

Pianist embarks on mission to play a concert in every Vermont city and town



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David Feurzeig played in concert regularly before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived. Then he spent the better part of two years hardly playing live performances at all.

Now he's going from zero to 60, or more specifically to 252. The pianist and music professor at the University of Vermont is about to embark on a tour of every town and city in Vermont, starting Friday, May 6 in Burlington and ending who-knows-where, Feurzeig expects, in December 2026.

"I just had this kind of crazy pendulum swing to the opposite extreme," Feurzeig said of going from no concerts to one in every Vermont community. Feurzeig will not only play a free concert in each community, he'll drive the state in his solar-charged electric vehicle to call attention to climate change.

Feurzeig grew up outside Boston and lived in Kentucky and Illinois before moving to Vermont in 2008. He acknowledged Vermont isn't "heaven on earth" and does have its problems. He also said he bought into the Vermont myth built around Town Meeting Day and a strong identity, and like most myths, there's a reason for the myth to exist.

"People in Vermont often have that sense of local community and they also are working to preserve it," Feurzeig said. "I think that is really special and I wanted to be part of that."

Feurzeig expects to play a mix of classical, jazz and avant-garde music at each concert. He also wants a local touch at each performance; at his next-scheduled concert after the Burlington premiere, May 15 in Brownington, Feurzeig said he'll work with a church choir and students from Lake Region Union High School.

The tour will be about more than music. Feurzeig also wants the tour to call attention to climate change. "It's not just 'a' crisis; it's the biggest crisis of all time," he said.

Feurzeig said combatting climate change takes more than just bicycling to work or recycling. He has stopped flying, and he was quiet about it for a while — it's a "downer of a topic," he said, and he doesn't want to come off as holier-than-thou.

But he realized that "the only thing more laughably, inconceivably irrelevant or insignificant than me not flying is me not flying and not saying anything," Feurzeig said. "It's a way of making a statement."

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