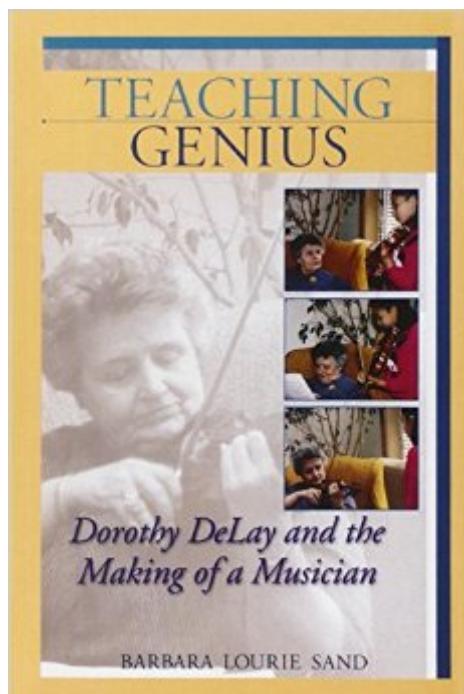


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Teaching Genius Dorothy Delay And The Making Of A Musician (Softcover)



Synopsis

(Amadeus). Itzhak Perlman, Kennedy, Midori, and Sarah Chang were among Dorothy Delay's students during her five decades as a violin teacher at Juilliard. For more than ten years, the author was granted access to DeLay's classes and lessons at Juilliard and the Aspen Music Festival and School, and this book reveals DeLay's deep intuition of each student's needs. An exploration of the mysteries of teaching and learning, it includes a feast of anecdotes about an extraordinary character.

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Amadeus Press; New edition edition (November 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1574671200

ISBN-13: 978-1574671209

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (36 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Music is my avocation, but I teach on the high school level. Not only did this book fill me in on the inner workings of the classical music business (lots of juicy stories that made me feel "in the know"), but I feel inspired by Dorothy Delay's masterful teaching style. I feel I'm a better teacher myself now when I enter the classroom and approach my students' difficulties and strengths. The book is so clearly written and I kept wondering how the author, Barbara Lourie Sand, got all this information. She must have spent a great deal of time with her fascinating subject because Ms. Delay came alive, her gifted students came alive, and so did all the mavens and greats in the music world. I'm telling all my colleagues and friends about the book. I'm urging them to give it a read because it is a treasure.

Barbara Lourie Sand's book about Dorothy DeLay is written by a polished journalist who knows how

to tell a good story. The early part of the book is thus the most interesting, tracing DeLay's life and development, first as a moderately successful concert violinist and chamber musician, next as longtime assistant to the great pedagogue Ivan Galamian, and finally as legendary teacher and mentor of many of the most successful classical violinists of the 20th century. Sand mentions in a preface that she shaped this book during the course of a ten-year association with DeLay during which she was also writing articles about some of her well-known students. She obviously had a warm and close relationship with DeLay, her husband Edward Newhouse, and her students, and while this gave her an enviable access it probably hurt her journalistic acumen in the end. Too often, troubling questions are raised and treated dismissively, or quickly dropped--the hardships of raising and nurturing exceptionally gifted children, or outright abuse in the name of discipline and training, for example. Sand treats DeLay's rupture with Galamian in a fair amount of detail, but does not mention that some of DeLay's students have broken very publicly with her as well. Criticisms of DeLay and her style are mostly confined to one chapter and are largely made by unnamed sources. Though DeLay's approach to teaching is discussed in detail, important issues, such as the pros and cons of learning from a teacher who herself never demonstrates, are left untouched. In short, this book is a good read and intriguing glimpse into the arcane and competitive world of top classical music-making. Because of her unwillingness to "go for the jugular," as she admits at one point, Barbara Lourie Sand loses a chance to make it even more. Minor quibble: The Accolay Concerto is not part of the Suzuki violin literature.

The most important problem in the U.S. today is education and teaching. Ms. Sand's book is about a very special teacher teaching very special students. If you have ever studied music or are interested in music you will love this book. But Ms. Sand's book about Ms. Delay is much more. It is about communicating ideas and about different ways of treating people so that teaching is effective. As such this book is must reading for those interested in either teaching or child development. Anyone who is interested in education in any field will devour Ms. Sand's book for the insights that it gives about teaching. Ms. Delay's approach is based on respect for the individual. From the outside this respectful approach may seem insufficiently directive for some people, especially when compared to the previous generation of teachers, such as Galamian, with approaches that were often prescriptive and authoritarian. But in Ms. Sand's book, the effectiveness and success of Ms. Delay's respectful approach is amply demonstrated. Fortunately Ms. Sand observed Ms. Delay for almost a decade so that the process and effectiveness of Ms. Delay's approach can be clearly seen through the success and individuality of her students. The remarkable number of successful

students she has taught is a measure of her extraordinary effectiveness. Interestingly, Ms. Sand writes about Ms Delay and her students in her own respectful style, which combines insight with wit. Read "Teaching Genius" and be inspired.

My love of the violin came late -- only a year ago, in fact. Since then, I have busied myself aquiring CDs of wonderful violinists and reading everything I can about their lives and their work. I have even attempted to learn this intricate instrument (but am realizing that I would be happier if I stuck to my recordings and reading!). In any event, I really enjoyed this book -- the stories of DeDelay's talented (and not so talented) students, their parents, her teaching "style," etc. My only criticism is that the writing is weak. It struck me as the work of someone who is not entirely comfortable as a writer -- that is, Sand seems to be an able researcher with a wonderful grasp of the import of her material, but she has no real tools or passion to communicate her findings. Remarkably, however, the subject carries the text and the reader really can get around the writer's awkwardness. If you like music, teaching, and descriptions of how the truly gifted "make it," don't let the less than inspired writing keep you away from this neat book.

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