

## Contents

### Reports

- ❖ European Suzuki Association Board Meeting 2013
- ❖ Suzuki Saturday - Centurion, Gauteng - Madeleine Wikner
- ❖ Suzuki Concert - Camps Bay, Western Cape - Sonnika Venter
- ❖ April Teachers' Training - Level 4 Violin - Joanna Swart
- ❖ April Teachers' Training - Levels 1 & 2 Violin - Engela Tomlinson
- ❖ From Our New Teacher Trainees
- ❖ Suzuki Goes To Bloemfontein - Maria Meyer

### Up-Coming Events

- ❖ Workshops and Concerts! Keep a look out!

### Pupils' Column

- ❖ My Experience in Simfonia Juventi - Daniel Selek
- ❖ Simfonia Juventi Orchestral Week 2013 - Nina Nathanson

### Announcements

- ❖ Leamogetswe Safety Home donation
- ❖ UNISA donates to workshop
- ❖ SASA Facebook! "Like" us!

### Editorial Team

Editor : Joanna Swart  
Design : Arlene Kersten

# South African Suzuki Association

## Newsletter

May 2013

*"Don't hurry don't rest. Without stopping, without haste, carefully taking one step at a time will surely get you there." - Dr. Shinichi Suzuki*

### **European Suzuki Association Board Meeting 2013**

Andrea Kreuter

This year's ESA Board Meeting was held 16-17 March in Estonia. Congratulations to our Trainers Martin Ruttimann for being re-elected as Chairman of ESA and to Karen-Michelle Kimmitt for becoming an Honorary Board Member. ESA has added two new instruments: trumpet and accordion. Latvia and Austria have also now become members of the Association. Next year's Board Meeting is 17-18 April 2014 in Belgium. The meeting shall be followed by a two-day workshop on "Back to Basics." This course is offered to all teachers levels 1-5. For more information, visit <http://www.europeansuzuki.org/>. Be sure to also visit the South African page for our events details!

#### **Suzuki Saturday – Centurion**



#### **Suzuki Saturday – Centurion**





SASA Box 206, Ferndale, 2160 • SASA0722031515 • [suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com](mailto:suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com)

## **Suzuki Saturday, Centurion, Gauteng**

Madeleine Wikner

On the 9th March 2013, SASA held a Suzuki Saturday, also known this year as "Teddy Bears' Picnic Day". The venue was Cornwall Hill School Music Centre, Centurion.

The doors opened at 9am and Pre-Twinklers, Twinklers and anyone fond of Teddy Bears went to the Big Hall upstairs. Entry was by way of a Teddy Bear Colouring-in Competition and the coloured-in pictures were pinned up for all to see. Games, action-songs and a little Suzuki play-along enlivened the proceedings, with Anne Naylor leading.

Downstairs Suzuki parents were comfortably seated on big sofas in the spacious foyer. Joanna Swart gave an interesting talk on "Listening", such an important and integral part of the Suzuki Method. Sheets were handed out on various relevant topics such as "practising", showing how parents participate in this daily routine and can motivate children to remain disciplined. More advanced Suzuki students practiced a new South African folk song for the National Concert, under the guidance of Andrea Kreuter and Lize-Marie van Dyk.

Next was an informative talk given by Hannes Jacobs, luthier, on violin making. Hannes showed the various parts of the violin in their raw state before assembly; he answered questions on buying a violin and prices. Finally, Lize-Marie van Dyk demonstrated Hannes' latest violin by playing *Thais*, by Massenet, which we all enjoyed.

Tea Time meant "Picnic Time" and the Teddy Bears rushed outside for a cupcake icing session. Someone, with terrific foresight, had positioned the tables on grass, close to a water fountain while a mother hovered close by with a towel and soap.

After tea, all students watched a video on Nigel Kennedy playing Vivaldi, while parents and teachers joined for a our Annual General Meeting in the foyer.

A SASA committee for 2013 was elected and our new Chairperson, Maria Meyer, went over the Outgoing Chairperson's Report on behalf of Madeleine Wikner. Maria also thanked everyone for their support, especially the Cornwall mothers who had provided the cupcakes and tea. Anne Naylor gave a power point presentation on the history of the South African Suzuki Association, after which we all felt a sense of achievement.

The morning closed with a mini-concert of Suzuki Book I pieces. This Suzuki Saturday will be remembered for being action-packed with fun activities suitable for all ages. We look forward to the next one....

## **Suzuki Concert - Camps Bay, Western Cape**

Sonnika Venter

Sandwiched between beautiful Lion's Head and the turquoise coloured ocean, the little "N.G. Kerk" in Argus fevered Camps Bay was fleetingly transformed into a little piece of heaven on Sunday 10 March 2013: Close to fifty Suzuki students, 4 teachers and 1 teacher-trainee participated in a very special concert. Not only did this event celebrate Suzuki violin (and how it has grown!), but also introduced Suzuki piano, recorder and cello to our appreciative audience in the Western Cape.

The studios of Renè van der Westhuizen and Maria Botha collaborated with the piano studio of Sonnika Venter – 43 violinists and 3 pianists – and a delightful selection of repertoire was presented to our audience.

Some of the Masidlale Group violinists charmed the audience with their rendition of Xhosa Traditional songs.

Suzuki Recorder Teacher, Nicola van Zyl Smit elated the audience with an inspiring introduction to Suzuki recorder.

Suzuki cello teacher-trainee, Warda Wannemaker enthused everyone with an introduction to Suzuki cello.

This concert was a striking prelude to 'What-is-to-come' with regards to Suzuki in the Western Cape.



**Suzuki Concert – Camps Bay**



**Suzuki Concert – Camps Bay**



## April Violin Teachers' Training

### Level 4 (Suzuki Books 6 & 7) - Randpark Ridge, Johannesburg

Joanna Swart

During the bright and sunny week of 14-18 April, teacher trainer Karen Kimmet flew in from her chilly Canadian home to give three new Level 4 trainees insight into the depths of the more advanced music and technique of the Suzuki literature and pedagogy. Many hours were spent in discussion on various teaching topics and much time was spent in demonstrations and one-on-one instruction. Trainees Andrea Kreuiter, Joanna Swart, Maria Meyer and Madeleine Wikner (refresher course) received much help and inspiration from the week. Many thanks to Maria Meyer, who hosted Karen and in whose home the training was held. Many thanks, too, to those parents who brought their children for lessons.



Andrea Kreuiter, Karen Kimmet, Joanna Swart and



Daniel Seleka and Karen Kimmet



SASA Box 206, Ferndale, 2160 • SASA0722031515 • [suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com](mailto:suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com)

## **April Violin Teachers' Training**

### **Levels 1 & 2 (Suzuki Books 1, 2 & 3) - Kyalami, Midrand, Gauteng 25-29 April 2013**

Engela Tomlinson

*This year SASA is pleased to have four new violin teachers join our teachers training, Engela Tomlinson (Kyalami), Melissa Witbooi (Johannesburg), Susan Kunju (Grahamstown), Tinotenda Chikoto (Zimbabwe/Johannesburg). Returning for Level 2 is Joy Meyer, currently studying music at North-West University in Potchefstroom.*

Madeleine Wikner has asked me for many years to be part of the Suzuki teaching team but the timing was never right. Recently when I was asked again I got very excited as the timing was right.

I recently got back into my music after thirteen years of absence.

I was so looking forward to the course. Little did I realize how intense it would be, but understandably so as we had less than five days to go through a lot of information and teachings.

What I observed and was exposed to was mind blowing. Some of the stuff I heard for the first time!

I started playing the violin when I was 7 years old, I was trained by good teachers, I had been a violin teacher for a long time and played in an orchestra for almost two decades - you'd think you must know something, but I realized that I have so much to learn. I am excited to learn and grow and be a teacher that will make a difference in the lives of students.

What a privilege it was to meet Christophe Bossuat, a great teacher and educator. He has so much to offer - I wish we had more time with him.

These five days were like starting all over again - we didn't just play through pieces but worked in detail on bowing technique, hand and arm technique, sound etc. The information and detail of every point that was discussed was excellent and made so much sense. We were taught how to play from the "inside" out and not just notes.

The group classes with the children that came in the afternoons was a wonderful opportunity for us to watch and observe how Christophe teaches and works with the children.

Since teaching after the course and applying the techniques and knowledge that was shared I can already see and feel a difference in myself and my students.

It was an unforgettable experience and I am so looking forward to learning and becoming a competent Suzuki teacher.

Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this life changing experience.

## From Our New Teacher Trainees

"I really enjoyed the [teachers' training] course...as I learned so much about philosophy of teaching young children as well as the various steps one can use when teaching from holding the instrument to playing each and every piece in the book. It was overwhelming at first as I think we might have expected too much of ourselves but as the days went by, we learned to let go of our worries and hang on to what we can, revising as we went along. I also realised that I too have so much to gain from the course in terms of my own playing. So, in a nutshell, lots to learn!!!! And so much more to give!!! All very exciting!!!" - *Susan Kunju (Susan teaches violin, viola, guitar and piano at Victoria Primary School in Grahamstown, Eastern Cape, and is now learning to apply the Suzuki Method to her violin teaching).*

"I am in awe and have to quiet down and meditate on all that we have been exposed to. There is so much that we need to learn, our appetites have been whetted and we have been exposed to a wonderful way to grow and to make a difference to the students we have the privilege to teach. Thank you Christophe for the difference you started to make in my life! We have just been exposed to the tip of the iceberg of the Suzuki Method and I am excited and looking forward to learn more." - *Engela Tomlinson (Engela teaches in her home studio in Kyalami, Midrand).*

"The course was an amazing experience, the environment was warm and we were all there to learn, everyone was very open minded.... Christophe also is an amazing teacher, I am still in shock at how precise we should teach the twinkles had no idea there are 48 steps... I learnt a lot of information in 5 days... It was amazing!!! Enjoyed! I know I have my Suzuki Family in South Africa." - *Tinotenda Chikoto (Tinotenda resides in Zimbabwe).*



**Susan Kunju, Betsie Meyer, Melissa Witbooi, Tinodenda Chikoto, Christophe Bossuat, Joy Meyer and Engela Tomlinson.**

## **Suzuki Goes To Bloemfontein**

Maria Meyer

Upon invitation by Lesley-Ann Mathews, accompanist at the Odeion School of Music at the University of the Free State, Maria Meyer set off to Bloemfontein on Friday 19 April to present music lecturers and students with information on the activities of the South African Suzuki Association in South Africa. The two presentations were positively received and lecturers and students showed interest in SASA's teacher training courses. Unfortunately for many the courses are still not financially viable and SASA would still need to find ways to curb costs and make the courses more accessible to music teachers.

In the meantime, some of the lecturers enquired about the possibility of SASA running a workshop on group teaching at the Odeion School of Music. The event would focus especially on assisting teachers in the Mangaung String Programme, Bloemfontein's thriving community music project, with skills to work with students in groups. SASA is currently in negotiations with teacher trainers Karen Kimmett (Canada) and Christophe Bossuat (France) to determine if such a workshop would be a possibility in Bloemfontein.

Dr. Suzuki believed that "perhaps it is music which will save the world". It would be wonderful if SASA, through the means of music, could be instrumental in giving children and adults the opportunity to a better life.



Maria Meyer and Prof. Nicol Viljoen



Maria Meyer and Leslie-Ann Mathews



## Up-Coming Events

- ❖ **1-5 July** - Level 4 Violin Teachers Training with Karen Kimmet (SASA members are welcome to participate in free group classes) - Johannesburg
- ❖ **6-7 July** - Suzuki Workshop with Karen Kimmet - Gauteng
- ❖ **20 July** - Rehearsal for Annual National Concert - Gauteng
- ❖ **27 July** - Annual National Concert - Gauteng
- ❖ **16-20 August** - Levels 1 and 2 Violin Teachers Training with Christophe Bossuat (SASA members are welcome to participate in free group classes) - Johannesburg
- ❖ **7-11 August** - Level 1 Cello Teachers Training with Ruben Rivera (SASA members are welcome to participate in free group classes) - Pretoria
- ❖ **September** - Graduation Concert - Gauteng



**Simfonia Juventi 2013**

## Pupils' Column

*Two of our Suzuki students were privileged to participate in the youth orchestra, Simfonia Juventi, this year. They were pleased to share their experience in this ensemble below.*

### My Experience in Simfonia Juventi

Daniel Seleka (14)

Simfonia Juventi is a youth orchestra for high school pupils from the age of 12 years until grade 12. The orchestra practices at Pro Arte in Alphen Park, Pretoria for six days during the April holidays. The standard of this orchestra is very high. From the way we sound, I'm certain that Nigel Kennedy would be proud of us.

To join the orchestra you have to play an audition at the beginning of the year. Once you are accepted, you don't have to play an audition for the next year. The only other audition will be during the orchestra camp to determine your placing. This year we were at least two Suzuki students playing in the orchestra, Nina Nathanson and I. It is our first year playing with Simfonia Juventi and we have really enjoyed it so far.

Each member is required to practice his/her orchestra music in advance in order to keep up the standard of the orchestra and to make the practice camp more productive. We certainly kept up the standard this year and the final concert in May promises to be excellent.

My experience in Simfonia Juventi has been awesome so far. It certainly has enriched my musical experience. The pieces we play this year are popular music and really nice to play and listen to. Most of them are easily recognisable, for example the 'Overture' to *The Barber of Seville*, music from *Gladiator*, *Lord of the Dance*, and *Kaiser Waltz*, just to name a few. It really is enjoyable to hear all the different sections and instruments playing together as one orchestra. During practice sessions, a 1½ hour session with the *tutti* (whole orchestra) flies by like 10 minutes. On the other hand, the same practice session may sometimes seem like an infinite amount of playing, with your back going through the backrest and your chair about as comfortable as a rock.

Friends are quickly and easily made. The social on the first night of the orchestra camp is a big hit and a great success. We have lots of fun, playing games and generally getting to know everyone (about 75 children!). Breaks are like mini socials, where there would be different groups varying in size talking and eating together. I really enjoyed making new friends and socialising with them.

The conductor, "Oom Fanie" Jooste, a retired professor, is a perfectionist and is very strict, but also very humorous. His jokes spice up the atmosphere and make us feel relaxed and at home. For instance, once while we were playing we were 'falling apart' because we were not looking at him. He stopped us, took out his iPhone, and opened a 'Parrot' app. Then he said "Kyk vir my!!" (Look at me). The app repeated what he said in a high-pitched, chirping parrot voice. It was hilarious and the whole orchestra was folded double on their seats with laughter! We certainly hardly ever forgot to look at him again.

Travelling is quite pleasant as new friends are often made on the two buses we travel in. To pass the time we usually talk, and sometimes we just dose. It is delightful to go and see new places and to play for an enthusiastic audience, inspiring other children to start playing an instrument. One of the things I enjoyed the most was staying with the host parents, because it was like having a second set of parents. They were excellent hosts and prepared real feasts for us - my three friends and I - four teenage boys with healthy appetites! Thank you to the organisers of Simfonia Juventi tours who do their best to group friends together in order to place them the host parents.

This year's program is as follows:

After a workshop (camp) and an informal gratis concert during the first week of April, we travelled to Nelspruit on the 19th of April and stayed there for two nights. On the 17th of May, we will be travelling to Nylstroom/Naboomspruit and we will stay over for one night. The last concert of the year will be in the ZK Matthews hall in UNISA in Pretoria on the 25th of May. This is a very popular concert and tickets sold like hot cakes!

I really enjoy playing in Simfonia Juventi. I am definitely going back next year!

## **Simfonia Juventi Orchestral Week 2013**

Nina Nathanson

From the 1st to the 6th of April, I was lucky enough to experience rehearsing as part of the Simfonia Juventi orchestra. After my positive audition results in January, I started practicing the second violin parts of the repertoire, which varies from baroque music to modern day movie music. I found some of the pieces challenging, but when I showed up at the orchestra week I was satisfied that I had learned all the pieces sufficiently.

On my arrival at Pro Arte Alphen Park, the venue at which the orchestral week was being held, I had another audition – this time to determine my place within the second violins. I was asked to play a piece from the repertoire that the judges decided on upon my arrival. Once everyone had played their audition, I discovered that I had been placed as the third second violinist. This means that I am playing Summer by Antonio Vivaldi – a song that is played in Simfonia Juventi by a selected string group.

The first day was absolutely fantastic, ending with a social where I really got to know more people through fun (and sometimes team-building) activities. The rest of the week was no different – it was amazing all the way through to the last moment on Saturday when our first concert was held. Out of the thirteen pieces we practiced, we played eight. I am greatly looking forward to our first tour on the 19th – 21st of April.

Below is a list of our repertoire so that you can have an idea of the variety of songs we play:

1. Overture from 'The Barber of Seville' – Gioachino Rossini
2. Waltz from 'Eugen Onegin' – Piotr Ilich Tchaikovsky
3. Emperor Waltzes – Johan Strauss
4. Eine Kleine Nachtmusik – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
5. Music from 'Lord of the Dance' – Ronan Hardiman
6. Music from the film 'Gladiator' – Hans Zimmer
7. An American in Paris Suite – George Gershwin
8. 'Tragic' Overture – Johannes Brahms
9. Folksong and Hunters Chorus from 'Der Freischütz' – Carl Maria von Weber
10. Intermezzo from 'Goyescas' – Enrique Granados
11. Piano Concerto in G Minor – Charles-Camille Saint-Saëns
12. Horn Concerto in E flat Minor – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
13. Summer – Antonio Vivaldi

If you are considering auditioning for Simfonia Juventi, but are not sure if you should, my advice to you is: DO IT! I can guarantee you will NOT regret it.



SASA Box 206, Ferndale, 2160 • SASA0722031515 • [suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com](mailto:suzuki.association.sa@gmail.com)

## Announcements

- ❖ **Leamogetswe Safety Home** has received R30 000 for instruments from VGI Consulting Incorporating. It enabled us to buy 20 violins and a good keyboard. - *Betsie Meyer*
- ❖ **UNISA** will give R15 000 for our yearly Suzuki workshop [held this year from 6-7 July] which will enable at least 30 children to participate. - *Betsie Meyer*
- ❖ Please "**Like**" the new South African Suzuki Association **Facebook** page!

## Annual National Concert 27 July in Gauteng



This year's **Annual National Concert** is sure to be a treat as we pair an **art exhibition** and **raffle** with our own **violin** students!

*Cheese and wine to complement.*  
*Cheese and wine to complement.*

SASA members: Please **diarise** this date and keep a look out for a forthcoming email for details.



## Keep The Date!



6-7 July - **Suzuki Workshop** with Karen Kimmet – Gauteng



"Don't hurry don't rest. Without stopping, without haste, carefully taking one step at a time will surely get you there." - Dr. Shinichi Suzuki