

Issue No. 1



**Suzuki Talent Education
Association Singapore**

In this Issue:

TWINKLE FUNTASY

The June holidays, the Nakamuras, and great music.. All we needed for a super fun concert!

BALI CONFERENCE 2016

What happens when Suzuki students from different countries come together? Read on to find out

UPCOMING EVENTS

TEACHERS TRAINING

TEACHERS DISCUSSION

STUDENTS CONCERT

STUDENTS WORKSHOP

**“When love is deep,
much can be
accomplished”**

Dr Shinichi Suzuki

Dear all,

Welcome to the 1st STEAS's newsletter.

It has been a year since STEAS was recognised by ISA (International Suzuki Association)/ARSO (Asia Region Suzuki Organisation) and 2 years since STEAS was officially formed. The only Singapore Suzuki country association that is recognised by ISA/ARSO, we are formed out of passion for music and education by a group of Suzuki teachers on voluntary basis. We believe that children can enjoy music in a loving environment with the support of parents and in that process, develop essential and important life skills.

This journey that we have been on so far has been very exciting and full of challenges. With conviction, the Organising Committee will do our very best to grow and strengthen the Suzuki community spirit in Singapore.

The aim of this annual newsletter is to share news, experiences and ideas, as well as document STEAS events, with all Suzuki students, parents, teachers and interested parties. In this 1st issue, there are articles on STEAS' Twinkle Funtasy event in June, plus two different viewpoints of the recent 2016 Suzuki Bali conference: that from a parent (June) and that from a teacher (Ying Ying). Also, fellow Suzuki-cello teacher, Wen Bin, shares his experience on teachers' training for cello. There is also a section on upcoming events.

I hope everyone will like this newsletter. I like to thank fellow teacher, Jayne (who is the editor for this 1st issue), and all who have contributed to this newsletter.

We are looking forward to more teachers' training, students' workshops and concerts, and graduation in 2017. To our students and parents: happy practicing... Enjoy the music! To our dedicated teachers, happy teaching and nurturing!

Yours sincerely,

Una Lauw

President,
(on behalf of the organizing
committee)

Suzuki Talent Education
Association Singapore

Website: <http://www.singaporesuzuki.org>

Shining its way into our hearts

The stars shone on our growing Suzuki community in the month of June. We were delighted that Mr Yasuki Nakamura and Mr Masaki Nakamura could join us in creating a 3 day camp for Suzuki students in Singapore. It was the first camp of this size, involving the students of various Singapore Suzuki teachers.



Violin teachers were also fortunate to receive a short training with Mr Nakamura.



Masterclass

A dozen students signed up for the masterclass sessions. They were excited to play their pieces after working hard for several weeks. Mr Yasuki and Mr Masaki showed great appreciation to all students. They praised and gave encouragement to all of them.

Workshops that don't feel like work



Students from the lower books copying the actions of Mr Masaki Nakamura.

Super fun workshops were led by Mr Masaki Nakamura. The children were enchanted by different activities and the gorgeous tone from his violin. They loved twirling around and being entertained while playing the violin. It was effortless to play through the 1 hour workshop. Parents who sat by the side were equally fascinated as well. Mr Yasuki Nakamura was beaming from his seat. Whenever he spoke in his gentle voice, the room would hush so everyone would carefully listen to his comments. It was a workshop that left us wanting for more!

The Big Concert

After months of preparation, the Twinkle Funtasy concert was held at Alliance Francaise on 4 June 2016. We have achieved our first milestone in combining the Suzuki students of various instruments for a concert, with kind sponsorship from Synwin Music. Here are some of the items from the event.



Everyone played Pachelbel's Canon in the grand finale. Even the Twinklers could join in!



Suzuki Guitar students led by Andrew Wee



Lecia Ong playing Sarasate Malaguena



Janine Loh playing Schumann's The Happy Farmer



Book 2 violin group playing Handel's Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus

Our Love For Music Unites Us

Photos of the classes, concerts and Singapore contingent.



Cello play-ins led by Ms Amy Barston.



Twinkle play-ins led by Ms Therese Wirakesuma (Chariman, SMAI)



STEAS teachers and Ms Rama Chobhe from India before the Bali conference's opening ceremony.



STEAS teachers, students and Ms Rama performing their opening ceremony item Singamelting Pot (a medley of Singaporean songs)



Students and teachers performing Book 8's Tambourin with Professor Lan Ku Chen conducting at the closing ceremony.



Orchestra rehearsal led by Dr Terry Durbin.



STEAS contingent at the closing ceremony.



STEAS students enjoying their ice cream treat from their teacher after the conference!

A Parent's Perspective by June Leow

We had signed up to attend the 6th Asia Region Suzuki Conference not knowing what we were in for. All I knew was that I trusted my daughter's violin teacher and since this conference came highly recommended by her, we simply had to go.

Though we enthusiastically accepted the proposal of attending this bi-annual event initially, I started having second thoughts when the details of the conference were out. Attending this conference in Bali meant that my child would need to skip school. Would that be alright? Nevertheless, I brushed away those worries and stuck with our decision to go. We really had no regrets.

We attended an informal welcome dinner on the eve of the start to the conference. I figured this was really to get us used to being in the same place with a big group of strangers for the next 3 days. Ms. Una Lauw, the President of the Suzuki Talent Education Association of Singapore, pointed out to us the faculty, guests and Suzuki teachers from around the Asian region seated at that very ballroom. Indeed, it felt extremely encouraging to be seated amongst the champions of the Suzuki method, the very people who believe in bringing up children as noble human beings through loving encouragement, constant repetition, etc. By the end of the dinner, we were pumped up for the start of the conference the next day.

Day 1, the conference begins! We made our way to the Nusa Dua Westin Convention Centre to rehearse for the "Singapore" item after breakfast. The Singapore contingency would be presenting a medley, brilliantly put together by Mr. Tan Wen-Bin, during the opening ceremony of the conference. It comprised of 4 songs, close to every Singaporean's heart. They were - Home, Di Tanjong Katong, Moonlight In The City and Muunaeru Vaalibaa.

It was really a proud moment for all of us, when Ms. Lauw and the Singaporean group took to the stage at their inaugural representation of Singapore at the Suzuki Conference. Ms. Lauw's enthusiasm was upbeat and she led the group, comprising of dedicated teachers and keen students to play the medley. My daughter was nervous but very excited to be part of a group to perform onstage together. She had been very encouraged that she had a part in this opening performance and was constantly practising this medley prior to arriving at Bali.

The performance met with a resounding applause and for us parents and other Singaporeans who were not part of the performance, we felt nothing but pride and joy!



Kim En Bi, with younger sister Seo Yeon and mother June

Though a small group, we were no less dedicated than the other Asian participants in our efforts and it really showed.

After the opening ceremony, the workshops were to begin. My daughter and I held on dearly to the program that was handed out to us on the day of our arrival and after a quick lunch, we made our way to the assigned room for her level (depending on where the student's current progress in Suzuki Book terms) and began our 3 days worth of workshops.

My daughter thoroughly enjoyed Mr. Martin Ruttimann's 1.5-hour workshops everyday, where they practised selected songs from the Suzuki books. She constantly looked forward to his fun yet enriching teachings. Over the few days, he made a deep impression in my daughter's mind, she began to learn how to better her techniques, how to express herself, and more importantly, learnt how to enjoy the fun in learning.

Dr. Terry Durbin, the conductor for Orchestra 1, was "THE Entertainer" of the conference to the children. He had so many funny antics up his sleeves, the children always looked forward to attend the rehearsals he conducted. My daughter was not the only one eager beaver to attend the rehearsals on time every day, it was evident by the overflowing hall where the rehearsal was held, that no student would want to miss the opportunity to rehearse together with Dr. Durbin.

It was not all work and no play for the attendees. We enjoyed a concert by up and coming Young Artists, showcasing songs played in the various instruments that the Suzuki method was taught in, namely the violin, cello and piano. It was an eye-opener for us to see such young talents and reassuring to see how the Suzuki method could help a child develop and blossom into an artist.

(continued)

We also had time for some shopping and dining on the last evening of our trip. We enjoyed Indonesian cuisine and after dining, went shopping and filled our bags with local goodies for our family and friends back in Singapore.

Would I bring my child for the next Suzuki Conference? It would have to be a resounding “YES”! It was a thoroughly enriching experience where my child and I were immersed in a very musical environment. We saw everybody carrying an instrument, teachers rushing from one room to another, parents waiting about but ever ready to assist their child with the logistics and encourage their children in their practices. The atmosphere shouted “Music is for us, Suzuki students!”

1 week back in Singapore, my child and I were still gushing about how this conference really fostered in us, an even more positive attitude towards the Suzuki

method and the importance of joyful practice on a daily basis. She was so encouraged that she wanted to complete Book 4 by the next conference!

Our takeaway from the conference: Music was the common language that brought us to this conference and there is no barrier to learning music anywhere as long as you are willing to learn. My child was inspired by the faculty and their joyfulness in imparting their skills and knowledge to them and looks forward to being able to play the violin like them someday. It is only when a student is self-motivated to pick up their instrument and practise, that you realise your child now loves what he/she does. This is what the conference did for us and we hope that others will join in too at the next Suzuki Conference to experience what we did, and enhance the musical journey for your child and yourself, a Suzuki parent.

ARSO/ISA's Bali meeting on June 25th 2016



ARSO country representatives with ISA representative

(From left to right) Ms Una Lauw (STEAS-President), Mr Paul Landefeld (ISA interim CEO), Professor Carmensita Arambulo (PSA-President Emeritus), Professor Lan Ku Chen (TTEA-Chairman), Therese Wirakesuma (SMAI-Chairman)



Representatives from China, Kazakhstan, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Thailand also attended the meeting.

A Teacher's Perspective by Ow Ying Ying

This was my second time attending a Suzuki Conference. While I was really excited to be reunited with old friends from Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Philippines, I was thrilled to have made friends from India, Thailand, Cambodia and Kazakhstan. It's amazing how Dr Suzuki's fundamental belief that all children have talent brought everyone of us together.

For teachers and parents, there were various workshops to attend, such as "The Serious Business of Having Fun During Learning", "Gypsy Music for Violin Teachers", "Ideas for Teaching Piano Group Lessons" etc.

As a teacher, I also learnt a lot through class observations for the 3 days, watching how other teachers conduct individual and group lessons. My favourite activity is watching the

outstanding concerts at the end of each day given by faculty and guest musicians.

Learning an instrument is a test of patience and it requires a lot of determination to overcome obstacles along the way. I came back feeling recharged and inspired, and I'm sure students who were there with me have become more motivated after watching and listening to other children.



Ow Ying Ying with Marzena Jasinska (Suzuki Piano Trainer for ESA)

Cello Training by Tan Wen-Bin

I attended Suzuki Cello Book 1 teaching training conducted by Prof. Bai-Chi Chen during the Asia Regional Suzuki Conference in Bali.

I was familiar with the pieces in the Suzuki books, but I had not been trained in the Suzuki Method, so it was undeniably

fresh and exciting for me. Prof. Chen made sure we were well-equipped to transfer those skills to our students.

I took home several important lessons, some of which differed considerably from traditional teaching. You have to be prepared to do anything you that you demand from your student.

Teacher training has definitely made me rethink my pedagogy, as well as my playing. I'm excited to go for further training, as well as apply the fundamentals that I've learnt to other music that I play.



Tan Wen-Bin with Prof. Bai-Chi Chen

Violin Training in SG

STEAS has organised an impressive number of violin and piano training within the short time it has been established.



1st batch of Violin Book 1 trainees with Prof. Lan Ku Chen and Mrs



2nd batch of Violin Book 1 trainees with Prof. Lan Ku Chen and Mrs Chen



Piano Training in SG

STEAS has organised an impressive number of violin and piano training within the short time it has been established.



Piano Book 1 trainees with Prof. Arambulo and Ms Carolyn Cheng



Piano Book 2 trainees with Prof. Arambulo



There is something for everyone

Teacher Training



Teachers' Discussion



Students' Workshop



Students' Concert



STEAS NEWSLETTER Issue 1.0

Thank you all for your hard work. It is with great honour that I'm writing the first newsletter in the history of STEAS. Looking at the numerous events covered in 1 short year proves that this organisation is set to grow larger with the contribution from all students, parents and teachers. I hope your journey will be as rewarding as mine has been for me.

Jayne Lee

"By means of industry and perseverance you will rise higher and higher."
— **Robert Schumann**