

## 2019 Teacher Trainer Appointments

### Lee Marais VIOLIN, SOUTH AFRICA

Lee Marais was born in 1975 at Paarl in the Cape Province of South Africa. At age seven she began studying both violin and piano whilst still a student at Paarl Girl's School, completing the grade exams of The Royal Schools and UNISA (University of South Africa). Her earliest playing experience was as a member of the high school orchestra from 1983 to 1990.

Lee matriculated from Randburg High School in the Gauteng (Transvaal) region of South Africa with both piano and violin as her major studies. In the Transvaal she was a member of the Transvaal Education Department (TED) youth orchestra under the baton of noted violinist and teacher Professor Alan Solomon.

Upon completing her school career Lee enrolled for a B.Mus. degree at the University of Stellenbosch with Professor Eric Rycroft for violin studies and Professor John Antoniadis for piano. In 1996 she moved to the University of Pretoria where her violin studies continued under Professor Alan Solomon and from where she graduated B.Mus. in 1998.

From 1996 Lee played frequently as an extra string player with a number of professional orchestras including The State Theatre Orchestra in Pretoria and The Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra experiencing a vast range of repertoire and performing all the major Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky and Prokofiev ballets scores at The State Theatre and most of the main stream symphonic repertoire with the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra whose concerts were broadcast live on Classic FM South Africa.

Lee began to study the SUZUKI™ Method of teaching in 1997 under

Nicolette Solomon and continued to progress under Christophe Bossuat and Karen-Michele Kimmet. After initially studying in South Africa Lee went on to study in Lyon in France, attaining her Suzuki certification level 5 in 2004.

In 1998 Lee founded The Violin Academy in Pretoria with a small number of students, but on finding that the demand for tuition was in the nearby city of Johannesburg some seventy kilometres away, where she also taught at a number of schools, Lee moved there in 2000.

In the late 1990's the South African Suzuki Association (SASA) was formed with Lee as a founder member, an organization that has now grown to thirty active teachers and four hundred children.

The ability to accompany her students is something Lee finds both enjoyable and of great benefit to the pupils. The experience of playing in a professional orchestra convinced Lee that this was not the career path she wished to

follow and her exposure to the philosophy of the SUZUKI™ Method convinced her rather that becoming a Suzuki violin teacher was a path she preferred to follow. She finds great appeal in the "triangle" relationship between teacher, parent and student, where parental involvement assists more rapid progress in between lessons once the parent understands the teaching point of a lesson. The use of the "mother tongue" together with the gradual step by step mastery of each point and an emphasis on beautiful tone, phrasing and bow speed helps Lee focus on creating talent and on promoting the idea that everyone can play which Lee feels is a key part of her work as a teacher.

Lee's objective through her teaching is to spread the Suzuki philosophy in its application to the violin, convinced of the human enrichment it brings to families, student and teachers whilst recognizing that the journey is more important than the result.

