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Legendary Pianist Passes Wisdom To Local Young Artists



PHILADELPHIA (CBS) — A legendary pianist and former president of the Curtis Institute on Rittenhouse Square held masterclasses this past week with young artists from all over the world, in their quest for a **career** of performing on stage.

Gary Graffman's ties to the Curtis Institute began in 1936, when he was accepted as a **student** at the age of seven. He debuted with the Philadelphia Orchestra at 18.

After touring or recording for decades, in 1980 he joined the Curtis Piano faculty, and was **director** and/or president of Curtis from the mid 80's through 2006.

Now, the 88-year-old master listened to the aspiring **artist**, 19-year old Huiping Cai, on a nine-foot concert grand piano, on stage at Curtis.

"The inborn thing, you have or don't have. Technique, that comes with practicing," Graffman said.

“His suggestions were very helpful. I’m currently starting Temple University, with Professor Ching-Yun Hu,” said Huiping.

The masterclass is part of a week-long series of events by the Philadelphia Young Pianists’ Academy (PYPA), established by concert pianist Ching-Yun Hu.

“They get to **play** for really world class renowned teachers and concert pianists,” Ching-Yun explained. She says it helps them grow as musicians, perhaps on the way to **professional** careers.

“I think it’s very important for them to play in **public** many, many times, again and again,” she said.