

# Book News And Notes



## Free Library Service Helps Blind Pianist Keep On Playing

(NAPSA)—Ayaka Isono began studying piano at age 3 in her native Japan. After moving to the United States and graduating from Indiana University, she embarked on a successful career as a concert pianist. But when she was 29, she suddenly lost her eyesight because of a rare retinal disorder.

A decade later, Isono, who lives in the San Francisco Bay area, is still performing—including a concert in Japan this past spring. She also gives private piano lessons to both sighted and visually impaired children and adults.

Isono has been able to continue playing the piano thanks to the braille music scores she receives from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS). “I can’t imagine my career without them,” she says. “I really can’t.”

NLS, part of the Library of Congress, has been producing and circulating audiobooks and braille books for more than 80 years. It also has the world’s largest collection of braille music scores, according to John Hanson, head of the NLS Music Section. “In the United States, there is no other source for a wide range of braille music, whether one is considering variety of instruments, types of music or extent of repertoire,” he says.

But that’s not all that NLS offers music lovers. The collection includes more than 30,000 braille, audio and large-print music scores, texts and instructional materials, including some titles developed solely for NLS. Six music magazines are also available by subscription to registered users of the program.

That is in addition to many music-related audiobooks and braille books in the broader NLS



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collection, including best sellers such as Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards’ autobiography “Life” and rapper Jay-Z’s “Decoded.”

### Who Is Eligible?

U.S. residents and American citizens living abroad who are blind, have low vision or cannot hold a book or turn its pages because of a physical disability are eligible for library service through NLS. Audiobooks, braille books and music materials are delivered and returned by mail, postage free. NLS also provides the necessary digital playback equipment. Those with computers and Internet service may download books—and soon, music scores—through the NLS Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) service.

For more information or to request an application, visit [www.loc.gov/nls](http://www.loc.gov/nls) or call (888) NLS-READ.