MAGAZINE

MAESTRO

SPECIAL EDITION WITH THE WBMC'S ABSOLUTE WINNERS

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"I became so obsessed with this instrument that my parents were „forced" to buy me one to calm me down".

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TUNYSTONES:
LEARN MUSIC READING IN A CREATIVE AND FUN WAY

"MY DREAM IS TO FEATURE ON FRANCE MUSIQUE".

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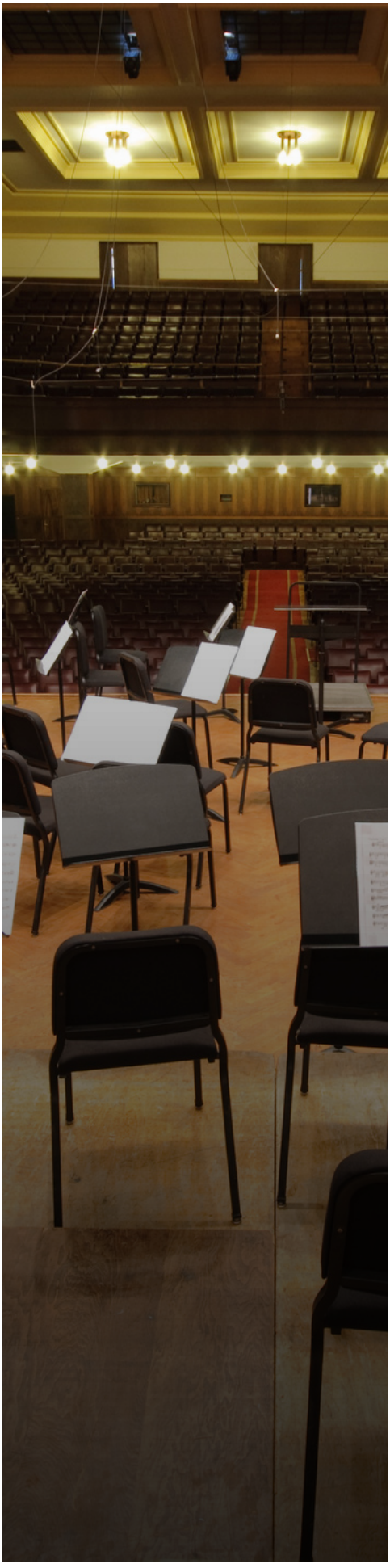
MAŸLIS ARRAT



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JULIAN BRODSKI



Can you share the story of how you first became interested in playing the saxophone and your musical journey from the beginning until now?

I've been in touch with music since an early age and I'm really thankful to my whole family for this. My dad is a worldwide famous violinist and my mom plays the violin too, my uncle plays the piano and my grandparents are great music lovers, thus as you can imagine my life path was kind of set since the beginning. I started playing a bit of violin when I was 3, but it didn't last long, infact although my parents are both violinists they never pushed or motivated me to follow their footsteps, still nowdays sometimes I wonder why they didn't. Anyway, a part from that I used to listen to a lot of music: my dad's concerts, his practice routine, as well as CDs, recordings etc. My big turn occured when I was 13 years old, while listening to one of my dad's recordings I said to myself: „wow, I want to be like him one day, I want to make music a part of my life, I want to follow his path". And that's when I decided that I would have been dedicated to music my whole life. I started to attend middle school's saxophone classes in October 2011 till 2013, then I begun attending the classical saxophone course a the conservatory: firstly under the guide of M. Todini in Perugia, continuing then with M. Rigliari when I moved to Benevento. Finally in Pesaro's cconservatory during my master degree I was guided by one of which I consider to be my greatest musical mentors and greatest saxophonist in the world: M. Fedrico Mondelci, who really gave me the most, both under a technical and a musical point of view.

I've studied during that last period in Pesaro composition and Orchestra conducting too (which I'm going to study deeper soon). In this very moment I'm studying jazz with another great musician: M. Visibelli in Milan.

What drew you to the saxophone in particular, and have you explored different types of saxophones in your musical career?

Honestly I don't know exactly what drew me to the saxophone, or at least I should say at a conscious level, but my parents told me several times about a little episode happened when I was more or less 3 years old: we just came out from a music shop,



I got in that occasion my very first violin, and on the way back to home there was a saxophone guy playing right on the sidewalk. So the little me at the view of this guy performing in the street, took his brand new violin and joined him for a „sensational" improvised performance, people passing by were amazed. Well, this is the only episode of my early life linked to a saxophone, afterwards the reason why I decided to pick this instrument at age of 13 still remains a mistery, I can only remember that out of sudden I became so obsessed with this instrument that my parents were „forced" to buy me one to calm me down. I explore daily all of the different types of saxophones (from the soprano to the baritone), infact a good saxophonist has to be handy with all of them, but for the moment my favourite saxophone to study and to perform with still remains the Alto saxophone, it's the one with which I feel the most freedom of expression while playing.

Could you tell us about your favorite musical pieces or composers to play on the saxophone, and how they've influenced your style?

For sure the classical saxophone composers I like the most are A. Glazunov and A. Desenclos. Both of them, through their saxophone masterpieces, pushed me towards a deeper understanding. I'd say that music, as well as life, is a continue quest of different aspects and during the study of these two pieces, for the first time, I've started to become aware of this process. Of course I need to thank my mentor too for putting me on the right tracks in order to understand that.

Have you had the opportunity to collaborate with other musicians or ensembles? What do you enjoy most about musical collaboration?

I currently play with several musicians as well as a soloist in different ensembles or orchestras. By the way I think that my biggest achievement till now is playing into the "Italian saxophone quartet", the quartet of my mentor ad playing at his side is really a huge honour to me. In my opinion the most beautiful thing about playing with others is the bond that is created through the time with the other musicians, even here there's a quest: being in such a confidence and connection with eachother to sound like a single instrument. One of the most clear and strong examples is in jazz, in which the musician literally try to "talk" (play) like eachother. It's also nice to listen in more experienced ensembles the idea of how they conceive music.

What do you believe is the role of the saxophone in contemporary music, and how do you see yourself contributing to its evolution?

The saxophone is the youngest acoustic instrument invented to get such a worldwide succes in a very brief time. It represents the future because it's a versatile instrument that can shift so easily through all genres of music: classical, jazz, pop, rock... thus there is a high number of modern composers disposed to write for this instrument. I think that its evolution depends on teaching to new generations and through concerts, making people aware about the stunning beauty and possibilities of this instrument. And of course cooperating with other musicians and composers.

What are your favorite ways to relax and unwind when you're not practicing or performing?

Definitely my favourite way to unwind is just to play the piano or the guitar: playing popular songs, classical / jazz / pop pieces, discovering harmonies that triggers me or anything that comes out from my mind in that specific moment, matter of fact I'm deeply in love with music composition because I conceive it as an inner journey and a way to express ourselves. Moreover I adore to listen to music, I'm quite open to all kind of musical genres, and sometimes I draw or paint.

Lastly whenever I can I go for walks, lately I'm into meditation too.

Looking ahead, what are your goals and aspirations as a musician? Are there specific projects or milestones you're working toward in your musical career?

I've focused all my studying and concert carrer mostly on classical saxophone, in this very moment one of my main goal is developing the jazz language (a must for saxophonist) as well as create my own jazz/pop ensemble with which travel and perform around the world. Other than that of course still remains the will to get affirmed as a classical saxophonist and to develop through the ensembles I'm part of. Also lately when I look forward into the future I like the idea of creating my own music school/teaching system, I think that sharing your knowledge (and in general everything in life) is the most important thing infact in order to receive you have first to give: and a place to play music too, something like a jazz club or a recording studio. Lastly I will master music producing, an aspect of music that always fascinated and triggered me.

Are there any hobbies or activities you'd like to explore in the future that you haven't had the chance to pursue yet?

Dance has always triggered me a lot, thus I think I'm going to take dance classes in a close future, probably Latin-American style because the rhythm of these dances flowing into your body is really something awesome. Afterwards my child's dream : taking a pilot licence. I do love planes and the aviation world so badly! Furthermore I'm going to take yoga classes.

"The most beautiful thing about playing with others is the bond that is created through the time with the other musicians.



Maÿlis Arrat



Maÿlis Arrat began her musical journey with the piano and transitioned to accordion under Viviane Mauriac. She enriched her classical accordion skills at the Toulouse Conservatory and earned accolades at the Genevilliers Conservatory.

Do you come from a musical family background?

I come from a family of music lovers, although there are no professional musicians among us.

Can you share your journey in learning to play the accordion, starting from your early experiences?

I began my musical journey with the piano at the age of 6. However, I had a strong affinity for the accordion, even though I cannot quite recall the initial spark that led me to this instrument. I began formal accordion lessons at the age of 8, under the guidance of Viviane Mauriac, an exceptional teacher. Originally, I started with standard bass accordion rather than classical accordion. My musical horizons broadened when I joined the Toulouse Conservatory at the age of 15, in Grégory Daltin's class. It was there that I delved into classical repertoire and chromatic bass accordion. I also attended master classes with the esteemed composer and teacher Franck Angélis. In 2022, I was awarded a prize at the Genevilliers Conservatory with the commendations of the jury, further enriching my musical journey.

Could you refer to other people who have been or are inspiring you on your musical path?

Over the years, I've had the opportunity to listen to extraordinary musicians who have inspired me profoundly. For instance, I found the work of V. Stupnikov, C. Rossi, F. Angélis, P. Makkonnen to be particularly enlightening.

What do you like to do in your free time? Could you tell us about your hobbies and interests?

Outside of music, I have a diverse range of interests. I am keen on sports and cinema. I also have a strong interest in politics. Additionally, I work as a social worker, a profession that I find deeply rewarding.

How do you feel when you perform and share your music with an audience?

For me, concerts are the pinnacle of musical expression. I relish the role of an interpreter, bringing my touch to other composers' works. I have a particular fondness for playing pieces written by contemporary composers, specifically for classical accordion, as well as transcriptions and ensemble music.



I aspire to deepen my musical collaborations, expand my performance repertoire, and make a meaningful contribution to the world of music.

What motivated you to participate in music competition such as World's Best Musicians?

Competitions serve a dual purpose for me. They provide a platform for self-improvement, pushing me to refine my skills further. Additionally, they offer visibility, opening doors for career opportunities in professional musicianship. For instance, winning my first international competition in Castelfidardo, the accordion capital, was a significant stepping stone in launching my career.

What are your biggest dreams for the future, particularly in relation to your musical career?

My dream is to feature on France Musique, a radio station I frequently listen to and highly admire.

I aspire to deepen my musical collaborations, expand my performance repertoire, and make a meaningful contribution to the world of music.



Michael Phillipe Andree



"It doesn’t really matter if we celebrate in small or big ways, the gratitude inside our heart is what counts".

Dear Michael, this is the second time you have appeared in our Magazine, this time for the WBM Competition grand prize. How do you feel about this?

I feel honoured and grateful, I've never imagined that playing piano would take me to various places and experiences, and one of them is definitely here being featured by Maestro Magazine. Thank you for the chance to be featured, and I hope for big success for the magazine as well, as a medium of showcase for pianist and instrumentalist alike.

How do you celebrate your musical achievements, big or small?

I cherish every musical achievement I've made so far, and I think it's necessary to celebrate every achievement as a sign of gratitude. It doesn't really matter if we celebrate in small or big ways, the gratitude inside our heart is what counts. Winning a competition doesn't really mean that we're already the best, it just means that we have made a solid step on our musical journey. As for me, I like to keep the celebration simple, like just having lunch or dinner with my parents or teacher. They are a major part in my achievement.

It seems to us that you are making rapid progress musically and technically. That's what the judges who first heard you at PCO six months ago say. What areas have you focused on recently?

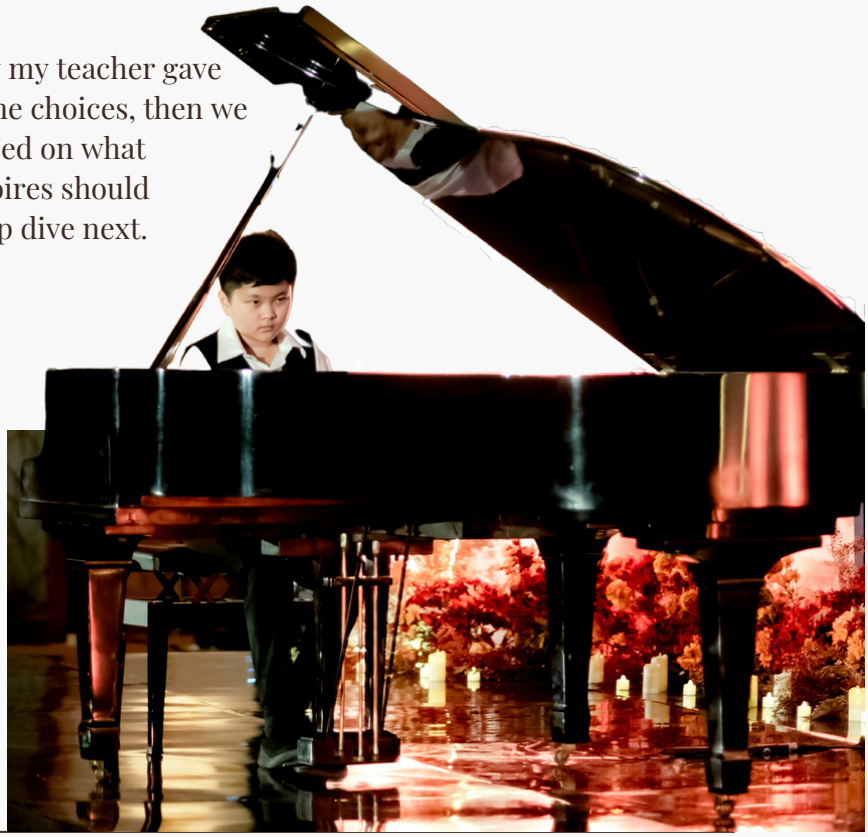
Thank you, it's a great honour to receive feedback from the judges, those comments will teach you us a lot about our playing, our musical interpretation, our technical issues, from the audience's perspective, and we don't get that kind of feedback easily. Recently, I have been focusing more on my techniques, mostly on accuracy. I think I'm not really good at my accuracy, so I would like to improve that area, at the moment.

How do you choose your repertoire? Does your teacher usually give you a choice? What do you enjoy playing the most?

Usually my teacher gave me some choices, then we discussed on what repertoires should we deep dive next. Sometimes I gave her a repertoire that I want to play, but if the repertoire is not really suitable for me, she would give her assessment. So it's more of a discussion on what to decide. Right now I enjoy playing repertoires from the modern and late romantic era, such as Ravel, Kapustin, and Kabalevsky.

As a young pianist, how do you manage your schoolwork alongside your dedication to piano playing?

My parents choose a school that's not really busy with assignments and extras, so I can still have time to practice for 1 or 2 hours after school.



But yes, there are times when schoolwork and tests come without mercy, at that kind of time, there is no choice but to skip some of the piano hours (or leisure hours). It's just at those times that you need to set the priority and be flexible.

How do you feel when you perform and share your music with an audience?

I feel really happy whenever I get a chance to perform.
I really like performing, even though sometimes I feel really nervous when performing in front of a lot of people. I feel like there is no room for mistakes or even a room for interpretation freedom. But I try to overcome that kind of feeling, for example by telling myself that it's just my fear talking.

> I feel really happy whenever I get a chance to perform.

However, when I sit ready to play on the piano, fully concentrated, the joy of playing will help me to overcome the stage fear. I hope the more I grow up, the more I can handle the nervousness.

Tell us about your non-musical side. What are your interests, what do you like to do in your spare time?

On my free time, I play online games with my friends, or just watch various youtube videos. For sport, I like swimming and basketball the most.

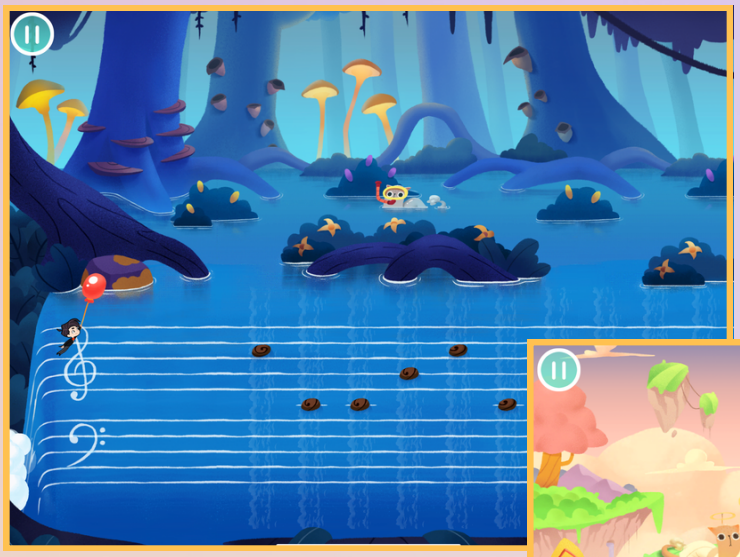
Absolute winner in piano category of the 1st WBMC in 2023



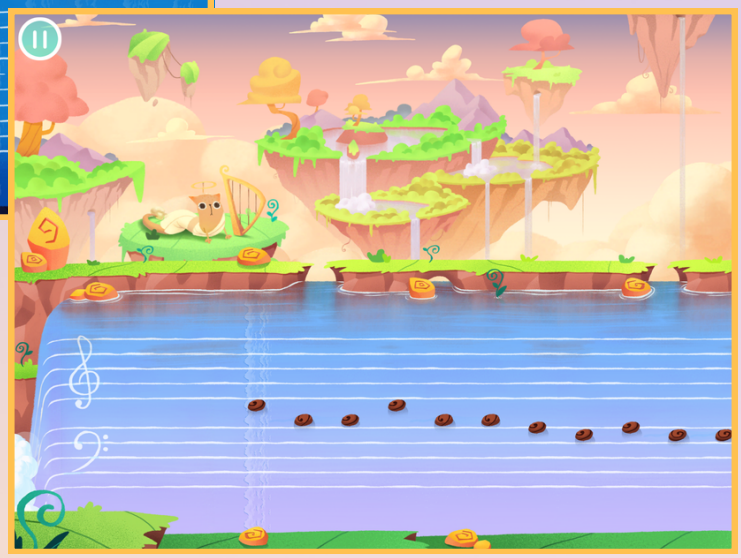
TUNY STONES for piano

An amazing app for home practice

The TunyStones App is a **real game changer** for piano lessons and home practice. Thanks to this playful, nonverbal and highly motivating method, the rather unpopular and dreaded subject of music reading is transformed into a thrilling and motivating game. The use of the app **does not require any previous knowledge**, as it is self-explanatory. A rough orientation about the notation system is given through the "improvisation levels". Next comes an introduction to musical intervals within popular melodies.







"You can compose with TunyStones and create your own melodies.

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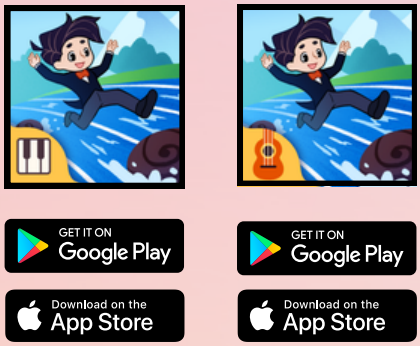
Free app for all piano teachers

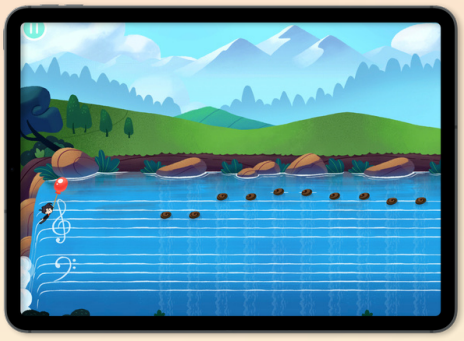
Many parents, pupils and most importantly, teachers, have tested the app during its development at the research project in Basel. Their ideas have influenced its development and made an **important contribution to its success**. The app is available in the AppStore for iOS and on the Google Play Store for Android devices - and it is free for all piano teachers. Pupils and parents can try the app **for free** and choose between a monthly or semi-annual subscription.



You can compose with TunyStones and create your own melodies. But beware: Tuny will make an appearance and has to master your own compositions, including all of the leaps from stone to stone! The learning process thus transcends simple music reading and composition; it nurtures creativity and provides a unique form of feedback and self-assessment.

Jan Gazdzicki about TunyStones:

“The app is perfect for daily exercises and independent practice at home. Beyond that, I would recommend using TunyStones towards the end of the lesson - the app has proved very popular with children aged 5 to 12 and can easily refresh the mind and motivate to overcome cognitiv hurdles”.







Aleksandra Gawęda

Absolute winner in violin category of the 1st WBM Competition in 2023

> Having an opportunity to record your playing is very teaching, eye-opening and motivating to get more out of yourself.

Who are some of your influential teachers, and what impact have they had on your musical journey?
Every person I've played and studied with has made an impact on myself and my playing, my school and college teachers, pianists I've worked with. Some of the most memorable people for me happen to be the ones that weren't exactly "nice" to me in the begging, or in general. I guess these unpleasant situations were motivators of some kind to constantly stand strong with what I believe in.

> **My advice is to try, try and try until something does work. That feeling at the end is indescribable.**



What are your biggest dreams for the future, particularly in relation to your musical career?
My dreams are to be happy with what I do. My biggest wish is to finally feel stable with my career life, be a teacher, play in a good orchestra.

How do you feel when you perform and share your music with an audience?
Stressed, that's for sure, which I think is very normal and natural for all performers, but besides that, I also feel free and very excited that I can share my musical perspective with the audience.

Can you share your experiences with chamber music? How does playing chamber music differ from solo performance in terms of collaboration and musical expression?
My experience with chamber music is based mostly on violin-piano duos. For many years I've played with my best friend, Maria Moliszewska and we've managed to study and perform some of the most significant repertoire of polish music - Bacewicz, Spisak, Szymanowski, and some other from different times and countries - Beethoven, Mozart, Crumb or Clara Schumann. I think chamber music largely consists of solo playing, but it's presented in a different way - you're not alone, you share the importance of your and other instruments parts - it works like a symbiosis, where when you give something, the others get it and when the right time comes, they give back and you receive.

What motivated you to participate in music competitions such as World's Best Musicians? What advice would you give to participants in a future competition?
Having an opportunity to record your playing is very teaching, eye-opening and motivating to get more out of yourself. It is also very painful when things don't go your way and that's why I decided to take part in WBMC - to challenge myself, to not give up. And my advice to all the people that are reading this is to try, try and try until something does work. That feeling at the end is indescribable.

Apart from being a violinist, what are some of your other interests and hobbies?
My biggest interest right now is in plants and gardening. This year I've managed to grow some jalapeño peppers, mint, basil and tomatoes! Might not sound like a lot, but if you're limited to only a small balcony, you appreciate everything you have!

Aleksandra Schulz

An interview with absolute winner in flute category of the 1st WBM Competition in 2023.

How did your passion for the flute begin, and what motivates you to continue playing it?

In 2015, thanks to my parents, I started attending music school. From the very beginning, the flute had a beautiful sound for me, and I am truly happy to play this instrument! From the beginning of my musical education, I have had wonderful teachers who always support me and guide me in my further development.

Can you share your favorite flute composition, and what makes it special to you?

I have so many favorite compositions, it's very difficult to choose one... Nevertheless, Carl Reinecke's Concerto in D major is a beautiful composition, especially the first part!

I also love the Mercedante Concerto in E minor, the Libermann Sonata. Each of them has incredible sensitivity, beautifully shows the color of the flute in many registers, but above all - it is a pleasure for the soul!

What specific aspects of flute playing have you dedicated time to perfecting in your practice sessions?

First of all, I focus on the sound you get from your instrument. Sensitivity is the most important thing to me! Practicing technique and finger speed comes naturally as long as sound is the foundation.
Every time I spend practicing, I start by playing long, concentrated sounds and only then focus on technique.

> **Sensitivity is the most important thing to me!**



Can you recall a memorable performance or musical moment that stands out in your musical journey?

My most memorable concert was definitely when I was in the second year of music school. Then I dressed very elegantly, I was happy that I invited my family to this performance. The moment came when I went on stage, my accompanist had already played the introduction to the song, and when I was supposed to produce its first sound, I failed. I tried again, and again, but still nothing. It turned out that my flute had a damaged mechanism, which broke down just before the concert. So there was a quick exchange, a friend in the audience held my flute and I played her instrument. Ultimately, the performance was very successful, but it was a lot of stress! Now I have something to remember!

Beside learning music, what are some of your favorite hobbies or activities?

I love it when there's a lot going on in my life! Music is definitely at the forefront of my life, but I also love other creative activities! I devote a large part of my time to editing wedding films - it is my summer job, which I love! In addition, reading books is my great passion, which I love to share with people close to me - then we exchange favorite titles and share our impressions.

Above all, talking to other people is for me the most satisfying form of spending my free time - such moments bring a lot to my life, they open me up to new experiences.

How do you strike a balance between your musical commitments and your school responsibilities?

I must admit that combining two schools at the same time has accompanied me since the beginning of my musical education, since I was nine years old. To this day, there are moments when the load of responsibilities is really tiring for me, but there are beautiful moments that make up for it, such as performing on stage. Thanks to this functioning, I also learned to set my priorities, and I know exactly what is most important to me in education. I am committed to some lessons with all my heart, and some of them are just a transitional stage that I would like to finish as soon as possible and focus on what is essential to me.

"I would like to fulfill myself as a professional musician and perform my favorite flute pieces with the accompaniment of a symphony orchestra".

What are your biggest dreams for the future?

In the future, I would like to fulfill myself as a professional musician and perform my favorite flute pieces with the accompaniment of a symphony orchestra. With all this, I would like to have time to capture beautiful moments as a photographer, but most importantly - to have a happy family and fulfill my travel dreams with them.



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