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## NEWS AT CCM

MICAH CHRISTIAN



JAY LANE



CCM welcomes Micah Christian and Jay Lane to the CCM faculty

This fall we welcome two highly accomplished musicians and instructors to our voice faculty. From beginners to professional performers, both Micah and Jay will help their students fine tune and strengthen their voice, build self-esteem, and develop foundation skills.

Micah will also be leading the [Concord Conservatory Girls Chorus](#) and Jay will be leading [Singing with Parkinson's](#)—each of them bringing a wealth of experience to CCM.

## **Discovery Day Open House at CCM**

*Where can you try out the drums, banjo, cello, guitar, piano, and violin in one afternoon?*

The obvious answer—the Instrument Petting Zoo at the [CCM Discovery Day Open House](#) on Saturday, September 11<sup>th</sup> from 1 – 3 pm at CCM!



Whether you are 4 or 94, the petting zoo enables you to explore many instruments in a hands-on way. Come to meet the instructors who will be glad to demonstrate how to hold and play all the instruments.

Do you need help deciding which instrument to choose for your kids? [Here's some help.](#)

New group music and movement classes for kids include: [Music Makers](#), [Musical Gateway](#), and [Rhythmic Solfège](#)

## **Demo classes at the Open House**

Reserve your kid's spot in an early childhood or Music & Movement 30-minute demo class!

**Sign-up** now so your kid can have the opportunity to participate in a demo class led by Weronika Balewski: 1:30 pm for ages 3-7 and 2:30 pm for ages 8-13.

Students who are older or younger are welcome to come join us to get a sense of [Weronika Balewski's](#) teaching approach. Please be aware that Weronika will be teaching primarily for the advertised age group, but would love to find a way to include older and younger students who might want to join!

You can also [sign-up](#) in advance for the **Group Keyboard Demo Classes** led by [Kitty Cheung-Evans](#) at 2:00 and 3:00 pm

Attend the Open House and enter the raffle for a chance to win a free CCM Group Class for the 2021 fall semester! Additionally, anyone registering for a group class at the Open House will receive a 15% discount.



### Are you a CCM friend yet?

Join us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) to be the first to learn CCM news and more! See what music videos we like, photos we post, practice tips and articles we suggest, and new music in the music world. Be sure to bookmark the **CCM Blog** so you never miss a new post.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD - WHY YOUR KID DOESN'T NEED TO PICK UP AN INSTRUMENT JUST YET

*How little kids learn music without instruments.*

By Lydia Yoder

Your young child doesn't need to start learning an instrument in order to start learning music. In fact, it will probably serve your child better to hold off on the instrument for a few years. Everyone hears about the young prodigies---Mozart, Chopin, the kid on the morning news—and it's easy to wonder if just starting your child younger will make them a better musician. It's true that starting kids young is helpful for musicians, but *how* your child starts

to learn music is actually just as important as when, and the reasoning all comes down to neuroscience.

Most people would say that starting your kid in music lessons at a young age is helpful because they have more time to learn—they'll have a head start on their peers. While that's true, the real benefit lies in capitalizing on the way kids' brains develop. Research shows that children develop an ability to distinguish between tones and match pitches at an incredibly young age—a huge amount of development related to listening happens between 6 and 12 months.

The ability to have perfect pitch?

It's almost impossible after age 7. Things like singing to your child, having them listen to music, and clapping or dancing to rhythms are easy ways to get your child started with ear training.



Once those key windows of development have passed, learning to distinguish pitches becomes exponentially more difficult. That's one reason why many adults struggle to learn second languages containing sounds that aren't in their native tongue.

Fine motor skills—the ability to move their fingers in a particular way, however? That's much easier for older children to learn.

Trying to get really little kids to pick up an instrument - whether it's violin, piano, or any other - when they haven't figured out how to move their body the way they want to, is a recipe for frustration. Playing a musical instrument requires a lot of fine muscle control, especially in the hands, but those skills aren't the only ones children need in order to be a musician. The critical age for developing listening skills is incredibly young and incredibly fleeting.

The key to raising a young musician is meeting your child where they are developmentally, and a great way to do this is by focusing on fostering a love for music and exposing your child to a range of sounds and rhythms at a young age. Teaching your child the skills they are both physically and mentally prepared to learn is the best way you can keep them happy and motivated.



That's why at CCM, early childhood classes focus on singing, dancing, and music games, which teach your child everything they need to learn in a way that they will love.

Kids will develop social, cognitive, and emotional skills while having fun with music in a group class. Complete with dancing and creative games, young musicians will explore all the qualities of music through movement—learning about pitch, phrasing, accent, and all of the richness of music. They won't even realize that they're gaining ear-training skills and other musical concepts.

Choose the class that's appropriate for your child (*or grandchild*)!

**MUSIC MAKERS** for 3-year-olds

**MUSICAL GATEWAY** for 4 and 5-year-olds

**RHYTHMIC SOLFÈGE** classes for ages 6 - 9 and 9 – 13

After all, the thing all truly great young musicians have in common is a love for music.



**UNLOCKING THE KEYS TO BECOMING A SONGWRITER**

## *What do Carole King and Taylor Swift have in common?*

by Joan Mankoff

They both made the [Rolling Stone 100 Greatest Songwriters of All Time](#) list. Talented and authentic in different ways, both iconic, celebrated women singer-songwriters compose their own lyrics and music. What is their secret to success? How does one learn this creative craft?



Songwriting is the next step for many musicians who want to take their musical ability and creativity to the next level. Learning to write, arrange, and play your songs opens the door to a deeper knowledge of music, more insight into the instrument you play, and exposure and interest in new instruments.

And, with today's technology such as GarageBand, you can more easily professionally record yourself and listen to what you've created in no time. That can be incredibly rewarding!

In addition, songwriting is good for your mental health. Songwriting has been proven to be a great source of stress relief, a creative outlet for self-expression, and a healthy method for reducing anxiety and depression. Songwriting can help us better understand ourselves and others.

Songwriter Dolly Parton once said, "songwriting is my way of channeling my feelings and my thoughts. Not just mine, but the things I see, the people I care about. My head would explode if I didn't get some of that stuff out."

Concord Conservatory of Music's award-winning guitar department chair Björn Wennås can teach you the tools of using harmony, melody, and lyric writing to turn your creative efforts into full-fledged songs!

This fall, Björn's offerings include two songwriting group classes: [Songwriting: Fundamentals](#) and [Songwriting: Continuing Work](#).

CCM's [Songwriting: Fundamentals](#) allows you to immerse yourself in the exploration of songwriting. For ages 13 - adults, you will learn the basics of how to combine harmony, melody, and lyric writing. This collaborative 12-week course provides an encouraging, innovative classroom setting to create, share, and receive feedback on your original songs. Good understanding of chords and experience on a chordal instrument such as piano, guitar, banjo, and ukulele are helpful but not required. In addition, you should have a computer with GarageBand, Logic, or equivalent, as well as a microphone.

Taking songwriting to the next level, CCM's [Songwriting: Continuing Work](#), for ages 13 – adults, provides a more structured setting to continue advancing your songwriting abilities. Over 12 weeks, weekly writing assignments will focus on form, chords, melody, rhythm, and lyrics. Meeting in a welcoming and inspiring group setting, songwriters can play what they have worked on and collectively discuss with other emerging and talented songwriters the process and how to build upon what's been created. With the weekly incentive of deadlines, this course is an excellent motivation for songwriters to generate new material. The prerequisite to this class is either completing Songwriting: Fundamentals or having written at least 3 songs.

Both songwriting classes are taught by Björn, an award-winning musician who has been teaching songwriting for approximately 15 years. Always writing, co-writing, and playing diverse music, Wennås was schooled in classical and jazz at Berklee College of Music and Longy Music School of Bard College. He was a grand finalist in the jazz competition “Just Plain Folks,” and he won best album in world music at the Independent Music Awards held annually at the Lincoln Center.

“Songwriting is super rewarding. It unlocks deep creativity that many musicians don't tap into until they learn the songwriting process,” says Björn Wennås, CCM's songwriting teacher. “The class collectively learns how to create, sing, record, arrange and improve upon our songwriting efforts. We strive to have ‘aha’ moments where students open doors to profound, innovative musical exploration— all in a welcoming and supportive environment.”

Want to try to be the next Carole King or Taylor Swift?

Why not start with CCM's songwriting classes? You will be amazed at the musical journey that awaits you.

Register today for [Songwriting: Fundamentals](#) or [Songwriting: Continuing Work](#).

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