

קונסרבטוריון הסדנה ירושלים
Jerusalem Conservatory Hassadna



'From Risk to Opportunity'

*Bringing the Beauty of Music and Dance Education
into the lives of Children of Ethiopian Descent*



***W120 Association
Mid Year Activity Report
2009-2010 School Year***

The First Children of Ethiopian Descent Were Accepted Into the Prestigious Music Academy High School – February 2010

Out of dozens of candidates and following three examinations, two children from the project - **Orit Taklo**, 12, a guitarist and **Avraham Terifa**, 12, a violinist were accepted to the Jerusalem Music Academy High School on full scholarships. The Academy is one of Jerusalem's top secondary schools and the only school of performing arts for this age group. For the first time, children from the Ethiopian community will participate in the music track of this renowned institution!

Their acceptance is a blessing for their families as it means that their children will benefit from education of the highest quality. At the Conservatory, we are thrilled that the music studies we were able to provide have brought these two pioneers new opportunities - opportunities they could only imagine previously. This is an enormous accomplishment and we hope and believe it will inspire other students to dream big.



Gala Concert in Toronto – November 2009

Our young quartet includes two children from the program: **Avraham Terifa** (12) on violin and **Lea Talhon** (13) on piano. In June, 2009, they and the other two members of our young quartet performed at a special event in the Israeli Knesset. Following this performance, they were invited to represent the city of Jerusalem at a beautiful gala event in Toronto. The event honored the city of Jerusalem and was held in the presence of Jerusalem Mayor, Nir Barkat.

Lea and Avraham, together with Yonatan (12) on the violin and Shmuel (13) on the flute, were privileged to benefit from a life-changing experience. The four youngsters enjoyed every moment of their magical journey. For the first time in their lives, they left their parents, flew in an airplane to a faraway place, experienced heavy snowfall, played with squirrels, visited a hockey stadium and were dazzled by Niagara Falls. Hosted by wonderful people and introduced to Jewish students in Toronto, they basked in the love and attention showered on them by the warm and caring people who were their hosts. The visit to Toronto had a deep impact on the children; they returned with a new sparkle in their eyes and increased motivation to invest in their studies.



The children in the quartet are very different from one another in terms of lifestyle, religious observance, culture and tradition. We have worked with them for a long time and believe that the experience in Toronto broke down many barriers which could have arisen between them. Through the experience of making beautiful music together, their diversity has enriched all of us and will continue to do so in the future.

The gala concert in Toronto represented the pinnacle of their achievements as a group. When we launched this program, we could only hope and pray that youngsters such as these, who needed so much personal and professional support, would be invited to travel abroad to represent their and our beloved city - Jerusalem.

We were moved listening to Nir Barkat greet the young musicians and thank them on behalf of the city for their part in making the gala evening an experience the 400 guests in attendance will long remember. He also thanked them for contributing their talents towards making Jerusalem a better city for all of us. It was a beautiful moment which neither we nor they will ever forget as we continue on our journey to grow as musicians and human beings.



Jerusalem Music Center Violin Program for Excellence – September 2009

Avishag Mizrahy, 8, was accepted to the Young Violin Program for gifted violin students. It is run by the Jerusalem Music Center and the internationally renowned violinist Miriam Fried. Participation provides Avishag with weekly master classes with Israel's leading violin teacher, Prof. Michael Gaisler. In May, 2010, Avishag participated in her second master class with the renowned violinist Miriam Fried.

The Joy of New Instruments

Sara Taklo, 11, who began studying contrabass this year, received her own contrabass at home. This has brought new joy and excitement into her house. Her family is now the most musical in the Ethiopian community; her sister Ronit has a piano and her other sister Orit has a guitar. The instruments bring their small home much light and pride!



Orit Taklo, 12, spent three years playing on a guitar for beginners. Thanks to her exceptional progress, she has now received a professional guitar. We hope this will encourage Orit to continue her hard work and to further develop her skills.

Oriya Goshen, 7, after a year in our pre-music program last year, Oriya discovered the world of making music and started studying the instrument he most desired - the piano. In October, a piano was installed in his home, enabling him to practice and progress. Having a piano at home is a source of great pride to him and his family. Like other students in the program, he now has a tutor who visits him regularly to help him practice. With his piano and his tutor, he has what he needs to ensure that he will reach his full potential as a musician and enjoy his studies along the way!



Matan Music Camp Over the Passover Holiday – March 2010

Avraham Terifa was honored to be invited to participate in the Matan music camp for young string players. Normally during school breaks, for lack of money and because his single mother does not have time to spend with him and his brother, they end up playing in neighborhood streets. The camp took place in a rustic setting at a kibbutz in the north of Israel. Avraham enjoyed high quality music instruction and played in orchestras and ensembles with youngsters from throughout Israel and had fun exploring the kibbutz.





Choir Performance with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra – January 2010

Hodaya Mizrahy, who studies the recorder, attends theory classes and accompanies the Conservatory choir. The choir, with Hodaya's accompaniment, participated in two series of family concerts (four concerts total) with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. For Hodaya, these four performances represented the pinnacle of her studies to date. Indeed, performing in the Jerusalem Theatre, along with a professional symphony orchestra is an experience she will never forget.



Tutoring 2009-2010

Adi Shimon, 7, is studying the cello. Although she has only just begun her studies, we were thrilled to hear her play at our mid-year concert. Her mother told us that Adi enjoys her theory lessons and has developed a special bond with Daniella, her home tutor. Daniella, a promising cello player, currently studies at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance. She tutors several *From Risk to Opportunity* students. Having this impressive young musician playing cello in Adi's home, no doubt has strongly encouraged her to set her sights high. Indeed, the neighbors are aware of Adi's involvement with cello and often come over to listen to her play.



Racheli Taklo, who studies the recorder, has developed a very strong bond with her tutor, Shlomit. Racheli's teacher at the Conservatory frequently comments that Shlomit has very much influenced Racheli's approach to music and the role it plays in her life. Racheli impatiently awaits Shlomit's visits and eagerly plays for her. When Racheli performed at the Conservatory's mid-year concert, her family and Shlomit enthusiastically applauded.

Malkamo Malaka started the guitar this year as he desired very strongly. This cute boy who comes from a very low socio economic background (a new immigrant family) is thrilled for this opportunity. Seeing his smile while coming to the Conservatory is a joy for us. We know the connection with his home tutor is very crucial for his advancement. So much of this music world is unknown for Malkamo and the musical and personal friendship with Itamar his tutor is helping a lot to both Malkamo and his teacher. The tutor tells us that he always puts emphasize on listening to music together with Malkamo so he would be more familiar with the music he wants so much to play. Malkamo's dream is the electric guitar. We are still waiting to see his investment and development before we help him reach this goal.

General Successes – Concerts and Ensembles

All of the children in the program performed in Conservatory concerts and demonstrated impressive progress during mid-year examinations. Many have now reached a stage where they are able to join Conservatory orchestras and ensembles. This year, we welcomed **Israel Mola**, a trumpet student, to the young wind orchestra and **Natan Terifa**, together with a child from the Battered Women Shelter, to the jazz ensemble on bongos and percussion. These are significant steps as they afford students the opportunity to play with their peers. The social interaction, along with the pride it brings them and their families, will encourage them to continue to work hard and advance in their studies.



Difficulties and Obstacles

As always, given the population we work with, we face a variety of challenges, each one requiring an individualized solution. With the children and their families, we invest significant efforts to identify problems at an early stage and develop creative solutions to overcome them.



Ruth Adena is a sweet girl who loves her piano lessons, her teacher and her music studies at the Conservatory. However unfortunately she doesn't invest herself in advancing and practicing. The home tutor is crucial in this matter and keeps her moving forward towards her lessons but this is not enough. In January we invited the family to a meeting to discuss Ruth's continuation in the program. We are trying to do all in our power to give this special girl all the encouragement needed.

Avraham's story is instructive here: He and his younger brother are being raised by a single mother. Mid-year, his mother suddenly left the country, leaving her children with their grandmother who does not speak a word of Hebrew. They did not know when she was planning on returning; she came back some six weeks later.

During this difficult period, the children, who felt somewhat lost, came to a home they know and love - the Conservatory. Every day, they would arrive at 1:30 in the afternoon directly from school. Prior to their lessons at 5:00 PM, they would wander the halls, play with friends, observe lessons, eat lunch, check in with their teachers and, generally, enjoy themselves. This story, more than any other, demonstrates the essential role the Conservatory plays in their lives - not just as a school of music but, perhaps more importantly, a warm and supportive second home with people who care about them.

It is important to note that Avraham's mother left the country during the crucial period of entrance examinations to the Jerusalem Music Academy High School. Only due to the program's on-going and intensive oversight, was he able to successfully complete his exams. We drove him to the tests, encouraged him, ensured that his teachers prepared him and completed the administrative requirements for his entrance and scholarship. There is no doubt that his acceptance into this school will be a formative influence on him musically and personally.



Adi Shimon with her Cello teacher Yoni Gotlibovitch



Oriya Goshen with his Piano teacher Ron Trachtman



Malkamo Malaka with his Guitar teacher Denis Sobolov



Racheli Taklo with her Recorder teacher Yeal Zamir and her tutor Sholmit Bloomental



Sarah Taklo with her Contrabass teacher Ora Boazson



Lea Taliyon with her Piano teacher Einat Sola



Avraham Terifa with his Violin teacher Mariana Tetro



Ruth Adena with her Piano teacher Mina Dashevsky



Orit Taklo with her Guitar teacher Gay Meir

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