

Article from 'Pianiste' magazine
September-October 2014

LYDIA JARDON'S PIANO SCHOOL

'IF YOU WANT YOU CAN!'

Paris, 13th arrondissement. On this June Sunday, in an elementary school classroom turned into a concert hall, Lydia Jardon welcomes the parents of 36 budding pianists who are going to participate in the annual recital of the Yaya piano school. Report.

The toddlers are arranged round the piano, each one looking at his or her colourful score, a hallmark of Lydia Jardon's, for the last time. Like most of the pupils, the parents of the young Gabrielle, winner of the Claude-Kahn Competition, met Lydia when she was teaching in the 17th *arrondissement* and followed her when she founded her school in the 13th. *'Her relationship with our child, which we considered exceptional - she has it with all the children; the atmosphere is studious but not stressful,'* confides Gabrielle's father. Most of the parents describe her as a 'baroque, exuberant' character. How does she manage to create an itinerary made to measure for each pupil? Her method enthuses! And there is so much emotion! Pierre Dunston, aged 8, with a year and ten months of piano behind him, plays Debussy's *Golliwog's Cakewalk* like a real artist. Cindy Chen-Rössl, 9, is filled with grace, *'the only thing I can't teach!'* cracks Lydia. Alexis Pinh, 13, a brilliant performer of the finale of Beethoven's famous *'Pathétique'* Sonata and Chopin's *'Revolutionary'* Etude, has been studying piano for... only two years! Following the recital, however, a young boy confides that he is not sure he wants to become a professional pianist even though he already works enormously 'without seeing the time go by'.

'The piano is a piece of furniture; the body is the instrument,' Lydia tells us. *'Beginning with the first class, I make it felt that the only means of obtaining equality between all the fingers is to transfer the weight of the body horizontally from one finger to the next: the pressure from behind towards the front. Trying to master everything at the same time, right from the start: sound balance between the right hand and the left; the art of the pedal; giving a musical direction to everything one does... I don't let anything get past, but always with love and showing the pupil to advantage. Patience, obstinacy, constancy, concentration over time, pleasure in effort, surpassing of oneself, and confidence are the precepts of life that I teach through music.'*

Her credo: *'It depends only on you. You can do it if you decide to.'*

Aurélie Moreau