

Try a Free 'Mini-Class' at Darien Arts Center Open House Aug. 30

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To inform the community of its latest offerings, the Darien Arts Center is hosting an Open House on Tuesday, Aug. 30 from 1 to 4 p.m. All ages are invited to participate in free mini-classes in dance, visual arts, kids' theatre and music, find out about programs, meet DAC board members and faculty, and enjoy music performed by DAC music teachers.

Information will be provided, including show dates and participation and volunteer opportunities, for those interested in their community theatre group, DAC Stage, the Bi-Annual Darien Art Show and Sale and other programs.

Complimentary mini-classes at the Open House include preschool hip hop dance, martial arts, piano, a singing class for tweens, and a printmaking project for all ages.

Teachers will be available to meet and greet visitors throughout the afternoon.

Information tables will be set up in the lobby for those interested in dance, visual arts, music and theatre, and all other programs including martial arts and Danceabilities and Artabilities for those with disabilities.

Now in its fourth decade, the Darien Arts Center continues to cultivate relevant and fun visual and performing arts programs.

Over 800 students benefit from the DAC dance program, one of the largest in Connecticut; and the number of music students has recently doubled, necessitating expansion of classroom space.

In 2016, hundreds of participants from as far away as California, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Washington D.C. entered the DAC's first-ever smartphone photo contest, and Darien's Got Talent returned as a successful fundraiser with contestants from Darien, Westport, Norwalk, Stamford, New Canaan and Greenwich.

DAC Stage continued to gain recognition for critically acclaimed shows, including their 2016 hit, *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and will kick off their 2016-2017 season with "Beatles Night" on September 24th. Hundreds of local artists will showcase their work at the Bi-Annual Darien Art Show and Sale, which returns in 2017 for its 58th year.

A newly expanded Kids' Theatre Program for students from age 3 to over 18 has been introduced and offerings in the Visual Arts Department include digital photography, cartooning, drawing, painting and a critique workshop for the advanced artist.

Visual Arts outreach programs, evening adult painting parties, a new creative writing workshop and craft and dance birthday parties are also available.

The Dance program includes ballet, hip hop, modern/jazz, tap, and pointe, and Martial Arts is offered for all ages and abilities.

In addition to group classes and private instruction, the Music department offers its 'Vocal Divas' Workshop for ages 7-12 and performance group classes. Registration is now open for all fall classes beginning in September at darienarts.org.

The DAC has developed its community outreach through partnerships with the Darien Library, Darien Nature Center, Atria, Maplewood and Darien After School Programs and those with special needs are able to express themselves in art and dance classes through a relationship with Star, Inc.

The Ginny Wright Scholarship is given annually in honor of Virginia Wright, to a graduating Darien High

School artist.

Over 150 teen and adult volunteers are needed to fulfill the DAC's mission and its funding is dependent on private donations and grants, as tuition and ticket sales do not cover all operating costs. 41 years strong, the Darien Arts Center continues to make Darien a more vibrant community.

To find out more, visit darienarts.org or call (203) 655-8683. The DAC is located at 2 Renshaw Road, behind the Darien Town Hall.