

Contents

Reports

- ❖ AGM Report 2014
- ❖ Chairman's Report 2014
- ❖ Treasurer Report 2014
- ❖ January 2014 Teacher's Training
- ❖ Graduation Concert & Awards Ceremony 2014

Articles

- ❖ Dr Suzuki – The Principle of Ability Development
- ❖ Isobel Nathanson – Surviving My First 10,000 Twinkles

Dates & Activities

- ❖ Dates 2014
- ❖ Drawing Competition!

Teacher Bios

- ❖ Betsie Meyer
- ❖ Anne Naylor

Editorial Team

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South African Suzuki Association

Newsletter

April 2014

"The real essence of art turned out to be not something high up and far off – it was right inside my ordinary daily self – If a musician wants to become a finer artist, he must first become a finer person."

Dr Shinichi Suzuki



Annual General Meeting 2014 Report

Arja Kreuiter

We had a very successful AGM on Saturday March 8th at Maria Meyer's home in Randpark Ridge. Since this is our third bid to gain NPO status, we stuck to the government agenda in keeping with their Constitution. We require audited accounts. Is there anyone out there who can assist?

For the first time we successfully managed to link up via Skype with other members. Thank you Warda, Nicola and Engela for joining us. It was a bit of a learning curve. Next time will be easier. Engela, we are sorry we lost you along the way. Imagine the possibilities! How about Skype group classes with Karen in Canada?

Our Chairperson, Maria Meyer, welcomed all and gave her report of all the events in 2013. All was positive news and we know 2014 will prove to be even better. In 2014 we have the following events to look forward to: Suzuki Saturday on May 24th, SASA Workshop on June 22nd, Annual National Concert on August 2nd, and the Graduation Concert on September 27th/28th. These dates have already been sent out. The first ever SASA Graduation concert took place in November 2013 and nine students graduated. Well done!

Lucia Seleka presented a rosy but cautious treasurer's report. Her message is that we need to focus on fundraising and advertising and that teachers need to bring in those membership fees so that we can bring out the Teacher Trainers.

Members of the Management Committee were nominated and seconded. Their portfolios will be given out at our next meeting when the sub committees are appointed.

General topics of discussion at our AGM included:

- Advanced Ensemble is off to a good start this year. It will be held bi-weekly during government school holidays.
- Newsletters, thanks to Joanna, Engela, Sara and Arlene, are being posted quarterly and our website, thanks to Maria and Lauryan, should be up and running in May.
- Michael Dingaan has been appointed to the Management Committee. He will be interviewing. Anne Naylor and Betsie Meyer on SA Classic FM on Thursday March 13th at 9.30am. Don't miss it.
- Anne will be representing SASA at the European Teachers Convention in Belgium. We look forward to hearing about her experience.
- Joy Meyer has made us proud by being invited to present at an international World Music Convention in Brazil (Suzuki Teaching in the South African context).
- Finally, Maria thanked each and every Suzuki member for everything done in 2013. Thank you parents, students and teachers!!!!

SASA is growing better and bigger (especially when you look at the prolific number of infants born and expected in the last year and for years to come...all prospective Teacher Trainees).

Here is to a great 2014!!!

Chairman's Report 2014

Maria Meyer, Chairperson of SASA 2013

Events

- **Teddy Bear's Picnic and AGM**

SASA kicked off 2013 with a Teddy Bear's picnic, coordinated by Madeleine Wikner, at Cornwall Hill College. This event was followed by the AGM. The Teddy Bear's Picnic was comprised of sessions with games and dances lead by Anne Naylor as well as talks about listening and progress for the parents, presented by Joanna Swart and Madeleine Wikner. Pro Studio supported SASA at this event with their display of music books and accessories.

- **Teacher Training**

In 2013, SASA facilitated teacher training for violin level 1 and 4, as well as cello level 1. Christophe Bossuat (France) instructed the Violin level 1, Karen Kimmett (Canada) the Violin level 4, and Ruben Rivera (France) was the trainer for the Cello level 1. For Violin four level 1 trainees, one level 2 trainee, one level 3 trainee and two level 4 trainees as well as three Cello trainees passed their examinations for their respective levels. The next teacher training will resume in April 2015, with the addition of Piano teacher training lead by teacher trainer Grant Mead from England. The deadline for applications is 30 August 2013.

- **University of the Free State presentation**

Maria Meyer was invited to speak at the University of the Free State about Suzuki in South Africa in April 2013. The reception was positive and although students and teachers were interested in implementing the method in their projects and sending students for Suzuki teacher training, the overall feeling was that the courses were not financially viable for the students and all the components of the method were difficult to implement in their music projects, specifically the Mangaung String Development Project.

- **Workshop**

A successful violin workshop coordinated in July by Anne Naylor and Betsie Meyer. It was held at Brescia House in Bryanston. The Workshop comprised different group sessions and an orchestra session lead by teacher trainer Karen Kimmett. The orchestra performed at the Annual National Concert two weeks thereafter. The workshop raised a fair amount of funds.

- **Annual National Concert**

The Annual National Concert was held at Brescia House on 27 July. The concert took on the form of an Exhibition Concert where artist Heidi Beyers's paintings were displayed. Lovemore Music donated a Stentor Conservatoire violin, Heidi Beyers donated one of her paintings and Maria Meyer donated 5 PracLudi practice games as prizes for the raffle's lucky draw. Each student received a charming wire violin with every raffle ticket that was purchased. A photobooth was set up where students could have pictures taken of themselves during the interval. The programme was varied with the performance of the Advanced Student Ensemble and the orchestra.

- **Graduation Concert**

In 2013, SASA started again with annual graduation concerts. Last year it was held on 17 November at Villa Taormina in Pretoria. Nine students graduated from their respective levels. Four students graduated from the Twinkle Variations, two students from Book 1, one student from book 3, and one student from book 5. Con Spirito awards were awarded to four students.

Membership

Membership payment has declined from 2012 to 2013. In 2012, there were 129 paid memberships and only 79 paid memberships in 2013. It is of utmost importance that teachers ensure that their students pay their annual membership to SASA.

Newsletter

The newsletter team has grown in the past year with the inclusion of and under the leadership of Joanna Swart. The team sent out some beautiful newsletters in 2013.

Advanced Student Ensemble

An advanced student ensemble was created at the beginning of 2013. Andrea Kreuter, the coordinator, was assisted by Joanna Swart and Madeleine Wikner. The student ensemble creates opportunities for advanced students in public performance exposure as well working on more advanced group music.

Axel Kasongo

One of Betsie's students, Axel Kasongo from Kingdoms Life, passed his audition for the University Music Diploma at the North West University in Potchefstroom.

SASMT

SASA is now registered as an institution with the South African Society of Music Teachers. Seven teachers are currently members under SASA's name. An advertisement of the teacher training courses in 2015 was placed in the The South African Music Educator SASMT's annual journal.

Website

The new website is www.suzukimusic.co.za

Lauryan Ritzlmayer is helping SASA with the construction of the new website. Construction is in progress and will be up and running by the end of March.

NPO registration and fundraising

After two unsuccessful submissions of SASA's NPO application, we are submitting it for the third time, this time drafted exactly like the sample constitution the government posts on their website. Hopefully, it will be successful. Thank you to Anne Naylor who offered great assistance in the third submission.

SARO Awards

SASA is very proud of Betsie Meyer and her students from Kingdoms Life who were invited to perform at the SARO Rugby awards on Saturday 8 February 2014.

Plans for 2014

ClassicFM interview

SASA was invited by Michael Dingaan to speak about the Suzuki in South Africa on ClassicFM on Thursday 13 March 2014. Anne Naylor and Betsie Meyer will present SASA in this interview.

ESA Board Meeting

Anne will be representing SASA at the ESA's Board Meeting in Belgium in April. The meeting will be followed by the European Teacher's Convention. Anne will also be partaking in this convention.

ISME Conference

Joy Meyer has been invited by the International Society of Music Education to present a spoken paper at the World Music Convention to be held in Brazil in July this year.

Events planned

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| • Suzuki Saturday | 24 May |
| • Workshop | 21 -22 June |
| • Annual National Concert | 2 August |
| • Graduation Concert | 27/28 September |

Fundraising and advertising

SASA needs to focus on fundraising and advertising in 2014. To start, fundraising portfolios need to be created and sent to companies and individuals who are potential donors.

Report compiled by Maria Meyer, Chairperson of SASA 2013

Treasurer's Report 2014

Lucia Seleka

January - December 2013

Accrual Basis

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

Bank Interest Earned	2,064.87
Exam and Assessment Fees	
Violin Exam/Assesment Fees	1,400.00
Total Exam and Assessment F...	1,400.00
Fund Raising Events	
ANC	35,153.00
Concerts	573.00
Suzuki Saturday	3,020.00
Workshop/Camp	21,190.00
Total Fund Raising Events	59,936.00
Gifts In Kind	600.00
Investment Income	506.63
Membership Fees	
Community Membership	1,620.00
Family Membership	25,850.00
Other Membership	765.00
Teacher Membership Fees C...	1,155.00
Teacher Membership Violin	8,122.00
Total Membership Fees	37,512.00
Sales Income	0.00
Teacher Training Fees	
Teacher Training Fees Cello	-400.00
Teacher Training Fees Violin	86,800.00
Total Teacher Training Fees	86,400.00
Total Income	188,419.50

Gross Profit 188,419.50

Expense

Bank Service Charges	643.63
Fundraising events	
ANC	10,449.00
Workshop/Camp	3,529.43
Total Fundraising events	13,978.43
Meals and Entertainment	1,602.07
Membership Fees ESA	7,208.24
Teacher Trainer Fees	
Teacher Trainer Fee Cello	34,434.82
Teacher Trainer Fees Violin	180,730.98
Total Teacher Trainer Fees	215,165.80
Venue Hire	2,000.00
Total Expense	240,598.17

Net Ordinary Income -52,178.67

Profit for the Year -52,178.67

January 2014 Teacher's Training

Susan Moyo

The final module of Suzuki Violin Level 1, 2, 3, 4 and Cello Level 1 courses took place early this year and were held at Anne's house with teacher trainers Karen, Christophe and Reuben. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet all Suzuki trained teachers this year, combining different levels, both on violin and cello. Although we were all slightly nervous about the exams and assessments our trainers prepared us so well that when the time came to play and sit through the exam, all went well. I cannot describe the effect this course has had on my teaching and playing. Suzuki methodology has changed my entire life and I am so excited about how the knowledge will improve the musical lives of all my students. A huge thank you to all who attended the course and those involved in organizing it. We are all so grateful to have had the wonderful opportunity to do the course with such wonderful Teacher Trainers!



Left to Right: Annerie Henn (cello, Pretoria), Engela Tomlinson (violin, Midrand), Susan Moyo (violin, Grahamstown), Tinotendo Chikoto (violin, Harare, Zimbabwe), Melissa Witbooi (violin, Johannesburg), Maria Botha (violin, Cape Town), Andrea Kreuiter (violin, Midrand), Rika Gerrys (violin, Kempton Park), Joanna Swart (violin, Johannesburg), Natalie Bentley (cello, Pretoria), Karen Kimmet (violin teacher trainer, Kingston, Ontario, Canada), Christophe Bossuat (violin teacher trainer, Lyon, France), Reuben Rivera (cello teacher trainer, Lyon, France). Not pictured, Warda Wannamaker (cello, Cape Town).

Graduation Concert and Award Ceremony 2014

Madeleine Wikner

On the 17th November 2013, a very warm Sunday afternoon, SASA held its first Graduation Concert at the Villa Taormina in Pretoria. This charming venue with its small concert hall and a small stage sporting an imposing Steinway Grand was the ideal place to host our historic event.

Conditions to qualify as a graduate were strictly applied. Candidates were required to play the entire book they intended to graduate from to their teacher in one sitting. Candidates must also be half a book ahead of the graduating book, in order to maintain a high standard of playing. The students involved found it an excellent opportunity for a thorough review of pieces already learnt. The successful candidate and teacher then signed a Graduation Indemnity form.

On the day of the concert, our nine candidates dressed in their formal concert attire drew one set piece out of a hat and performed it as a solo. Twinkle Theme and Variations graduates were Carys Kersten, Jenna Levin, Hodaya Jacobs and Betul Imre. Christine Botha and Silke Ottermann were Book One graduates; Rumi-Anne Seleka played off Book Three; Shamel Seleka graduated from Book Four and Daniel Seleka graduated from Book Five. Congratulations and well done to those nine candidates.

The Con Spiritu Award is an award given to a candidate who showed enthusiastic participation in private lessons, group classes, and at least two SASA functions during 2013. Even more importantly, the candidate had to show a helpful and caring attitude toward other Suzuki students, in line with the Suzuki Philosophy. The proud winners of this award were Jana van den Berg, Murad Imre, Ane Greyling and Jenna Levin.

Finally, many thanks to the dedicated teachers, parents and students who made this important SASA event possible. We look forward to many more graduates in 2014!



Discovery of The Law of Ability & The Principle of Ability Development – Proof That Talent Is Not Inborn

Dr Shinichi Suzuki

For many years, many people have cherished the common belief that talent is inborn and each person has his own inherited quality or nature, that everyone has his individual character and talent which are superior or inferior from his birth, and that this inherited talent cannot be developed further afterwards, if it is inferior from the start.

This belief has been advocated as a theory by many scholars, but I realized about forty years ago that it is totally wrong. Since then I have endeavoured to prove that talent is no accident of birth and every child can be highly educated if he is given the proper training. I have demonstrated good examples of highly developed children in music. I also have been appealing for people in the world to understand my idea. It is very difficult, however, to change what has been believed for such a long time, but I have never been defeated by the difficulty, never given up my belief. I have proven the fact that talent is not inborn and I nurtured and developed many children whom I accepted as my students without any test for musical ability. I taught them to become splendid musicians. Meanwhile I finally found the law of ability after long research of the principle for developing talent.

I realized the following:

1. Talent is acquired through the powerful function of "life force" (or the life-giving force or energy).
2. Talent is developed as the matter of physiology or brain-physiology which functions in a living

The law of ability might be summarized as the following:

"A living organism acquires talent responding to the environmental stimulation from the outside and adapting itself to all things surrounding it. Talent is the production of the life force; therefore, there is no talent without stimulation which comes from the outside."

A new born baby's life force absorbs all the things around him, such as his mother's way of speech, her way of feeling and thinking and so forth. We should notice that a child acquires his talent parallel with his growth through his life force, being fed with nourishment. A living organism would have to die if it could not adapt itself to the environment. When we know that talent in order to survive in the environment, adapting himself to all kinds of environmental stimulation which comes from the outside.

Through my experiences I firmly believe that the law of ability is quite true. It is an obvious fact that a child's ability is developed in a physiological or brain-physiological way, just as a baby's body grows physiologically through the activities of his powerful life.

If you move to Alaska with your newborn baby and raise him in the cold Alaskan environment, he will adapt himself to the stimulation there and will gradually come to the ability to endure the severe cold,. A physiological change will emerge on his skin over his whole body in order to survive in Alaska.

Of course, one or two weeks stay in Alaska is not long enough to cause this change in the baby's body. He will never be able to gain the ability to bear the coldness in such a short period, though he might gain some knowledge about the Alaskan coldness.

A baby who hears his mother talking every day absorbs everything into his make-up and imitates his mother's voice, pronunciation, intonation and accent, adapting his vocal cords and muscles around the mouth and so forth to the outside stimulation. Finally he becomes able to speak quite the same way as his mother, just like a copy of the mother. It is impossible for me to pronounce English sounds beautifully, because I was raised hearing my mother tongue of Japanese, not English.

I often say, "A person is the product of his environment."

Even primitive men who lived in the Stone Age had the potential to develop to a high level, but their potential was not stimulated by the environment more than the Stone Age. Everyone in those days, therefore, had to grow as primitive men of the Stone Age. They could not develop their abilities more than in the Stone Age. This example explains the law of ability eloquently.

If you put today's baby into the Stone Age and raised it there, it would become like other Stone Age men. On the other hand, if you put today's baby into the future world of five thousand years later and if he were educated by highly civilized people, he would certainly develop to the same highly advanced level at that area.

I discovered the fact that the activities of the great life force can be used to develop children's abilities to a miraculously high level under good fostering from the very day of their birth. I would like, therefore, to emphasize the importance of education from zero years old. We should esteem and value LIFE more, and we should notice that every child has the wonderful potential to be highly educated.

From: Shinichi Suzuki: His Speeches and Essays

"There is no point where we can say, "This is enough." Always seek finer music, finer performance. Eventually this will change from a learning attitude to a joyful quest which will last throughout our lives."

-Dr Shinichi Suzuki

SASA Events 2014

Here are the South African Suzuki Association's events planned for this year. Please diarise these dates! We look forward to seeing you there!

DATE	FUNCTION	LOCATION
24 May	Suzuki Saturday	Johannesburg
21-22 June	Workshop	Johannesburg
26/07/14	Rehearsal (An Nat'l Concert)	Pretoria
2 August	Annual National Concert	Pretoria
27/28 September	Graduation Concert	Pretoria

Drawing Competition

Prizes are to be won!

Suzuki students and parents are invited to participate in a drawing competition. Drawings must be related to Suzuki violin or cello and be on A4 paper. Drawings must also be clearly marked on the back with the participant's name and age. To submit, bring your drawing to the Suzuki Saturday on 24 May and pay the R10 entrance fee.

Age Categories of Entry:

- Ages 4-6
- Ages 7-9
- Ages 10-12
- Open (13 upwards)

The best of each age category will also be displayed in SASA's next newsletter!

Surviving my first 10,000 Twinkles

Isobel Nathanson

Isobel is mother to Nina Nathanson who studies with Anne Naylor in Johannesburg.

I have always been interested in my children's education, so I naturally embraced the philosophy behind the Suzuki method. Suzuki encourages parents to learn the violin alongside the child. Nothing motivates a child more than seeing their parents direct involvement.

I did not go that far, but my participation in attending lessons and actively helping with daily practice (at least most of the time) ensured that my daughter felt a sense of importance and I was much more sympathetic to the difficulties of learning how to play the violin. Suzuki said: If a child hears fine music from the day of her birth and learns to play it herself, she develops sensitivity, discipline and endurance. I believe that applies to the parents as well. The parent becomes the child's practice partner, mentor, and "home teacher."

Over time, my role as a Suzuki parent has evolved. In the beginning it was important to create a stimulating and positive environment and motivating daily practice. Listening to the Suzuki CD, showing interest in her progress, setting up a reward system and making sure that she was prepared for the next lesson were all key. Not forgetting of course - lots of praise and more importantly – fun and laughter during the lessons.

As she matures, my role has changed to providing emotional support as she learns to cope and juggle the increasing demands of school and keeping up the Suzuki discipline. Now and again a little reminder to practice, and a little guidance during practice, is still necessary. Mostly though, she understands what her teacher requires in order to structure effective practice.

My presence in practice has gone from entirely supervising to more general as she has become more independent. My presence at the lessons is no longer required, but I enjoy the Suzuki repertoire and the progress my daughter is making. So much so that I am happy to carve out some special time to attend the lessons whenever I can.

I believe that over the years, she has grown to appreciate classical music and learned the skills to easily memorize and retain information. This has led to confidence building through regular performances, perseverance in all things music, and above all pride in her achievements. The gift of music translates to other aspects of everyday life and will last a lifetime.

**"Parents who have smiling faces have children who have smiling faces."
- Dr Shinichi Suzuki**



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Teacher Bio

Betsie Meyer

Betsie Meyer was born early one Autumn morning in the little town of Potchefstroom - long, long ago. She is one of 5 children and everyone in the household played at least one instrument. Practice sessions started at 5 o'clock every morning, starting with the G Major scale. (Little did she know she would play this for the rest of her life - but not at 5 in the morning).

After school, she studied at universities studying various subjects and obtaining degrees in music, languages, and psychology. She later realized she would find that the violin method included all her interests. She got married - also long, long ago and has 2 children, 6 cats, and 2 dogs. They still live together - not always happily.

Then, not so long, long ago she stumbled upon the amazing Suzuki method. It opened up new, wonderful ideas. Like everyone can learn an instrument, everyone can grow, and together they can lift up an entire community - all this through playing violin.!! (Little did she know scales can be uplifting and even good for your brain!).

Betsie is teaching in Atteridgeville at Kingdoms Life and Leamoetswe, at home in Centurion, and one day at Anton van Wouw Primary School.

What does she enjoy most?

Children smiling (with or without teeth)

Children playing in tune with beautiful postures

Cats purring in tune

Her message for upcoming violinists:

Practice your scales because you are feeding your brain.

Teacher Bio

Anne Naylor



I did not learn the violin through the Suzuki Method myself, but I am convinced that this is the best way to learn the violin! I came across the method in 1980 when I started teaching the violin and have used it very successfully ever since.

The first part of my career was teaching Music as a Subject to high school children at the Art, Ballet and Music School in Braamfontein. (The National school of the Arts). It was great to be able to teach all the different aspects of music: theory, history of music, aural and of course the violin.

After I had my children, I went back to teaching at Brescia House School. Here I taught classes in Music and Arts and Culture in the primary school for 17 years. And, of course, the violin in the afternoons!

Five years ago, I left Brescia House and started my own violin teaching studio: The Violin Kid's Studio. Now I teach two afternoons at Brescia and the other three afternoons at home. It is wonderful for me to see the Suzuki Method in practice and I really enjoy this new, violin orientated career.

As Suzuki has said:

Everyone has a sprout of talent.

*Developing that sprout into a wonderful ability
depends upon how it is cultivated.*

I enjoy doing the cultivation!