

# DAILY NEWS

## Your Brooklyn

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Concert pianist Simone Dinnerstein, who has helped organize classical performances to benefit PS 321, takes five with kindergarten teacher Joseph Phillips, whose work will be featured in the last show of the series, in April, and played by a student group. Photo by James Monroe Adams 4th

# PROS PLAYIN' FOR PS

BY ELIZABETH LAZAROWITZ  
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

## Artists give time to help Park Slope school

PARK SLOPE pianist Simone Dinnerstein wants others to share her love of classical music, so she's starting right in her own backyard.

Tomorrow, the Juilliard-trained pro will launch the first of four open-to-the-public concerts at her alma mater, Public School 321, in the hope that the performances will get more people into the musical genre — and bring in big bucks for the school.

"My hope is that this could start a trend all around New York City where musicians could adopt an institution," said Dinnerstein.

When Dinnerstein decided she wanted to give back locally, picking PS 321 was a no-brainer. Her son now attends the school on Seventh Ave., and her husband teaches fifth grade there. Dinner-

stein's mother is even a former PS 321 teacher.

She gave two concerts last year that packed the school's auditorium, and brought its parent association about \$7,000.

The concerts couldn't come at a better time, given that schools across the city are facing budget cuts of about 5%.

Even in relatively high-income Park Slope, the tough economy has meant a bigger battle to raise private funds, said Julie Markes, a PS 321 parent and series co-chairwoman.

Hearing world-class pros could tempt even those being more frugal, she said. "They're going to see a great concert and at the same time donating."

Tickets are relatively cheap — \$15 at the school and \$25 online.

Dinnerstein said she's had no problem getting musicians to donate their time.

Tomorrow at 7 p.m., cellist Clive Greensmith, who plays with the Tokyo String Quartet, will join pianist Jean Schneider.

Three more concerts will follow, including performances by Dinnerstein and the American Contemporary Music Ensemble on Jan. 10, and the Chiara String Quartet on Feb. 4.

The last one, on April 15, will feature a piece written by one of the school's own music teachers, Joseph Phillips, and played by youngsters in the contemporary classical music ensemble Face the Music.

Phillips hopes his work will

give the audience a sense that classical music is alive and well and influencing work done today. "It isn't just dead white guys," he added.

"There's a certain kind of stiffness to classical music. It feels very stuck in the past," Dinnerstein said. "I wanted to make a concert series that became part of everyday life... where people felt a connection to the performers because it's in their own neighborhood."

Piano store Klavierhaus has loaned pianos — since PS 321's isn't up to snuff — and then there are the squeaky auditorium seats.

While it's no Carnegie Hall, Dinnerstein said she likes the intimacy of performing there, saying: "Playing in the PS 321 auditorium makes Park Slope feel like a village."

elazarowitz@nydailynews.com