

Laboratoire de recherche en pédagogie du piano

Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory

Donors make a difference

Music is the language of emotion – a deep and moving enrichment of the human spirit. It fosters cultural understanding, serves as a universal language, strengthens our community and contributes to a vibrant society.

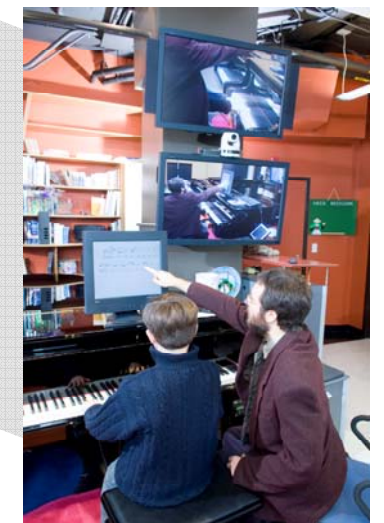
The philanthropic support of donors creates a lifetime legacy. It drives the community to nurture talented young musicians. The University's role is to help advance research that will better current and future generations of music teachers and piano students.

The partnership between donors and the University advances the value of music study, a creative expression that is known to uplift the spirit and inspire us all.

To learn more about the endowment, please contact:

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The Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory

Applying modern technology to traditional learning skills



Piano players achieve their artistic potential by mastering motor, cognitive, auditory and expressive skills. For many, this complex activity can lead to a lack of motivation, frustration with music reading and to pain related to practice.

By advancing the study of how piano skills develop, the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory is helping to enhance the art, the comfort and the enjoyment of piano playing and performance. How? By applying modern technology to traditional learning skills, through research.

This unique state-of-the-art piano laboratory at the University of Ottawa is probing the fundamentals at the heart of keyboard playing to gain a greater understanding of piano instruction.

The Laboratory's progressive approach is leading the way in multidisciplinary research and innovation. In less than two years, it has brought together 24 researchers from 10 separate institutions and forged unique partnerships with 11 other laboratories and research institutes to study the intricacies involved in how young musicians learn piano.

The Laboratory is also recognized for its leadership in pushing the limits of distant broadband music instruction, teaching pupils as far away as Kangiqsualujjuaq in Northern Quebec and Khumo, Finland.

Like other fields of education practice, piano pedagogy can be informed by a scientific analysis of its foundations and methods. The University of Ottawa is ahead of the curve – the Laboratory is creating knowledge that will promote greater effectiveness and a higher retention rate among piano students.

An endowment for cutting-edge research and infrastructure

Since it opened its doors in October 2005, the Laboratory has established an international reputation as a centre of excellence. Its pioneering work continues to attract public and private investments. However, like many art-focused programs, it must compete for diminishing amounts of government funding.

The University of Ottawa is creating a \$2 million Piano Pedagogy Endowment Fund to enable the Lab to build on its world-class research program, focusing on three strategic areas:

Support for research



Is it better to start learning to play the piano with written music or by ear? How does sight-reading develop? What are the effects of different teaching methods? What are the motivational stages of piano playing? What is the effect of technology on teaching and learning piano? How can we prevent health injuries related to piano playing? The Laboratory's students and researchers who are collaborating on such multidisciplinary projects have begun to provide answers to these questions and disseminate the new knowledge.

The Lab is designing the first ever academic journal on multidisciplinary research in piano pedagogy. As well, a first handbook on research in this field will serve as a reference tool for professors, teachers and students.

New research findings at the Lab promise to:

- Improve musical reading by tracking the nature and the frequency of learning difficulties
- Understand the cognitive and neurological strategies in deciphering musical scores
- Better understand the role and participation of parents in motivating their child

Recruitment of researchers

Fellowships provide support for outstanding graduate students at the doctoral or master's levels. They enable graduate students to identify and examine research issues in piano pedagogy, learn research skills and work in multidisciplinary research teams at local, national and international institutions.

Support for human and technical resources

The Lab's human and technical infrastructure underpins the effectiveness of teaching methods. It is generating important empirical data on how piano learning occurs and how specific parts of the brain trigger the development of motor skills, auditory perception and musical expression. The Lab will advance its work as long as it is able to maintain and renew its suite of high-tech tools and its technical expertise.

