

## **2017 Informational Letter**

Dear Midsummer Adult Piano Retreat Participants:

We are very excited as we plan our 12th annual Piano Retreat. Many returning participants as well as some 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 8th. 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 Dodd House this year. Directions to Dodd: 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 large white house with green shutters is Dodd House. Debi will be on the porch to greet you and provide you with a room key, a building swipecard and meal card, parking permit and general campus information, like pool and gym hours. You'll then be directed inside 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 Dodd 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**

We are all staying in Dodd House this year because of work being done on our usual houses. Dodd was the original Williams Inn. It has lovely common areas where we can gather. There is a piano in the living room, though it is in pretty bad shape. One of our participants, Jim Gish, plans to bring his new fancy digital keyboard for all to try!

### **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.

### **Classes**

This year Alison will present the Tanglewood pre-concert talk. She will also lead a class called "J.S. Bach –Master of Invention."

Debi will lead this year's *Fireside Chat* on Sunday night. This is an informal discussion of topics relevant to all adult pianists. Her longer class centers on the Alexander Technique and how to bring its principles into your piano life. Debi will also be leading the short Alexander Technique Movement Classes each morning. Peter's stimulating talk is entitled, "Flats, Sharps, the Personal and the Transcendent." 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,) ensemble coachings, optional "student

exchange,” ensemble sharing opportunities, and our trip to Tanglewood. We'll be handing out lesson, practice and class schedules on Saturday evening.

Please note that Tuesday night is 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, 2-pianos) 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. This year our guest artist will provide coaching sessions for those who want them. We have already prepared a schedule for those who expressed interest.

### **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 Wednesday evening and a Studio Class on Thursday morning (participation optional.) He will also provide ensemble coachings on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning.

### **Tanglewood**

Our Tanglewood Field Trip is on Friday. A bus will pick us up at the dorm at 4:00 p.m. Dinner beforehand will be at Gateways Inn again <https://gatewaysinn.com/> The entire cost of the evening – transportation, meal and concert ticket – is included in your retreat tuition.

Tanglewood is the beautiful and inspiring summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. We will be hearing Andris Nelsons conduct Ravel, Haydn, Adès and Mozart featuring pianist Daniil Trifonov in the Koussevitzky Music Shed. The full program is:

RAVEL *Le Tombeau de Couperin*  
HAYDN Symphony No. 83, *La Poule*  
Thomas ADÈS *Three Studies from Couperin*  
MOZART Piano Concerto No. 21 in C, K.467

### **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,  
Alison, Debi and Peter