

Doug Montgomery, piano

A native Chicagoan, Montgomery began attending Northwestern University's pre-college music prep program at the age of 15. His passion for classical music prompted Montgomery to pursue his Bachelor's degree from Northwestern (1976) where he studied with Gui Mom-baerts and then his Master's degree from the famed Juilliard School of Music in 1978, where he studied with Martin Canin and John Browning. Upon receiving his Master's, he was awarded the prestigious Joseph Lhevinne Scholarship in piano and returned to teach at Juilliard for a year. He attracted national attention as a top prize winner (1977) in the renowned Robert Casadesus Piano Competition. In 1976, he also won first prize in the Musical Arts Competition in Chicago, which is sponsored by the Society of American Musicians.

Fate intervened when Montgomery was visiting a photography studio and was asked to go along on a shoot and stopped by a modeling agency. When he walked into the "A+" modeling agency the owner immediately asked him to go out on a modeling assignment that very afternoon. A new and very busy career opened up as a model in Chicago and Manhattan. Montgomery didn't play the piano for almost a year, but he did manage to pay off his debts and get back on his feet. After the brief and needed hiatus, he realized he wanted to play again, and how much he wanted to think of a life beyond modeling. For the first time in his life, he began thinking of playing something other than classical music.

"I suddenly realized it was only because I had so much training, in classical music, that I was having a hard time justifying ever playing popular music. But I went out one evening with some friends to a piano bar. As I listened to the gentleman playing that night, I realized that with my ability, I could play those things in my own way, using my own arrangements and feel very good about what I was doing. Popular arrangements really are based on a lot of classical techniques," says Montgomery.

Not long after that a friend invited him to see the magnificent country near Santa Fe, New Mexico and another chapter in Montgomery's life had begun. Since 1983, he has been playing in his new hometown several nights a week, when he's not on the road. He is the star attraction at Vanessie of Santa Fe, repeatedly referred to as one of the best piano bars in the country. In 1986 he added vocals to his performances and the rest is history.

In addition to pleasing his loyal local audiences, Montgomery maintains a very busy schedule traveling the country appearing at public and private events where he can count such celebrities as Gerald and Betty Ford, Henry Kissinger, Princess Margaret, former British Ambassador Walter Annenberg, Bob Hope, Arnold Palmer, Diane Sawyer and Oscar De La Renta among his admirers. He performed at several events during the 1989 inauguration of George Bush at the personal request of the new president.

Today, Montgomery is married and makes his home in Santa Fe, NM and can be found most Sunday and Monday nights at the Rio Chama steakhouse in Santa Fe on Old

Santa Fe Trail. Also, he performs at many private, public and cruise line engagements throughout the world.

Source: www.dougmontgomery.com