



“I LOVE TO *practice*”

Ideas for parents to get their children to love practicing without resorting to things they wish they hadn't!

Renew your membership

It is time to renew your membership of the SASA, if you have not already

take pride in
being part of

Membership fees 2016

Teachers: R490

Families: R300

Township students: R60
per student



The South African Suzuki Association

➔ Keep in touch and stay tuned!



Like us on
Facebook
The South African
Suzuki Association

WWW Visit us at
Suzukimusic.co.za



Send us an
E-MAIL
Suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com

CONTENTS

- 4 Calendar 2016. Dates to diarize.
- 5 Letter to the readers. By Joanna Swart.
- 6 I love to practice. Ideas to help parents guide their children practice. By Joanne Bath
- 9 Musing about a muse. The extraordinary story of Mischa Elma as a prodigal child. By Jolene Kokot
- 10 Suzuki recorder in Cape Town. By Nicola van Zyl Smit
- 11 The violin is thriving in Durban. By Louise Howell
- 12 2015 in review. National concert, teacher's training, workshop 2015 and much more.
- 14 Contact us today. How to get in touch with SASA.



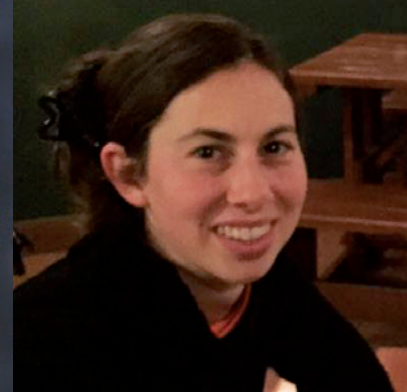


Calendar 2016

Dates to diarize



12 March "Give a child a teacher" fundraising concert	28 May Graduation concert	16-19 June Eisteddfod Workshop Concert festival	26-30 June Teacher training courses Violin (module 1) Cello (module 2)	30 July Annual National Concert	22 October Graduation concert	11-15 December Teacher training Violin (module 2) Cello (module 3)	16 December Cello exams
--	-------------------------------------	--	--	---	---	--	-----------------------------------



LETTER TO THE READERS

Dear Suzuki friends,

As we begin the second half of 2016 (already!), I sit back to recall our events of last year: an amazing joint concert with the Buffalo Suzuki Strings, a workshop, the Annual National Concert, the Graduation Concert, plus three teachers training modules. For our busy lives, this is a lot for us teachers to organise. We hope you enjoyed these activities and will continue to make future SASA events a priority for your child and your family's growth in various ways.

In my personal life, I have been considering the importance of slowing down, enjoying the moment, taking time to focus on quality of activities rather than quantity of them. Prioritising. For the student (and parent), I think this is not only important but necessary for success.

When Dr. Suzuki first began to teach and in the several decades to follow, lives of families and children were radically different than today. Mothers often stayed home with their children and made themselves available to their children's needs and cares. Young children were given much time for free play and discovery while school-aged children had more after-school time to play at will. It has been noted time and again how our modern lifestyle has changed radically in a relatively short amount of time. In South Africa today, most mothers work outside of the home, there are endless options for extramurals for children, school-aged children come home from school with piles of homework to tackle, while technology brings us all again and again to screens of all sizes. All of these things have their advantages and possibilities for growth. But does how much they

help out-weigh how much they hinder?

I encourage you all to sit back and reflect on your lives, considering the things that are of real value to you. Are they family? Education? Career? Social interaction and friends? Spiritual pursuits? Physical fitness and health? To me, calming myself down to reflect upon these things has helped me to focus my being on what is really important and to take pleasure in these matters of life.

I was inspired by the article by Joanne Bath (see page 6) on practicing with your child. When I sit down to practice violin with my own children, I am reminded to enjoy these moments, to value them, yes, even to love them (even when my 7-year-old resists or when the 4-year-old is just too silly), not for the moments themselves, but for the priceless time with my children and the opportunity to give them a lifetime of joy through playing an instrument and the skills and character that are developed through such exercise. And when the 7-year-old resists, to breathe (a loooong and deep one), and remember that what she needs most is to be loved and to know that she is loved. When I sit in front of my violin students, I think about how I want to teach them to breathe, in other words, to take courage when faced with a challenge, to have fun, to work hard, and then to look back and take pride in what has been accomplished. These are some of my priorities.

I would like to dedicate this issue to pondering upon our priorities and taking time to delight in them.

Warm regards,

@Joanna Swart
joanna.swart@gmail.com

SASA OFFICE BEARERS 2016

Chairlady: Betsie Meyer / Deputy Chairlady: Natalie Bentley / Country Director: Andrea Vermeulen / Deputy Country Director: Anne Naylor Secretary: Arja Kreuter / Treasurer: Lucia Seleka / Social Media and Website Directors: Joy Meyer and Joanna Swart Membership: Joanna Swart / Events Organisers: Madeleine Wikner and Anne Naylor / Teacher Training: Andrea Vermeulen



By Joanne Bath

Suzuki violin teacher from the Suzuki Association of the Americas: suzukiassociation.org

Excerpted from a talk given to parents of the Greenville Suzuki Association, 11/1999

"I love to PRACTICE"

"I love to practice!", that's what we all want our children to say. Here are some ideas for how parents can get there without resorting to things they wish they hadn't! These suggestions can keep you motivated so that you can help your children have the best possible musical experience.

Enjoy the process. If you can figure out how to have pleasant practice sessions, you and your children will succeed. This may be the hardest part of the whole process, and perhaps the most crucial. Suzuki said that little children

should "practice three minutes, five times a day, with joy." The main goal for practice should be with joy.

Be consistent. If your child knows that you will practice every day at the same time, it is easier for you and more secure for your child. Find a time that works best for your family. If you can, practice for ten or fifteen minutes before school.

Don't negotiate. If you practice only when your child feels like it, you will probably never practice. Get in the habit of regular practice and do it. Say: "Practicing is what we do in our family." I have found that "in our family" is one of the great

test phrases you can use. If children believe that something is done in their family, they will do it!

Be reasonable. Don't expect perfection. One of the parent's most important jobs is to show children that life is not a matter of being perfect, but one of trying new things and growing. We do not want children to be overly cautious about learning. We want them to be interested in a variety of things, and willing to accept a challenge.

Work for an accomplishment rather than a set amount of time. One of the best ways you can teach your children to be efficient workers is to stop early when they have accomplished the goals

for a practice session. If students can learn to reach their goals in less time, they learn efficiency.

Do not ask for too much. If you stop the practice session before the child is ready to stop, the child will want to play again the next day. Suzuki said, "Move slowly and never stop".

Gradually lengthen practice time. Children need to slowly gain physical stamina. They will also have more repertoire as time progresses, and practicing will automatically get longer as they review. Some of my students review a whole book each day.

Focus on quality rather than quantity. Small manageable sections can be worked out with a feeling of success. Do one measure thoroughly so the child can really master it. More is not always better. It is better to play fewer pieces and play them well, so move slowly and carefully.

Move at your child's pace. Compare only so you have a general idea of what others are doing. Allow your child to move at a pace that is natural for her.

"Say: 'Practicing is what we do in our family.' If children believe that something is done in their family, they will do it!"

Know what you are doing. You are the home teacher. To learn what you should be doing at home with your child, ask the teacher. Take notes or tape the lesson.

Be in charge. The secret to successful practicing is that the parent must be in charge to a greater or lesser degree depending on the child's age.

Focus on what is right. Tell children what they are doing well. Parents often ask if they can help their children successfully if they are not musicians themselves. Actually, non-musician parents often have a much easier time than musician parents. Musicians are trained

to find mistakes so that they can correct them, while people who are not musicians tend to hear the music and not the mistakes.

Stay positive. Be of good cheer. Avoid statements like, "You're not even trying," "That's terrible," or, "You're just trying to irritate me!" If you feel something hurtful coming, put your hand over your mouth. Do not say something that could destroy weeks of positive growth.

Remember the power of praise. Praise always accomplishes more than criticism. Sometimes it is not just praise but acknowledgment. Acknowledge what the child is doing. Keep a running list of all the wonderful things that your child does. If your child is just starting to read, make the list in large print so the child can read for himself all the things that he did well.

Give rewards. From the beginning, try to establish the desire and pattern of practice. You don't have to always give rewards, but if you do at certain times, you'll find that you will get good work from your child. Austin, our six-year-old grandson, will work hard for shiny pennies, which we call "gold coins." I sometimes



About the author @ bathj@ecu.edu

Joanne Bath is the Hardy Distinguished Professor of Suzuki Pedagogy at the School of Music, East Carolina University in Greenville, NC. She is an SAA-registered Violin Teacher Trainer, a former SAA Board member, and a frequent clinician at institutes and workshops. Joanne was the professor nominated from East Carolina University for the 2010 O. Max Gardner Award, which is given to honor one who is deemed to have made a great contribution to the betterment of humankind, and she was the 1996 recipient of the prestigious North Carolina Award in Fine Arts.



times give him one for everything he does well in a practice session.

Consider listening part of practicing. Listening makes the practicing and learning easy. Put your child to bed every night with a tape of the next piece. He will be able to learn the notes to that piece very rapidly, and all you will have to do is show him the bowings. If you are in a time crunch, and simply can't practice one day, listen. If you have to choose between practicing and listening, listen. If you go on a camping trip and you can't take the violin, take the tape player and listen.

Give projects and assignments. Deadlines and performances are very motivational. A performance could be just making a video or audio tape for the grandparents, or playing over the tele-

"Praise always accomplishes more than criticism. Keep a running list of all the wonderful things that your child does"

phone. Get children to play as much as they possibly can.

Review every day. Most of my students have a review chart. When they are more advanced, they may do three pieces from each book or they may do one book a day. The students at the end of Book 2 should play all of the pieces in

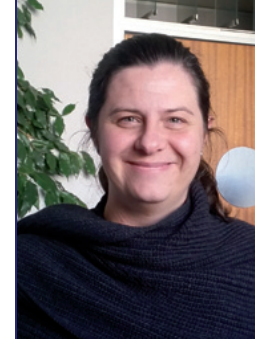
Book 2 every day. This may mean two practice sessions. If your child is in Book 1, he should be practicing all of the pieces in Book 1 every day.

Play review games. Children love "Lucky Dip". Write cards with the names of all the pieces that the children play and put them in a box. The children draw the name of a piece of music from the box, and play the piece. Or have your child play along with the CD.

Divide practice sessions in approximate thirds: one-third review, one-third preview, and one-third polishing. Polishing means working on the last three pieces and getting those so that they are performance ready.

Help older children find time to practice. One of the best things you can do is to excuse your teenager from some household tasks in exchange for practicing. Make it easy for them.

This is a very special time that you have with your children. You have your child one-on-one during practice. Sometimes that is the only time that a parent and child have alone together. Treasure your children and their accomplishments. Be understanding, encouraging and loving and I promise you that you will have success beyond anything you could have ever imagined! ■



By Jolene Kokot
Suzuki parent. Children: 'Tighe (4) is a pre-twinkler and Finn (7) is finishing off Twinkle Variations

Teacher: Maria Meyer



Musing about **A MUSE**

The inspiring story of the prodigal Mischa Elman.

In Nurtured for Love, Shin'ichi Suzuki writes of how a phonograph player—an old style wind-up handle and bugle version—found its way into his home, prompting him to buy a record. His first purchase was of Mischa Elman performing Schubert's Ave Maria, and listening to this performance brought about Suzuki's Eureka moment, one which opened his eyes forever to music.

Reading this made me wonder who Mischa Elman was: I have never taken much notice of the performers of classical music—rather concerning myself with the composers instead—but since Suzuki was very specific about this particular rendition, my curiosity was piqued. Luckily for me, we live in an age where we are but a few keystrokes away from a seemingly limitless font of information.

Mischa Elman was born in a small town in 1891 in the Russian Empire. It became apparent from a very young age that Mischa had perfect pitch but Mischa's family were hesitant in encouraging a career as a musician as musicians were not very high up on the social scale. In time, Mischa's father relented and bought a miniature violin for the young boy, who quickly taught himself some tunes. Soon thereafter Mischa was admitted to the Imperial Academy

of Music in Odessa. By the age of 11, after auditioning for Leopold Auer and impressing him greatly, Mischa was admitted to the St Petersburg Conservatory.

During a trip to Pavlovsk, Auer arranged for Mischa to play with the famous Colonne Orchestra but did not reveal Mischa's age to Eduard Colonne (the conductor)—who hated child prodigies. On the evening of the performance, Mischa's age was discovered by Eduard Colonne—while Mischa was waiting, violin in hand, to go onto the platform to perform! The famous conductor was furious that he had engaged a child and flatly refused to continue with the programme!

Colonne was assured that Mischa had the recommendation of Auer himself and was capable of doing justice to the music but Colonne was adamant: "I have never yet played with a child, and I refuse to start now!" Can you imagine? And so 11 year old Mischa had to play with piano accompaniment while conductor and orchestra sat listening.

Unbelievable! You would think that Colonne would have felt bad for the child, who really had done nothing wrong. It was only after Colonne had heard Mischa play that he went to Mischa and said: "The best apology

I can make for what I said is to ask you to do me the honour of playing with the Orchestra Colonne in Paris'. Four months later Mischa went to Paris and played the Mendelssohn concerto for Eduard Colonne with great success.

At least there was a positive ending to that experience! What a brave young man Mischa Elman was. It is said that you can 'hear' someone's character in music. I wonder if that is what Colonne and Suzuki heard.

In describing Mischa Elman's version of Ave Maria, Suzuki wrote: "I felt my very soul entranced by the sweet tone of his playing. A dream-like melody wrapped in velvety softness. I was shocked by the experience". Reading this description made me wonder what exactly Suzuki had heard. What was it that inspired him to learn to create music himself? This is what I found: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuS5UQSLhfc>.

I would guess that every great artist had to overcome a number of obstacles in order to achieve success. Maybe the complex emotions experienced when facing challenges add to the depth of the artwork created? All I can say is that I am pleased that Mischa Elman was brave enough to play his violin that day. ■



By Nicola van Zyl Smit,
Suzuki Recorder teacher

Western Cape



By Louise Howell
Suzuki violin teacher

Durban

Suzuki Recorder CAPE TOWN

"I look forward to further collaborations with colleagues who teach other instruments that sound well together with recorders, with a variety of repertoire from the Suzuki method".



Six of my students were able to enjoy the highly memorable Buffalo Suzuki Strings combined concert at Bishops chapel held in April 2015. The recorder players played with excellent sound projection together with the 100 violins from the USA and SA on this occasion.

I remain imaginative about practical as well as general philosophical aspects of the Suzuki method. Myself and other recorder teachers in Wynberg, Camps Bay and Muizenberg, continued with beginner recorders using aspects of the Suzuki method since 2015 to great success including recorder playing supporting the senior phase curriculum, and young recorders winning awards. November saw the 3rd concert of the year involving Suzuki recorder players, again held at the beautiful Franschoek NG church, including both Suzuki repertoire and Christmas carols.

Similar to teaching the recorder, my students of the foundation phase all have a good understanding of high and low, and I often use tonic solfa singing to establish this, something I am increasingly opening up to. This works particularly well with particular areas of repertoire such as Kodály folksongs.

I look forward to further collaborations with colleagues who teach other instruments that sound well together with recorders, with a variety of repertoire from the Suzuki method and related repertoire from the Renaissance and modern works. ■



The violin is thriving in

DURBAN

"The more time I spend with the Suzuki Method the more respect and admiration I have for the vision and genius of Dr. Suzuki".



I have approximately 45 students, 12 of whom attend violin with a parent or *au pair*. The Grade 3's and 4's each learn in a group, approximately 10 in each, as unfortunately this is all the timetable will allow. The rest have an individual lesson and a group lesson during school hours and play in the Senior Primary Orchestra.

This last year I have had a very special time with two pupils who

are here for only a year. In July 2015 Simon Pryor (Age 10, Book 4) and his sister Elsa Ruth (Age 7, Book 3) arrived in SA from the US. They live in Pietermaritzburg and travel for an hour to get to their violin lesson in Durban. Because of the travelling they have not been able to attend group lessons but that did not stop them from having fun at the end of year Christmas concert.

The more time I spend with the Suzuki Method the more respect and admiration I have for the vision and genius of Dr. Suzuki. How wonderful that children from different countries are able to play together in a concert without any rehearsal, thanks to the common repertoire.

We are all truly blessed to be the recipients of Dr. Suzuki's most inspired legacy. ■

Review of 2015



News from Maria Botha

Suzuki violin teacher, Cape Town

Hi Everyone,

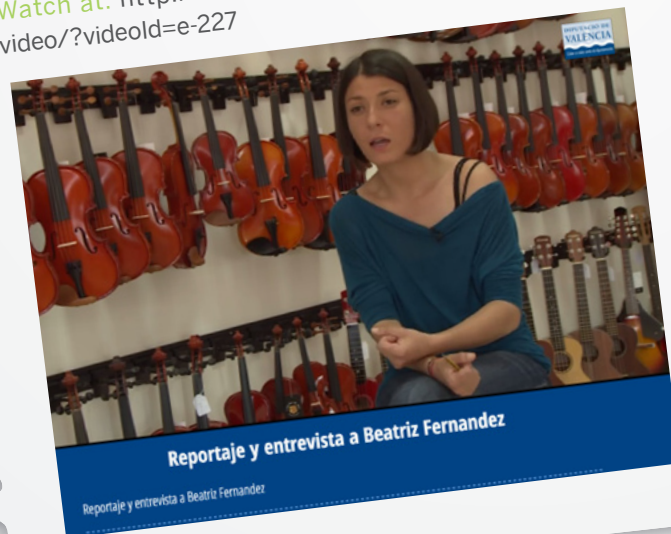
I just want to say Hi from Cape Town and would love you to know that so much is happening here. **We need more Suzuki teachers and could even give a full time employment to a Suzuki trained teacher.** Please let me know if anyone is interested.

In the meantime, if you want to come and join and observe what is happening here, please don't hesitate to come and teach/observe/give a hand.

Herewith **a little movie of our European Suzuki teachers who fly all the way in their summer vacations to give me a hand on their own expense.** I really need help. The movie is in Spanish but the photos tell the story!

Maria Botha

Watch at: <http://www.enetres.tv/channels/diputv/video/?videoid=e-227>



Annual National Concert 2015

By Madeleine Wikner

Our National Concert was held on the 6th of June 2015 at Brescia House School Bryanston in Johannesburg. We started our rehearsal early on the day. This was followed by a picnic lunch on the field outside.

The Program was lengthy and a lot of children were able to attend. It was necessary to use the two galleries upstairs on either side of the stage to accommodate everyone. Quite unexpectedly this added an extra dimension to the sound. The audience experienced a "sound in the round" effect and so we will repeat this effect in the future.

The Senior Ensemble opened the concert with Scottish Reels, followed by the cellos ably led by Natalie, and we performed the Bach A Minor Violin Concerto, 1st movement, for the first time.

Lovmore once again gave us a violin to raffle for which we were grateful, as this extra income booked SASAs coffers for the next Teacher-training session. Colleen Marais was our able accompanist. Many thanks to all the teachers whose concerted effort made this concert possible, for Anne Naylor and her able leadership and planning, and all the parents and children for their hard work.



Johannesburg

SASA WORKSHOP 2015

By Joanna Swart

SASA Workshop 2015 was a fun-filled time, featuring gypsy music with Stieneke Poot from the Netherlands. Children from Suzuki Book 1 and beyond learned gypsy tunes from listening to Stieneke play them in the classes. In addition, the children were involved in orchestra, choir, an African drumming session and Suzuki repertoire masterclasses. The choir, led by violin teacher Lucia Seleka, was another favourite session, with the children learning several different songs based on a train theme. Catchy songs and the beat of two djembes got children and teachers alike moving and using multiple languages of South Africa and familiar Suzuki rhythms.

A mini workshop for Pre-Tinklers was held the second morning and featured 'boat rowing' to Lightly Row and singing words to other familiar early Book 1 pieces.

A helpful parents session over coffee and croissants was led by Suzuki mother Erika Helmbold. During one of the lunch breaks, Stieneke gave an informal demonstration to interested teachers of Music Mind Games, amazing materials used to create music literacy with joyfulness.

The final concert was a celebration of all that was learned over the weekend and where all the gypsy violinists adorned themselves with brightly coloured scarves. The workshop was held at Brescia House School in Bryanston, Johannesburg over the weekend of the 25-26th of July.

Grahamstown

GRADUATION CONCERT

By Sue Kunju

Grahamstown held our very first Suzuki Violin Graduation concert in October 2015. Most of the children playing were from Victoria Primary School although we also had some from surrounding schools such as St Mary's and Mary Waters. The concert featured all our graduates playing pieces from Book 1 and 2, with group performances from all the violinists learning via the Suzuki Method. There were up to 8 graduates from Book 1 and about 15 Twinkle Variation Graduates. A truly magical night and exciting time for us all in Grahamstown!

TEACHER'S TRAINING

Suzuki Course-Level 2

By Sue Moyo

The last module of my course for Level 2, was held in December 2015. The first four days were spent revisiting the philosophies behind the Suzuki method as well as learning once again, how to teach Books 1, 2 and 3. I always find that with each course, I learn numerous new things which means it is never purely revision but rather a kind of renewal! This course in particular was a challenge because we had exams to play and go through. It has been the hardest for me, so far but also the most enriching as I didn't think I could get through it, a few years ago. Thank you, as always, to our inspiring teacher trainers, Christophe, Reuben and Karen.

GRADUATION CONCERT

By Andrea Vermeulen

2015's Graduation Concert took place Graduation Concert 14 November 2015 at John Roos's beautiful Villa Taormina in Waterkloof Pretoria.

The requirements to graduate from Twinkle/a Book are:

- Be more or less half a book ahead of the piece/book from which you are graduating.
- Make a video of you playing all five Twinkle Variations and the Theme/the entire Book from which you are graduating, by memory.
- Attend the Graduation Concert and perform one of the Variations/pieces (by picking out of a hat) either as a solo or in a small group.

The video is watched by several Suzuki Teachers and the student receives both a report and a certificate at the end of the Graduation Concert. After the Concert a MASSIVE feast is enjoyed by all.

35 violinists and cellists from Gauteng graduated from Twinkle – Book 5. Grahamstown also had a Graduation Concert organized by Suzuki Teacher Sue Kunju. 24 violinists from Grahamstown graduated from Twinkle and Book 1.

Thank you to the parents who helped out, brought food and supported their children, the teachers for all their hard work and especially to the young violinists who really made us proud! Congratulations!



Contact us today

E-mail us: Suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com

Visit us at Suzukimusic.co.za

Like us on Facebook: **The South African Suzuki Association**