

Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers



Violin/Viola Instructor: Sesek String Studio

Contact Email: info@seseckstringstudio.com

Contact Phone: 346-454-4013

Location of Studio: Sugar Land, TX.

Dr. Amber Archibald-Sešek and her husband, violinist Mr. Ervin Luka Sešek, are the proud founders of the Sešek String Studio in Sugar Land, TX. With around 60 students, Amber and Luka stay in demand as their instruction over the years has produced a number of outstanding students who pursued music at the collegiate and professional levels.

Dr. Amber Archibald-Sešek has been praised for her vivacious playing that matches her personality and enjoys a diverse career as a soloist, chamber musician, and teacher. After returning to her hometown of Houston, Texas in 2021 after living in Seattle for 13 years, Mrs. Archibald has reconnected to the arts scene, performing with the Houston

Symphony, Houston Grand Opera, ROCO, Mercury Chamber Orchestra, and other musical organizations in the city. Beginning in August of 2023 Dr. Archibald is the newly appointed Professor of Practice for Viola at the University of Houston. Teaching has always been Mrs. Archibald's biggest passion and at the forefront of her career. Prior teaching posts include professorships at Seattle University and Seattle Pacific University.

Ervin Luka Sešek began his violin studies with his mother, Anastazija Juvan, and then continued for many years with his father, Armin Sešek. Before moving to America, he studied at the Conservatory of Music and Ballet Ljubljana (Slovenia), School for Musically Gifted Children Ćuprija (Serbia) and Faculty of Music in Belgrade (Serbia). He holds a Professional Studies Certificate from the prestigious Colburn Conservatory in Los Angeles where he studied with Martin Beaver. Constantly honing his craft, he has performed for several internationally prominent pedagogues including Aaron Rosand, Stefan Milenkovic, Arnold Steinhardt, Igor Ozim, Pavel Vernikov, Ken Aiso, Eugene Sarbu, Scott St. John.



Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers

Violin Instructor: Raul Colmenero

Contact Email: culrame@gmail.com

Contact Phone:

Location of Studio: Sartartia M.S. during class period



Violinist Raúl Colmenero is an accomplished musician with over 15 years of teaching experience, dedicated to nurturing the musical talents of students at every level. He holds an undergraduate degree in music obtained in 2014, along with two master's degrees—one in musicology and another in performance. Most recently, he completed his Artist Diploma at the University of Houston, where he advanced his expertise and mastery of violin performance.

His professional journey has seen him perform extensively with prestigious orchestras and chamber ensembles across Europe, Asia, and the United States. This rich and varied experience allows him to bring a global perspective to his teaching, enriching his students' learning with insights from diverse musical traditions and practices.

"My teaching philosophy is centered around fostering a supportive and motivating learning environment. I believe in tailoring my approach to meet the unique needs of each student, ensuring that they not only improve their technical skills but also cultivate their own musical voice. Whether you are a beginner eager to start your musical journey or an advanced student looking to refine your technique, I am committed to helping you achieve your goals through personalized instruction and dedicated mentorship."



Violin Instructor: Jack Li

Contact Email: Jackyongli@hotmail.com

Contact Phone: 713-306-8831

Location of Studio: Sartartia M.S. during class period

Jack Li was the former concertmaster of the Texas Theater Opera and performed as a soloist with the Houston Civic Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, and Galveston Symphony Orchestra. Additionally, he tutors many kids of all ages in the Houston area. As a result, they have been participating in various musical activities, such as school orchestra and Houston Youth Symphony

orchestra performances, competitions, etc. Over the past two decades more than 70 high school students have played in the all-state orchestra, and his pupils have placed first chair more than ten times in the middle school region.

Jack Li studied under Fredell Lack at Moores School of Music, where he earned his master's degree in 1993.

Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers

Violin Instructor: Chavdar Parashkevov

Contact Email: chavdarmusic@yahoo.com

Contact Phone:

Location of Studio: Home

Praised by Strad magazine as “a romantic virtuoso with sparkling and brilliant tone and clarity of gesture,” Bulgarian violinist Chavdar Parashkevov has frequently appeared with orchestra and in recital in Bulgaria, Turkey, the United States, Germany, Russia, Italy, and Denmark. Most recent performances include chamber music recitals at the Round Top Festival, Houston Museum of Art concert series, and Cypress Creek FACE Foundation. Parashkevov was awarded First Prize in the National Competition Svetoslav Obretenov in Provadia, First Prize and a special Bach prize in the “Young Talents Competition” in Sofia, Second Prize in “The Best Performance of Bulgarian Music” in Varna, and First Prize for the “Best Performance of Czech and Slovak Music” in Varna. He has released four albums, the most recent “Brahms and Shostakovich - Piano Trios” published in 2021. Parashkevov is a graduate of the School for the Arts in Varna, he also holds degrees from Southern Methodist University and the University of Houston. His teachers include Peter Hristoskov, Veronica Bogaertz, Nelli Shkolnikova, Andzrej Grabiec and Albert Muenzer. He currently combines performing for the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Ballet Orchestras and teaching at the Round Top Music Festival.



Violin Instructor: Amy Mathis

Contact Email: mathismusicstudio@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 832-724-4020

Location of Studio: Currently not accepting students due to full studio

Amy Mathis graduated from Omega Christian Academy and then went on to receive a violin performance degree, *magna cum laude*, from Wichita State University, Wichita Kansas. While in Wichita she performed with the Wichita Symphony, Wichita Grand Opera and has been a guest with many other orchestras including The River Cities Symphony in West Virginia and the Midwest Band and Orchestra Convention in Chicago. Since moving to Houston in 2003, she has played with the University of Houston Orchestra, the Houston Civic Symphony, the Fort Bend Theatre and is a performer with various chamber groups around the Houston area.

Amy's teaching experience includes Wichita Collegiate School, Central Christian Academy, Blessed Sacrament School and Cornerstone Christian Academy. She has been teaching both group and private lessons for over

years. Her students perform for the local community through concerts, recitals, All-Region orchestras, Solo and Ensemble competitions, as well as the Houston Youth Symphony. She was awarded the Music Teachers National Association Star Award and is a member of American String Teachers Association, Texas Music Educators Association, and the Suzuki Association of the Americas. She has served as President of the Southeast Texas Suzuki Association. Amy completed Suzuki violin training through book 10 and is a certified Suzuki instructor.



Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers



Violin/Viola Instructor: Lauren Haley

Contact Email: Laurenhaleystudios@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 832-600-5338

Location of Studio: Home

Lauren Alexandra Haley is a violinist, author, speaker, and pedagogy expert based in Houston, Texas. A Violin Performance graduate of the Eastman School of Music, Haley is the author of *Kids Aren't Lazy: Developing Motivation & Talent Through Music* (2018). In addition to leading Lauren Haley Studios in violin and viola, Haley collaborates with performers and teachers across the US. Press, studio information, and resources for teachers are available at www.laurenhaleystudios.com

Violin/Viola Instructor: Shao-Chin Chen

Contact Email: shaochinchien@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 281-889-0690

Location of Studio: Home

Dr. Shao-Chin Chien is the founder/director of the Houston Suzuki Music (HSM) located in Stafford. Students from her studio are coming from all areas including FBISD, HISD, SBISD, Alief ISD, Katy ISD, even Magnolia and Victoria area. Dr. Chien believes in the Suzuki principles of "Every Child Can". She and her studio teachers from HSM have helped numerous students surpass their musical ability to achieve their short/long term goals from time to time. From working with their awesome HSM instructors weekly, these amazing students have been successfully participating in all kinds of musical events including school/youth orchestra performances, chair tests, orchestra auditions, competitions, contests, etc. and all have received great outcomes. For example, they have started as beginners and passed the audition after taking instruction to get into Honors and Sinfonia orchestras, received highest rating 1s from the Solo & Ensemble event each year (and the exclusive SBISD award only for the top 3 students as "Outstanding Performance"), won annual region contests and got into their region orchestras, passed challenging audition of Houston Youth Symphony and be chosen as one of the orchestra members, participated in the TFMC All-State Festival and won the competition to become All-State Winners and receive Outstanding ratings (violin/viola/piano). A few students also have received the highest Distinction rating from the ABRSM exam (violin/piano). One of the HSM violin students even won the audition among hundreds of participants and was selected as one of the Houston Young Artists. Many of them are the principals and concert masters/mistresses in their school/youth orchestras and all-state orchestras.



Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers



Violin/Viola Instructor: Harrison Cheng

Contact Email: Haoqinchengmusic@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 713-516-1131

Location of Studio: Home

Born in China, Haoqin discovered his love for music at an early age. At just four years old, he embarked on a remarkable journey as a violinist, displaying innate talent and dedication. This passion for the strings led him to pick up the viola at the age of 15, expanding his artistic repertoire. Haoqin continued to pursue his musical aspirations at the renowned Moore School of Music, University of Houston. There, he earned his Master of Music Performance degree and Certificate of Music Performance, honing his skills and

delving deeper into his technique. This exceptional training and education propelled Haoqin to new heights in his musical career.

Currently, Haoqin is immersed in an exciting chapter as he pursues his Doctor of Music Arts degree at the Moore School of Music, University of Houston. Embracing this opportunity, he strives for excellence while further refining his artistry and pushing the boundaries of his musical expression.

Violin/Viola Instructor: Konrad Rudowicz

Contact Email: konrad.rudowicz@gmail.com

Contact Phone:

Location of Studio: Sartartia M.S. during class period

Konrad Rudowicz, born in Łódź, Poland, began his violin studies at the age of seven. In 2021, he earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Houston, studying under Dr. Kirsten Yon. Additionally, he holds degrees and certificates from the Hochschule für Musik und Theater "Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy" in Leipzig, Germany, the Academy of Music in Łódź, Poland, and Azusa Pacific University in Los Angeles, California.

Throughout his career, Konrad has had the opportunity to perform in prestigious concert halls, including Elbphilharmonie Hamburg, Gewandhaus Leipzig, Konzerthaus Berlin, Shanghai Oriental Art Center, and Bozar Centre for Fine Arts in Brussels. He has also participated in lessons and masterclasses led by distinguished violinists such as William Preucil, Brian Lewis, Leon Spierer, Kristof Barati, and Wanda Wilkomirska. Konrad was awarded first prize in the Young Artists Competition held by the Redlands Bowl Association in Redlands, California, third prize in the Lowell Chamber Orchestra Concerto Competition in Lowell, Massachusetts, and fourth prize in the Young Violinist Competition held in Łódź, Poland.

With over 10 years of teaching experience, Konrad combines insights from various educational systems with the Suzuki method. He currently serves as a violin and viola instructor at the Ethos School of Music and as an Adjunct Professor at the San Jacinto College.



Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers

Violin/Viola Instructor: Gemma Figueras

Contact Email: gemma.figueras@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 281-939-4475

Location of Studio: Sartartia M.S. during class period

Gemma Figueras is a violinist, music teacher, and school psychologist from Barcelona, Spain. She started to play the violin when she was seven years old and she spent all her life playing violin and attending music lessons. Her career started in

Casals Music School (El Vendrell, Tarragona) where she received lessons from Margarita Güell and she earned the scholarship Agusti Cohí Grau (2006). She continued her violin studies in Vila-Seca Music Conservatory (Vila-Seca, Tarragona). She was part of the Haendel Orchestra with Rafael Fabregat (head of orchestra) in the same conservatory. At the same time, she received her Bachelor Degree in Music from Rovira i Virgili University in 2009 (Tarragona). Passionate educator, she started to teach in different public schools. In one of them, she was the founder of the string orchestra and she was the head of the orchestra for seven years. She continued her studies and she graduated in School Psychology in 2015.

She moved with her husband and her three boys to Sugarland in 2022. She currently teaches in Sartartia Middle School, First Colony Middle School and James Bowie Middle School.



Pau

Cello Instructor: Hasmik Varganyan

Contact Email: hasmikvardanyan88@gmail.com

Location: Home

Armenian cellist Hasmik Vardanyan has performed as a soloist and chamber musician in major concert halls around the world, including Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, the Paris Opera House, Tchaikovsky Music Hall in Moscow, Berlin Opera House, St. John Smith Square in London and the Munetsugu Hall in Japan. Ms. Vardanyan is a top prizewinner in many national and international competitions. She won the second prize at the Aram Khachaturyan International Cello Competition in 2010. She began her formal cello lessons at the age of nine in Hrazdan. After moving to Yerevan in 2002 she studied at the Tchaikovsky Music School with Armen Mesropyan, principal cellist of the Armenian National Philharmonic Orchestra.

Committed to chamber music and community engagement, Ms. Vardanyan is a member of the Da Camera Young Artist Program in Houston.

Currently, she is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at the University of Houston, where she studied with Vagram Saradjian.



Sartartia Middle School Orchestra Lesson Teachers

Cello Instructor: Olive Chen

Contact Email: olivechen.cello@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 281-793-8526 (text preferred)

Location of Studio: Missouri City, Lake Colony area

Olive Chen has performed as soloist and principal cellist in the Symphony of Southeast Texas, The Woodland Symphony, Opera In The Height, among other orchestras. Before coming to the United States, Chen was a member of Taipei City Symphony Orchestra with which she toured Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Korea, Philippines and Hong Kong. Olive Chen was born to a musical family. She started studying music at the age of three. She was the winner of National Youth Music Competitions, Taiwan in 1982 and 1983. Because of her illustrious early years, she was admitted to Soochow University through a program for the promising up-and-coming musicians. She received her master's degree from Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in 1993, where she studied under Shirley Trepel, former principal cellist of Houston Symphony. In Aspen Festival 1990, she studied under David Finckel, former member of Emerson String Quartet and current co-chair at Lincoln Center's Chamber Music Society.

In 2010, Chen co-founded Trio Oriens. The piano trio has since become an outstanding chamber music group in Houston's musical landscape, performing prolifically and premiering new pieces by composers such as Joel Love, Stephen Yip and Joe LoCascio. Olive Chen is a cello educator with an impeccable reputation in the greater Houston area. She has taught in her private studio, Houston Community College and Houston Youth Symphony. Her students have excelled in various contests and performances.



Cello Instructor: Mark Yee

Contact Email: markyeecello@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 832.233.2517 (text preferred)

Location of Studio: HWY 59 and Sweetwater, right next to Clements High School.

In 2015, Mr. Yee graduated from the Eastman School of Music with a Masters of Music on a full-tuition scholarship and received a Performer Certificate while being a teaching assistant to Steven Doane and Rosemary Elliott. Mr. Yee finished his Bachelors of Music at the Manhattan School of Music under Clive Greensmith, former cellist of the Tokyo Quartet and professor at the Colburn School. His previous teachers have been with Desmond Hoebig, Richard Weiss, Christopher French, Richard Aaron, and Lynn Harrell.

Passionate educator, Mr. Yee has maintained a full cello studio with 50 students; his students regularly perform every year in the TMEA and TPSMEA, Texas All-Region and All-State orchestra. He is professor at TexasCellos every year since its beginning in 2020 held in Dallas, TX. He has contracts with Fort Bend, Katy, Cypress, Memorial, Lamar, and Houston ISD school districts giving masterclasses and leading sectionals for cellist all around the Houston area.



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His previous students go off and attend prestigious universities such as Stanford, Harvard, MIT, Columbia, NYU, Rice, University of Chicago, Eastman, New England Conservatory and the University of Michigan. Outside of music, he's known for his abilities as a Korean Barbecue Chef specialist and enjoys triathlons in IRONMAN. He resides in Sugar Land, TX with his wife, two daughters, and his pug Hercules.



Cello Instructor: Mitchell Wright

Contact Email: wmitchellwright@icloud.com

Contact Phone: 512-618-6560

Location of Studio: Sartartia M.S. during class period

Mitchell Wright is currently in his fourth year of undergraduate studies at the Moores School of Music in Houston, Texas. He is seeking a bachelor's degree in Cello Performance, first studying with the late Vagram Saradjian and currently under Estelle Choi of the Calidore Quartet. He has been a featured performer in the 2019 Contemporary Music Festival at Cy-Fair College and was recently awarded, with the Iris Trio, Second Prize in the Enkor International Competition. Mitchell has received masterclasses from such performers as Alexander Rudin, Deborah Pae, the Formosa Quartet, the Aizuri Quartet, and the Modigliani Quartet. Mitchell plans on continuing to collaborate and perform with the Iris Trio and continuing his studies into graduate school.



Bass Instructor: Jarrett Bastow

Contact Email: jlbastow.music@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 518-496-6188

Location of Studio: Westchase District in between Wilcrest and Richmond. Virtual Lessons available.

Jarrett is a professional bassist based in Houston, Texas who comes from Albany, New York. He is a Section Bassist for the Tulsa Symphony ([TSO](#)), and Principal Bass for Symphony of Northwest Arkansas ([SoNA](#)). Jarrett has performed with Springfield Symphony (MO), Signature, Bartlesville, Arkansas, Texarkana, Shreveport, and South Arkansas Symphonies, Arkansas and Lawton Philharmonic and the Tulsa Ballet and Opera.

His [Suzuki Training](#) began at Northwestern University when he took Suzuki Pedagogy with Gilda Barston in 2013. He continued his training with notable teacher trainers including

(Cello) Dr. Beth Cantrell, Dr. Andrea Yun, Dr. Shu-Yi Scott, Zachary Sweet, (Bass) Dr. Kate Jones and Virginia Dixon. Other teaching experiences include working as Bass Teaching Artist for Symphony of Northwest Arkansas, Bass Coach and Orchestra Assistant from Tulsa and Bartlesville Public School District respectively, Private Bass Instructor and Chamber Coach for the bART Conservatory of Music, and Guest Artist for a bass masterclass at Brigham Young University Idaho. He has served as the Adjunct Bass Instructor at [University of Arkansas - Fort](#)

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[Smith](#) and Adjunct Instructor of Low Strings at [Northwest Arkansas Community College](#). Currently, he is a Teaching Artist for [Harmony Project Tulsa](#) as of 2021.

Jarrett received his Bachelor and Master of Music in Double Bass Performance from Ithaca College and Northwestern University respectively. His principal teachers include Erik Johnson, Nicholas Walker, Andrew Raciti and Lauren Pierce. Jarrett is also a Master of Arts Leadership & Cultural Management from Colorado State University. His certifications include a Graduate Certificate in Change Management from Cornell University and a Certificate in Grant Proposal Writing from Fort Hays State University.



Bass Instructor: Eddie Tchaouchev

Contact Email: Eddiet29@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 248-756-1849

Location of Studio:

Eddie Tchaouchev is a double bassist based in Houston, TX. He recently graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor of Arts in Music with Honors, and currently studies with Robin Kesselman of the Houston Symphony. He has studied and performed at the Orford Music Festival and Domaine Forget International Music Festival in Quebec, as well as the Sewanee Summer Music Festival in Tennessee. In addition to performing and teaching, he has worked as a Music Library Apprentice at the Houston Grand Opera. Eddie is passionate about teaching, and is thrilled to share the joy he has found in music with students, no matter where they are on their musical journey.



Harp Instructor: Hope Cowan

Contact Email: hope.k.cowan@gmail.com

Contact Phone: 507-993-4969

Location of Studio: Katy, near I-10 and 99.

Harpist Hope Cowan performs and teaches throughout the Houston area as a soloist, chamber and orchestral musician, and event harpist. She is principal harpist with the Symphony of Southeast Texas and is a founding member of both the Canticle Duo and Lynx Trio. She is also a core member of Monarch Chamber Players. She teaches students of all ages at her private teaching studio in Katy, and is a teaching artist with Young Audiences of Houston.

She serves as South Central Regional Director for the American Harp Society. She received a Bachelor of Music degree from the University of Houston, and a Master of Music degree from Rice University, both under the instruction of Paula Page. www.hopecowanharp.com