

IMA Newsletter



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International
Music
Academy

Voted **top 100 educators in the world** by the International Biographical Centre
Winner of the **Consumers' Choice Award** for best music school in the GTA.
Winner of the Royal Conservatory of Music **Gold Medal for Teaching Excellence**.
Winner of the **York Region Character Community Award**.
Markham Board of Trade **Business Excellence Award** finalist.

Year XVIII, No. 8

August 2014

WELCOMING OUR NEW STUDENTS

Vonne A. (Trombone)
Angelina W. (guitar)
Sophie S. (violin)
Mythili S. (piano)
Desmond C. (violin)
Danna G. (piano, voice)
Mahnam K. (piano, voice)
Furqan K. (violin)
Mahboub E. (piano)
Grace K. (guitar)
Kashan K. (piano)
Myles K. (piano)
Goldium T. (violin)
Ciara D. (piano)
Kaila D. (voice)
Elizabeth W. (voice)

IMA STUDENTS BIRTHDAYS IN AUGUST

Vincent P., Ahanna P., Dhaarika R., Layan S., Emma M.,
Jhanvi T., Vera A., Aneesah B., Henry B., Arthur T., Sara C.,
Jeff M., Aidan J., Joy W., Matthew S., Isabelle T.,
Vithushan J., Angelique E., Jade Y., Lara S., Mahboub E.,
Ana C., Alena P., Ria K., Emma L., Jackie X.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

IMPORTANT DAYS IN AUGUST

Aug 4 - Toronto Youth Symphony Orchestra auditions
Aug 4 - Ontario Civic Holiday. **School is open.**
Aug 8-9 - RCM Theory examinations
Aug 11-23 - RCM practical examinations

NEWS

MANY OF THE IMA TEACHERS ARE ALREADY "SOLD OUT" FOR THE UPCOMING SCHOOL YEAR

During the summer, there were over 50 new students who registered for lessons with the International Music Academy – we welcome them all and wish them an exciting and meaningful time at our school.

Although we are still a month away from the beginning of the school year, many of the IMA teachers have already been fully booked and don't have any (or have very limited) availability. Here are some of the teachers' availabilities, as of August 1:

- Ms. Helena Holl (voice on Tuesday) – has only 4:30 pm -5:30 pm and 6:30 pm - 7:00 pm available.
- Mr. John Mills (guitar on Monday) – has only 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm and 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm available
- Mr. John Mills (guitar on Tuesday) – has only 4:30 pm – 5:00 pm and 5:30 pm – 6:00 pm available
- Mr. Leonid Sprikut (woodwinds/brass on Friday) – has only 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm and 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm available
- Mr. Leonid Sprikut (woodwinds/brass on Saturday) – has only 9:30 am – 10:30 am and 6:30 pm – 7:00 pm available
- Ms. Lili Imastounian (piano on Saturday) – has only 4:30 pm – 5:00 pm and 6:30 pm – 7:00 pm available.
- Ms. Lili Imastounian (piano on Sunday) – has only 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm, 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm – 4:00 pm available.
- Ms. Lili Imastounian (piano on Monday) – has only 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm available.
- Ms. Lili Imastounian (piano on Wednesday) – has only 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm and 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm available.
- Ms. Antonia de Wolfe (piano on Sunday) – has only 10:30 am – 11:30 am and 12:30 pm – 1:30 pm available
- Ms. Antonia de Wolfe (piano on Thursday) – has only 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm and 8:30 pm – 9:00 pm available
- Ms. Inna Kotenko (piano on Friday) – has only 5:30 pm–6:00 pm, 7:30 pm–8:00 pm and 8:30 pm–9:00 pm

International Music Academy
4981 Highway 7, Unit 1
Markham ON L3R 1N1



COMPOSERS' ANNIVERSARIES IN AUGUST

2/08/1945 - Mascagni died
8/08/1975 - Shostakovich died
09/08/1919 - Leoncavallo died
10/08/1928 - Janacek died
12/08/1992 - John Cage died
13/08/1912 - Massenet died
22/08/1928 - Stockhausen was born
22/08/1862 - Debussy was born
25/08/1918 - Bernstein was born
26/08/1958 - Vaughan Williams died
28/08/1959 - Martinu died

Where you born or do you know someone who was born on the same day as these famous composers? Drop us an e-mail at info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca to let us know.

2014 GREAT COMPOSERS ANNIVERSARIES

C.P.E. Bach – 300 years from his birth (March 8)
M. Mussorgsky – 175 years from his birth (May 21)
R. Strauss – 150 years from his birth (June 11)

FEATURED TEACHER OF THE MONTH



Ramon Taranco
Guitar and interpretation

After experiencing 17 years of playing guitar professionally and teaching in New York City (from December 1994 to June 2012), Mr. Taranco now dedicates his time to teaching in various music schools throughout the York region. He

continues to compose music and prepare for future performances. Solo, duo & band performances in New York City include 8 concerts in the New York City's Guggenheim Museum's World Beat Jazz Series, the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Majestic Theater, Queens Museum of Art, Harborside Jazz Festival, Stephen D. Hassenfeld Children's Center (Manhattan), Visions Institute for the Blind (Manhattan), and many more. Ramon's is the author of 2 CDs, *Music From the Bermuda Triangle* and *The Adventures of Bo Segovia*, that present 16 of his eclectic compositions ranging from solo guitar (electric and acoustic) to full band. To date, Ramon's music has received airplay on at least 350 stations in 50 countries around the globe. Ramon played blues, jazz and classical guitar in many of Toronto's premier venues including the Harbourfront Centre, C'est What, The Riverboat, the University of Toronto's Hart House Theatre, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, and in the Top O' the Senator concert series. Ramon toured in Western Canada and several times across

Ontario giving concerts, lecture-recitals and guitar clinics. Ramon also served as a music consultant and guitar teacher for the 20th Century Fox feature film "PCU." Mr. Taranco received several grants from the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, The Foundation to Assist Canadian Talent on Record (FACTOR).

FEATURED STUDENT OF THE MONTH

Daniel Robson, electric guitar



What instrument do you play? -
Electric guitar

How long have you taken lessons?
- I have been taking lessons with IMA for 4 years

Who are your favourite musical artists? – I love classic rock...The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton

What are you other hobbies, besides music? - I like to play video games and Xbox

Favourite food? - Definitely pizza

What is the coolest thing you've learnt in your lessons in the past three months? - I have started learning chord progression.

Do you have any performances coming up? - I have performed at many of the IMA music festivals but I am taking a break from performances during the summer and focusing on my lessons.

E-mail to info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca a photo of yourself (or your child) together with the answers of the questions above. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of every month. We will feature you in one of the next issues of the newsletter.

PET OF THE MONTH

Send a photo of your pet together with following information and we will publish it in one of the next issues of the IMA newsletter. What is the name of your pet? How old is he/she? What kind of breed our pet is (if applicable)? How long have you had him/her for? Any special circumstances around getting the pet (i.e. a gift, foster pet, etc.)? The funniest story about you pet? Any special skills or abilities.

Music Training Sharpens Brain Pathways, Studies Say

By Sarah D. Sparks
San Diego



Yashelyn, 9, plays violin in the Youth Orchestra LA at the Heart of Los Angeles music program class in Los Angeles.

At the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles, a student sits poised with her bow at a practiced angle to her violin, her eyes following both the written notation in front of her and the conductor's direction, aware of both her own music and the sounds coming from fellow students' instruments. New research suggests that the complexity involved in practicing and performing music may help students' cognitive development. Studies released last month at the Society for Neuroscience meeting here find that music training may increase the neural connections in regions of the brain associated with creativity, decision-making, and complex memory, and they may improve a student's ability to process conflicting information from many senses at once. Research also found that starting music education early can be even more helpful.

"It's really hard to come up with an experience similar to that" as an education intervention, said Gottfried Schlaug, the director of the [Music and Neuroimaging Laboratory](#) at Harvard Medical School. Not only does it require attention and coordination of multiple senses, but it often triggers emotions, involves cooperation with other people, and provides immediate feedback to the student on progress, he said. Music, on its own, has also been shown to trigger the reward area of the brain, he noted.

Learning to Multitask

For example, a team of researchers led by Julie Roy, a postgraduate researcher at the auditory-neuroscience-research library at the University of Montreal in Canada, tested 15 musicians with 10 to 25 years of experience, as well as 15 non-musicians of the same age, in sensory-processing tasks. The participants were asked to report touch sensations while also hearing sounds, ignoring what they heard, and reporting only

what they felt on a finger. Prior research has shown that to be difficult to do; normally, those who feel one touch but hear two sounds will think they have felt two touches. Longtime musicians, however, who must simultaneously read music, feel their instrument, and respond to the sounds it produces, were more than twice as accurate at distinguishing touch and hearing.

In another study, Yunxin Wang, a researcher at the [State Key Laboratory of Cognitive Neuroscience and Learning](#) at Beijing Normal University in China, examined the structures of the brains of 48 young adults ages 19 to 21 who had studied music at least one year between the ages of 3 and 15. After controlling for gender and the amount of time they had trained overall, Ms. Yunxin found those who had begun musical training before age 7 had significantly more-developed brain areas associated with language and executive function.

Ana Pinho, a neuroscientist at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, argued that musical education can be helpful at any age. "Even after stroke and disease, starting musical training can still help you get more from your brain," she said. "All of these findings show [musical training] can create a lot of plasticity that can produce effectiveness across the brain, in cognition and behavior." Ms. Pinho used functional magnetic resonance imaging to record the blood flow in the frontal lobes of 39 pianists while they improvised music on a specially designed keyboard. Musicians with longer experience in improvising music had better and more targeted activity in the regions of the brain associated with creativity and the ability to transfer working memory to long-term memory. While specific parts of the brain can be responsible for a motor task such as strumming a G-string, researchers are finding that a musician interpreting Johann Sebastian Bach's "Air on a G String,"—much less creating such a masterpiece—uses more of a brainwide process.

"We say that when people are inspired, they create, that it all comes in a rush," said Antonio R. Damasio, a neuroscience professor at the University of Southern California, "but, of course, it comes in a rush if you've trained your hands and your mind for an entire lifetime. That moment of inspiration generally comes on the back of a whole process of imagination and knowledge and criticism of what has come before." "We want to know what circuitries are involved, but this is something about the whole brain, not left or right brain or some particular cortex," he said during a symposium about the neuroscience of creativity.

Mr. Damasio leads an ongoing longitudinal study by USC's Brain and Creativity Institute on the development of musical skills—and neurological development—of students in the Youth Orchestra Los Angeles. For the past year, the [Effects of Early Childhood Musical Training on Brain and Cognitive Development](#) project has worked with the youth orchestra, which provides free musical instruments and training to low-income students in the city. Researchers are tracking students for five years, beginning at ages 6 or 7, who have been matched in age, socioeconomic status, and prior cognitive ability.



Kevin, 11, plays flute in the Youth Orchestra LA at the Heart of Los Angeles music program class in Los Angeles.

“Several studies have provided compelling evidence that when the brains of adult musicians are compared to nonmusicians there are differences of function and anatomy,” said Assal Habibi, a USC postdoctoral researcher on the study. “Longitudinal studies in children are the only way to examine the relative contributions of nature and nurture to the differences found in adult populations.”

Creativity Toolbox

And insights to the ways music affects brain development may help researchers understand how students process other cognitively complex tasks, Mr. Schlaug said. For example, he has found that “musical disorders,” such as tone-deafness or the inability to distinguish and hold a beat, **affect 4 percent to 10 percent of the population**—the same percentages that have been identified with primary disabilities in other areas, such as dyslexia in reading or dyscalculia in mathematics. Moreover, a 2011 study by Mr. Schaug and his colleagues found among children ages 7 to 9, the ability to perceive pitch and phonemic awareness were correlated, suggesting there may be a connection or a shared neural cause of both dyslexia and tone-deafness. “Having this toolbox of ways to examine creativity allows us to understand what brain regions are involved in creative thought and coming up with new ideas,” Harvard’s Mr. Schlaug said. “From a broader societal perspective, it is obviously important to strengthen creativity because that is the seed for coming up with new developments, new ideas, and new tools.

Does this mean states should set mandatory music-training requirements, as nearly all now do for physical education? Probably not, according to Mr. Schaug. While studies show benefits of music training, so far they have only looked at students who are voluntarily participating, not those who are forced to play. “You wouldn’t want to do an activity that wouldn’t be joyful and rewarding for anybody to do,” he said.

If you would like to comment on this story or anything else you have read in the Newsletter, head over to the IMA Facebook page or message us on Twitter.

International Music Academy

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