



Nora The Piano Cat™



PURR-ETRY CONTEST

Winners for 2010

My heart-felt thanks go to all who submitted poems. We received poetry in several forms: rhyming, non-rhyming, limericks, haiku, and accrostic. The judging was difficult, as judging always is, and I'm really glad that Betsy and Burnell took care of that aspect of the project (with a little help from Betsy's personal assistant, Allie). And the winners are...

In the adult category, 19 + up for best rhyming poem:

First place goes to Sarah L. Gordon for
In Praise of the Piano Cat

Roll over Beethoven! Poor Mozart watch out!
The scope of your greatness has been called into doubt
by a newcomer to the world music scene...
A goddess, a tabby, a diva, a queen.
This pussycat prodigy takes to the floor,
gleaming of coat, and gifted of paw.
With pads, chin and whiskers she tickles the keys.
Crescendo. Adagio. All mastered with ease.
She wants no sheet music – the tune's in her head.
No metronome needed – her tail taps instead.
Though she can't reach the pedals she has reached the world,
this grey and gorgeous, glorious girl!

Second place goes to Juliet Staveley for
The Feline Phenomenon from Philly

There's a rather famous musician,
You simply can't igNORA,
A bewitching bewhiskered Bartók,
Whose many fans adore her.

She has her own piano,
A Yamaha, if you please,

And happily plays for an audience,
By pawing (nearly) all the right keys

A silvery striped sensation,
She performs a great duet,
Or solo too, if that's your thing,
How talented can you get?

Of course it's a serious business,
She practices every day,
And follows greats like Betssorgsky,
Who inspire her to play.

Her favourites are G. Purrcini,
Depussy and Meozart,
The renditions are world famous,
She's touched a million hearts.

And when her concerts are over,
She larks with best pal Max,
Or poses for manager Burnell,
Who takes her PR snaps.

It's tough to be this gifted,
And stardom can be such a bore
But Nora, we simply implore `er,
Please tinkle forevermore!

We had a tie for Third place with *Nora's Gift* by Karen Batesole
and *Nora's Message* by Rosemary Gilbert.

Nora's Gift

by Karen Batesole

The tinkling of piano keys
once wafted
through the air
when no one
was around to play.
What could it be down there?

Downstairs there sat a Nora cat
and innocent, she played,
as little paws revealed her gift
through music she had made.

Expressions of her little soul
so touch us
with her art,

for music is the soul's best way
to reach
into the heart.

Nora's Message

by Rosemary Gilbert

When I was a kitten, I played on floors,
batted at anything hanging from doors.
I ran up the sofa-sides, cute and sweet,
tho' the sofa soon looked like Shredded Wheat!

One day, when I was inspecting my claws,
I heard music inside my paws!
Also a tiny voice which said:
"Play the piano – don't go to bed."

That's really how it all began,
to the piano-stool I ran.
Made myself comfy and
plunked on the keys.

Oh, the glory of it all!
Far more fun than tossing a ball.
Better still than watching fish
I'd been granted my dearest wish.

A humble tabby, my joy abounds
I now make lovely musical sounds.
Half of the world knows me by name
Soon, the Pussycat Hall of Fame!

Adult Category - 19 years old & up, Non-rhyming:

First Place - Carlos Silva - ***In the Quiet Corner of a Steel Cage***

In the quiet corner of a steel cage
Away from the craziness and rowdiness and the mundane
Sits a little creature... covered in fur, wide eyed, big eared
Quite curious really, of what lies beyond the gate...
"There is so much out there" she thinks... that I'd like to see
Oh so mysterious... is life and so much to do I'm sure
Like chasing butterflies, or tiny bugs
So many shadows and secret hiding places...
Cozy places... out in the sun,
Perhaps some delicious treats... like fresh grass
Or a nice tree trunk to sharpen my claws,
So much to see... indeed and do!

Like run real fast and jump and nap of course
And what are those big things I see
That stare back at me
Instead of nice furry feet they have hairless hands
They point, try to get my attention...
What silly creatures they can be
Humans! They are called... said the cat next to me
And if you are good, playful and act silly
A new home they will give to thee!
A new home... she thought, why I'd love that!
Away from these pesky kittens... so noisy they can be!
A new home... she thought, where I can be queen!

Maybe a comfy pillow to sleep on
And a nice dish with milk... when I please!
Oh... and I'd also like to listen to music!
Piano music it's called... I think
I saw it and heard it... in a dream!
Pianos are quite large... and fun to lie on
Sit on, and dance on! They are also a great viewing spot
High above anyone else
I could rule the world from there... I know
But most of all I dream... of making music, I know I can...
I shall sit in perfect posture and harmony...
I will concentrate real hard... and perhaps some day
My own orchestra I will conduct
And a wonderful symphony... I will inspire!
Why everyone will be so pleased... yes
I think I will do that... that is what I will do.

...A little furry creature sits
In the quiet corner of a steel cage
Looking out into the world, beyond the gate...
"There is so much out there I know"
That I must prepare...
The little furry creature curled up... in her quiet little corner
Closed her eyes... and dreamed
Of the symphony she would indeed
One day complete...

Second Place - Cindy Ward - ***Of Summer***

Summer slumbered softly
beneath the winter white.
Waiting to begin its awakening
soon after the first day of spring,
that day when Emma died.
I planted her beneath
the butterfly bush

so she could sleep quietly
alongside summer.
I planted marigolds.
The colors of summer.
The colors of Emma.

That was the beginning
of the summer of loss.
Of lost.
Being part of the world,
but the world so far away.
Cats gone on ahead
before their chance to share
so many more seasons with us.
Some of them were old.
Some of them weren't.

The marigolds grew
and filled the ground
with summer's sunlight,
summer's warmth.
I was glad that Emma
and all the others
were there, safe, together,
filled with fragrance
and flowers.

It was the summer
of marigold hands,
of yellows and oranges and
golden sunlight all mixed in
with the green of growing things,
things growing atop the dark earth
where so many cats are planted.

Someday I would like to write
a poem about the ones who sleep
alongside summer's light.
Emma, Adrian, Elsa, Possum.
Silly, the White Cat, Dorian.
Tomas, Corrina, George.
Jackson, Claude. And Theo.
Someday.
Someday when the sweet scent
of September no longer
lies quietly waiting.
Just waiting.
I wait, too.
It was the summer of loss.
And lost.

Later, it became
the summer of Nora.
The waiting had been
worth it.
I discovered her
quite by accident.
Watched and listened
over and over again,
at the wonder that is Nora.
She plays the piano
as I wish I could,
hearing her own tune,
pawing only the keys
most pleasant to her.

It doesn't matter
to anyone else,
but it was the summer
of falling in love.
With Nora.

It might have been the music,
so soft, so sweet,
or perhaps that furry face
turning so softly, so sweetly
toward the sound.
It might have been
just because
it's Nora.

When the package arrived,
I waited again.
For time to enjoy
the opening part
of getting something
in the mail.
Fed the cats.
Filled their water bowls.
Scooped their litter pans.
Hugged them all.

Thirty-two still here.
Every kind of cat
and color of cat.
Three-legged, blind, deaf,
cats with no eyelids.
Leukemia cats.
Big cats, tiny cats.
And cats of every size

in between.
Really old cats, baby cats.
And cats of every age
in between.

It doesn't matter
to anyone else
what happened before
they found us.
But it matters to them.
And to us.

So when the package arrived,
I waited again.
I looked in all the pockets
of my bright, new, yellow
messenger bag
with a picture of Nora
and her piano on the flap.

I was hoping
that she had somehow
managed to stow away
inside my new bag
and in a moment
I would hear
the familiar sound
of the music that only Nora
knows how to play.
But she wasn't there.

I will have to be content
to begin each day
watching and listening,
over and over again,
at the wonder that is Nora.
That sweet face, turning
as she presses the keys,
asking for nothing,
yet giving
so much more
than she will ever know.

The sweet scent
of September is here.
It was the summer
of loss.
Of lost.
And found.
Nora.

Third Place - Sue Norton - ***Cute Adorable Nora***

cute adorable nora
you inspire young and old
with your music

your passion for the keys
is infectious

you have captured a nation
young and old

to love animals
to love music
to love

cute adorable nora

Category - 13-18 years old:

First Place - Krissy Hamilton - ***Music is Life***

Music is life, music is zest.
But mentioning talent, this cat is the best...
She taps on the keys, making such a sweet sound.
This cat is an artist, the best one around.
Her music is pleasing, like such a sweet aura.
This cat is amazing, this cat is
Nora...

Second Place - Wyatt Counterman - ***Nora Limerick***

Nora the piano cat
Watch as she hits a B flat
Paws are flying
People enjoying
What Nora is best at

Third Place - Sarah Butler - ***It's Just that Cat***

It's Just that cat that leaves me warm and fuzzy inside,
A talented cat, My affections for her I cannot hide,

One day soon I hope to find a cat, just like her,
I want my own nora, one all covered with fur.

Category - 9-12 years old:

First Place - Chelsea Carrington - ***Nora the Piano-Playing Cat***

Nora is a talented cat
Who has her own obsession,
She sits on her seat and let the world take her away,
While her paws tap on the keys and her head starts to shake,
She knows what tune she is about to make,

Nora is a talented cat
Who has her own gift?
A cat from a shelter who no one knew,
Until she became worldwide,
YouTube she is famous for and here is her story,

Nora is a talented cat,
Who was found at a shelter?
Though Nora's cage describing card said "BOSSY!",
Betsy and burnell were so in love they didn't,
Worry about whether she was fat or "BOSSY!",
So they took her home and loved her so
Please read on below,

When Nora got in she loved the fact
It was full of art and musical instruments,
And especially a grand piano,
But as Nora was a cat,
She had never seen one before,
But before Betsy and burnell could have a say in,
She was teaching the little cats to hiss, purr and growl

So as soon as she took her talent to heart
She was a worldwide superstar
So Nora is a talented cat
And I can say a defiantly 1 in a kind.

Second Place - Elizabeth Sullivan - ***Music***

I see Betsy on the bench at the piano
Betsy begins to play
I hear marvelous sounds
I long to make those sounds too
Betsy gets up and leaves
I jump on the bench

How do I play the same notes?
How do I make the same sounds?
My paws tap the keys
I make the same marvelous sounds
I make music

Third Place - Davey Hiester - ***Piano!***

Professional
Intelligent
Awesome
Nora
Ovation

Category - up to 8 years old:

First Place - Emely Jimenez - ***Untitled***

Nora you are so cute
I can play a flute with you
The piano is so big
I can do a little jig
You are so sweet
I can give you a treat
Nora you play a tune
Under the moon

Second Place - Anna Grace Rosenthal - ***Untitled***

France, England and Spain
Nora is a prize
She goes beneath their eyes and begins to play
Every day and night
Nora brings delight world wide and
She is filled with pride.

Third Place - Maggie Mota - ***Nora the Great Piano Cat***

Nora is grey.
Nora has green eyes.
Nora has stripe's.
Nora sit's and touch's key's on the piano.
Nora play's song's on the piano
and sit's on the piano bench.

Category - Best Haiku:

First Place - Rachel Ward - ***Nora***

green eyes squint in light
gray beauty pressing the keys
surprising music

Second Place - Carolyn Clink - ***Untitled***

paw stroking keys
feline rhythm and blues
hep piano cat

Third Place - Elizabeth Core - ***Paws, Pause***

Nora plays, purrs, mews.
Her audience listens, hears
music run forward.

Category - Best Limerick

First Place - Lynne Campbell - ***Untitled***

There once was a stripey gray cat
The indelicate might say she was fat
But she was an artist--
And one of the smartest--
When at the piano she sat.

Second Place - Elizabeth Core - ***Imagining Lear's Take on Nora***

There once lived a kitty named Nora
who sat like a one-piece amphora
but when she leaned forward
tickled keys, she outpour-ed
the sounds that would bring fame galora.

