

AMBASSADOR

Aber Suzuki Center

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

February 2008

From the Director's Desk

By Dee Martz

Allegro molto ma maestoso, crescendo, poco allargando, piu calmato ed espressivo, a tempo, molto rit., adagio molto espressivo, sostenuto, piu mosso, subito, largo legatissimo....

The composer wrote these instructions, and many more, to help the performer reach artistic decisions in just one Book 5 piece. These are all very common musical terms that appear in many pieces but unfortunately most of us can't pronounce and don't understand the words. Just when we start to get a handle on the Italian terms the next piece uses French or German instead.

I used to wonder why the publishers didn't translate the terms. After all everything from the Bible to Grimm Fairy Tales are in English so why not the terms in music? After years of performing on this continent and others I started to understand that that tradition, economics and the international quality of the musical community make publishing what the composer wrote the best solution. As a result, during lessons I frequently sound like an advertising agency for the study of other languages. I could even give a good pep talk for the study of Latin if you are interested. Granted, it will take years to get enough understanding of the vocabulary and the structure of other languages to be really helpful. So in the meantime the pragmatic solution is to own a good music dictionary and to use it regularly.

Music dictionaries come in all sizes and shapes. Some fit into shirt pockets and cost under five dollars. Others have multiple volumes and price tags more suitable for libraries than for families. My favorite mid-size all purpose dictionary is the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music. I purchased several other dictionaries before I found one that really suits my needs. Since most music stores have a selection of dictionaries, I suggest that you go in and browse to find one that appeals to you



Winter Weather

During times of severe winter weather, the local media will be notified of UWSP closings. Information will also be available by

calling University Information at 715-346-0123. In the event you hear that the University is closed, you can assume the ASC program is also closed, however the University closes only under the most extreme weather conditions. If the University is not closed, whether or not to reschedule lessons due to the weather is up to the individual teacher.

If we feel there is a need to cancel a Marathon or recital due to severe weather, the local media will be notified.

If you need to cancel your child's lesson for any reason, it would be helpful to the teacher if you leave a message on his or her voice mail rather than the Suzuki general number. Direct telephone numbers to each studio are listed below.

Dave Becker	346-4902
Pat D'Ercole	346-4938
Kyoko Fuller	346-4951
Mary Hofer	346-4921
Dee Martz	346-2805
Tim Mutschlecner	346-3580
Ann Marie Novak	346-4889
Tom Yang	346-4977



Seven Steps to Spectacular Sight Reading

By Ann Marie Novak

I. Why Sight Read?

"Seven Steps to Spectacular Sight Reading" is the motto of our most advanced piano group class. In addition, it is the title of the bookmark I make and give to all of my students who are readers.

In the advanced class, we spend a lot of time sight-reading and sight-singing. I believe that both of these activities connect to and support each other. This also supports the notion that: "if you can sing it, you can play it".

Before going on, I think it is important to define what, precisely, we define as sight reading. I will begin by stating what sight reading is not: it is not reading to learn a piece or to practice something from

the score. On the other hand, we do define it as: reading something and playing (or singing)* it correctly the first time.

Why is it so important to try to play a phrase (for example) correctly the very first time? Suzuki students have amazingly good listening skills. This means that, after hearing something for the first or second time, they will, in all likelihood, remember it and be able to reproduce it. If they can remember it, then they are no longer actually reading. Thus, they get only one, or maybe two, tries at reading before the phrase is memorized.

Sight reading level is important for many musical pursuits, such as: studio work, orchestral work, chamber music, and, of course, practicing and learning music.

My vision of how sight reading functions is as follows:

Imagine that learning a piece in its most polished form means that you must reach a level 10. If your sight reading ability causes you to start your practicing at a level 1, then you have 9 levels through which you must pass before you reach that polished level of a 10. But, if your sight reading level is higher, (say, a 5) then you need to progress through only 5 more levels before you get to your polished level. You have just cut your learning time in half! Imagine how much more repertoire you can cover and how much more time you have to just enjoy playing and refining any areas you wish.

II. The Steps

Now that we've established some reasons for working on sight reading skills, let's take a look at those "Seven Steps..."

These steps are not found in any book or practice guide; rather, they are a product of experience, of trial and error, of years of testing theories. Give them a try and see if they help you to be a "Spectacular Sight Reader".

Please note: a few of these apply more to piano (p) but can be applied to other instruments. Also, it is best to use a short, easy example (a 4 measure phrase, perhaps) so that you can stay focused and have better results.

1. **Check clefs, key, and meter.** This helps you to establish the most basic elements of the piece.
2. **Look at the "jobs" of both hands (melody/accompaniment) (p).** This helps the pianist to focus energy and sound on the appropriate line. String players could look for shifts or bowing patterns.
3. **Look for any "special effects", such as dynamics and articulation.** Even though these may be thought of as extras, they are indeed a part of the fabric of a piece. If you have chosen an easy selection, this may be challenging, but not impossible.
4. **Look for any complex fingerings, string crossings, or intervals.** This will help you to be prepared!
5. **Look for patterns, such as scales, or warm-ups or tonalization patterns.** These are familiar groupings that

you may have done frequently, perhaps over a number of years.

6. **Clap or tap, and COUNT!** Now you are getting close to the real thing. Take your time and repeat this step if necessary.
7. **Play and count.** Now you have arrived. In essence, you have now practiced various elements of this segment as many as six times (in your head, so to speak). Again, take your time, and this time, try to do it in one turn if possible.

Most good sight readers essentially use these steps; the difference between beginning sight readers and the advanced ones is the speed with which they accomplish the steps, and how they combine them.

Try these when you work on your reading and see if they give you a boost. You can cut out this segment of the Ambassador and use it as a book mark in your music book, OR, you are welcome to ask me for a laminated copy of your own (stop by my studio or give me a call at 346-4889).

*Please note that "playing" can be thought of as either playing or singing.



Voila Viola

By Dee Martz

You Tube-----Many of you may be familiar with this online resource but I have just begun exploring it. I have discovered a number of viola performances that are really fabulous and quite a few that perhaps only a grandmother could love. No doubt you remember the name William Primrose as I frequently refer to him as perhaps the most famous and influential violist of all time. We are fortunate that someone has taken the time to put a number of Primrose recordings on YouTube. Even all three movements of the Handel Concerto that we have in Suzuki viola Book 7 is available. Unfortunately most are audio performances but you can see Primrose performing the Paganini Caprices.

In the process of looking for Primrose recordings I came across a video of a college student preparing a piece for the Primrose Viola Competition. The Sarasateana Tango, arranged by Primrose, is very well played and great fun to hear. Check it out at www.youtube.com. Then type in Sarasateana Tango in the youtube search engine and enjoy this exciting viola playing.



Prof. Pat's Studio Gives a Do-It-Yourself Recital

By Pat D'Ercole

On January 6, Prof. Pat's students gathered in Michelsen Hall for a Do-It-Yourself recital. What is a Do-It-Yourself recital? Well, these were the rules. Students could only choose a piece they had

learned before the start of this school year and they had to polish it with the help of their parents. They were given only one chance to ask me for help.

The goal of this event was to let the students experience the difference in performing a piece where the notes and technique were easy so that more attention could be given to the finer qualities of the performance such as tone and expression. That should always be our ultimate goal—how well we can express the music, but many listeners tend to value a piece that's higher, faster and louder than the ability they currently have attained. It is impressive to hear a performance of that sort and it is even motivational, but if the performance is lacking in musical expression, if it doesn't convey the mood of the composition, then by most experts' opinion the performance would not be esteemed. Many of the students in Books 5-8 played pieces in Books 1-4 and to hear how differently they played these pieces now – the depth of tone, the refinement of their phrasing--and to know that they came to this sensitivity on their own was very rewarding to me as a teacher.

Secondly, I wanted the students to experience the freedom and enjoyment that comes from playing a piece with which one is truly comfortable, to make the connection between preparedness and anxiety. When I interviewed the students about the experience, most students said they weren't as nervous as they usually are. Other students delighted in the sense of progress they felt in playing an old piece from a much more advanced perspective. Roshini Traynor said, "It was fun because you picked a piece [that] you were struggling [with] before, but right now you feel so easy to perform." Dinesh Traynor wrote that "the Do It Yourself Recital is fun, because I like to play songs and you can play anyway you want."

Thirdly, the recital provided some incentive to practice during the holidays and to practice performing for relatives and friends at holiday gatherings.

Overall, the recital seemed to be a success and many families expressed the desire to make it an annual event.



Parent Education Sessions

Please join the February session "Suzuki: Translating the Philosophy into Reality" on **Tuesday, February 12, at 7:30 pm, NFAC 144.**

Future sessions are as follows:

March 11 - "Do You Hear What I Hear?" (Listening)

April 8 - "Fostering Independent Learning"

May 13 - "In the Good Old Summertime: Survival of Those Lazy Days of Summer"

We look forward to seeing you there!!!



Anna Luetmer Senior Recital

Anna Luetmer will present her senior violin and viola recital on Sunday, February 10 at 4:00 p.m. at the Church of St. Anne located at 700 W. Bridge St. in Wausau. Anna will be assisted by her sister, Grace, who will perform the first movement of the Bach Double violin concerto with her. She will be accompanied by David Becker on piano. The program will include Dvorak's Romance, Op 11, several show pieces by Fritz Kreisler, the first movement of Symphonie Espagnole by Lalo, Polish Dance by Severn, Ave Maria by Schubert and two movements of the Viola Concerto in c minor by J. C. Bach. A reception will immediately follow the concert in McKillip Hall which is connected to the church.



Aurora Quartet Plays for Art Exhibit

The Aurora String Quartet provided music for the art exhibit sponsored by the Boys and Girls Club of Portage County on January 8, 2008. The members of the quartet are **Hannah Buehler** and **Lindsey Mocadlo** on violin, **John Banovetz** on viola and **Chris Peck** on cello. This is the second year in a row that the Aurora quartet has donated their services for this event which was held at Mark Motors in Plover.



Alumni News

Rebekah Furdek was chosen as the winner of the CWSO Young Artist Award and performed the Grieg Concerto with the orchestra on December 1-2. She is a student of Michael Keller, and a former student of Ann Marie Novak.



Student News

On December 15th, **Keith Kunze** played his Book 1 graduation recital in piano at his home.

Marco Kurzynski, **Richard Meihlan**, **Alyssa Schroeckenthaler** and **Kate Young** attended the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin Workshop, Jan. 11-13 in the Inn on the Park in Madison. They had a great time. Ask them about it!



Faculty News

Ann Marie Novak, **Kyoko Fuller** and **Pat D'Ercole** were clinicians at the Suzuki Association of Wisconsin Winter Retreat in January.

Tom Yang was a clinician at the Preucil School of Music in Iowa City, Iowa January 11-13, 2008.

Dee Martz has been named to the Suzuki Association of the Americas Latin American Ensemble Committee.

Congratulations to ASC faculty members **Dee Martz and Pat D'Ercole**. They are numbered among the 57 string teachers who were selected to contribute to *The String Teacher's Cookbook: Creative Recipes for a Successful Program*, a 122 page book published by the The American String Teachers Association. The book is a compilation of essays by string teachers of diverse backgrounds of experience. The authors include Suzuki teachers, as well as elementary, middle, high school and college string teachers and conductors and professional performers such as Midori and Rachel Barton.



December Graduates

Lamu Ryavec, Piano Book 1
Lamu Ryavec, Voice Book 1
Elena Jimenez-McDermott, Voice Book 2
Sarah Thimmesch, Voice Book 2
Christina Marchel, Violin Book 3
Teresita Marchel, Violin Book 5
Emma Sands, Violin Book 7
Charlie Frerks, Piano Twinkles
Mileena Yang, Voice Book 2
Laura Josephson, Violin Book 6
Michael Josephson, Violin Book 9



January Graduates

Natalie Van Tiem, Piano Twinkles
Sarah Harmon, Violin Book 4
Nathaniel Taylor, Violin Twinkles
Joanna Sakamaki, Violin Book 4
Linnea Turner, Violin Twinkles
Chris Peck, Cello Book 9
Ethan Allar, Violin Twinkles
Lara Prebble, Viola Book 2
Havilah Vang, Violin Book 2
Katie Hoerter, Voice Book 2
Gabriella Heese, Voice Book 2
Ashley Hoerter, Voice Book 2
Claire Oberthaler, Violin Book 2
Alan Kiepert, Violin Book 4
Olivia Heese, Voice Book 2
Rachel Reichert, Violin Book 5
Keisuke Yamamoto, Violin Book 10

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, February 12, 2008

Parent Education Session, "Suzuki: Translating the Philosophy into Reality", 7:30 pm, NFAC 144

Saturday, February 16, 2008

Marathon, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday, February 17, 2008

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

Tuesday, March 11, 2008

Parent Education Session, "Do You Hear What I Hear?" (Listening), 7:30 pm, NFAC 144

Saturday, March 29, 2008

Marathon, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Saturday, March 29, 2008

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

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Parent Education Session, "Fostering Independent Learning", 7:30 pm, NFAC 144

Saturday, April 12, 2008

Piano Marathon, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday, April 13, 2008

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

Saturday, April 26, 2008

Marathon (except Piano), 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday, April 27, 2008

String & Voice Festival Concert
2:00 pm, Ben Franklin Junior High School Auditorium

Saturday, May 10, 2008

Solo & Ensemble Concert – 2:00 and 3:30 pm, Michelsen Hall

Saturday, May 10, 2008

CSCO Concert, 7:30 pm, Michelsen Hall

Sunday, May 11, 2008

Piano Festival Concert, 2:00 and 3:30 pm,
Michelsen Hall

Tuesday, May 13, 2008

Parent Education Session, "In The Good Old Summertime: Survival of Those Lazy Days of Summer", 7:30 pm, NFAC 144

