

2016 Informational Letter

Dear Midsummer Adult Piano Retreat Participants:

We are very excited as we plan our 11th annual Piano Retreat. Many returning participants as well as several newcomers will make up our group this year. There will be twenty-five students in all. There have been some changes again this year, so please read this letter even if you feel you “know the ropes.”

Logistics

Arrival is from 2-4 p.m. on Saturday, July 9th. If you get into Williamstown early, please amuse yourself in the town, as **early check-in is not available**. If you expect to arrive after 4 p.m., please call Debi on her cell (617-290-6935), and she will arrange to meet you with all the necessary materials at the dorm. **Check-in** will be done at Parsons House again this year. **Directions** to Parsons: as you approach the campus on Route 2 (Main Street) you will turn onto Park Street (Don't worry. You can only turn in one direction onto Park St). Then you will turn right onto Mission Park Drive. The road will curve down a hill where you will see three white houses. The two small ones, side by side on the left, are two of our three dorms (Hubbell and Parsons.) Parsons House is on the far left as you face the houses. Our third dorm is Sewall House, which is across the street from Hubbell and Parsons, and is also a white wood-frame building.

Debi will be at Parsons House on the porch to greet you and provide you with a room key, a building swipe-card and meal card, parking permit and general campus information, like pool and gym hours. You'll then be directed to your dormitories where Alison and Peter will greet you and help you get situated. A Williams College student will be on hand to help carry your bags into your rooms. We'll have refreshments waiting for you in the Hubbell House common area. The Conference Office rents fans for \$6.00/week and Debi will have those available when you check in. It helps if you have the right change for the fans! If you are driving to the workshop, please bring your own. Rooms come with sheets, blanket, pillow and towels. Other items that past participants have suggested bringing are hangers, reading lamps, a clock radio or alarm clock, foam pads for the mattresses, a cushion for the chairs in the classroom, a sweater for the overly air-conditioned classrooms and a power strip if you have numerous electrical devices. A useful link to the Williams College website is: <http://www.williams.edu/visitors/>

Here you'll find information about accommodations and other frequently asked questions. There is a list of what not to bring too! You can also find a campus map on

their website.

Accommodations

Students have been assigned to three dorms again this year – Hubbell House, Parsons House, and Sewall House, across the street. This allows us to avoid putting anyone in a third floor room where it can get quite hot.

Travel

The website above (under “Logistics”) will provide complete and easy travel information. For transportation from the Albany airport, we have used the following services. Sorry, but we do not have current prices at this time. Please call well in advance to reserve:

Shuttlebug 518-892-3052 (Rick is the owner.)

Norm's Limo 800-486-4946

<http://normslimo.com/>

There is also a taxi service 518-242-4222. There is also train service for those of you who may not wish to fly. There's a daily train from Toronto to Albany. There is also daily Amtrak service from NYC to Albany.

Canadian attendees — please remember to pack your passports!

Classes

This year Alison and Peter will once again share the pre-concert talk. Alison will also lead a class called “Mozart - Classical Perfection.” On Sunday evening, we'll have a discussion on *Collaborative Piano*. The *Fireside Chat* will be held on Monday. This is an informal discussion of topics relevant to all adult pianists. Peter's stimulating talk is entitled, “What is Music -- What am I Doing when I Push Down Piano Keys?”

Debi will lead short Alexander Technique Movement Classes each morning. Her longer class centers on the Alexander Technique and how to bring its principles into your piano life. The remainder of our scheduled time will include practice hours, private lessons, morning coffee break, three wonderful daily meals, Guest Artist Recital and reception, Guest Artist Studio Class (participation optional,) collaborative piano coachings, optional "student exchange" and ensemble sharing

opportunities, a Two Piano Recital by Debi Adams and Michael Serio, and our trip to Tanglewood.

We'll be handing out lesson, practice and class schedules on Saturday evening.

Please note that Tuesday and Friday evenings are free for you to explore Williamstown. You may want to consider Williamstown Theatre tickets: <http://www.wtfestival.org/>

Collaborative Piano

One of the missions of our workshop is to encourage ensemble playing (i.e. 4-hand duets, flute and piano) for any student who wishes to experience it. We're thrilled that many of you have already let us know what you wish to play. There will be several 15-minute coaching periods scheduled during the week. If you don't already have repertoire, we encourage you to select a piece now. Most of you are working with teachers who can help you with that. If not, let us know and we may be able to suggest a piece for you to start. We are excited to explore all the repertoire you have been working on and to enhance your ensemble experience with Debi and Mike's performance, our coachings and our *Collaborative Piano* discussion.

Guest Artist

We are thrilled to welcome pianist John Ferguson to our workshop this year.

For bio information, please visit his website at

<http://www.johnferguson.org>

After his concert, we'll have a reception, generously hosted by longtime attendee, Paul Whitlow. This year's reception will be held at Chopsticks Restaurant on Route 2 in Williamstown. John will give a recital on Thursday evening and a Studio Class on Friday morning (participation optional.)

Tanglewood Field Trip

On Wednesday, we'll be leaving Williams at 4:00 p.m. for a dinner and concert at Tanglewood, the beautiful and inspiring summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We will be hearing Renee Fleming, soprano and the Emerson String Quartet in Seiji Ozawa Hall. Their program -

BRAHMS - Quartet in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2

WELLESZ - *Sonnets by Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, Op. 52, for soprano and string quartet

BERG - *Lyric Suite* for soprano and string quartet

The dinner before the concert will be at Gateways Inn in Lenox (see website link below.) Once again, we'll have a bus to transport us to and from dinner and the concert. The entire cost of the evening – transportation, meal and concert ticket – is included in your retreat tuition.

<http://www.gatewaysinn.com>

BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME

If you haven't done so already, Please send us your cell phone numbers and provide us with an emergency contact name and number. PLEASE DO THIS WELL IN ADVANCE OF ARRIVAL. And please write down the following and/or put them in your phone:

Debi Adams' cell # 617-290-6935

Alison Barr's cell # 781-582-7245

We all look forward to getting to know each of you and seeing our returning students once again! The week we spend at Williams is always a highlight of our teaching year.

Warmly, □Debi, Alison and Peter