

# Young pianist to perform

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by **Observer staff**

**MOULTRIE** — A child prodigy will perform a free concert at 2 p.m. Sunday, July 18, at the Colquitt County Arts Center.

Arjun Ayyangar, 5, of Old Bridge, N.J., has been playing the piano since he was about 2, according to published news reports from his hometown newspaper, The Home News Tribune.

The newspaper accounts say the boy recognized numbers and letters by the time he was 1 simply by playing with wooden blocks. He was reading before he was 2.

His father, Vijay Ayyangar, said he and his wife didn't know their child was so gifted; they thought all children were like that, until they started talking to other parents.

"He would get bored and cry if we didn't teach him things," Vijay Ayyangar told the Home News Tribune. "We used to sit and have to think of things to teach him."

To keep him occupied, they taught him the names of all the U.S. presidents and all the states and their capitals. He can identify countries on a globe and most of their flags and many elements on the periodic table. And he learned most of that by the time he was 2.

Then a play-by-number music book captured his attention, and his family learned he had perfect pitch — the rare ability to identify notes simply by hearing them.

Since then, Arjun has become the pupil of Ray Landers at the Westminster Conservatory of Music in Princeton, N.J.

"Arjun is exceptional," Landers said in an interview for India Abroad. "During my 25 years of instruction, I have come across only one other student like him."

Landers, a teacher of the Suzuki method, is bringing Arjun to Moultrie on a visit. A former resident of Haines City, Fla., Landers has relatives here, including the Rev. Ron Barrett of Mt. Olive Baptist Church.

Landers himself is well-known as a performer, composer, recording artist, author, educator and administrator. He founded the Suzuki Music Academy of Chicago, now the Suzuki Music Association, and several other musical organizations.

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