

## **Holmdel Fifth-Grader Muchen Zhao Made Carnegie Hall Debut This Past Winter**

**HOLMDEL, NJ** – The Holmdel Township School District proudly announced that Muchen Zhao, a talented fifth-grade student from Indian Hill School, made his debut performance at the prestigious Carnegie Hall in New York City this past winter. This marked a significant achievement for Muchen, who showcased his musical prowess on one of the world's most renowned stages.

Muchen performed "Toccata" by Martin Cellular, a piece he described as "fast-paced and suspenseful." When asked about his favorite aspect of the performance, Muchen highlighted "the slow part that is in the middle of the piece that is really calming and sounds nice." While this was his first time performing at Carnegie Hall, he had previous experience on other stages, demonstrating his budding career as a musician.

Anticipation was high for Muchen, who expressed particular excitement about performing for the New York audience. "Probably the New York audience, because my family and friends have already heard this song," he remarked, showcasing his enthusiasm for a new performance experience.

The intricate demands of "Toccata" presented a challenge, particularly "near the end when I have to play the notes really fast and move my hands down the piano." To prepare for such a grand recital, Muchen adhered to a dedicated routine. "I usually first do a warm up with a book called 'Hanon, the virtuoso pianist,' then I just practice through the whole routine from bowing, playing the piece and then finishing," he had explained.

Through his extensive preparation, Muchen embraced a valuable lesson: "Learning a new piece can be frustrating, but it really is worth it." This insight underscored his resilience and commitment to his musical development.

Following his momentous performance, Muchen had plans for a well-deserved celebration. "I will celebrate by going to a restaurant and then riding the train home," he had shared.

The Holmdel Township School District commended Muchen Zhao on this extraordinary accomplishment. His dedication, talent, and passion for music were an inspiration to his peers and the entire school community.

