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Close your eyes, and make music: a case study in teaching students with visual impairments - 60 min keyboard lab presentation

Musicians and audiences without visual disabilities remain surprised to see how blind pianists can reach a high level of perfection. However, they are usually unaware of the painstaking work that is behind the learning process. During this session, the attendees will understand and experience in person how pianists with visual impairments approach a new, challenging piece.

The following points will be explored in detail:

- Methods, strategies, and pedagogical tools we can apply when teaching pianists with visual impairments.
- The customized learning process experienced by a visually impaired student.
- The pedagogical insights that both students and teachers can gain.

The attendees will enjoy the presence of David Lai, blind pianist and MM student at CCM Cincinnati, who will give a practical demonstration of his learning strategies and techniques. At the end of the presentation, participants will try to learn a new piece as a visually impaired pianist, testing these techniques. Plenty of handouts and references will be provided so that the attendees will be able to focus on the session instead of taking notes. The goal of this session is to deconstruct the perceived limitations of blind pianists. There is never an impossible piece; only inaccurate or incomplete practicing and teaching methods.