Please select the appropriate lesson length and add your initial installment to your cart.

**Initial Installment**  
30 minute lesson - 91.88

Quantity:

[Add to Cart](#)

### Recital Fee

During the Fall and Spring Quarters, please add the \$7.50 recital fee for each participating student. This helps cover the rental of the church, printing costs, and awards.

Quantity:

[Add to Cart](#)

### Late Fee

Well, this one is no fun! If your tuition is late, please do the honorable thing and add the \$10.00 late fee to your cart.

[Add to Cart](#)

### Summer Quarter Tuition

You may pay the entire quarter tuition in full or choose from the installment plan options. Please be sure to select your correct lesson length and quantity before adding to your cart.

**Summer Quarter Tuition in Full**  
30 minute lesson - 164.04

Quantity:

### Prorated Tuition

## Holiday Music

Most students love playing Christmas music. If you wish to incorporate seasonal music into your regular lesson repertoire, please purchase one of the Faber or Helen Marlais holiday books that corresponds with your current lesson book level. For your convenience, I have listed some choices below. If you are not working in a method book and need a suggestion from me, let me know. I like to start working on Christmas music right after Halloween. That way we have plenty of time to explore the book before Christmas is upon us.

**My First Piano Adventures:** Pre-Reading Christmas

**Primer Level:** Pre-Reading Christmas (for recent beginners), Piano Adventures Christmas, or PreTime Christmas

**Level 1:** Piano Adventures Christmas 1 or PlayTime Christmas

**Level 2A:** Piano Adventures Christmas 2A or ShowTime Christmas

**Level 2B:** Piano Adventures Christmas 2B or ChordTime Christmas

**Level 3A:** Piano Adventure Christmas 3A or FunTime Christmas

**Level 3B:** Piano Adventure Christmas 3B or FunTime Christmas

**Level 4:** Piano Adventure Christmas 4 or BigTime Christmas

**Level 5:** AdvanceTime Piano Christmas

**Accelerated Book 1:** Accelerated Piano Adventures Christmas 1, PlayTime Christmas, or ShowTime Christmas

**Accelerated Book 2:** Accelerated Piano Adventures Christmas, ShowTime Christmas, or ChordTime Christmas

**Adult 1:** Christmas for All Time - Book 1

**Adult 2:** Christmas for All Time - Book 2





Mailha Mukherjee (1st Grade)



Tina Gao (2nd Grade)



Anusha Mukherjee (7th Grade)



Roshni Datta (7th Grade)



Theo Simonton (7th Grade)



## AMTA District Auditions - April 16, Samford University

The Alabama Music Teacher's Association District Auditions are for piano students, age six through eighteen, and are held in March or April of each year. They are composed of a Performance component of three pieces of contrasting style and a Theory component (scales, arpeggios, cadences, etc.) Students, age 10 and older, who receive an Outstanding rating in both Performance and Theory can progress on to the State level of this competition in May.

District Auditions will be held at Samford University on April 16. Our district participants this year are: Anusha Mukherjee, Maliha Mukherjee, Theo Simonton, Roshni Datta, and Tina Gao.

The State Auditions will be held on May 13 and 14. A handful of winners will be selected from the State Auditions to participate in a Winners Recital.

