

BUSINESS

A World of Experience In A Violin Studio

Spotlight On Huntington Businesses



By Sophia Ricco

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Find your pitch and never miss a beat while studying at Dr. Joanna Violin and Viola Studio, a private studio that incorporates techniques from around the world.

Founded and taught by Dr. Joanna Kaczorowska, she has integrated her teachings from Poland and the U.S. plus her experience at numerous world-renowned performances to instruct students. She rents a room at the Faust Harrison Piano Store and Studio for one-on-one lessons that range from half an hour to two hours. Kaczorowska takes on talented and inexperienced students alike from ages 6 to 18.

Kaczorowska has the chops. After obtaining her master's degree in Poland, she was invited by esteemed violinist Charles Treger to study toward her master's degree at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. She would later earn her doctoral degree from Stony Brook University where she became the Director of Undergraduate Performance and a professor.

"I combine two methods of teaching



Kaczorowska encourages her students to practice by having them fall in love with the instrument.

which are very different and I have been teaching for more than 20 years," Kaczorowska said. "I have experience that yields great results."

This year, three of her students made it to the final of the elite Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of New York Concerto competition. Only eight instrumental players were selected from Long Island and of those, only four are violinists or violists. Three are students of Kaczorowska's.

Previously, Kaczorowska's student Victor Jiao won first prize in the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of New York and performed as a soloist in Lalo's Symphonie Espagnole violin concerto.

While she takes the study of violin seri-

ously, "None of it is done through tears and sweat," she said, "but with good laughter, cheer, enjoyment and encouragement."

She encourages students to have fun at practice so they will develop a natural love for the instrument. She admits that when she was young, she did not enjoy practicing.

"When my students don't like to practice, I say, 'Fine, I'll get you to love the instrument first then we'll see if you can find the patience to practice,'" Kaczorowska said.

Kaczorowska encourages students to join an orchestra or band where they can play among other talented musicians.

"My students get very motivated once they join the orchestras. As they see other kids doing exceptionally well, a competitive

element kicks in," Kaczorowska said. "They just suddenly want to be best and show this to the whole school."

This may start a fire within the student, who is vying for the coveted first chair, a designation of the most talent in their section, that leads them to put in the extra work at home.

"It's a discipline, it's a state of mind, it takes time to establish a routine for those students," Kaczorowska said.

It won't happen overnight, but in time Kaczorowska finds she doesn't even have to remind her students to rehearse, it becomes a part of them.

"After a year, once a student has soaked up the environment, observed my other students and learned of their achievements, and start getting good results and feedback from their teacher at school, suddenly just the pride of playing an instrument kicks in," Kaczorowska said.

Kaczorowska brings an extensive performance background to the table. She has collaborated with Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, the Emerson String Quartet and many others, and played at Carnegie Hall, Suntory Hall and Beethoven's Haus.

"I not only teach, but I teach how to be an artist, how to go through life as a musician," Kaczorowska said.

Kaczorowska hosts three to four recitals a year to give students experience playing in the spotlight.

"You can only learn how to perform on stage, by performing on stage," Kaczorowska said. "One thing is teaching in the safe environment of a studio one-on-one, another thing is experiencing something like NYSSMA, it's a stressful situation. I do recitals before NYSSMA so they can get nervous with an audience and feel what it's like to perform in a stressful environment, where others are observing you."

Following a recital, Kaczorowska and her student will review a recording and the students often find they were better than they thought. This preps them for NYSSMA, a musical test, that she said 95 percent of her students have scored a perfect 100.

"Music is located in the same part of the brain as mathematics and linguistics," Kaczorowska said. "All of my students are fantastic in math and languages, because when they practice, it is strengthening the same area."



A former concert violinist, Dr. Joanna Kaczorowska has taught Huntington students for years at her studio, across the street from the Walt Whitman Shops.

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