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Dance, Martial Arts Classes, Private Music Lessons Begin Sept 3 at Darien Arts Center

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Categories : [Classes](#), [Darien Arts Center](#)

Tagged as : [Darien Arts Center Fall Registration 2019](#), [Martial Arts Classes 2019](#)[Music Lessons 2019](#)

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Registration is open for fall classes that begin on Sept. 3 at the Darien Arts Center. See all classes and sign up at DarienArts.org.

— *an announcement from Darien Arts Center*

Dance Program

The DAC Dance Program offers a wide variety of classes for all ages and skill levels. Classes for ages 3 & up include Ballet, Jazz, Hip Hop, Teen Lyrical, Adult Lyrical Jazz, Teen Contemporary, Modern, Broadway Dance, Pop-Pilates Tap, and Pointe. It is strongly suggested not to wait to register as classes fill quickly.

Students train in one of the finest dance spaces in Fairfield County and have the unique opportunity to

participate in multiple performances throughout the year.

In the introductory program for ages three to five, students explore rhythm, music, creative expression and basic coordination skills in addition to dance vocabulary and basic positions.

For intermediate and advanced level students, the focus is on technique and creative exploration. Adult students enjoy opportunities to work at their own level.

The DAC Weatherstone Studio is utilized for classes, but also converts to a full black box performance space, giving DAC students more performance opportunities than any other dance program in the area.

Junior and Senior Dance Companies perform in all DAC Dance productions and at other venues in and around Connecticut. Following are many of the performance opportunities for DAC dance students.

Scenes from the Nutcracker (December) - This one-hour DAC tradition is comprised of excerpts from this classic ballet. It is a wonderful introduction to seeing live ballet and also features an original narration that brings the story to life.

Dancefest at the Palace Theatre (January) - DAC students take master classes and workshops with other students from across Fairfield County. This local convention culminates in a performance with all participating students on the iconic Stamford stage.

So We Think We Can Dance (January) - Members of the DAC Senior Company produce, direct and choreograph an exciting evening of dance performed by their peers.

Original Spring Ballet (April) - Students demonstrate their technique and storytelling abilities in original DAC ballets written and choreographed by Dance Director, Bonnie Gombos.

Junior Spring Concert (May) - The DAC's littlest ballerinas take the stage in this production designed just for them. This recital demonstrates their new found abilities and puts them front and center for being the stars that they are.

Senior Spring Concert (June) - Intermediate and advanced dancers give their final showcase of the season in this jam packed performance on the Darien High School stage.

Bi-Annual Summer at Disney World (June) 2020 is the next year for the opportunity to perform at Disney World in Orlando Florida. Students in intermediate and advanced levels spread their joy throughout the Magic Kingdom.

The DAC Dance program has a long history of fostering cohesiveness as a “Dance family” as portrayed in the following DAC Dance student testimonial.

- “Dancing at the DAC has played such a huge part in my growing up. The dancers and the teachers create a sense of community that really makes you feel like you belong while also pushing you to work hard through exercise, with team work and respect.”

— *Eva L.*

The DAC Music Program includes private lessons for guitar, flute, violin, voice, piano, and music theory as well as group classes for both adults and children.

DAC instructors are professionals chosen for their individual artistry and teaching skills. Through one-on-one instruction, students discover their full potential by strengthening their technique, creativity, self-awareness and individuality.

Focus is placed on building the skills needed to read and perform music. Children as young as five may be ready to begin private instruction.

Once children begin, private instruction focuses on basic skills in an engaging environment with attention paid to the developmental needs of each child. Two recitals are produced each year to develop performance skills, poise, self-confidence, and self-control.

Middle and high school students develop skills to play the type of music they enjoy that includes rock, video game, and anime, classical, jazz, and pop. Adults who have decided to acquire a new skill or to keep minds and hands nimble, also comprise the DAC student body.

Qualified students have the opportunity to participate in the Royal Conservatory of Music Program, which offers adjudicated testing in both music theory and practical application. For more information about the RCM program contact Juanita Bosee at juanita@darienarts.org.

“In a town where sports are so heavily emphasized, it was important to us to find a way to support other aspects of our children’s growth in addition to athletics. Our son was interested in learning how to play the piano, so we signed him up for lessons at the Darien Arts Center.

“Within a few weeks of starting lessons, we were amazed by his progress, but even more so by how much he loved to play. To this day (more than a year after starting lessons), he frequently chooses to play piano without being asked, and loves to play both pieces that he has memorized and his new pieces.

“He has gained a lot of confidence in the past year, and I attribute much of this to his piano lessons. I am also thrilled to see him gaining a skill that he will be able to enjoy for the rest of his life.”

— *Megan M.*

To register for private music instruction, email Juanita Bosee, DAC Music Director at Juanita@darienarts.org or call the DAC office at (203) 655-8683.

DAC Group Music Classes:

NEW SING! SING! ELEMENTARY GROUP VOICE with CHRISTINA DEMAIO

Grades 1–5 | Thursday | 5:30 – 6:15pm

Sept. 19 – Dec. 5 | 10 classes

\$210 plus \$35 Registration Fee

Does your child like to sing? Through musical games and activities, students will learn proper vocal techniques while receiving an introduction to music literacy. The group will be invited to participate in the Darien Arts Center Holiday Recital in December.

BEGINNING YOUNG COMPOSERS with DAN SAULPAUGH

Grades 3–5 | Saturday | 3:00 – 4:00pm

Sept. 21 – Nov. 23 | 10 classes

\$210 plus \$35 Registration Fee

Beginning composition students will learn the basics of writing music. We will cover topics including setting up a score, identifying pitches on the staff and simple rhythms, as well as other aspects of music notation. Students will compose simple pieces that explore specific parts of the compositional process. These will include melody writing, harmonic progressions, form, and orchestration. At the end of the course students will have written several short pieces. Students' pieces may be performed at the DAC Holiday Recital in December.

ADVANCED YOUNG COMPOSERS with DAN SAULPAUGH

Grades 5–12 | Saturday | 1:15 – 2:45pm

Sept. 21 – Nov. 23 | 10 classes

\$320 plus \$35 Registration Fee

Student composers with more experience will work in a workshop setting, writing and critiquing each

Darienite

News for Darien

<https://darienite.com>

other's music. More advanced harmonic progressions, forms, and elements of melody and counterpoint will be explored. Students will write short pieces that explore specific aspects of the compositional process such as imitation and different types of chromaticism. Students will also work on their own self-directed pieces, to be performed at the DAC Holiday Recital in December.

NEW ADULT ROCK BAND with DAN SAULPAUGH

Tuesday | 8:00 – 9:30pm

Oct. 1 – Dec. 3 | 10 classes

\$210 plus \$35 Registration Fee

Adult Rock Band musicians will choose, learn, and perform music from the rock and blues traditions. Students will deepen their technical facility on their instruments. They will also learn about group interplay in a band and how to create a cohesive band sound. Improvised solos will be covered, as well as playing ensemble parts. Students will work with the instructor to choose songs which may include covers and original material.

The DAC Martial Arts Program offers classes that are divided by age and designed to hone fine motor skills and improve focus. Additionally, the practice of martial arts contributes to better self-discipline while learning self-defense. At the DAC, enhanced awareness and proper behavior through respect are achieved, all while having fun.

DAC Martial Arts students also have the opportunity to participate in the Spring Martial Arts Tournament, a day of friendly competition with other Fairfield County Martial Arts Schools.

Testimonials to the DAC Martial Arts Program:

“DAC Martial Arts is a fantastic program that builds strength, flexibility, and character. We take advantage of the classes for both kids and adults, and really enjoy the camaraderie of the students and staff.” (Tessa)

“It's not just for kids! I began studying 10 years ago at the age of 45, now I'm a 2nd degree black belt. Martial Arts at the DAC will help you get stronger, feel accomplished, and might just save your life. Get out of your comfort zone and join us.” (Victoria)

DAC Martial Arts Director, Bonnie Gombos has achieved the rank of 5th degree black belt (Master) in Shaolin Kempo Karate and also teaches in the DAC Martial Arts program. Sensei James Gombos is a 5th degree black belt in the art of Shaolin Kempo Karate. He has been studying various types of Martial Arts for over 20 years and has taught many students throughout Fairfield County.

Martial Arts Classes:

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News for Darien

<https://darienite.com>

BEGINNER MARTIAL ARTS | White-Blue | Monday, 4:00-4:45pm | Sept 9 - Jan 13 | 17 classes

These classes are divided by age and are designed to refine motor and organizational skills, teach self-defense and awareness, improve self discipline and teach proper behavior through respect and self-control while having fun.

LITTLE DRAGONS | Ages 3–5 | Tuesday, 9:45-10:30am | Sept 3 - Jan 14 | 17 classes

This is Martial Arts for the pre-schooler. This class will include basic technique and tumbling. While working on discipline and proper behaviour in a fun calm atmosphere.

BEG/INT MARTIAL ARTS | White-Blue | Tuesday, 5:30-6:30pm | Sept 3 - Jan 14 | 17 classes

These classes are divided by age and rank and are designed to refine motor and organizational skills, teach self-defense and awareness, improve self discipline and teach proper behavior through respect and self-control while having fun.

ADVANCED MARTIAL ARTS | Blue & Up | Tuesday, 6:30-7:30pm | Sept 3 - Jan 14 | 17 classes

Advancing students will concentrate on technique, material and performance while exploring the philosophy of the art.

OPEN MARTIAL ARTS | Ages 8 & Up | Thursday, 6:15-7:15pm | Sept 5 - Jan 16 | 17 classes

Open Martial Arts for ages 8 and up.

ADULT MARTIAL ARTS | Tuesday, 10:45 -11:45am | Thursday, 7:15 - 8:15pm | Sept 3 - Jan 16

A great workout while learning many self-defense theories and skills. This class will improve coordination, stamina and self-awareness.

The Darien Arts Center is located at 2 Renshaw Road, behind the Town Hall. For more information, visit darienarts.org. For questions, please call the DAC office at (203) 655-8683