

CMA PROTOCOL FOR EXTENDED TECHNIQUES PIANO PERFORMANCE

Approval should be sought from the CMA piano technician and piano faculty before any use of pianos for extended techniques in the Moore Musical Arts Center.

Prepared Piano Usage:

The following pianos are designated for prepared piano usage (including screws and bolts):

Bryan Recital Hall: Steinway B
Choral Room: Steinway B
Kobacker: Baldwin concert grand
Classroom: 2115
Practice room: 3003

Light Extended Techniques:

Light inside the piano use (plucking, muting, harmonics) can be approved on these designated instruments:

Bryan Recital Hall: Steinway D-564 and Steinway B
Choral Room: Steinway D-567 and Steinway B
Kobacker: Baldwin concert grand
Classroom: 2115
Practice room: 3003

*Steinway D-333 is off-limits for inside the piano use except when two Steinway D's are required, and then, *only used with approval.*

Removal of Piano Lids must have the approval of the piano technician and supervision of the piano faculty.

GUIDELINES FOR EXTENDED TECHNIQUES

Extended techniques should only be performed on a designated piano after consultation with a piano technician and must follow these guidelines:

The piano technician must approve all structural changes to any piano. This includes removing the lid or other case parts and attaching anything to strings or soundboard to modify the sound.

Touching the strings

If the strings will be touched by fingers or hands (harmonics, plucking, rubbing), hands should be washed first. For moderate use of these techniques, a reasonable amount (not too much) of powdered talc may be applied to the hands to help prevent the transfer of oil from skin to the strings. Thin gloves should be worn for extensive contact with the strings.

Marking

Sticky notepaper, Post-It strips/flags or small dot labels are preferred material to use for marking dampers, agraffes or strings. To mark a string node, a thin (1/8") strip of the adhesive part of a sticky note or a mailing label can be worked around the string and stuck to itself.

Chalk may be used on the plain wire but never on the wound bass strings. Never use masking tape or any other adhesive that may leave a residue. Other than small stickies and chalk, nothing should be applied directly to the strings. This includes whiteout, tape, crayon, stickers, nail polish, etc. The performer is responsible for removing any stickers immediately after any performance.

Dampers

Care must always be used when touching dampers as they are easily damaged or displaced. Sticky notepaper, Post-It strips/flags or small dot labels are preferred material to use for marking dampers. Never use chalk. The performer is responsible for removing any stickers immediately after any performance.

Malleable substances on strings

Bostik Blu-Tack, Scotch Removable Mounting Putty, or like products are the only malleable substances acceptable for direct application to the strings. The piano technician must approve all other substances.

Screws and bolts

In some cases, literature calls for the insertion of screws or other items between piano strings. Proper protocol must be followed when inserting screws. Only use new screws and bolts, or those in like new condition, in the piano. Screws and bolts showing signs of rust or corrosion should never be inserted between the strings. Screws should be carefully selected to fit into the gap between the strings with minimum spreading. Depress the damper pedal while inserting anything between the strings. Go slowly, taking great care not to let the screw come in contact with the soundboard. Only plastic screws/bolts or similar materials softer than metal may be used when inserting between wound strings.

Striking and plucking strings

Strings may be struck or plucked with fingers or guitar pick. Other devices must always be a material that will not mar or scratch strings. On steel strings only materials that are softer than the steel string, such as brass or aluminum, may be used. Copper wound bass strings must be struck or plucked with a material softer than copper (copper is much softer than steel). Acceptable materials might include wood, plastic, rubber and felt mallets. The general rule is that the material should not be harder than the strings. Never use a steel chisel or screwdriver on piano strings (a substitute may be made from brass stock). The piano technician will help any performer in selecting materials that will not damage the piano.

Clean up

The pianist should clean up after performance and leave the piano in the same condition it was found. Nothing should be left in the piano. Do not, however, risk damaging the piano for the sake of clean up. If you need assistance removing something please contact the piano technician.

Damage avoidance using sound and prudent judgment

Most damage to pianos can easily be avoided by using good judgment and knowledge of the piano. Please consult with the piano technician before using extended techniques. If you are composing a piece using extended techniques, consult with the piano technician to ascertain what is safe. Usually alternatives to potentially destructive methods can be found to satisfy both the performer and this policy.