



# ANNUAL OVERVIEW 2023

CREATING ART

BUILDING COMMUNITY





## A FRONT DOOR FOR THE ARTS IN THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA AREA

**Mason Community Arts Academy (MCAA)** connects the community with George Mason University's College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) faculty, students, alumni, and area teaching artists through year-round lessons, classes, workshops, summer programs, and K-12 teacher education programs, for all levels and ages.



Making arts education accessible and affordable to the community with over \$12,000 awarded in annual scholarships



Providing enriching quality arts experiences led by George Mason faculty, alumni, and area teaching artists



Connecting George Mason students to effective learning and teaching opportunities in the surrounding area



Reaching beyond our walls with in- and after-school offerings, including programs created for underserved populations



Advocating for the arts and supporting arts research through our partnership with the Mason Arts Research Center, a National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) program



Creating economic opportunities through a \$1.9+ million annual budget, with more than \$1 million in faculty salaries



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our motto in CVPA is that “the arts create community,” which stays steadfast at the very core of the Academy’s mission. The past few years have been a time of great change. In Spring of 2020, like the rest of the world, we found ourselves managing our daily operations and programs in ways we never could have imagined. As health conditions improved and things began to open up again, we made a gradual and safe return to where we are today: fully in-person, programs fully enrolled, and fully engaged in the community.

Through it all, the MCAA faculty and staff have remained resilient, creative, and resourceful, and for that, I am sincerely grateful. We are proud of our history, our growth, and to represent George Mason University, serving as that connective point between the University, our Academy students, and their families. As we celebrate our 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we thank you for your support, which will inspire us in providing meaningful arts education experiences for years to come.

**Mary Lechter**

*Executive Director, Mason Community Arts Academy*

## OUR STORY

- 2008 ● Potomac Arts Academy (formerly the Potomac Music Academy initiative) was established and provided arts instruction to nearly 300 participants in the surrounding community.
- 2011 ● Acting for Young People (AFYP), a thriving community theater nonprofit, joined forces to serve as the Academy’s theater program.
- 2018 ● The Academy relaunched as Mason Community Arts Academy.
- 2020 ● Instruction and classes pivoted online in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic shutdown. In-person and hybrid options became available as restrictions lifted.
- 2023 ● Rebounding from the Pandemic, the Academy has experienced record level numbers in enrollment and is celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> Year.





# YEAR-ROUND CLASSES

The Academy offers a wide array of enriching year-round classes, workshops, and showcases that are tailored to specific age groups, skill levels, and interests.



**850+**

Students are enrolled in group classes, workshops, and showcases



**50+**

Lead instructors and assistants



**72**

Classes and workshops ranging from beginner to advanced levels offered for students ages 4 to adult



**ACTING**

- 8 Yearly Acting Showcases
- Musical Showcases
- Audition Techniques Workshops
- School Holiday Workshops



**VISUAL ARTS**

- Classes taught by local teaching artists and Mason's School of Art graduate students
- Art for ages 4-18
- Drawing & Oil Painting for Adults
- Digital Illustration
- Art Showcases



**MUSIC**

- Instrumental Beginner Classes for Children
- Vocal & Instrumental Classes
- Early Childhood Classes
- Piano and Guitar for Adults
- Older Adults (55+) Classes



# SUMMER ARTS AT MASON



Summer at the Academy brings weekly artistic and skill-building camps, programs, and workshops for kids, teens, and adults to the George Mason Campus.

Mason professors, graduate students, and industry professionals teach these programs in state-of-the-art facilities. Students in visual arts, film and video, and photography programs use cutting-edge software and industry-standard equipment. This past year, we launched new programs including the [Mason Summer Band Camp](#) & the [Summer Conducting Symposium](#).



**87**

Programs in the areas of acting, music, film & video, visual arts, and credit/non-credit teacher training



**2,009**

Students, ages 4-70, participated in our summer programs



**94%**

Teaching staff are George Mason faculty, students, or alumni



**55**

Volunteers and MCAA Summer Arts at Mason paid interns



**5,000+**

Visitors attended final showcases, concerts, art exhibits, or film screenings



**PARTICIPANTS**

Traveled from 27 States, the District of Columbia, and 6 countries (Argentina, Canada, China, Ireland, Thailand, Portugal)



# PRIVATE MUSIC LESSONS

The Academy has a diverse instructor base offering a variety of instruments, teaching styles, and professional experience. Additionally, we work closely with the College of Visual and Performing Arts to invite our students for masterclasses, clinics, and performance opportunities.



## TYPES OF INSTRUMENTS

- Brass
- Guitar
- Percussion
- Piano
- Strings
- Voice
- Woodwinds



## STUDIO EXPANSIONS

Five new private lesson rooms and a dedicated percussion studio were added to accommodate our growing needs



## 57 INSTRUCTORS

80% hold advanced degrees



## 420+

Students attended weekly private lessons at the Academy



## MUSIC COMPETITION

At the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Music Competition Honors Recital we had 50 submissions from MCAA students and local community members, with over 30 invited to play at Mason's Harris Theatre



## PERFORMANCES

Academy music students performed at CVPA's *ARTS by George!* fundraiser, City of Fairfax *Spotlight on the Arts* festival, the NEA sponsored *Mason Arts Research Center Conference*, and two MCAA semester recital weekends



# OUTREACH PROGRAMS

The Academy offers an array of events and arts experiences to extend our reach to the community. For the past 15 years, the Academy's flagship outreach program, *Instruments in the Attic*, has provided instruments to schools, individuals, and organizations to further provide equitable access to quality arts education for all.



## FACULTY PERFORMANCES

Fourteen faculty members performed in this year's City of Fairfax *Spotlight on the Arts Faculty Showcase*. The Academy also hosted 3 violin events at the City of Fairfax Regional Library



## CENTER FOR THE ARTS MASTERCLASSES

Opportunities for the MCAA community to engage with world-class guest artists in special workshops

## INSTRUMENTS IN THE ATTIC

Since 2008, [\*Instruments in the Attic\*](#) has collected musical instrument donations from the community and has distinguished itself as the most recognizable outreach program of the Academy.



## 1,500+ INSTRUMENTS

Have been donated to the program, 85% of those instruments placed with students in need



## DESTINATIONS

- Local schools and George Mason's School of Music
- Nonprofits and community organizations
- Community members in El Salvador, Haiti, Jamaica, Costa Rica, and West Africa







A big thank you to our individual, foundation, and corporate sponsors for their continuous support of our programs and scholarships in helping make the arts accessible for everyone.

## DONORS & SPONSORS



**The Seeley Foundation**



## MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS



**Mason Community Arts Academy**  
College of Visual & Performing Arts  
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