

AMBASSADOR

Aber Suzuki Center

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
College of Fine Arts and Communication
inspire, create, achieve

December 2008

From the Director's Desk

By Dee Martz

I have a short list of musical sites on the World Wide Web that I think are especially worth exploring. The one I want to share with you this month is <http://classicsforkids.com/>. This site, and the radio program on which it is based, provide lots of information about classical music and musicians. What I find most interesting is that the information is presented through the music itself, with stories about composers, with lessons plans and worksheets and even with a section designed especially for parents. Also found on this site are: composer time lines, geography related to composers, programs for composing your own music, information about instruments, a music dictionary... I could go on and on. The information is child friendly and the site is easy to navigate.

I particularly like to listen to some of the past Classics for Kids radio programs. Just today I clicked on the program about Edvard Grieg and I learned quite a bit about Peer Gynt, a piece for orchestra that I first played at summer camp when I was a 9th grader. I wish that someone had told me the story behind the music then! I bet that if you go on line and listen to the program you would want to find a recording of the Peer Gynt Suites so that you can imagine the story while you listen to the various movements.

If you have a favorite music site on the World Wide Web please send it to me at dmartz@uwsp.edu so that I can go exploring and find out how you are learning more about music.



Don't Miss These Great Concerts!

December 6 and 7, 2008
Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra
Presents: Celebrate Winter

Featured Artist: Chris Norman, flute/small pipes. "A flute superstar." – Toronto Globe & Mail

Featured Artist: David Greenberg, violin. "The best baroque violin soloist in Canada, if not North America." - Stephen Pedersen, Halifax Mail-Star

For more information on this concert, visit the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra website at: www.cwso.org.

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Wednesday, December 10, 2008
Time For Three
Sentry Theater, 7:30 pm

Time for Three is a trio that is the future of music. Made up of two violins and an upright bass, the three musicians met at the Curtis Institute of Music when they were students. Together they create sounds that transcend musical genres. These genres include an electric mix of bluegrass, Hungarian gypsy, jazz, country-western fiddling, and improvisatory music.

For tickets, call 715-346-4100.



"I HATE MUSIC, But I Love to Sing!"

By Mary Hofer

"I hate music! But I love to sing!" So begins the third of five "Kid Songs for Soprano and Piano" composed in 1943 by Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990), a composer famous for, among other things, presenting classical music to wider audiences including average Americans and children. Bernstein's "I Hate Music!" song continues with a phrase of "la di das" that could represent the spontaneous, gleeful outbursts of a child enjoying singing.

In my experience teaching children to sing, I think a more accurate title for Bernstein's song would be "I Hate to Practice!" rather than "I Hate Music!"

Children love to sing and play music and parents love to listen to their children sing and play music. But the dedicated practice required to learn to perform beautiful music is not always so easy or enjoyable.

Perhaps if we can change the mindsets of children and parents alike from "I hate to practice!" to "I love to practice!" learning to

sing and perform can become as enjoyable as singing and performing. Practice will become the fun part of music.

What is it about practice that we do not like?

Practice, according to Webster's dictionary, means to "do something repeatedly."

I could argue that in today's world of variety and choice, repetition implies the very boring "same old, same old." But not always. When my son was trying to learn to ride his rip stick last year, he practiced using the stick repeatedly and with great enthusiasm. Also, much to a parent's annoyance, sometimes children repeat things endlessly and tirelessly. So I do not think it is the repetition in practicing musical pieces that children and parents dislike.

Perhaps, instead, we need to begin with a belief that practice can be fun. Dr. Suzuki, in his book *Nurtured by Love* says, "a game to begin with a spirit of fun leads them on." I am not saying that practice should be all games, but we need to begin with a mindset that practice can be fun.

What can we, as parents, do to make practice a more positive experience for our children and ourselves? Here are a few suggestions:

1. Before you begin practice, ask yourself, "What beautiful memory do I want my child to have of our practice today?" Make the time with your mind and heart to be present and in the moment with your child, to be there for your child and to take the time to listen. Many former Suzuki parents whose children have graduated from the Suzuki program, including my sister and my sister-in-law, have told me how amazed they are at how quickly the time with their children in Suzuki has gone by. They miss the time they spent practicing and listening with their children and they are so very glad to have beautiful memories.

2. Begin your practices with a spirit of fun. For example, my son likes silly stories about my childhood. When I tell a childhood story, it makes us laugh which puts us in a positive humor before we even start the practice. You might also make it a custom to share a favorite snack and listen to some upbeat, inspirational music just before practicing.

3. Even older children who are beyond hands-on parental music coaching want our approval and respect. Tell your older Suzuki students how much you admire them for practicing and how much you love to listen to them practice. Your children will appreciate knowing that you are listening and are impressed with their efforts. It is very motivating to have your efforts noticed positively.

4. Be creative and ask other parents and teachers for ideas on how to help make practicing more enjoyable. Also, share your ideas with others.

5. Before you begin practice set a specific, focused and attainable goal for practice that day. One of the reasons people avoid something is because it may seem overwhelming as a whole and we do not know where to start or how to break a large goal into smaller specific, focused and attainable goals leading up to the large goal.

6. You are not alone – nor are you the first Suzuki parent faced with helping their child learn beautiful music through practicing. Many teachers and parents have shared their wisdom in wonderfully inspiring books that they have written regarding the

Suzuki Philosophy. Sometimes reading just a page or two can inspire you. Ask your teacher for his or her favorite book recommendations. Here's a few of my favorites: *Nurtured by Love* by S. Suzuki; *They're Rarely Too Young and Never Too Old to Twinkle* by K. Sloan; *To Learn With Love* by W. and C. Starr; and *The Talent Education School of Shinichi Suzuki: An Analysis* by R. Landers.

7. When you have very young children practicing, ask them, "How many different ways can we practice this?" Try having your young child sing or play their piece while standing on one foot or turning in a circle. Make it a game by asking: "How many times can you repeat this section correctly?" Have them try singing or playing with a stuffed animal on their heads.

8. Small prizes for accomplishing specific goals can be motivating also. M&Ms, stickers, pennies, and, best of all, hugs and "high fives" are great motivators for little children.

9. Videotape your child's practice or photograph your child during his or her practice so they can show it to their teacher (or grandparents, perhaps?).

10. Practicing at home is most important, but arranging occasional Suzuki practices with friends can have a tremendous motivating impact on your children. The positive impact of practicing together is evidenced each month during marathons where the children work together and can also see what older and younger students are accomplishing. (The cookie break is, of course, very popular and motivating also.) For parents marathons provide opportunities to share and glean ideas from other parents and Suzuki teachers or parents. Occasional joint practices with other Suzuki families can also provide this camaraderie and support (not to mention conversation, playtime and treats).

11. And finally and most importantly – when you achieve a goal, master a phrase or get to marathon, celebrate your accomplishments with joy and enthusiasm! Be sure to tell your child, "We made a wonderful team today!" or "We tackled this phrase" or "Great job!"

We don't really hate practice. Instead, I believe our "spirit of fun" has been misplaced in the hustle and bustle of our busy lives and the pressure to get so many things done in so little time. This week let's try beginning practice with the mindset of "I Love to Practice!" and create a positive memory. Truly enjoy the moment, the place your children are and this special opportunity to be working together. You may be surprised at how effective this change of attitude can be!



Voila Viola
By Dee Martz

Learning to read music is both exciting and challenging. It is a bit easier for students if the parents can already read music but even then many of viola parents are caught off guard when they open up Book 1 and see something that they have never seen before. The questions begin tentatively with, "What is this thing at the beginning of the piece?" Then hopefully, "Is it just a weird way of writing a treble clef sign?" Because violists most often play notes that are right in the middle, between treble and bass clefs, we have our own clef where the notes on the staff are right in the middle. It

is called the ALTO CLEF and the middle c on the piano (3rd finger on the G string) is written on the middle line.



Although now the clef is only used in viola and trombone music, it was very popular during the renaissance when instruments came in families of all difference sizes and ranges. At that time each "family member" had its own clef with each one pointing to a different line and identifying it as middle C. The samples show tenor clef, mezzo soprano clef and baritone clef.



As a group these are all known as "C" clefs. Viola is the only instrument that has a "C" clef for its primary clef. Of course that makes us really special!

The other great thing about reading viola music is that as we learn to read the higher notes that we know how to play we discover that they are sometimes written in Treble clef. This is the clef that violinists use all the time and the same clef used for the right hand in piano music. Learning to play in treble clef on the viola makes everything easier and with just a bit of experience travelling back and forth between alto clef and treble clef is done without effort.



So violists, keep up the good reading skills and enjoy being part of the very special alto clef readers club.



ASC Parent Education Sessions

All Aber Suzuki Center parents are encouraged to attend the Parent Education Sessions which are offered to you free of charge! Join the December session, "The Art of Reviewing with a Purpose", on Tuesday, December 9, at 7:30 pm in NFAC Room 144.

Future sessions are as follows:

February 10: "Suzuki: Translating the Philosophy Into Reality"

March 10: "Do You Hear What I Hear?" (Listening)

April 14: "Fostering Independent Learning"

May 12: "In the Good Old Summertime: Survival of Those Lazy Days of Summer"

We look forward to seeing you there!!!



Cello News

By Tim Mutschlecner

All cello students from the Aber Suzuki Center are invited to play in a Christmas concert at Edgewater Manor on Friday December 19th at 7:00 pm. Please bring a stand and a little chair if needed.

Congratulations to **Trenton Seegert** for performing his Book Two home recital on November 16th, accompanied by Mari Nummelin and Tim.

Wade Dittburner, Eric Sands and Emily Clay (members of the Earth Quartet) along with **Lucas Chan** performed during the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra's intermission on Sunday, December 7th.



Thank you!

By Nancy Chinn

Thank you for supporting the American Suzuki Foundation Music of the Masters. We hope you enjoyed the evening and look forward to seeing you at next year's event. Over \$6,600 was raised which will be utilized for needs-based scholarships for students of the Aber Suzuki Center. Thank you to all of our sponsors who contributed cash or items for the raffle and silent auction. These include the **Sentry Insurance Foundation, Lee Ayers Jewelers, Thomas Dailing Designs, Contemporary Photography, Teri and Bill Jenkins, Rogers Cinema, Jim Laabs, Sommer Rentals, Eco-Building & Forestry, LLC, Jim Garbe's Sugarbush, Target, Grazies Italian Grill, Cabela's, Otto Photography, Holiday Inn, Rudy's Red Eye Grill, Michelle's Restaurant, Comfort Suites, UWSP Theatre & Dance Department, Dataworks, Inner Element, Sugar Cubed, Tesori Trovati, Audio Video Environments, Sheila Banovetz, Starbucks, Koerten Gallery, Best Buy, Slumberland, Noodles & Company, Cold Stone Creamery, Golden Corral, Perkins, Pizza Hut, McDonald's, Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, Joyce Wotruba, Stone Innovations, Inc., Campus Cycle, Virtues Village LLC, Team Schierl Companies, All American Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning, Keely Sullivan.com, Art Village, Loren and Roxann Rolak, Edward Bodedecker and Thanheuang Nguyen, Vivian Chao, Cecilia Chao, Gerald and Marian Mulligan, William and Susan Boylan, Jeff Morin, Sue Ollech, John and Eva Mae Regnier, and Robert Schultz.**



Michael Josephson - Graduation Solo Recital

Michael Josephson, a violin student of Kyoko Fuller and a piano student of Tom Yang, will give his solo recital on Saturday December 6th 1:00 pm, at the Chestnut Avenue Center for the Arts in Marshfield.

He studied his violin with Dee Martz until book 4 level and then moved to Mrs. Fuller. He is now a freshman at Marshfield High School and just completed all Suzuki violin repertoire through Book 10. He also has studied many pieces outside of the Suzuki repertoire. Because he has three more years until giving his Senior Recital, he will share his Solo Recital celebrating Suzuki book completion now. His program includes three movements from Violin Concerto in D Major by Mozart, three movements from Piano Sonata C Major and Praeludium and Allegro by Kreisler. He will be assisted by Mr. Yang.



Student News

An addition to the Middle School Honors Orchestra list published in the November Ambassador – **Teddy Schenkman** was principle violist in the middle school honors orchestra.

The Aber Suzuki Center students performing during the December Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra intermissions are:

Saturday December 6th: **Aurora Quartet** coached by Dave Becker. Members: **Hannah Buehler, Lindsay Moadlo, John Banovetz and Chris Peck.**

Sunday December 7th: **Earth Quartet** coached by Tim Mutschlecner. Members: **Wade Dittburner, Erik Sands, Lucas Chan, and Emily Clay.**



Faculty News

We were notified that the Dr. Suzuki digital collection was recently proclaimed as one of the "best of the web" new sites by Librarians Index to the Internet (lii.org) in a weekly alert. Congratulations to Distinguished Suzuki Specialist **Patricia D'Ercole** and the UW Digital Library Committee for making this historic collection available on the world wide web.

<http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/Arts/subcollections/SuzukiAbout.html>

Digital collection of archival video footage related to "Japanese violinist and educator, Shinichi **Suzuki**, who was born on Oct. 17, 1898 in Nagoya, Japan." View footage of lectures and master classes by **Suzuki** presented at the American **Suzuki** Institute in 1976. Topics include tonalization and bowing. From the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections.

From November 14-16, **Tom Yang** was a guest clinician in a series of master classes for piano students in Volume 1-2 at the Preucil School of Music in Iowa City, Iowa.

Suzuki faculty **Dave Becker and Dee Martz**, along with UWSP Music Department faculty members Steve Bjella, Lawrence Leviton, Dave Story and Molly Roseman performed a chamber recital in Wausau on October 28, in Stevens Point on November 7, and in

Madison on the "Sunday Afternoon Live from the Chazen" series on November 9. A highlight during the Radio broadcast was when the sound technician came to the backstage area during intermission and said "I know that it may not be very professional of me to say this but .. That was awesome."



October Graduates

Sabrina Tang, Violin Twinkles
Sienna Borchardt, Piano Book 1
M. J. DeBot, Violin Book 3
Natalie Van Tiem, Cello Book 4
Craig Felt, Violin Book 5
Sarah Harmon, Violin Book 5
Bryce Marion, Violin Book 5
Joanna Sakamaki, Violin Book 5
Teresita Marchel, Violin Book 6
Jonathan Cochran, Violin Book 6
Erik Sands, Violin Book 7
Lindsey Moadlo, Violin Book 7
Michael Josephson, Violin Book 10



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Parent Education Session

"The Art of Reviewing with a Purpose"

NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

Saturday, December 13, 2008

Marathon, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday, December 14, 2008

Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

