

Mr. Hoops clearly defines musical age and chronological age, and therefore has the ability to educate music students at any age or level. He also has the insight and passion to dig deep into the musical mind and find the elements that are preventing growth. Mr. Hoops has discovered through his decades of teaching that the lack of understanding in as few as one element of music can cause the frustration level to rise to the point of giving up on music. With the sequence provided by Music Learning Theory, he can pinpoint that one concept or element or skill that is lacking and guide the student at every level of competency or frustration. Mr. Hoops has a nurturing and patient style of teaching and understands many of the common problems and issues of beginning and returning students. Making music is inherent human behavior and as a teacher Mr. Hoops believes anyone can make music.

What does this all mean for the music student?

Below is a short description of how Mr. Hoops approaches and individualizes each and every lesson:

**Beginning Music Student** (Approx. 3-5 years old) Mr. Hoops focuses on the pre-audiation and acculturation skills of understanding music. Along with pre-audiation activities, the lesson includes keyboard exploration and creativity all in an informal, yet very purposeful music lesson. Here we play and explore music through fun activities involving movement and singing. Every lesson involves some unstructured piano exploration.

**Beginning Piano Student** (approx. 6-9 years old) Mr. Hoops focuses on musical concepts and how to apply them to the instrument. We cannot learn to audiate through an instrument, however immediate application of new found musical concepts are further internalized by applying them to the instrument in a sequenced, sometimes informal yet still fun manner during the lessons. This is also when symbolic association (music reading) starts. The movement continues to reinforce musical concepts, but at this level the majority of the time is spent working on the instrument.

**Intermediate/Advanced** (approx. 10-20 years old) At this point the potential in the music student has stabilized and now Mr. Hoops focuses on musical skills. In these formal, structured lessons, the student explores the expression and artistry of making music on the piano, and also these lessons continue to work on theory and technique for the pianist. We explore music history, musical styles, and even jazz improvisation.

**Adult** (beginner or returning to piano) With his deep understanding of music and his passion for teaching, Mr. Hoops has come to realize with these students, it is about reconnecting and breaking down barriers. With his laid-back demeanor and patience in the studio, many adults have considered his lessons “therapeutic.”

The lessons will mostly resemble traditional piano lessons for the student, but are also documented, evaluated, and sequenced according to the students’ level. Mr. Hoops takes pride in his music teaching and goes the extra step through validated evaluation methods to assure a true sense of musical ownership. He teaches far more than just how to push the keys of a piano. Through his understanding of MLT he clearly recognizes the strengths and deficiencies in every student and builds his lessons around the individual musical mind.