

## International School of Music Opens Doors to DC Community

### *School Offers Instruction for Children and Adults of all Levels*

By Alexandar Serdar

With a shout of "Yes" and a big jump for joy, ten year old Chi Chang added another trophy to his growing collection of musical accomplishments. This time the trophy was for first place in the Concerto Competition, and it joins the seven other trophies he's collected in his four years of playing the violin. "It is exciting to see how much charisma and confidence he has developed studying his violin," said his mother. "There is a real joyfulness in his playing. Sometimes, he will play for hours on his own, without any prompting from us. He just really enjoys it."

Inspiring stories breathe life into us. They give us hope, help us to dream, laugh, cry and live. Such is the case with music students at the new International School of Music (ISM). Their stories are different. Their lifestyles are different. But they share a common bond—their love of making music has significantly impacted their lives, and the lives of those around them.

"Starting children in music early is very important to nurturing their growth," says Inja Stanic, the founder of ISM. "The

ear is the first sensory organ to develop, and research shows that the sounds and music have a direct connection to brain development. The active experience of music in the beginning of life will greatly effect all parts of human development and thus to a larger extent our immediate society."

Many experts believe that studying music has been shown to enhance children's performance in math and other subjects, increase expressive abilities, foster creativity, develop discipline and a sense of self-worth, and promote cooperation. Not only is playing music fun, parents and teachers have found that music participation can have a beneficial and long lasting impact on a child's self discipline and confidence. In addition, music study has intrinsic value and leads to life long enriched experience.

"International School of Music (ISM) is a school dedicated specifically to the education of the whole child, mind-body-spirit", Ms.Stanic said. "The heart of the mission of the ISM is to provide the finest and the absolute best age-appropriate education in music, for children of all ages and their families, in an environment, which is warm, nurturing and stimulating

to the learning process."

Ms. Stanic, an internationally known musician, performer and pedagogue, has personally experienced the many benefits of musical training. She studied piano for 10 years in Belgrade, Yugoslavia before arriving in this country at age 17 with music as her only medium of expression. After graduating from the University of Maryland School of Music and acquiring a master's of music degree from American University on scholarship, she taught piano at the American University Preparatory, Montgomery College, Holton-Arms and other music institutions. She has performed at numerous embassies, the National Theater, Montgomery Symphony Orchestra, and on Voice of America and NPR. She has published numerous articles in international music journals and recorded music from Latin America and her home country of Yugoslavia.

Inspired by European and Asian music schools, ISM provides a unique, well rounded curriculum that includes individual private lessons in most instruments and voice, solfège, ear-training, theory, chamber music, and composition. The school currently offers teaching in voice,



piano, guitar, cello, violin, viola, drums, oboe, harp, saxophone, clarinet, flute, jazz, song-writing, composition, and theory, to students of all levels and ages. In addition to individual lessons, the school offers early childhood classes for children of 18 months to five years old that are intended to introduce them to music.

"The Washington DC area deserves the highest quality musical education, and I am thrilled that so many distinguished music teachers want to be a part of this program," said Ms.Stanic. "Leading young people through their musical growth experience is tremendously rewarding. It requires creativity, persistence, analytical skills and solid personal musical competence, which ISM possesses. It is amazing how gifted teachers can turn young people's lives around through music. I am filled with joy when I hear and

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see wonderful music making by young people here at ISM. Success of our teachers means that more youngsters will find the same wonderment in making music that they found.”

ISM's distinguished faculty includes some of the Washington's most prominent musicians, as well as internationally known performers. ISM consists of 22 faculty members, and its faculty and students hail from numerous countries, including Singapore, Taiwan, China, Thailand, Korea, France, Spain, Russia, and others. ISM's faculty members are highly qualified and talented performers and teachers with worldwide concert and pedagogical experience. All faculty hold masters and doctorate degrees from the most respected musical conservatories around the world, and are dedicated and passionate about their art and teaching. Teachers are members of numerous local and national music guilds and associations such as MTNA, MMTA, National Federation of

Musicians, ASTA, Royal School of Music, National Piano Guild/American College of Musicians.

In addition, the ISM serves the needs of adults who wish to pursue music for their own enjoyment as well as professionals who seek to refine their musical skills or add new ones. Many adults have found that learning to play a musical instrument is a stimulating, challenging and rewarding way to release stress and be involved in the creative and recreational experience of this life-enriching pursuit.

Chang, an adult taking lessons at ISM, said: "I am working towards something I've always wanted to do, and there is a great feeling of accomplishment in that. I get inspired by listening to great musicians and holding onto the vision that someday that may be me playing—maybe not in Carnegie Hall, but somewhere else. I would just love to be able to play for my church or for friends. That's my hope. I am moving ahead and accomplishing something, and that feels great!" says Chang.

Starting in the spring of 2005, ISM will be a sponsor of the new center for the Bethesda National Piano Guild Auditions/American

College of Musicians. The auditions provide students an opportunity to perform in front of judges, who review each student's work and provide a certificate/diploma of his or her level of accomplishment. Ms. Stanic is currently the Chairman of the Bethesda chapter of the National Piano Guild Auditions.

"If you are ready for a high-quality school that is also warm-hearted, playful, supportive, spontaneous, inspiring, hard-working, and creative...then ISM is the place for you. We can open ears and minds, and fill your soul with new possibilities", said Inja Stanic. "And the possibilities keep on multiplying. You may

find yourself discovering a passion for singing, playing violin or cello, or jazz. Whatever your choices, you will be part of a community that cares about all the ways your musical personality can emerge."

For more information, readers can visit website [www.ismw.org](http://www.ismw.org), or call 301-657-0763.

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