

Frost Educators Launch Educational Video Series

NEWS, KEITH JARRETT, SHELLY BERG, DAFNIS PRIETO, GONZALO RUBALCABA, MARTIN BEJERANO, JOHN DAVERSA, BRIAN LYNCH

By John Radanovich | Apr. 9, 2019



The University of Miami's Frost School of Music has launched a new educational video series titled Frost Music Masters. The series features acclaimed musicians/educators dissecting complex pieces of music and sharing tips on how to play them.

The series, which was funded by an anonymous donor, will showcase Frost's philosophy of teaching. As reflected in the school's motto, "Build Yourself at Frost," the curricular method is built around the idea that there is no single "right way" to learn.

The idea for the series was sparked by the unnamed donor, who challenged the faculty to create a learning video with differing strategies for tackling a piece, offering to cover the entire bill for the video production.

In a recent interview on the Frost campus, Dean Shelly Berg explained that the donor “just so happens to be quite a good amateur jazz pianist.”

The first entry in the series is a 10-minute video that includes in-depth commentary and demonstration from four Frost faculty members—Berg, Martin Bejerano, [Gonzalo Rubalcaba](#) and [Dafnis Prieto](#)— all of whom examine pianist Keith Jarrett’s intricate “Last Solo Final Impromptu.” Work on the video was done by university staff, as well as an outside production company.

Berg was quick to point out that having four different players explain their own unique ideas and performance techniques perfectly illustrates how Frost educators constantly emphasize to students that there are many possible ways to approach a piece of music.

Given his unique style, Jarrett’s works are difficult for many young pianists to understand. The four educators help unpack some of the mystery surrounding Jarrett’s techniques and offer their own pathways to interpretation.

In the video, Berg tells viewers, “This song is all about improvisation. It seems so easy, and it’s confoundingly difficult.”

During Rubalcaba’s section of the video, he tells viewers to “record yourself, listen to yourself, but don’t get in love with yourself.”

During his segment, Prieto—a Grammy-winning drummer and big band leader—discusses bass drum parts, high-hat rhythms and other percussive elements.

In a telephone conversation, Prieto said he was impressed at how well the video turned out. Although his contribution to video is surrounded by commentary from pianists, he joked that his part certainly doesn’t look like it was “just kind of squeezed in.” He said, “The point is to extend the idea of the instrument, and we are talking about a very special artist here, too.”

Frost encourages students who use the techniques in the video to upload their own performance clips of the Jarrett piece and share them on social media with the tag #FrostMM.

Future entries in the series will include commentary and demonstrations of performance techniques from two renowned trumpeters on the Frost faculty: [John Daversa](#) and Brian Lynch.

The series not only helps young learners understand some musical complexities, it also showcases the personalities of the faculty members. The series undoubtedly will prove useful to students who are considering applying to Frost—as well as students who simply want to soak up the advice of world-class educators.

Additional information is posted at the [Frost Music Masters website](#). **DB**