

## Musikgarten Progression

Did you know that by enrolling your child in a Musikgarten class you have taken the first step to ensuring that your child reaches his/her full music potential? In fact, Musikgarten is the only early-childhood music program that can see your child through from birth until s/he is successfully making music at the piano. We do this through a carefully sequenced plan that we often refer to as the *pathway to music literacy*. This pathway refers to the way Musikgarten develops particular activities, allowing them to evolve in each class in a way that is appropriate to the age and experience of the child. For instance:

- The experience of playing sticks and jingles in the toddler class evolves into playing specific rhythmic figures on the drums or specific melodic motifs on the resonator bars in *The Cycle of Seasons*, building the ensemble skills that will be utilized in the *Music Makers* classes. These are the same skills that will be called on as the children learn to play their favorite songs on the piano in *Music Makers: At the Keyboard*.
- The movements first learned in the finger plays and simple dances of the toddler program are refined and practiced when the child is challenged to move to the recorded movement stories in *The Cycle of Seasons*, laying the physical groundwork for the concepts experienced in the following years. They also give children the dexterity and grace needed to play the piano musically and rhythmically.
- The simple listening examples which ask the toddler to focus on a particular sound are expanded to an activity which nurtures the auditory discrimination skills of the 3-year old, challenging him/her to discriminate among the voices of four different animals or insects, preparing him/her for discriminating among the 4 instruments of the string family in the *Music Makers* program. These activities ultimately prepare the child for the careful listening required in figuring out a melody line or chord structure of a song in *Music Makers: At the Keyboard*.
- And the echoing of simple patterns is a prerequisite to learning a special rhythm and tonal language, allowing the child to organize and recall those patterns. It is through the recollection of patterns that the child will eventually be able to realize what patterns make up his/her favorite songs – thereby leading the child to music literacy.

Many people believe that children are ready to start piano lessons when they start elementary school. Still others believe lessons should start earlier. However, research indicates that the best time to start lessons is after a solid musical foundation is in place. Being in Musikgarten classes will help establish that foundation and secure your child's musical future. If it is your hope that your child will some day take piano lessons, or join the school band or chorus, staying involved in Musikgarten classes is the right thing to do.