



IMA STUDENTS BIRTHDAYS IN JANUARY

Jaslene Grewal	Ian Donalds
May Khanna	Xianxin Du
Jasper Lam	Joseph Holosko
Sarah Lam	Sancho Angulo
Christina Lovatsis	Taea Ho
Anna Wong	Lisa Li
Michael Kwong	David Kwong
Joush Robinson	Hannah Grewal
John Mamatis	Kevin Gao
Ayesha Abdulla	James George
Steven Dumasal	Matthew Richardson
Crystal Fung	Katherine Lee
Deanna Najar	Jessica Faccaini
Ganesh Sathananthan	Serena Yu
Edward Tang	Sheela Venkatraman

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

IMA HAS WELCOMED MORE NEW STUDENTS IN DECEMBER 2007:

Ben Williams (RCM piano 6)
Bethani Todd (piano)
Boris Likov (voice)
Charlotte Lam (Suzuki violin)
Chris Nedeljkov (guitar)
George Pramatrian (piano)
Hazel Ali (voice)
Jeffrey Wong (guitar)
John Elliott (guitar)
Jonathan Blear (electric guitar)
Liberti Todd (piano)
Michael J. Ip (piano)
Mitchell Hafez (clarinet)
Patricia Walter (RCM piano 8)
Richard Ferguson (RCM violin 7)
Sonya Alexis (violin)
Sylvia Chan (piano)
Tamara Hogg (voice)
Victoria Zank (voice)
Zachary Liu (Suzuki violin)
Zealots Yong (guitar)



FURTHER AHEAD...

January 1 *New Year's Day. School closed.*
January 7 *Christmas (Orthodox).*



January 14-26 RCM practical examinations.

January 31 Euromusic Music Festival registrations deadline.

LEARNING TO PLAY A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

(continue from the November 2007 issue)

Experience is a hard thing to place a numerical or monetary value upon, but most of us recognize that experience is irreplaceable in any field. You can benefit from the experience of a teacher in many ways. One of the hardest things for students to recognize is that there are often many ways to accomplish a difficult passage in a piece of music. Students rarely have the knowledge or experience to choose the best fingerings for themselves. Even a well-edited score may give fingerings which simply will not work for you. Similarly, a teacher can help you identify repertoire and challenge you to improve your abilities by choosing just the right piece for your interest and level of ability. It is also difficult to continually motivate yourself to practice when you reach challenges that seem beyond your capabilities. Here again, a teacher has faced these issues themselves many times and can help you work through the problems in a sound and safe way.

Music is not merely the playing of notes on the page, but the ability to understand and interpret those notes in an emotionally meaningful fashion. If you have ever heard a player with competent technique, but no real understanding of MUSIC, you know what we mean when we say music is more, much more, than the notes on the page. A good teacher can help you not only learn to correctly play the notes, but understand the

emotional language of the piece in a way that will make your playing more enjoyable to do and more compelling to hear. This is one of the reasons why even professional musician take lessons themselves occasionally and one of the best reasons to take lessons even after you have learned to play proficiently. We all need someone to share and help us refine our musical ideas; the teacher may be the best person to do that with, because they know you and your musical abilities better than anyone.

In the end, the most important thing a teacher can give is an awareness of and a joy in music. You may be able to accomplish that yourself, but you'll find the teacher's experience, empathy, and knowledge will get you there faster and more enjoyably. Software and books are very valuable, but we think you will find they are no replacement for a dedicated teacher.

Before you start lessons

If you or your child plans to learn to play musical instrument, you will want to consider a few things prior to starting lessons so as to assure that your time and money are not wasted. First and foremost, consider carefully whether you or your child have the time and commitment necessary for lessons. To make progress at a reasonable rate, you'll need to commit at least 30 minutes a day to practice. In addition, you have to allow for travel time to and from the music school and time for events like concerts, recitals, and other school's activities. This may sound like a lot of time, but if you consider that your child will spend several hours a week in practice for any sport like soccer or basketball, plus the time spent at games and associated travel time, the time demands of music training are well within the range of those of alternative activities. You can't reasonably expect a teacher to rearrange continually a teaching schedule to accommodate your sport or other activities anymore than you would ask a coach to move practices constantly to accommodate your child. Beyond the time required for lessons and other events, we would strongly advise you to make time to attend concerts, recitals, master classes and so forth. These events are not only enjoyable in and of themselves but give you the opportunity to focus on enjoying music while you are learning to play it. If you or your child have something going on virtually every evening of the week, you need to ask yourself if you have the time for piano or, alternatively, what you are willing to give up to learn a skill that can give you pleasure for the rest of your life.

While it is possible to start piano lessons with a digital keyboard or a MIDI keyboard attached to a computer, you will probably find that you will need to get an acoustic piano after about a year, if not sooner. Pianos range in price from about two thousand dollars used for an inexpensive upright to over \$80,000 for a concert Steinway grand. Think carefully about how you can budget to buy a piano down the road, if you don't already have one. Try to find an appropriate location for it as free from distractions and interruptions as possible. If you do have a piano, you need to invest the money required to keep it tuned and in good working order. Of course, you will also have to budget money for the lessons themselves and for music and learning materials.

Parents of child students also have the responsibility not only to encourage and support the student, but to provide a home environment in which practice is facilitated and learning rewarded. As a parent, you can be a major factor in the success of your child's studies of a musical instrument; it does not take a lot of time, but does require some commitment on your part. Like any skill worth learning, playing a musical instrument takes effort, but if you are willing as a student or parent to make a little extra effort, you will be rewarded with a skill and knowledge that you can carry with you and enjoy for the rest of your life.

(continue in the next issue...)

FAMOUS COMPOSERS BORN IN JANUARY

❖	01/04/1710	PERGOLESI, Giovanni	Italian
❖	01/06/1838	BRUCH, Max	German
❖	01/06/1872	SCRIABIN, Alexander	Russian
❖	01/07/1899	POULENC, Francis	French
❖	01/13/1893	ZELINKA, Jan	Czech
❖	01/17/1917	MORAWETZ, Oscar	Canadian
❖	01/23/1752	CLEMENTI, Muzio	Italian
❖	01/27/1756	MOZART, Wolfgang	Austrian
❖	01/31/1573	MONTEVERDI, Giulio	Italian
❖	01/31/1797	SCHUBERT, Franz	Austrian
