

# 'Sound of Music' fills arts center

## Parent-child teams are part of ensemble bringing hills alive

Beth Bar  
The Patent Trader

Family is an important theme as performers with Music in Chappaqua prepare for the production of "The Sound of Music."

This year's musical will feature a number of parent-child teams as part of an effort to create an ensemble cast.

One of these teams is Frederic Zonsius of Chappaqua and his daughters, Sasha Zonsius, 17, and Mikala Zonsius, 12.

Frederic Zonsius has been cast as Franz, Liesl von Trapp's beau, and Sasha and Mikala will play two of the von Trapp daughters.

As a father who works long hours, Zonsius called the chance to act with his daughters a welcome opportunity.

"It's been a terrific bonding experience," he said.

Sasha said the experience has helped her father better understand her passion for acting.

"He didn't understand theater and music the way I do," she said



Photos by Elizabeth Orozco/The Patent Trader

Music Director George Croom, left, plays the piano and rehearses with students playing the Von Trapp children Nov. 16 at Music in Chappaqua. Below, Mikala Zonsius, 12, of Chappaqua sings.

### If you go

**What:** "The Sound of Music."

**When:** 7 p.m. Dec. 9 and 10, and 2 p.m. Dec. 11.

**Who:** Music in Chappaqua.

**Where:** Seven Bridges Middle School.

**Tickets:** \$15 per person or \$10 for students and seniors. Preferred seating tickets are \$35 per person or \$30 for students and seniors.

**Call:** Tickets can be purchased at the door or ahead of time by calling 914-238-3123.

this to understand my interest in theater."

Parent Doug Heintzman of Pleasantville is also involved in the production. Last year he played Daddy Warbucks in the school's

behind-the-scene roles as his son Aidan, 11 and daughters Marissa and Olivia, 13 and 8 respectively, play von Trapp kids.

Doug Heintzman said an important philosophy behind Music



# Families bring the 'Sound of Music' to Chappaqua arts center

MUSIC, from D1

in Chappaqua's theater program is family inclusiveness.

"It's not just about teaching," he said. "It's about participation. Parents are heavily involved."

John Fanelli, who is directing "The Sound of Music," said having parental participation has helped convey important messages about teamwork and equality.

"I don't care if you are the goat or Maria, you are important," Fanelli said.

That is why Fanelli chose to triple cast this year's musical.

This means that each performance will feature a different cast.

"I want kids to understand how to be great ensemble cast members," he said. "It not all about you being in the spotlight."

About 80 people are in the cast, the director of Music in Chappaqua Janet Angier said.

While ensemble may be an important theme, the school has cast professional actors in the lead roles of Captain von Trapp and Maria.

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directing

Doug Berry will play the captain and local actress Jennie Berkson will play Maria.

Fanelli praised both Berry and Berkson as actors who have a strong background in working with children.

Berkson teaches educational theater and Berry is a principal at Springhurst Elementary School in Dobbs Ferry.

"They understand kids and the value of education through the arts," Fanelli said.

The desire to educate children through the arts was what inspired Angier to start the school in 1993.

The school, which has 250 students, offers private lessons in voice, guitar, piano, violin, bass and drums.

Early childhood musical education classes, master classes, performance classes and recitals are also popular options.

It has five main studios, and a recording studio.

Fanelli said he is excited about directing "The Sound of Music" because many of the war-time themes are applicable today.

"It takes place during World War II and the people in the story have decided to go against what people were doing in their country," he said "Today we have a similar situation with the war in Iraq."

The story is also a powerful one because it deals with death and how one handles the death of a loved one.

"In the captain's situation, he wasn't dealing all that well," Fanelli said.

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