

Hello, everyone!

We hope you had a nice Thanksgiving holiday! Two weeks ago, we welcomed community musician and comedian Jake Cassman to our group. Jake demonstrated his electronic keyboard for us, which had piano, synthesizer, and organ sounds programmed into it. He showed how he could control specific aspects of the pitch, like which overtones were present, simply by adjusting slide controls on the interface. Jake then led us through an improvisatory exercise where we all danced in response to the music he played. We continued musical improvisation with situational nonsense songs! Jake instructed Julianne and Chrysa to musically break up with each other (Julianne was very angry and Chrysa was trying to win her back), and then instructed Neal to musically ask his mother (Chrysa again) for candy. Tony-winning performances all around!

This week, we welcome neuroscientist and opera singer Dr. Indre Viskontas! From Indre:

I'm an opera singer-turned-director who came of age during the decade of the brain. I've always been pulled both by art and by science and have finally found ways to integrate the two in my work. I finished a Masters of Music degree in Voice Performance and a Ph.D. in Cognitive Neuroscience and currently enjoy faculty positions at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and the University of San Francisco. I'm passionate about communicating ideas to the public, by directing operas that illustrate the richness of the human experience, creating compelling lectures and podcasts about the brain, conducting research on the neuroscience of creativity.

You can read more about Indre on her website: <https://www.indreviskontas.com/>

Happy Hannukah and see you tomorrow!
Chrysa & Julianne