



## **Ergonomic cushion for piano stool**

### ***1. Presentation***

This original patented ergonomic cushion is designed to transform any flat piano stool into an ergonomically inclined stool.

At minimal cost, this cushion modifies the seating position of the playing pianist. This new seating position is the result of recognised scientific studies.

### ***2. Scientific principles***

Medical reports reveal that a growing number of amateur and professional pianists alike suffer from physiological problems of varied intensity. The static and dynamic body stresses created while playing are mostly located in the neck, shoulder blade and lower back regions.

These stresses can be effectively avoided by an inclined seating position.

### ***3. Two solutions to the problem : how do we sit on an inclined surface ?***

One solution to the problem is to have a specially designed inclined stool. Such stools are currently available from specialised piano dealers. However inclined stools are expensive and make the stool the pianist already has useless.

The second solution is to add a specially designed inclined cushion to an ordinary piano stool in order to obtain the same comfort and playing conditions as the best ergonomic piano stools.

### ***4. Origins of the concept***

The entire concept of an innovative ergonomic cushion for pianists is the result of my personal research and experience as a professional piano teacher. Nevertheless the beginnings of the concept date back to 1979 when my own Piano Master, who was a disciple of Maestro Vincenzo Scaramuzza, first revealed to me the advantages of an inclined seating position for playing the piano.

More than twenty years later I have taken up the challenge to transform the idea into reality. This cushion is therefore one of the final results of all the ergonomic research I have done in the field of piano playing.

### ***5. How to use the ergonomic cushion, essential partner of the piano stool***

The ergonomic cushion is stable and portable and is simply positioned on top of an ordinary piano stool in good condition.

Using the cushion is just as easy. Simply sit down on the back part of the stool and enjoy the new sensation of the inclined surface.

Flexible by nature, the cushion can be removed if so desired. This allows the pianist to get used to the inclined position progressively and gently discover, at his or her own speed, the cushion's subtle qualities, among which its specially calculated angle.

Furthermore, with this removable cushion young children do not need to change stools because sitting on an inclined surface is not recommended while the feet do not yet touch the floor.

Being portable this cushion's indispensable advantages will be promoted beyond the home of each pianist, transporting the new habit of the inclined position wherever they go.

For this purpose a special carry bag will be available soon.

## ***6. The remarkable qualities of the ergonomic cushion***

Each of the two sides of the cushion can be used either side facing up, according to preference.

**One side is called soft**, providing all the comfort and support necessary for tension free playing.

**The other side is firmer and more dynamic**, allowing the pianist to move quickly and to play high virtuoso pieces with greater ease.

**Both sides** of the cushion encourage a gentle forward leaning posture making it possible for the pianist to have a better feeling of his body dynamics. Among these are the lower back region important in the tradition of Liszt, and the left foot which 'supports body weight when playing powerful 'fortissimo' for example' (cf. "L'homme et le piano" by Monique Deschaussées)

As a result this cushion leads the pianist to an awareness of his full body's energy.

**The two clearly distinct seating features** open up perspectives for more accurate variations in musical expression.

Technical virtuosity, sensitivity to the piano keys and sound quality can all be improved.

**So each pianist** can make his temporary or permanent choice out of the two sides, according to his sensations and artistic creativity.

## ***7. The essence of this cushion***

The particular angle of this ergonomic cushion induces an ideal posture, in which your elbows are physically active, while preventing any dorsal tension. The modern school of Piano believes in the use of free falling arms. This technique, widely practiced today, inevitably generates a percussion-like method to playing the piano. This cushion reveals a new concept : the indirect drop of the arms controlled by the elbow. This new piano technique uncovers a sound spectrum that goes beyond that of percussion.

## 8. Conclusion

Authentic French, sold at a reasonable price, this ergonomic cushion allows both amateur and professional pianists to avoid recurrent pathologies as a result of bad seating position at the piano.

It is even possible for other musicians, of wind instruments in particular, or singers, to benefit from the use of this cushion.

The exceptional physical well-being enjoyed by the use of this ergonomic cushion can reinforce our creative senses and encourage a deeper approach to music.

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*Posture au piano selon Vincenzo Scaramuzza*



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