

PRATT MUSIC FOUNDATION

Promoting Classical Music In Bloomington-Normal

No. 18 – December 2008

The Pratt Music Foundation identifies children in Bloomington-Normal with the talent to excel and who need support in order to pursue their talent. The Foundation selects, nurtures, and provides scholars with music instruction from the Illinois Wesleyan University Music Preparatory Program.

Our Own Mildred Pratt

There's something special about Mildred Pratt-- her beautiful smile that brightens every corner of a room, her contagious laughter, or her gracious spirit; there are simply too many things to mention.

It has now been 12 years since Mildred's beloved husband, Dr. T.A.E.C. "Ted" Pratt, passed away, and it has now been 12 years since the beginnings of the Pratt Music Foundation. As the Pratt family's small home in Normal began to overflow with flowers and plants, an idea for a memorial to Ted began to take shape and today it is known as the Pratt Music Foundation. It's hard to imagine how much this would please him: He had a great love for classical music, and a strong belief in opportunities for children. Mildred turned a sad time in her life into a gift that keeps on giving.



Photo by Jack Bowles

Mildred has had a great impact on our community. Her vision created the Bloomington-Normal Black History Project: to preserve the story of those of African descent who settled in Bloomington-Normal beginning in the 1830's (Mildred considers this project the highlight of her career). Did we mention that she is Professor Emerita of Sociology, having retired from ISU in 1993?

Finally, Mildred is a very modest person. Her daughter, Menah, gave us permission to pay her this tribute (and has agreed to accept any consequences should Mildred object). We love you Mildred. Thank you for all you do to make the world a better place.

Your Fellow Board Members

Is there an unused instrument in your closet?

SHARE the MUSIC

Donate your musical instrument knowing it will be loaned to a deserving music student. Your donation is tax deductible.

For more information: Call Joy Hippensteele at **The Music Shoppe**, 309-888-4500



Photo by Glenn Reeder

Shelby Bays, now in her second year as a Pratt Music Foundation scholar, played her violin at the annual Pratt Scholar reception last February.

17 Scholarships for 2008-2009

The Pratt Music Foundation Board awarded 17 classical music scholarships at its June meeting. Our scholars for the coming year include students from Bloomington, Normal, and Le Roy studying piano, cello, viola, and violin. They attend Unit 5, District 87, Leroy District 2, and three are home-schooled.

The Pratt Music Foundation Board received and considered 31 applications.

HOW WE AWARD SCHOLARSHIPS

Pratt Music Foundation Scholarships are awarded based on financial need, talent, and motivation. Most scholarships are awarded to students who have already had some instruction, but students with no musical experience are also considered. The application includes a music teacher referral and a statement of interest from the student.

ELIGIBILITY. Any student in grades K through 12 and capable of regularly attending instruction will be considered. Scholarships are awarded in the Bloomington-Normal-McLean County area.

THE SCHOLARSHIPS. Each recipient of a Pratt Music Foundation Scholarship receives tuition for weekly individual lessons for the academic year (including summer) in piano or strings with the Illinois Wesleyan University Preparatory Music Program.



"Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom and all philosophy. Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks and invents." Ludwig von Beethoven



AWADAGIN CHOOSES A PIANO



The Cincinnati Conservatory of Music recently installed a brand new Steinway in Awadagin's teaching studio. Here are his comments on why an excellent piano is so much a part of excellent music.

While one can teach basic music on an upright, one needs a grand to teach color, voicing, and gradations of tone and dynamics.

On a larger piano, the slightest variations in touch express themselves more clearly in tone and color. The pianist can hear immediately the difference in tones as he experiments in touch, voicing, and pedaling.

I have had many opportunities to choose pianos, but those were for concerts. Sometimes I made the selection in a hall, sometimes not, but the choice was always geared to a particular concert. I have never before chosen a new instrument for "permanent installation" as it were.

String players can take the instrument away, have it adjusted by someone, play on it for weeks, and finally take it or return it for another. With pianos, it's more like an arranged (or shotgun) marriage. You play them for a while (I had about two hours) and you choose.

The Steinway dealer in Cincinnati arranged the visit to the showroom. I didn't know how many pianos there would be to choose from (I'd heard from three to five); as it turned out, there were six ...

The challenge was to find one that had the greatest range of possibilities: of palette inherent in the instrument, and beautiful tone; I believe I found it.

In many ways it was the less obvious choice (there were others with brighter treble and punchier bass). The technician seconded my opinion and assured me that my reservations about balance and treble would not be a problem.

It was the newest of the pianos, the least played; the least prepped, and after several months, I can see I made the right decision.

Awadagin keeps busy with his touring schedule and he is Associate Professor of Piano and Artist in Residence at the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati.

Are you taking your young person to a holiday concert?

Concert Etiquette for Young People

Concert etiquette is the way people express their respect and concern for the musicians and audience. We educate our scholars (and other students) with these common sense concepts.

♪ **Know When To Applaud.** The best strategy is to wait until the rest of the audience starts to applaud (rather than you being the first one to clap).

♪ ♪ **Don't Interrupt the Performance.** Turn off your cell phone. If you need to leave, wait for a break (while people are applauding). There's no need to talk (or whisper) or make noise. Other people notice, even if you think they won't.

♪ ♪ ♪ **Enjoy the Performance.** Music is one of the world's oldest forms of entertainment. Find what pleases you and enjoy that part of the concert: the **melody**, the **rhythm**, the **harmony**, the **musicians**, the **sounds** themselves, the **instruments**. Following this rule means you truly understand the purpose of the event.

THE PRATT 2008 SCHOLAR RECEPTION

Every year, the **Pratt Music Foundation** hosts its scholar reception for our students and their families. Students play their instruments in an informal, non-recital setting; the Board of Directors and our Advisory Board have the opportunity to meet and talk to the students and their families.

An array of delicious refreshments is provided by our Board. A favorite, of course, is the gondolas provided by **Avanti's**. **Bevande** donates its flavorful coffee.

Special mention must be given to Kathy Steadman's *music note cookies* and Willie McCauley's *very popular punch*.



Photo by Glenn Reeder
February 2008 Pratt Scholar Reception

100 %

*of your support
goes to our
endowment;
earnings are used
only for music
scholarships.*



Help us be good stewards of our funds and of the environment. If you wish to be removed from the **Pratt Music Foundation** mailing list, please email prattmusicfoundation@gmail.com or call 309-827-5534.

