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Humor Under The Keyboards

By Ismael D. Tabije

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For me, the piano is the symbol of what is stiff, proper and elegant. It doesn't have faults, it is perfect. Pianists are the most perfectionist people in the world. They should not and can not make mistakes especially when performing. That is how I viewed the piano and the pianists. But then, I just found out I was wrong. A few researches and I have once again proven that appearances can be deceiving.

The pianists we see play appear to be the most formal and respectable stars on the stage. They hold the power and the breath of the audiences. They could look intimidating in their formal suits not to mention the authority and the air of arrogance they exude while on stage. They can be captivating.

But before we forget, these pianists are also human. And humans do make mistakes. Most of these mistakes can be frustrating and depressing. But then, there are also mistakes that are amusing and could also be totally hilarious. It shows how fun could be inserted even in the most seemingly stuffy and proper event.

Here are some examples:

When asked for their definition of a piano, some famous musicians and musical enthusiasts have some famous replies:

·For David W. Barber (The Musician's Dictionary), a piano is a cumbersome piece of furniture found in many homes, where playing it ensures the early departure of unwanted guests.

·Piano (n.) is a parlor utensil for subduing the impertinent visitor. It is operated by depressing the keys of the machine and the spirits of the audience, according to Ambrose Bierce, an American journalist (The Devil's Dictionary).

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·A piano tuner is a person employed to come into the home, rearrange the furniture, and annoy the cat. The tuner's chief purpose is to ascertain the breaking point of the piano's strings.

Though these definitions may sound humorous, you can never miss the ironies in it. Coming from people who live and breathe the piano, these definitions seem odd.

Here's more - when asked about their secrets in playing, you would certainly be surprised at how simple their secrets can be, and definitely applicable.

·Australian pianist Artur Schnabel said, "I always make sure that the lid over the keyboard is open before I start to play".

·"Nothing soothes me more after a long and maddening course of pianoforte recitals than to sit and have my teeth drilled", said George Bernard Shaw, a writer and a music critic.

I definitely agree with Artur Schnabel's top secret! I wonder why George found it relaxing to have his teeth drilled after hearing the pianoforte recitals. Check out more of the piano's funny side:

·Bob Hope, an American comedian commented on fellow comedian Phyllis Diller on her playing the piano: "When she started to play, Steinway himself came down personally and rubbed his name off the piano."

·A band teacher recalled the title of the song "Claire de Lune" played by a student as "Claire de Loonie".

·The audiences at a piano recital were appalled when a telephone rang just off stage. Without missing a note, the soloist glanced toward the wings and called, "If that's my agent, tell him I'm working!"

Now, let's check out some famous questions and answers in the funny world of piano:

·What do you get when you drop a piano down a mine shaft? A flat minor

·What do you get when you drop a piano on an army base? A flat major

·Why is an 11-foot concert grand better than a studio upright? Because it makes a much bigger kaboom when dropped over a cliff.

·Why was the piano invented? So that the musician would have a place to put his beer.

·Why did they say that the pianist had fingers like lightning? They never struck the same place twice.

·What did they find when they dug up Beethoven's grave? He was decomposing.

·Why did Mozart kill his chicken? Because they always ran around going, "Bach! Bach! Bach!"

Imagine a singer, a piano player, a bass player and a drummer sitting around the table. Now if you drop a hundred-dollar bill right in the middle and tell them they're free to take it, who's getting it? The piano player. Because the bass player is too slow, for the singer it's too little money and the drummer didn't get the assignment.

Now that we've seen the humor under the keyboards, the piano and the pianists are not as elusive as they seem to be. It is just like discovering a new type of music. The piano and the pianist can take not just the breath out of the audiences but also the laughter as they present not only fine music but terrific humor as well. Having fun is what life is all about.

The writer Ismael D. Tabije runs the website

that markets a wide choice of

high-quality digital pianos and accessories at the lowest prices in the online market. Brands sold include Casio, Yamaha, Korg, Kurzweil and Roland. The website also features interesting piano articles about piano humor, trivia, myths and facts and even piano lessons and instructions.

Five Ways to Sharpen Your Sense of Humor and Improve Your Relationships

By Mike Moore

Humor has long been considered one of the most effective tools to judge the quality of any relationship. If there is laughter present you can be sure the relationship is a healthy one. When the laughter ceases the relationship is on the down slide. If you want to have more fulfilling relationships you might want to consider sharpening your sense of humor as a great place to start.

Here are five ways to improve your sense of humor and improve your relationships in the process.

1. Begin to cultivate an atmosphere of humor and laughter in your relationships by focussing on the funny things in life and enjoying the laughter they evoke. Soon you will be seeing humor all over and enjoying it fully.
2. If you don't laugh as much as you used to and want to correct the situation start associating with humorous, fun loving people and avoid the downers.
3. Learn to laugh at yourself. If you don't you leave the job to others. So many people are unable to laugh at themselves because of their own insecurities and fears. We are afraid to look foolish in the eyes of others and appear to be incompetent. It is important to realize that we all make mistakes and when we do a good laugh makes the mistake seem trivial and human.
4. Collect cartoons and jokes and put them on display on the fridge or the bulletin board for all to see and enjoy. Make sure to avoid racist, sexist or filthy humor. There is plenty of good clean humor to go around without resorting to these. Remember that there is a difference between dirty and earthy humor. I personally like earthy humor. I don't appreciate dirty material.

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5. Use humor to neutralize conflict in your relationships. When things get tense use self deprecating humor to lighten things up. I remember one evening having an argument with my wife, Carol. In the heat of the moment she said something totally out of character. She said something hurtful. In my surprise I looked at her and said, " Carol, when you say things like that you stoop to my level." She started to laugh and so did I. It wasn't long before things were back to normal.

Remember that a sense of humor is learned, not inherited. You can sharpen your sense of humor if you really want to. When you do, you will find that your relationships become richer and more rewarding and that people find you more attractive and fun to be with. This alone makes improving your sense of humor worth the effort.

Mike Moore is an international speaker/ writer/ cartoonist on humor, motivation and human potential. Visit him at

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