

The 2013-2014 musical year in review:

This was an extraordinary year for special events. We were able to take advantage of three visiting artists (Carol Wincenc, Maurice Steger, and Zara Lawler) to provide workshop opportunities for our students, have two students and one teacher attend the SAA biannual conference, and run a small scale summer program for teacher training and student classes.

Fall term:

- ◆ Group classes were reorganized to create a mixed beginner group based on the "toolbox" songs, which fostered more parent participation in the group class.
- ◆ Students participated in the first annual "Tutti Day" Suzuki mixed instrument play-in to celebrate Dr. Suzuki's birthday. Senior students performed Bach b minor Minuet with orchestra accompaniment as part of this event.
- ◆ Silverwinds had a field trip to see Ian Anderson of Jethro Tull in concert. (Their Kiwanis Festival group scholarship subsidized the tickets.)
- ◆ Silverwinds played in Winspear lobby as part of "Musicians in the Making" series and received free tickets to ESO concert featuring Mozart flute & harp concerto.
- ◆ Sweetwoods played in Winspear lobby as part of "Musicians in the Making" series and received free tickets to ESO concert featuring recorder soloist Maurice Steger.
- ◆ Senior recorder students participated in a recorder workshop and masterclass with Maurice Steger at the Winspear Centre
- ◆ The first Every Child Can! course was sponsored by ESFRS as part of our new parent orientation program.
- ◆ All the groups performed at the "Groups in Review" concert at the end of November. Thanks to an operating grant from the AFA, we were able to present this concert at the Expressionz Cafe. Many positive remarks were received afterwards regarding the coffeehouse setting.
- ◆ Flutist Zara Lawler from New York gave a movement in performance workshop for all students.
- ◆ Silverwinds, Sweetwoods, and the reading group performed at performed at "Celebrate the Season" in the Legislature Rotunda.

Winter term:

- ◆ Kathleen Schoen was invited to teach at the International Suzuki Festival in Lima, Peru.
- ◆ Silverwinds & Sweetwoods performed selections from "The Hobbit" soundtrack with the STE ACE orchestra as part of their mid-winter rehearsal retreat at Concordia University.
- ◆ Everyone played solos at the Winter Solo Recital, and all the new beginners took a bow!
- ◆ The first "Teaching Strategies" PD course following the Latin American model was given as part of our in-house teachers' PD program.
- ◆ Second term of group classes ended with a groups concert at the theatre in the EPL Whitemud Crossings branch. The building is a former movie theatre, and one of the small screening rooms was preserved as a community theatre space. The seats even still had the original drink & popcorn holders!
- ◆ We lost our Board secretary, Menzie McEachern, to a job transfer to Inuvik. His daughter Maica continues her lessons with ESFRS via Skype.

Spring Term:

- ◆ Our students received more than \$1000 in scholarships and a provincial festival recommendation at the Edmonton Kiwanis Music Festival. This included students winning the special Cora Molstad and Pamela Farmer scholarship classes.
- ◆ The ECC! class was given as part of the new parent orientation.
- ◆ Groups & Grads was the last group concert of the season. Two students graduated from Book 1A flute, one from Book 1B recorder, and one from a new level this year: Grade 12 comprehensive recorder, with a performance that was recorded for an SAA teacher training audition. Thanks again to the AFA operating grant, we were able to have this event at the Stanley Milner Library theatre. The formal concert hall setting was appreciated by all.
- ◆ Kathleen Schoen was invited to Whitehorse to give the ECC! class to parents and teachers as part of their Suzuki in the Schools start-up.
- ◆ This was an SAA Conference year. Two students (Sophia Schoen and Devan Prithipaul) auditioned and were invited to participate in the SAA International Recorder Consort, along with students from USA and Brazil. One student also participated as a teacher in the Paul Leenhouts recorder workshop and the Dalcroze movement workshop. Our students also participated in the Suzuki Americas performance with students from all over North and South America. Two recorder students in this ensemble were both also taking teacher training courses from

Kathleen Schoen: Diak Anthony Bustamente Flores from Peru, and Sophia Schoen from Edmonton. They played side by side in the Suzuki Americas concert.

◆Recorder Unit 7 was offered at the St. Paul Conservatory of Music immediately after the Conference. Our student Sophia Schoen attended as a student masterclass participant, and Kathleen Schoen attended as a teacher participant.

◆Everyone played solos at the Spring Solo Recital.

◆Pre-registration for the 2014-2015 season was set up to accommodate on-line registrations through the Paypal system.

Summer Term:

◆Kathleen Schoen attended the Suzuki Associations of Greater Washington Institute to work with Toshio Takahashi, the founder of the Suzuki Flute method.

◆The Alberta Summer Suzuki Institute featured Flute Unit 1 training. This course was taken by Lara Hyde and Nicolette Garman, so we now have two more flute teachers in our program! Three of our students (Finn Cunningham, Jack Ma, and Megumi Varghese) took advantage of a makeup lesson rebate from their teacher to participate in the student masterclasses.

◆Carol Wincenc, flute teacher at the Julliard school, was in town during the Institute. Through a cooperative agreement between ESFRS, U of A, and the ESO, we were able to have her lead the opening play-in and technique class of the Institute, and have her give masterclasses which the Unit 1 teacher participants could include in their required teaching observations. The masterclasses were also attended by our teachers Beth Gardner and Leigh-Anne DeVries as auditors, and Kathleen Schoen as a performer.

◆Kathleen Schoen ran a recorder student masterclass the following week which was attended by six of our students (Cole, Samantha, and Rebecca Carlsen, Massilya Hocine, Angus Savage, and Oriana Campbell)

◆A Bass flute was purchased for the use of the Silverwinds group, thanks again to the AFA operating grant.

Plans for the 2014-2015 year:

◆Continuing with more community outreach performances, thanks to the AFA operating grant.

New this year: Bach in the Subways on March 21, J.S. Bach's 330th birthday.

◆Incorporating a Summer Institute into our calendar to create a year-round program.

Based on the prototype program we ran this last summer, partially through ASSI and partially through Kathleen Schoen's studio, it will consider the following points:

1. Cost: Institute fees need to be included in the overall cost for the whole year, not be an extra cost to families.
2. Timetable: Student masterclasses need to be offered at a variety of times (morning, afternoon, and evening) to facilitate parent attendance and work commitments
3. Scheduling: Later in August would help families, especially beginners and those registered in the Charter School, to get a good start on their music studies before needing to juggle school commitments at the same time. This would also provide outreach performance opportunities at the Fringe Festival.
4. Long term plan: summer 2015 - small scale workshop program; summer 2016 - full Institute to celebrate beginning of ESFRS 10th anniversary season (2016-2017)

◆ Incorporating the Teaching Strategies course into our in-house PD program

The business of making it happen:

	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014-2015
Recorder Students	13	11	10
Flute Students	26	26	28
TOTAL STUDENTS (This doesn't add up because some students play both instruments.)	38	36	38
New Students	6	6	8
Recorder Teachers	2	2	3
Flute Teachers	3	3	5
TOTAL TEACHERS	3	3	6

Student enrollment is staying relatively stable, with incoming students replacing students who leave the program. There was an opportunity to increase our intake of beginners in the spring through demand from the Charter School, but we had to decline because we were not certain if our new teachers were going to be able to take the Unit 1 training over the summer. Now that we know we have two new flute teachers, we can increase our intake and possibly even advertise.

It is important when the program becomes this full to look at our student demographics over several years. If we fill every available space with beginners, then there is no place for new students the following year. Then the program becomes heavily weighted towards one age group or level, and you are faced with a situation where everyone graduates at once and you have to start all over again. In order to maintain a balanced program, growth needs to be gradual, maintaining space for a limited number of beginners each year.

Teachers with Suzuki training are still in short supply. Due to the nature of the music teaching business, many of our teachers also have day jobs or other music freelance occupations. We have to balance the available teaching hours with our student enrollment. In the interest of maintaining program quality, we do not hire new teachers unless they have shown a commitment to the Suzuki teaching philosophy by beginning the teacher training process. Our minimum requirement for teachers is to have completed the Every Child Can! and Unit 1 course. The ESFRS program includes promotion of teacher training through a professional development fund. Now that we have a resident SAA Teacher Trainer most of our minimum requirements can be completed locally, except for Flute Unit 1. We partnered this year with the Alberta Summer Suzuki Institute to offer Flute Unit 1, and were able to train two new flute teachers, and Recorder Unit 1 was offered locally this fall, providing training for one new recorder teacher. We have also started a pilot project to offer the Teaching Strategies course to our teachers as part of their ongoing in-house professional development.

Financially, our budget is relatively stable. We have received an Alberta Foundation for the Arts operating grant for a second year, so some expense increases, such as banking services, did not have to be passed on to the student families. This grant also left us a bit extra for some special projects (see handout of proposed budget). The rent charged by the Charter School has remained stable after the first increase after the move to the new building.

An ongoing problem with the budget process, the timing of rent increases, has been eased after some conversations with the Charter School.

A record number of NSF cheques last year has led us to start using the Paypal service for invoicing tuition fees and accepting payments. Families still have an option of sending in post-dated cheques, but any families with a record of continuous NSF payments will be required to use the Paypal system exclusively to guarantee payment. This increases the service charges on all of our transactions, but also provides us with limited bookkeeping services, reducing the number of our limited volunteer hours spent on financial administration. There have been a number of tuition payment delays during the transition to the new system, but the long term view looks good, with 71% of our member families choosing to pay their registration fees on line, and 29% paying their tuition online. 50% of the new beginner families paid tuition on line, so this looks like the way of the future.

We have established separate funds for scholarships, special projects, and operating expenses. Any budget surpluses are divided into thirds and one third is put in each fund. In order to grow these funds, especially the scholarship fund, we want to be able to offer tax receipts for donations. We have yet to apply for the necessary registration number to be able to do so. This is the next long term financial goal.