

AMBASSADOR

Aber Suzuki Center

University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point
College of Fine Arts and Communication
inspire, create, achieve

October 2008

From the Director's Desk

By Dee Martz

Year after year we celebrate graduation and say farewell to a number of students who have become good friends, fine musicians and even more importantly, fine people. And then we wonder---Where are they? What are they doing? What are they becoming? Is music still an important part of their lives? Is music part of their children's lives?

There is no longer any need to wonder about one of our grads---Joel Fuller. While he was part of the Suzuki program at UWSP, many young students looked up to him when he played in the Marathons, were amazed by his ability when he toured with Dolce Strings, marveled at the beauty of his sound when he performed on recitals and, yes, wondered how he could be so spacey during string quartet coachings. Following his graduation from the Suzuki program and from SPASH, he went to UW-Madison for his undergraduate degree where he became part of the Madison Symphony and spent his summers at the Aspen Music Festival. He continued his studies at the University of Michigan where he earned his Master's degree under the tutelage of famed violin pedagogue Paul Kantor. Joel then became assistant concertmaster of the Naples Florida Symphony and is currently assistant principal second violin of the Kennedy Center Opera Orchestra in Washington D.C.

Now we all have the opportunity to hear Joel Fuller again and to celebrate the mature musician he has become. Joel will perform the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto with the Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra on October 11 and 12. Tickets are available through the University Box Office.

P.S. The Mendelssohn Concerto is a review piece for Joel!



Celebrate for 110 Years

By Kyoko Fuller

The delightful summer with so many days of beautiful weather has passed and it is time again for us to focus on study, practice and work.

I would like to encourage you to renew your mind to capture valuable aspects of Suzuki study and move forward in this coming year.

This year is a special time to discover again the founder of our method, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki. Born on October 17th 1898 and living almost 100 years, Dr. Suzuki is remembered by his students who were touched by his life of dedication to high ideals and service. Around the world, Suzuki programs are celebrating his 110th birthday with grand concerts and memorial speeches. At 110 years, he continues to affect new generations of children. As I see these young eager faces, I am reminded of my own study with Dr. Suzuki, and as that time grows more distant, it seems that the memories become more vital and his ideas even fresher.

First, we should all be reminded that Dr. Suzuki was not only an educational philosopher, but was also a masterful musician and an accomplished scholar. That this is not spoken of much today may be due to Suzuki himself, who identified so closely with the lives of children that the facts of his skills and accomplishments

seem always to be in the background. Perhaps, it was his modesty, or part of his philosophical view that we all have talent that he did not promote himself. We seem to always see him walking with little children playing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star", a big smile on his face.

However, before he developed his theory of talent education, he held a position of music professor at the Imperial Music Conservatory and the Kunitachi Music School in Tokyo. He collaborated with many prominent Japanese composers at the conservatory. And he formed the first professional string quartet in Japan in 1929, which performed for national broadcasts over a number of years. While studying in Germany, his performance of Frank Sonata was professionally recorded and is considered still to be a fine art work.

Concerning his scholarly work, even more can be said. *The 10 volumes of Violin Repertoire* that we use today is recognized for its sound methodology in the development of technical skills. Suzuki put that together and it is still working beautifully today. He had several publications along with his Suzuki Method books. He wrote a book emphasizing his musical theory called *The Philosophy of Tone* which was widely studied in Japan. There is a collection of his thoughts and letters during 1950s to early 1960s available in a set of three books in Japanese. He also wrote a biological and philosophical book called *The Path I Walked*. It was more philosophically focused than *Nurtured by Love* which was published much later.

For his remarkable accomplishments, Dr. Suzuki received honorary doctoral degrees from the New England Conservatory, University of Louisville, Eastman Music School, Cleveland Institute of Music, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, and University of Maryland. He received numerous awards from such as Eugene Ysaye Foundation and Albert Einstein International Academy Foundation. You can learn more about his recognitions from Evelyn Hermann's excellent book *Shinichi Suzuki: The Man and His Philosophy*. It is a mark of his amazing humility that though he received most of these honors during the period I studied with him, I hardly remember that he ever mentioned any of it to us.

Despite great scholarly recognitions, Dr. Suzuki decided not to pursue the academic path, but chose to advance his revolutionary theories of early child education in a different laboratory, outside of the walls of the university. Today, we forget how radical it was for him to take such powerful stand on the issue of early child

education: "Talent is not inherited or inborn, but can be trained at an early age!" And he went even further in promoting the benefits of music to nurture children. This is finally being studied and understood by modern psychology. Today he continues to stand apart from the modern philosophy of music education that is based on materialistic psychological and biological assumptions because his view of education included the whole person in what he called the development of "noble" character. He often would say, "Character building first!"

I remember one young rising star pianist who came to Matsumoto to give her recital and visit Dr. Suzuki and his students. Her heart was broken down with tears as she confessed to him that she was taking music the completely wrong way with pride and competitiveness. She was touched by Dr. Suzuki's spirit of joy and kindness in his teaching. It shows you that the mechanics of music learning alone would not direct children to be a fine person or happy person. In our generation, this is an area of great need in child education as our modern system has abandoned it, and we see the sad results every day.

I would distinguish his teaching from other educators one other aspect. That was that he understood children and loved them to a degree that I have never seen in anyone else. Though he was an older man who never had his own children, amazingly, he was able to identify himself with children. He was constantly fascinated with their innocence and happiness. This enabled him to understand the secrets of motivating them to learn. He was able to experience their incredible ability to learn and to be positively influenced by their environments.

As in many areas of life, politics and prejudice have continued to influence the appreciation of Dr. Suzuki and many harsh criticisms continue to be spoken. But he was a humble person who did not easily take offense at those who doubted his work. He was always full of confidence in his philosophy of education and could always see the proof of his work in the thousands of students. Now, as teachers and parents following his footsteps generations later, we have the same confidence as we point with pride to our own students. They are clearly the good fruits of the Suzuki method.

I humbly but proudly mention my son Joel Fuller, who is a former Suzuki student of Pat D'Ercole and who will be performing with CWSO on October 11 and 12 to open CWSO's 60th celebrative season. Like many Suzuki

students, his practice was at times passionate and inspired, but most of the time very routine, based on basic Suzuki principles. His college professor was opposed to the Suzuki method yet greatly valued Joel's musical accomplishments. So it is still a mystery to me why some do not see the connection between student's ability and their musical environment. I am sure of this though. I know Dr. Suzuki could have convinced this professor if they had had a chance to really meet each other. Dr. Suzuki had a strikingly magnitude personality to draw people to him.

Dr. Suzuki had a desire to work until age 120 and perhaps retire then. I am sure we can fulfill his desire by carrying on his legacy faithfully and living in the love of children with music.



Voila Viola
By Dee Martz

At the American Suzuki Institute we had the pleasure of presenting a member of the "President's Own Marine Band" in a viola recital. You may be wondering just what kind of violist plays in a Marine Band or even wonder why (or if) there are any violists in a Marine Band. Well, the answer is very simple. There are three very fine violists in The President's Own Marine Band, which is actually the chamber orchestra that plays at the White House and for all kinds of very special government events. Lisa told me that she even played for the funerals of both President Ronald Reagan and President Gerald Ford. What an honor! Violist Lisa Ponton was a student at the American Suzuki Institute from just about the time she started playing the viola until she was 14 years old. The last year she attended ASI, she and violinists and UW Madison violin Professor David Perry (age 12) presented a joint, special recital and wowed everyone who was present. Lisa went on to earn degrees at the prestigious Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School. She continued her studies in Germany with Rainer Moog and performed with symphonies in Germany, Iceland and Sweden. And then....one of her friends from Curtis convinced her to audition for the President's Own and she won the audition.

This summer Lisa came to ASI to continue her Suzuki teacher training and was very excited to present one of the special Alumnae recitals. After a fantastic recital the audience particularly enjoyed hearing her encore—Brahms Lullaby from Viola Book 2.

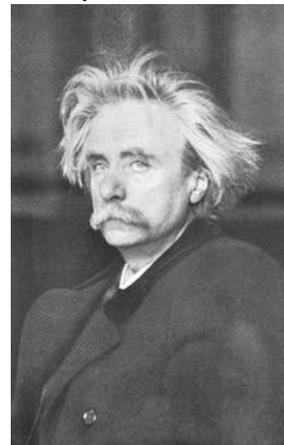
This month Lisa completed her 10 year commitment to the Marines and has just won the principal viola position in the Iowa Symphony (formerly Cedar Rapids Symphony) and will be teaching and performing in northern Iowa in the very near future.

The moral of the story---there are opportunities for fine violists in unexpected places so keep practicing.



Music of the Masters

The American Suzuki Foundation invites you to the *Music of the Masters*, an evening of music and merriment, to be held on October 25, 2008, at the Holiday Inn, 1001 Amber Street, Stevens Point. The



host for the evening will be Edvard Grieg, as portrayed by former Aber Suzuki Center student Jesse Nummelin. Students from every Aber Center studio will provide music throughout the evening. The festivities begin at 6:00 pm with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Dinner will be served at 7:00 pm and the entertainment will continue after the meal.

In addition, a silent auction will be held during the cocktail and dinner hours. A variety of wonderful items have been donated for the silent auction. New this year, the *Music of the Masters* will include a raffle. Lee Ayers Jewelers and Thomas Dailing Designs have donated a one of a kind pendant, valued at \$1,500, which will be the grand prize. Raffle tickets are currently on sale (one ticket for \$5, three tickets for \$10), and the drawing will be held at the end of the evening. The pendant will be on display at Lee Ayers Jewelers, downtown Stevens Point until October 25, 2008. All profits from this event will be used for needs-based scholarships for Aber Suzuki Center students. Tickets for the *Music of the*

Masters and the raffle may be obtained at the Aber Center Suzuki Office, from your ASC instructor, or from any American Suzuki Foundation Board member. The UWSP box office will also have tickets for the *Music of the Masters*. If you need additional information, please feel free to contact Nancy Chinn at 341-7373, or Sara Oberthaler at 342-5909. Thank you for your support.



Attention New Suzuki Parents

The 2008 Parent Orientation was a success! Each faculty member gave a brief presentation on one topic, such as: Parent Roles and Responsibilities, Program Offerings, Philosophy, Benefits Beyond Music, Program History, etc. In addition, parents were given the opportunity to view a portion of the video, "Nurtured by Love", a professionally made video about Dr. Suzuki, his life and his philosophy. Also, each new parent was presented with a copy of the Aber Suzuki Center Parent Handbook, an excellent compilation of many articles, charts for practice, and other inspirational tidbits, prepared by the ASC faculty. Lastly, parents and faculty mingled at a brief social hour complete with punch and assorted goodies.

Just in case you missed it, and you are a parent who is new to the program, please be sure to ask your teacher for your ASC Parent Handbook. This event was not recorded, so if you were unable to attend, perhaps you would consider attending next year. It's a great way to get a sense of the program and to meet other new parents. Also, please see the article on the **Parent Education Sessions**, and plan to attend at least 3 of the sessions if at all possible.



ASC Parent Education Sessions

That's right...more of a good thing is on the way! Regardless of whether you attended the Parent Orientation on September 28, you are strongly encouraged to join us at the upcoming Parent Education Sessions. They are scheduled to take place on a *monthly* basis throughout the academic year

(except January). All parents are invited to attend, and first-year parents are requested to attend as many of the sessions as possible. It is our intention that all parents will have an opportunity to learn, grow, and to share their own unique perspectives.

The sessions will be offered on the **second Tuesday of each month (at 7:30 p.m. in NFAC Room 144)**. The format will include a short presentation by a faculty member, followed by a Q & A time, and a little social time as well. Each session is prepared surrounding a specific topic (see below), but all comments and questions are welcomed and encouraged.

This year, the program will be presented by Kyoko Fuller and Ann Marie Novak, both of whom are looking forward to some lively discussions AND the coffee and goodies that will be offered afterward. Remember that these Parent Education Sessions are offered to all parents of the Aber Suzuki Center free of charge!

The schedule is as follows:

October 14: "First You Got to Create...Da Mood"
(The Suzuki Home Environment)

November 11: "Practicing: The Great Quest for Consistency Without Boredom"

December 9: "The Art of Reviewing with a Purpose"

February 10: "Suzuki: Translating the Philosophy Into Reality"

March 10: "Do You Hear What I Hear?" (Listening)

April 14: "Fostering Independent Learning"

May 12: "In the Good Old Summertime: Survival of Those Lazy Days of Summer"

We look forward to seeing you there!!!



This Month in Piano

October 3: Clarinet recital by UWSP Alum and Suzuki Mom, Jenni Yang. Works include the Mozart Clarinet Quintet with Dave Becker, Steve Bjella, Kyoko Fuller and Tim Mutschlecner, and the Poulenc Clarinet Sonata with Tom Yang. Michelsen Hall, 7:30 pm.

October 16: The Story of Babar choreographed and danced by Pam Luedtke (UWSP – Dance Department)

and students at Jefferson School. Jenni Yang will narrate and Tom Yang will perform the piano music. Jefferson Elementary School, 9:00 am.

October 25: Piano Group Classes. Note that the Pre-Twinkle Class will meet at 8:30 am.

November 1: Halloween Piano Recital. All students are invited to participate and perform in this semi-formal setting. Students are welcome to wear their Halloween Costumes. Michelsen Hall, 11 am and 12:30 pm.



Student News



The following ASC students participated in the **Stevens Point 150th Birthday Parade** on May 17th: **Kate Young, Frederic Van Tiem, Julia Graham, Joia Thiagesen, Eleanor Mutschlechner, Marco Kurzynski, Richard Meilahn, Dinesh Traynor, Natalie Van Tiem, Jonathan Peck, M. J. DeBot, Annika Enders, Lucas Chan, Trenton Seegert, Anjalie Iyengar, Roshini Traynor, Lamu Ryavec, Michael Treder, Rachel Ley, Daniel Smith, Claire Oberthaler, and Antony Van Tiem.** Special thanks to ASC Faculty Members Pat D'Ercole and Ann Marie Novak, and the volunteer parents: Pramela Thiagesen, Tabitha Frerks, and JoAnn Burk; to Bill and Jillian Jenkins for pulling the float, and to Remya and Jim Traynor, Navneeth Iyengar, Charles Young, Sara Oberthaler and Mary Tierney-Ley for passing out ASC literature and candy.

Olivia and Gabrielle Heese, Natalie Leek, Tim Hofer, Angali Iyengar, Kelly, Annie and Tori Tillotson, Joe Dickinson, Emily McIntee, Ashley and Katie Hoerter,

and Lamu Ryavec performed the Bug Recital on June 26th at the Portage County Public Library.



Graduating Senior **Jesse Nummelin** performed a senior recital on June 27. Friends and family members joined in for this lively concert featuring Jesse on cello, saxophone and voice.

Cal and Sarah Irons, Rachel Ley, Ada Sell, Alyssa Schroeckenthaler, Sarah Harmon, Frederick, Antony and Natalie Van Tiem, Dinesh and Roshini Traynor, Marco Kurzynski, Hope Mahon, Olivia Yang, and Trenton Seegert participated in the **2008 Downtown Krazy Days** on July 11th:



Students of the Aber Suzuki Center participated in the **Parade of Gardens** on July 25th. The students were **Marco Kurzynski, Roshini Traynor, Dinesh Traynor, Hope Mahon, Fredric Van Tiem, Antony Van Tiem, Cal Irons, Sarah Irons, Alyssa Schroeckenthaler, and Sarah Harmon.** We have already been invited back for next year!



Most recently, students of the Aber Suzuki Center performed at the **JusticeWorks Suzuki Stroll** on August 29th: **Alyssa Schroeckenthaler, Kate Young, Craig and Tom Felt, Roshini and Dinesh Traynor, Marco Kurzynski and Maleah Zinda**. Many thanks to the parents who assisted in serving drinks and handing out the goodie bags!



Alumni News

Roy Meyer, a freshman at UW-Madison, was accepted to be a member of the 1st violins in the Madison Symphony Orchestra.

Ami Yamamoto, a senior at Monona High School, former ASC student, was offered a four-year full scholarship from UW-Madison Music Camp to the college.



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, October 14, 2008

Parent Education Session

“First, You’ve Got to Create ... Da Mood (The Suzuki Home Environment”

NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

Saturday, October 25, 2008

Marathon, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Saturday, October 25, 2008

Music of the Masters,

Holiday Inn Convention Center, Stevens Point,

Cocktails/Hors d’oeuvres: 6:00 pm

Dinner: 7:00 pm

Silent Auction: 6-8:00 pm

Program by Aber Suzuki Center students: 8:00 pm

Tickets available at the UWSP Box Office (346-4242),

the Aber Suzuki Center office (346-3033), or from your

instructor. Can’t be there? Raffle tickets are available

for \$5/each or 3/\$10. Grand prize: Custom Gold

Pendant by Lee Ayers and Thomas Dailing Designs,

valued at \$1,500. Second Prize: One-Hour Massage by

Inner Element. Third Prize: Taste of Point (a variety of

gift certificates from area restaurants). Proceeds

support ASC Needs-based Scholarships.

Sunday, October 26, 2008

Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

Saturday, November 1, 2008

Piano Halloween Recitals, 11:00 am and 12:30 pm,

NFAC Michelsen Hall

Tuesday, November 11, 2008

Parent Education Session

“Practicing: The Great Quest for Consistency without Boredom”

NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

Saturday, November 22, 2008

Marathon, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday, November 23, 2008

Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall

Tuesday, December 9, 2008

Parent Education Session

“The Art of Reviewing with a Purpose”

NFAC 144, 7:30 pm

Saturday, December 13, 2008

Marathon, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Sunday, December 14, 2008

Solo Recitals, 2:00 and 3:30 pm, NFAC Michelsen Hall