



# What's In *Your* Attic?

*Instruments in the Attic*

## **Instruments in the Attic**

**A program of George Mason University's  
Potomac Arts Academy  
2009-2010**

**Potomac Arts Academy  
George Mason University  
4260 Chain Bridge Road, A301  
MSN 6D8  
Fairfax, VA 22030**

**Email: [potomac@gmu.edu](mailto:potomac@gmu.edu)  
Phone: 703 993-9889  
<http://Instrumentsintheattic.gmu.edu>  
[www.potomacacademy.org](http://www.potomacacademy.org)**



## **What people are saying about Instruments in the Attic:**

*“My kids had a blast playing all of the IIA instruments. We loved the concert and the chance to try everything – thanks to all of the donors who make events like this possible”*

Parent – IIA sponsored Children’s concert

*“My experiences in school band programs were vital to my development as a person; I learned skills beyond music that I have been able to take with me throughout my adult life. With my donation to IIA, I am able to pass along to another generation the same life changing experiences I was fortunate to have”*

Donor – IIA

*“As a public school music educator for over 30 years, I cannot express enough how important it is for students to have access to quality instruments for rehearsals and practice. IIA provides an invaluable service to music education.”*

John Casagrande, Director of Instrumental Music Education George Mason University

*“Now, more the ever, there is a vital need for businesses to work in close partnership with community outreach programs. I applaud George Mason University and Instruments in the Attic for their commitment to community outreach and music education.”*

Joan Porte, Civic Coordinator, Arlington Country Business and Civic Association

## **Instruments in the Attic Arts Partners include:**

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra

Fairfax Wind Symphony

City of Fairfax Band

Vienna Community Band

NOVA Manassas Symphony Orchestra

Washington Balalaika Society

Reston Choral

Reston Community Orchestra

## Mission

**Academic:** Identify and collect instruments needed by Mason music education students for their music education degree requirements.

**Community:** Partner with community arts organizations, local community centers and school systems to provide high quality music education opportunities for young people and real life teaching experiences for music education students at Mason.

**Professional:** Establish partnerships with Northern Virginia arts, business and community organizations through the collection and distribution of musical instruments. These partnerships will help to expand audiences and supporters for the Arts at Mason, and for our arts partners.



## Background

The evidence is overwhelmingly clear, that children who learn to play a musical instrument and participate in school music programs perform better in both school and in life. They learn discipline, develop math skills, enjoy a sense of belonging and purpose, and develop a life long interest in the arts. Most importantly, they gain personal pride and self worth through shared goals and objectives.

More then ever, we need to develop our children to become creative, problem-solving members of our economy. The arts, and in particular music education, allow children to exercise their creativity in ways few other subjects can.

“Studying music encourages self-discipline and diligence, traits that carry over into intellectual pursuits and that lead to effective study and work habits. An association of music and math has, in fact, long been noted. Creating and performing music promotes self-expression and provides self-gratification while giving pleasure to others. In medicine, increasing published reports demonstrate that music has a healing effect on patients. For all these reasons, it deserves strong support in our educational system, along with the other arts, the sciences, and athletics.” *Michael E. DeBakey, M.D., Leading Heart Surgeon, Baylor College of Music.*

In order to train the future generation of musicians and creative members of our society, children and their school districts need two things: instruments, and dedicated, highly prepared music teachers to work with them.

Instruments in the Attic (IIA) was started in September 2008 in part to fulfill this need. The program is under the direction of the *Potomac Arts Academy*, the community outreach umbrella of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at George Mason University.



*Without Music, Life would be a  
mistake*

*Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche*

## Objective 2009-2010

**Academic:** George Mason University produces approximately 45% of all music teachers in our regional school districts. To earn a Bachelors degree in music education, each prospective music educator must learn to play 16(!) different instruments proficiently. These include the flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, horn, trombone, euphonium, tuba, percussion, violin, viola, cello and bass.

The School of Music has identified 175 instruments needed by Mason students at a cost of \$250,000. As an economic alternative to purchasing these instruments, IIA has been supporting the needs of Mason's instrumental methods classes.

*As of December 2009, we have collected nearly 100 instruments*

**Community:** IIA will continue soliciting instruments and place them into the hands of young students through various community outreach programs. The Potomac Arts Academy has established partnerships with community centers and local school systems to conduct a series of "musical explorations" programs. We are also working closely with The Fairfax Arts Council and the city of Fairfax band to support and expand "petting zoo" programs for the International Children's Festival at Wolf Trap.

These programs are designed to introduce students, grades second through fourth, to instrumental music. Many local public school systems do not begin class instrumental instruction until the fifth grade. The chance to reach young people prior to the start of their formal music education will hopefully ignite a passion for instrumental music.

*IIA was an integral part of the 2009 International Children's Festival instrumental petting zoo, and has begun a series of instrumental exploration programs at local community centers.*



**Professional:** While serving the academic and community components of our mission, IIA seeks to build relationships with professional and business communities of Northern Virginia.

George Mason University has gained national attention as a leading and innovative University. Many organizations in the region are unfamiliar with the range and depth of Mason and the wide variety of programs offered throughout the University. The opportunity to identify and address these groups and their constituencies with a program like IIA will not only accumulate needed instruments and financial support, but also open channels of communication for other university relationships. Support incentives will be available to established business partners.

*Phase one will begin in the fall of 2009, with a major announcement and speaking tour to take place beginning in January 2010.*

*Music was my refuge. I could crawl into the space between the notes  
and curl my back to loneliness  
Maya Angelou*

## Funding

Not all donated instruments are in playable condition. Many are in need of some repair. In order to keep inventory up to date for students and outreach programs, IIA must raise funds to repair and improve donated instruments.

These repair costs are FAR lower than the cost of purchasing new instruments.

In addition, administrative support is needed to catalogue donations, evaluate instruments, coordinate activities with the school of music, and perform other vital tasks related to the administration of IIA.



***IIA will need to raise \$15,000 to fulfill these 2009-2010 objectives***

## Future

*Instruments in the Attic* has many creative opportunities for growth and development. It is important to recognize that the resources needed to sustain a new and growing program are provided at George Mason University's College of Visual and Performing Arts and The Potomac Arts Academy. Infrastructure and professionals are in place to meet the current and future needs of the program.

The Potomac Arts Academy is committed to sound management of the IIA program. All activities will be "rolled out" carefully, with the long-term goal of sustainability.

Three Year Goals:

- Expand community center "music exploration" programs and partner with area arts organizations.
- Partner with schools, or entire school systems, in the northern Virginia region to provide music instruction with IIA donated instruments. Participating public school students will have the opportunity to study and practice on an IIA instrument.
- Partner with private schools to provide similar instructional opportunities.
- Build relationships with existing youth education programs, and support with instruments and instruction as needed.
- Continue to raise funds that are needed for instrument repair, outreach and in-school programs, administrative support and inventory expansion.
- Provide instruments to Potomac Arts Academy students and classes.
- Introduce young people's concerts with IIA donated instruments.
- Introduce instrumental programs for senior citizens.

***Music's the medicine of the mind***

*John A. Logan*

# ABOUT US

## Potomac Arts Academy

The Potomac Arts Academy is the community arts umbrella for the College of Visual and Performing Arts. We seek to enrich the lives of community members of all ages, skill levels and socio-economic backgrounds by providing the highest caliber of artistic instruction in an accessible and nurturing environment. Creating a strong bond between George Mason University faculty and students, professional artists/performers and the surrounding communities, the Academy will ensure a vibrant future for the arts in our region and beyond. As of fall 2009, we are proud to serve over 1100 students with our summer programs, year-round classes and special events throughout the year.

## College of Visual and Performing Arts

The College of Visual and Performing Arts offers degrees in Art and Visual Technology, Dance, Film & Video Studies, Music, Theater, Arts Management, and Computer Game Design. Professional and liberal arts courses of study are designed to prepare students for careers as creators, performers, teachers, scholars, arts leaders, and arts entrepreneurs, while enriching the cultural life of the George Mason Community. The college is home to the Center for Arts, the professional presentation and production arm of the College of Visual and Performing Arts at George Mason University. Together, the College's academic programs and the Center for the Arts offer students an environment rich with opportunity, where they will:

- *Stretch, grow, learn, and experiment, guided by a faculty of dedicated, practicing artist-teachers*
- *Perform, create, and exhibit their work in a wide variety of public venues (2,000-seat Concert Hall, 500-seat Harris Theater, 150-seat Theater Space, 100-seat Dance Performance Studio, 75-seat Black Box, Johnson Center Gallery, the Fine Arts Gallery, and the Mason Hall Alumni Atrium Gallery)*
- *Enrich their education with regular contact with distinguished visiting artists in master classes and residencies.*
- *Enjoy free student tickets for Center for the Arts performances where artists from across the country and around the world regularly perform.*

## School of Music

George Mason University School of music is recognized nationally as an innovative and cutting edge music school. With over 400 students, the School of Music provides artistic and academic challenges in an exciting learning environment. The location provides unparalleled opportunities to attend world-class performances in the Center for the Arts Concert hall, as well as the rich cultural environment of the greater Washington DC area. The new, five million dollar de Laski Performing Arts Building extension will carry Mason into the next phase of its dynamic growth. The music program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM) and offers degree programs at every level; undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate. George Mason University is proud to be an All-Steinway School.

