

# MUSIC & MUSIC THEORY

The primary goal of the music program is to offer our students the perspective of a composer: to give them not only the ability to appreciate and understand the craft of the masterpieces of Western music, but also the ability to write and think in gestures, textures, harmony, melody, and timbre. This program does not presuppose any prior musical training on the part of the child or parent, nor does it expect the instigation of supplemental education; we build that bridge for our students every day.

As with any kind of literacy, our task begins with teaching the symbols of musical notation. Their study continues with mastering the fundamentals of Western classical music, the age-old organization of notes into major and minor scales, modes, and other types of scales or rows. The study of intervals leads to that of functional harmony and both sixteenth and eighteenth century counterpoint. The mastery of these skills is complemented by a cyclical genre study, spanning the various stylistic eras, encompassing works for voice, orchestra, solo instruments, chamber groups, and opera.

We reinforce the lessons learned in class with the well-crafted examples at our disposal: the symphonies of Beethoven and Mahler, the fugues of Bach, the operas of Mozart and Verdi, the dance pieces of Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev, the miniatures of Schumann, Chopin, and Webern, the song cycles of Schubert and Schumann, the string quartets of Haydn, Beethoven, and Bartók. Because of our dedication to the understanding of music created in the present day, we also study works by composers whose influence steered the course of music in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, composers such as: Schoenberg, Britten, Barber, Ligeti, Babbitt, Carter, Reich, Ives, Cage, Gubaidulina and Adams.

In order to give our students a global perspective on music, our curriculum provides ear-training, theory, music history, and performance throughout the course of each year. For the more advanced classes, the emphasis is on research and writing prose that articulates the students' knowledge of and views on musical thought and practice.

## FACULTY

### Justine F. Chen

Concert Violinist and Composer  
D.M.A., Composition, The Juilliard School  
M.M., B.M., Violin & Composition, The Juilliard School

### Giuseppe Spoletini

Baritone Vocal Instructor  
M.M., Manhattan School of Music  
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## HIGH SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS 2010 - 2011

### Music Theory and History: Counterpoint

To improve fluency in reading, performing, and understanding music by reinforcing basic aural and notational skills, the students in this course will review identifying and writing basic musical symbols, identifying and creating pitches using treble, bass, alto and tenor clefs, the reading, dictation, and performance of rhythms in standard meters, written and aural identification of intervals, and single-line melodic dictation. We will also study stylistic trends in music history, and 16th century counterpoint, and the exploration of fundamental harmony through aural and written exercises. Ear-training exercises using singing, clapping and stamping will be used to help train visual-physical responses to written music.

### Music Theory and History: Harmony

Beginning with a review of counterpoint, the main area of study for this course is functional harmony and its structural significance in the music of the Classical period. In addition, advanced rhythmic study will demand the practice and performance of exercises from Robert Starer's Rhythmic Training, as well as basic polyrhythms. Written work includes exercises in creating and identifying qualities of chords and will progress to Roman numeral analysis. Additionally, the students will broaden their understanding of musical styles by researching and writing about selected composers of the month.

### Music Theory and History: Choral Performance

The main focus of this course is to solidify the skills that students have learned to date and to lay the foundation necessary for them to be members of a choral ensemble. The students will learn the foundations of a proper singing technique that they are able to use in performance as well as in their ear training exercises when identifying intervals and building chords. We will explore a variety of musical masterworks spanning the 17th to the 20th centuries. Each month a selected composer will be studied in depth so that students learn to identify musical characteristics that associate the composer with his specific musical era. The fundamentals of harmony, melody, rhythm and notation are also covered throughout the year.

### Music Theory and History: Analysis

This course is an overview of music from the late Romantic and Twentieth Centuries with a focus on observing stylistic trends by studying the significant works of the time and reading supporting contemporaneous documents. A review of counterpoint, functional harmony, and Roman numeral analysis will be followed by a study of sonata-allegro form, theme and variations, and serial techniques. In addition to learning musical analysis, there will be an emphasis on writing, comparing and contrasting these musical trends and thoughts. This course pre-supposes knowledge of all the clefs and fluent interval identification.