

REDEFINING A GREAT
Arts EXPERIENCE

HONORING
Mark Murphy
John Zoubek
Orange Orphan Society

Nov
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2019

SOPAC
gala



Mark Murphy

Mark Murphy is the owner and founder of Mark Murphy's Music (MMM), one of the largest music schools in the NYC area and based in the heart of South Orange. Mark opened his doors in Maplewood 16 years ago as a one-person operation. Since then, the business has grown to the size of a middle school, offering a unique and innovative program to over a hundred students a day. He has created a connection with the local community through public performances by both students and faculty and has become a strong advocate in the South Orange Business Community. He is also a lauded musician in his own right.

Mark, who grew up in the Boston area, earned an undergraduate degree in music from the University of Miami. After graduating, he relocated to NYC where he worked briefly for PolyGram and Mercury Records. In 2002, he completed his MBA at Lehigh University, and shortly afterwards moved to Maplewood with his future wife, Haneen.

While still brand new to the SOMA area, Mark began to wonder, "Why didn't this amazing artistic community have a music school?" As he taught music lessons at various locations in NY/NJ, Mark decided he would take a chance on building his own school - with a core program of his own design. He remembers his opening day at 513 Valley Street clearly: No one came to the school. Not one person. But, every day, he built relationships with one student, one family, and one teacher at a time. It did not take long for the MMM community to blossom and outgrow its four room lesson space. In 2005, MMM relocated to the corner property at 25-27 Scotland Road in South Orange Village.

Since then, the school has significantly evolved and expanded. His faculty of 35 teachers, including top-level performing musicians, work in 12 lesson spaces, including a large performance space and two large ensemble rooms. Offerings include the “Solo-Artist Program” where students learn to combine both disciplines of voice and instrumental lessons and learn the art of performing independently as a solo artist, as well as “Little M’s,” which is private instrumental music instruction for students ages 4-6. In its 16th year, MMM continues to break ground, with construction underway on a recording studio where students will have access to professional recording equipment and world-class producers to learn the art of music recording, mixing and production.

While teaching and expanding programs at his school, Mark writes, records and performs his own music. He has been reviewed and honored in national publications including the premiere Jazz magazine, *Downbeat*. In 2016, *Downbeat* named his album *Slip Away* one of the year’s best, calling it, “an assured debut by a gifted musician with stories to tell.”

As both a business and home owner in South Orange, Mark also believes in being involved locally. He is Board Chair of the South Orange Village Center Alliance (SOVCA), an organization he joined in 2017. He is very proud of recent SOVCA accomplishments, including his essential role in developing the Under Cover Music Fest on Sloan Street.