



Pre-College
Strings
Program

Fall 2018 / Spring 2019

Notes

CELEBRATION OF STRINGS



wku.edu/strings

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the WKU Pre-College Strings Program newsletter for 2018–19!

As always, I take great pleasure in sharing with you news about our program and activities, giving you updates on the accomplishments of our students and faculty members, and celebrating with you the inspiring work of everyone involved in the program.

At first glance, the core of our program may seem to be individual lessons: one local teacher, one local student. But truly, our program embraces so many more opportunities for our students to learn. The daily practice sessions, supervised by parents (as I talk about in my article on practicing). Our group classes. Our master classes taught by visiting teachers, who always bring a fresh perspective. Our student performances, where we can all show off what we have learned and what we have taught. Our faculty performances, with both local and visiting performers, demonstrating how many different beautiful ways our beloved instruments can sound. Our community outreach programs and the fundraising events that help to support them. And behind the scenes, the training of our student teachers.

Notice that I keep saying “our” this and that. Because I cannot emphasize this enough: the program is a broad and diverse *community*, in which every member plays an important role: students (from Twinklers on up), teachers, administrators, parents, visiting performers and teachers, townspeople, sponsors, the whole university, the whole city, the whole state, even the whole region. We include everyone. We embrace everyone. We celebrate everyone.



We held a fundraising event to benefit the Bridging Cultures Through Music Program at Bowling Green High School and the Draja Music Initiative in April 2019. By teaching practical musical skills, these organizations work to engage students from diverse cultural backgrounds in the many benefits of playing music, from improving problem-solving skills to providing a healthy and rewarding creative outlet to furnishing a venue for expression that language cannot always accommodate. The event featured musical performances by local musicians, including WKU faculty and WKU College and Pre-College students.

Please read the inspiring stories of our performances, teacher training, and outreach programs this year.

I would also like to encourage you to participate in the 2019 Violin Fest featuring guest artist teachers Paul and Tim Kantor and Brenda Brenner. Events will be held at WKU on November 1 and 2. Follow us on social media for more information or request emails by writing to strings@wku.edu.

Finally, last October Andy Braddock and I were blessed with a potential Twinkler of our own: the cutest baby girl imaginable, Kaitlin, who is of course already part of our Program’s community and will surely pick up her 32nd-size violin (or 64th-size violin) and play her variations any day now. Watch this space.

Enormous thanks from me to everyone in the community for the gift of music and the blessings it brings to all of us every day.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ching-Yi Lin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Ching-Yi Lin

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Student Performances

Fun at the Southern Lane Bowling Alley August 1, 2018

A few of our students came and played at the Southern Lanes' Back to School Bash. How fun to see that our students can make music wherever and whenever! What an interesting sight it was to see a bunch of students playing music in the middle of a bowling alley.



Southern Lane Bowling Alley

Vanderbilt University Suzuki Play-In October 14, 2018 by Malika Brower

On October 14, the Vanderbilt University's Blair School of Music in Nashville, Tennessee hosted The Greater Nashville Suzuki Strings Play-Down. It was a wonderful opportunity to observe violin and cello students from around the region, including three of our WKU Pre-College Strings Program students (Leah Chen, Chloe Hawkins, and Elli Trivizadakis) perform an array of pieces from Shinichi Suzuki's repertoire, ranging from Book One to Book Eight. They enthusiastically presented a lively performance.

Leah Chen wrote about her experience: "I loved playing at the violin and cello playdown at Vanderbilt University! I was a little nervous at first, but when I started playing I relaxed and started to have fun. I got to perform some violin pieces that I have



Suzuki Strings Play-Down
at Vanderbilt University

not played in a while, such as Musette, Allegretto, The Two Grenadiers, Gavotte, and Twinkle Variations. One of my favorite parts was listening to the older students playing pieces that I haven't learned yet. They sounded so cool!"

Halloween Recital October 27, 2018

by Danae Ryan-Kessler

Halloween is an enjoyable experience for children and adults alike. There's dressing up, candy, and the fun of playing pretend. This year, on the Saturday before Halloween, the children who performed at the Halloween Recital and the family members who attended received something extra: the extraordinary experience of playing and listening to music.

A total of seven groups and two soloists dressed up to play the music they had worked so hard to prepare for the recital. The groups, at varying levels, were equally excited to play. As much as I enjoyed listening to the



Violin II at Halloween Recital

older groups' skill in pieces such as Hungarian Dance No. 2, my favorite part of the recital was hearing the younger groups play. It took me back to when I was their age, playing Suzuki pieces and all the Twinkle Variations. It reminded me of why starting at such a young age is important and why that has continued to inspire me to play today. We are taught not only the basics of playing the instrument, but also the excitement of performing and presenting the new skills learned. These recitals demonstrate the hard work put in by the students and instructors,

and also demonstrate to the students that performing and playing their instrument can be fun and exciting. Every student, whether playing *Ant Song* or *Witches' Dance*, can have a sense of pride and accomplishment at the work they have done, and be inspired to continue learning. This is a feeling that I and many other young musicians have experienced. I know it's what put me where I am today. The joys of recitals like the Halloween Recital, and the work of the Pre-College students and teachers, help to make the musicians of the future.

Cellobration

November 18, 2018

by Eliana Ricketts

After working on my performance piece (*Danse rustique* by William Henry Squire) really hard and going on stage to play it, I felt that I accomplished something amazing. I wanted to make it more interesting for the people watching, so I worked on my dynamics and believe that I achieved that goal.

I liked watching all the other cellists play, too. I liked seeing how far they had come and learning what I could do next time to play even better. My favorite piece to listen to was David Popper's *Hungarian Rhapsody*, played by Amelia Allen. She really got into the music and played very well. It was a great day!

Village Manor and Sky Rehab Hospital Performances

March 17, 2019

by Joseph Breslin

I have always had wonderful experiences when performing at retirement homes. This time, I found that in the beginning I was nervous about making mistakes. But I didn't need to be concerned, because the



End-of-the-Semester Solo Recital



Quartet Performance on Midday Live

residents were so joyful to have us there. Now I play in a quartet (*Fourte Quartet*), with some of my closest friends: James Han and Zoe Hu, violin; and Amelia Allen, cello. We enjoy playing so much that we scheduled two different locations on the same day. Performing with my friends made the experience enriching. We performed Haydn's Quartet in G major, Op. 64, no. 4 and Mendelssohn's Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 12.

Spring Group Recital May 10, 2019

by Madelyn Tucker, age 6

I loved playing my cello in the Spring Group Recital. It was so fun! My family came to see me play! I got to play a solo. It was *Hot Cross Buns*. I can't wait until our next group recital!

Chloe Pitcock and Leah Chen's Book Four Recital

May 18, 2019

by Chloe Pitcock

I had so much fun performing the pieces in Suzuki Book 4 with Leah. It was exciting to have a friend play with me in the recital. We performed our first duet [Bach double], which was challenging and took lots of practice. I was really nervous at first, but we did

a great job. After we played, we had snacks and a yummy violin cake with our family and friends.

Midday Live May 24, 2019

Students from the program made an appearance on WBKO's Midday Live TV show. Chloe Pitcock and Leah Chen performed the first movement of Vivaldi's A minor concerto, and the Fourte Quartet (James Han, Zoe Hu, Joseph Breslin, and Amelia Allen) performed Haydn's Quartet in G, op. 64 no. 4.

How I Prepare for a Violin Recital by Asa Ashley

I have been playing the violin with the Pre-College Strings Program for five years.

One of the ways I practice is to listen to the piece I am going to be performing. That makes it easier for me to play, since I know how it goes.

Then I try to perfect the parts of the piece that I am not as good at, so that everything is equal in standard. Then, when all the parts sound equally good to me, I try to perfect the whole piece.

The rhythm of the piece is especially important, because that is what keeps the whole piece together. To practice this, I like to use the metronome. Once I become comfortable with the rhythm, I remove the metronome and just tap my toes.

Last, let me mention all the help that my teacher, Professor Andy Braddock, gives me. He is such an awesome teacher and makes the lessons fun.

Congratulations to our students for their accomplishments:

Back to Back End-of-the-Semester Recitals, December 8, 2018

Kollin's Suzuki Book One Recital, February 24, 2019

Anna Darling Senior Recital, March 23, 2019

Cellobration, April 28, 2019

Spring Semester Violin & Viola Solo Recitals, May 4, 2019

Guest Artists

Dr. Hal Grossman Violin Master Class

by *Evan Patriatan*

On October 16, 2018, Hal Grossman, Associate Professor of Violin at the University of Louisville came to Western Kentucky University to give a lecture, “No Pain, No Gain: A Healthy Way to Stretch and Play.” The lecture covered ways to stretch different parts of the muscle groups we use to play the violin. One example: the rhomboids, the muscles that connect our arm with our body, are used frequently when we move our arms in playing the violin. Another thing that Professor Grossman taught us was to have a straight and relaxed back, which will improve our playing overall.

Two students played in the master class, Grace Kim and Chloe Hawkins. Grace performed Ysaÿ’s Sonata No. 2 and Chloe played Vivaldi’s Sonata in G minor, third movement.

Christine Kim Cello Master Class and Guest Recital

by *Mariah Thomas*

On Friday October 19, 2018 at the FAC Recital Hall, Dr. Christine Kim, a faculty member at Middle Tennessee State University, hosted a cello masterclass. Dr. Kim worked with Chris Kim, Amelia Allen, and David Wiles. Amelia Allen performed David Popper’s *Hungarian Rhapsody*. Dr. Kim then discussed the sautillé bow stroke, which is similar to détaché. She worked with Amelia on the bowing by having her imagine dribbling a basketball, then



Dr. Christine Kim and Chris Kim

a tennis ball with the floor closer, then a ping-pong ball with the floor even closer. She stated that the best place to practice this stroke was near the balance point of the bow.

In the evening, Dr. Kim was joined by Dr. Arunesh Nadgir (piano faculty at MTSU) to perform *Pohádka* by Leoš Janáček, the Sonata for Piano and Cello No. 4 in C major, Op. 102, No. 1, by Ludwig van Beethoven, and the Sonata for Cello and Piano in G minor, Op. 19, by Sergei Rachmaninoff.

Christina McGann Violin Master Class

by *Grace Kim*

On November 12, 2018, Dr. Christina McGann from Vanderbilt University visited WKU to teach a master class. Chloe Pitcock (Seitz, D major Concerto, third movement) and

Kollin Hsieh (*Minuet One*) performed for McGann, who helped Chloe to decide the shape of the notes, then how to produce a singing tone.

Malika Brower performed Henryk Wieniawski’s Violin Concerto No. 2, and Ying Cheng concluded the masterclass with Corrente and Double from J. S. Bach’s Partita in B minor. Dr. McGann suggested Ying analyze her pieces so she could fully understand the bass line, and she encouraged Ying to experiment with a more natural sound.

Dr. Penny Thompson Violin Master Class

by *Dannae Ryan-Kessler*

On March 21, 2019, a master class was taught by Dr. Penny Thompson, the violin professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, and her colleague Dr. Steve Kruse.

For this master class, the professors first heard Bartók's *Contrasts* wonderfully performed by Anna Darling (violin), Tanner Age (clarinet), and Aliza Norman (piano). Then we were excited to show off our violin beginners to Drs. Thomason and Kruse. The students played the *Ant Song*, *GDG*, and *Twinkle*. Dr. Thompson and Dr. Kruse shared encouraging words for the youngsters. They asked the group if they enjoyed playing, and every child enthusiastically said yes. We then heard James, Zoe, Joseph, and Amelia (freshman students from Bowling Green High School) perform the Mendelssohn Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 12, first movement. We concluded the master class with Ying Cheng performing the Korngold Concerto in D major, first movement, and Grace Kim playing the Bruch Scottish Fantasy, fourth movement. A special thanks to our pianist, Carlos Martinez, for performing with our students!

Violin Masterclass with Professor Dalmas

by Mariah Thomas

On March 26th, 2019, Jennifer Dalmas led a violin masterclass. She worked on the first movement of Barber's Violin Concerto with Abby Preston, the first movement of Bruch's Violin Concerto with Evan Patriatin, and the first movement of Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 2 with Malika Brower. For the Barber, Professor Dalmas gave various technical tips on how to "pull the sound out of the violin" and add color to the piece. She noted that it seems to have been written while thinking of Brahms, because of its warm sound, so shaping phrases and using lots of vibrato is essential



Dr. Jennifer Dalmas working with Abby Preston

to its performance. We also enjoyed a performance by our pre-college program Violin Group III class. The eight students played *Hunter's Chorus* from Suzuki Book Two. Professor Dalmas helped the group experiment with their bowings and dynamics to create a more musically expressive performance.

Dr. Evgeni Raychev Cello Masterclass

by Lea Sewell

On Tuesday March 26, 2019, Evgeni Raychev, professor of cello at Stephen F. Austin State University, taught a masterclass at Western Kentucky

University. Savannah Heckman performed the prelude from Bach's Suite No. 3 in C major, David Wiles the first movement of Dvořák's Cello Concerto, Amelia Allen Goltermann's Cello Concerto No. 3, and Josue Mora the first movement of Elgar's Cello Concerto. Professor Raychev encouraged Josue to work primarily on figuring out the problematic spots, especially the

difficult, exposed, shifting passages. He recommended cellists to focus on learning the intervals between all fingers in all positions, and even advocated them to "not correct" their fingers in practice. Instead they should try again until they fix the intonation, so that in the future you are not sliding or searching for notes. This results in very accurate playing.

A Violin Masterclass with Professor Rebecca Henry

by Malika Brower

On April 5th, Rebecca Henry, a pedagogue and professor from The Peabody Conservatory, gave a violin



Dr. Evgeni Raychev and Josue Mora

The Importance of Master Classes

BY ABBY PRESTON

One of the many opportunities offered through the WKU Pre-College Strings Program is access to master classes taught by visiting professors from around the country.

Think of a master class as a private lesson in front of an audience, in our case made up of Pre-College students, parents, and faculty. The audience both listens to the performance and benefits from the teacher's praise and critique.

For the students performing, although the situation may be stressful, there are several clear benefits. Students work with a new teacher and hear a different perspective. Researchers have found that students learn better and gain more self-reliance when teachers offer more opportunities

for engagement. Researchers such as Beatrice Szczepek Reed have observed that working with visiting teachers naturally invites engagement.¹ These teachers ask the students questions to gauge their understanding of the piece, discover how they have been practicing, elicit their questions, and reveal their struggles. Through responding to these questions, students become more engaged in their playing.

Master classes also have benefits for the students watching, who can learn from the teachers' suggestions, whether or not the piece being performed is familiar.

Do join us for the next master classes in our series. We feel sure you will benefit.

¹ Reed, Beatrice Szczepek. "Creating Space for Learner Autonomy: An Interactional Perspective." *Classroom Discourse*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2017, pp. 175-190.

master class for pre-college and university violin students from WKU.

The masterclass began with Leah Chen playing Kuchler's Concertino, first movement. Professor Henry discussed how Leah can have more flexibility with the bow and a relaxed bow hold while playing. She worked on phrasing and isolating spots that needed more attention to dynamic contrasts within a phrase. Together, they moved the bow's contact point on the string from the fingerboard towards the bridge while playing a section of the piece, creating varied sounds while still producing a clear tone. Professor Henry guided Leah to leave her fingers down whenever possible in order to advance her left-hand technique and optimize her violin playing.

Chloe Kim performed *Minuet 3* by J. S. Bach. First, Professor Henry commented on what Chloe was doing well at, especially a nice left-hand frame. The professor talked about the importance of knowing the relationship



Rebecca Henry and Leah Chen

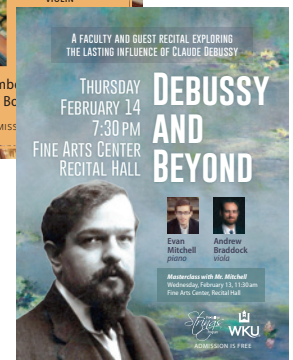
between whole step and half step and feeling this difference in your hand frame while you leave fingers down. She also worked with Chloe on the idea of "independent fingers." In this case, she instructed Chloe to leave one finger down on a string while hopping the

third finger over to another string. This makes playing the notes and crossing to other strings easier and more efficient.

Also heard on this masterclass was Sonata No. 2, Obsession, fourth movement, by Eugène Ysaÿe, performed by Grace Kim.



Sunday at Three Concert Series in Cape Girardeau, Missouri



FACULTY PERFORMANCES

Sunday at Three Concert Series August 24 and 26, 2018

The retirement community Chateau Girardeau's Sundays at Three series opened its 2018–19 season with “Baffoni, Braddock, Lin and Lopes” in the Shuck Music Recital Hall on the River Campus of Southeast Missouri State University. The series director, Gabrielle Baffoni, joined forces with Ching-Yi Lin, Andy Braddock, and Zachary Lopes of Western Kentucky University (WKU) to present a program of music for clarinet, violin, viola, and piano. The program included a pairing of Robert Schumann’s *Märchenbilder* (Fairy Tales) with György Kurtág’s *Hommage à Robert Schumann* for clarinet, viola, and piano,

a duet by Bohuslav Martinů for violin and viola, and Béla Bartók’s *Contrasts*, a cornerstone piece in the repertoire for clarinet, violin, and piano.

This program was also performed two days earlier in the Fine Arts Center Recital Hall on the WKU campus.

Sarah Berry & Friends September 23, 2018 by Anna Darling

At the Bowling Green Train Depot, Professor Sarah Berry along with her colleagues Heidi Álvarez, Melissa Bull, and Kenneth Stein, and her student David Wiles, gave a delightful and inspiring recital. On the program were pieces by five Baroque composers, some well-known, others worth discovering.

Sonata No. 4, *La Lumagne*, by the French flutist Michel Blavet, was performed by Dr. Álvarez on flute, Professor Berry on cello, and Professor Stein on harpsichord. The slow movements are dominated by the ornamented and expressive melody line of the flute, whereas the fast movements include scintillating repartee between flute and cello. Following this piece, Professor Berry performed the *Capricci* for solo cello by the Italian cellist Joseph Dall’Abaco. Each of the three movements sounded like conversations between different voices in the various registers of the cello. I loved how she also communicated the music through her facial expressions and gestures.



Ching-Yi Lin playing Poulenc's Violin Sonata with Aram Arakelyan at Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Summer Festival

Also on the program was a duet for two cellos by the French cellist Jean-Baptiste Barrière, Sonata No. 1 in D minor by Alessandro Scarlatti, and Concerto in D major for flute, violin, and basso continuo by the great Antonio Vivaldi.

Debussy and Beyond: Recital

February 14, 2019

In February, Andy Braddock and guest pianist Evan Mitchell performed a recital of works exploring the music of Claude Debussy. In addition to works by Debussy himself, the recital included works by composers who influenced Debussy (including J. S. Bach and Gabriel Fauré) and some who were influenced by him (Paul Hindemith and Toru Takemitsu).

Sonata for Viola and Piano

April 26, 2019

by Arthur Bliss

Andy Braddock and WKU professor Don Speer gave a lecture-recital that examined Arthur Bliss's monumental Sonata for Viola and Piano (1933). Braddock presented his historical and musical analysis of the work, followed by a performance with Dr. Speer.



Sarah Berry & Friends at the L&N Train Depot in Bowling Green, Kentucky

WKU students, faculty, and out-of-town guests enjoyed ten days of intense and inspiring Suzuki Books Three and Four training with Edward Kreitman and Edmund Sprunger. Mr. Kreitman is Founder-Director of the Western Springs School of Talent Education and the Naperville Suzuki School. Edmund Sprunger, a psychologist and registered Suzuki Association of the Americas teacher, is the author of the book *Helping Parents Practice*, with insightful advice for parents on how they can construct positive practices. This summer he returned to WKU for the third time to teach the Suzuki Book Four training, having previously given the Every Child Can and Suzuki Book One and Two trainings. In addition to Kreitman and Sprunger's wonderful lectures, 16 of our students from the WKU strings program and 6 students from Vanderbilt Suzuki Program had the opportunity to play in master classes for these pedagogues for the teacher observation hours.

Suzuki Books Three and Four Training with Two Eds



Book Three Training with Ed Krietman



Ed Sprunger and Lilian Barr



Book Four training with Sprunger

THOUGHTS FROM OUR STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THESE MASTER CLASSES

“I would like to thank Professors Ching-Yi Lin and Andy Braddock as well as Ed Kreitman and Ed Sprunger for the opportunity to review pieces I’ve played before. They gave me some new ideas that I can bring into my playing. I now have a deeper understanding of the Suzuki books and how they impact us.”

— SONIA CONTE

“Both trainers discussed at length how to teach students in a way that acknowledges students’ obstacles not as flaws but rather opportunities to connect on an individual level. One of my favorite take-aways from our training was how every lesson is not only an opportunity for the student to learn, but also for the teacher to grow.”

— ANNA DARLING

“I really enjoyed the masterclass I had with Ed Krietman. When I played *Gavotte* by Jean Becker for him, he talked to me about using the lower half of my bow more. We also went over ways to improve the relaxation of my bow hand. I enjoyed his teaching methods and I appreciated the invitation to the master class very much.”

— REBEKAH JOHNS

Special Recognition

University Teaching Award

Professor Ching-Yi Lin was recognized at the President's Convocation on August 24, 2018 for receiving the Western Kentucky University Teaching Award.

KMEA All-State

Congratulations to James Han, Zoe Hu, Nathan Jones, and Sonia Conte (violins) and Amelia Allen (cello) for their successful audition into the 2019 Kentucky Music Educators Association All-State Symphony Orchestra. They performed in Louisville in February 2019.

Farm Bureau Variety Show

by *Chloe Hawkins*

I entered the Farm Bureau Variety Show because I wanted to gain



Ching-Yi Lin with University President Dr. Timothy Caboni

experience performing on stage. I really enjoyed playing the Concerto in G minor by Vivaldi for the audience. I had the chance to enjoy watching all the other performers. I felt everyone's performances went really well. To my surprise, when they announced the winners, I won first place! I am very glad I had the opportunity to enter the Farm Bureau Variety Show.

Sisterhood Presentation

November 16, 2018

by *LeeAnna Delbridge*

Mariah Thomas and I spoke on behalf of Dr. Ching-Yi Lin at the annual Sisterhood meeting. This group of women provided Dr. Lin with a grant to start an outreach program to teach the violin to English as Second Language students. When we gave the one-year report, Mariah described how we had used

the grant money to purchase violins and award stipends to the students' teachers. I also spoke about how the opportunity has made me think differently about the world around me. I grew up in a very homogenous school, and being in a class of people so different from me has made me see the world a bit differently. I never knew anything about countries like Uganda, Vietnam, Somalia, Tanzania, Burma, or Namibia. Now when I hear about these countries, I have a face to go with them, and suddenly the world is a lot smaller place. I am thrilled with this opportunity to enrich the lives of others, and have been surprised at how enriched my own life has been in return. I was honored to speak at the Sisterhood meeting and especially honored to be representing such a fantastic program.



James, Zoe, and Sonia at the All-State Orchestra Performance

International Viola Congress

November 20–24, 2018

In November, Professor Andy Braddock traveled to Rotterdam (The Netherlands) to participate in the 45th International Viola Congress. This week-long event was a gathering of violists from around the world, featuring performances, master classes, lectures, workshops, panel discussions, and more. On the first day of the Congress, Andy took part in a group performance showcasing a selection of the compositions entered in the Berkshire Festival Competition a century ago in 1919. This composition competition received over 70 entries of works for viola and piano. The top two winning works are now cornerstones of the viola repertoire, but many of the others have rarely, if ever, performed. This performance rediscovered and revived many of those works. Andy presented his lecture “The Sixth Source: Creating Your Own Edition of Bach’s Cello Suites,” in which he outlined his method for using the original manuscripts to create a personal performing edition. Later in the week, he participated in a panel discussion about researching viola repertoire. It was a fantastic and viola-filled week of musical exploration and discovery.

Performance by the Peabody Pre-Conservatory Violin Ensemble

by Anna Darling

On Friday, April 5th, 2019 the director of the Peabody Pre-Conservatory Violin Program, Rebecca Henry, visited WKU with a group of eight violinists for an incredible master class with our college and pre-college students, followed by an exciting performance by the Peabody Ensemble.



Thank you, Amy Bingham for a wonderful story about our Bridging Cultures Through Music Program in Bowling Green High School

The accomplished young musicians played a diverse program, featuring works ranging from Mozart and Beethoven to Sarasate and Elgar. The concert began with three group performances. *Silhouettes*, a three-movement piece by Paul Juon, was full of contrast: playful pizzicato and long dramatic melodies. In *Salut d'Amour*

by Elgar and *Banjo and Fiddle* by William Kroll, the blending and interaction in the group, as well as the energy with which they performed, were mesmerizing.

A Fundraising Event at La Gala

A special thanks goes to the spring semester Entrepreneurship in Music class for hosting a fundraising event benefiting

the Bridging Cultures Through Music and Daraja Music Initiatives on April 19th, 2019. Our sincere gratitude also goes to Graves Gilbert Clinic, Buy Local, Kathy Austin, Elizabeth Rhodes, and various business and individual donors in the Bowling Green community for supporting these two wonderful programs.



Bridging Cultures Through Music Fundraising Event at La Gala



Students at Majengo Primary School

Nakupanda: Unforgettable Experience in Tanzania

BY YING CHENG

A lot can happen in only three weeks. In Moshi, Tanzania this summer, working with the Daraja Music Initiative, I learned so much about both teaching and life in such a short time.

I found the students at Majengo Primary School and Korongoni Secondary School positive, smart, hardworking, enthusiastic, and grateful for everything DMI provides.

On the first day, I tuned 40 violins as fast as possible before class started

at Majengo, for two groups: beginners and returning students. Every day the students were truly excited to play the violin. Every day in class, we'd say "I love to play the violin" after finishing a piece—and it was true.

Korongoni had a small chamber group: three violinists, four violists, three cellists, and four more beginning violinists. I had to remind students of finger patterns, so they could play more easily and in tune. After I wrote the patterns on the blackboard,

the students' intonation gradually improved.

The hardest part of teaching for me was the language barrier. The students know some English, but they still struggled to understand what I was saying. A few Swahili phrases such as "juu" and "chini" (up and down, for bowing directions) were a big help.

At Open Mic, my favorite activity, we met once a week at a coffee shop—a beautiful public space for students to perform. I was touched by how excited they were for this opportunity. They enjoy every single moment that they can play their instruments.

Another part of the program was planting and pruning mpingo trees, the national tree of Tanzania, also used to make clarinets. This precious tree is beneficial for the soil and the rest of the environment. I saw the trees I was pruning as my "babies." With pride I took great care of them, clipped away unusable branches, and made sure the soil was healthy.

I hope the students will grow as beautifully as the mpingo trees. I hope I can go back next year, as I love these precious kids so much. They gave me so many moments that I'll never forget.

A Day in the Life of a DMI Volunteer

BY ABBY PRESTON



Abby and Students

TIMELINE

6:30 AM: The Sun begins to rise in Moshi, Tanzania. Our hostel has plenty of windows, making waking up with the Sun easy.

9:00 AM: A taxi arrives to take all volunteers to pruning at Majengo Primary School, where we teach in the afternoons. So many mpingo trees! We prune them, weed around them, and string them up so they will grow tall.

11:30 AM: We head into town to have pilau for lunch at Bush & Town.

12:45 PM: All of us volunteers leave our hostel and do the half-hour walk back to teach at Majengo, getting to see the varied neighborhoods of the town.

1:30 PM: I start the string program with the 1–2 year and 3–4 year classes together for General Music. We sing a few songs and play some rhythm

games. Then I take the 1–2 year class and work on playing position, bow holds, and *Twinkle*.

3:00 PM: Our taxi arrives to take us to Korongoni Secondary School. All the volunteers pile in with our instruments.

3:30 PM: We have about 15 students in the strings class playing violin, viola, and cello warm-ups and then repertoire for the concert on Saturday. One of the pieces is based on chromatics, so we review sharps, flats, and naturals. Later we meet up with the clarinet classes and perform for each other.

5:00 PM: Our taxi takes us back to the hostel. Another volunteer, Madi, and I go on a mission to bring some pili pili (hot sauce) to the house. We head to the restaurant down the street, place our order, and enjoy a rare commodity, free WiFi, to message friends and family members as well as upload some pictures.

6:30 PM: Madi and I introduce ourselves to the five new volunteers who have flown in today, then have dinner.

8:00 PM: Nights at the hostel consist of Bananagrams, puzzles, and down time after a full day of pruning, teaching, and traveling. Tiring and also great fun!

Practicing Tips

BY CHING-YI LIN

Practicing should be a fun and enjoyable process for both children and parents. Shinichi Suzuki stressed the importance of learning the violin for “the happiness of the child,” not so that students can go on to win prizes or obtain the best seat in orchestra. He often reminded students that poor home practicing can cancel out the “best teaching in the private lesson.”¹

Practice time should lengthen as the student progresses to longer lessons and more advanced repertoire. In the beginning stages, children need to only practice a few minutes at a time, but four or five times per day. Gradually, each practice session should begin to increase. More advanced students who have 30-minute lessons should practice 30 minutes per day. Students can also “practice” by listening to recordings frequently. Many parents have found it helpful to play recordings of Suzuki’s pieces in the car, where the children are a captive audience and can sing along or “air bow” with the recordings.

It is especially important to practice within the first 24 hours after a lesson, to ensure that both students and parents retain “the details, sensations, and flavor of the lesson.”² Elizabeth Mills even suggests that practicing the main points within 5 or 6 hours after the lesson is the most beneficial method. This will increase the speed of learning and, in turn, helps students stay interested.

The location in which students practice at home is highly important. It should be a quiet area, free from distractions, with good lighting and a comfortable room temperature. Students should avoid practicing in rooms that have distractions such as television, phones, or toys. The instrument, music and music stand, metronome, and a tuning device should all be present and easily accessible. This room can also include a practice chart to keep track of practicing progress and a mirror to reinforce good playing posture.³

Regular Practice

Parents must insist that their children practice every day. *Regular practice makes perfect!*

It is important for children to understand that they can master difficulties if they take the time to practice. The better they play, the more they will enjoy the way they sound, and the more they will want to play. Below are five ways that parents can help with daily practice routines:⁴

1. Set a regular, reasonable time for children to practice (better to let the children pick the time).
2. Parents can use a calendar to mark the days that their children have practiced.
3. Parents can help their children’s practice sessions with a kitchen timer (which comes in various animal shapes and sizes to appeal to children).

4. Divide the practice session into parts, so children can always pay attention.
5. Create non-material incentives such as performing for neighbors, guests, or stuffed animals.

Effective Practicing

It is important to keep an active mind when practicing; the most effective practicing is done when concentration is at its fullest. The following five steps can help keep the mind focused:

1. Keep practice short and enjoyable for the Pre-Twinklers. Move on frequently from one passage to another.
2. For teachers and parents, keep instructions to a minimum at any one time. Focus on one or two problems.
3. Set goals: How many times should the child repeat a passage? How much time should the child stay on a passage? Let the child plan a day’s or week’s practice.
4. Start with small fragments and isolate difficult passages. Avoid mindlessly running through pieces.
5. After fixing problematic areas, practice performing the whole piece straight through without stopping.

There are many reading materials that teachers, students, and parents can refer to for additional suggestions to successful home practicing techniques. Books such as Kempter's *Between Parent and Teacher*, Parkinson's *Mommy Can We Practice Now?*, and Richards' *How to Get Your Child to Practice Without Resorting to Violence*⁵ provide useful games and strategies for helping children practice.

Practicing is an important part of students' musical growth. The general guidelines given above can help keep students interested and focused now and for the rest of their musical careers.

¹ William Starr, *The Suzuki Violinist: A Guide for Teachers and Parents*, rev. ed. (Miami: Summy-Birchard Music, 2000), 18.

² Elizabeth Mills, *In the Suzuki Style: A Manual for Raising Musical Consciousness in Children* (Berkeley: Diablo Press, 1974), 46.

³ Susan Kempter, *Between Parent and Teacher: A Plan For Nurturing Suzuki Students at Home* (Ann Arbor MI: Shar Publications, 1991), 15.

⁴ Kempter, *Between Parents and Teachers*, 13.

⁵ Cynthia V. Richards, *How to Get Your Child to Practice Without Resorting to Violence* (Provo, UT: Advance Publications), 1985.

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**Friday, November 1, 2019
7:30pm, FAC Recital Hall**

Featuring
Brenda Brenner, violin
Paul Kantor, violin
Timothy Kantor, violin
Ching-Yi Lin, violin
Andy Braddock, viola

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**Saturday, November 2, 2019
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Featuring participants and students of WKU



For more information, please contact Dr. Ching-Yi Lin at ching-yi.lin@wku.edu or (270) 745-5939.
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