

iMA Newsletter

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**
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International
Music
Academy

Year XXX, No. 7

July 2026

WELCOMING OUR NEW STUDENTS

Ava G. - voice

IMPORTANT DAYS IN JULY

July 1. *Canada Day. IMA is open.*
July 1. *Unionville Millennium Square. Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Canada Day Celebration*
July 12. *Collingwood Music Festival. Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Symphony under the stars*
July 17. *Stouffville Memorial Park. Kindred Spirits Orchestra. Symphony under the stars*

IMA STUDENTS' BIRTHDAYS IN JULY

Nathan B., Cyrus S., Adriel B., Kelly L., Evan R., Matthew B., Kanimoli R., Brian L., Ashley W., Kailash C., James C., Ivanna L., Melissa L., Alyssa L., Kelly L., Adriano L., Dhanvik A., Matthew B., Callie Z., Evelyn H., Krish R.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

GET A \$30 CREDIT ON YOUR NEXT MONTH TUITION

We are always very happy to welcome new students of all ages, levels, and instruments to the iMA. **Please tell your friends about your experience with the International Music Academy.** Do you know someone who is thinking of taking music lessons or who has **children** who may be interested in getting their hands on a musical instrument or singing? Do you know a **teenager** who needs a high school OAC credit? Do you know an **adult** who has wanted for a long time to learn how to play a musical instrument but has never had the time or inclination? **Please tell them about the IMA.** As an appreciation for your referral, we will give you a **\$30 credit** for each new family who registers at the International Music Academy as a result of your referral.



COMPOSERS' ANNIVERSARIES IN JULY

1/07/1925 - Satie died
2/07/1714 - Gluck was born
3/07/1854 - Janacek was born
4/07/1623 - William Byrd died
7/07/1860 - Mahler was born
8/07/1882 - Percy Grainger was born
9/07/1879 - Respighi was born
10/07/1895 - Carl Orff was born
11/07/1937 - Gershwin died
13/07/1951 - Schoenberg died
23/07/1757 - Domenico Scarlatti died
29/07/1856 - Schumann died
28/07/1750 - J.S. Bach died
28/07/1741 - Vivaldi died
31/07/1886 - Liszt died

FEATURED STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Arun Gobiraj



1. **What instrument do you play?** I play the piano.
2. **How long have you taken lessons?** I have been taking piano lessons over 4 years
3. **Who are your favourite musical artists?** - My favourite artists are Drake and Kendrick Lamar.
4. **What are your other hobbies, besides music?** I like to play basketball, soccer, video games and spending time with my family in my free time.

5. **Favourite food?** My favourite foods are pasta, pizza and sushi.
6. **What is the coolest thing you've learnt in your lessons in the past three months?** The coolest thing I've learned is how to play the major keys.
7. **Do you have any performance coming up?** No, I just finished IMA summer music festival and I do not have any performance coming up.



FEATURED TEACHER OF THE MONTH

Michael Mirsaedi, D.Mus.
Violin and Piano Studies



Michael Mirsaedi is a violinist, pianist and music educator specializing in both Western classical and Eastern musical traditions. He studied World Music Performance at Kar-Danesh School, where he received training in violin performance, music theory, ensemble playing, choral work, and music education. With advanced

knowledge of both classical and Eastern violin styles, Michael combines technical precision with a strong foundation in aural and stylistic interpretation. Michael was a member of the Saba Orchestra in Isfahan from 2007 to 2021, performing at major venues including Farshchiyan Hall and Khorshid Hall. In Canada, he has taught violin and piano at several music schools, including Max Music Academy, Farnoosh Music Academy, Wonder Music School, Starry Academy, Rockstarmusic Central, and Wiingy Tutors. From 2022 to 2024, he taught at El Sistema and Van Goozen Music in Sarnia, where he specialized in violin instruction, ear training, ensemble skills, and recital preparation. Michael has also remained active as a performer through community ensembles and live events in Ontario.

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

1. What do you like most about teaching? - What I value most about teaching is that my students progress not only in theory but also in practical performance. It is very important for me to see balanced development in both areas. I find it especially rewarding when a student is able to develop an understanding of musical analysis and apply it directly in their playing. Observing how a student connects theoretical knowledge with practical execution and begins to interpret music more consciously is one of the most satisfying aspects of teaching for me.

2. How do you inspire students to practice more? - I believe consistent practice is the result of a well-structured and individualized approach. The first step is to carefully analyze each student's personality, learning style, and technical abilities. Based on this assessment, I design a personalized learning path that aligns with their strengths and challenges. A uniform method cannot effectively serve all students, as each individual requires a different pedagogical strategy. I also set clear, achievable short-term goals so that progress is measurable. When students see their improvement and understand the purpose behind their practice, motivation develops naturally through clarity and structure.

3. What roles does performance play in student's development? - Performance plays a fundamental role in shaping a student's artistic and technical growth. It serves as the bridge between practice and real musical communication. Through performance, students learn how to combine technical accuracy with emotional expression, stylistic awareness, and stage presence. It also helps them manage performance-related stress and improve concentration under pressure. I always tell my students that 50% of performance is style, meaning that musical identity and expressive interpretation are just as important as technical precision. Regular performance experience helps students refine their personal style and develop a more mature musical voice.

4. Who are your favourite composers? - My musical inspiration comes from both Eastern and Western traditions. In Persian music, I deeply admire masters such as Ostad Badiie, Parviz Yahaghi, and Ali Tajvidi, whose works are rich in emotional depth and melodic sophistication. In Western classical music, my favorite composers are Johann Sebastian

Bach, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Ludwig van Beethoven. Each of them represents a unique dimension of musical expression, from structural complexity to emotional intensity and clarity.

5. What was the last piece of music (sheet music or a recording) you purchased for yourself? - The last piece of music I purchased was an Iranian musical work that is rich in emotion and deeply expressive. It carries a strong lyrical character and reflects the emotional depth often found in Iranian music. I am particularly drawn to works that communicate feeling in a natural and sincere way, allowing for a deep personal connection with the listener. This piece was especially inspiring to me both as a performer and a teacher, as it highlights the importance of emotional expression alongside technical precision.

Symphony under the stars

Friday, July 17 • Memorial Park

Event starts at 7 PM • Concert begins at 8 PM

Experience an evening of
classical and contemporary music
with a live orchestral performance
by Kindred Spirits Orchestra

townofws.ca/symphony

Presented by CITY © PARK  Stouffville

FEATURED ARTICLE



music MAGAZINE

Piano 'accompanists' rarely get the recognition they so richly deserve

by Richard Morrison

Reading Andrew Green's excellent appreciation of the pianist Gerald Moore in the April 2026 issue, two things struck me. The first is that Moore, who forged memorable partnerships with some of the greatest singers and instrumentalists of the mid-20th century, was the exception that proves the rule – the rule being that piano 'accompanists' (the very word implies subservience) rarely get the credit, or the limelight, they deserve.



Famous piano accompanist Gerald Moore with cellist Pierre Fournier © Getty

'The assumption that accompanists can get away with being less proficient is false' - Joseph Middleton

So many piano accompanists are creative powerhouses, yet accept second billing

Indeed, it could be argued that since the heyday of Moore, who did become a celebrity in his own right, his profession has actually lost ground in the struggle for public esteem. So many collaborative pianists today are not just intensely focused musicians but also the driving-forces, creatively and intellectually, behind song and chamber-music festivals – where they frequently play ten times as many notes as their 'star' collaborators. Yet still they often have to accept a smaller typeface on the programme and, sometimes, smaller fees as well.

Plus, other minor humiliations along the way. Some star female singers, for instance, are notorious for wanting only male pianists on stage with them, concerned that their own frock won't be the most glamorous object on view. And whether the accompanist is male or female, I sometimes detect a reticence in their playing that stems not from caution or any lack of technique but from a misplaced sense of deference. They have been made to feel that they are the junior partner in the relationship and therefore should be providing a gentle aural backing for the 'star', rather than a full-blown interpretation of a piano part that is often fascinating in its own right.

Piano accompanists must be consummate, empathetic musicians

The second thing to strike me is a more general thought. All those skills that pianists need when partnering singers or instrumentalists – intense emotional empathy, instantaneous responsiveness to someone else's nuances (even when spontaneously done during a performance) and the psychological insight to recognise what extra-musical support, encouragement and advice a partner needs to perform well – are traits that every musician should acquire. And certainly, every musician who aspires to conduct (which is so often an exercise in accompaniment) or to play chamber music, where the rapport between participants is central to the success of a performance.

But how well are empathy, responsiveness and psychological acumen instilled into young musicians? It strikes me that performing in a youth orchestra or choir doesn't quite cut it, valuable though that social and musical experience is. In those situations, young musicians are usually just doing what the conductor wants. And if you want to reach the top as a singer or instrumentalist you will inevitably spend much of the rest of your life in solitary confinement – practising by yourself until you reach the required level of technical perfection and individuality in interpretation.

Far too little time, it seems to me, is devoted to the skill of building partnerships with other musicians, learning how to put forward your own interpretative ideas while being respectful to others, and working out how to meld those diverse ideas together into a coherent whole. Or in learning how to be confident without crushing the individuality of others – and the converse: how to prevent someone with a more pronounced ego from pressurising you into conforming with their ideas.

Being a connected, responsive musician fosters vital life skills I don't think these qualities – empathy, responsiveness, psychological acumen, confidence – are vital only in order to make music with others. I also think they lead to a deeper level of mutual understanding in many contexts. In his visionary book *Everything is Connected*, Daniel Barenboim puts forward the idea that once you connect musically with someone else – even someone who has had a completely different and diametrically opposed upbringing to you – you also understand a great deal more about them.

The example he draws on is the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra, which he founded to bring together young Israeli and Arab musicians, sharing the same desks and playing the same music. 'The fundamental principle was quite simple,' Barenboim writes. 'Once the young musicians agreed on how to play just one note together, they would not be able to look at each other in the same way again.'

When is the right time for musicians to retire? That's what empathy can do for musicians, and for society as a whole. It's ironic that piano 'accompanists', though often so low in the musical hierarchy, are the performers who have to demonstrate this empathy every moment of their working lives. They are pioneers and exemplars. We should celebrate them much more than we do.

International Music Academy

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Name of the new student: _____

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