

# SOBE INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

## *Grassroots Program Farms Talent in our Own Backyard*

BY DAIANA KUCAWCA

**E**ight-year-old Florentina Onolfo wanted to learn music but did not know how to sing in pitch or read music. Her mother sent her to the SoBe Institute of the Arts to learn piano—just a year later, she was writing her own pieces.

Florentina's budding talent was made possible by an agreement the SoBe Institute of the Arts formed with the City of Miami Beach to provide educational programs and professional performances at the historic Carl Fisher Clubhouse and Little Acorn Theater. Its programs are facilitated by professionals and include classes for film, dance, musical theater, theater production, music and screenwriting.

Executive Director Carson Kievman, a Ph. D. Princeton graduate, founded

the previously named SoBe Music Institute in 2005. Like Kievman, students also have the privilege of working along professional artists like Arthur Barron, a Berkley College of Music graduate and saxophone/flute instructor who has been teaching at the school for two years.

"It was a grassroots program that has developed into a full-fledged school, something which has not really ever happened before in Miami Beach," said Barron.

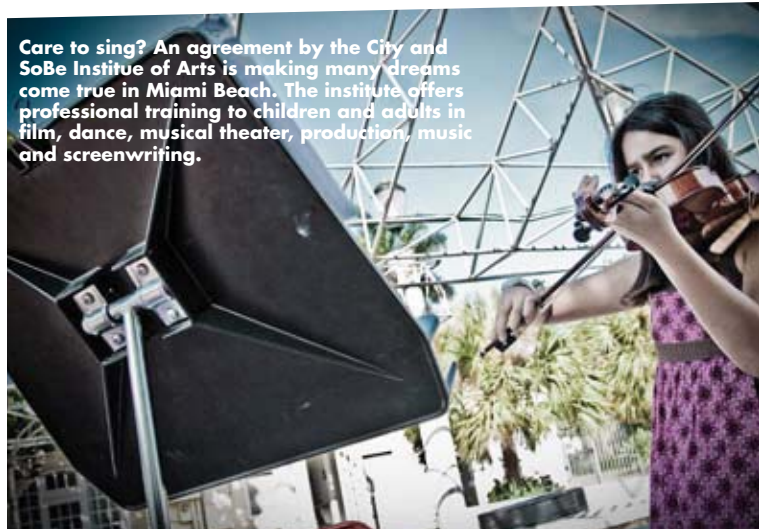
Rebecca Diderrich, violin/viola instructor who has taught at the institute for two years, is a member of the Palm Beach Opera Orchestra and a regular viola substitute with the New World Symphony.

"I've seen kids go from never having read a note of music to being able to read and play pieces of music," Diderich said.

Camelia Onolfo, Florentina's mother, said her daughters love going there and practice every day after they come back from school. On a phone conversation with Onolfo, her daughter Florentina could be heard on the background playing the piano.

Florentina agrees. She added that they wanted piano lessons because they already had a piano at home. "I wanted to learn how to play myself instead of listening to other people's music," she said.

Her professor, Kathleen Bell, voice instructor at the institute for two years,



Care to sing? An agreement by the City and SoBe Institute of Arts is making many dreams come true in Miami Beach. The institute offers professional training to children and adults in film, dance, musical theater, production, music and screenwriting.

said the school offered a unique opportunity for people who did not find music performance affordable or available. "You're bringing music to those wouldn't usually receive it," Bell said. Scholarships are available to qualifying students.

The school is not only for children, in fact, adults used to be the primary students. Jim Fields, 43, a violin and guitar student at the institute, has been coming for a year once a week for an hour.

"It's a good place for people to learn music when South Beach is not really known for art," Fields said.

According to Kievman, the institute's programs help cultivate a lifelong love of music.

One parent who sees it this way is Avraham Eini, father of violin students Agam, 9, and Ayu Eini, 7, who have been going to the school for two years. He said music was an essential

ingredient to education. "They are more enriched in their way of looking at the outside world in terms of problems and challenges," Eini said.

In addition to classes, the institute has offered over 30 free performances ensemble concerts, and multimedia talks, including a new family-oriented series called "Music Unites!" offered on Saturdays.

"We take pride in presenting a first-rate mix of cutting-edge and traditional performances, introduced with an historical and educational perspective," Kievman said.

The classes are all two or three times a week for three hours each day. Class prices range per session, but the Institute offers eligible students scholarships, and all students get some form of discount. There are also after-school programs and camps available.

305.674.9220 | [sobearts.org](http://sobearts.org)

### HISTORY

The Carl Fisher Clubhouse was designed by August "Gus" Geiger and built in 1916/1917 as part of Carl Fisher's private executive golf course. In 1937, the Little Acorn Theater (aka, Little Stage Theater), designed by Robert A. Taylor, was added to the site. The bandshell was added in the 1950s. In 1983, the 21st Street Community Center became a designated historic preservation site.

The Little Stage Theater located at the Carl Fisher Clubhouse, 2100 Washington Ave., is available to small groups for rentals. 305.674.9220 | [sobearts.org](http://sobearts.org)

# Instituto fomenta talento local

## SOBE INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS

POR DAIANA KUCAWCA

**F**lorentina Onolfo, de ocho años, quería aprender música pero no tenía nociones de tonalidad ni sabía leer partituras. Su mamá la envió a SoBe Institute of Arts para que aprendiera a tocar piano. Un año después, la niña estaba escribiendo sus propias piezas musicales.

La escuela no es solamente para menores, y de hecho inicialmente gran parte de los estudiantes eran adultos. Jim Fields, de 43 años, estudiante de violín y guitarra en el instituto, lleva un año asistiendo a clases, una hora a la semana.

El prometedor talento de Florentina se hizo crecer gracias a un acuerdo entre el SoBe Institute of Arts y la Ciudad de Miami Beach para proveer programas educacionales y presentaciones artísticas profesionales en el histórico Carl Fisher Clubhouse y el Little Acorn Theater. Los programas de estos establecimientos son dictados por profesionales e incluyen clases de cine, danza, teatro musical, producción teatral, música y escritura cinematográfica.

“Es un buen lugar para aprender música, especialmente cuando South Beach no es realmente conocido por las artes”, afirma Fields.

Carson Kievman, director ejecutivo del SoBe Institute of the Arts quien tiene un doctorado en la Universidad de Princeton, fundó el instituto en el 2005, nombrado entonces el SoBe Music Institute. Como Kievman, los estudiantes también tienen el privilegio de trabajar lado a lado con profesionales del arte como Arthur Barron, graduado en Berkley College of Music, instructor de saxofón y flauta, quien ha estado enseñando en el instituto durante dos años.

Kievman indica que los programas del instituto ayudan a cultivar un amor de por vida por la música.

Un padre que ve las cosas de esta manera es Avraham Eini, padre de dos niños que estudian violín, Agam, de 9 años y Ayu Eini, de 7, quienes llevan dos años asistiendo a la escuela. Él dice que la música fue un ingrediente esencial para su educación. “Son más enriquecidos en la forma en que ven el mundo externo en términos de problemas y desafíos”, dijo Eini.

Además de las clases, el instituto ha ofrecido más de 30 conciertos gratuitos, y pláticas con base en multimedia, incluyendo una serie dedicada a la familia, denominada “¡La Música Une!” ofrecida los sábados.

“Era un programa para personas de bajos recursos y se desarrolló hasta convertirse en una escuela de alta calidad, algo que no había ocurrido antes en Miami Beach”, dice Barron.

“Estamos orgullosos de presentar una valiosa combinación de obras de vanguardia y ejecuciones tradicionales, presentadas desde una perspectiva histórica y educativa”, dijo Kievman.

Rebecca Diderrich, instructora de violín y viola, quien lleva dos años trabajando con el instituto, es integrante de la Orquesta de Ópera de Palm Beach y sustituto habitual para el instrumento de viola en New World Symphony.

Las clases se ofrecen dos o tres veces a la semana en sesiones de tres horas. El costo de las clases es por sesión, pero el Instituto le ofrece becas a los estudiantes que califican, y todos los estudiantes reciben alguna forma de descuento. También hay programas disponibles para después del colegio.

“He visto a niños que nunca habían leído una nota musical y luego aprenden a leer las partituras y a interpretar obras”, afirma Diderich.

Camelia Onolfo, madre de Florentina, dice que a sus hijas les encanta ir al instituto y practicar diariamente después del colegio. En una conversación telefónica con Onolfo, de fondo se podía escuchar a su hija Florentina tocando piano.

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Florentina esta de acuerdo con su madre. Dice además que deseaba recibir lecciones de piano porque ya tenían un piano en la casa. “Yo quería aprender a tocar piano en lugar de escuchar la música de otras personas”, dice la niña.

Su profesora, Kathleen Bell, instructora de canto en el instituto durante dos años, dice que la escuela ha ofrecido una oportunidad única a personas con pocas posibilidades de acceso a la música. La institución está dando clases de música a quienes usualmente no podrían recibirlas”, afirma Bell.

**SoBe Institute of the Arts  
está localizado en el Carl  
Fisher Club House, 2100  
Washington Avenue.**

