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STUDENT NEWS:

Congratulations to **ALL CSYM Students** for their fine performances in the 20 April Concert at West Road Concert Hall. Thanks also to parents for your help and for your comments afterwards: "Fantastic".... "What a wonderful concert!" "My daughter really enjoyed herself. And what an amazing concert it was all round with so many outstanding performances".... "The choir was amazing! I felt there had been a lot of hard work and fun put in and that it really showed. Congratulations to all!" ... "A great mix of music...the variety was very inspiring..."

Following the first round of the EPTA competitions this past March (European Piano Teachers' Association), the following CSYM students went through to the second round of concerts which took place May 10 & 11th in Oxford and Cambridge: **Madeline Gowers, May Kershaw, Molly Upjohn and Isabella Shallcross.** In Oxford, May Kershaw received a highly-commended at the Intermediate 1 Level, and in London, Madeline Gowers placed first at the Elementary Level. Congratulations to all students for their extra efforts and fine performances!

Seven Gold Club members of the 2007-08 CSYM Practice Club celebrated their 90 days of consecutive practice at Pizza Express on Saturday 10 May.

Sarah Chung, Mathilda Streets, Francesca Blake, Claudia Bisutti, Benjamin Somers-Heslam, Christopher James & Alexander Mitchell enjoyed a feast of pizza, ice-cream and hangman along with Betty & Stephen, Alison James, Karen Sylvester & Louise Mitchell. A good time was definitely had by all, and the CSYM Practice Club Challenge will be initiated again at the start of the new academic year. We hope everyone will give it a try next time around.

Cambridge Suzuki Young Musicians News Notes May 2008

CSYM SCHEDULE REMINDER:

No group classes on Saturday 24 or 31 May.
Remaining group classes this summer term:
June 7, 14, 21*, 28 and July 5

PLEASE NOTE: The fund-raising Play-a-thon originally planned for Saturday 21 June has been postponed until October 2008.

Instead, ***SATURDAY 21 JUNE** will be a **GROUP CLASS CONCERT DAY** for

- GROUP A (11:30-12:15)
Twinkle Lucky Dip & 1 Polished Piece
- GROUP C (3:00-4:00PM)
1 Scale & 1 Polished Piece
- **ADVANCED PLAYERS** as usual

GROUP B'S CLASS CONCERT WILL BE 5 JULY to allow the students more time to prepare for a Book 1 Lucky Dip Recital that day.



CSYM NEEDS YOUR HELP!

At the last CSYM Committee Meeting 7th May, it was agreed that new help is definitely needed, as present committee members have served 2-3 years at least and need to step down by the next November AGM. Our next meeting is scheduled 25 June which would be a good time for new parents to sit in to get some idea of the work involved behind the scenes.

A parent support group is crucial for organizing and managing our twice-yearly concerts, special events and workshops. The Chairperson steers meetings and compiles the annual report for the AGM. Group funds and subscriptions need to be managed by a **group treasurer**, and the budget overseen by a parent committee. **PR support** for our activities is extremely valuable and necessary to continue to raise the profile of our Suzuki/Kodaly programme in Cambridge. We also need a new **Webmaster** to maintain and edit our website, preferably someone who is already familiar with this kind of work.

The committee meets approximately 6 times a year. Why not chat to one of the current members to find out what is involved: Jane Kershaw, Judith Somers-Heslam, Rae Streets, Karyn Barnes, and current Webmaster Steve Mullock (via email).

**DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2008-09**

October 2008:

CSYM Fundraising 'Play-a-thon'
Date and Venue TBA)

30 November 2008:

CSYM Group Concert
West Road Concert Hall
Theme: Duet & 2-Piano Ensembles

April-May 2008:

EPTA Piano Competitions & N. London Festival,
including EPTA Composition Competition

5 July 2009:

CSYM Group Concert
West Road Concert Hall
4-Piano Concert!

5 December 2009

CSYM Group Concert
West Rd Concert Hall

**CSYM HOSTS
DR SUZUKI ANNIVERSARY CONCERT:
A Celebration of Suzuki Piano
Sunday 29 JUNE 2008 at 3PM
West Road Concert Hall**

This Concert in Memory and Celebration of Dr Shinichi Suzuki (1898-1998) includes a very exciting programme with duets, trios, and solos from beginning to a very advanced standard by composers including Chopin, Gershwin, Granados, Fitkin, Mozart etc. The 31 Students performing include several CSYM students as well as other Suzuki piano students from England, with one 8-year-old from California playing Bach's Italian Concerto, and students from Germany.

As hosts of this concert, CSYM families have a WONDERFUL opportunity to enjoy a showcase piano concert which promises to represent a high-level of student achievement, as well as pay homage to Dr Suzuki's lifelong work, i.e. that EVERY child has wonderful potential. Hearing this kind of repertoire played by other Suzuki-trained students provides great motivation for our pupils, and we recommend this concert to all our parents and students.

Tickets are priced at £5 and are available in advance from Stephen & Committee Members. All profits will go to Save the Children.

From: Stephen

Re: Dr Suzuki Anniversary Concert

Dr Suzuki noted that children take more notice of other children's performances than they do adults. The Anniversary concert is a once-only opportunity to hear fine performances by children aged 6-18 of both Suzuki and non-Suzuki repertoire. This promises to be a concert of a high calibre with 33 children from 11 experienced teachers from the UK, USA, and Germany.

I sometimes ask my pupils for a wish list of pieces they would like to play. Going to this concert is one way of that wish list taking shape. One of my current students would like to play Alla Turca by Mozart, a piece he heard many years ago in the beautiful (but cold!) setting of Jesus College Chapel, at his first Suzuki concert, played by an 18 year old boy. *What is not present in the environment does not develop in the child.* How many of our pupils will go away from the concert wanting to play the "Fantasie Impromptu" by Chopin, or the Bach "Italian Concerto" played by an 8 year-old (who will travel all the way from California especially for this concert). To get the most out of the concert, try to listen to these pieces on CD, by downloads, or, best still, on DVD every day from now until the concert.

I once had a pupil with a strong desire to play Beethoven's 'Moonlight' sonata. I told him he could play it in book 5, (he was just starting Book 2). In two years he was ready to start book 5 (his hands were only just big enough to stretch the octaves necessary for this piece, so I said I had meant the *end* of book 5...he learnt this book like a shot, and learnt this cherished piece. If the piece had not been part of his home environment the desire would not have grown (Let me emphasise here that no pieces were left out in learning the repertoire, review was practiced, and he listened and practiced every day). Dr Suzuki says at first we must inculcate the desire. Not only at first, we also need to keep feeding that flame.

So I urge everyone to attend the concert, not only for the sake of your own child but also in that spirit of sharing and 'service' to others that Dr Suzuki felt would 'save the world'.

'If a child is raised on Bach from a young age, the noble soul, the powerful personality and the religious sensitivity of Bach will develop in the child. If a child is raised on Mozart, then the loving soul of Mozart will develop in the child. The life force in the child will absorb those traits to a high level. The heart that feels music will feel people.' From 'Ability Development from age Zero', Dr Suzuki

CSYM PRACTICE CLUB RESULTS:

Why Practice Every Day?

From Betty

Congratulations again to the 12 students who took part in this year's CSYM Practice Club Challenge. A Bronze Level Award (30 days) went to Nanou Sabourian, Silver Level Awards (60 days) to Rachel & William Kunz, Isabella Shallcross, Roxanna Shini, and Gold Level Awards (90 days) went to Francesca Blake, Claudia Bisutti, Benjamin Somers-Heslam, Sarah Chung, Mathilda Streets, Christopher James, Mathilda Streets.

A Gold Club Member, Alexander Mitchell (age 6) continues to carry on with every-day practice, at last count, adding up an impressive 239 days in a row! I've asked his mother, Louise Mitchell, to describe some of the differences she has observed since getting him into the habit of a daily practice routine:

Alexander has developed more 'ownership' of his practice, he is the one that now more often than not will ask "when are we doing piano practice today?"

Because the everyday approach is now common place at home, there is no 'debate' about practice happening, it's a given for us all.

Alexander has started to compose his own music recently, now, I do not know if this would have happened anyway but it feels as though his increased focus on piano practice has enhanced this.

Alexander seems to have progressed in Book 1 at a different pace since practicing every day, the significance of this is that repeat practice on polishing pieces is easier because he has an increased variety of things to play which keeps him interested.

We seem to fit more into practice time too because Alexander is more focused he actually doesn't 'dally' so much when working through the session - he likes to look at the Suzuki book content page before practice and list the pieces that he would like to play... They become the reward for playing twinkles and repeat practice pieces, together with point scores!

Betty's comments:

1) The most exciting result from daily practice is that the **child becomes more motivated to practice**. With good daily practice, improvement and progress are inevitable. The child is pleased to be able to play well and learn quickly – and so is the parent! Momentum continues to build at what may seem an astonishing rate, but this result could be the norm for all children rather than the

exception. In this scenario, learning is joyful & exciting, not a struggle.

(Warning! For the child's sake, don't try to squeeze 2-3 practices into one long session over a week-end or holiday. This is like eating breakfast, lunch AND dinner all at once! "Force-feeding" music practice is not at all what Dr Suzuki had in mind when he described the natural process of Ability Development. Children will really hate this way of practicing!)

2) **Learning through absorption listening.**

Because young children learn easily through the body & senses, the easiest way to first learning the notes & rhythms is through absorption listening, i.e. 10X more than they practice. If this daily habit of learning by ear is acquired in the early stages, more advanced & longer repertoire will be easy to learn as children grow older.

3) **True ability = good repetition, i.e. every day.**

Dr Suzuki reminds us that learning to play an instrument is not an intellectual process. Although students are generally very quick to understand *how* to do things, their bodies, brains & senses still require 10,000 repetitions to develop the technical freedom to perform with accuracy, ease and expression – and ultimately enjoyment!

4) A daily practice routine also **eliminates confusion and arguments**. How many practice sessions have been ruined before they ever began, due to conflicting ideas about when, what & how practice went three days ago?

5) **Body 'memory'**. Calm and steady daily practice helps the mind, body & senses more easily recall what was practiced the day before, and steadily develops the habit of correct playing, i.e. posture, balance, attention & concentration. Any break in the routine, and the body & senses need another day or two to 'remember' what they learned and re-gain momentum. This type of practice is extremely frustrating, always one step forward and two steps backward.

NEXT MONTH:

Maintaining Momentum thru the Summer
A Second Instrument? Pros & Cons

TEACHER UPDATE....Betty will travel to Barcelona, Spain over the half-term break to take this year's final weekend of the ESA Suzuki Piano Teacher-Training Course. She was on the piano faculty of the National Suzuki Workshop in London over the Easter break, and has been invited back to teach at the London Suzuki Group's annual workshop at Bryanston this coming August.