



Twinkling The Ivories

January 2014

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Look, Listen, and Learn: Reflections on Listening by Gail Lange

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This year the Fall Institute was fortunate to host Gayle Lange, a Suzuki piano teacher and trainer in Guelph for almost 40 years. Gayle spoke to parents about the role of listening in the Suzuki method and provided opportunity for reflection on how one's own personal listening habits and preferences might shape a child's learning.

In the backdrop of the workshop there was classical music playing on a CD. With this backdrop Gayle asked participants to consider the idea that choosing the Suzuki method is an opportunity for listening and appreciating classical music. Gayle provided parents with a questionnaire that encouraged parents to spend a moment thinking about their own musical inspirations, and how they might influence a child's interest in music. Some of the questions parents were asked to consider were:

- *What style(s) of music do you like best?*
- *What was the most fantastic concert you have ever attended? Why?*
- *Which piece on your child's current CD do you enjoy the most?*
- *Do you put the CD on every day at the same time () or when you remember (), or do you expect the Suzuki student to put on the CD ()?*
- *When you put on the CD, do you have the volume up high or very low? () Is the CD playing in the background, or much more in the "foreground"? ()*
- *Do you listen to the radio in the car? () In the house? ()*

After considering these questions, parents may be able to more completely summarize what one's personal listening habits and preferences are. One might also see what role classical music specifically plays within overall listening habits.

It's not a stretch to understand how our own personal listening habits will impact the musical environment we create for the Suzuki student in our home. The home environment influences the development of a child's interests and pursuits. For example, if sports games are always listened to/watched, conversations center on sporting themes, events are attended and family members demonstrate excitement around the subject, then there is a good chance the child will take at least some interest in it. Certainly the same holds true for a musical interest in the home. Family members who show interest and excitement through actions and conversations influence the Suzuki student.

Children develop interests largely from seeds that are planted at a young age. A lot has been written about Mozart and his apparent genius as a musician. It is likely he was naturally gifted, however being immersed in an environment of music definitely enhanced his aptitude. His father was a composer, conductor, violinist, and teacher. With his father's guidance as a teacher, as well as absorption in a musical environment, Mozart received the foundation for the making of a successful musician.

Based on all of this, Gayle encouraged parents to think about the numerous ways to expose Suzuki students to classical music. Attending concerts and musical events increases exposure and provides another perspective of the music.

Shinichi Suzuki understood very well that the musical environment in the home has a significant impact on a child. The "Mother Tongue" approach is centered on immersion. This combined with enthusiastic role models develops a student's love of music. Accordingly, "Where love is deep, much will be accomplished."

Heather Ehlers

Interested in Teaching Suzuki Piano?

There is a shortage of Suzuki Piano teachers at Edmonton Suzuki Piano School. Suzuki parents who had been "traditional" students at a high level or Suzuki parents who are currently "traditional" piano teachers could be candidates for teaching Suzuki piano. Or, Suzuki parents may know other musicians intrigued by the Suzuki method. Suzuki piano teachers need to have a high level of playing, must believe in the Suzuki philosophy (that every child can learn), need to commit to ongoing training, and need to be able to work self-employed.

Requirements involve making an audition video, taking the "Every Child Can!" course (which will be offered here on 3 May), and taking the training, which will be offered at Mount Royal University in Calgary in August. New teachers with Book 1 training completed would receive referrals from the Edmonton Suzuki Piano School. ESPS cannot guarantee a number of students but the teacher shortage has been substantial for years, and the demand for spots in the ESPS program is very high.

The ESPS has its own requirements; please contact Kim Green at office@edmontonsuzukipiano.ca for more information, and visit the ESPS website at edmontonsuzukipiano.ca

For general information about Suzuki teacher training, please see the Suzuki Association of the Americas website at suzukiassociation.org/teachers/training

2013-2014 Calendar

February 2, 2014 *Winter Recitals, Suzuki Charter School*

12:30 Students of Tim Eckert

2:15 Students of Nancy Thornhill

3:45 Students of Ruth Johnson

February 9, 2014 *Winter Recitals, Suzuki Charter School*

1:00 Students of Alla Rekhson

2:30 Students of Rhonda McEachen

3:30 Students of Eleanor Tsui

February 21, 2014 *Recital for Students of Joyce Sipsas, SCS*

February 23, 2014 *Winter Recitals, Suzuki Charter School*

2:15 Students of Tess Brown

3:30 Students of Ken Zeller

March 15, 2014 *Spring Festival, Suzuki Charter School*

April 13, 2014 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

May 3, 2014 *Parent Class, Suzuki Charter School*

May 3, 2014 *Groups Concert, Suzuki Charter School*

June 8 & 15, 2014 *Summer Recitals, Location TBA*

June 22, 2014 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

January 2014 Graduations

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

Volume 1

Nicholas Belhumeur
William Fraser
Conlan Van Oene
Jenna Xu
Jacob Xue

Volume 2

Hamish Chan
Alexa VanDenBriel
Muskaan Visram

Volume 3

Jane Chen
Natalis Chen
Mason Kruger

Volume 4

Charisse Chan
Erin Chow
Matthew Lee

Volume 6

Selma Hammad

Register for The Spring Festival – March 15, 2014!

Plan to attend our annual Spring Festival, where students prepare a piece, polish it to the highest level, and perform it in class for an adjudicator, parents, and other students.

Guest teachers Lana Ramsay and Joseph Fridman will evaluate the performances and provide written comments, which typically include suggestions for further study, practice tips, and encouragement.

The registration fee for ESPS members is \$20 (non-members \$40) and the deadline for registration is February 13, 2014. See your teacher for a registration form or for more information. See you at the Festival!