



Twinkling The Ivories

February 2011

Ed Kreitman - Renowned Suzuki Educator Defines "Progress"

In November I had the wonderful opportunity to attend a lecture hosted by Suzuki Charter School entitled "Defining Progress". The guest speaker was Ed Kreitman - a violinist, educator, and author of two books (*Teaching from the Balance Point* and *Teaching With an Open Heart*). Kreitman has over 30 years of experience teaching the Suzuki method to both students and teachers at his music school, institutes and lectures across North America.

My understanding and appreciation of the basic tenets of the Suzuki philosophy was enriched through this presentation. Kreitman stated that parents and teachers often think of a child's progress with his/her instrument in terms of moving from piece to piece. With this line of thinking, the more quickly a child advances through the repertoire, the more "successful" s/he is. Kreitman reminded us that at its core, Suzuki education is not even about playing an instrument. It is really about the development of the whole person.

In the past, Kreitman has asked parents why they chose music lessons for their children. Not once has he heard the answer: "So that my child will become a professional musician." Rather, the thoughtful, common responses have included:

- *develop poise and the ability to present themselves in public
- *develop a lifelong love of music
- *be able to break a complex problem into small, achievable steps
- *develop fine motor skills and good hand-eye coordination
- *develop problem solving skills and have a healthy relationship with struggle
- *create something beautiful and develop sensitivity to beauty in the world
- *develop a healthy sense of self-esteem tied to feelings of accomplishment
- *build self-confidence
- *transfer music's unique learning skill set to other subjects

Kreitman suggested that these parents' insights are how we can and should measure progress! He described the difference between "*depths of progress*" (developing artistry which has the potential to transform) as opposed to simply "*linear progress*" (moving through the repertoire). Artistry, Kreitman explained, means being sensitive to every aspect of the music: beautiful tone on every note, rhythmic integrity, musical direction, and the essence of the performer being present in the playing. For example, it is far more meaningful to play *Lightly Row* with the above qualities than to play *Christmas-Day Secrets* in a mediocre way, even though *Christmas-Day Secrets* is a more "difficult" piece.

I hope that this summary and reflection nurtures you as it continues to do me. May we continue to deepen our understanding of progress for the sake of our children.

Melanie Bodnar

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Finding Inspiration on YouTube!

YouTube can be great for inspirational and instructional piano. Try searching for big names in piano, such as: Gabriela Montero, Oliver Jones, Helene Grimaud, Oscar Peterson, Herbie Hancock, Dave Brubeck, Janina Fialkowska, Marc-Andre Hamelin, Vladimir Horowitz, Angela Hewitt, Evgeny Kissin, Victor Borge, Michael Kaeshammer, Alicia de Larrocha, Louis Lortie, Leif OveAndsnes, Chucho Valdes, Fred Hersch, Stephen Hough, Mitsuko Uchida, Stephen Kovacevich, Maria-Joao Pires, Vladimir Ashkenazy, the Labeque Sisters, etc.! All genres are there...

You can also search for composers and specific pieces of music. If it's popular, it's probably there. Try "piano tutorial" as a category to watch someone playing a piece slowly. Of course, YouTube is "watcher beware" so some videos are better than others.

Tim Eckert

ESPS Casino March 4 & 5th, 2011

Thank you to all of our ESPS families who have volunteered to work at our upcoming casino. By now, volunteers should have received their shift information in the mail. ***If you signed up to volunteer and have not received your volunteer shift information, or if you would still like to sign up to be a volunteer (more volunteers are always needed), please contact Kim Green at 780.488.0548 as soon as possible.***

What's New in the ESPS Library?

Great Reads

The Talent Code: Greatness Isn't Born; It's Grown by Daniel Coyle
Teaching With an Open Heart by Ed Kreitman
Teaching From the Balance Point by Ed Kreitman

Contact Kim Green at 780.488.0548 if you'd like to borrow one of these titles.

Listening Library

If you have not borrowed something for a while, ask your teacher to see what items s/he has on hand in his/her listening library. Teachers recently held a "CD swap" - so you might just find something new and notable to borrow at your teacher's studio. You can also check www.edmontonsuzukipiano.ca for a complete list of items available for borrowing.

January 2011 Graduations

Congratulations to the following students for their hard work and well-deserved graduations:

Volume 1

Isaac Chua

Martin Dai

Ethan Jackson

Sophia Jewell

Colin Sweetzir

Ryan Szalacsi

Hannah VandenBorn

Volume 2

Silas Truong

Braxton Wong

Marcus Wong

Volume 3

Alexandra Federkiewicz

Joanna Schmidt

Volume 4

Peter Filice

Daphne Ma

Volume 6

Cindy La

Office Hours at SCS

If you are looking to purchase repertoire, arrange an observation, or simply want to chat, you can visit Kim Green during our weekly office hours at Suzuki Charter School (10720 54 Street). Office hours occur each Friday from 9:00-11:30 a.m. in Room 4/5 of the music wing.