



# Twinkling The Ivories

May 2014

## Getting More Out of Groups

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[www.edmontonsuzukipiano.ca](http://www.edmontonsuzukipiano.ca)

When a family signs up for any Suzuki music lessons, as we all know, included in the program are monthly group classes. At the preschool level, where so many of us start our journey, it is sometimes difficult to get a clear vision of why these classes are so important to the overall program. We can see that our children enjoy group classes, but sometimes wonder what other benefits our children can derive from group classes besides “fun.”

With a stringed instrument, there is an immediate sense of community, and ensemble, because the instrument itself is normally thought of in terms of a group activity. One practices at home to be ready to play with their peers at the end of year concert. With the piano, the group mindset is not the norm. It is private lessons, practice, and performance with slow and steady progress through the Suzuki levels.

*The beauty of the piano group class is that it allows children the same opportunities to learn, listen to others, form friendships, practice cooperation, and to learn that their role in a group performance is only one part of a much larger picture. We can hear all of the parts of the whole, and together music is made.*

Unlike school, where group activities sometimes railroad the shy, quiet, or thoughtful child who is uncomfortable “speaking up”, piano group allows all children to have an equal platform of expression. From the smallest “twinkler” up on the stage, every student has the opportunity to equally take part.

Additionally, many children relish the opportunity to learn a piece outside of the Suzuki repertoire. At the group concert, one can hear everything from a playful “dinosaur walk”, to a jazz rhythm, a ragtime melody, and even an 80s radio song!

So although it might not be clear from the start why you are bringing your child to group classes, the skills learned are far reaching and bring together children who learn to work together to create something beautiful.

Kristin Nowazek

### There's An App for That!

**Noteworks** - For those who want to do a little extra work on note reading, Tim Eckert recommends this app that is available on iTunes for a small fee. The game format of **Noteworks** makes it fun for kids, and the multiple skill levels make it challenging for every student.

## Summertime Inspiration: Attend a Suzuki Institute!

A Summer Institute is a special summer camp offered to families involved in Suzuki programs throughout North America. Featuring master classes, group classes, music theory, enrichment activities, concerts, and family events, Institutes are an action-packed and inspiring way to experience music outside of your normal routine. While Institutes are offered throughout North America, inspiration can also be found much closer to home. Why not think about adding one of these Institutes to your summer schedule?

### Langley Community Music School Suzuki Workshop

July 13-17, 2014

Langley, B.C.

[www.langleymusic.com](http://www.langleymusic.com)

### Calgary Suzuki Piano and Guitar Institute

August 11-15, 2014

Calgary, AB.

[www.mtroyal.ca/summer](http://www.mtroyal.ca/summer)

## Welcome to Gail Olmstead

This fall, ESPS members will notice a new face among our teachers. We are pleased to welcome Gail Olmstead as a new individual and group lesson teacher in the Bonnie Doon area of Edmonton.

Gail Olmstead started piano lessons when she was 7 years old studying RCM repertoire and eventually played piano in her high school jazz band. She continued her musical studies at the University of Alberta, receiving a Bachelor of Music degree in classical music. She then attended Grant MacEwan College to attain her Diploma of Music in jazz studies. Since then she has taught traditional piano lessons for about 25 years and has freelanced as a collaborative performer and director in various styles and communities including musical theatre, classical and jazz choirs, vocal and flute recitals and a folk/swing band. She has also composed music for choirs and a dance troupe.

Gail is very excited to be taking Book 1 training in Idaho this June with Rae Kate Shen. Besides music, Gail enjoys traveling, hiking in the mountains and snorkeling in the tropics!

## Spring Concert Schedule

### June Recitals

June 7, 2014 at Laurier Heights Baptist Church - Students of Ruth Johnson

June 8, 2014 at Convocation Hall, University of Alberta

12:00 - Students of Alla Rekhson

1:45 - Students of Melanie Bodnar and Rhonda McEachen

3:00 - Students of Nancy Thornhill

4:30 - Students of Ken Zeller

June 15, 2014 at Convocation Hall, University of Alberta

12:30 - Students of Tim Eckert

2:00 - Students of Tess Brown

3:00 - Students of Eleanor Tsui

4:30 - Students of Joyce Sipsas

### Graduation Concert

June 22, 2014 at Muttart Hall

## April 2014 Graduations

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

### Volume 1

Joseph Anderson  
Matthew Dyck  
Julie Lourenco-Reis  
Riya Nayar  
IreOluwa Oladunni  
Audrey Watt

### Volume 2

Clara Chen  
Abigail Chua  
Kianna Flores  
Naomi Li  
Stefani Lourenco-Reis  
Genevieve Salanguit  
Pauline So  
Weiran Sun  
Finnegan Taylor

### Volume 3

Anita Chlebek  
Jannon Kong

### Volume 4

Sam Brosseau-Carter

### Volume 5

Nicholas Yamamoto

*Beautiful tone, beautiful heart.*

Shinichi Suzuki

## Perfect Practice Tips

Continually ask your child to evaluate his/her own playing.

*"Did you play that repetition correctly?"*

*"Did your left hand remember to play softly?"*

*"Did you find the right note?"*

Don't do the thinking for your child – train him/her to do it.