



The *Quality* of the Ottawa Music Academy

How would I sum up my years, so far, teaching guitar at the Ottawa Music Academy?

In his book *Introducing Music*, author Otto Karolyi explains the various “Sounds and Symbols” of music. After pitch and volume, he introduces the concept of quality. “Quality (or in French, *timbre*) defines the tone colour between a note played on different instruments or sung by different voices. Thus the ‘colour’ of a note enables us to distinguish between various instruments playing the same tune.”

He continues with a question. “But why? Here we come to one of the most fascinating of acoustic phenomena, the *overtones*. The characteristic frequency of



a note is only the *fundamental* of a series of other notes which are simultaneously present over the basic one. They are important because they determine the *quality* of a note, and they also give us brilliance of tone.”

This is what enables us to distinguish, for example, Minnie’s voice and Doug’s flute—even when they sing and play the same note. As Otto Karolyi tells us, this is owing to “the varying intensity

of the overtones over the actual notes which they play.”

For me, the Academy is about all of the *overtones*, each of us with our own unique *tone colour*, all creating the overall *quality*.

The Academy is like an orchestra. It works so well because we all have our distinctive part to play and we all work so well together. The Academy is about all the people who come here: the parents, the administrators, the teachers and the director - our conductor! I have seen and experienced many harmonious interactions between people of all ages, in all combinations of the various roles we play.

Continued on page 2...

Letters from the Community



Hello,

I just wanted to let you know how pleased I was with the music camp my daughter attended last week. Her teacher, Olga, was very engaged with the students and her energy was contagious. It was my daughter’s first formal introduction to music, and she now wants to take both piano and violin lessons.

A great camp! Thank you so much.

Suzanne Bailey

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Missed the opportunity to attend one of our Summer Camps? Sign Up For A Group Class for the new school year!

More Information On



The Great Memos (cont'd from page 1)

Here are some—of many—fondly remembered moments I have experienced with my students at the Ottawa Music Academy.

- While playing “Largo” by Dvorak, a sensitive young student told me “This song makes me think about God”
- Discovering that teaching a song like Joni Mitchell’s “The Circle Game” - in her open G tuning—is perfect for students learning to strum what would otherwise be impossibly difficult chords.
- “I find this interesting.” A student born this millennium pointed to “Back to the ‘50s” - a song in his method book. “I think it’s wrong.

How can it be *back* when we haven’t got there yet?”

- A dedicated student who managed to play—very well—with his right-hand fingers inside the hole of his guitar.
- The elated face of an enthusiastic student who composed her own song, “Spring Storm”—inspired by the weather and her new ability to arpeggiate chords.
- At the end of January, a student earnestly told me, “I’m done with rock ‘n’ roll; I’m into Christmas music now.”
- Seeing a shooting star as I walked across the parking lot to my car,

moments after my first lesson with a very talented student who remind me of John Lennon. A year later, in my last lesson with him, this student performed “Working Class Hero” (a John Lennon song) for me.

- The witty student who told me, “It’s good to have memos.” (I knew he meant to say mementoes.)

I have so many great *memos* of the Academy, however, it will always be each and every student, parent, administrator, and director that I will remember and cherish most. Each with their own love of music, and each with their own unique *over-tones*. This *quality* has created a wonderful experience!

Thank you. Sincerely, Sylvia.

How many clarinetists does it take to change a lightbulb?

Only one, but he’ll go through a whole box of bulbs before he finds just the right one.

Fall Group Classes (starts the week of Sept. 17)

TALENT QUEST

This program is designed to uncover children’s hidden musical talent. Participants will play the piano, keyboard, drums, guitar, violin, recorder and as well receive voice training.

KMA Saturdays 12—12:45

OMA Saturdays 12—12:45

MUSIC IS FUN

A fun, musical and social environment which will develop young children’s concentration, social skills, basic rhythm and appreciation for music.

KMA Saturdays 12:45—1:30

MUSICAL THEATRE

Participants will prepare a musical for performance. They will develop theatre techniques such as body movement, vocal techniques, character development, stage presence and stage management.

KMA Fridays 6—8

VOCAL PERFORMANCE

Students learn to sing in a variety of different popular styles. Vocal techniques such as breathing, diction, tone placement and dynamics are instructed. Performance instruction will include microphone techniques, stage presence, blocking and/or choreography.

KMA Tuesday 6:30—7:30

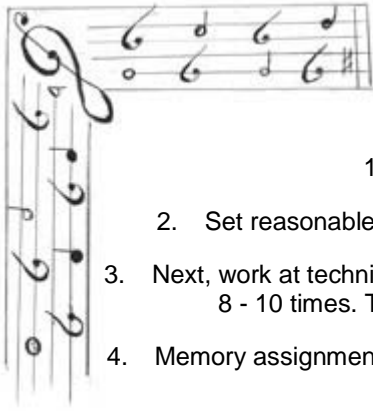
OMA Wednesday 6:00—6:45



GUZHENG

Participants will learn about the history of Guzheng, process of making Guzheng, how to read Guzheng notes, symbols, basic fingering skills, play songs, hands on experience & public recital. No prior musical knowledge is required.

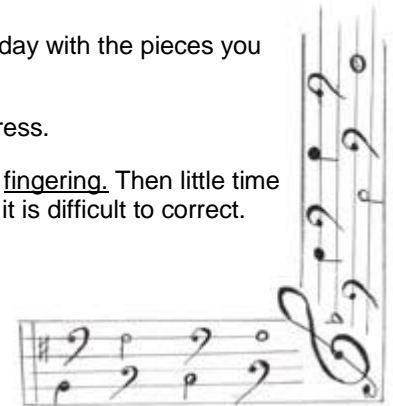
KMA Tuesday 7:00—7:45



Practice Recommendations

1. Begin each practice session with 5-10 minutes sight-reading
2. Set reasonable goals to accomplish in each area, and work until you have reached your objective
3. Next, work at technique. Begin with the new scale, chords, etc., and repeat each item until fluent—perhaps 8 - 10 times. Technical work, including studies, should require almost HALF daily practice time.
4. Memory assignment next. This should be near the beginning of practice when the mind is fresh. Memorize only short excerpts at a time.
5. NEVER begin at the beginning and play to the end once you have read through the piece, but begin with the parts you find difficult and work at these areas until secure and fluent.
6. Practice in small areas; difficult runs, 16th note passages, big jumps of chords, left hand chord progressions, etc.
7. Try to cover all assigned work in at least 2 days' practice, beginning the second day with the pieces you omitted the previous day.
8. Concentration on your goal is MOST important for good progress.
9. When learning a nice piece, try to be absolutely ACCURATE in notes, timing, and fingering. Then little time will be wasted on making corrections at the lesson. Once a mistake is learned, it is difficult to correct.

Enjoy Practicing!



Conducting A Music Class

A band director named Ravelli was having a lot of trouble with one drummer. He talked and talked and talked with the drummer, and performance simply didn't improve.

Finally, before the whole band, he said, "When a musician just can't handle his instrument and doesn't improve when given help, they take away the instrument, and give him two sticks, and make him a drummer."

A stage whisper was heard from the percussion section: "And if he can't handle even that, they take away one of his sticks and make him a conductor."

Quiz Your Brain!

What is the 1st space of the treble clef staff?

1. F
2. G
3. E
4. D



Which musical instrument is the best choice for your child?

BY MATTHEW ERIKSON

McClatchy Newspapers



FORT WORTH - Young children love music. Getting that early interest to translate into real musical ability is tougher, though; most school districts don't start instrumental programs until fifth grade at the earliest. That means kids are missing a golden opportunity to get started earlier -- even as young as 4 or 5 -- when their fertile minds can most benefit from learning how to play an instrument.

But for many parents of kids younger than 10, especially parents who aren't musically gifted themselves, the search for individual music lessons can be a bewildering maze of choices. Which instrument to choose?

A look at the options...

Piano

Pro: It provides a good musical foundation for children, especially if they want to pursue another instrument when they are older.

Con: Even the cheapest piano will cost hundreds of dollars. And it's not something you can stick in a closet when not in use.

Guitar

Pro: They're versatile instruments that can teach a child classical and pop repertoires.

Con: For a child ages 5 to 9, a guitar can be a big instrument to handle.

Percussion

Pro: It is one of the best ways to teach complex rhythms.

Con: Get out the earplugs -- they're awfully loud for practice at home. Essential music basics such as melody and harmony often are lost in percussion lessons.

String instruments

Pro: Children can reach a decent level of proficiency in a relatively short amount of time.

Con: For a child whose ultimate interest lies in pop or rock music, a violin may not be the best idea.

Brass instruments

Pro: Who isn't impressed by the big bold sound of a trumpet or horn?

Con: Nearly all brass instruments require adult-size lung capacity and big enough lips for the mouthpiece.

Flute

Pro: Children are often fond of the silvery tone of the flute. It also makes a good band as well as orchestral instrument.

Con: A flute is often too large for a 5- or 6-year-old, although some smaller-sized flutes are being made for children.



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