



by  
**DR. BRUCE BERR**

MTNA National Conference, Baltimore, Maryland  
9:15 - 10:15 a.m. Sunday, March 19, 2017  
Grand Ballroom II III & IV, Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel

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## PROGRAM TOPICS

Please share your comments or ask questions at any time

- \* Introducing improvisation to an elementary student
- \* Technique & practice strategies with an advanced student:
  - “throwing” vs. touch-first shifts
  - “emptying” between gestures
  - smoothing out lateral motions
  - freezing practice
- \* Observation of the “Finish Line Syndrome” with an intermediate student
- \* Guiding a fireball—a balancing act!
- \* Teaching a gifted advanced student—less is more
- \* Are syncopations really that funny?!? (rerun)

(over)

## Music used in today's videos . . .

1. "Toes In The Sand" by Phillip Keveren. *All-In-One Piano Lessons*, Book B, Hal Leonard.
2. "Rondalla Aragonesa" from *12 Danzas Españolas* by Enrique Granados. Public domain.
3. "Joy to the World" by Handel, arr. by Kern, Keveren, Rejino. *Christmas Piano Solos*, Level 4, Hal Leonard.
4. "Jazzy Joe" by Nancy Faber. *Piano Adventures*, Level 1, Faber Piano Adventures.
5. *Rhapsody in Blue* by George Gershwin. Warner Bros.
6. "A Little Latin" by Bill Boyd. *Piano Lessons*, Book 2, Hal Leonard.

BRUCE BERR is a member of the full-time faculty of the Chicago College of Performing Arts of Roosevelt University as a musicianship and pedagogy professor. He previously taught there from 1989-2002, and before that served on the faculties of numerous institutions, including Washington University in St. Louis. He has also been an independent piano teacher for over four decades, working with children of all ages, leisure adults, as well as other piano teachers.

Berr is nationally known as an author. His articles on music and piano teaching have appeared in the major keyboard journals, and he has been associate editor for *Clavier Companion* magazine since 1997. His popular column on personal observations, "ad lib," appears every issue on the back page of *American Music Teacher* magazine.

Berr frequently travels to present workshops and demonstration teaching throughout the country. He has done programs for the World Piano Pedagogy Conference, MTNA National Conferences, and for the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy, as well as numerous universities and professional teachers groups. He has presented in twenty-three states and the District of Columbia. Last spring he taught the intermediate level master class at the 2016 national MTNA conference in San Antonio, Texas. Since then, he has appeared at state conferences in Iowa and Alaska. Later this year, he will be doing video programs of his teaching at the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy in Chicagoland.

Dr. Berr is also a composer and arranger of educational piano music. His most recent publications are *Eight Sound Poems* by Opus Music, *Frontier Sonatina* by FJH Music, and *Barcarolle Impromptu* by Hal Leonard Publishing Corp., who also distributes his arrangements of Chanukah and Passover holiday music as well as several arrangements

of patriotic duets for young pianists. Berr served as a consultant, composer, and clinician for Hal Leonard's piano method series for children. *Clavier* magazine featured his music in its "Commissioned by Clavier" pages. Berr also has several other books of compositions, including *At the Seashore*, Vols. I and II, by FJH Music Company; these volumes were on the Federation List. He served as a judge for this year's MTNA National Composition Competition, and he has also been commissioned to write a piece for the 2018 Conference in Orlando, Florida.

Berr's most recent awards include being a Fellow for 2017 for the Illinois MTA, and a Citation Award from the New York MTA in 2013.

Bruce Berr received his degrees in piano and pedagogy from Washington University and Northwestern University. His piano teachers included William Schatzkamer, Etsko Tazaki, and David Kaiserman. He also studied in New York with Jonathan Feldman and Edna Golandsky. His pedagogy teachers have included Frank Murphy, Frances Larimer, Marcia Bosits, and Elvina Pearce. As a young child, his first piano teacher was Thelma Mildé.

Berr's hobbies include watching movies, dramas, and old sitcoms on TV, listening to international radio on the internet, driving a motorcycle, and studying linguistics. He holds a General Class ham radio license with the call sign, W9KBR. Bruce Berr and his wife, Jennifer Merry, live in Glenview, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, with their dog Frango and their cats Seiko, Romeo, and Rusty. He has been a fan of the Chicago Cubs and Wrigley Field since 1986, and could not believe that hell froze over last year.

Please visit Bruce Berr's website at [www.BruceBerr.com](http://www.BruceBerr.com). He can be reached by e-mail at [BBerr@comcast.net](mailto:BBerr@comcast.net)