



Collaborative Piano Fellowship



Photography: Karl Rabe
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Overview

The Postgraduate Collaborative Piano Fellowship is an intensive two-year fellowship directed by pianist Erika Switzer. It is designed to give professional experience to pianists who have a strong interest in becoming collaborative artists, with the ultimate aim of easing the transition between academic and professional life. The fellowship comes with a generous stipend and is open both to students who have already completed a degree in collaborative piano, and also to those students who have completed a bachelor's degree in piano performance and have a strong interest in further study of collaborative piano.

The program allows students to expand their knowledge of the core collaborative piano repertoire; to increase experience in playing for high-level undergraduate and graduate students under the mentorship of master musicians; and to deepen their musical understanding through the guidance of the distinguished faculty of The Bard College Conservatory of Music.

Curriculum

Playing and Performance

The Bard College Conservatory of Music piano fellows work with students in the Undergraduate Double Degree, Advanced Performance Studies, and Graduate Vocal Arts Programs. Fellows are responsible for playing for studio lessons, coachings, masterclasses, rehearsals, classes, auditions, and performances. In this capacity they play for and are coached by the faculty and guest artists of the Conservatory. Piano fellows have semester-long partnerships with Vocal Arts Program singers. Additionally, major works are prepared for the annual conservatory concerto competition and bi-annual main stage Vocal Arts Program operas.

Evaluations

Fellows will be evaluated at the end of each year by the program director. A successful evaluation at the end of the first year is necessary to qualify for the second year of the fellowship.

Collaborative Piano Seminar

This seminar, led by director Erika Switzer, meets weekly and has two main components:

- A survey of the basic collaborative piano repertoire, including instrumental duo repertoire, the concerto repertoire, and the basic aria and song vocal repertoires.
- A study of the skills necessary to work as a collaborative pianist. These include playing orchestral reductions, sight reading, score reading, and transposing.

The seminar also surveys the various challenges, both practical and musical, of being a professional collaborative pianist. The emphasis in the seminar is on the practical, rather than the theoretical, with the aim of both facilitating the fellows' work in the Conservatory and preparing them for the professional world.

Teaching

Fellows may also teach, on a limited basis, some secondary piano lessons to undergraduate instrumentalists, under the supervision of the program director, Erika Switzer.

For information on admission, additional programs, and more, visit: bard.edu/conservatory/fellowship