

# iMA Newsletter

Winner of the **Consumers' Choice Award** for best music school in the GTA.



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International  
Music  
Academy

Year XVI, No. 12

December 2012

## WELCOME NEW STUDENTS

Stephen C. (Voice)  
Jaison W. (Piano)  
Ashraf A. (Viola)  
Andrew S. (Piano)  
Matthew S. (Piano)

## IMA STUDENTS BIRTHDAYS IN DECEMBER

Victoria B., Kingsley T., Gianna F., Kalliopi K., Alexia K., Nikethana B., Zahra H., Taylor L., Amaan B., Sanjana V., Zoe M., Zena M., Danny Z., Ashraf A., Wayne Y., Ali B., Rhea P.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

## IMPORTANT DAYS IN DECEMBER

**December 3.** Peel Music Festival registrations deadline.

**December 14-15.** RCM theory examinations.

**December 2-9.** Hanukkah.

**December 15.** Markham Theatre  
Handel's Messiah with the KSO.

**December 17.** IMA Winter term report cards.

**December 25.** Christmas Day. School closed.

**December 26.** Boxing Day. School is open.

## MUSIC HISTORY IN DECEMBER

- December 3** Maria Callas, opera singer, born (1923)
- December 4** Benjamin Britten, British composer, dies at 63 (1976)
- December 5** Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, composer, dies in Vienna, Austria at 35 (1791)

- December 6** Dave Brubeck, Concord CA, jazz pianist/composer born, (1920)
- December 7** Pietro Mascagni, Italian composer, born (1863)
- December 8** Jean Sibelius, Finland, composer, born (1865)
- December 9** Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano, born (1915)
- December 10** Olivier Messiaen, composer, born (1908)
- December 11** Hector Lou Berlioz, France, composer, born, (1803)
- December 12** Frank Sinatra, singer, born, (1915)
- December 14** Carl Phillip Emanuel Bach, German composer, dies at 74, (1788)
- December 15** Ludwig van Beethoven, composer, born (1770)
- December 16** Charles Camille Saint-Saens, French composer, dies at 86, (1921)
- December 17** Johann Friedrich Schubert, composer, born (1770)
- December 20** Artur Rubinstein, pianist dies in Geneva at 95, (1982)
- December 23** Giacomo Puccini, Italy, composer dies, (1853)
- December 24** Alban Maria Johannes Berg, composer, dies at 50, (1935)
- December 26** Lennox Berkeley, composer, dies at 86, (1989)
- December 29** Pablo Casals, cellist, Catalonia Spain, born (1876)
- December 30** Dmitri B Kabalevsky, St Petersburg Russia, composer born (1904)

## FEATURED TEACHER OF THE MONTH

**Stanislav Vitort**, M.Mus. Vocal Studies

Mr. Vitort has graduated with a Master on Music in Operatic Arts from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music. In 2009 he was a finalist of the

International Competition "Luciano Pavarotti". He has also received The Canadian Broadcast Corporation Galaxie Rising Stars Award as well as the Special Prize of La Piste aux Espoirs Competition in Tournai (Belgium). Mr. Vitort has been teaching voice and interpretation at Bravo School of Music (Toronto) in addition to his busy career as opera singer in various recitals, concerts, and special events. He has also appeared at Music Niagara International Opera Theatre, The Centre for Opera Studies in Sulmona (Italy) and Le Festival de Radio France in Montpellier. was also a leading performer in goodwill concerts for AIDS relief 'We Will Rock You' with members of the international rock band Queen and participated in Montreal Jazz festival as a member of Toronto based group 'Smooth Jazz'. Mr. Vitort is a registered teacher with the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCME 63743).

*Mr. Vitort was happy to answer a few questions for our students and parents:*



**What do you like most about teaching?** I enjoy sharing my knowledge about singing. I'm glad when the students achieve their goals. The teaching process also helps me to improve my own vocal technique.

**How do you inspire students to practice more?** I encourage students to focus on their continued improvement. I don't let my students struggle to figure out what is expected of them. It is important to always reassure students that they can do well and tell them exactly what and how they should do to succeed. Teacher's enthusiasm is a crucial factor in student motivation, so I always strive to inspire my students.

**What roles does performance play in student's development?** Performance of well-prepared music piece is an important step in the students' progress. Unsuccessful performance due to the fact that the student was not ready could have a very negative impact and turn students away from continuing to study. Not every one takes failure with ease. Sometimes it could be very hurtful, even devastating. An individual approach is the most important element in the teaching process.

**Who are your favourite composers?** Tchaikovsky, Sviridov, Joseph Haydn, Verdi, Puccini, Mercury, McCartney, Lennon, Webber, Morricone, Jackson...

**What was the last piece of music (sheet music or a recording) you purchased for yourself?** A vocal score of Giordano's "Andrea Chenier".

## STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

### Garrett Kawabata



**What instrument do you play?** – Piano and violin.

**How long have you taken lessons?** – I started piano when I was 3 1/2 and have been taking lessons for about 6 years. I have been taking violin lessons for about 1 1/2 years.

**Who are our favourite musical artists?**

– **My favourite artist right now is Psy - Gangnam Style.**

**What are your other hobbies, besides music?** – I like drawing, swimming.

**Favourite food?** - Hamburgers.

**What is the coolest thing you've learnt in your lessons in the past three months?** – I like the Sonatina Rondo by Beethoven that I'm learning in RCM Grade 5.

**Do you have any performances coming up?** – The IMA Winter Festival and Kiwanis Music Festival.

### Carter Kawabata



**What instrument do you play?** – Piano and violin.

**How long have you taken lessons?** – I have been taking piano lessons for about 3 1/2 years. I have been taking violin lessons for about 1 year.

**Who are our favourite musical artists?** – I like Psy - Gangnam Style.

**What are your other hobbies, besides music?** – I like basketball, handball, swimming and Angry Birds.

**Favourite food?** - Pasta with butter sauce and parmesan cheese.

**What is the coolest thing you've learnt in your lessons in the past three months?** - Coconut Rag by Christopher Norton.

**Do you have any performances coming up?** – The IMA Winter Festival and Kiwanis Music Festival.

*E-mail to [info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca](mailto:info@InternationalMusicAcademy.ca) a photo of yourself (or your child) together with the answers of the following questions: What instrument do you play?, How long have you taken lessons?, Who are our favourite musical artists?, What are your other hobbies, besides music?, Favourite food? What is the coolest thing you've*

learnt in your lessons in the past three months?, Do you have any performances coming up?). 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 your pet? Any special skills or abilities?



Music is sooooooooo beautiful!

Register for lessons by **December 31** 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.*

## Even A Few Years Of Music Training Benefits The Brain

By [Christie Wilcox](#) | August 21, 2012



Music has a remarkable ability to affect and manipulate how we feel. Simply listening to songs we like [stimulates the brain's reward system](#), creating feelings of pleasure and comfort. But music goes beyond our hearts to our minds, shaping how we think. Scientific evidence suggests that even a little music training when we're young can shape how brains develop, improving the ability to differentiate sounds and speech. With education funding constantly on the rocks and tough economic times tightening many parents' budgets, students often end up with only a few years of music education. Studies to date have focused on neurological benefits of sustained music training, and found many upsides. For example, researchers have found that [musicians are better able to process foreign languages because of their ability to hear differences in pitch, and have incredible abilities to detect speech in noise](#). But what about the kids who only get sparse musical tutelage? Does picking up an instrument for a few years have any benefits?

The answer from a study just published in the *Journal of Neuroscience* is a resounding yes. The team of researchers from [Northwestern University's Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory](#) tested the responses of forty-five adults to different complex sounds ranging in pitch. The

adults were grouped based on how much music training they had as children, either having no experience, one to five years of training, or six to eleven years of music instruction.

Music training had a profound impact on the way the study subjects' brains responded to sounds. The people who had studied music, even if only for a few years, had more robust neural processing of the different test sounds. Most importantly, though, the adults with music training were more effective at pulling out the fundamental frequency, or lowest frequency sound, of the test noises. "The way you hear sound today is dictated by the experiences with sound you've had up until today," explained co-author and lab head Nina Kraus. As she and her colleague wrote [in an article for Nature](#), "akin to physical exercise and its impact on body fitness, music is a resource that tones the brain for auditory fitness."

Bulking up the auditory brain has non-musical implications. [The ability to differentiate fundamental frequencies is critical for perceiving speech](#), and is an integral part of [how we recognize and process sounds in complex and noisy environments](#). Thus childhood music instruction has strong linguistic benefits and improves performance on everyday listening tasks. Since we live in an inherently noisy world, the better we are at focusing on sound and perceiving different sounds, the better. This can be particularly important for children with learning disorders or those for whom English is a second language. There is a body of research that suggests music training not only improves hearing, it bolsters a suite of brain functions. Musically trained kids do better in school, with [stronger reading skills](#), [increased math abilities](#), and [higher general intelligence scores](#). Music even seems to improve social development, as people believe music helps them be [better team players](#) and [have higher self-esteem](#). "Based on what we already know about the ways that music helps shape the brain, the study suggests that short-term music lessons may enhance lifelong listening and learning," said Kraus. "Our research captures a much larger section of the population with implications for educational policy makers and the development of auditory

training programs that can generate long-lasting positive outcomes."

The importance of music education is something to consider, given that election season is in full swing. According to [a recent White House report](#), more than 300,000 education jobs have been lost since the "end" of the recession in 2009 – 7,000 were lost last month alone. As schools lose funding, arts and extracurricular programs are often first on the chopping block, meaning less music education for the nation's youth. Given the scientific evidence supporting the importance of music both neurologically and educationally, the loss of music education seems particularly painful. Perhaps as we head to the polls this season, we should give even more thought as to how our choices of elected officials might affect the education system in this country and the brains of the children who are its future.

Citation: Skoe, E. & Kraus, N. (2012). A Little Goes a Long Way: How the Adult Brain Is Shaped by Musical Training in Childhood, *Journal of Neuroscience*, 32 (34) 11510. DOI: [10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1949-12.2012](#)



**About the Author:** Christie Wilcox is a science writer and blogger who moonlights as a PhD student in Cell and Molecular Biology at the University of Hawaii. Follow on [Google+](#). Follow on Twitter [@NerdyChristie](#).

International Music Academy

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