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Miami's top teen poets showcased with international Classical stars and DJ

PIANO SLAM's Urban/Classical Concert February 28th at the Adrienne Arsht Center
Directed by Broadway's Ilana Ransom Toeplitz

By: *Dranoff 2 Piano*

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The Adrienne Arsht Center and the Dranoff 2 Piano Foundation bring the 12th anniversary of PIANO SLAM to the Knight Concert Hall in a Classical/ Hip Hop/Spoken Word mashup featuring internationally acclaimed Piano Duo Dan Strange and Rachel Ohnsman – mixing up Beethoven, Bach, and Gershwin with Bad Bunny, Camila Cabello, and Lizzo rocking the beats of DJ Cardi with Miami's own star choreographer Rosie Herrera, Argentinian songstress Roxana Arned, and debuting the works of Miami's top young poets.



PianoSlamLogoWhite

PIANO SLAM 12's music and poetry theme is Miami *VARIATIONS: And Sill I Rise*

The Future of Peoples and Climate in South Florida

PIANO SLAM is a high powered cross-genre Music/Poetry/Dance extravaganza recommended by The Miami Herald as "a fantastically hip musical showcase for the voices of Miami's young poets in an extraordinary collaboration of top international and local artists." PIANO SLAM is directed by Broadway stage artist Ilana Ransom Toeplitz with music direction by Martin Bejerano.

PIANO SLAM's wildly popular county-wide music-based poetry competition has worked with more than 80,000 Mami-Dade Public middle and high school students making Classical music fun and an inspiration for their own creative writing. From Hialeah to the Beaches and Miami Gardens to Homestead, Dranoff 2 Piano Foundation's PIANO SLAM has been connecting teenagers' love of music to professional performance artists across creative boundaries for over a decade and is sponsored by Miami-Dade County, Miami-Dade Public Schools, Books & Books, The Children's Trust, and the Miami HEAT.

2020 marks twelve years of the PIANO SLAM bringing top international Classical pianists to showcase the award-winning literary voices of Miami Dade Public School's top teen poets matching their Spoken Word with professional Classical and Hip-hop artists in this FREE concert at the Arsht.

PIANO SLAM 12 takes place on Friday, February 28th at 7:30PM at the Knight Concert Hall in the Adrienne Arsht Center located at 1300 Biscayne Blvd, Miami, FL 33132.

PIANO SLAM concert is FREE, but tickets are required. Tickets are available at www.ArshtCenter.org starting on January 31st.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

ILANA RANSOM TOEPLITZ is a New York City-based director and choreographer specializing in new musicals and comedy. On Broadway, Ilana assistant directed *VIOLET* (2014 revival starring Sutton Foster, Tony Nominations for Best Direction and Best Musical Revival) and was the SDCF Mike Ockrent

Fellow on *THE PROM* with Casey Nicholaw (2018, Tony Nominations for Best Direction and Best Musical). Favorite credits as a director and/or choreographer include *25th ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE* (Choreographer, ACT of CT), *CHICAGO* (Dir./Choreo), *REEFER MADNESS* (Dir./Choreo, featuring Alan Cumming), *THE DROWSY CHAPERONE* (Dir./Choreo), *SINGIN' IN THE RAIN* (Choreo), *MARY POPPINS & SEUSSICAL!* (both with Berkshire Theatre Group), the TheatreWorksUSA National Tours of *CLICK CLACK MOO & A CHRISTMAS CAROL* (Dir./Choreo), and the upcoming world premiere of Drew Gasparini's *WE AREN'T KIDS ANYMORE* (Dir./Choreo) set to premiere in New York City in spring 2020. Ilana was the Associate Director of *A CHRISTMAS STORY: THE MUSICAL!* (2014-2015, First National Tour), *DIRTY DANCING* (2017-2018 Tour) and the premiere of *SONDHEIM ON SONDHEIM* (2017, Boston Pops & Tanglewood). Ilana has directed readings and premieres of new work at The Drama League, NYMF, the Adrienne Arsht Center, Berkshire Theatre Group, York Theatre Company, NY Theatre Barn, Boston Center for the Arts, Keen Company, the Museum of Sex & 54 Below. Ilana holds additional assistant or associate credits with: Leigh Silverman, Casey Nicholaw, Susan Stroman, Baayork Lee, Sara Lapine, NY City Center, Second Stage, Signature Theatre (VA), Huntington Theatre, and Pittsburgh CLO. Ilana is a proud Pittsburgh native, a Directors Project Alum (2016 Leo Shull New Musicals Directing Fellowship) and the 2018 SDC Foundation Mike Ockrent Fellow. Ilana is also a plus-size model and activist for body-positivity, women's rights and LGBTQIA+ communities. Ilana was featured in Gabriela Herman's book and NY Times feature, "*The Kids Are Alright*".

DAN STRANGE has performed on a variety of the world's biggest stages from Carnegie Hall to NBC's *The Today Show* as well as with critically acclaimed artists representing multiple genres including Jodi Benson, Susan Egan, Robert Davi, The Mills Brothers, Michael Feinstein, Ann Hampton Calloway, Rachel York, Tony award nominee Norm Lewis, and two time Tony award winner Sutton Foster. He has played in orchestra pits for the national touring companies of *Wicked*, *Jersey Boys*, *Pippin*, *Les Misérables*, *West Side Story*, *Dreamgirls*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Legally Blonde*, and *A Chorus Line*. As a composer, Daniel has written, arranged and orchestrated for numerous musical settings including jazz, pop, choral, and orchestral ensembles from all over the country. Dan is the Director of Contemporary Keyboard Studies at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music.

RACHEL OHNSMAN is a singer-songwriter completing her senior year at the University of Miami's Frost School of Music. Growing up in Pennsylvania, Rachel was trained in classical piano and voice, and performs frequently in local musical theatre productions. Upon moving to Miami, she found her love in jazz and pop.

DJ *CARDI* is a Miami born and bred DJ who has DJ'ed all over the world thanks to his residency at The Cove Atlantis Bahamas. Local Miami hot spots where he can be seen are the American Airlines Arena for Miami HEAT, The Wharf, and poolside at the Fontainebleau.

MARTIN BEJERANO is a native of Miami and has been active as a professional musician since the age of fifteen when he began his performance career playing Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" concerto with the Mexican-American Bi-National Symphony. Martin is a graduate of New World School of the Arts where he studied jazz piano, composition, and arranging with Bill Peterson whom he cites as one of this most important influences. Martin then went on to receive a Masters degree from the University of Miami under full scholarship. Currently, Martin heads the jazz piano department at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami teaching jazz piano, improvisation and composition, and tours throughout the U.S. Europe and Asia .

ROSIE HERRERA is a Cuban American dancer, choreographer and artistic director of Rosie Herrera Dance Theater in Miami. She is a graduate from New World School with a BFA in Dance Performance. She has been commissioned by The Miami Light Project, The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Ballet Hispanico, Jose Limon Dance Company, Moving Ground Dance Theater, Houston Met Dance, New World Symphony and the American Dance Festival (ADF) in 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2018. Her company, Rosie Herrera Dance Theatre, has been presented by the Northrop Dance Series, New World Symphony, Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Miami Light Project, Baryshnikov (SP?)Arts Center, Texas A & M University, Duncan Theater, The Annenburg Center, Maui Arts and Cultural Center, Dance Place, Contemporary Arts Center of New Orleans, The Yard at Martha's Vineyard, Alys Stephens Center, Wilson Center at Cape Fear University, The Rialto Center, Gotham Dance at Skirball and Focus Dance at The Joyce as well as by The American Dance Festival at the Joyce NYC in 2016 and 2018.

ROXANA AMED is a vocalist and songwriter and is considered by colleagues, audiences and critics as one of the most important voices in the Jazz Fusion style, blending Argentine folk and rock with jazz. Amed is producing her octave work, original music, jazz and Argentine fusion, to be released by Sony Music with Martin Bejerano (piano and composition), Mark Small (sax and composition), Edward Pérez (acoustic bass), Ludwig Alfonso (drums) and other important collaborations at emblematic studio The Hit Factory.

ABOUT THE DRANOFF 2 PIANO

For 34 years, the Dranoff International 2 Piano Foundation has been the world's leading champion of exclusively two piano repertoire and artistry. It is the only international foundation, accredited by the World Federation of International Music Competitions, to discover, promote, and award honors to top professional duo piano artists through its competition, commissions, and presentations of duo piano concerts. The Dranoff promotes awareness in a new generation of students of the transformational power of music and the arts through its multi-disciplinary, educational, and inspirational concert program, PIANO SLAM.

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