

Music School Expands, Improves Service to D.C. Area.

International School of Music opens second location, adds new faculty and programs

The International School of Music (ISM) greatly expanded its musical education program in September, adding a variety of new classes and teachers, and opening a second location. In just two years of operation, ISM has attracted several hundred students and is becoming one of the leading musical programs in Montgomery County and the Washington, D.C. area. Inja Stanic, Director of ISM, says that ISM's dramatic growth reflects the school's "dedication to providing convenient, top quality instruction to its students in a nurturing, family-friendly environment. Musical education is a priority of many parents and students in the Washington area, and we are pleased at how quickly residents have signed up for our lessons."

Some of the ways ISM has increased its services to the D.C. area are :

New Faculty

The International School of Music has added 15 new teachers to its faculty for the fall. All of the teachers hold Master's degrees, some have doctorates and several teachers

are on the staff of local universities. Due to its large faculty, (over 40 instructors), ISM is able to place students with the teachers who best meet the student's needs.

Second Location

On September 1, ISM expanded its operations in the Westwood Center II mall, conveniently located off River Road in Bethesda. The new space more than doubles the size of the school. Stanic says, "The Westwood Center II is easy to reach from the Beltway, from Montgomery County, Virginia, and from D.C and has excellent free parking available. We are thrilled that we can teach music in such a spacious, clean and well-run facility."

Early Childhood Program

ISM will be starting a whole set of new classes for children ages 3, 4, and 5, which will serve as a wonderful preparation for private music lessons. These group classes will introduce children to the basics of music through singing, dancing, and storytelling in a fun environment.

Convenient Scheduling

ISM is able to arrange classes for several children from the same family simultaneously. The school has also many evening, and weekend class times to accommodate more students in "first choice" times. "Between the pressures of homework, sports and family time, a lot of parents can be overwhelmed trying to fit in all the activities," says Stanic. "We appreciate the challenge of balancing so many competing activities. We strive to make our lessons as convenient for parents and students as possible."

Variety of Music Classes

A large diversity of instruments is taught, from piano, guitar, voice, etc to the less common viola and harp. Although a large number of students choose to take classical instruction, the school also has a large number of students that study pop, jazz, folk and contemporary music. The main focus is on helping students gain the skills they need to enjoy music long after music lessons are over. In fact school director Stanic says that the mission of the school is "to provide students of all ages

with the skills they need to enjoy music for their lifetime."

Performance Opportunities

Last June, one hundred and fifty ISM students participated in spring recitals at the Montgomery College, Rockville Campus. ISM also hosts the National Piano Guild Auditions, sponsored by the American College of Musicians for its students and others in the Bethesda area. Seventy students participated last year and many received commendations for their performances. The auditions provide students an opportunity to perform in front of judges, who review students' work and provide certificates/diplomas of their level of accomplishment. Participation in recitals and auditions is purely voluntary, as many children choose to take music lessons as a recreational activity. Nonetheless, students are encouraged to perform as a way to improve their skills and demonstrate their progress to others.

Musical Philosophy

Stanic says that every child has a gift to bring to the school and that it is a teacher's job to nurture that gift. The faculty at

Int'l School of Music realizes that music is a disciplined and fun art form for all students. "Enhancing the student's artistic abilities and assisting in developing their self-esteem is important to us", says Stanic. "We hope that students will take these skills they have learned in the school and apply them in many other areas of their life. ISM offers a safe, child friendly environment. Our emphasis on individual (instead of group) classes allows children to receive the personal attention they need and permits a more enriching experience altogether. Music lessons encourage creativity and teach important skills such as discipline, self-expression, and performance, that are widely known to enhance learning in other subjects.

Due to expansion of teaching times, additional studios and staff, the International School of Music will be accepting new registrations now throughout the early fall. For more information contact the school at 301-657-0763 or visit them at www.ismw.org for helpful information on getting started in music lessons.