



TWINKLING THE IVORIES

June 2018

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THE SUZUKI PIANO JOURNEY

Shinichi Suzuki believed the fate of our children lies in the hands of parents. What a wonderful idea, that, as parents, you wish to enjoy and understand your relationship with your child better through the world of music.

Don't hurry, don't rest.... Without stopping.... Without haste.... Carefully taking one step at a time.... Will surely get you THERE!

'Will surely get you there', implies that we are going on a journey. As I read this quote of Dr. Suzuki's, I can't help but ask myself, "Where is 'THERE?'"

What is the destination and why are we going? Dr. Suzuki has said that "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."

Listed below are maybe some of the things that you believe you and your child will achieve and/or accomplish on this journey of music study:

- Develop problem solving skills
- Learn to break complex problems into achievable steps
- Develop fine motor skills and hand eye coordination
- Develop self esteem and a sense of accomplishment
- Strive for excellence
- Learn to create something beautiful
- Develop sensitivity to beauty in the world
- Learn to manage time effectively
- Enhance memory skills

How long will it take? Dr. Suzuki believes that with earnest training that anyone can cultivate ability in ten years. Ten years of 'carefully taking one step at a time' will result in outstanding ability. Have you made that long-term commitment? I can assure you that there will be challenges along the way. Life happens and there are times those curve balls just seem to come out of nowhere. But, I believe we teach our kids a valuable lesson about life when we stick to the things that we set out to do.

Continued, page 2

THE SUZUKI PIANO JOURNEY

“To make a resolution and act accordingly is to live with hope. Confronted with a high mountain, you cannot reach the summit in one stride, but must climb step by step to approach your goal. There may be difficulty and hardships, but not disappointment or despair if you follow the path steady. To commit yourself to untiring patience and strong endurance is an absolute necessity in education (Nurtured by love (pg. 45).”

Recently, I watched a TED talks given by Angela Duckworth titled, ‘GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance. In it she states:

“Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future, day in, day out, not just for the week, not just for the month, but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint.

Many, if not all of you have most likely encountered the ‘necessity’ of grit in your musical journey.

How and what do we need to get there? When you set off on a road trip one of the essential requirements is that you have enough gas in your tank to get you to where you are going. You need FUEL! You need ENERGY!

When we consider music lessons, what would you say is the FUEL that will get you to your destination?

- Listening to the CD.
- Consistent practicing
- Lots of concert and recital opportunities, taking advantage of workshops etc.
- Lots of support from extended family
- Developing relationships within your studio community. Growing skill requires emotional fuel and taking the time to watch another students lesson and a few words of encouragement at a recital go a long way in fueling your child’s desire to ‘keep on going’.
- PRAISE! PRAISE! PRAISE! Not necessarily for the result but for the EFFORT!

When you set off on a road trip one of the essential requirements is that you have enough gas in your tank to get you to where you are going. You need FUEL! You need ENERGY!

PRAISE! PRAISE! PRAISE! Not necessarily for the result but for the EFFORT!

Nancy Thornhill

Scenes from the 2018 Group Concerts



CONGRATULATIONS TO ESPS' NEWEST BOOK 7 GRADUATES!

When an ESPS student completes Volume 7, the final book in the Suzuki piano repertoire, ESPS honours this accomplishment by hosting a solo concert for the graduate.

The graduating students perform works from Volume 7 as well as some of their favourites, and ESPS members are invited to enjoy these very special performances! Read below to learn more about some of these graduates and their recitals.

Edmonton Suzuki Piano School congratulates Madeline, Christopher and Claudia for their tremendous accomplishment!

BIOGRAPHY – MADELINE LIETZ

I started playing piano when I was 4 years old and starting kindergarten at Suzuki Charter School. Tim Eckert has been my piano teacher for the eleven years that I've been taking lessons. His patience and encouragement have helped me as I've developed my skills and progressed through the Suzuki Piano Books.

The skills I've learned through taking piano lessons have also enabled me to play the piano in my school band and choir as well as assisting me as I learned to play the trumpet. I've had the opportunity to play a variety of genres of music, from ragtime to Baroque. Learning new music is a challenge that I've enjoyed, although being able to play my favourite songs is always satisfying. Some of my other interests include being outside, hanging out with my friends and playing basketball. In the past year I completed the Royal Conservatory Grade 8 exam and am now preparing for my Suzuki Book Seven Graduation concert. Setting a goal and working toward it is something that I've practiced while taking piano lessons and it is a skill that will assist me as I complete high school and in the future.

Madeline performed selected pieces that included works from Mozart, Bach, and Hurwitz earlier in June.

BIOGRAPHY – CHRISTOPHER OTTO

I began attending music classes at age one, in the Suzuki Early Childhood Education (SECE) program. Shortly thereafter, at age three, I started taking Suzuki piano lessons; I then started taking lessons with Tim Eckert at the age of four. I'm forever grateful for the opportunity the Edmonton Suzuki Piano School has given me in the development of my musical ear, and the performance opportunities I have had. Thank you to my parents for their guidance and for driving me to piano for many years. I would especially like to thank Tim Eckert for his outstanding patience, knowledge and expertise in helping me along the way.

Over the years of taking Suzuki Piano I have overcome a significant amount of adversity in my completion of the repertoire: practicing piano regularly along with my busy schedule, including being in Advanced Placement academic program, being involved in school bands playing the clarinet, and being involved in multiple sports. Separating both shoulders and breaking my thumb playing club hockey over the past five years provided many obstacles in my advancement in the repertoire. However, with the guidance of Tim and my perseverance I am finally able to say I have graduated from the Suzuki Piano program.

I recently finished my first year of Engineering at the University of Alberta, and I plan on completing a Mechanical Engineering Bachelor's Degree in the coming years. My intentions are to continue playing piano as an enjoyable activity as well as performing for family and friends on occasions.

*Christopher will perform works by Mozart, Handel and Claman at his graduation concert on **Sunday June 24th at PCL Hall at 11 AM.***



*Scenes from the
2018 Group
Concerts*

BIOGRAPHY – CLAUDIA WANG

My name is Claudia Wang and I started taking piano lessons when I was 6 years old with Troy Lamoureux. I was born with Arthrogryposis, a chronic condition of stiff joints and weaker muscles on the left side. Playing piano was a form of physical therapy for me, as it helped to develop the strength in my arms and hands.

When Troy moved away, Brianna Koller became my teacher and she introduced me to the Suzuki Method. I really believe in the Suzuki philosophy, that “Every Child Can”. Brianna and her family have really supported me throughout the years. We finished book 1 Suzuki together, then, she taught me the Minuets and A Short Story. That story was our last, as she had to leave for university. She then referred me to her teacher, Alla Rekhson, who kindly accepted me.

I have been studying with Alla for 8 years and I have now completed the Suzuki Piano Repertoire. I have had the amazing opportunity to participate in Alla’s unique group classes, where we explored a variety of genres together and performed them with different ensemble groups.

In the last Suzuki book, I finally reached Alla Turca, one of Mozart’s well-known works. To me, this brilliant piece, with such fast passages and large chords, seemed impossible for my hands to handle. Alla worked patiently and passionately with me bar by bar, so that I could express it in the Turkish character and texture found from Mozart’s time.

In addition, as a person of Chinese heritage, I have always wanted to play the famous Colourful Clouds Chasing the Moon composed by Ren Guang. I brought this music to Alla, hoping that she would teach it to me. She amazed me with her deep understanding of the piece and she guided me through the interpretation. I was thrilled to have performed this piece at the SPS Honours Concert and at my teacher’s recital.

Without all the support and love from my family and friends, I could not be where I am today. Giving back has always been part of my growth as a musician, and as a person. I have had opportunities to contribute as a pianist to the community through fundraising events, such as the annual Hope & Harmony concerts, organized by the Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT) program where I performed as a soloist. Also, during the second year for the same concert, I had the privilege to work with ESO conductor, Lucas Waldin, as I piano accompanied special needs students singing songs. Furthermore, I participated in a fundraising calendar photoshoot for The Rainbow Society of Alberta.

Studying music has also helped me build up study habits academically. I have maintained honours with distinction at École J. H. Picard, and at Archbishop MacDonald High School.

I am very grateful that my life has been enriched with music. I want to thank my family and especially Alla Rekhson for supporting me through my musical journey.

Claudia will perform works by Mozart, Bach, Debussy, Bartok, Guang and Chopin. Her concert will take place at 2:00 pm at PCL Hall (5th Floor) at Grant MacEwan’s Alberta College Campus (10050 MacDonald Drive) on July 15, 2018.



Find more fantastic photos from the Group Concerts at our website: edmontonsuzukipiano.ca or on Facebook @edmontonsuzukipiano.

HELP WANTED: CAN YOU VOLUNTEER AT THE ESPS CASINO?

November 15-16, 2018 at Casino Edmonton

Every two years, ESPS members volunteer at a casino, and in exchange for two days of work, ESPS earns about \$70,000 that can be spent in more ways that we can imagine. We can provide our teachers with professional development, so they can come home excited, motivated, and full of new information. We bring master teachers to Edmonton to convey their expertise to our teachers, speak with our parents, and teach our children. We host a Fall Workshop and Spring Festival with subsidized fees so that students can perform in front of an adjudicator. We can also rent some of Edmonton's nicest concert halls, purchase equipment and maintain pianos for our students to play at group classes and concerts.

The fundraising casino gives us the freedom to provide these opportunities in our very comprehensive program. The casino is our only fundraiser and without it we would need to hold many more, far less profitable fundraising events. Ultimately, this could mean time spent selling chocolate bars or gift cards.

The shifts are long, and they run through the day or late into the night, but if you can help, please consider volunteering. No experience is needed - paid casino staff are on hand to work with during your volunteer shift. And if you volunteer, your shift counts as two years of volunteer commitment at ESPS. Next year, you'll enjoy a casino pass and get a break from volunteer duties.

If you can help, or are looking for a little more information, we'd love to hear from you! Get in touch with Kim at 780.488.0548.

THE POWER OF OBSERVATION

After two agonizing months of seal-on-dry-land crawling, my son finally learned how to formally crawl. It was amazing to watch him go one morning from dragging himself around to clearing a room like a pro! He did so using the power of observation...

Most of us have primary learning strategies (kinaesthetic, visual, auditory, etc.). For anyone, but especially visual learners, observing someone perform a task can be an essential part of learning how to do something. Take your private lessons for example: Your teacher will give a model of how to perform a certain technique. He/She exaggerates a certain movement that your child is learning. Your child then learns this exaggerated movement before they begin to refine it into something smooth and beautiful.

Back to my son. I had provided many models of how to crawl. I would crawl around on the floor each day, exaggerating the movements, hoping to help my son progress from dragging himself around to crawling. All my attempts felt futile. What I failed to grasp was an extremely important truth: children learn from one another (aka: the power of observation)! I had not exposed my son to enough children near his age who were crawling! Incredibly, after spending a couple of hours with a similar aged crawling-baby, he started crawling everywhere! Coincidentally, he also learned how to pull himself up later that week from that same observation session. Maybe you have noticed a stall with your child learning a new technique. Maybe the remedy is simply to engage the power of observation...

When children learn from each other, they provide models for each other. Their bodies are similar, as are their movements. Before they refine a skill, it is automatically exaggerated. You may have noticed in group class; that students are given opportunities to play for each other either through games or mini performances. This is an excellent opportunity for your child to learn from others. It may not be as obvious as babies learning from each other but watching others can facilitate learning, and also provide healthy motivation to consciously improve one's skills!

Another excellent opportunity to observe comes simply from arriving/staying 10-15 minutes before/after your lesson to watch your teacher's other students. A book 7 student can learn something from a beginning student and vice versa. If your child is of a similar age/ability as the student they are observing, all the better! Parents and students receive extra modelling from their teacher during that time and can be inspired by the students as well!

Over the summer, embrace the power of observation! Find a friend in your piano studio and practice together over the summer. Find a Youtube video of a piece you are working on refining. When you come back in the Fall, try to arrange your schedule to give yourself that extra "wiggle room" to arrive early or stay longer for your lessons and plan on attending each Group Class. You will not regret the great gift you have given your child.

Hillary Paul, ESPS Teacher

THANK YOU ESPS VOLUNTEERS!

Many hands make light work! As always, this year ESPS benefitted from the helping hands of our excellent ESPS parent volunteers. Whether you were a parent driver, Spring Festival host, or worked at one of our many concerts as part of a set-up or tear-down crew – THANK YOU! Your help is appreciated, and it allows us to accomplish more for all of our students. Hats off to you all!

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday September 26, 2018

Plan to attend our Annual General Meeting, to be held on Wednesday September 26th at 7:30 PM. We'll present our Annual Report, financial statements, and update society members about plans for the coming school term.

Additionally, we'll hold elections for positions on our Board of Directors. Are you interested in getting involved? ESPS is looking for parent volunteers to contribute their voice to the governance of our society. Whether you have been an ESPS parent for one year or 10, your perspective is valuable, and helps shape the programming we offer to students and families. Previous Board experience is not necessary. If you'd like more information about joining our Board, please contact Kim for more information at 780.488.0548.

2018/2019 EVENTS CALENDAR

September 22, 2018 *Parent Workshop for Parents of Beginners at Suzuki Charter School*

September 26, 2018 *Annual General Meeting at Suzuki Charter School*

October 20-21, 2018 *Fall Workshop at Suzuki Charter School*

November 25, 2018 *Graduation Concert at Muttart Hall*

January 20, 2019 *Graduation Concert at Muttart Hall*

February 3, 10, and 24, 2019 *Winter Recitals at PCL/Bryan Hall*

March 16, 2019 *Spring Festival at Suzuki Charter School*

March 17, 2019 *Graduation Concert at Muttart Hall*

May 5, 2019 *Group Concerts at Suzuki Charter School*

June 2 and 9, 2019 *Summer Recitals at Convocation Hall*

June 23, 2019 *Graduation Concert at Muttart Hall*

CONGRATULATIONS JUNE GRADUATES

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

Volume 1

Bryce Burgess
Allizy Cawley
Jacob Flores
Connor Guo
Esther Han
Rafael Jordao
Jacey Lam
Maya Maharaj
Carmel McAllister
Aleksandr Ollis
Alicia Rojas
Alyssa Shan
Nathan Spanu
Justin Symonds

Volume 2

Morgan Burgess
Noah Chow
Petra Dueck
Claire Guo
Erika Starcevic
Marie VandenBorn
Sydney Zapesocki

Volume 3

Jayden Dyck
Parker Schenk

Volume 4

Evan Holt
Naomi Li
Mira MacMillan
Nathan Oddoye
Isabelle Suen
Ethan Zhang

Volume 5

Hamish Chan
Wesley Deng
Erika Dyck
Timothy Lu
Tiffany Phan
Dan Zhang

Volume 6

Gabriella Poworoznik