



## DANA MARTIN STUDIO

2355 Huguenard Drive, Ste 101

Lexington, KY 40503

859.488.9148

## QUICK LINKS



# KEYS

DANA MARTIN STUDIO  
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

### NEWSLETTER INFO

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Contact info:

2355 Huguenard Dr, Ste 101  
Lexington, KY 40503  
lessons.dms@gmail.com  
859.488.9148

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Free to students enrolled in  
Dana Martin Studio

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KEYS | JANUARY 2026

## WHAT'S NEW FOR DANA

December was truly a "concert month" for us! Anthony and I kicked things off with the Chris Tomlin Christmas concert in Louisville, which was such a beautiful way to start the season.

A few days later we had the incredible honor of attending John Michael Montgomery's concert at Rupp Arena as VIP guests. We were so grateful for the "best seats in the house," and watching his banner drop at Rupp was a powerful moment we will never forget. As a "hometown boy" from just down the road in Nicholasville, seeing him honored in Lexington's most iconic venue was deeply moving. Experiencing live music at that level is always such a great reminder of why we do what we do!

On December 17th, Andrea and Jonathan reached an incredible milestone: their 20th wedding

anniversary. We're so proud of the love and life they have built together over the last two decades. Cheers to many more years of happiness!

Our hearts were full as Andrea, Jonathan, and the whole family came up to celebrate Christmas with us. It was such a special time together, making memories and enjoying the magic of the season. Our son, Jon-Michael and his family were celebrating with his in-laws in Oklahoma this year.



Evie, Mamaw, Papaw,  
Ryan, Megan, Will, Natalea



Jon-Michael, Landree,  
Hadlee, Tiffany



Jonathan, Andrea

Anthony, Dana



John Michael Montgomery



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## LILY WU

### STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Lily

Hi, my name is Lily Wu. I'm originally from China. My parents are both from small cities, but we moved to Beijing

when I started elementary school, and I've lived there ever since. They introduced me to musical instruments, which is how I first developed an interest in piano. I love the tone of the instrument and the unique feeling of placing my fingers on the keys—it both sounds and feels like a stream of water. Classical music has always been my favorite, but recently I've also become interested in game soundtracks.

Aside from music, I'm deeply interested in medical science, which is why I came to Kentucky in 2022 to pursue my PhD in neuroscience. I love doing research and working with animals. I keep several

small animals in my apartment, including a pair of parakeets (who just started nesting during the holidays!), a hamster, and a corn snake. In my free time, I enjoy drawing cartoons and listening to classical music. Overall, I consider myself a quiet, calm person who enjoys solitary activities.

It is such a joy to feature Lily in this month's newsletter! As her teacher, I can truly say she is a "dream student."

Lily is an already experienced pianist, but what makes her stand out is her incredible diligence. She isn't satisfied with just "learning the notes"; she works tirelessly to bring every single piece she touches to a true performance level. Her preparation is second to none, and she approaches the piano with a level of focus and determination that is inspiring.

Beyond her work ethic, Lily brings such a wonderful energy to our studio. She has a genuine love for exploring new repertoire and always arrives at her lessons with a bright smile and a positive attitude. Lily, thank you for your hard work and for being such a beautiful example of lifelong musical growth!



## COMMUNITY

### Studio Happenings



#### WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!

MEGAN CAREY  
DAVID COVINGTON  
ALEX HINES  
ANNA KOVINCHICK  
ELLE MIDDLEBROOKS  
HALLE MIDDLEBROOKS  
ELLIE SVOEUNG



#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

DAVID MALENAB JAN 5  
KRISHWIN KUMARAN JAN 22  
ANDREW HOSTETLER JAN 31



#### IMPORTANT DATES

WINTER-SPRING SEMESTER  
BEGINS JAN 5  
ART BEAT JAN 16  
WINTER PERFORMANCE  
FEB 21  
SPRING RECITAL MAY 11

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DMS has been invited to participate in the Art Beat Celebration for the second year in a row! It's, a local week-long focus on the arts for children. Here are the details about when DMS students will perform:

**Friday, January 16, 4:30 pm**  
**Marksbury Family Branch Library**  
**2197 Versailles Road, Lexington**

Choose a recent fave or something new. We'll only have 2 piano lessons before the performance, so practice NOW to be prepared in time!

Please **RSVP (yes or no)** here:  
<https://bit.ly/dmsartbeat2024rsvp>  
or scan the QR code.



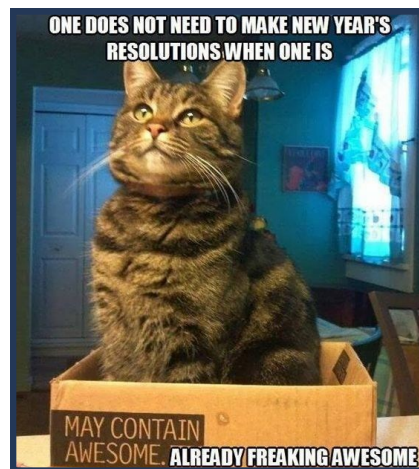
SCAN ME

## DMS STUDENT RESOURCES

### Need a new keyboard, MIDI cable, or some sheet protectors for your music?

Our studio's *Student Tools* webpage is your one-stop hub for helpful piano resources. From keyboards and writing supplies to all the materials needed for our **Piano Express** program, students can easily access what they need to support confident, successful learning. Visit the page anytime ([danamartinstudio.com/studenttools](https://danamartinstudio.com/studenttools)) to stay equipped, inspired, and ready to play!

## FUNNY CAT MEMES



## PRACTICE TIPS

### How Practicing Piano Is Like Following GPS

When you pull up GPS directions for a destination, probably like me, you read over the entire directions before beginning your journey. It's the same with a new piece.

1

**Scan the Route:** Before beginning your "journey" of playing the piece, look over the piece first to see "where you're going." This helps minimize any surprises along the way. It also helps you avoid pausing to figure out what comes next, so you can keep a slow, steady rhythm.

2

**Watch for Detours:** When following GPS, knowing ahead of time if the next turn is going to be left or right allows you to be in the correct lane in plenty of time. Likewise, in playing music, knowing what's coming up lets you be prepared for it.

3

**Mark Your Map:** Before you practice a new piece, take a few moments to "map out" the piece. Look over each hand individually, noticing the key signature, hand position, intervals, etc., as well as anything unexpected such as changing hand positions. Mark your music to remind you of these "unexpected turns" as you play your piece.



## CHRISTMAS RECITAL FUN!

We had an amazing Christmas Recital with 42 talented students! From "Silent Night" to "Jingle Bell Rock," we enjoyed everything, including jazzy tunes, beautiful flowing pieces, and some awesome duets. Our grand finale was a super fun duet, "Carol of the Bells."

After the recital, we warmed up with delicious hot chocolate and cookies.

A quick shoutout to a few students who had to leave early and aren't in the photo—missed you guys!

Thanks to all the students for your hard work and to the parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends who came to support. You all made the evening magical. We appreciate you!



## HAVE A CONFLICT WITH YOUR LESSON?

**PX Students** reschedule your lesson here: [calendly.com/danamartinstudio/px-reschedule](https://calendly.com/danamartinstudio/px-reschedule).

**Private Students** contact Dana to schedule an online or video feedback lesson.

## EXCITING NEWS: PIANO EXPRESS FOR IPAD/IOS!

We are so excited to announce that the Piano Express (PX) app is now compatible with your iPad and iPhone! This is a fantastic way to make practicing at home even more seamless.

Here is how to get started:

1. **Download the App:** Head to the App Store on your iPad or iPhone (best suited for models 2022 or later) and search for "Piano Express."
2. **Get Connected:** Visit our [Student Tools Page](#) to find the specific items needed to connect your device to your keyboard.
3. **Setup Guide:** We've posted a helpful video on that same [Student Tools Page](#) that walks you through the setup process.

**Need a hand?** If you have any questions or need help troubleshooting, please reach out to Ethan Abrams. He is our resident expert and is happy to help!

- **Email:** [ethanabrams.dms@gmail.com](mailto:ethanabrams.dms@gmail.com)
- **Phone:** 859.488.9148

Happy practicing!

