

The conservatory where musicians grow

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Every Friday, from 5.30 p.m., in the conservatory of Villa Recalcati (entrance from Via Daverio on the second floor of the car park) **Lucia De Giorgi** and her staff welcome students who love music. **From middle school, to university**, they find a place in the **Student Youth Orchestra**, which was founded in 2000, to bring young people closer to the world of **pop music**. “There’s nothing like it in the rest of Italy,” conductor De Giorgi said proudly. “This idea of mine is supported by the Director of the School Board, **Claudio Merletti**, and by the President of the Province, **Gunnar Vincenzi**, who I thank greatly. It’s an opportunity open to everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, from beginners to trained musicians, to learn to play together.”

Lucia is assisted by a staff of young people who have made the Orchestra a weekly commitment: **Ilaria, Elisa, Lorenzo, Claudio, Tommaso, Stefano** and the person in charge, **Laura**, who has now graduated and is employed, but is unable to give up her role in the Orchestra.

The young people who come in **always find someone** to welcome them, to fit them in, to teach them the music and to move their fingers on the keyboards, strings, flutes and saxophones.

“Every year, we open enrolments, which are open to anyone because **this experience is free of charge**. Our little ones try their best. Only when they become good do they get solo parts and, then, they’re expected to play with greater attention and ability. It’s a natural process of becoming mature, as they

gradually enter into the spirit of the orchestra. **It's a big family**, everyone has their role, **where there's no competition or envy**, only the desire to play music together."

The Orchestra is supported by the **parents' association, chaired by Silvia Piperno**, enthusiastic adults actively involved, who help the Orchestra to collect funds to continue. "We wouldn't be able to deal with donations," Lucia De Giorgi explained. "They come in because **our performances are free of charge, for charity events or celebrations of the association**. We don't ask for money, but the organisers often want to support us."

The pop repertoire: "It's the music that best lends itself to new interpretations. **Our orchestra sounds different every season**, because of the movements that take place. So, every time, we start from the beginning again, and adapt the scores, which we revise together, with the young people that have developed adequate sensitivity."

Lucia De Giorgi conducts with skill and authority. "They know I give my all, and they reciprocate with as much determination and passion."

It is not necessary to know how to play an instrument, it is not necessary to have had lessons before; anyone that comes here is welcomed as though they were already a member of the orchestra, and they are accompanied as they grow. "Our province is lucky. Of course, music should become more widespread, but I think the commitment of the School Board has produced excellent results. More should be done. And we're willing to try. With all the determination and love we can"

www.orchestragiovanilestudentesca.org.

di Alessandra Toni Translated by Prof. Rolf Cook