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Letter from the editors

We are delighted to present the first issue of Volume 2 of the *Journal of Piano Research*. We continue to be encouraged by the quality and breath of submissions, which reflect a growing body of scholarship addressing diverse aspects of piano performance, learning, and teaching.

Two articles in this issue examine aspects of piano technique, a subject often approached in the field through experiential knowledge and pedagogical traditions. The two articles make important strides toward clarifying and evaluating the language used in the pedagogical field, a language that has often been imprecise or inconsistent with established anatomical and biomechanical terminology. In “Translating Taubman: The biomechanics of ‘curling the fingers’ in piano technique,” Jeffrey Sabo, Gilles Comeau, Robert Dvorkin, and Donald Russell examine the Taubman Approach’s concept of finger curling, translating pedagogical descriptions into precise biomechanical terms and exploring their implications for piano technique. Their work offers a valuable bridge between the experiential knowledge of piano teachers and scientific research. Similarly, in “Antagonistic muscular co-contraction (AMCC) in piano pedagogy: An assessment of accuracy, consistency, insight, and terminology,” Cobi Ashkenazi, Aaron Williamon, and George Waddell undertake a systematic and critical analysis of 81 pedagogical works dating from 1597 to 2020. Comparing these sources with an empirical model of muscular co-contraction and its effects on piano technique, developed in 2025 by the authors, they identify numerous inaccuracies and inconsistencies. Yet they also uncover valuable insights from centuries of practitioner-led inquiry, some of which remain unexplored in scientific research. Their findings underscore both the need for empirical research in piano pedagogy and the unique contributions of experiential knowledge to our understanding of piano technique.

Turning to music education, Robert A. Duke and Robin S. Heinsen explore the relationships between teachers’ piano learning experiences and their use of the instrument in K–12 classrooms. In “Relationships between piano learning experiences and uses of piano by K–12 music teachers,” their large-scale survey reveals important associations among perceived keyboard competence, enjoyment, and frequency of piano use in teaching. Their findings offer valuable considerations for university music programs seeking to strengthen secondary piano instruction and better prepare future music educators.

Finally, Zachary Deak offers a thought-provoking critical recontextualization of a longstanding, and recently contested, tradition in piano performance. In “Pianistic memorization as cultural memory: Insights from religious and devotional traditions,” Deak examines memorization through the lens of religious and devotional practices and cultural memory. Deak’s interdisciplinary perspective invites us to understand memorization not

merely as a technical accomplishment or a performance convention, but as a process of internalization, embodiment, and meaning-making that shapes musical interpretation and performer identity.

We hope that the breadth of topics and research approaches presented in this issue will engage and inspire our readers, offering fresh perspectives, practical insights, and new questions to explore in the art and practice of piano performance and teaching.

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