

MARCH 2007

NEWS NOTES



STUDENT NEWS

We are sorry to say good-bye this term to **Yuna & Jin-gyu Chang**. We will miss their energy, enthusiasm and musical contributions to our group work and concerts, and wish them the best of luck in their future music studies...CSYM extends a warm welcome to new students, **Henry Wynn** (age 5) and his mother, Jacqui Wynn from Willingham. Also welcome to **Rachel Kunz** (age 4), daughter of Audrey Caldwell, whose brother William is already studying with Stephen...**Henry Wynn** and **Alexander Mitchell** enjoyed a concert on 2nd March at Emmanuel United Reformed Church which featured Ravel's 'Mother Goose Suite' and Saint-Saens 'Carnival of the Animals', both featuring two pianos.

LESSON SCHEDULES

Betty's Teaching Schedule:

11 Week Summer Term starts Monday 16 April through 12 July (Ref: Betty for details)

Stephen's Teaching Schedule:

Mon. April 16 until July 20th (excluding Friday April 27th, Wed 2 May-Sat 5th, June 27, July 9&10, 16&17, and excluding half-term may28-1st June)

CSYM presents

'Especialmente España'

West Road Concert Hall
Sunday 18 March 2007 at 3 PM

Highlighting Piano Music by Spanish & Latin American Composers, including Albeniz, Rodrigo, Turina & Villa-Lobos. This concert is free and open to the public. A retiring collection will be taken with all proceeds to benefit the Royal National Institute of the Deaf and its campaign to protect young people's hearing "Don't Lose the Music". (www.dontlosethemusic.com)

Note to Parents: One important aim of a Suzuki concert is to encourage and support each child's efforts. Please give all the children your full attention and avoid distracting performers or members of the audience by switching off mobile telephones and restricting the use of laptops to the lobby. Parents, please also ensure that no phones (including texts!), hand-held games or MP3 players are used at any time in the concert hall. Thank you all for your cooperation. We look forward to another exciting concert!

CSYM Membership Subs Due

Group Subscriptions are now due to the British Suzuki Institute. If you haven't already done so, please send a check (£77) to Rae Streets (479 Newmarket Rd, Cambridge CB5 8JJ) by **23rd March**. Checks should be made payable to Cambridge Suzuki Young Musicians. Please include your full name and address for reference.

SUMMER TERM 2007

10-Week Saturday Group Classes

*Group Class Concert Days

April 21, 28

May 5, 12, 19*

(No classes 26 May & 2 June)

June 9, 16, 23

(No classes 30 June)

July 7*, 14*

CSYM Summer Institute 23-26th July

SUMMER CLASS CONCERT REPERTOIRE:

Suzuki Piano Institute participants need:

Polished repertoire piece (preferably Spanish), Learning piece, Scale(s), Composition

(This assignment also applies to those students not participating in the workshop)

Suzuki Chamber Workshop participants need:

Polished Spanish piece, Learning piece, Composition, Chamber music

Contemporary Chamber Workshop participants need: new

Fitkin work, Solo for K. Stott masterclass (if performing), (Spanish Piece) Composition

***May 19th**: Suzuki Repertoire and Spanish repertoire

***July 7th**: Compositions/Chamber Music

***July 14th**: Solos/Compositions/Chamber Music

CSYM Fundraising Success!

CSYM Treasurer, Rae Streets, reports that CSYM family, friends and members of the public have contributed a total of £1242 towards the Fitkin Commission:

October Playathon: £999

Christmas Raffle: £139

Michaelhouse Concert: £103

This means that we only need to find another £118 in order to match the funds provided by the Performing Rights Society. Karyn Barnes has researched a local grant which might be available to us through the Camb. Co. Council. Many thanks to all who have helped along the way!!! The new music will fast become a reality! Ready, steady, practice!

2007-2008 DIARY DATES

9 December 2007: Kodály 125th Birthday Anniversary Concert, West Road

20 April 2008: CSYM Charity Concert highlights the 'Carnival of the Animals', West Road

29 June 2008: International Piano Concert in tribute to Dr Suzuki, with pupils from teachers from around the world, West Road

There will be no CSYM Summer School in 2008 or 2009. In our next newsletter we will advise on other workshops to attend for each level of learning

CSYM Students Ages 7-13 Invited to Join Saturday Chamber Choir

For several years, Choir was a scheduled part of the CSYM group class routine for the older students. Singing in ensemble helps develop intonation, memory, concentration, listening, tone production, 2-3 part reading and hearing, as well as confidence in leading and performing, and the joy of making-music together. By age 10+, our CSYM students acquire outstanding musicianship skills; based on this, Betty would like to establish a non-selective youth-choir, aimed to develop musicianship for all children through singing, with CSYM students as its core, and a few low-key performance targets through the year.

The first 10 Week Summer Term of the Arion Chamber Choir* starts 21 April from 2:30-3 PM for CSYM students at Zion Baptist Church Hall, effectively "piggy-backing" the Group C class at 3 PM. (see below) Non-CSYM Students will be required to attend a Kodály Musicianship session at 2 PM before the Choir session. For more details, fliers for friends and registration forms, please contact Betty by phone or email. Tuition as follows:

CSYM Students:	Non-CSYM Students:
£25 for 10 Choral Sessions from 2:30-3 PM; Summer Term is Free of Charge if you bring a friend to join the 2-3 PM class	£60 for 10-week Summer Term ; Each weekly session includes 30 min. musicianship studies + 30 min. choral session

*The choir's first public performance will be part of Cambridge Suzuki Young Musicians' Concert in December 2007, dedicated to the 125th birthday anniversary of the Hungarian composer and choral educator, Zoltán Kodály. This will lead to a March 2008 performance as part of CSYM's charity concert highlighting "The Carnival of the Animals".

5 Quick Ideas to Make Practice Fun! Book 1

1) For each perfect repetition, slide ahead one bead of an abacus, or drop an M&M or raisin in a bowl. Move back or remove if repetition is incorrect. Aim for 10X perfect in a row.

2) Keep track of beautiful Twinkles with a penny in a big glass jar each time played. When full, use pennies to shop for a music-related prize. Aim for 1000 Twinkles!

3) Make five different paper hats, one each for Twinkles, Review, Polishing, Learning, Reading if appropriate. Have the child wear that hat for each section of the practice, and award a sticker when the job is done well. You could also use a different soft-toy or doll "mascot" for each section of practice, to cheer and applaud and do flips.

4) Designate a practice "helper" in the form of a puppet, soft-toy or doll who speaks in a different voice, asking questions or asking for better effort - "How can you make it better?" "Please watch your hand", "Can you play it softly?"

5) Keep a box of jokes & riddles by the piano - enjoy one after each section of practice is complete.

CSYM PARENT QUESTIONS:

From Mum of daughter age 12: "At the last group concert, T. felt she had not performed very well and had felt very nervous about her playing. What can I do to help?"

Betty: As children mature, they become increasingly self-conscious about their physical appearance, their street "cred", not to mention how they well they will succeed in any public performance, be it a speech in English class or a performance of a Clementi sonatina. They need constant reassurance that: 1) It's perfectly natural to feel this way, 2) Their nightmare scenarios, e.g. tripping on stage, or losing their way in the music, really DO happen to even the greatest models & pianists! , 3) It's not the end of the world! and 4) Their confidence will grow through good preparation at home and frequent performance practice.

Performance "nerves" are an inconspicuous but often unavoidable aspect of many adult working lives, e.g. the positive "stress", the extra pump of adrenalin we might feel prior to an important presentation or job challenge. Thorough preparation, keeping it "positive", and focusing on the goal are some of the strategies we might use and impart to our children.

In 'The Inner Game of Music' (Pan Books, 1986), Barry Green outlines the importance of understanding that **Performance** (achievement) is only one side of the P.E.L. triangle of goal-oriented activities, with the others being **Experience** (emotional, physical, social - including enjoyment!) and **Learning** (the process - is it easy? natural? successful? Why or why not?) It is easy to see that, if you neglect any side of the triangle, it all becomes "unglued" and the final goal is not effectively realised.

Rather than withdrawing their involvement at this age and stage, parents can become pro-active. They can initiate a 3-way discussion of the problem and its possible solutions with the student and teacher. Responsibilities can be outlined and delegated, with both student and parent making a "contract of agreement" to answer "Who will implement the listening programme?" "When and for how long will practice be scheduled?" "To what extent will the parent be involved in practice and lessons?", etc. Parents can also encourage the child to perform one concert weekly to record, providing positive feedback to the child, as well as take advantage of any performance opportunities recommended by your teacher.

A formal piano performance offers a wealth of learning opportunities and possibly a "wake-up" call to the young adult who normally prefers to tune-out to parental or even teachers' advice. Sometimes it takes a substantial "fall" for them to gain a real perspective, but Suzuki education is unique in that they never need stand alone. Ask yourself, at what age is your child TOTALLY independent of you? Although your role changes over the years, you still remain and active player as a Suzuki parent. In moments of crisis, they particularly need your help to build upon the wealth of skills and knowledge they have acquired thus far.

SUZUKI LISTENING MAKES LEARNING EASY

From Betty

"Listening" in the Suzuki learning process means learning from recorded materials through "absorption listening", e.g. music played constantly in the background of every-day life. Of course most people don't spend all day at home with their children. However, if you count the number of hours you ARE home in the day, isn't it possible to find at least one hour (or one hour more?) for Suzuki listening. Parents, please don't ignore this essential feature for successful study. Without it, inevitably the student will find learning new pieces a hardship rather than an exciting process of discovery, and practice will be an uphill struggle each week with little to no progress. Once the learning-by-listening habit is well-established (ideally by the end of Book 1), students will be capable of learning progressively longer and more-advanced repertoire, as well as maintain what has been studied. From the earliest stages, investing ten more times in listening than in practice will produce enormous returns. For students of all ages, including teenagers, it remains the parent's responsibility to play the CDs, even when the student is studying a piece out of the repertoire.

When Dr Suzuki began teaching, 78 recordings were just coming onto the market, and he was thrilled to realise that the performances of great masters could be heard and studied in the home! With the knowledge we have about the enormous potential of children, combined with today's amazing technology, why is it that so few Suzuki parents are willing to afford the time and money to purchase CD's of the wonderful music their children are trying to learn? Not only does listening facilitate the learning process, but makes a wonderful investment for the future, for your children to own an inspiring home music library of great performances for their own inspiration and enjoyment! Most parents don't hesitate purchasing healthy food, fashionable clothes, popular books & DVDs, story-cassettes, I-pods, mobile telephones, televisions, etc for their children....why not invest in good piano recordings?

NURTURING PERFORMANCE ABILITY

By Betty Power

Our aim as teachers is to help children grow in ability so they are able to love music and enjoy expressing it through performance. "Performance Ability" is the ability to express and communicate music with confidence, accuracy, musicality, fluency, freedom, ("letting go"), and personal style. Enjoyment of *playing* grows from steady improvement and progress, satisfying oneself by learning the pieces one aspires to play. However enjoyment of *performance* involves more complex processes that develop through time, experience and with greater maturity. It doesn't happen overnight, but grows in sophistication through various ages and stages, depending on the quality of 1) practice, 2) listening and 3) frequent performance experience.

1) GOOD PRACTICE BASICS

- Every day with care and attention, organised and monitored by the Suzuki Parent
- Hands separately six times out of seven!
- Includes Technical Study, Review, Polishing Known Pieces, Learning New Pieces, Reading.

- Leads to improved Tone, Balance, Accuracy, Memory and Musicality.

2) ABSORPTION LISTENING. An active "absorption listening" programme is not only essential to the learning process, but extremely helpful in preparing for performances. Listening to the CD's will not only strengthen musical memory, but nourish tone production and inspire the imagination and greater musicality. Whatever a child is listening to will be in h/her quick-recall memory and will more easily come to life in the fingers. Mrs Kataoka reminded us that if we only listen to ourselves, we will only sound like ourselves! I'll never forget when one of my students, now 16 years old, played Christmas Day Secrets at age 6-7 with the same energy and passion as a Beethoven sonata played by Schnabel, which is what he had been hearing at home. It sounded as if Schnabel himself was playing Christmas Day Secrets! Children are amazing!

3) PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE. Because any performance opportunity creates a new short or long-term goal to focus the practice for both parent and student, performance features prominently in our programme, and ideally progresses through the following stages:

1) Playing by memory at home with correct notes, rhythm and fingerings. Accurate tempo & dynamics can be learned from the start since they are found in the music and on the CD - they don't need to be taught by the teacher. A good memory test is with eyes closed!

2) Playing a piece for the teacher, as above. At this This performance is most exciting for me, because I always feel personally grateful to Dr Suzuki for his idea, and to the parent for making it work, because now I am able to begin the real music lessons, working on tone production, musical expression and fluency.

3) Performing a piece for family & friends, with bows and applause! (Recording successive videos to review can be very useful here and a useful record of progress)

4) Performing a piece for peers. Useful at all ages and stages when combined in a master-class setting. It is often not until a teenager is given the opportunity to play for peers that h/her mind becomes focused on the work that needed to be done in the first place - regretfully, too often at the last minute! Combined w. discussion of musical elements and constructive criticism, the master-class is a crucial step for the intermediate/advanced student and integral to every music college/conservatory programme.

5) Performing the same piece in concert, MANY times. Most internationally-known pianists perform the same concert programme around the world for many months. Dr Suzuki heard us play the same song for weeks in Monday concert!

Remember, one performance is worth 100 practices. No matter how the performance goes, valuing the process and the child's efforts will lead h/her to a sense of self-satisfaction and achievement, triggering the desire to start again the next day on more "polishing" as well as beginning something new.