

Informant: Christopher Neil Kellam, 21 years old, Bloomington, Indiana

Collector: Brian Jeffrey Veerkamp, 21 years old, Bloomington, Indiana

Title: "The 12-inch Pianist"

Genre: Joke or Catch Tale. Jokes or Catch Tales are commonly defined as "humorous narratives that are short, concern almost any subject, and are ubiquitous." In general, they "often can be traced to an exploration of some socially or emotionally forbidden or intimidating subject matter." They also usually end with a punch line. (see Alan Axelrod and Harry Oster, *The Penguin Dictionary of American Folklore*, New York: Penguin Group, 2000, p286)

Folk Group: Young Adult Males

Typical (Performance) Context: Jokes or catch tales of this nature would most typically be performed in an informal and often social setting. Since the material presented in this particular joke is relatively unsuitable for a younger audience and may actually offend a person belonging to an older or more sophisticated folk group, it is usually performed only in the presence of peers of this particular folk group.

Transcription of the Item: A guy walks into a bar, and he's got a box with him and a lamp. He goes and sits down at the bar, and the bartender asks him, "What's that?" He says, "It's my magic lamp, but it is broken." He goes, "Well, let me try it." The guy says, "Okay." He rubs it, and the genie comes out. He makes a wish, and the next thing you know, there are ducks all over the bar. The guy looks at the bartender and is like, "What did you wish for?" He's like, "I sure didn't wish for a million ducks. I wished for a million bucks." So the bartender understands it is broken, and he's like "What's in the box?" The guy says, "Go ahead," and the bartender looks in the box, and there is a little guy in there playing a piano. He was like, "Well, what did you wish for?" The guy looks at the bartender, and he says, "Well, I sure didn't wish for a 12-inch pianist."

Commentary: These are usually told in party situations, during a conversation. They are intended only to make people laugh and "loosen the mood."