

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**
Winner of the **York Region Character Community Award**.
Markham Board of Trade **Business Excellence Award** finalist.



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International
Music
Academy

Year XXX, No. 9

September 2026

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE IMA DIRECTOR



Welcome to the International Music Academy 2026-2027 school year!

Our Faculty and Staff are very excited and proud to having you as a student! We look forward to working with you and fostering your potential through music. On behalf of our teachers and staff, I wish you an exciting and stimulating school year!

KRISTIAN ALEXANDER

M.Mus., M.A., D.E.S.S.G.O.C., B.Mus., B.A.
Music Director

WELCOMING OUR NEW STUDENTS

Sophie Sritharan, piano
Emma Sritharan, piano

IMA STUDENTS' BIRTHDAYS IN SEPTEMBER

Leonidas R., Youngia C., Lucas L., Chloe R., Riya S., Emilia P.,
Kaira M., Katelyn D., Hanna L., Nathaniel F., Zarrie J., Gavin R.,
Ovya P.

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 SEPTEMBER

4/9/1824 - Bruckner born
4/9/1892 - Milhaud born
4/9/1907- Grieg died
5/9/1735 - J.C. Bach born
5/9/1912 - John Cage born
8/9/1841 - Dvorak born
8/9/1949 - Richard Strauss died
13/9/1874 - D. Schoenberg born
20/9/1957 - J. Sibelius died
21/9/1874 - G. Holst born
23/9/1836 - Bellini died
25/9/1906 - Shostakovich born
25/9/1849 - J. Strauss Sr died
26/9/1898 - Gershwin born
26/9/1945 - Bartok died

IMPORTANT DAYS IN SEPTEMBER

September 1. IMA School year begins.
September 2-3. PA day (YR). **IMA is open.**
September 7. Labour Day. **IMA is open.**
September 11-13. Rosh Hashanah.
September 20-21. Yom Kippur.

International Music Academy

FOLLOW US

Don't miss a beat!
Follow International Music Academy
for the latest updates on classes, events, and musical opportunities!

FEATURED STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Theijah Thushan



1. **What instrument do you play?** I play the piano.
2. **How long have you taken lessons?** I have been taking piano lessons for over 4 years.
3. **Who are your favourite musical artists?** My favourite musical artist is A.R. Rahman, and I also like K-pop music because it is fun, upbeat, and energetic.
4. **What are your other hobbies besides music?** I enjoy gymnastics, singing, and classical dancing.
5. **What is your favourite food?** My favourite food is pasta.
6. **What is the coolest thing you've learned in your lessons in the past three months?** I am working on a piece called *Mockingbird*. It is teaching me about syncopation, and I am really enjoying it.
7. **Do you have any performances coming up?** I am looking forward to performing at the IMA Winter Music Festival in December.

KINDRED SPIRITS ORCHESTRA
Kristian Alexander | Music Director

ELEGANCE and IMAGINATION

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 17, 2026
8 P.M.**

RAVEL
Ma mère l'Oye

MOZART
Concerto for flute, harp and orchestra

FRANCK
Symphony in D minor

Kristian Alexander | conductor
Kelly Zimba Lukić | flutist
Andrew Chan | harpist

FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE

FLATO MARKHAM THEATRE | 171 TOWN CENTRE BLVD. | 905.305.7469 | KSORCHESTRA.CA

FEATURED TEACHER OF THE MONTH

Adam Tsang, M.Mus., B.Mus.

Voice Studies, Piano and Interpretation



Adam Tsang is a cosmopolitan musician and certified voice teacher, holding a Master's degree in Music Education and Dual Bachelor's degrees in Music Production and Vocal Performance from Vienna and Graz (Austria). His teaching career includes voice, piano, song writing and music theory lessons in Vienna, Hong Kong, and Beijing. Adam

Tsang works with singers at every level, blending science-driven techniques with clear multilingual guidance (English, Mandarin, Cantonese and German). He builds healthy vocal habits, nurture the authentic tone, and achieve sustainable progress across every stage of the students' development. Beyond teaching voice, Adam also coaches piano/vocal integration, holding prestigious certifications of DipABRSM and Trinity ATCL in Piano. Whether students are looking to casually play favorite songs with vocal accompaniment or preparing for RCM/ABRSM examinations, he'll craft a tailored path to help unlock synergistic skills for fuller musical expression – empowering complete musical storytelling. *"For me, singing is a process of storytelling, and the composer is like the writer of the story. Whether conveying stories that are joyful or sorrowful, calm or fiery, the essence lies in the genuine and raw emotional expression from the composer and singer."*, says Adam Tsang. He believes everyone can learn music, and his role is to make that journey as enjoyable as possible.

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

1. **What do you like most about teaching?** What I love most about teaching is watching each student gradually discover their unique musical voice. Whether it's a child singing with joy for the first time or an adult returning to music after years away, I feel fulfilled helping them build confidence and expression through music.
2. **How do you inspire students to practice more?** I try to make each lesson meaningful and personal—so that students leave feeling excited about what they're working on. I often customize their repertoire or vocal exercises based on their goals, personalities, and upcoming opportunities, like performances or competitions. When students feel their growth is real and visible, practice naturally becomes more rewarding.
3. **What roles does performance play in student's development?** Performance is not just about showing what you've learned—it's about building courage, communication, and artistry. I believe every performance, big or small, gives students a chance to tell their own story and grow as individuals, both musically and personally. That's why I encourage students to perform regularly, and support them in developing both technical control and emotional connection.

4. Who are your favourite composers? I have a deep love for composers who write with strong emotional intent. From the classical world, I'm especially drawn to Schubert and Debussy for their sensitivity and color. Outside of classical music, I'm passionate about Jazz, Pop, and Rock— some of my favorite artists include Stevie Wonder, Sara Bareilles, and Queen. I love how JPR music allows for creativity, individuality, and emotional storytelling.

5. What was the last piece of music (sheet music or a recording) you purchased for yourself? The last piece I purchased was *The Art of Letting Go* by Myles Kennedy. His song writing blends rock with emotional depth and lyrical sensitivity, which really resonates with me as both a performer and a teacher. I often explore this kind of repertoire to stay connected to contemporary music and to inspire students who love expressive, genre-crossing songs.

FEATURED ARTICLE



YUJA WANG: A GUIDE TO THE CELEBRATED PIANIST AND HER BEST RECORDINGS

By Steve Wright



Yuja Wang/Getty Images

Who is Yuja Wang?

Yuja Wang is an acclaimed Chinese classical pianist. Perhaps best known for her fearless, theatrical style and dazzling interpretations of 20th-century piano works by the likes of Prokofiev, Rachmaninov and Scriabin, Wang has performed all around the world and has made many bestselling albums. Her

2024 release *The Vienna Recital* received a glowing review in our August 2024 issue.

How old is Yuja Wang?

Wang was born on 10 February, 1987.

Where was she born?

Yuja Wang was born in Beijing, China.

What did her parents do?

Wang comes from a musical family. Her father, Wang Jianguo, is a percussionist, while her mother Zhai Jieming is a dancer.

When did Yuja Wang start learning the piano?

She began studying piano at the age of six. She went on to study at Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music and the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

At what age did Yuja Wang become famous?

Wang was performing concerts around the world by the age of 21. However, her road to fame began quite a time before that. She was just 11 when she took third prize in Germany's Ettlingen International Competition for Young Pianists in 1998. The next few years were fruitful: in 2001, Wang took part in the very first Sendai International Music Competition in Sendai, Japan, winning third prize in the piano section. She also took the special jury prize, awarded to the most distinguished finalist aged 20 or under.

Her earliest releases included, in 2009, a performance of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3, accompanied by the Lucerne Festival Orchestra and their conductor, the great Claudio Abbado.

Where does Yuja Wang live?

Yuja Wang lives in New York City.

Who were Yuja Wang's main influences?

In a 2009 interview with BBC Music Magazine writer Rebecca Franks, Yuja revealed:

'Vladimir Horowitz was a very big influence on me. I love listening to him and never get tired of it. Also I love Alfred Cortot and Rachmaninov.'

'Carlos Kleiber the conductor [is another], and I love Leonard Bernstein. When I moved to America when I was 14 I read the Young People's Concerts. That book was a big influence on my way of looking at Western music. I'd been learning in China and there's a different way of analysing music.'

'I think before I thought more about how I felt the piano physically and emotionally; with him it's more how to analyse music. He looks at music from a very musical point of view. In China we're very imaginative – we invent stories or colours or poems. He was talking about rhythm, contrapuntal lines and harmony, it was very music oriented. You have to have a good balance of both.'

'When I was 14-15 I got to know about music theory that way – it was harmony and structure that were important. But if you have just that and no subjective feelings it won't be human.'

Yuja Wang: five great recordings

Fantasia

Works by Rachmaninov; Scarlatti; Gluck; Albéniz; Saint-Saëns/Liszt/Horowitz; Strauss/Cziffra; Chopin DG 479 0052
Liszt: five essential works

Which is your favourite Liszt piece?

From our review: 'Wang's aim [with these miniatures] is to 'create a vignette of a memory, or a hope... like a haiku'. She has succeeded brilliantly. The lightness and flexibility of her touch takes the breath away, and her sound is at every moment transparently controlled, each piece displaying insight and affection.'

The Berlin Recital

Works by Ligeti, Prokofiev, Rachmaninov & Scriabin DG 483 6280

From our review: 'highlights the poetry of a pianist we've more often seen in extrovert showcases like Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto. She knows how to give just enough space to a phrase while never losing sight of parallel lines.'

John Adams: Must the Devil Have All the Good Tunes? etc
Yuja Wang (piano); LA Phil/Gustavo Dudamel DG 483 8289

From our review: 'It's the pianist as perfectly as her infamous bodycon dresses. Her flawless technique is ideally suited to the frequent high-octane, galloping passages...Packed full of ear-worms (the simple melody and its improvisatory-like variations in the third section are devastatingly catchy), this work lives up to its title.'

Chopin - Franck - Piazzolla
with Gautier Capuçon (cello) Erato 9029539226

From our review: 'Despite his uniquely pianistic outlook, Chopin's blending of a string instrument with piano [in his Cello Sonata] is unsurpassed in the repertoire, and the duo make the most of it.'

Rachmaninov: Piano Concerto No. 3 / Prokofiev: Piano Concerto No. 2
Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela / Gustavo Dudamel DG

Yuja Wang excels here in two big concertos from 20th-century Russian masters: Sergey Rachmaninov and Sergey Prokofiev.

Electrifying performances of two big, dramatic and technically challenging Russian piano concertos, with fine support from Gustavo Dudamel and his Venezuelan band.

Yuja has great form with Rachmaninov: another of her recordings crops up in our list of the best recordings of the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini.

International Music Academy

GIFT CERTIFICATE

for new students only

1 offer per family

ONE FREE LESSON

Call the IMA Office at

905.489.4620 (Markham) or

905.640.6363 (Stouffville)

to schedule your first lesson.

Once scheduled, the lesson cannot be rescheduled. **Cannot be combined with any other offer.** No refunds, no exchanges.



Music is soooooooooo beautiful!

Register for lessons by

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\$50 off

New students only. 1 offer per family
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.

Cannot be combined with any other offer.