

Neighbourhood Business Profile

Young Voices Toronto



A Genius Sculpting Young Voices

It's not often you hear the word "lucky" associated with a choir, but in the case of Young Voices Toronto (formerly High Park Choirs), they feel like the luckiest choir in the world. When you think of a children's choir, you imagine rows of beautiful but bored faces running through passages of music over and over and over again, until everyone can sing it the same. As a parent, you know that having your child in a choir is good for them, not unlike cod liver oil, even though you may not know exactly why. Fortunately, that is not the case with Young Voices Toronto, a choir currently made up of 150 singers ranging in age from 4 to 24 years of age. You know from the first rehearsal your child attends, that things are different at YVT, and that this is not your typical choir. You know this, because your ears hear something that they have never heard before.

What is it exactly that makes Young Voices Toronto unique? Simply put, it's having a vocal sculptor at the helm, gently fashioning each voice into a pure, full body, free flowing vibration. There's no better way to describe Artistic Director and Conductor, Zimfira Poloz, other than a creator of vocal beauty, a genius of human sound production. In her hands, each child is encouraged to find the best within themselves and she has every trick up her sleeve to get them there. "It's about the sound, always the sound," says Ms. Poloz, "I believe everyone can sing," she smiles with a shrug, "it's only about knowing the best way to get that quality out of them." She makes it sound so easy, but you know that to transform a group of singers from ordinary to sublime is no easy feat. A drop of the jaw, a movement of the body, a small adjustment of the tongue, and voila!, a piece of heaven to the ears.

Eleven years ago Ms. Poloz came to Canada without a word of English and no connections. Today, she is the Artistic Director as two of Canada's finest children's choirs, Young Voices Toronto and the Hamilton Children's Choir (who, by the way, just came home from a tour to China after having won first prize in the Xinghai International Choir Championships). She also gets invitations to conduct, adjudicate and speak all over the world. Just in the last year she has been to six countries and conducted thousands of children.

It's not often we use the word genius, as it is reserved for the very few, but with Ms. Poloz there is no doubt that we are amongst genius when we are in her presence. Lucky? Oh yes, without a doubt and Young Voices Toronto thanks their lucky stars to have her talent, focus and dedication on their team. You just have to hear it to believe it.

This profile was contributed to SNAP by Young Voices Toronto.

Young Voices Toronto is holding auditions in the first two weeks of the New Year for January start in all their choir levels. For more information, or to book a vocal appointment, call 416-762-0657 or visit www.highparkchoirs.org