

# 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 XIX, No. 5

May 2015

## WELCOMING OUR NEW STUDENTS

Irene H. (piano)  
Meagan J. (piano)  
Vera Z. (voice)  
Abinaya S. (piano)  
James L. (piano)  
Sohum T. (piano)  
Bob K. (voice)

## IMA STUDENTS BIRTHDAYS IN MAY

Lana L., Kyla T., Sana P., Carter K., Catherine T., Gautam S., Kaila D.,  
Riya R., Nitin R., Janessa P., Lizbeth D., Jonathan W., Christina K.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

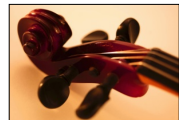
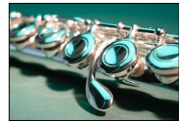
## IMPORTANT DAYS IN MAY

May 1-4 Canadian Music Competition (local finals, Toronto)  
May 5-11 Canadian Music Competition (provincial finals)  
May 8-9 RCM theory examinations  
**May 16 Flato Markham Theatre. Elgar's Cello Concerto  
with the Kindred Spirits Orchestra**  
**May 18 Victoria Day. School is open.**

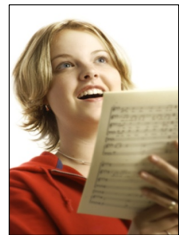
## NEWS

### IMA ANNUAL SUMMER FESTIVAL

The end of the school year is fast approaching and we have already begun preparations for the iMA Summer Music Festival. As usual, we are planning on having a series of one-hour concerts starting on both Saturday, June 27 and on Sunday, June 28. The festival will consist of ten separate one-hour concerts (on Saturday – only piano and guitar; on Sunday – any instrument). Participation in the iMA Summer Festival is based upon a teacher's recommendation and it represents a natural culmination of several months of studying at the International Music Academy. Performing in front of public builds essential skills and develops a high level of self-esteem and confidence. All students are encouraged to participate.



The concerts will take place in the magnificent ambiance and extraordinary acoustics of Cornell Recital Hall located at the Cornell Community Centre, 3201 Bur Oak St. in Markham PN L6B 0T2. The hall has an excellent Steinway grand piano, large screen connected to an HD camera that will allow you to see the finest details of each performance.



### HOW TO KEEP YOUR LESSONS CURRENT DAY, TIME AND TEACHER FOR SEPTEMBER?

Over the past few years several parents asked how to keep the day, time and teacher for their children for the upcoming school year. Below is important information that would most likely answers most of your questions. Please do not hesitate to ask if there is still something that we did not cover.

**Q. How do lessons work in the summer?** - The IMA is open year round, and we do not close during the summer.

**Q. Do a lot of students quit during the summer?** - For the past 5 years, we have grown in enrolment each July by 10%. Some students withdraw but we get a huge influx of students in June, July and August and most of them continue into the fall.

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**Q. How full is the Academy?** - As of today we are near capacity, and many teachers have no availability between the hours of 3:00-8:30 p.m. on weekdays and between 8:30 am – 6:00 pm on both Saturday and Sunday.

**Q. If we withdraw for the summer, can we keep our spot for fall?** - Lessons are first come first serve, so if you withdraw for the summer, we cannot guarantee that we will have a spot for you in the fall as we will open the spot to new students.

**The big question for all parents and students to consider is: Do you want to stay with the same teacher in the fall?**

**IF THE ANSWER IS YES THERE ARE 2 WAYS TO DO THIS:**

- 1. Take advantage of our summer make-up lessons.** We realize that some of you will go on vacation for a portion of the summer. So, what you can do is simply make up in advance the lessons that you would miss because of your holidays. You can make them up as early as you can (in April, May or even earlier).
- 2. Sub lease your spot to a family or friend.** You can send a family member or a friend in your place for the dates you will miss. Just let the office know who is coming in your place and when. Make sure that they reimburse you directly for the lessons. If you are taking summer lessons and need a specific time for the fall, please contact us around late July and we will do our best to accommodate you.

Each September, we get calls from students who have been with us for years, but withdrew for the summer. They want to return to the same teacher, day and time, but another student who signed up for lessons in July or August has already filled the spot. We can't kick out the new student from the spot he/she has been taking for 2 months during the summer.

**So, if you LOVE your teacher, keep your spot by using the summer make-ups or sub lease your spot.**

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## COMPOSERS' ANNIVERSARIES IN MAY

01/05/1904	Dvorak died
07/05/1833	Brahms born
07/05/1840	Tchaikovsky born
12/05/1845	Faure born
12/05/1884	Smetana died
15/05/1567	Monteverdi born
17/05/1866	Satie born
18/05/1909	Albeniz died
18/05/1911	Mahler died
19/05/1954	Ives died
20/05/1896	Clara Schumann died
22/05/1813	Wagner born
25/05/1934	Holst died
27/05/1840	Paganini died
29/05/1860	Albeniz born
31/05/1809	Haydn died

*Where you born or do you know someone who was born on the same day as these famous composers? Drop us e-mail at [info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca](mailto:info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca) to let us know.*

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## FEATURED TEACHER OF THE MONTH

**Antonia de Wolfe, M.Mus., B.Mus.,**  
Piano Studies and Interpretation, Music Theory



Ms. Antonia de Wolfe has graduated with a degree in piano performance from the George Enescu Institute of Music in Bucharest, Romania and, later, with another degree from the Central School of Music affiliated with the P. I. Tchaikovsky State Conservatory in Moscow. She has also graduated from the Academia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia in

Rome, where she studied with Sergio Perticaroli, and has earned a Master in Music (piano performance) degree from the University of Toronto. In addition, Ms. de Wolfe has studied with Maestro S. Petricaroli at Mozarteum Hochschule für Musik in Salzburg (Austria). Ms. de Wolfe has given several recitals and concerts in some of the finest concert halls in Bucharest, Moscow, Rome, Paris, Salzburg, and Toronto. She has also taught piano at the Columbus Centre, Cosmo school of Music, and Koffler Music School. As a collaborative pianist and accompanist, she has been in great demand for several productions of the Centuries Opera Association, Toronto Opera Repertoire, Palestrina Choir, Ethobicoke Centennial Choir, and others. Ms. de Wolfe is a registered teacher with Royal Conservatory of Music (RCME 44667).

Ms. De Wolfe was happy to answer a few questions for our students and parents:

**1. What do you like most about teaching?** I feel a great satisfaction upon following the development of my students' skills and of their understanding of music. When I teach pieces that I myself have played I get a new perspective on them and I get new ideas about alternative ways to approach them. Teaching requires a keen analysis of musical structure, which helps the teacher to unveil hidden or new meanings involved in the experience of music. Also I like to perpetuate the love of classical music for the new generations.

**2. How do you inspire students to practice more?** It's very important to listen to music. Listening to recordings, going to concerts... Listening to music is an active process that inspires a student. It awakens in them the expressive possibilities that music offers. I always demonstrate a piece of music on the piano. Also, I give the student several repertoire choices and let them pick their favourite one. Finally it is important to put a

piece in historical context: information about the composer and the period the music was written in. All of this leads to inspiring my students to learn more.

**3. What roles does performance play in student's development?** It is important to have performances as milestones in a student development. Such events contribute much to shape the self-image of a student. Once a student has a performance as a set goal practicing becomes more exciting! Simply, a motivated student puts more effort into practicing. The performance in itself represents the culmination of all the effort put into practice. Plus it's a great feeling to be on stage and create beautiful music.

**4. Who are your favourite composers?** Robert Schumann has been a long-standing favourite composer of mine. His intense romanticism has always moved me. His ability of changing moods from lyrical calm to passionate torment, from sadness to great joy and glamour, exemplify is depth of character (as a composer). Also from orchestral repertoire I like *Symphonie Fantastique* by Hector Berlioz. Wagner and Berlioz were both innovators of program music (music that has a story line behind it).

**5. What was the last piece of music (sheet music or a recording) you purchased for yourself?** I purchased *Carnaval* by Robert Schumann, a piano piece.

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## FEATURED STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

### JACKIE XU



**What instrument do you play?** - I play the clarinet.

**How long have you taken lessons?** - I've been taking lessons ever since I was in grade 5 so it has been 3 years now.

**Who are your favourite musical artists?** - My favourite musical artist is *Macklemore*. I like all of his

rap songs he sang especially "Can't Hold Us."

**What are your other hobbies, besides music?** - Some of my hobbies, besides music, are playing video games, soccer and basketball. I play house league soccer and basketball and play some fps games like COD and CSGO.

**Favorite food?** - My favourite food is French fries, especially ones at McDonald's.

**What is the coolest thing you've learnt in your lessons in the past three months?** - The coolest thing I've learned in the last

three months is how to play *The Entertainer* and *Grande Sonata*.

**Do you have any performance coming up?** - My next performance coming up will be at the IMA summer festival.

*E-mail to [info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca](mailto: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.*

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## 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.*

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## FEATURED ARTICLE

### DIGITAL KILLED THE IVORY KEYS: WHY ACOUSTIC PIANO SALES ARE DECLINING IN CANADA

[David Kennedy, Financial Post Staff](#) | January 5, 2015 |

Robert Lowrey remembers piano stores lining each side of Yonge Street from Sheppard to Finch.

"In the '80s there were at least 40 or 50 piano businesses in the Greater Toronto Area," he said.

Today, Mr. Lowrey, the owner of Robert Lowrey Piano Experts, could think of only eight major retailers and a handful of smaller restoration shops left.

Robert Lowrey, owner of Robert Lowrey Piano Experts, poses by a Bosendorfer Grand Piano in this file photo.

In its heyday, Mr. Lowrey's store was selling 1,200 pianos annually. This year he expects sales numbers to come in just under 700.

"Sales have been really shrinking since [the recession]," he said. "There's definitely something that's occurred that's in its own way similar to what's happened to the book industry and CDs."

Research firm IBISWorld noted in a 2014 report that sales of acoustic pianos have declined over the past five years as consumers have purchased more digital and electric pianos.

There's a split in taste among consumers: Parents buy a more affordable digital piano for their children, and upgrade to acoustic if their child shows promise. The millennial generation, unsurprisingly, just likes digital.

Conversely, the grand piano market is made up almost exclusively of the wealthy, who have the space to house and the means to own an elegant instrument.

Digital is not the only thing hurting sales. Craigslist postings offering free pianos to anyone willing to pick them up themselves have cropped up in recent years, damaging the restoration market and providing anyone with a particularly strong back a fix-me-up option that doesn't run into the thousands of dollars.

At the heart of the issue, though, may be that the piano is of a bygone era.



In 1920, thousands of Canadian-made pianos were rattling off the line and being sold across the country every month. There were about 15 thriving manufacturers during the heyday. Heintzmans and Sherlock-Mannings entertained a generation of Canadians in the living room before radio and television muscled in.

"You see pictures of sawed huts on the prairies without a bathtub but they've got a piano," Jeremy Elliott, manager at Paul Hahn & Co., said.

Pianos were a status symbol – the home entertainment system in the years before band frequencies and rabbit ears.

Paul Hahn & Co. has operated in Toronto for over 100 years. The business used to sell new instruments, but now only sells restored pianos and performs private restorations.

Mr. Elliott pointed to 1890-1940 as the golden age of the North American piano industry.

"When I look at a piano from that period," he said, "I'm not really seeing a piano, I'm seeing... the iPod, the iPhone and the Mac all mashed into one... It used to be if you wanted music you had to make it."

The golden age dimmed once the home market for pianos became saturated. Mr. Lowrey said that six or seven years ago his company was selling \$2.5 million annually in restored or reconditioned pianos, but today even that part of his business has almost evaporated.

Retailers have done what they can to adapt. To the shock of purists, Robert Lowrey Piano Experts introduced Roland digital pianos in 1985.

Nothing could ever compare to sitting down on that bench and striking the authentic keys

Digital pianos take up less space, generally cost less and their design has improved: most digital pianos use weighted keys that play like a traditional ivory or ebony key – a light or heavy touch will produce a sound that reflects the strength of the strike.

"[Digital pianos] have always been a strong part of our market," he said, "and in this past year they've become much stronger."

According to Euromonitor International, electric instruments make up over 40% of Canadian instrument sales, while acoustic pianos and organs account for less than 7%.

Nevertheless, for true keyboard lovers, there is nothing quite like a real piano. Canadian singer-songwriter and pianist Chantal Kreviazuk remembers the day her parents got a Kawai grand piano as a dream come true.

"I certainly like some of the sounds that we've come up with digitally in recent times," she said, "but nothing could ever compare to sitting down on that bench and striking the authentic keys."

Mr. Lowrey feels there is a great deal of nostalgia for the piano.

"It's certainly not going to disappear," he said, "but the place it's going to have in peoples' homes has still yet to be determined."

*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

## **GIFT CERTIFICATE**

*for new students only*

### **ONE FREE LESSON**

Call the IMA Office at **905.489.4620**  
to schedule your first lesson.

*Once scheduled, the lesson cannot be rescheduled. Cannot be combined with any other offer. No refunds, no exchanges.*



Music is sooooooooo beautiful!

Register for lessons by  
**June 15, 2015** and receive

# **\$30 off**

*New students only.  
Cannot be combined with any other offer.*

## **REFER A NEW STUDENT and GET ONE FREE LESSON!**

When you refer a new student to the IMA, who registers for lesson, you will get one free lesson for every new student. So, if you refer the IMA to 2 new students, we will give you 2 free lessons; for 3 new students – 3 free lessons etc. Fill in the coupon below and leave it with the IMA Office administrator.

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the new student: \_\_\_\_\_

*You can print or photocopy this coupon as many times as you need.  
**Cannot be combined with any other offer.***