

Luc Cianfarani

Artist Minigrant Outcome Report

Contemporary Music Summer Study

Thanks to the generous funding I received through the Miller Arts Scholars, I was able to take four piano lessons with Anthony de Mare in New York City this summer. Mr. de Mare is an internationally renowned pianist who has performed in some of the world's most prestigious concert venues. Specializing in contemporary music, Anthony has worked with some of the greatest composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. NPR ranked his new album *Liaisons: Re-imagining Sondheim from the Piano* as one of the top 10 classical albums of 2015.

I worked exclusively on twentieth century solo piano repertoire with Anthony. With his help I worked on four pieces from Paul Hindemith's *Ludus Tonalis*, "Hommage à Rameau" from Claude Debussy's *Image Book I*, "Toccata" from Francis Poulenc's *Trois Pieces*, and Frederic Rzewski's "North American Ballad #4". The set of pieces I worked on from *Ludus Tonalis* I had previously worked on in the spring semester. Anthony helped me give these pieces more direction and flow. As these pieces are not particularly easy on the ear, I had to focus on making them more musical. I ended up performing one of these pieces at the Kennedy Center in July (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0xvLMhggYs> begins at 39:30).

The Poulenc and Debussy works were assigned so I could focus on creating different sound colors and characters. As these pieces are not technically demanding we were able to work on honing and cultivating my musical energy. Working on Rzewski's Fourth North American Ballad presented unique technical challenges that

are not frequently found in the standard piano repertoire. Anthony, having previously played the piece and knowing the composer personally, gave me insightful advice that put me on the right track towards bringing this challenging piece to performance level.

I found a great mentor and friend in Anthony and he has agreed to teach me again in the future. Studying with Anthony de Mare was an excellent experience that would have not been possible without the generosity of the Miller Arts Scholars program. I would like to wholeheartedly thank the entire Miller Arts Scholars program, with a special thanks to Evie and Steven Colbert as well as Sandy and Vinie Miller.