

Cambridge Suzuki
Young Musicians

NewsNotes Sept 2007



STUDENT NEWS

A warm welcome to new parents and their children entering our programme this September: **Rita Atkins and daughter Maria (age 5)** and **Martha Beardsworth and daughter Isabel (age 4)**

Sam Wood (age 15) succeeded in proceeding through to the second round of the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition this past July with his exciting performance of "Fervent" by Graham Fitkin. We wish him all the best in his second round audition on Wednesday 19th September at Blackheath Halls in London.

AND FROM OUR "ALUMNI": Some CSYM members may also remember Sam's brother **Tom Wood** who studied with Stephen from age 4 through to 18, finishing his studies at CSYM after performing the Ravel Piano Concerto with Hills Road VI Form College orchestra at West Road. We were delighted to hear that Tom received the highest marks in the Oxford Music department for his first-class Music Degree at Oxford, and has been awarded full funding to do his Masters in Musicology at Christchurch. Congratulations Tom from all your friends at CSYM!

Tom first started observing lessons aged three, but when asked if he wanted a lesson after the three months observation was up said 'no', so he ended up observing for three terms before he then said 'Yes', when asked again. First we must create the desire: Tom watched Michael Hawkes, one of my best students at the time, learned a great deal unconsciously and the desire to play was fostered. The value of observing lessons cannot be stressed enough!

We've also heard from former student, **Chloe Martindale (age 16)**, who is now entering her

6th Form studies at Chetham's School of Music, Manchester where she has been a student for the past two years. She was very pleased to receive 100% full marks on her (early) AS Level Music examination, attributing her early Kodály musicianship studies and the introduction to 2-4 part dictation for establishing the foundations for her subsequent success. She also fondly remembers the very first song (along with many others!) that she learned as a 5-year-old beginner the first day of class.

Parents, please note: It wasn't always easy going, because Chloe was very strong-willed and wanted to quit piano at age 8. But her mother encouraged her to just do what Betty asked her to do, and things would change. And they did, because now Chloe is thrilled with her spectacularly-exciting musical world and contemplating further musical studies at university level.

"Anything that one wants to do really well and loves doing, one must do every day. It should be as easy to the artist and as natural as flying is to a bird. And you cannot imagine a bird saying, "I am tired today. I am not going to fly."

Yehudi Menuhin



CSYM ARION CHAMBER CHOIR

will continue to meet every Saturday from 2:15-3:00 PM and is open to CSYM students ages 6-12 this year.

However, parents must commit to weekly attendance with a tuition fee of £25/term is payable to Betty Power on the first day. Please also could parents organise a parent-rota so there is always one parent on hand should assistance be required. We will begin work on several Hungarian songs to present at our December concert, and the Spring Term will highlight the theme of the "Carnival of the Animals". Focus is on unison & 2-part work, solos, canons, and working together in ensemble. Come one, come all, & sing along!

REMINDER... GROUP CLASS

AUTUMN TERM DATES & SPECIAL EVENTS

September 15, 22, 29

October 6*, 13

No Classes 20th & 27th October

November 3, 10, 17*, 24

December 1st

October 6th - Group Class Concerts

Theme: Lucky Dip Review

October 13th - Parent Talk w. Stephen

12:30-1:15 PM All CSYM Parents Invited

November AGM Date TBA

November 17th - Group Class Concerts

Theme: December concert piece

Sunday 9th December - CSYM West Road
Concert Highlighting The Hungarians & Kodály's
125th Birthday

LOOKING AHEAD FROM STEPHEN

This coming academic year is designed with very clear performance and composition goals for each term. Autumn's focus is Hungarian piano and choral music by Kodály, Kurtág, Bartók, and Ligeti, among other celebrated composers, culminating in the December concert to celebrate Kodály's 125th anniversary year. (Our dream is to take the children on a last-minute weekend trip to Budapest to visit the former homes of Kodály and Bartók in the capital - any parent volunteers to investigate and organise would be welcome!!!)

The Spring term's activities will culminate in a concert at West Road with the theme of 'Carnival of the Animals'. Besides Saint Saen's wonderful collection, many composers from the Baroque to the present day have written animal-related pieces. The scope for creative work, and particularly composition on an animal theme, suggested by this project is vast. The concert will be in aid of an animal charity.

June 29th sees 'A Cambridge Concert for Dr Suzuki': almost 100 years since he was born and ten years since he died, this concert

celebrates both his life's work and his legacy. Teachers from around the world will be invited to send pupils to participate, and our parents and pupils will be involved in hosting this tribute to this great human being, whom Betty and I were lucky enough to have studied with, in Japan, in the 1980's, and whose ideas and teaching we try to interpret and develop. The concert will be in aid of a children's charity. Along the way there will be the chance for keen pupils to participate in the EPTA competition and the 'Cambridge Young Musician of the Year' competition, amongst others.

The new academic year will also see changes in the CSYM Executive Committee, as Rae Streets has expressed her desire to step down as Treasurer, and Jane Kershaw will relinquish her post as Chairperson. Their invaluable hard work behind the scenes has made many CSYM projects possible, as does the continuing work of the committee. Although we will not be offering another summer workshop or Institute over the next two years, we would like to invite new parents to work with us on other new projects. One idea is to organise a CSYM 'Tour Group' to Spain for a series of concerts and master-classes in 2008/2009, promoting the educational philosophy and musical success of Suzuki Piano, working with our Spanish friends, and having a great time with music! P.S. We also have an UNCERTAIN invitation to Brussels, but more on that when things are less UNCERTAIN.

September 26 at 8PM: CSYM Committee Meeting (5 Hillfield Rd, Comberton) - New Parents Needed! Please contact Jane Kershaw or Judith Somers-Heslam

TEACHER NEWS: Over the coming academic year, Stephen plans to continue his work on the ESA Teacher-Training project for the Spanish Suzuki Federation. Betty is keen to develop a new introductory "Pre-Twinkle" course for new parents and 3-4 year-old students, and contribute more towards the BSI Teacher Training programme. She will also be busy starting work on the creation of a progressive Kodály Musicianship curriculum on behalf of the British Kodály Academy, in the hopes that this valuable study might eventually gain the national accreditation status it deserves for both students and adults.

SUMMER SUCCESS REPORT FROM A CSYM PARENT IN EARLY BOOK 1.....

"We are both really looking forward to restarting piano lessons. We have had a fantastic summer and a really positive music time - this has been enhanced by the CSYM Summer School. S's (age 6) practice has continued to go well throughout - My kitchen cupboards and chopsticks have had an airing to endorse the Dalcroze experience with Jacqueline - real fun for us both!! We have found some good CDs to help with the body and music connection principles too especially Marching, Walking and galloping!...S. has enjoyed listening to more Mozart, Holst, Bach, Fitkin and others, we have fine tuned with Yo Yo Ma, Catherine Stott recitals (a variety but Chopin lead), and in general family fun of listening to Radio 3 and choosing if we like a piece and guessing what it is called. We have also purchased a new CD system for S's bedroom - he commented without prompt that the 'Taking' sounds so much better with the Suzuki CD, no better feedback than that. He is now regularly selecting CDs in his bedroom to put on and play of his own accord - this did not happen before with the old CD player....In terms of practice, S has concentrated on polishing what he knows, along with building strength on the left hand with Twinkles!! ...With Compositions he has expanded some more and is beginning to build pieces using voice and piano of his own accord..."

HOME CONCERTS. Those of you who have experienced the lively musical environment of a workshop this summer might like to re-create a similar atmosphere on a smaller scale with a home concert. Decide upon a date and how many students and parents you are able to accommodate, discuss your plans with your teacher so that children can prepare well in advance, and organise a musical party around afternoon tea or Sunday morning brunch and a swim at a nearby pool. This opportunity to bring friends and parents together through a common study and enjoyment of music is a great motivational tool, especially during the darker winter months.

RECOMMENDED LISTENING: THE HUNGARIAN COMPOSERS

*Béla Bartók piano music performed by Lili Kraus (old Vanguard Classics recording 08 9100 71)

Andras Schiff plays Bartók (old Denon/Japan 1984 recording C37-7092)

Gyorgy Kurtag: Jatekok
ECM New Series 1619 453511-2

Composers in Person: Bartók & Dohnanyi
EMI Classics 7243 5 55031 2 1

*Bartók: Concerto for 2 Pianos, Percussion, and Orchestra performed by Argerich/Freire plus Kodály's Dances of Galanta performed by Concertgebouw Orchestra
Philips recording 416 378-2

ALSO Dinu Lipatti's recording of Liszt's "Petrouchka" sonnet

RAISE YOUR ABILITY WITH A PIECE YOU CAN PLAY

In the collection "Where Love Is Deep", Dr Suzuki writes: "Knowing something does not amount to ability. How well one can do it is the measure of one's ability." He observed how children develop a very high ability to speak their mother tongue fluently by the daily "training" to acquire it. Dr Suzuki's recipe is: "Let them practice well, train them repeatedly every day, and expose them to the high level environment of great music." Once a student has learned to play a piece accurately with no mistakes, e.g. with correct notes, rhythms and fingerings, the real music lessons can begin to develop musical rhythm, refined tonality, beautiful posture and balance. Only after the student has learned the piece can the teacher begin to help the h/she develop greater ability in playing it. Suzuki writes: "Some parents think that going to the next piece means becoming more advanced. All they want is to advance to a higher piece. Aiming at fostering fine ability, the teacher may try to instruct according to the principle of creating ability with a familiar piece the student can already play, but some parents seem unhappy that the teacher won't let them go forward...Create fine ability with an old piece - if this method is carried out correctly, every child will grow splendidly."