



# TWINKLING THE IVORIES

April 2018

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## TECHNOLOGY DOES MAKE LIFE EASIER!

Listening to the recordings is vital to success in the Suzuki Method. From observing my students, I see a big difference between students who consistently receive a healthy dose of quality listening and those who scarcely listen or not listen at all.

My students who use listening to their benefit display qualities such as:

- " learn quickly and thus move along the repertoire faster
- " internalize or memorize the music with minimum efforts
- " play more musically
- " have a higher capacity to work on technique
- " better at evaluate own playing
- " advanced repertoire becomes less difficult

Families are very busy, but they are also tech-savvy. Incorporating listening into your daily routine to maximize your children's learning experience just makes sense.

Burning and making copies of the CD is easy for some. Importing the CDs and having the repertoire synced to devices is economical. If these options are too laborious and time consuming, consider purchasing the Suzuki piano repertoire on iTunes Store. It is only \$9.99 per volume or \$0.99 per song.

We all need a gentle reminder once in a while. Some families set up their listening routine using an alarm clock that has a dock. The Suzuki repertoire playlist turns on automatically at the pre-set time.

Another family takes advantage using their Echo (Alexa) device.

*"We set up two reminders (breakfast and dinner time) on our Echo (Alexa) device. At those times it wakes up and says, "It's time for your Suzuki songs...!" Either me or the kids go and turn on the player. It is helping because these are the times they're not concentrating on reading/watching/playing videogames. They are either with us helping or having their meal. We think they can listen better to the songs". - A. Wanderley*

With all the gadgets available to us, listening to the Suzuki piano repertoire has never been more convenient!

*Eleanor Tsui*

# THE CLASSICAL PIANO

One of the greatest inventions of the Classical Period was the acoustic piano. Until this time, musicians and composers had been using other keyboards such as the organ, virginal, clavichord, spinet and harpsichord. None of these instruments were touch sensitive meaning that you could not produce a louder sound by pressing the key more forcefully. However, the mechanics of the new “fortepiano” (or pianoforte) could do this which produced new dynamics and sounds creating new opportunities for keyboardists and composers. The Italian musical terms *forte* and *piano* mean “loud” and “soft” respectively, (referring to the variations in volume) and was eventually shortened to the word, “piano”.

Bartolomeo Cristofori (1655-1731) of Padua, Italy, was employed by Ferdinando de Medici, Grand Prince of Tuscany. Cristofori was an expert harpsichord maker and used his knowledge of mechanisms and actions to help develop the first pianos. He invented the *fortepiano* around the year 1700 and devised new mechanics in which the strings are struck by hammers. The greater the force of the pianist’s pressure on the keys, the faster the hammer hits the strings and the louder the sound is produced. Conversely, the softer the touch, the quieter the sound. After the padded hammer strikes the strings, the hammer rebounds from the strings causing the strings to vibrate. The vibrations are transmitted through a bridge to a cypress soundboard that amplifies the sound. When the key is released, a damper stops the strings’ vibration, ending the sound.

After an enthusiastic article written in 1711 appeared regarding Cristofori’s new piano mechanics, Gottfried Silbermann, an organ builder, added one important addition to this new piano: a sustain pedal, which lifts all the dampers from the strings simultaneously, allowing the pianist to sustain the notes without having to keep the keys depressed.

Silbermann showed Johann Sebastian Bach one of his early instruments in the 1730s, but Bach did not like the instrument at that time, because the higher notes were too quiet. However, Bach liked a later model in 1747 and even helped to sell Silbermann’s pianos.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was drawn to the models of Viennese fortepianos built with wooden frames, two strings per note and leather covered hammers. These pianos only had a 5-octave range (compared to our modern 7+ octave range). Mozart composed his concertos and sonatas for these instruments that had a softer, more ethereal tone than our modern pianos.

The first fortepianos in the 1700s had a quieter sound and smaller dynamic range because of thinner strings and wooden frames. However during the Romantic period (1800s), innovations such as the cast iron frame (which allowed for much greater string tensions) and thicker metal strings gave acoustic pianos a more powerful sound with a richer tone.

Although the piano has strings, it is usually classified as a percussion instrument rather than as a stringed instrument, because the strings are struck rather than plucked (as with a harpsichord).

*Gail Olmstead (with information from Wikipedia)*



# CONGRATULATIONS TO BOOK 7 GRADUATE, MARCUS WONG!

*On Sunday, May 13th, Book 7 student Marcus Wong will perform at a special recital to celebrate his completion of the Suzuki repertoire and the ESPS program. The concert will take place at 4:30 pm at Muttart Hall at Grant MacEwan's-Alberta College Campus (10050 MacDonald Drive). ESPS members are invited to enjoy this very special performance! Marcus is a student of Eleanor Tsui, and the recital program will include:*

The Harmonious Blacksmith from Suite no. 5 by Handel  
Sonata in A major, k.331 by Mozart  
Nocturne in C# minor by Chopin  
La fille aux cheveux de lin by Debussy  
Piano Sonata No. 14 in C#, Op. 27, No. 2, 1st mvt "Moonlight"  
Prelude and Fugue in C minor, BWV 847 by J.S. Bach  
Por Una Cabeza for Piano Trio by Gardel  
Sonata for Cello and Piano in C major by Handel

*Edmonton Suzuki Piano School congratulates Marcus for this tremendous accomplishment!*



*"Anything you think of doing, however insignificant, should be done immediately. Spur yourself on and carry it through without becoming discouraged. If this becomes an ingrained habit, things you thought were impossible will become possible, and closed doors will open, as you will discover in many ways."*

— Shinichi Suzuki, *Nurtured by Love: The Classic Approach to Talent Education*

## BIOGRAPHY - MARCUS WONG

I began studying piano at the age of five and am grateful that I've had the opportunity to grow my musical foundation with the Suzuki method over the years. Thank you to the Edmonton Suzuki Piano School for providing many performance opportunities. Thank you so much to my teacher Eleanor Tsui for her guidance, support, and patience. Thank you so much to my mom who continues to come to all my private lessons and provide support during practice times.

I have many wonderful memories of learning music over the years. While I was a student at the Suzuki Charter School from Grades K-6, morning group lessons with Tim Eckert provided many fun times. While there, I was also fortunate to be part of ensembles and a chamber group, which introduced me to the joys of playing alongside my peers. I have attended many Suzuki festivals and institutes over the years, including a very memorable piano workshop with Honens 2012 winner Pavel Kolesnikov when I was twelve years old.

I am currently in Grade 9 at Ottewell School and have been playing trombone under the guidance of Jayne Montgomery since Grade 7. This year, I also had the opportunity to perform with both the Edmonton Junior Honour Band and the Northern Alberta Honour Band. Recently, I completed my RCM Level 8 Theory Exam and received Honours with Distinction. Other things that I enjoy outside of music are basketball, reading, hockey, robotics, and science projects.

After my Suzuki graduation, I plan to continue studying piano and hope to complete the remaining levels in the Royal Conservatory program. I am very excited to share the pieces that I have been working on in my upcoming concert!

## COMING SOON: SPRING FESTIVAL

*April 21, 2018 at Suzuki Charter School*

On April 21st, come participate in the Spring Festival, our annual event that offers students the chance to perform a polished piece in a non-competitive format for adjudicators. This year, we are pleased to welcome Joseph Fridman, Sandra Roberts and Marg Caspell to Edmonton to work with ESPS students. The schedules for the event will be available from your teacher this week.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

*Spring Festival – Friday April 20<sup>th</sup> & Saturday April 21st*

As always, the Spring Festival wouldn't be successful without the contribution of many ESPS volunteers. If you haven't completed a volunteer activity yet, watch for an online sign-up email in your inbox this week. We'll be looking for volunteer drivers, Festival hosts, and set-up and tear-down crews, and we would love your help! If you aren't receiving links to the volunteer sign-ups, contact Kim ([kgreen@edmontonsuzukipiano.ca](mailto:kgreen@edmontonsuzukipiano.ca)) to confirm your email address.

## 2017/2018 EVENTS CALENDAR

**April 21, 2018** *Spring Festival at Suzuki Charter School*

**May 6, 2018** *Group Concerts at Suzuki Charter School*

**1:00** *Groups of Brad, Heather, Tim, Melanie, Hillary, Ruth and Rhonda*

**3:00** *Groups of Eleanor, Gail, Alla, Tess, and Regine*

**June 2, 9, 16, 23, 2018** *Parent Reading Class at Suzuki Charter School*

**June 3, 2018** *Summer Recitals at PCL Hall, MacEwan Conservatory of Music*

**12:45** *Students of Gail*

**1:45** *Students of Melanie and Hillary*

**3:00** *Students of Tim*

**June 3, 2018** *Summer Recitals at Convocation Hall, University of Alberta*

**12:45** *Students of Eleanor*

**2:00** *Students of Tess*

**3:15** *Students of Regine*

**June 10, 2018** *Summer Recitals at PCL Hall, University of Alberta*

**1:45** *Students of Ruth*

**3:15** *Students of Alla*

**June 17, 2018** *Graduation Concerts at Muttart Hall*

## CONGRATULATIONS MARCH GRADUATES

*Congratulations to the following ESPS students for their effort to achieve these well-deserved graduations:*

### **Volume 1**

Lucia Arruebarrena

Lauryn Doherty

Chukwuka Ezeonyeasi

Brendan Lewington

Julia Podraza

Amanda Mella Rodriguez

Evan Mercer

Delton Nguyen

Julia Tao

### **Volume 2**

Riley Chan

Erin Gabrielle Delos Santos

Owen Gilchrist

Tiah Guo

Riya Nayar

Isabella Oberg

Dmitry Pavlov

### **Volume 3**

Chloe Giesbrecht

Mark Rico-Lam

### **Volume 4**

Abigail Chua

### **Volume 5**

Marlon Beakhouse

*“Teaching music is not my main purpose. I want to make good citizens. If children hear fine music from the day of their birth and learn to play it, they develop sensitivity, discipline and endurance. They get a beautiful heart.”*

Shinichi Suzuki