

Ever since I was 12 years old and in the early days of my musical studies at the Yehudi Menuhin School in England, I have been fascinated with the process and notion of teaching. The idea of passing on a legacy through performance practice, and being part of an aural tradition entrusted to me by masters of the instrument is somewhat magical. It is the creation and preservation of history.

I am fortunate to have had great opportunities in my life. While the idea of “giving back” has become cliché, I cannot think of a better term to explain my motivation to help those who have the talent, personality, work ethic, and determination to succeed. I am indebted to all my past teachers who took the trouble to share their experience, knowledge, philosophy, and passion with me, and inspired me by their dedication to musical ideals. Their example and belief in me as a young cellist stimulated the development of my own teaching philosophy. Many teachers were pivotal in my artistic development. Those I was fortunate to spend the most time with are the following: Guido Mascellini and Myra Chahin (in my early years), Alberto Lysy (my father), Maurice Gendron, William Pleeth, Radu Aldulescu, Yehudi Menuhin, and Ralph Kirshbaum.

My wife Margaret, a violinist and pedagogue, has also been a constant inspiration. She proves daily that dedication, passion, and patience can bring about incredible results. Her boundless energy and spirit has spread the joy of music-making to countless young minds. She is the founder and director of a wonderful school in Santa Monica, SOL-LA Music Academy (www.sollamusicacademy.org). I am so grateful for the privilege of having taught, really learned, at two distinguished universities: McGill University in Montreal (for 15 years) and the University of California Los Angeles Herb Alpert School of Music (since 2003). After over twenty-five years of teaching I have many fabulous memories. These schools have been stimulating environments in which to hold concerts and conduct repertoire research, interact with the younger generation on a daily basis, meet brilliant minds in a variety of vocations, make lasting friendships, and never get bored! I am delighted when past students do well for themselves by pursuing their studies on scholarship, perform and work professionally as soloists, join prestigious orchestras, chamber ensembles, teach in distinguished institutions, and pursue other varied and interesting career choices.

Many people ask me “What is your method or style of teaching?” My goal is to teach students to teach themselves. I hope I can guide them to learn to be truly independent and creative musicians; instrumentalists who find solutions to any problem; individuals who have confidence in their own ‘voice’, and are not put off by self-imposed limitations. Every student has something special to offer the world of music and there is room for them all.

Trying to make a living from music may seem to many like a risky business; yet it is a truly admirable pursuit. It requires, not dissimilarly to parenting, patience, dedication, unconditional love, and accepting the uncertainty of the unknown and

the challenges it may bring. Music is like so much else, the more you put into it, the more you receive.