



**Villa Sinfonia
Foundation**

32 Mountain Spring Avenue • San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 661-3782

www.villasinfonia.org

Dear Villa Sinfonia Friends and Families,

When our daughters Lena and Beatriz were four years old, their father George gave them tiny violins. We knew he was a musician - when we were introduced we'd been told "he's thin, he's a pediatrician and he plays cello" - but we had no concept of the force that music would become in our lives. Apparently the cello part was a big deal.

Not being musically inclined we said "Thank you George" and quietly panicked. We had no idea what to do with our tiny prospective violinists. Ellen's boss said "you'll call Roy Oakley, that's what you'll do." Roy was accepting new students, and the following two years were a sort of screeching agony that only two five year olds on strings can create. At some point, we started to hear music —simple music, but music just the same. We were grateful for that but things got even better when Roy suggested that identical twins shouldn't play identical instruments. Recognizing the cellist in Bea, he introduced us to cellist Carol Rice and Carol introduced Bea to her true love, the cello.

Over the past seven years music has become central to our lives and Villa Sinfonia has become our musical family. We had no idea what we were getting into: the practice, the rehearsals, the concerts, the camp, the tours and the instruments. Villa Sinfonia requires a big investment of time, energy and yes, money. But the return is unparalleled. Our children have become musicians. They have learned an art that they love, that they can share with their father, with their friends, even strangers. With their music they can connect to history and across cultures. Recently our girls met Edgar, a 90 - year old Holocaust survivor who had played violin with an orchestra in the Warsaw ghetto. Five minutes after meeting, they sat down together and played a Beethoven quartet with him. Edgar was delighted and amazed. Private lessons alone would not have prepared them for this moving experience. Villa Sinfonia is unique in providing a combination of individual, group, and ensemble training in the company of professional musicians. Villa has taught our children not just to play music well, but to be real musicians, to play music together with confidence and joy. Last summer when they took the stage at Carnegie Hall, you would think it was something they did every day.

We are so grateful to have stumbled into the best classical music instruction in San Francisco. The teachers and administration, the volunteers and the students who keep Villa humming are an incredibly dedicated group. Their passion for music and their determination to make each and every member of Villa a better musician is evident in every VSF activity. As non musician parents we can't play along with the orchestra, but we can support the Villa foundation so that all *students from Suzuki Book 1 to Villa Chamber Orchestra first violinists get the chance to be their best and to play with the best.*

Please join us in making a year-end contribution to the 501(c) (3) non-profit Villa Sinfonia Foundation. Your gift will help to support the countless ways VSF enriches our lives every day.

With gratitude,

The Opie Lederman Family (Ellen, Nicole, Lena and Beatriz, and George Emerson)