



Nathan Hunsinger/Staff Photographer

**Mavericks coach Rick Carlisle** watches as Cameron Ordinario, a seventh-grader with Asperger syndrome, plays piano at Greiner Exploratory Arts Academy, accompanied by Joseph Vincelli on the flute.

# Carlisle orchestrates a life-changing act

With coach's help, a young talent touches a chord with classmates

When Rick Carlisle looked out over the forest of upraised hands at Greiner Exploratory Arts Academy a few weeks ago, he was just casting for volunteers.

He got a concert instead.

Cameron Ordinario, a slender, flop-haired seventh-grader, was not about to let the opportunity of a lifetime pass.

"Is it OK if I sing?" he asked onstage.

"Sure!"

What else could the coach of the world champion Mavs

## IN THE KNOW

■ Joseph Vincelli, who plays the national anthem at Mavericks games and conducts music workshops across the country, will appear with Rick Carlisle on Tuesday at Hockaday.

■ Rick Carlisle and Cameron Ordinario at the Greiner Exploratory Arts Academy: <http://youtu.be/spqj52Oj08M>

teased him because of his mild case of Asperger syndrome, a form of autism. He knew exactly how he would do it. Rebecca Ordinario had heard it many times.

*Mom, if they could just hear me play and sing, they'd look at me different.*

Cameron had taken up the piano only five years ago. "Because of his issues," as his mother put it. He was spending too much time watching

very lucky."

Cameron has played in everything from recitals to the majestic main sanctuary of Highland Park United Methodist Church.

But now he would perform for his toughest judges yet: his classmates.

Carlisle wasn't sure what to expect. He was new at this. With little to do during the lockout, he's been appearing at local schools to "stimulate" a

Greiner was an early stop on Carlisle's music appreciation tour this fall.

Cameron — who says he likes music because "it brings everybody together" — would be his greatest discovery.

"We didn't have a boom mike or anything," Carlisle said. "He sat down at the piano, and I leaned over holding the microphone, standing on one foot, while he played and sang." Cameron sang from his heart. He sang from his toes. The lyrics of Adele's "Someone Like You" reverberated through the auditorium like thunder.

Girls shrieked. Boys cheered.

A life changed