

# Carmel VALLEY NEWS



## Carmel Valley's Chase Morrin to perform at Greene Music July 21

By Vivian Feig  
July 19, 2007

Chase Morrin is not your average piano teacher. As he goes through one of his own jazz compositions with a student, he pulls out a cymbal from behind his Boston piano and taps on it to explain the swing rhythm of one section of the piece.

"I'm much more open to teaching all different kinds of ways," Chase said. "Take notes and counting. You can count in 1, 2, 3, or saying ta ti, ti. It's not about the right style to teach a student. It's about how they're going to learn, and you want them to enjoy it."

Perhaps most striking, though, is the fact that Chase is only 13 years old.

Chase started to play the piano when he was 9, after his parents bought him an electric keyboard. According to his mother, Cindy Morrin, Chase started playing around with the keys, and could soon play songs just by ear.

"He never started with a book," Morrin said. "Chase just played.

Learning how to read notes and stuff—Chase just caught up to those things later."

Chase said that he begged his parents for over a year to let him take formal lessons. In July 2002, he started learning with Svetlana Pikous. Today, he studies with Grossmont College professor Ken Ard.

Chase feels fortunate that both teachers taught jazz in addition to the usual classical repertoire.

As natural as playing seemed to be for him, Chase also composed music right from the beginning. He has currently



completed 15 compositions, and says he has many more that have not yet been written down.

At only 13, Chase has already received numerous awards for his works, including a national award for his piece "Freefall": In February 2007, Chase became the youngest composer ever to win the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Young Jazz Composer Award for the composition, a funky, erratic selection which Chase said is Bach-inspired.

"Bach has intertwining melodies—three at the same time," Chase said.

"I decided I'd write a song like that, but it'd be funk and jazz."

According to Chase, his compositions always start with an idea. From then, he comes up with a main melody line, something simple that he develops as the piece progresses.

"I like to switch up parts," Chase said. "If the song is fast, I like to slow it down to a ballad section. When you're composing, you can do whatever."

While thinking of the music seems to come easily to Chase, he said that actually notating it is the most difficult part. He uses Finale songwriter, which he says he has outgrown. On his wish list are Sibelius, a more sophisticated composing program, and classes on how to use the software.

This fall, Chase will enter Canyon Crest Academy, where, according to Cindy Morrin, Chase's schedule will be able to accommodate jazz band and symphonic band as well as the advanced classes that he plans to take. While Chase is set on music for a living, his fallback career is engineering.

In addition to music, Chase also participates in Science Olympiad, likes to solve the Rubik's cube and enjoys writing. He is also learning other instruments beside the piano, such as percussion and trumpet, so that he can eventually compose orchestra or ensemble music.

**Chase will be showcasing some of his own compositions, as well as others' pieces that he has learned, in a solo concert at Greene Music Concert Hall at 6 p.m., July 21. Greene Music Concert Hall is located at 7480 Miramar Rd., San Diego. The concert is free, though the Morrin family encourages attendees to donate to the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation. He will also be giving a solo concert at the Carmel Valley Library on Aug. 29 at 7 p.m. For more information about Chase and his upcoming performances, visit his Web site, [www.cuyamaca.edu/cindymorrin/ChaseMorrin.htm](http://www.cuyamaca.edu/cindymorrin/ChaseMorrin.htm).**