

ELIZABETH CRECCA (USA)

Bucknell University (Lewisburg, Pennsylvania)

Contact Presenter

Email



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Dr. Elizabeth Crecca is Visiting Assistant Professor of Music in Piano and Theory at Bucknell University. Her research has focused largely on performance practice and its practical applications. She has presented at the MTNA National Conference, University of Oklahoma, Bilkent University Piano Festival, and the 2021 WPC. Her lecture recital on performance practice in Béla Bartók's music was nominated for the Eastman School of Music Lecture Recital Prize. Dr. Crecca holds a Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, a Master of Music in Piano Performance with Baroque Emphasis from the San Francisco Conservatory, and a Bachelor of Music in Piano Performance and Music Theory from the University of Michigan. Her past piano teachers include Natalya Antonova, Yoshikazu Nagai, and Logan Skelton. She studied harpsichord and fortepiano with Corey Jamason and Lisa Crawford, and has performed on period instruments with the American Bach Soloists. Dr. Crecca previously served on faculty at Bradley University, teaching music history and piano. She taught piano at the Eastman School of Music during her doctorate studies, earning a nomination for the Teaching Assistant Prize for Excellence in Teaching.

What Pianists Can Learn from the Harpsichord

Most of the Baroque repertoire performed on piano today, such as the music of J.S. Bach and Domenico Scarlatti, was originally composed for harpsichord. The harpsichord's capabilities differ significantly than those of the piano. The harpsichord does not respond dynamically to the speed at which keys are depressed, yet was the instrument of choice for a large body of emotionally charged compositions. Studying the harpsichord encourages one to reevaluate the relative importance and application of music's three main expressive areas: dynamics, timing, and articulation. While modern pianists tend to use dynamics as their primary means of expression, the harpsichord demands that timing and articulation be placed on equal or greater footing. When pianists begin to apply the same level of nuance to timing and articulation as they do to dynamics, a vast range of interpretive possibilities opens up—and the harpsichord provides the guidelines for the realization of those possibilities. This presentation involves side-by-side demonstrations and comparisons of expressive techniques on modern piano and harpsichord.