

2002 Minijournal



On Music

by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki

Within each note they play, how innumerable and varied are the emotions and senses expressed by great artists!

When it comes to tone itself, besides the matters of color and volume, there are the realms of tone with sensibility and tone without sensibility. This is what constitutes the life-force of the world of music.

Printed notes express only the broadest intentions. The composer specifies no features in the printed notes' appearance other than pitch and rhythm. Even Beethoven's and Mozart's eighth-notes are printed identically.

But these very eighth-notes express Beethoven's and Mozart's different human sensibilities. Although each composer's notes are therefore expressed differently on the instrument, there is no way to indicate that difference in the printed note.

People whose sensibilities understand Beethoven, and whose senses have been nurtured to feel Bach within themselves will respond to those identically printed notes by expressing Beethoven's and Bach's respective human sensibilities in their music. The tone of people who haven't yet developed a feel for Bach will not embody a live Bach sound even if they are taught that Bach is played a certain way. Music is a world created between and among people.

How blessed are those whose musical sensibility is developed through music.

It cannot be helped if people who teach notes but don't nurture music are labeled as ineffective teachers. I suppose, though, that some of those people are unable to recognize that such a label applies to them. They remain self-satisfied, at peace with all the world. It is proof that people who have

the capacity to be self-reflective are responsive to music.

Often hear from parents who tell me that although they had wanted to learn music, they never had the opportunity. As a result, they wanted to make sure that their children would grow into people who understood music. This is a wonderful desire. Even as they strive to nurture music in their children, the parents too will unknowingly become people who feel music within themselves.

In return for their love for their children, these parents will one day unexpectedly find a beautiful sensibility inside themselves. I take great joy in the fact that a musical talent education for adults is taking place everywhere.

Just imagine what the world would be like if all humans were raised so they had a highly artistic sensibility and a morally beautiful heart.

People today are fairly unconcerned for these two points, perhaps because they do not directly lead to gains in daily life. Such people may have been raised from birth in a milieu where interest is always reckoned. But this is a miscalculation. In a world where we are in pursuit only of the benefits in front of our noses, a paucity of sensibility and virtue will continue to lead to catastrophes such as war, anxiety, conflict, and misfortune. This is what results from short-sighted reckoning. (May 1954)

(English translation by Lili Selden)

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Concert Manners

by Carolyn McCall

Listen regularly to the type of music your child is studying. Include recordings of pieces on upcoming concerts.

Attend concerts to learn standard concert behavior. Seek out free concerts with open seating, at least at first. Sit quietly in the back. Plan to stay as long as possible, but leave between numbers if necessary.

Avoid distracting others. Arrive a few minutes early and take care of young children's snack and bathroom needs. Seat siblings away from one another. Deactivate all electronic watches, pagers, cellular phones, and handheld games prior to the performance.

Watch and listen to the performance, and your child is likely to do the same. Your interest, enjoyment, and enthusiasm are contagious! Do not talk, and only whisper if vitally necessary. If you have a coughing fit, leave at once. Clap when other audience members clap. Often the audience claps when the performers come on stage. Clap at the end of a full piece but not between movements of a piece. The concert program shows if a piece has several movements.

Photograph only if allowed to do so. Do not take photos during the performance as it is distracting to performer and audience alike; wait until the conclusion of the piece.

Congratulate the performers after the performance and shake their hands, if the situation is appropriate. Compliments are rewarded with thank-yous.

Carolyn McCall began violin study in the program of Suzuki pioneer John Kendall in Edwardsville, Illinois. She holds an undergraduate degree in music from the University of Illinois and a master's degree in violin performance from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville.

International Travels for a Fun Play-in

by Sara Penny

Exotic travel with your students takes a little imagination and a few simple props. Students in our group classes for violin, viola and cello range from age three through high school. We combined everyone together for a play-in and transformed Aunt Rhody into an aural odyssey in D Major. The parents were invited to share in the adventure, and since it was so successful we'd like to share our ideas with other Suzuki groups.

Props

(1) World map on wall and an energetic parent to serve as narrator and map guru. Provide this parent with a magic wand or some other fun pointer. While the narrator shows the students the next destination the costume and percussion helpers can add new costumes and instruments.

(2) Costumes like hats, masks, or vests which are quickly applied. Another smiling parent to quickly plop on hats. A cowboy hat is obvious for the West, colorful scarves for Romania, a fez of red construction paper for Egypt, shawl for Scotland and other simple costumes work well.

(3) Percussion instruments to hand out in the audience. Another happy parent helps out. We use maracas from Mexico, but you can fill a small plastic bottles with macaroni or rice for great shakers. We had a rain stick for Brazil. You can take a cardboard tube and put in straight pins on all sides, tape the bottom, put rice inside, tape the top, and cover with contact paper or plastic wrap for an easy rain stick. Old oatmeal boxes for Chinese drums and jingle bells for the North Pole are other possibilities.

(4) Scripts for the teachers, pianist, and parents so they can help keep everyone on track.

(5) One or more leaders to demonstrate and lead each variation.

HAVE FUN!

Once upon a time there was a lovely lady named Aunt Rhody (regular Aunt Rhody start 2 on D - 3 for cello)

Her wonderful husband was Uncle Bob. He had worked for years and really wanted a vacation. (flaw 2nd finger which sounds minor—2 for cello)



They had many nieces and nephews. All of the children had grown up, and they had jobs all over the world. The nieces and nephews asked Aunt Rhody and Uncle Bob to come for a visit. Off they went to Guadalajara, Mexico, to see their first niece. (dotted rhythm—2 eighths—3 for cello)



They sailed on a big ship to Brazil to see their nephew who lived in a rain forest. (pizzicato regular Aunt Rhody; advanced students use left hand pizz.)



Their next stop was in Cairo, Egypt. Their nephew took them on a tour of pyramids. (high 2, low 1 which sounds harmonic minor—3 and low 1 for cello)



Aunt Rhody and Uncle Bob took an airplane to Beijing, China, to see their niece. (play 2nds, 2 on both A and D, 1 on both etc) start 3 for cello



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It was getting to be early winter and they didn't want to get stuck in the snow storms in Russia, so they rushed to "Rush Ya" for the next nephew. (as fast as you can, for once rushing is allowed!)

Ex. 6 Russian—as fast as you can play

Uncle Bob was excited for the trip to Romania because this niece had children who played advanced violin.

(Like Uncle Bob with low 2, use natural harmonic (soft 3rd on open strings—advanced students use artificial harmonics, start 2nd position—1 stich on F and 4 softly on C—harmonic requires flat bow near bridge.)

Ex. 7 Romania—beginning version harmonics

Ex. 8 Romania—advanced harmonic version

For Christmas they visited their nephew in Scotland. The bagpipers played with the violins at the Christmas banquet.

(Beginning students play drone on D.)

Ex. 9 Scotland—beginning student play bagpipe

Ex. 10 Scotland—advanced students

Aunt Rhody and Uncle Bob had always wanted to see Vienna so they were delighted when their niece invited them for ballroom dancing on New Year's Eve. (Piano provides waltz introduction. Beginners play open ADD waltz rhythm. Change to 3/4 time by making quarter note into a half note.)

Ex. 11 Viennese Waltz

Why is the Frog called the Frog?

"I think the frog is called a frog because maybe the person who invented it used part of a frog to make it the first time.

Another idea is maybe the person who made it had a last name that had something to do with a frog."

— Matt Schlais

They made a quick trek up to the North Pole to see their nephew who works in the Santa Claus toy factory. The elves were recovering from Christmas and planning ahead for next season. It was very cold and the violinists were shivering.

(Tremolo, regular Aunt Rhody—2 on D, 3 for cello)

Ex. 12 North Pole—chattering, chilling tremolo

The last stop was a Texas ranch for an old fashioned hoe-down with their niece's family.

(Use grasshopper rhythm shuffle A and D string doublestop, keep A going Western style—regular Aunt Rhody—2 on D—3 for cello)

Ex. 13 Aunt Rhody "Hoodoo" Variation

Safely home again, the happy couple enjoys listening to the music recorded during their travels.

(Thanks to Patty Walsler for gathering ideas from the Suzuki web page. We also want to thank Edmund Sprunger, Ann Monizka Smetzer, Ariel Wilbeck, Suzanne Brimhall, and Diana Beavre for sharing their teaching ideas with Suzuki Strings in Cedar City, Utah. Compiled with additions by Sara Penn.)

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Elgin Students Reading Together

Submitted by Lamar Blum, Director, Suzuki School of Elgin

A number of students from the Suzuki School of Elgin recently took part in a special library reading and book report project. Working in pairs and borrowing from the Suzuki School of Elgin's growing library of music-related books, the kids shared their comments about several books that other Suzuki students may enjoy reading.

JUSTICE YODER

Justice Yoder, age 14, read *The Philharmonic Gets Dressed* to Kate Yoder, age 8. Both agreed that they enjoyed the book and felt it was a good choice. Kate described the story as follows: "105 people get up. They all take baths, bubble baths or showers—4 few sing in the shower. They all get dressed in black and white. One man with black hair and a white lightning bolt in his hair gets all fancied up. He gets in a long black car because he's the conductor."

Hannah Vogel, age 11, read to Evan (8) and Chad (5). All three liked the project and recommended their book to other readers. Chad and Evan described the story *The Remarkable Farkle McBride* as follows: "It's about a boy who tried all different kinds of instruments. But he did not like them. But he becomes a maestro later."

Alex Jovce, age 9, read to Ben Jovce, age 6. Their book was *Berlioz the Bear* by Jan Brett. Both enjoyed the book and Ben really liked the sound effects and the pictures. They shared the story as follows: "Berlioz and his friends had a big concert to play in. On the way to the concert the wheel of the wagon got stuck in a hole. All of the animals tried to get the mule to move but then a bear came and stung the ox. The ox ran fast and got the bears to the concert in time."

Musical Max by Robert Krause was a good choice for Karen Darling (10) and Mikell Darling (5). They read together often and Mikell had fun naming the instruments shown in *Musical Max*. Mikell described the story: "Max played lots of instruments. Then he stopped playing instruments. Max started playing instruments again. I like all the instruments."

Thanks to these students for their reading recommendations.

Why is the Frog called the Frog?

Well, the frog makes a deep sound, right? The frog on the bow makes the same sound. Another theory comes from the name of the thing—a ma-bob used to hold jackets together. The frog on the bow holds the hairs to the wood.

— Jonathan Larson

How to Take Care of Yourself

So You Can Take Care of Your Children & Students



by Joanne Bath

For several years I have been noticing that many parents and teachers do not seem to be getting all of the joy they might from the Suzuki experience. Perhaps they are caring so much for the children that they are forgetting to care for themselves.

To function optimally, whether you are a parent or a teacher, you must take care of yourself physically, emotionally and intellectually. The following list of ideas might help keep you energized, enthusiastic, positive and healthy so you can enjoy parenting and teaching in the Suzuki philosophy.

Caring for yourself physically

Exercise: Even half an hour of exercise three times a week will make you more productive and improve your mood.

Get enough rest: Your body cannot function well if you do not get enough sleep. Many parents find ways to get a little extra sleep by hiring a babysitter so they can take an afternoon nap. Try cutting out some activities or household chores so you can go to bed at a reasonable hour.

Eat well: Make time to eat and treat yourself and your family to nutritious meals, not empty calories. You might

consider adding vitamin and mineral supplements to your diet.

Drink a lot of water: Sugary, caffeinated or alcoholic beverages alter your blood sugar, affecting your energy levels. Give your body what it really wants, plenty of water.

Manual labor: Take the time for manual labor. Housework and yard work can be good exercise and provide time for productive thinking or a mental rest.

Caring for yourself intellectually

Get ideas and information on child rearing: Read books, talk to other parents and teachers and talk to professionals. Take every opportunity you can to learn about raising children. If you see parents who seem to be doing a good job, ask them what they are doing.

Read: Read a lot. Choose books and articles that interest you. Besides, if you are reading, your children will also read.

Join the SAA and your local & state Suzuki associations: Suzuki families provide wonderful support for one another. The SAA can provide you with valuable parenting, philosophical and musical information, as well as tips for motivating your young musician.

Find a mentor: Parents and teachers need to find people to help them and to give seasoned advice and encouragement. Maybe it is older parents who will be able to answer your questions and tell you how they handled the crisis you now face.

Caring for yourself emotionally

Put worries in perspective: Often people are worried about things that really do not matter in the

overall picture. Think about the things that you are worried about and ask yourself this question: "How will this affect me in a month, a year or five years into the future?"

Avoid rigidity & perfectionism: Realize that there are many ways to do things. If you are rigid about what you are doing, you will be unhappy if things don't go exactly the way you want. Remember that nobody is perfect. Be forgiving of your own and your children's mistakes. Stay flexible and relaxed with your children. Enjoy spontaneity.

Be genuinely thrilled with your child's accomplishments: The best things that happen in the child/parent relationship occur when the parent is absolutely thrilled with what the child is accomplishing. This is when the child will rise to the parents' expectations time after time. When the parents have expectations that are just a little too far over the child's current abilities, resistance is likely to occur. You can help yourself and your child by keeping your expectations attainable and by being happy with what your child is doing. Be genuine in your praise and encouragement.

Smile and relax: Stay relaxed with your children. A tense parent often creates a tense child. Your child is sensitive to your tone of voice, expression and body language and will react to your frustration or tension. Children are incredibly sensitive and perceptive.

Watching the clock: Children have a very limited concept of time. If children have to be ready for something, then it is the parents' job to make sure that the child is ready. Do whatever needs to be done, and remember that Suzuki said one of the main goals for the parent is to make life as easy and successful as possible for the child.

Give yourself time to clear your brain: Be sure that you allow "clear-the-brain" time. This is the time when you aren't thinking about anything important, just

daydreaming. Some of our most effective solutions and best ideas come from such times.

Take time to think about your decisions: Avoid snap decisions. Do not allow yourself to be pressured into making important parenting and teaching decisions too quickly.

Pamper yourself: Take time to do things you really want to do. Indulge yourself in shopping, watching TV, reading a book, practicing your musical instrument or whatever pleases you. If necessary, schedule time to do something just for you.

Do not do things that make you miserable: There are many things in our lives that we have to do, even though we do not want to, but get rid of any unpleasant task that you can.

Build a support system of friends: Maintain and treasure your social life. Be sure you have peers with whom you can share ideas and thoughts and just have fun.

Remember the power of praise: Praise is necessary, not only for your child, but for yourself. You need to hear that you are doing a good job. Tell other people when they are doing a good job. Compliment others frequently. Train your spouse to praise you every day by praising him or her, and by graciously accepting his or her compliments. We verbalize the complaints, but often forget to give compliments. It should be the other way around.

Less can be more: Cut out nonessentials. Remember that less can be more. You can live on less income if it means a more reasonable schedule, and you can have a happier life.

Play: Play and have fun. We need play like we need food, water, rest and praise.

Ask your own parents for help: Take advantage of your own parents' expertise and experience. Ask them for advice and help. Your parents truly know and love you unconditionally. It is often difficult to accept suggestions from your parents, because we all want to be respected as adults. Remember that in the area of child rearing, we all need as much help as we can get. Our own parents are a rich source of valuable information.

Raising children is the most important and most difficult, yet the most rewarding job we have. You are the most important person in your children's lives. There is nothing that your children want more than to have stability in their homes and you as their loving parent. Treat yourself to some pampering, relaxation and indulgence!

Adapted with permission from the newsletter of the North Carolina Suzuki Teachers Association newsletter, November 2000

Joanne Bath received the BM degree with honors from Denison University, the MM from the University of Michigan, and the certificate from the Conservatoire American, Fontainebleau, France. In addition to teaching a large studio of private students, Joanne is also the Suzuki Pedagogy Program manager at East Carolina University in Greenview, North Carolina. A former Suzuki Association of the Americas board member, Joanne currently serves as the SAA's Institute Liaison.



CD REVIEW

The Story of Ferdinand, by Munro Leaf, Puffin Books, 1977, New York, N.Y., Ferdinand and Friends, DMD Classics, 3785

The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf was first published when today's young Suzuki students' grandparents were children. It is as delightful today as it was then. The story is about a bull, Ferdinand, who looks fierce, but in reality is not. Large and powerfully built, he seems suited to be a champion in the bull fights of Madrid. In the end, Ferdinand does not fight, but rather remains the peaceful creature he truly is.

The pairing of this book with the CD *Ferdinand & Friends* is delightful. The story is composed for speaker and solo violin. Composer Alan Ridout, violinist Drostan Hall and narrator Dorothy Hall have combined their talents to create a story with music which children will enjoy listening to again and again. The quality of the recording and performance is excellent. Also included on the CD are a variety of other short, descriptive pieces which the whole family will enjoy. Each work is preceded by appropriate narration or poetry. Other instruments included are the piano, double bass and cello. A second edition, now available, contains additional poetry and pieces including both the flute and clarinet. — Kathleen Spring

Price: CD \$16.99, CD/Book Combination \$24.99
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The Orchestra is Here to Play! Gemini & the Phoenix Ensemble

If you are having a "down" day or your children, a crabby one, this CD just might help! This is music to sing and dance to. *The Orchestra is Here to Play!* presents Gemini and the Phoenix Ensemble. Gemini consists of the twin brothers Sandor and Laszlo Slomovits. This pair has performed for families and children throughout the US and Canada for 29 years. For this recording, a live performance in Ann Arbor, Michigan, they are joined by the Phoenix Ensemble, a cooperative orchestra of outstanding young musicians. Though the recording includes some traditional melodies, (even Twinkle with a new twist gets in there!) many of the pieces are composed by Laszlo and Sandor. Their themes are ones that all children will relate to—and the child in all adults as well. As I listened to *Puppy Love*, I was charmed and almost excited to go out and get a new puppy! But then I remembered how much I was going to be gone this summer! I'll guess I'll just settle for Pizz! If you buy this CD, you'll understand. — Kathleen Spring



Available: Gemini Children's Music, Phone: (734) 665-0165. Please make checks payable to GEMINI, and mail to: 2000 Penneretts Ct., Ann Arbor, MI 48103. Email - geminiz@tmich.com, www.geminichildrensmusic.com Price: \$15 US

Why is the Frog called the Frog?



"I think the frog is called a frog because it has two eyes. The screw looks like a tail. The frog goes back and forth when you twist the screw."

— Joe Meyer

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Perfectimo

I started little over one year ago on the third floor
And met my teacher at the practice room door
First she inspected my instrument, half a size
and poked and plucked and gave a few sighs

The bridge was crooked, the bow a mess
the smudges, the rosin—could use a bit less
The sound was alright, even and nice
She had me play, squeaking once or twice.

This was the beginning of my adventure so rich
At Neighborhood Music School, I found my niche
With a teacher more particular than I
Whose vision would help me to spy

The whole steps and half steps and circle bows
the dynamics and rests and arpeggios
and a hundred more words that ended with “o”
Like crescendo, staccato and even “perfectimo”!

Some lessons felt hard and I imagined I was a bird
Flying around as if those mistakes I had not heard
Then my teacher would make me laugh with a silly word
Or point out the easy view of a broken third.

“Determine the key” she would say
“Look for an upper neighbor, see the easy way”
“For now in measure seven ignore the slur”
“And blink your eyes for goodness sake—clear up the blur!”

With fiddle tunes she provided some relief
Some easy Irish pieces that returned my belief
That I really could learn quickly if only I would know
The basics, the foundation to help me grow.

Now, I still fly—but not around the room
My fingers plant themselves and then they zoom
Over the circle of fifths and into a Baroque Duet
Galloping in “Hunter’s Chorus” right through “Musette.”

My eyes now see and my ears now hear
The notes, the rhythms and melodies clear
Like another language before me unfurled
I’m glad to be part of the NMS world.

—by *Danny Sylvestre (age 10) and his mom, Sheila Sylvestre*

Daniel Sylvestre, a fifth grader, wrote this poem as a Christmas gift to his teacher, Ms. Phoebe Barron. In addition to studying violin and piano, Danny paints and plays baseball, hockey and basketball. The family lives in Wallingford, CT.



2003 Minijournal Cover Design Contest

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About the Cover:

2002 Cover Contest Design winner is Sasha Patkin, age 11, of Hamden, Connecticut.