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Journal



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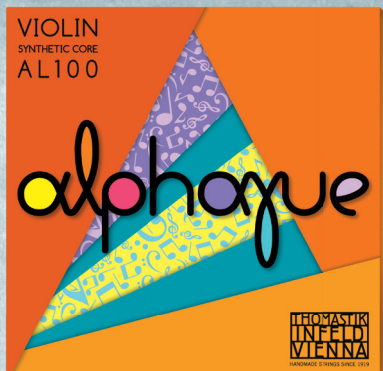
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Chair's Column

By David Strom, Guest Columnist

It has been an honor to serve as your SAA Board Chair these past two years. In preparing this, my final Chair's Column message, I turned to our colleague, David Strom. David's insight and unique ability to speak to the core of who we are as Suzuki teachers continues to inspire me. What we do is bigger than "us"; it spans centuries, builds bridges, and nurtures noble hearts. Thank you, my Suzuki community, for your endless generosity, camaraderie, and example of excellence!



– Sarah Bylander Montzka

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I remember with great vividness when music became an irresistible, intoxicating, all-consuming force in my life—that mysterious and miraculous moment when music was no longer a hobby but a hunger.

It was not always so. While I would practice dutifully, it was more for the approval of others than for any intrinsic fire of my own. When I was about 14, it was as if every seed that had ever been planted bloomed simultaneously. To this day, I have no idea what precipitated it—but I remember taking the day off from school to immerse myself in the works of the great composers. They all seemed to be crying across time, begging for me to listen, pleading for my understanding. I imagined over the span of hundreds of years their message had been received. I felt that I somehow “knew” Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninoff, Brahms, Dvorak, Shostakovich, etc. I had never felt more connected to the universe.

Reflecting on this now, I am struck by the power of music to obliterate every conceivable wall in service of our common humanity. How else could a middle class kid from the suburbs feel that he “got” Shostakovich and Shostakovich was speaking directly to him? But of course, it was equally incongruous that the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart would move a young Japanese violin teacher in pre-World War II Japan to write, “It was

Mozart who taught me to know perfect love, truth, goodness, and beauty.” It is striking that so many of the artificial constructs that divide us so deeply are cosmically insignificant in contrast to the unfathomable, rich emotional landscape that is expressed through our art.

It is no surprise that dictators throughout history start by silencing the artists. Any force that reminds us we are fundamentally the same terrifies those who would exploit our fears to divide us.

The divisions in our world have been building for years, but they have arguably never been more keenly felt in our lifetime than right now. I would strongly argue that musicians—and especially Suzuki teachers—have the opportunity and almost-sacred responsibility to remind us of our common humanity, which is indeed at the heart of two of our most foundational principles as Suzuki teachers: “Every child can” and “character first, then ability.”

Every Child Can

While music itself may intimate at these truths, when Suzuki declared that “every child can learn,” he was saying as directly as he could that music is not the privilege of a blessed few, but rather a birthright of all children. Music and musical ability belong equally to children of

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SAA Membership Form

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START PLANNING FOR THE 18th Biennial SAA Conference May 24–28, 2018

Hilton Minneapolis and Minneapolis Convention Center · Minneapolis, MN

Teacher Sessions

Teachers can expect four days filled with lectures, panel discussions, interactive sessions, workshops, and keynote speeches from esteemed colleagues in and outside the Suzuki community. Topics are wide ranging, from instrument-specific teaching techniques to Suzuki philosophy and history. Observe respected artists and teachers give master classes to highly-prepared Suzuki students. Be inspired by stunning student performances and enjoy special performances by clinicians and guests. Catch up with colleagues and make new friends and professional connections. Refresh your teaching toolbox and collaborate with your Suzuki community!

Student Events

At the heart of SAA Conferences are student performances, where Suzuki students from across North and South America come together for four days of unforgettable music-making. All

students studying with an SAA member teacher may audition for student events.

Master Classes

Students perform prepared repertoire in instrument-specific and chamber music master classes with distinguished guest clinicians.

SYOA

Suzuki Youth Orchestra of the Americas—a highlight of the conference! Grouped into two different age levels, string players rehearse with engaging conductors and in sections with SAA teachers to prepare for a final performance.

SYASE

Suzuki Young Artists String Ensemble fills the need for students who have “aged out” of SYOA, but still desire to be a part of an ensemble. Look for new, exciting repertoire and an enthusiastic conductor!



International Ensembles

A treat for students and conference-goers, performing groups led by SAA member teachers showcase their polished performances.

Piano Concerto

One Suzuki piano student is chosen by audition to perform an advanced piano concerto with a faculty orchestra of SAA teachers and a professional conductor.

Other Instrumental Groups

Other group performing opportunities will be available for students in other instruments, including the Advanced Violin Performing Ensemble, Flute Performing Ensemble, Bass Choir, Recorder Consort, and Guitar Ensemble. New in 2018: Cello Choir!

Teachers and parents, now is the time to think ahead to 2018 Conference Student Events. Help your students hone their

book-level-appropriate techniques and practice habits, and look for specific repertoire audition pieces and deadlines in ASJ v45#4 (Summer). Keep an eye on the SAA *Short Score* email newsletter for more announcements in the coming months. To watch previous years' student performances, visit our website: <https://suzukiassociation.org/media/tags/video/conference/> •



Photos by Loren Abramson and SAA Staff



Photos by Loren Abramson and SAA Staff

ATTENDING A ON A

By MaryLou Roberts

I have to admit that before I attended my first conference, I wasn't sure why everyone was so excited about it. My colleagues thought it was one of the most important Suzuki events for a teacher to attend, saying you get to refresh and deepen your understanding of Suzuki ideas, see people who are leaders in different parts of the country, listen to inspiring speakers, and just get excited about teaching. So I left my children, ages three to thirteen at the time, with some serious "Daddy time" and drove to Cincinnati. I went on trust, and hoped for the best.

I had to do everything for that trip in the same way that I always do: making it the most fun without spending too much. Here are some tips for attending conferences on a budget. These ideas are for implementing now or in the fall.

- 1. Save on transportation any way you can.** If you are driving, let teachers in your area know you are going and offer to share expenses. If you are flying, find a ride to the airport. Buying plane tickets early can save a bundle. The Minneapolis public transport system is online at metrotransit.org, and it is easy to use right from the airport. It is reliable and inexpensive, so you can get around the city for only a few dollars.
- 2. Save on hotel costs.** Find a roommate—it's a lot of fun getting to know another teacher. If you are really diligent, you can even bring an air mattress and sheets and share a room three or four ways. Air beds are relatively small. There are also discounted rates at nearby hotels that are within walking distance.
- 3. Save on food costs.** Depending on what you like, this can be fun, too. Every hotel room comes with a coffee maker, so you can have tea, oatmeal, instant soup, or anything that can be made with hot water. You don't need to pay three dollars for coffee unless you want to; save that money and use it for socializing at lunch or dinner. Restaurant options range from upscale places to places like Panera and Chipotle, and there are grocery stores nearby for breakfast and lunch supplies.
- 4. Pay the early conference registration.** It saves money, helps the conference team with planning, and gets you excited that you are really going.
- 5. Start a vacation envelope in a secret spot.** It's good Feng Shui to put money away in a red envelope for a special time that you look forward to all year. The red color is for good luck!
- 6. Plan in the fall.** It is possible not to miss any teaching to attend the conference by holding a master class with your own students, three or four in one hour Monday to Wednesday of the conference week. This leaves time for travel on Thursday. Families benefit by seeing other children learn, performing in a small,

CONFERENCE BUDGET

supportive setting, and your weekly lesson fee is maintained. Framing it for parents in print helps you say the benefits much better than talking on the spot. Students really do learn a lot from watching each other, and most parents will give you one lesson like this per year, especially if they know you are becoming even more excited and directed by attending the conference. Most parents understand the concept of conferences through their own work.

- 7. Consider adding a little to your lesson fee, and tell parents it is for support to attend the biennial conference.** Even just a \$3 increase will give you a “scholarship” amount to work with.
- 8. Open a separate savings account so your fees are not used for other expenses.** Or consider having a dedicated credit card or using a smart phone app to keep track of saving and expenses that can be deducted from your income for tax purposes. All conference expenses, transportation and meals will save you money at tax time.
- 9. Realize the difference between conference attendance and teacher training.** When you are just starting out, teacher training on a regular yearly basis gives you a strong foundation with the materials you need. The conference gives you something else: enthusiasm for Suzuki teaching, networking with like-minded teachers who are also starting out, and finding so many great teachers who all have useful ideas. I have found this enthusiasm and belief in what you are doing can translate into better students and, practically speaking, more reliable income. The conference helps you find your own “why” and gives you confidence to use your training even more effectively.
- 10. The conference will get your brainstorming going.**

As teachers, just talking with colleagues, sharing your ideas informally gets the thought process going that lasts all year long. Friendships are made that can bring you closer to having the kind of studio you want, making a bigger difference in the lives of the children you work with. The conference is an exploration of the possibilities that exist for you, so that you can go beyond what you thought was possible.

I have found that the forward thinking at conferences is amazing. I see what the other instruments are investigating, how groups are being presented, talking with colleagues, awesome performances and sharing ideas. Helping others by sharing some of my own ideas is also a great way to learn and organize my own way of thinking. I will be starting my own red envelope this fall, and I hope to see you at the conference in 2018!



Photos by Loren Abramson and SAA Staff

Plan a Fall 2018 SPA Course Now!

Have you thought about offering Suzuki Principles in Action in your area? The time to plan fall courses is now! The SAA administers the course in cooperation with a hosting organization or individual—local programs, state or provincial chapters, Suzuki schools and other groups are among those who may be the hosts for the course. If you've wanted to take SPA but it hasn't been offered in your area, maybe it's time to host!

Suzuki Principles in Action (SPA) is a course designed to help teachers incorporate Suzuki's principles effectively in their teaching. The course focuses on **how to teach, not what to teach**, and allows for the sharing of ideas among all instrument areas. It is based on Dr. Suzuki's belief that knowledge is an important first step, but "knowledge plus 10,000 times" is what produces ability. This important principle, which teachers frequently explain to their students, applies equally to the art of teaching.

What are the principles that SPA reinforces?

The inspiration for SPA came from a need, identified by both Trainers and Teacher Workshop Participants, to deal with the challenges of implementing the knowledge gained from Unit courses into the reality of day-to-day studio teaching.

Topics include:

- Setting standards of excellence for students at all levels

- Identifying the appropriate time to move ahead in the repertoire
- Incorporating regular, productive review work in daily teaching and practicing
- Incorporating ear training and learning by ear in daily teaching
- Focusing attention on tone development
- Giving productive, balanced, frequent feedback to students
- Communicating effectively and working productively with parents
- Structuring lessons to facilitate successful progress

Sheryl Shoheit wrote this about her experience with SPA through the Suzuki Association of Hawaii in ASJ 40#1: "All of us were deeply aware and appreciative of the careful thought and preparation that the SAA SPA committee put into this course. We loved the video clips that were tailor-made for us Suzuki teachers, the extremely well-organized and clearly written handbook, the nice balance of activities, and the informative and guided discussions. Even the ice breakers were a hit! Most importantly, we learned new approaches that we could immediately incorporate into our teaching.

The SAA has wisely created this course as a preparatory step to its Practicum course, encouraging teachers to consider taking the Practicum next. **Please consider hosting a SPA weekend in your area.** It was easy to organize, and it's only one (enjoyable) weekend of your life."

Learn more about SPA and start the process of hosting a course at <https://suzukiassociation.org/teachers/training/spa/> •



Photo by Jean Dexter

SAA Chapter Affiliate Heart of America Suzuki Association hosted a SPA course April 1-2, 2017, at the University of Missouri—Kansas City. Teacher Trainer Carol Tarr facilitated the course for 12 participants.

Repairing work of the TERI building and nameplate donation

Dear Suzuki families throughout the world,
In 2016, the Talent Education Research Institute (TERI) celebrated its 70th anniversary. As part of the 70th anniversary commemoration, we included repairing and reforming the TERI building which was built by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki 50 years ago. Construction on the building began in October 2016, and we are planning for it to be completed in the end of May 2017. Though the main purpose of the repairs was to bring the building up to code for earthquake safety, in addition to reinforcing the building we have also included some reforms that we believe will improve the function and comfort of the building. Two of these additions are an elevator and a soundproof room. To many in both Japan and throughout the world the TERI building is much more than just a building or a school. This is always very evident when people return and nostalgically tell stories about things they did here. It is a place that brings people together from many countries. It is a place where many who have been here, as well as many who have not yet visited TERI, feel a strong belonging.

As both the building reformation and the 70th anniversary commemoration comes to an end, we have been thinking of a way that members of the Suzuki family can show to all who visit here that TERI belongs to them. And as our 70th anniversary finale, we

are offering two ways that you can have your name engraved in the TERI building. With a donation of more than 5,000-yen, your name will be engraved on a commemorative plate that will be displayed in the reformed TERI building. Or, what about having your own personalized seat in the TERI hall? The first 250 people who donate 30,000 yen can have their own engraved nameplate on the back of a seat in the TERI hall. (To see an example of these plates, please refer to the web URL below).

Anyone interested will need to fill out the form and send it to teri@suzukimethod.or.jp. Donations will be accepted through PayPal from May 1 to 31, 2017, through the web site (<http://www.suzukimethod.or.jp/70donate/english.html>). If you are interested in having your name on a seat in the hall, please remember that we can only offer this to the first 250 people. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact us at teri@suzukimethod.or.jp Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,
Prof. Ryugo Hayano
President,
Talent Education Research Institute ●•



Image courtesy of TERI

Artist's rendering of the renovated TERI building in Matsumoto, Japan

New Flute Book One Recording Finished

The Revised International Edition of Suzuki Flute Volume One will feature a new CD performed by renowned recording artist Lorna McGhee. Originally from Scotland, Lorna is currently principal flutist with the Pittsburgh Symphony. She teaches at Carnegie Mellon University and is a highly sought-after master class clinician. Lorna was accompanied at the piano by Vahan Sargsyan, who is also on faculty at CMU. The recording session took place at The Lodge studio in Indianapolis. Present were officials from Alfred Publishing and Kelly Williamson as representative from the ISA Flute Committee. Lorna's interpretation of the Book One repertoire displayed the color, sensitivity, and imagination that her playing is noted for. One listener said, "If someone didn't want to play the flute before, they certainly would after hearing this!" The Suzuki flute community is very much looking forward to the release of the CD, along with the Revised Book One.



Lorna McGhee and recording technician Corey Miller

Photo by Kelly Williamson

Calendar of Events 2017

1st of each month	Newsletter (Short Score) submissions due
Nov. 1, Feb. 1, May 1 and Aug. 1	ASJ submissions due
May 25-29	Leadership Retreat, Deer Creek Lodge & Conference Center, OH
May 27	SAA Annual Membership Meeting, Deer Creek Lodge, OH
July 31	SAA fiscal year end
Sept. 3	Premier Business Member Renewals due
Sept. 15-17	Board meeting, Boulder, CO
Sept. 25	Established Institutes – 2018 preliminary information due
Oct. 15	2018 Institute Applications due
	Conference International Ensembles applications due
October 25	Conference master class, orchestra and all other ensembles due
October 30	Conference session proposals due
Dec. 15	Conference Piano Concerto applications due

Asia Regional Suzuki Association is the Newest ISA Regional Association

The board of directors of the newly-formed Asia Regional Suzuki Association, country association officials, and International Suzuki Association representatives met in Manila, Philippines, to sign name and sub-license agreements with the International Suzuki Association on April 30, 2017. ARSA joins four other ISA regional associations: SAA, European Suzuki Association, Pan-Pacific Suzuki Association, and the Talent Education Research Institute. ARSA comprises Suzuki associations in countries across Asia, except for Japan.

Pictured, left to right:

Lan Ku Chen, ARSA Secretary and ARSA Chair Elect, Representative to ARSA Board, Taiwan Talent Education Association Past Chair, ARSA Representative to ISA Board, ARSA Violin Teacher Trainer
Hoei Tsu Chen, Current President of TTEA, ARSA Assistant Teacher Trainer for Violin

Paul Landefeld, ISA Committee for Asia Region Oversight and Reorganization, ISA Co-Interim CEO

Carmencita Arambulo, ARSA Chairperson, Philippine Suzuki Association Representative to ARSA, Past Chair and Founding Member of PSA, ARSA Piano Teacher Trainer

Therese Wirakesuma, Suzuki Music Association of Indonesia Chairperson, SMAI Representative to ARSA Board

Una Lauw, Suzuki Talent Education Association of Singapore Chairperson and STEAS Representative to ARSA Board



Paul Landefeld and Carmencita Arambulo

Chair's Column, continued from p. 3

all races, religions, political parties, genders, sexual orientations, and countries of origin.

Our Suzuki families are as divided as the country right now, and we respect the diversity of opinion within our studios. In keeping with its core principles, however, the Suzuki community wholeheartedly rejects attempts by anyone to denigrate, demean, or discriminate against our brothers and sisters and all members of our human family who might look different, love differently, and worship differently than we do. *Every* child can.

Character First, Then Ability

I don't think of character as a good/bad polarity, but rather a set of qualities which we are all seeking to grow: kindness, honesty, generosity, respect, humility, compassion, hard work, discipline, empathy, and curiosity, amongst others. No individual or political party holds a monopoly on these virtues.

Rather than only a "do this, not that" approach, I want my students to experience beautiful tone and musicianship as their own intention. Like many of my teacher friends, I will demonstrate two ways and have the student choose which they prefer. I believe we have an extraordinary opportunity to highlight for our kids the people in their lives who are exemplifying beautiful character traits. Perhaps it is the teller at the bank who always asks about their day and offers a lollipop. Maybe it's their teacher at school who buys supplies with her own money and always has a special word for everyone. Or the person with very little who still finds something

to give to those with nothing. Look for men who respect women and women who are fearless and bold. For kids it can be framed as a game—a scavenger hunt for the best of humanity. We all have such paragons in our lives, and each day affords the opportunity to choose between behaving more like them or more like those who would demean women and minorities and sow racial and religious division. None of us, no matter our politics, can remain silent when fundamental issues of character are at stake.

Now, a quarter century removed from my formative experience as a teenager, I still feel deeply connected to the great composers—however, I hear in them a richness and emotional complexity that had eluded me earlier. Yet that essential quality of oneness amongst all people remains undiluted. This feeling is best exemplified by the greatest masterpiece of them all, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with its transcendent chorus: "Alle Menschen werden Brüder"—"All men will be brothers." No wonder tyrants have no use for music. For if we all "got" this message, we would get that, as Pablo Casals wrote, we are all marvels. And how, he asks, could we then do harm to one who is, like us, also a marvel? He concludes by imploring all of us to create a world that is worthy of our children. No matter how dark things may appear, there is no greater cause in this life.

David Strom resides in the Washington, DC, area, where he co-directs the Northern Virginia Suzuki Music School in Mclean, VA, with Ronda Cole and the Herndon Suzuki School in Ashburn, VA, with Will Hurd. Mr. Strom is an SAA Registered Teacher Trainer. He is a frequent clinician at workshops and institutes around the country. He holds a BM from the Hartt School and an MM from the University of Maryland. David is a former Suzuki kid and proud father of daughter Juliet.

Building Noble Hearts

New Suzuki Teaching Podcast from SAA

By Margaret Watts Romney

Have you ever felt transported to a different place when you were listening to someone tell a story? Have you lost track of time in the car while listening to a radio piece? Do you like hearing about the trials and triumphs of your Suzuki colleagues?

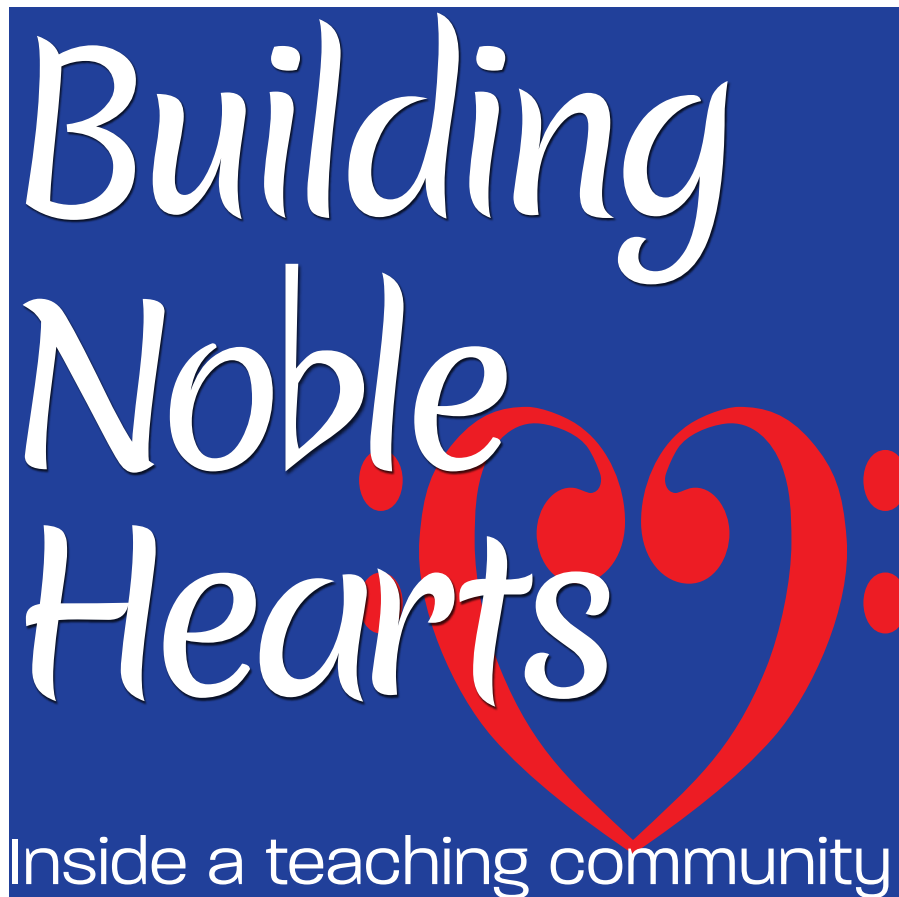
Building Noble Hearts is a podcast exploring the learning environments in which children, parents, and teachers not only gain new knowledge, but are encouraged to become fine individuals—just as Dr. Suzuki saw that by teaching children to play music in the same way that a baby is lovingly taught to speak, he could not only create excellent musicians but also build noble hearts.

Based on commentary, recordings, and interviews with members of this Suzuki teaching community, we will examine themes of good teaching everywhere.

Why a Podcast? Besides the fact that these audio shows are one of the fastest growing segments of media on the internet, there is a special connection made between speaker and listener through audio. Communications professor Emma Rodero from the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona, who has studied podcasts and how they capture people's attention, says, "Audio is one of the most intimate forms of media because you are constantly building your own images of the story in your mind and you're creating your own production."

From the Peabody award winning podcast Radiolab, host Jad Abumrad describes why this medium can be so powerful: "In a sense, I'm painting something but I'm not holding the paintbrush. You are. So it's this deep act of co-authorship, and in that is some potential for empathy."¹

In this music community we are very aware of the impact of sound, and focus a great deal of attention on what sounds we are producing. Creating an audio podcast for our auditorily focused demographic is a way to connect our community while simultaneously touching an audience beyond our traditional reach.



Tune in to hear interviews with teachers, board members, and parents (and eventually students!) as they answer questions such as, "What is Suzuki teaching to you?" "What is your story of how you became a musician?" and "If you could go anywhere in the world and share a musical experience with people there, where would you go and what would you do?"

How can you access Building Noble Hearts? On your computer, tablet, or phone, download an app that gives you access to the plethora of podcasts available: iTunes is the most popular for Apple devices and Stitcher for Android. After you download the app, search by title or subject. When you find the Building

Noble Hearts podcast, click to subscribe, and each episode will automatically be downloaded to your device as they are released every two weeks. You can erase or re-download episodes as you wish.

Episodes will also be available on the homepage of our website, with a transcript of the show, links to any music you heard, and a correlating discussion in the Suzuki Forum.

Join us in Building Noble Hearts! 

Notes

http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/ten_years_in_your_ears/2014/12/what_makes_podcasts_so_addictive_and_pleasurable.html

Suzuki for the 21st Century

By Joseph Kaminsky

Shinichi Suzuki was born in the 19th century and lived to the ripe old age of 99. His legacy of Talent Education is still going strong well into the 21st century.

Dr. Suzuki was a musician and an educator, but he was also a scientist. His laboratory was his Talent Education Institute in Matsumoto, Japan. His hypothesis is that all children can be educated to a high degree if they are educated in a proper manner. He posited the easiest way to learn was parallel to the way children learn to speak, as this was their natural way of learning. But before the advent of his teachings, it was still popular in the early 1900s for children to take private violin or piano lessons. The outcome of lessons, however, was quite different back then. While many children started lessons, only a few continued their studies through high school. Those who survived were deemed “talented,” and as God-given talent was surely not to be wasted, they were often channeled into professional directions with their musical gifts. “Talent” was thought to be an inherited trait, as there was a high occurrence of high-achieving students having musician parents. Dr. Suzuki was perhaps one of the first to realize that in music education, this high correlation did not necessarily indicate a causal relationship.

This idea was the basis of Dr. Suzuki’s life work. He isolated the environmental factors that contributed to a child’s success on an instrument, which led him to the conclusion that some of these factors present in musical families were the primary reasons for the child’s musical success, rather than any inborn genetic talent. Some of these factors included starting at a very young age; being constantly surrounded by live music in the household; utilizing early parental guidance; enjoying the pleasure of playing together as a family; performing as soon as possible; having the children watching the parents and their musical friends performing together to not only expose them to music but to inspire them to produce music themselves; normalizing daily practice as something that is natural, habit-forming, and pleasurable.

Dr. Suzuki used the tools at hand to constantly experiment and find the best ways to educate all children. He was always trying his “new idea” and seeing what results he could achieve. I remember when I studied with him in 1984 that he manufactured a small weight that could be taped to the inside of the bow tip so that one could play with natural bow weight and avoid pressing the bow down with the index finger. He had us all try using these weights during our group class. He had thousands of new ideas over the years, from the very simplest idea of using two tapes in the middle part of the bow to limit bow usage for young beginners so they could learn to play songs more quickly and without excessive bad bowing habits to very complex ideas like having students practice the Mendelssohn Concerto while listening to the recording on headphones and then performing this concerto as a group so that everyone had the same phrasing and musicality. I think Dr. Suzuki took great delight—as if he was still a young child—when he regularly presented teachers with “my new idea.” Clearly, he was constantly tinkering to find a better way.

But what if he had been born 100 years later? Would things have been a bit different? Below is an imaginative look at what Shinichi Suzuki’s new ideas may have been if he had been born 100 years later. It’s all in fun, but I wouldn’t be surprised if a couple of them eventually came to fruition.

Shinichi Suzuki: “My Posthumous New Ideas For the 21st Century”

1. Install a “bow-dometer” in each student’s bow to see how much each student has really practiced between the lessons. Make it tamper-proof.
2. Use a “pressure gauge chin rest” to make sure the student is supporting the violin with the relaxed natural weight of the head. Tune it to the actual weight of the child’s head so that if the child squeezes her head down, a low-pitched alarm sounds as the pressure increases more than one pound over her natural head weight. Likewise, if the pressure lightens more than two pounds for more than 30 seconds, a high-pitched alarm sounds, as the child certainly has started to hold up her instrument with her left hand instead of using her chin and shoulder.
3. Use of a “thermostatic end button” on the violin or viola that picks up the 98.6 degree temperature of the child’s neck. A sound chirp will remind the student to keep the button touching the neck should the instrument become disengaged from their neck. This way, students whose instruments constantly slide off their shoulder will have gentle reminders until they get tired of hearing the message. Students who have too much padding on their instruments and can’t comfortably get the instrument into their necks will benefit too.
4. Replace the instrument’s tailpiece with a self-tuning variety that picks up the pitch of the open strings and adjusts the tension on the fine tuners to retune the instrument every time an open string is played.
5. In the same fashion as the self-tuning tailpiece, the “speed limit scroll” is highly visible while practicing and will start to flash when the intonation is off more than 10 percent. If too many notes are out of tune, a warning siren will be emitted, and if the student still doesn’t slow down their practice to improve the intonation after one minute, the boot arm will slide out of the speed-limit scroll and cover up two inches of the string, essentially locking the instrument from being played. Of course, students can resume practicing after inserting a dollar coin into scroll slot to pay the fine, but let’s hope it doesn’t get that far.

Continued on p. 18

Suzuki for the 21st Century, continued from p. 17

6. Using the lighted LED bow will be a great boon to keeping the bow straight. As it is Bluetooth connected to the bridge, the five circular lights on the side of the bow will remain green if the bow stays parallel to the bridge. If the bow gets slightly crooked, the lights will turn yellow. If the lights are red, then it is time to find a mirror and practice your “open string” warmup exercises.
7. Students and parents will delight to the new Pandora Internet radio station that plays “all Suzuki, all the time.” You can tailor your selection to your instrument and book level, but it still sneaks in enough review pieces so you can’t escape listening to Twinkle that easily.
8. The “only-one-teacher-at-a-time couch” is where all parents now sit to watch the lessons. It emits a mild shock every time parents shout out instructive comments to their children while they are playing for the teacher. Designed by a former baseball major-leaguer-turned-engineer, after three “strikes” during any lesson, the “cone of silence” will descend from the studio ceiling and cover the parent. This will enable the student to focus 100 percent on what the teacher is saying. But as old habits die hard, if the student keeps looking back at their parent’s face for feedback, the teacher can press a button to darken the transparent cone to a reflective color that lets the parents see out but doesn’t let the students see in.
9. As learning starts from birth, the new Suzuki rocking chair is programmed to play Book One pieces and rock in time with the beat of the music. As the baby is lulled to sleep, the rocking motion will fade as the music fades out. If a small pet mistakenly jumps into the empty rocker, the rocker will play “Flight of the Bumble Bee” and rock ferociously until the pet disembarks.
10. Even young babies will be enchanted by the “Michael Jackson left-handed glove.” A built-in microchip will play Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star and the individual fingers of the glove will contract corresponding to the correct finger that should be played when the child eventually starts to learn the instrument. So not only will the baby learn the music aurally, they will already know the fingering through muscle memory. Different settings can be used to learn the first five pieces in Book One.
11. Lessons used to be constantly interrupted by cell phones going off until the automatic electronic cell phone blockers were placed into the studio. Now, no cell phone can ring during the child’s lesson. For doctors on call, however, an exception will be made to let the phone ring on vibrate mode.
12. As several parents had the strange habit of waiting until their child’s lesson was over to bring up ancillary issues that they needed to talk to their teacher about, the “parent taxi meter” has proved to greatly diminish this practice. Triggered by the opening of the studio door and the next family entering the room, the meter counts the number of words spoken by the vacating family after the lesson has ended (through its voice recognition chip), and with Bluetooth precision sends a bill to the departing families’ cell phone for \$1 overage fee per word spoken over a set limit. The payment goes directly to the new family’s PayPal account, since it is their lesson time being used up!
13. For students who continually collapse their left wrist, there now is the “laser arm band.” This device worn on the outside of the left arm has a laser light to ensure the wrist stays straight. Should the left hand collapse, the device will gradually release a skunk-like stench so awful that the student will have no option but to straighten his wrists. A side benefit is that at each lesson, the teacher can smell the instruments’ scrolls to find if the students have been keeping their left wrists straight during their home practice.
14. Keeping the violin or viola level to the floor used to be so difficult until the “leveler” was invented. This level is imbedded into the pegbox so that the student can see the bubble to ensure that the instrument is level. With this, droopy scrolls will be a thing of the past, and tone will be greatly improved as bows will be much more likely to stay on the Kreisler Highway.
15. The “pressure sensitive bow grip” will detect excessive index finger pressure. Allowances will be built in for more pressure at the time of the bow but hardly any index finger pressure at all when playing at the frog. A buzzer will notify the student when index finger pressure exceeds the optimal level.
16. The “heated bow grip” is a removable wrapping that fits over the bow’s natural winding. The grip is room temperature over the normal hand spacing for the child, but if the index finger starts to stray too far away from the frog, the grip is extremely hot and the index finger will quickly reverse course. This grip is easily removable and usable from student to student. Once the natural finger spacing of a student has become a good habit, the grip can be sold to the next student who needs it.
17. Revolutionizing tone production, the “digital display tonal mute” slips right on top of the bridge and functions as a normal mute, but when the black button is depressed the amount of vibration of the string and bridge is displayed numerically. Being able to measure your tone has become a concrete way to assess your tone production.
18. Virtual reality helmets have reinvented home practice. Now that every practice can be in the presence of a teacher model, the student always comes in with the correct bowings and usually a pretty consistent bow distribution for their Suzuki pieces. A “Silent” setting allows the student to listen 100 percent to their own playing and focus on intonation and tone while visually following the bowings of the virtual teacher. The adaptor mute that fits over the student’s bridge will mute the student’s playing when the helmet is set on “Listen” mode so the student can watch and listen to the teacher playing while the student is “playing” silently along. The “slow-downer” feature of this helmet will allow the student to never practice the piece faster than they can play it accurately and in tune, then gradually speed up the piece. The pitch stays constant, no matter what the tempo.

The advanced helmet focuses on the “Tier 1” concertos and students can practice their Mozart, Bruch, Wieniawski, Lalo, Mendelssohn, and Viextemps concerti at speeds that allow

for pitch and accuracy, then accelerate the tempo. The "Performance" setting allows the student to virtually play with either the piano accompanist or the orchestra to prepare for an upcoming performance. The "Orchestral" setting allows the student to play in the section of an orchestra while a virtual Jacha Heifetz, Joshua Bell, or Hillary Hahn performs the concerto as soloist. This is very valuable to learning the orchestra part as well as her concerto part. Sitting on the orchestra and watching a wonderful artistic performance of a concerto is a great learning experience, too.

19. The "graded dilution rosin" has been a great boon to making group performances sound fantastic. While the left side of the rosin cake has gold flecks mixed in with the rosin, the middle of the cake is just plain rosin, and the right side is mixed with Ivory soap. Before a performance, the teacher can rosin each student's bow on one of the three sections of the rosin according to how well they have prepared, and the unprepared students will still get to play but their inconsistencies will not greatly detract from the quality of the performance.

Now that we have been presented some fantastical new ideas, what real ideas can we come up with? The world is our playground, as it was Dr. Suzuki's, and it's time to play! ●

Joseph Kaminsky

has been teaching violin for over forty years and has been a registered Suzuki Teacher Trainer since 1984. He is a frequent workshop and institute clinician and has taught at more than 350 such events, as well as at national conferences and workshops in Japan, Puerto Rico, Canada and Singapore. Mr. Kaminsky received his training studying with John Kendall, Roland/Amita Vamos, and Shinichi Suzuki. Formerly adjunct professor of violin at Webster University and the University of Missouri-St. Louis, he currently has taught twenty years for the Kirkwood School District. Mr. Kaminsky is also Principal 2nd violinist with the Metropolitan Orchestra of St. Louis and a member of the Cardinal String Quartet. Joseph Kaminsky was named MoASTA "Artist String Teacher of the Year" in 2014 and "Private Teacher of the Year" in 1999. He also is a regular contributor to the *American Suzuki Journal*.



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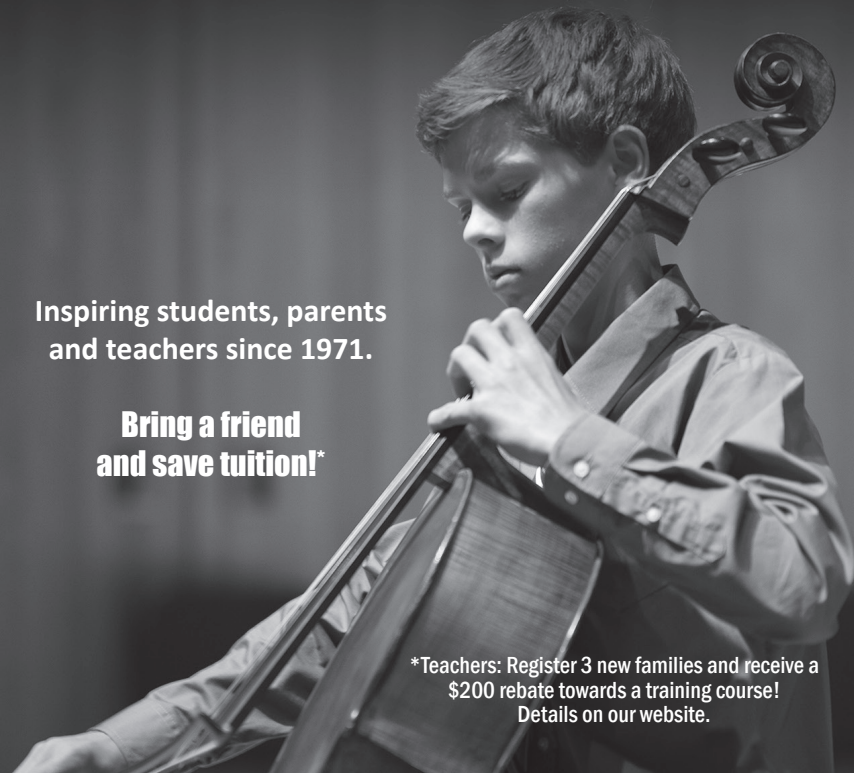
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Walk the Hills, Crawl if Necessary

By Karen Bjork Kubin

I did a fair amount of running a few years ago, eventually working up to a couple of trail half-marathons. To prepare, I trained with friends almost every summer weekend on the race course outside of town—a beautiful, rugged narrow path that curved around an equally beautiful, narrow lake. Running on it was very different from running on pavement; we had to slow down to manage the uneven ground, the rocks and tree roots and sharp curves. Once in a while, an entire tree or shallow stream blocked our path. I got strong, and the trail grew familiar—however, it never got easy. Even at my strongest, there were a couple hills I had to walk. In the moment, this felt like giving up. I had to remind myself that I was still moving forward, and that was what really mattered. We always ran again at the top. The truth is, walking the steep parts was probably what allowed us to finish the course.

This concept of changing pace to fit the circumstances is harder for me to remember as a parent. As a teacher, I know and expect that my students will not learn and develop steadily. As a violinist, I have learned to recognize my own hills and valleys—that there are times when learning seems to trudge steadily, times when it leaps forward, and times when it appears completely stagnant. When it comes to my own children, though, it gets more complicated. I want so much for them. I feel an enormous responsibility for how their lives turn out. And while I love and want to emulate Suzuki's concept of "never hurry, never rest," an unexpectedly slow pace can often look like no movement at all. It is a difficult thing to confront. I have more than a few times through the years had to step back and loosen my grip on my expectations. Walk the hills. Crawl them, even.



My kids are 16, 14, and 10—I am in the thick of parenting. I am wary of giving advice, but I can at least share what I see from this vantage point: some learning is underground: slow, deep, and long-term. On the surface a child might be resistant to practicing or struggling with a new skill, but there is always more going on below the surface, other lessons being learned that we can only guess at. The value of this kind of learning is not in how fast or obvious it is, and its nature may be hidden. Even if it is hard for me to see, though, I can choose to nurture it.

When we started our oldest on cello at an early age, he gave me absolute fits, because I could not get him to even bow at the beginning of a practice session. He was not a defiant kid, but he could not see the point of it, and could not be convinced. *If we are supposed to start practice with a bow and cannot even do that, I remember thinking frantically, how is he going to learn anything at all?* He did learn a little about playing an instrument, but he did not have access to group lessons or other young students, and family life was in a particularly hectic period. So we took a break from cello. Twelve years later, we are still on it.

On the surface a child might be resistant to practicing or struggling with a new skill, but there is always more going on below the surface, other lessons being learned that we can only guess at.

When it became clear that this break was happening whether I wanted it to or not, the guilt was enormous. How could I let my child miss out on something so important? I decided I could at least provide a rich musical environment for him. Some kind of Suzuki-lite. We borrowed DVDs of child-friendly operas and ballets from the library. We listened to *Beethoven Lives Upstairs* and every other CD from the Classical Kids collection I could find. My little boy started singing bits of famous arias while he was putting his socks on in the morning. We attended outdoor concerts and had music of all kinds playing in the background at home. We drove down the highway with *Peter and the Wolf* and *Carnival of the Animals* blaring, and I swear I saw other driver's heads turn whenever the children brayed along with the violins in "Characters with Long Ears." When his sisters started violin, our son took to singing the piano accompaniment for their pieces from the other room while they practiced. In fact, he sang all the time, even though he insisted he hated to sing. He went to every violin recital, passed out programs, took pictures, clapped for every kid who played. And then, in sixth grade a choir teacher got hold of him. Suddenly he loved to sing. Suddenly he did not hate music. Within a few years, in fact, he had dragged his father and me somewhat reluctantly through the process of applying to a fine arts boarding school so he could sing even more.

Please understand, this is a story half-told. Not even half, actually. It might look like he is on a straight clear path, but there are many things ahead for all of us: college applications and college itself, other competing interests, and lots of Who Knows What Else. All we know for sure is where he is at the moment, what he might have in front of him, and that music is a defining part of his life.

The only guarantee we have as parents is that our children's stories are usually far more complicated than the straight-arrow plots we come up with in our heads.

A great work of art often challenges our expectations. It is helpful to remember this in considering our children.

This is not a how-to story, either. It is only one story, and our son's alone—one of an endless number of possible variations. What it tells me is that the only guarantee we have as parents is that our children's stories are usually far more complicated than the straight-arrow plots we come up with in our heads. They're also a lot more rich. Change, uncertainty—even wrong turns—will be there along with the golden moments. Remember our son's violin-playing sisters? They both recently lobbied—hard—to quit. We are having them stick with it for the time being, for the same sorts of reasons we want them to stick with math and vegetables and tooth-brushing—also because they come home from orchestra sometimes with the music spilling out of them, regardless of whatever complaining they might have done on the way there.

There are two extremely important points to all this. First is that we, as parents, for as much as we know, have no idea how music lessons will play out in our children's lives. We cannot even begin to guess, beyond the basics of things like discipline, appreciation of the arts, and the deepening of who we are as human beings—all the reasons we hopefully started out on this Suzuki journey—what role music study will play in our children's lives. We can certainly stop wondering if all the time, energy, and money spent is worth it, because it is. *How* it is worth it, though, is not information we are privy to.

Second it is vital—*vital*—for us to understand that we are in this for the long game. Or the long race. Because of the first point.

Sometimes practicing/lessons/Book Two will be magical and loving and successful and you will feel like you have Arrived—*thank goodness* you stuck through that earlier hard stuff because now all is good. And sometimes—maybe three weeks after this, maybe a year or two later—you will wonder where you or your child or your teacher or the world failed, because *we aren't getting anywhere/this is just too hard/my kid hates practicing and I hate trying to make her practice*. Sometimes school or life or family are simply in the way, sometimes we fall so far off the practice wagon we cannot even see it in the distance anymore.

We can certainly stop wondering if all the time, energy, and money spent is worth it, because it is. How it is worth it, though, is not information we are privy to.

I want to remind you that this is okay. It is part of the story. It is part of this work-of-art-in-human-form you and your child are creating.

A great work of art often challenges our expectations. It is helpful to remember this in considering our children. The older they get, the more they will take over the telling of their individual stories. This will require parents' patience, our eyes, our ears. A fair amount of waiting. And the understanding that this struggle, this labyrinth, this holding pattern you find yourself in, is part of it—not the end of it. If you are walking the hills right now, or perhaps collapsed on one, convinced you will never get up, know that you are not alone. I am on one of those hills myself, and I have been on others in the past. Each one proves to me that my hopes and expectations are not the central thing. My kids are—their needs,

their personalities, and ultimately the people they are becoming.



The sign at the head of the trail my friends and I trained on warns:

*On this trail, you may experience:
Natural surface, dirt, mud, gravel,
shifting rocks, slippery surface, etc.
Rocks, roots, and/or downed vegetation
on the trail
Steep grades and inclines more than
10 percent
Bridges and/or structural crossings
Water/stream crossings without bridges*

Often as a parent I feel like I am running through the woods at twilight. The only thing I've ever found to work well is to look at the path in front of me and decide the best way to take the next step. No matter how it *should* look, or used to look, or how far ahead I can see. All that matters is what is actually in front of me and how I respond. It is, after all, the middle of a rugged trail, and being on it at all counts for a lot. Along the way the scenery is beautiful, and there will probably be some really good stories to tell at the end. ••



Karen Bjork Kubin has lived life on all three sides of the Suzuki triangle. She grew up in the Suzuki program at MacPhail Center for Music in Minneapolis, studying violin with her father, Mark Bjork. She holds a B.M. in violin performance from

UW-Madison, studying with Vartan Manougian, and a M.M. in performance from Northwestern University, studying with Gerardo Ribeiro. Past teacher trainers include Mark Bjork, Craig Timmerman, Alan Lieb, and Alice Joy Lewis. She has taught in the pre-college music programs at DePaul University and Wheaton College, and with the Copper Country Suzuki Association in Houghton, Michigan. Currently she maintains a private studio and is founder and director of The Violin Project in Kirksville Missouri, an after-school program that serves 16 1st-4th graders. The mother of two Suzuki violinists and a singer, Mrs. Kubin writes about the intersection of the arts, education, and life at <http://www.kbkubin.blogspot.com>.

ILIA (Illinois-Iowa) Cello Exchange

By Laura Shaw, Kate Vos, Sally Gross, Alex Revoal

Many years ago the Guelph Suzuki cello program (Sally Gross) and the Cleveland Institute of Music cello program (Carol Tarr) began an exchange program for younger students that continued for years. In fact, 30 years later, many families remain in touch. I really wanted that experience for the younger cellists in the Western Springs School of Talent Education and the Naperville Suzuki School, so my colleague, Alex Revoal, and I contacted Laura Shaw and Kate Vos from the Preucil School of Music in Iowa City. Our programs are very similar in numbers and playing levels, so we were a good fit, and are only a three hours drive away from each other. The idea of promoting community between our two programs and providing students with a unique learning opportunity was very compelling.

One of the things we loved about the ILIA exchange was the chance for children to get to know each other. Both schools have a fairly large program, but many of the kids don't have the

opportunity to go to Summer Institutes or see other Suzuki programs. Many of them don't realize that there are other kids their age doing what they are doing all over the country. It also gave them a taste of what an institute would be like, but for a very low price. Some of those children may be convinced to do Institutes in the summer based on their experience. Others who might find an institute to be cost-prohibitive received a similar opportunity.

Parents loved the exchange because of the low cost and the friendly, relaxed atmosphere. Amy Redhage, a violin Suzuki teacher and now a cello Suzuki parent from Iowa, said that it "helped her 'group-reluctant' cellist enjoy being with other musicians and have a special cello-only time with Mom." Other parents enjoyed getting to know not only their peers from the other program, but also fellow parents from their own program that they may not have had a chance to get to know before the exchange. As teachers, we loved that our kids got to experience a group activity with another



amazing program, and we got the chance to collaborate with other Suzuki teachers.

An unintended side effect of the exchange was the opportunity to see other teachers teach. Even within our own programs, we hardly ever observe each other teaching group class. This program allowed us as teachers to see other amazing teachers work with a group. Again, many of us go to institutes in the summer, but many of us do not. This was such a wonderful way for the teachers to get inspired by watching the wonderful things that other teachers are doing in their studios. Teachers co-taught the group classes.

We decided to have the weekend in Iowa at the end of October and the weekend in Chicago during the spring. This would let us do more outside activities in Iowa and indoor activities in the big city when the weather was more unpredictable. We wanted to give the kids a taste of the rural side of Iowa, so we planned our concert at a local pumpkin patch. The kids could perform, but could also take part in the many activities that the pumpkin patch provided. And best of all, the pumpkin patch brought out hay bales for our cellists to sit on while they performed. Luckily, the day was beautiful and much warmer than usual for late October in Iowa.

We planned our concert in Illinois at the Chicago Children's Museum on Navy Pier in the city. It was packed with people that beautiful weekend. The Iowans had a good



taste of city parking. The kids had a great time enjoying the museum before and after the concert, and many of the Iowa kids got a chance to explore the city as well.

We decided to have all of our group classes on Saturday and the concert on Sunday. We thought families might enjoy having some time on their own to explore both areas, and we wanted everyone to be fresh for the concert. In the morning, we divided up our group classes by level, and had two sessions each. This allowed us to rotate the four teachers throughout the groups, and it meant that at all times, two of us were teaching and two were observing or helping out with the classes.

We had a Book One and Two class and a Book Three through Five class. In the afternoon, we had two sessions with a break in the middle, but we combined the groups together to prepare for the concert.

The students had a wonderful time both in Iowa and in Chicago. Everyone we talked to said that they would do it again. From a teacher's perspective, it was such a successful experiment, and could be easily replicated in other programs around the country. Building community and playing together are key Suzuki concepts, and the ILIA Cello Exchange was a fabulous way to explore them. ••



Laura Shaw is on the cello faculty of the Preucil School of Music. She is also Assistant Principal of Quad Cities Symphony Orchestra. Laura earned her DMA from the University of Iowa, and her master of music from the Hartt School of Music, where she received her Suzuki training from Pamela Devenport.

Sally Gross is cello director at the Western Springs School of Talent Education and the Naperville Suzuki School. She holds a bachelor of music degree from Northern Illinois University where she studied with Marc Johnson and a master of music in Suzuki pedagogy from Ithaca College where she worked with Carey Beth Hockett and Sandy and Joan Reuning. She has been a teacher trainer since 1990.

Alex Revoal holds a bachelor of music from Lawrence University. He earned a master of music degree in cello performance and pedagogy, and a performance certificate from Northern Illinois University. He has earned the SAA Certificate of Achievement, Level One. Alex currently teaches at the Western Springs School of Talent Education/Naperville Suzuki School.

Kate Vos received her bachelor of music and long-term Suzuki pedagogy training at Western Illinois University with Tanya Carey and completed her master of music degree in cello performance at the University of Michigan. Kate has been teaching at the Preucil School since 2001 and is a member of the Preucil faculty quartet. She is also a member of the Quad Cities Symphony Orchestra.

One Thin Dime

By Andrea Cannon

“Success breeds success.” – Shinichi Suzuki

Today I found a dime. It was on the ground during my morning walk.

Earlier this year I attended a music conference where a colleague told me a story: A former instructor who had emigrated to the US from Europe many years ago believed that when you saw money on the sidewalk, even if it was a small coin like a penny, you should pick it up. Its true value lies in an opportunity—you should look at the year printed on the coin and be grateful for something good that happened in that year.

The dime I found this morning was minted in 2015. Well, I do have a standout memory from 2015.

My summer music camp travels had begun and I was in Ottawa, Kansas, which was a new town for me. Though I was watching my step, somehow I ended up on the ground during a morning jog and later on, in the emergency room. I broke my ankle in two places.

Once home in Houston, the doctor recommended surgery, followed by time off and physical therapy. Mixed in was depression

because of the sudden inactivity, learning to get around on crutches and braces, and missing planned events. All told, it added up to months of time I would have much rather spent doing other things.

So, today when I picked up that dime, it was disappointing to see the year 2015. The first thing I thought of as a memory was my broken leg.

I know we’re supposed to be thankful even for challenges, because they often work out for good. But, on the other hand, it would sure be nice to have a happy memory from 2015!

So I worked to think and to remember one: it was also the year I traveled to Ohio to work with students in a small but vibrant studio with a family who hosted me and with whom I’ve stayed in touch.

I decided that’s a pretty nice memory from 2015 that I can feel grateful for!

And then I remembered something else really special—an arts organization in Guatemala City endowed a scholarship in my name to allow an underprivileged child to receive music lessons. That has been a standout—and they regularly communicate about her progress and joy in playing. I was even able to meet her in 2015.

And another memory came—I started a new job as a college professor, which has been great.

And I met all of the nice people, including emergency room staff, in Ottawa, Kansas, for the first time.

So—to overcome the bitter memory, it required a bit of digging for one nice one. After that, it seemed as if the walls gave way and many other good thoughts followed.

Here is the dime that inspired it. The coin that taught me—much in the same way the physical therapist did—that the first step is often the hardest one to take. •



Reprinted from “Musings from Guitar, Travel and Life” by Andrea Cannon
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Andrea Cannon's Guitar Arts Studio in Houston, Texas, includes training in theory and performance skills for guitarists as well as the first Suzuki Early Childhood Music program established in the US. She serves as a consultant to the Spring School District Music Department and directs applied guitar studies at Lone Star College.

She is certified through Music Teacher's National Association and is a Registered Teacher Trainer with the Suzuki Association of the Americas.

Andrea is humbled and proud that arts advocacy group Alarte of Guatemala City, Guatemala, has created a Scholarship in her name. The first recipient of the “Beca Andrea Cannon” is enjoying the benefits of a new guitar as well as expert Suzuki instruction and also has a beautiful smile.

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Nurturing a Love of Differences, and Commonalities

a Tour Group adventure through the Baltics

By Allison Huebner-Woerner with Erika Lord-Castillo

“The priest would like to have a few words with you in his chamber,” our translator whispered.

It was 30 minutes before the finale concert in Estonia, and rehearsal had gone well. Some balance adjustments and strategic acoustic placements were necessary. Our repertoire list had been pre-approved by the church months ago, and all pieces in any dance form had been removed at the priest’s request.

Except for “Mamma Mia” by Abba. Somehow that piece had made the cut.

“This feels like I’m being called into the principal’s office,” I quipped and smiled, as my shoes clicked along the marble aisle. It had been brought to my attention that this priest had served at St. John’s of Tallinn during the Soviet Occupation and the 20 years of independence since. He had seen it all, and now he wanted to speak to me.

“Yes, much the same,” the translator said, stoically. The 20-foot heavy wooden door haltingly opened, and I drew in one final deep breath before entering.

“Good evening,” a voice spoke calmly from across the stone anteroom. The priest slowly stood up, revealing a tall, thin frame with steely eyes and a cautious smile. He extended his hand and bid me over to the open, weathered Bible along the outer stone wall.

After a few introductions and pleasantries, the priest narrowed his gaze and asked me plainly, “What is your purpose here in Estonia and our church?”

After 16 years of directing Tour Group and traveling to 17 European countries, I had never been asked this particular question until now.



In 1983, motivated by the wish to help expose more of the world to Suzuki teaching, John Kendall organized an international performance tour of Iceland for 13 Suzuki students from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. These young violinists ranged in age from 8 to 15. The group performed pieces from the Suzuki repertoire, traveling to Iceland as ambassadors of the US, SIUE, and the Suzuki Method itself.

This tradition of outreach and ambassadorship is stronger than ever at SIUE, as is Mr. Kendall’s vision of his performance group, which now is simply referred to as “the Tour Group.” Tour Group’s mission is to continue Mr. Kendall’s wish to help people throughout the world know about Suzuki education, and to allow our students to share their music and work with those far from our home. Through public outreach and service, the students develop a confidence and pride of being able to give the gift of music. Weekly rehearsals join students from two states and more than a dozen different school districts. Musicians range in age from

10 to 18 and learn to work together, support each other, and have personal responsibility for their part. The Tour Group has grown from 12 students in 1983 to 44 students for 2015–2016.

Today’s Tour Group continues Mr. Kendall’s vision through the work of every studio and group teacher in the SIUE program. Directors for the Tour Group are faculty instructors in the SIUE Suzuki Program as well. Allison Huebner-Woerner has been director since 2001. The group was split to two levels in 2010, with Level Two led by Allison Huebner-Woerner and Level One led by Vera McCoy-Sulentich, with Erika Lord-Castillo taking on Level One duties in 2015. Because of rising advanced viola numbers, a viola group called “Camerata” was added in 2012 and is directed by Vicki Lottes.

Throughout the past 16 years, Tour Group has traveled both nationally and internationally for performances. Tours have ranged from eight to twelve days, and have included Austria, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Lichtenstein, Spain, Italy, Scotland, England, Ireland, Switzerland, Sweden, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, the last three known as the Baltics.

“Tour Group” is just one part of a comprehensive group repertoire, technique, and note reading curriculum included weekly for all Suzuki violin, viola, and cello students at SIUE. Every Saturday morning, the halls of SIUE are bursting with Pre-Twinkles, Kindermusik, three youth orchestras, Viola Camerata, Cello Ensembles, repertoire/technique group classes, and two levels of Tour Group. Level One consists of Book Five through mid-Book Six, and Level Six covers mid-Book Six through post-Suzuki repertoire.

Lifelong friendships are made on Saturday mornings at SIUE, and although Tour Group takes up these precious otherwise lazy Saturday mornings, there is a shared comradery of stumbling into rehearsal while trying not to be the one who is late, the excitement of learning part assignments, the challenges of learning and memorizing the music each year, the anticipation of discovering where the next tour will be, and the tangible sense of loss for the seniors when they realize indeed how quickly these years flew by.

The 2015–2016 SIUE Suzuki Tour Group traveled to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Participants included 23 students ranging in age from 13 to 18, as well as 14 parent chaperones, two Tour Group directors, one program director, and one pianist, our amazing accompanist Robert Valentine.

The tour began with a cultural exchange and performance at Karoliniskes Music School in Vilnius, Lithuania. Through the magic of social media, once we decided on an itinerary of countries, we reached out and connected with many local teachers in the region. These teacher contacts have led to dozens of international friends through the years, with opportunities and experiences both planned and some we could never have planned for! Lithuania included both of these moments as well.

Continued on p. 26

News From Here & There

Love of Differences, continued from p. 25

Rima Svegsdaite, a Suzuki Violin teacher at the Karoliniskes School, answered a request we posted on an international Suzuki teachers Facebook group. After many messages back and forth (and a lot of Google translating!), the possibility of a cultural exchange took shape. The plan was to perform a joint concert with Tour Group and a group from the Lithuanian school. What actually happened was so much more.

One that first day, we arrived at the school, and discovered we would be playing a concert with no rehearsal, and while navigating twenty-three teenagers through jetlag from the flight. So with no idea who we were playing for, we entered the building.

Inside, we met dozens of local teachers, parents and students. We took the stage and proceeded to perform in small groups since we discovered the stage wasn't large enough for us all to perform together. Needless to say, this required manic behind the scenes groupings and letting the students know what was going on and who they would be playing with (which we had never rehearsed)! Impressively, the students were flexible, rose to the occasion, and performed remarkably well.

Vera presented a slideshow of our program at SIUE, and two of our Tour Group members explained their lives as

American teenagers. The students answered questions, and although there was a language barrier, we made an emotional and musical connection that we never expected. A beautiful reception followed, and we left with an eager anticipation for the following day when we were planning on the joint concert at St. John's Church with the students from the Karoliniskes school.

The performance at St. John's Vilnius with the Karoliniskes Suzuki students consisted of a rehearsal followed immediately by a concert. Earlier in the day we had toured the Vilnius University, which was founded in 1579. We managed to get a peek into the performance space and it took our breath away. The fact that we would be performing in such a stunning and revered place had the students excited and nervous.

The rehearsal flew by, with several Lithuanian teachers leading pieces with the combined groups. The Lithuanian group ranged from Twinklers to Book Four, so our Tour Group had prepared pieces from the Suzuki books to play together. With minutes to spare, we whisked away to an anteroom and changed into our performance clothes. When we came out, we couldn't believe our eyes.

The massive marble and gilded church was filled, with hundreds of people, seemingly all with a camera. Our hosts had professional lighting and sound systems miraculously installed, and the wooden

stage floor gleamed. The concert was the kind of experience you can only hope your students get to experience at some point: the music was excellent, the audience was enthusiastic, and the students blended to become one. The performance flowed as if we had been rehearsing for weeks. Everyone understood each other even though there was a very real language barrier; the experience of music, community, and Suzuki is indeed an international language.

The concert was met with great joy and spiritedness. The group had encores,



bravos, and standing ovations, and we discovered the wonderful tradition of giving beautiful flowers from the region. The students posed for so many pictures, and the comradery between the two schools touched our hearts. We had brought gifts for the Lithuanian students, and they surprised us with gifts as well, including a delicious, *huge* loaf of traditional black bread. The Lithuanian school even recorded each piece and posted it to YouTube—just search SIUE Tour Group and you'll see our pieces from every concert from this tour (and many other tours and concerts).

Our time in Lithuania also included walking tours, shopping, soaking up the magic of Vilnius, and falling in love with Lithuania. After our time there, we couldn't imagine how we would ever top the experience there. Until we traveled to Latvia, and then to Estonia.

In Latvia, we toured Trakai Castle, The Hill of Crosses, Rundale Palace, took a boat ride through Riga canal, shopped,





learn music like they learn to speak, by being surrounded by it and hearing it every day. Our students are ambassadors of Dr. Suzuki's vision.

Dr. Suzuki's goal is to develop a fluency and an awareness of beauty, so music becomes an extension of their experiences. We hope to nurture the children through beautiful music, in order to develop beautiful souls.

Part of that for us as teachers is exposing the students to beautiful music, places, and people. And the knowledge that music, and the beauty in the world, is all throughout the world.

By meeting students in other places, living and breathing in different cultures, exploring history art, customs and beauty with a common thread of music, we can also experience the other things they have in common with other places, and hopefully they can realize that we are much more the same than we are different.

And that sometimes the things that are different make us special and beautiful as well.

Continued on p. 28

explored the architecture through a fabulous walking city tour, and topped it off with another stellar concert at St. John's Church in Riga, Latvia. The tourism office had issued tickets to our concert, invite only! The church was standing room only, with many local Suzuki string and piano teachers in attendance. Again the students rose to the occasion, playing as beautiful as the surroundings, with several encores, ovations, and of course amazing flowers.

The students told us they loved Latvia now, and they wanted to stay there as well. But we headed to Estonia, another unknown adventure awaiting.

One our way to Estonia, we stopped at a national park to tour Turaida castle, and the students (and most adults!) wound up taking bobsled rides down the side of a mountain, ski lifts back up, and even feeling the white sand through our toes as we waded into the Baltic Sea. We checked into our third hotel, all of which had been excellent and charmingly different.

In Estonia, we explored the Old Town, taking advantage of our dwindling opportunities to eat gelato every few hours. Each day we had breakfast and lunch provided through the tour company, all of which were unique, represented local culture and flavors, and all very tasty. It was in Estonia Old Town that Erika and I snuck away and found, of all things, an Irish pub to grab coffee and some snacks. It was our first real opportunity to steal

some time to reflect incredulously on the trip two years in the making. It had all gone by so quickly and so very well. Of course, it wasn't without the unexpected challenge, but we had managed to keep everything running seamlessly along. We toasted to our tour and to the concert coming in only a few hours' time, at St. John's Church. Yes, all three venues were St. John's churches—apparently St. John is a big deal in the Baltics!



"What is our purpose in Estonia?" I stammered. My eyes were saucers, my heart was racing, and the air felt suddenly very cold.

"First of all, thank you for having us. Estonia, and all the countries we've been to, are beautiful and everyone has been so welcoming and lovely. We've had the most amazing time here.

Our music program is a Suzuki program, which means it was started by Dr. Suzuki in Japan and is now all over the world. It's based off the idea that children



News From Here & There

Love of Differences, continued from p. 27

Hopefully the students then absorb that beauty, learn to appreciate differences, and appreciate what makes each of them unique as well.

I suppose our purpose is to teach our young people to give, to share, to learn, to be brave, to embrace differences, and to love—people, places, experiences, moments, and each other.”

I finally remembered to blink. The words had fallen out of my mouth quickly, and I wasn't sure if they even made sense. But I will remember them for the rest of my life.

The priest smiled, and told me he was willing to translate for the concert, and he turned to open the enormous wooden door. In the chancellery, Tour Group was warming up. The sound of violins and violas bounced throughout the massive marble church.

Allison Huebner-Woerner has served as a faculty violin and viola instructor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Suzuki String Program for the past 22 years. In addition, she has been director of the Edwardsville Youth Orchestra, and is currently director of the SIUE Suzuki Tour Group. She holds degrees from University of Missouri-Columbia and SIUE in Music Performance and Music Education. Allison served as a graduate assistant to John Kendall while completing her long-term Suzuki training, and was a doctoral assistant to John McLeod during her doctoral studies at University of Missouri-Columbia.



My seniors, including my own son, were ready for their final performance with their beloved Tour Group. This group, which had dedicated countless hours practicing, Saturday mornings rehearsing, while making amazing friendships—these kids are something special. And it was time for one last crowd, one last standing ovation, one last encore. There were tears afterward, more flowers, and a sense that this group of kids from different schools, all different ages, and so many diverse interests from sports to arts, had become a family. And they had fallen as in love with the Baltics, just as I had.


These students had developed the most beautiful souls indeed. ●●



Erika Lord-Castillo (violin, viola) has been a faculty teacher in the SIUE-Edwardsville Suzuki Program since 2009. Originally from Iowa City, Iowa, Erika earned a Bachelor of Music degree in Violin Performance and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Literature, Sciences and Arts from the University of Iowa. She holds a Master's in Music Education from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, and studied Suzuki pedagogy Violin Books 1-10 with Vera McCoy-Sulentic. Erika has also completed Suzuki teacher training with Michelle Higa George, Moshe Neumann, Judy Bossuat, Nancy Jackson, Christie Felsing, and William Preucil, Senior. Erika presented

her Masters Thesis at the American String Teachers Association national conference in March 2011, and her article, "John Kendall's Early Contributions to Suzuki Education in the United States"; was published in the American Suzuki Journal in Fall 2012. Erika received the Suzuki Association Certificate of Achievement Level 1 in the summer of 2015.

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32nd International Suzuki Festival and 8th Latin American Teachers' Conference

Held in Lima Peru, January 4–25, 2017

By Caroline Fraser

The International Suzuki Festivals in Peru and the Latin American Teachers' Conferences are the most international Suzuki events to be held in the Americas. Seventeen countries participated in these events this year! And there are still more countries to reach. We have received a plea from Cuba for help in forming their Suzuki Association and training their teachers. Participants from the Dominican Republic wanted to attend, but did not have the funds to travel.

Reflecting on 32 years of festivals in Peru, we can clearly see the Suzuki philosophy transforming entire communities and forming bonds between students, teachers, associations and countries which will continue to benefit many generations to come. Profound friendships, along with modern technology and instant

communication, combine to make the Suzuki Latin American family even closer knit and more effective.

The Suzuki Association of Peru (ASP) must first thank the entire SAA community for the continued support we have received throughout the years: covering teacher trainers' airfares, offering scholarships for teacher participants, and making individual donations to the Latin American fund. Without all of this, our festival would not be viable. Dr. Suzuki was right: "Working together we can change the world." In turn, the ASP has a fund which allows teachers and students from economically disadvantaged regions of Peru to attend and be inspired by this event. This year our fund also allowed us to buy a clavivna for the ASP to cut the costs of renting every year.

The Suzuki Festival in Peru has become a model for festivals all over Latin America. Hopeful participants from Mexico to Patagonia spend the year saving and planning in order to travel to Lima. Wherever I go in Latin America, I hear the words, "In Peru, they do it this way." We now enjoy having a group of young teachers who themselves grew up in the Suzuki approach and are now working and receiving on-going training. One new participant, attending a Dalcroze course, approached me and asked, "Do you think the Suzuki Method can work for children wanting to become professionals?" He had heard in the music conservatory to the contrary. I turned around and directed the question to a group of young Suzuki-trained professionals. They answered his question by their existence! Our new participant is already signed up for the Suzuki Philosophy course next year!

In Peru, all the unit courses beyond Unit One, have a teaching component attached to them. This course, called Teaching Strategies, is an obligatory part of the training and involves the teacher participant showing a class either live or recorded and receiving constructive feedback from the teacher trainer, based on the SAA pedagogy descriptors. All participants and teacher trainers find that this course is a vital part of the program. Participants

For the first time in our festivals, there was no need for translators for the teacher trainers in the Suzuki courses, as all gave their courses in Spanish.

learn more effective ways of teaching and trainers learn how well they actually got their teaching concepts across.

As we require that all the repertoire be memorized in order to pass the course, teacher participants come extremely well prepared. In my course, one participant who had not been able to study the repertoire asked me if I would grant her the favor of being able to take the course again the following year.

In Peru, as in many other Latin American countries, there are very few



opportunities for training in music education. Many excellent instrumentalists are contracted by schools to teach classroom music with almost no preparation in pedagogy or classroom management. The ASP helps fill that educational gap by offering general courses with no prerequisites. This year, such courses offered were Dalcroze taught by Dr. Jeremy Dittus, and Classroom Dynamics, taught by Roberta Centurion, which reached a wider community of teachers and musicians from Peru and abroad. These participants then leave

intrigued to know more about the Suzuki approach. A similar offering was "How to teach recorder successfully in the schools," taught by the ASP Suzuki recorder pioneer Lucia Nieto.

For the first time in our festivals, there was no need for translators for the teacher trainers in the Suzuki courses, as all gave their courses in Spanish. Only Jeremy required a translator, and violin teacher Angela Thompson performed the task excellently. The Festival was organized by the ASP Festival Committee; past presidents Roberta Centurion, Caroline Fraser, and Annika Petrozzi, along with Luciana Castillo, who also produced the event. When Suzuki-trained recorder teacher Luciana moved to Brazil three years ago, we thought we had lost her. Instead, we gained a vital motor for our association. Thanks to Luciana, Maria Pia Beltran, our invaluable administrator, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Skype!

This year a historic meeting was held during the festival for all the Latin American teacher trainers, both in person and by Skype. Unanimous decisions were reached assuring consistency and excellence in the Latin American teacher training program. All were in agreement that the course Teaching Strategies is a vital part of our training.

Continued on p. 32



32nd Annual Suzuki Festival, continued from p. 31

The following is based on a report Luciana wrote along with Maria Pia:

Colegio Santa Ana in Lima generously offered to host the Festival 2017. Around 250 teacher participants and 250 students from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Venezuela, Canada, the United States, and Scotland attended the 2017 festival. There was participation from all over Peru: the coast, the Andean mountains, and the jungle. Twenty-three teacher training courses were offered in total. Course instructors were Kelly Williamson, Canada, Marilyn O'Boyle, US, Fernando Piñero, Argentina, Diana Chagalj, Argentina, Jeremy Dittus, US, and from Peru, Flor Canelo, Caroline Fraser, Annika Petrozzi, Lucia Nieto, Maria Luisa Labarthe, Roxana del Barco, and Roberta Centurion.



The Latin American Teacher's Conferences, which have been held every three years since 1999, were inspired by the SAA Leadership Retreats, with the intention of providing a space for the Latin American leaders to share ideas, share visions and strengthen connections between associations and countries. The Conferences have achieved this and more. For the first time, 17 countries made presentations both in person and on video. The conference was organized by the board of directors of the ASP: President, Flor Canelo, Vice President, Mercedes Vargas, Ximena Venero, and Lindsay Pre Kong.

The following is based on a report by Ximena:
The theme of the Conference was "Somos Suzuki" (We are Suzuki)

We are one united family with one vision and mission and the same philosophy with many proposals aimed at making a better world

through music, art, and a different kind of education. We are part of a larger Suzuki community of all the Americas.

Country reports were given by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, and the US. Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Panama sent virtual accounts of their programs. Many countries expressed their gratitude for SAA support.

In addition, there were presentations on

- *"The impact of the Latin American Teachers' Conferences" given by Luciana Castillo and Fabio dos Santos from Brazil*
- *"Suzuki Method for Trumpet" given by Pedro Azevedo*
- *"Music as an integral part of education in schools" given by Natasha Encinas and Inkeri Petrozzi*
- *"Youth orchestra programs" given by Wilfredo Tarazona, Luis Melgar, Flor Canelo, and Javier Fernandez*
- *"The changing world and music education" given by Gabriel Pliego*
- *"Reflections on the Suzuki Method in Latin America" given by Fernando Piñero*
- *"How to implement Suzuki Programs in areas of economic disadvantage: INEPE" given by Andrea Raza*
- *"We are the SAA" given by Marilyn O'Boyle and Kelly Williamson*

Pam Brasch, SAA executive director, had sent a presentation including some questions for the Latin American teachers which were discussed in brain storming sessions. Here are some of the responses:

The Latin American teachers:

- *Support having more presence on the SAA web page*
- *Like the idea of more articles and videos translated into Spanish and Portuguese and there are translators willing to help, including with audiobooks*
- *Are interested in attending Conferences in the US if the sessions are offered bilingually, and with financial support*



Photos by Sergio Aguilar

- Are interested in seeing the videos of Dr. Suzuki's teaching
- Believe in continuing with the Teaching Strategies courses in order to raise the level of teaching
- Appreciate the continuation of SAA scholarships, and suggest the addition of scholarships for training in Early Childhood Music
- Are very interested in attending the **First Convention of the Americas in Cancun, from May 1-5, 2019**. Assistance with travel expenses is necessary to ensure participation from South America.

Many thanks to all who have helped make these events in Peru possible: SAA members and staff; the ASP board of directors and members; our wonderful office staff, including dedicated parents and our treasurer, Adriana de Paliza; Colegio Santa Ana; and our sponsors. And thank you, Dr Suzuki! Working together, we are changing the world.

The Suzuki Association of Peru is now planning the 33rd International Suzuki Festival to be held in Lima from January 5-25, 2018. Come to Peru and change your life! Take training courses or participate in the student festivals and then visit Cusco, Machu Picchu, and the Amazon jungle. !Somos Suzuki!

www.asociacionsuzukidelperu.org

Caroline Fraser is from Scotland. She graduated from Edinburgh University with a Bachelor of Music degree and studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London obtaining the diploma



Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music and Associate of the Royal College of Music in piano and violin. She obtained a Masters of Music degree with Kodaly emphasis from Holy Names University (HNU). Caroline started to teach using the Suzuki method in 1974 in California. She pioneered the Suzuki method in Peru in 1981. From 1992 until 1999 she was a lecturer in music theory at HNU, where she continues to direct the Summer Suzuki Piano Teacher Training Institute. Caroline is an ESA, SAA and ARSO teacher trainer. She lives in Lima, Peru and is one of the Latin American liaisons for the SAA. She has given teacher training courses all over Latin America, in the USA, Canada, Europe and Taiwan.



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The Suzuki Festival in Ecuador

By Andrea Raza

Translation edited by Caroline Fraser

“Teaching music is not my main purpose. I want to make good citizens. If children hear fine music from the day of their birth and learn to play it, they develop sensitivity, discipline and endurance. They get a beautiful heart.”

– Shinichi Suzuki



First International Suzuki Festival in Ecuador from March 2 to March 5, 2012

Background

In Ecuador, the Talent Education Method developed by Dr. Suzuki invites us to create spaces where art and music are present in order to shape good, sensitive human beings, who contribute to build a better society. Given the degradation of values and social and ecological problems

we face as humanity, it is urgent to incorporate and deepen art in education in order to train children as loving people. We use this method, where we all learn in community where children, youth, and adults learn to enjoy music and develop confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline, and concentration, as well as the need to try to do difficult things. These are qualities that are needed in a society.

The Institute for Research, Education and Promotion of Ecuador (Instituto de Investigación, Educación y Promoción Popular del Ecuador or INEPE) is a community-based, non-profit organization that works with the primary aim of contributing to improving the quality of education and the integral and harmonious

development of children, youth, and adults for the pursuit of happiness and the improvement of their living conditions. Art and music have always been mainstays of our educational approach, and that is why since 2008, INEPE has developed music workshops in the Talent Education Program, where children, young adults, and community members live the teaching and learning process of piano, violin, viola, guitar, flute, recorder, and ensembles using the Suzuki Method of Talent Education.

The results from these years of work have been the engine driving INEPE efforts to spread this method and its benefits; therefore, in 2012, the **First and Second Suzuki Festivals** were organized in the city of Quito, with the presence internationally-

recognized teachers who are experts in the method. In these festivals, the *Every Child Can!* course was the main event, and was directed by Caroline Fraser as a representative of the Suzuki Association of the Americas. The vital precepts of Talent Education were learned and internalized by about 190 musicians, teachers, parents, and other audiences interested in the subject of how to develop the full potential every child is born with by creating an affectionate environment.

Motivated to continue teaching and spreading the benefits of the Suzuki philosophy and method, in 2013 we organized the **Third International Suzuki Festival**,

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from the November 6–11, 2013. The teacher trainers who coordinated the courses in this festival were Caroline Fraser (Piano Unit One), Nancy Lokken (Violin Unit One), Roxana del Barco, and Maria Luisa Labarthe (Early Childhood Music One). For the first time in our country, we had a group of 15 Suzuki Violin teachers and three Suzuki Piano teachers.

We were happy to have participants from various parts of our country: Esmeraldas, Guayas, Tungurahua, Chimborazo, Loja, and Pichincha. We had the opportunity of sharing one day of the festival in the facilities of INEPE, in the southwest of Quito, 3100 meters above sea level.

These festivals have had the support and have been certified by the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador. The authorities of this university have organized our use of the facilities. We want to express our public gratitude to the authorities of the Catholic University for this important support.

Thanks to these first three festivals, several teachers from important points of our country have begun their Suzuki classes. Teachers of Guayaquil, Loja, Ambato, and Ibarra already have their studios and Suzuki academies, after their training in our festivals. Therefore, we as INEPE Suzuki teachers decided to establish the International Suzuki Festival as an annual effort of self-management that benefits more and more teachers and students in Ecuador. This is why during the **Fourth International Suzuki Festival** in November 2014 we had the presence of a delegation of teachers from the American School of Guayaquil and the Symphonic Orchestra of that city. Their experience attending the courses of Kodály One with Lydia Mill and the Filosofía course with Caroline Fraser was a source of inspiration to take the first step towards the co-organization of the next festival in the city of Guayaquil and to the formation of the Ecuador Suzuki Network.

The **Fifth International Suzuki Festival Ecuador** in 2016 was an important event in our country, as the city of Guayaquil hosted this event for the first time. It was also an opportunity for committed teamwork and networking with colleagues from this city, which is the main port of Ecuador. The organization of this Festival was held in cooperation and collaboration, and the event lasted two weeks (March 14–24, 2016). In addition, the Suzuki Association of the Americas provided an economic contribution for the teacher trainers' travel to our country.

The Suzuki philosophy was shared and taught to musicians of the Symphony Orchestra of Guayaquil, teachers of

conservatories and music schools, school directors, and parents, not only from this important city, but from other parts of the country. For the first time we had the attendance of teachers from the Galapagos Islands, Manabi,* and Ibarra. The teacher trainers that coordinated the courses of this festival were Caroline Fraser (Filosofía, Piano Unit One), Nancy Lokken (Violin Units One and Two) and Kathleen Schoen (Introduction to Recorder).

Unlike previous festivals, which had been characterized by the participation of Suzuki students from INEPE only, Suzuki students from Guayaquil participated in the master classes for piano, violin and recorder, as well as in the recitals. There were graduations of Piano One, and for the first time in

* This is the province that was most affected by the earthquake on April 16, 2016.



Second International Suzuki Festival in Ecuador from November 8 to November 11, 2012



Continued on p. 38

Suzuki Festival in Ecuador, continued from p. 37

Ecuador we had a graduate of Guitar One and Piano Two. The teachers that attended the festival gathered for a concert dedicated to the teacher trainers, playing pieces of the Latin American and Ecuadorian repertoire.

This festival hatched networks with the authorities of the American Ecuadorian Center of Guayaquil, and the American School of Guayaquil, which were the headquarters for the courses. We also believe that this event marked a milestone in the history of Suzuki in Ecuador, because we could establish and settle the Ecuador Suzuki Network, composed of the coordinators of the

Talent Education Program of INEPE, the Suzuki teachers of the American School of Guayaquil, and the Suzuki teachers of the *Cindy Camchong* Music Studio.

Both cities (Quito and Guayaquil) joined forces, initiatives, and common goals to make the experiences meaningful a worthwhile project for all children and communities in Ecuador, with committed and responsible teamwork.

We are currently in the process of making the Ecuador Suzuki Network an official legal entity which can be established as the representative and voice of the Suzuki work in our country. When this process is completed, we will designate the board of directors, which will be comprised of coordinators from the places in our

country where the method is already being implemented.

Sixth International Suzuki Festival Ecuador

The vibration of Dr. Shinichi Suzuki's words and legacy inspired all of us who belong to INEPE and to the Ecuador Suzuki Network, to work together in order to organize the VI International Suzuki Festival Ecuador, which took place from February 20 to March 8, 2017, with the endorsement and support of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador and the Suzuki Association of the Americas.

This event was very important in our country because every year, more teachers, directors from educational institutions, parents, and the general public are getting to know the Suzuki approach to education and understanding the urgency we have as a society and planet to deepen this philosophy of life. It is especially important in this new era; when getting together as human beings in community, shaping ourselves together through art to take care of our common home, the Earth, is so necessary. This is why today, more than ever, we see Dr. Suzuki's philosophy not only as something applicable to musical training, but as a philosophy to continue generating more life.

What made this festival a different event? First, we created opportunities before the festival to interact personally, through free talks with leaders of institutions and other people, in order to dialogue and answer questions and concerns about the festival. We were able to get across Dr. Suzuki's message in more depth, as well as to talk about the importance of having the Suzuki Association of the Americas Teacher Trainers in our country. In this way, we



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made it possible for participants from various parts of the country to attend and participate in the courses. Today, attendees have received training in the Suzuki philosophy, music reading, Kodaly, early childhood music, piano, violin and recorder.

The fifth and sixth festivals have become milestones in the development of the Suzuki philosophy and methodology in our country. They have created a network of people and institutions who have worked together to produce these events which have attracted participants from various corners of the country: from Quito, Guayaquil, Loja, Ambato, Riobamba, Esmeraldas, Quevedo, Cayambe, Ibarra, Galápagos, and Santa Elena. With joy we have seen that, thanks to the courses offered in our festival, there are now several institutions and professionals putting the methodology into practice, benefiting more children and families as we become better human beings, individuals of peace who work together to build a better world through music.

The Sixth International Suzuki Festival in Ecuador had a very interesting group of participants: music professionals from prestigious schools in the capital, educators of pre-school children, instrumentalists, teachers of music education, and parents. It was a great joy to know that our festival is also being recognized internationally. We had the presence of two participants from Venezuela and two participants from Argentina, who learned about the Suzuki method and the courses in Ecuador by various means and who made an effort to travel to Quito in order to get the training in the four courses offered: Suzuki Philosophy, Music Reading, Introduction to Recorder, and Recorder Unit One. It is important to mention that we have been pioneers in working with the Introduction to Recorder course, with the participation of teachers who today can implement the method with large groups of students in primary schools and high schools. This course has been very important in our country, and this time, we experienced the tremendous value of continuing the training in Book One in order to work with this instrument that is accessible to many students. The magic of the tools of the method, both at a human and pedagogical level, was sown inside each one of the participants, who in their testimonies indicate that after their training there was a change—sometimes radical—in their way of seeing education and life.

At the Sixth International Suzuki Ecuador Festival we also had the opportunity, as teachers of the Talent Education Program of INEPE, to present some of the fruits of our work with the students and families who participate in the program. With happiness we were able to celebrate



First group of Violin Two teachers – V International Suzuki Festival Ecuador



Piano Unit One participants and teacher – V International Suzuki Festival Ecuador



Introduction to Recorder participants and teacher – V International Suzuki Festival Ecuador (Location: Colegio Americano de Guayaquil)

Continued on p. 40

*Suzuki Festival in Ecuador,
continued from p. 39*

music with performances in piano, violin, guitar, flute, and recorder. In addition, we presented in concert, the Suzuki Choir of INEPE, which is an innovative space of vocal and choral work where children, adolescents, and their parents, grandparents, and teachers sing and share music together every week. All this in synchrony with dance and above all, in a common vibration, communicating the joy we have despite the adversities we might face; the joy in knowing with conviction that we continue walking along this beautiful path where we see that the construction of a new humanity is possible.

Thank you Dr. Shinichi Suzuki for your legacy! Thank you Teacher Trainers for sharing your knowledge and your life with us! We will continue weaving more networks of love and art so that Suzuki continues to flourish and beat in more and more hearts in our small and multicolored country. Our dream and vision is to expand and continue spreading the legacy of Dr. Suzuki in our country, in order to shape citizens of peace, whose art and nobility of feelings are the builders of a better humanity. ●●



Festival Internacional Suzuki Ecuador 2016



Festival Internacional Suzuki Ecuador 2016



Andrea Raza attended Conservatory of Music "Jaime Mola," where she studied piano until she graduated as Tecnólogo en Música con mención en piano in 2003. She has also taken private singing classes and attended workshops about Choir Conduction. As a student at INEPE high school, her love and passion for music and children led her to create the Children's Choir at this same community-based school that benefits people from vulnerable and poor areas of the city. She now leads 45 children, adolescents, parents, and teachers that are part of this choir. She has participated

in Choir Festivals in Quito, Colombia, Chile, Argentina and Brazil. Andrea Raza currently works at INEPE School as Coordinator of the Talent Development Program. She has been part of the group of organizers of the Suzuki Festivals since 2012. She also has a bachelor degree in linguistics and a master's degree in English teaching, where she also applies the mother tongue philosophy with their students.



Latin America

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PARAGUAY

CHILE

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ARGENTINA

Suzuki students play for renowned Brazilian violinist Alessandro Borgomanero, former student of Koji Toyoda and Ruggiero Ricci

Observations of a pivotal moment

By Raphael Egidio

Translation edited by Ed Kreitman



On March 10, 2016, I received an unexpected email addressed to the Suzuki Center of Brasilia. The email contained information about two important Brazilian musicians who would perform a recital and also give a master class. Along with the notice of this event came the invitation to provide students to perform in the master class.

The event would be sponsored by the Brasilia branch of the Association New Acropolis, an association that was founded in 1957 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, based on a philosophical, cultural, and social character and guided on voluntary activity. The Association currently has a presence in more than 50 countries on five continents, bringing together thousands of members and supporters. In a few weeks, the Association New Acropolis would be presenting a day dedicated to art and to do so, had invited violinist Alessandro Borgomanero and guitarist Eduardo Meirinhos to perform the recital and master class.

The invitation to see if we had students to recommend for this master class or if some teacher of the Suzuki Center would be interested in participating came as a surprise because the Suzuki Center of Brasilia is very new, although it already has a fairly large structure and function. To be recognized in the city as a relevant institution in the musical and cultural context was a great honor. Suzuki Center of Brasilia's work began in 2013, although it was only officially made a center in 2015. It is formed by a team of 15 teachers and serves around 250 students in early childhood music education, violin, viola, cello, recorder, piano, and guitar.

The violinist, Alessandro Borgomanero (Italy and Brazil), is professor at the Federal University of Goiás. He is a very present and active personality in various festivals in Brazil. Mr. Borgomanero's early training began in Salzburg, at the Mozarteum Ruggiero Ricci's class, and he followed his studies with Boris Belkin (Accademia Chigiana, Siena) and Salvatore Accardo (Cremona). He has performed as soloist with several orchestras such as the Budapest Chamber Orchestra, Salzburg Chamber Soloists, Philadelphia Virtuosi Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Salzburg Virtuosi, the Berlin Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra Sinfonietta Salzburg, Bachiana Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra Vaasa (Finland), and the vast majority of symphony orchestras in Brazil. In 2002 he held the first Brazilian performance of the Schostakovich Violin Concerto No. 2 in Curitiba. In 2005 he appeared as soloist with the Chamber Orchestra Kremlin (Russia) in two concerts at the Kremlin in Moscow. In 2009 he made the world premiere of the Jaime Zenamon Concerto for Violin and Orchestra with the Paraná Symphony Orchestra.

One of Mr. Borgomanero's most recent triumphs was performing the world premiere of Helene Rasquier's Concerto for Violin and Saxophone at Carnegie Hall in June 2015.

Remembering my own experience of working with Mr. Borgomanero, when I had him as a teacher at festivals, I knew him to have a kind and respectful teaching style. I understood that it would be an interesting encounter, to say the least.

I invited five families of children from the Suzuki Center of Brasilia to participate in the master class along with me and each family readily accepted the invitation.

At the expected day, I received a warm embrace of reconnection from Mr. Borgomanero. I asked him, in order to give some preparation for the students he would meet, if he knew something about the Suzuki method. He answered that although he had been a student of Mr. Koji Toyoda at the Berlin Music University between August 1987 and September 1989, he knew only very superficially about the method and did not have an opinion about it.

This information took my breath away because until that moment, I had not realized that there was a connection between Mr. Toyoda and Mr. Borgomanero, and that made the encounter even more special.

For the children, playing for an unknown teacher was not a new situation, since this practice is part of the training of each Suzuki student with the continuous participation in Suzuki festivals in different regions of Brazil and other countries.



The students were playing one by one, and Mr. Borgomanero's initial skepticism turned into enthusiastic smiles of wonder and surprise at what he saw and heard coming from the small violins and accurate student fingers. Seeing those kids playing from memory, artistically, with the left and right hand technique and posture well built—surely it was not expected by him.

Excited to see how fast the children responded and made adjustments after his suggestions, the teacher expressed phrases like: “How easily they play!” or “How natural is the violin for them!”

After the class and without the presence of children and parents, he told me that the children were very talented. At that moment, I saw a beautiful opportunity to explain to him the belief which Dr. Suzuki had and shared with us that talent is something that develops, that all children are capable and that those children demonstrate those skills because they started learning at an appropriate age for a good development, follow a methodology based on mother tongue learning, have a proper orientation, committed families, pleasant and stimulating environment, and regular daily practice and listening.

Mr. Borgomanero listened intently, perhaps making a mental connection between what was heard and seen in the moments before with the context of the

environment and how the musical and human growth of Suzuki students are developed.

Several messages exchanged in the next days, from him, emphasizing his desire to be kept informed about the students, and by my part, asking what were the suggestions that he had to give me for repertoire to follow with those young students he had seen. He offered broad support, including with regard to sending scores for the additional repertoire. Mr. Borgomanero also offered to teach those students at no cost when he comes to Brasilia in the future.

The meeting also had major effects on the institution that housed the master class. In these dialogues, it was possible to introduce the coordinators of the institution to the approach and the philosophy of Suzuki methodology. They saw a huge similarity between human principles they themselves advocate in their school, and the beginning of a partnership began to take shape. The concrete result of this convergence of ideas and purposes was the availability of facilities of the New Acropolis Brasilia institution to host the course of Suzuki Philosophy held in July 2016 and guided by the Teacher Trainer Eduardo Luduena (Argentina). This course had a maximum capacity of participants who completed the course, which created a significant number of potential new Suzuki teachers. Each one of them was

full of enthusiasm and inspired by the new world of revolutionary and transformative ideas exposed in the course.

With no doubt, an important door opened for the development of Suzuki methodology in Brazil by having had the recognition and support of a violin authority in our country. The support of someone of Mr. Borgomanero's stature has resulted in a prolific cooperation agreement, with his supervision and support of our students.

Equally important is Mr. Borgomanero's intention to support the newly formed Suzuki Center of the city of Goiania, where he resides, plays, conducts, and teaches. ●



Raphael Egídio, musical education specialist, graduated in violin at the Conservatório Dr. Carlos de

Campos de Tatuí-SP. He has been a member of the Suzuki Association of the Americas since 2009. Has constantly participated in Suzuki Festivals in Brazil, Peru, Argentina, Colombia and US. Since 2010, he has coordinated violin and viola modules of the “Music for Children Program,” held at University of Brasilia-UnB. Egídio is a member of “Suzuki Brasília,” a teacher team responsible for Suzuki activities with national and international range. He is also founder of Brasília Suzuki Center.

The Choir of INEPE

A Suzuki space to sing for peace

By *Jéssica Natalia Ramos González*

Translated by Andrea Raza with revisions by Caroline Fraser

I visited Quito, Ecuador, in September 2016, traveling on my way to Pasto, Colombia, with the Youth Choir of the National University of San Luis, Argentina, where I work as assistant to its Conductor, Ricardo Marino. We had a contact in Quito from a friend we met years ago in Pasto; she is Andrea Raza, who was in charge of our stay in Quito and coordinated a show at the *Teatro México* in this city. In the course of my communication with her, she used the name INEPE several times; it was the organization where we would spend our days in Quito. She shared a link with us so we could know about the organization, and in that same email, she also mentioned the Suzuki method and tried to explain briefly some aspects of the educational method that is practiced in the organization.

We lived at INEPE (Institute for Research, Education and Promotion of Ecuador) for a week—a week in which we discovered that love can make the stay very warm in a place where the climate is very cold. We did not understand how it was that the staff of the organization talked, looked, walked, explained, and listened with so much love. Then, in a moment of discovery, we not only began to give that love back, but we realized we had begun practicing it together within our group, as well.

A few days later, in the city of Pasto, Andrea gave a talk about the Suzuki method. That information was very timely as we were at an international choir festival and most of us had no knowledge about the existence of the method. Many questions came to me, questions I asked Andrea after a lunch together, which were happily answered by inviting me to the next Suzuki Festival in Quito.

This is why I attended the Suzuki Festival in Quito after having personally experienced what the method consists of. And curiously

I do not speak formal study of the method, or from reading books that mention it, but from something absolutely based in personal experience.

I participated during the month of February (as a cultural exchange between the National University of San Luis and INEPE) co-directing the choir of the music program. I brought an arrangement of an author from my country (María Elena Walsh) to sing with the children, and here I found a choir where not only children but also adolescents, parents, and grandparents were rehearsing together. From the first minute of our meetings something caught my attention: to breathe deeply and bow. From that moment on, inside the classroom there was nothing but music and conversations that referred to the activities that we would carry out there. Then, the warm-up exercises were not the conventional ones we use to practice in other choirs. The exercises, aside from being designed for children, were very didactic and fun. The children sang happily even though they were only warming up to start our rehearsal, and their parents accompanying them kept catching my attention. After that, it was time to practice the repertoire. It takes a great effort to practice and internalize the parts of each voice with a group of children, adolescents, and adults who are not singers or music students. Well, in this choir, it did not take so much effort and stress, and after a while I understood why. The director (Andrea) shared with each member the recordings of each voice and each piece that we interpreted, and then I also discovered the important role of the parents. They could have taken all the recordings but not played them at home. This had not happened, but the opposite. They had each melody we rehearsed in their ears, and as if that was not enough, they sang every note



in tune. My surprise did not end there. Every time we finished singing a phrase with each voice, the students were always applauded and congratulated for their achievement. If we invited them to sing with more volume (“How about singing a little bit louder, altos!”) Andrea asked the rest of voices, “Did you hear the altos, or should we ask them to raise the volume a little more?” Afterwards, she invited them to do it again, and when the rest of the group agreed that they sang louder, we would applaud them and congratulate them on their achievement. So, the first rehearsal ended, between laughter, smiles, applause, congratulations, and above all, music.

There was a mid-term break at school between our rehearsals (something I was personally concerned about because we had just a few more rehearsals and the day of the concert was approaching), but Andrea was always calm, so I just had to follow in her footsteps. After the school break, we had only three rehearsals until our presentation, but all the children and parents had taken the recordings of the repertoire home in their memory sticks. When we met again, it was clear that they had heard each track *together*, and those three rehearsals were very comforting. This made me stay calm with a new understanding: with love, everything is possible.

I have to emphasize that the Suzuki philosophy is being applied to the INEPE choir, although this has not been

written about anywhere. This should be highlighted and taken into account as a precedent in current choral activity. This would grow and blossom if we would apply this philosophy, building world peace. I also want to highlight this aspect because happy children making music assure us that this world will change for good at some point, even if we are no longer present to see it.

During the course of *Filosofía* I reaffirmed that the method is a philosophy

of life. I met people who contribute with their grain of sand every day to create a better world, because happy children making music assure us that a better world is coming to us. I am happy to belong to this family now. I take all these feelings and knowledge back to Argentina with the conviction that along with the children and their families from South America, we will walk towards world peace. ●

Jéssica Natalia Ramos González

is assistant director of the Youth Choir of the National University of San Luis, in San Luis, Argentina. A singer and songwriter, she has been a member of the Youth Choir since 2012. She is a student of the career of music production in the National University of San Luis and a teacher of elementary piano and vocal and stage workshops in public and private spaces. She is also a member and arranger of various vocal groups, a video clip producer for local television, and a vocalist for recording productions. In 2017, she volunteered as co-director of INEPE's choir (Quito, Ecuador) with a live performance for the Opening Concert of the Sixth Suzuki Festival in Ecuador.





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Introduction to Suzuki Recorder

Implementation of a New Course in Ecuador

By Kathleen Schoen



The Background

A few years ago, the Suzuki Recorder Teacher Trainers developed a new course for teachers, “Introduction to Suzuki Recorder.” The motivation behind this was the current state of recorder playing in North American elementary schools. Many elementary schools employ recorders in their introductory music classes, but the teachers do not have the skills to ensure that their students can play the instrument with a beautiful tone. This leads to an impression in the general public that the recorder is a squeaky toy that has to be endured for a few weeks and then abandoned in favor of other instruments. As we know, this is not the case—the recorder is played beautifully by many fine performers in both early music and modern music. We were looking for a way to help people, whose only exposure to the instrument is through this limited use in elementary schools, become aware of the instrument’s full potential as both a pedagogical tool and as an instrument for performance.

Suzuki Recorder Unit One offers many resources for the development of beautiful tone on the recorder. But very few elementary school teachers have the performance skills required to pass the Basic audition in order to take a teacher training course. Their work does not require that level of playing, but they could certainly benefit from using the tone development techniques offered in the Suzuki Recorder Book One. So we developed a course for teachers that discussed the approach to the first few pieces of Recorder Book One, basic principles for continuing to use these ideas in other repertoire, and included a master class lesson for each teacher participant to ensure that they left the class understanding how to use these principles in their own playing as well as how to communicate the ideas to students. This course is short—it can be done over three days, so it could fit into a long weekend or a weekend before or after an Institute or Festival—and it does not require any audition.

Another initiative that was introduced to make Suzuki training more accessible to elementary school teachers was a new audition level. There is now a Pre-Basic audition for recorder, which permits taking Recorder Unit One for credit, but a further audition is

required before continuing on to Unit Two. The audition piece is more accessible for the typical elementary school teacher, but still demonstrates that they can do everything needed to perform the Book One repertoire.

After these two initiatives were prepared, a concern was raised, that the teachers who took the Introduction course would then think that that was all that Suzuki Recorder training entailed, and would not want to continue with further training. So the next step was to test the course in a community and see how people reacted to it.

The Pilot Project

I happened to have a conversation about the new Introduction to Recorder course with Andrea Raza, a teacher at the innovative INEPE school in Ecuador, when we were both in attendance at the International Suzuki Festival in Peru. Andrea felt that the intentions behind the Introduction to Recorder course aligned very well with the philosophy of the INEPE school, and offered to host the course for the first time at the Ecuador Suzuki Festival in Guayaquil, Ecuador. This happened in March of 2016. The response was so favorable from the participants that it was offered again a year later in Quito, immediately followed by Recorder Unit One in the same location. Close to half of the teacher participants in the two Introduction courses went on to take the Unit One course.

Many of the teachers in the Introduction course chose to play the new Pre-Basic audition piece for their master class lesson on the last day of class, and many of the teachers in the Unit One class were already asking about Unit Two at the end of the week!

The parents who attended the demonstration lessons with their children immediately noticed the difference in the tone quality and expressiveness of the students’ performances after working with the master class teacher. They began asking the teachers at INEPE about what they could do to support continued student improvement.

A representative of a music store in Guayaquil traveled to Quito and set up a temporary shop for two days during the festival. After observing some of the student classes, she was so impressed by the potential of the program that she offered to arrange to get inexpensive but adequate instruments shipped in bulk so that there could be enough for all of the students at INEPE. This was a wonderful offer, as access to instruments had previously been a problem.

These reactions demonstrated that our Introduction to Recorder course had a bigger impact than we had anticipated. Not only did it give teachers immediate access to resources and training, but it also increased community awareness of the potential of

the recorder when used with the Suzuki method, which in turn led to offers of local support and resources.

What Next?

So far, our experience with the Introduction to Suzuki Recorder course is that the participating teachers see immediate application of the approach in their own communities, become very excited to take these ideas home, and inquire about ways of doing more teacher training in order to continue the process.

The Introduction course creates an environment where the Suzuki approach can be demonstrated with immediate results, for both students and teachers. This environment is filled with a sense of possibility, as the teachers see and hear how their playing and their students' playing improves. Parents who attend the demonstration classes also see the possibilities for their children and look for ways to support the work of the teachers.

The idea of auditioning to continue teacher training becomes an attainable goal rather than an impediment to using the Suzuki approach.

Dr. Suzuki was interested in making music available to all the children of the world. The new Introduction to Suzuki Recorder course brings this goal closer by increasing ease of access to Suzuki training, not by lowering our standards, but by providing resources for communities to develop an environment where those standards are possible to achieve.

It would be interesting to see if this approach could also increase accessibility to teacher training with other instruments. The existing audition system would be retained for teachers who have previous music training, but an introductory course leading to a Unit One audition could help teachers and students who have less access to resources get started, begin to play with a more beautiful tone, and create a nurturing environment filled with possibilities for further development. ••



Kathleen Schoen has been teaching both flute and recorder since receiving her B.Mus degree from UBC in 1984. She is active in the Suzuki community both locally and internationally, as an Institute Director, Conference Co-ordinator, teacher, teacher trainer, and program administrator, and is the first Canadian flute teacher to receive the Certificate of Achievement from the SAA. She has also taught flute and recorder at the University of Alberta, Augustana campus. A performer on flute, baroque flute, and recorder, she works both as a soloist and with her chamber music group, the Schoen Duo. A Suzuki parent as well as a teacher, her daughter started in the Suzuki program at the age of 2 and is now also a trained Suzuki teacher.



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It's Not about Review

By Megan Titensor

Recently I tackled a lifelong dream to learn a foreign language. It was something big and would require significant changes in my life, much like committing to learning a musical instrument. In fact, it became my own experiment with the “mother tongue” method. For 10 years I had been teaching cello using the Suzuki method, which is modeled after language acquisition. Since I don't remember many of the pivotal moments of acquiring my own native language, I thought it would be fascinating to really comprehend the correlations of language learning and how it related to my own expertise in teaching cello using the Suzuki method.

Shinichi Suzuki says in his book *Nurtured by Love*, “The human spirit demonstrates its power only in those who act, and thus no ability whatsoever will develop in those who neglect to train themselves.”

I began taking Spanish lessons in Salt Lake City, Utah, with a Colombian woman. Irma Sanchez was confident that my musical ear and discipline would bode well for my learning. I was enchanted by learning and enjoyed the honeymoon period. I loved going to class, my brain was energized by learning new vocabulary, and I felt happy I was finally chasing a dream. I assumed that if children can learn to speak within two or three years, surely my adult mind would have me speaking a new language within six months.

After three months of study, my husband and I took a weeklong trip to El Salvador. I was anxious to test my mettle and get some “real” Spanish practice in. Shockingly, I hardly understood anything, and even floundered at the typical greetings. I realized I had become just like my five-year-old student Molly. After months of studying Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, I invited her to join in a play-in, knowing that she could easily play along. As it turned out, she burst into tears, not even recognizing the piece in its unfamiliar context. Standing awestruck in El Salvador, I completely understood her confusion. I was now that Twinkler student in a sea of fluent Spanish speakers.

After that vacation, it dawned on me that I wasn't using the Suzuki method very well to acquire a new language. My language acquisition experiment had gone awry. At home in Utah, I wasn't listening to native Spanish speakers nearly enough. There wasn't exactly a “conversational Spanish” recording I could put on repeat. I wasn't using enough review and repetition to develop my vocabulary. I was reading more than I was speaking, and in fact, I wasn't speaking much at all. I had a daily study routine, but it needed some serious revision. Filling out worksheets for my classes wasn't cutting it. As Suzuki said, “Knowledge is not skill. Knowledge plus ten thousand times is skill.”

Fast forward one year after the date I started Spanish lessons to find me moving to Peru to immerse myself in the language and teach cello. If Suzuki says that “man is the son of his environment,” then putting myself in a Spanish-speaking environment would do the trick!

What they don't tell you about immersion is that it's painful. Every day my head literally hurt just as growing pains hurt during childhood. It was exhausting, embarrassing, terrifying, and

rewarding. I was constantly on a roller coaster of emotion that comes with frustration and achievement. I could easily relate to the emotions of my four-year-old students. I could see my growth daily, weekly, and monthly. It wasn't until I was living within the environment that I understood the subtle difference between translation and interpretation.

Linguistics has become a new fascination of mine, because I am searching for meaning in an entirely new language. A direct translation often loses meaning, and therefore interpretation is necessary to understand the expression. Fluency of expression takes years and decades to master, just as it does for musicians. I'm now starting my third year of my language learning experiment and I have many years still to go!

There are several principles of the Suzuki method that I delightfully encountered along my language learning journey, and I want to illustrate them here.

Everyone can learn: I've developed more humility in learning and faced the fear of failure again and again. I'm constantly comforted by the knowledge that children all over the world can learn their native language. I've been teased for my mistakes and have been made fun of for my pronunciation or accent, but I knew I could do it.

Character: If I let discouragement get the best of me, I would never develop my ability. I was comforted by Suzuki's idea that, “We all have unlimited shortcomings. Yet one way of seeing things is to consider our lives as a time frame that allows us continually to work at changing our weaknesses into strengths. This, I must say, is an intriguing task.”

Positive feedback: I've realized that I learn best, and indeed, excel, within a circle of support, receiving positive feedback, enthusiasm, and patience from native Spanish speakers.

Listening: I've appreciated that there's more to listening than hearing. I've picked up nuances of body language, pronunciation, grammatical structures, and humor.

Repetition: I enjoy repetition for the comfort that comes with ease of pronunciation and the familiarity of automatic responses.

But here's my confession. *Review didn't really work for me*—or rather, it had its limitations. I realized it's not about review. Instead, it's about synthesis.

Often, review means to go over, brush up, abbreviate, condense, summarize, shorten, abridge, scan, or have another look. But in the Suzuki method, we truly aim to refine for precision and increased efficiency in ability for the integration of our composite understanding. By reviewing repertoire we are seeking unification of the cumulative parts to develop artistry, which is why we should focus on the deeper meaning of synthesis.

Assimilating our knowledge with an integrated approach toward mastery can often be a faster method than more revision and review. Imagine learning the word sheep only by hearing it and repeating it back several times, or worse, 100 times. Now imagine learning the word sheep by first being introduced to the animal at a farm, later drawing a picture of it, reading a story about

sheep, and snuggling up in a wool blanket. It's that kind of integration that creates a deeper connection to learning.

I've learned that memorizing a list of words on a piece of paper doesn't hold the same significance as experiencing those words within my world view: in a heated conversation, in a picture book, or in the landscape in front of me. Likewise, memorized words out of their original context will not ring a bell, and therefore, become a lapse in comprehension.

Synthesis can be easier to access than we realize. It doesn't necessarily take hundreds of repetitions or once-over review to get there. Perhaps it was synthesis and integration that Suzuki was referring to when he said: "Art is not some far-off place. A work of art is the expression of a man's whole personality, sensibility, and ability."

Take Perpetual Motion, for example. I have a student who wants to pause between sections and has practiced pausing. It's not that the student hasn't listened enough or doesn't know what's coming, but simply hasn't integrated the corporal effect of what *perpetual motion* means. After asking the student to tap along to the beat while I played and inserted a key pause in

my continuous eighth notes, the student finally felt the effect of what was missing in her Perpetual Motion.

Another example is the student who is struggling to articulate well the strong and weak beats of a minuet. After dancing around the room with different qualities of dance steps, the student hears and feels the difference in those beats and forever plays the piece differently.

It's not about sitting down to review the old pieces and give them another glance so they don't get rusty. It's not about reviewing a vocabulary list and committing more words to memory. It's about synthesizing the knowledge so that the learning has been internalized to connect the dots in a global approach to learning. The integrated knowledge has a secure foundation with meaningful experience that produces the ability.

Yes, we need repetition. Yes, we need a supportive learning environment. And yes, we need a long-term vision for progress. But we also need to consider that integrating character, expression, comprehension, and knowledge can help us master abilities much quicker and on a deeper level. The process for achieving synthesis can be

much more enjoyable than the dreaded review approach. Consider integrating history, visual art, museum trips, storytelling, creativity, improvisation, dress-up, analysis of video recordings, singing, dancing, theater, or even food.

In your next "review" moment, instead, ask yourself what can be integrated to achieve synthesis. ●●



Megan Titensor, cellist, is on the faculty of the Asociación Cultural de Qantu in Cusco, Perú. Megan completed her master's degree in cello performance at CU-Boulder and her bachelor's degree in cello performance at Utah State University.

Also an accomplished pianist, Megan has extensive experience as a performer and collaborator, enabling her to accompany her own students. Her students range from young Suzuki cellists to adults. Megan has also had experience teaching early childhood music and movement classes and enjoys teaching Music Mind Games. She loves skiing, hiking, biking, cooking, travel, and yoga.



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Cultivating Slow Practice with the Media Multitaskers of “Generation M”

By Megan Graham

“If you practice something slowly, you forget it slowly. If you practice something fast, you forget it fast.”
– Itzhak Perlman¹

“Good scholarship requires time: time to think, write, read, research, analyze, edit, and collaborate. High quality instruction and service also require time: time to engage, innovate, experiment, organize, evaluate, and inspire.”
– Alison Mountz et al²

Focus during the music lesson and home practice is a challenge for many children. It is becoming increasingly difficult to resist distraction when there are so many things that need to get done. Teachers, parents, and students are all part of a society that demands high productivity in a compressed time frame. These ever-increasing demands on our time are not small matters. They are big tasks that cannot be ignored. The pressure to multitask, to do even more in less time, is strong. It is fueled by the rapid pace of the technology in which we are immersed.

In this article, I will address the problem of distraction and the pressure to multitask in the context of the Suzuki lesson and home practice. Specifically, I will consider the research on the culture of multitasking that our students belong to, and consider the latest neurological research findings on children, multitasking, and learning. Additionally, I will suggest strategies that foster a deliberately slower, more contemplative learning environment, both in the studio at home.

Teaching Music to “Generation M”

It’s an hour before dinnertime at home and a fourth grader and sixth grader both have to complete violin practice and homework for school the next day. The problem: They also want to finish an “important” online game with their friends that they started the night before. Can they do all of this at the same time? Can it be done accurately?

This predicament was adapted from a scenario proposed by child development researchers Carrier, Rosen, Cheever, and Lim.³ The children in the scenario are part of the generational cohort of media multi-taskers that follow from Generations X/Y/Z/Net/Digital Natives. They have been coined “Generation M” for “multitasking” by *Time* magazine. Gen-M is growing up with a relationship to technology that begins at birth. This is a “mobile culture” where laptops, cell phones, and iPads are used all the time, accompanying every activity.

Child development researchers found that American children and adolescents of Generation M (8-18 years old) are able to compress 10 hours and 45 minutes worth of media content into 7.5 hours of media use.⁴ Youth are literally saturated with technology. Homes have become “media multitasking environments,” where adults and children simultaneously watch television, use the computer, and engage with the cell phone and other electronic devices. The youngest generation in society carries out the most media multitasking on a daily basis. This multitasking happens both in school and at home. Children have their attention pulled by external factors (e.g., smartphone alerts) and internal factors (e.g., thoughts about future online activity). The compression of media content noted above means that children do not focus on one media source at a time. Instead, they switch between the media at an extreme rate of more than four switches per minute.⁵

The 30-minute music lesson and the subsequent home practice sessions demand

uninterrupted attention to the task at hand. Any teacher would be concerned about how young students will learn what they need to during this time, given Generation M’s rate of multitasking. There is growing concern that children and teenagers, who are the biggest media and internet multitaskers, can become dependent on the rapid change of pace that these formats provide and might then be unable to carry out more sustained goals.⁶ Learning an instrument requires repetition and focused attention that engages the working memory and executive functions of the brain. Media multitasking may be training children’s brains to switch tasks frequently and orient to distractions in a way that is detrimental to learning music well.

The Multitasking Brain May Struggle During Lesson and Practice Time

Bringing technology into lesson and practice time presents challenges. Music and technology both occupy the complicated intersection of work and play in our lives.^{7,8} I encourage my older students to search YouTube for videos of fine musicians and to read articles on the Strad website. This past year, I have started posting individualized practice videos (passages played at progressive tempos) so that students can play along with the videos during practice. There are also great advances spearheaded by the teachers and researchers at Queen’s University who developed the Music Tool Suite, a collection of digital tools to support music learning.⁹



While I do not yet use these in my studio, I think they are a good way to harness and channel media cravings during practice time at home. Purposefully accessing a single media outlet is not the distraction culprit. Instead, distraction during the lesson seems to stem from the brain's fast switching, multitasking response that has been learned during the rest of the student's day.

A variety of social and economic pressures have convinced most of us that multitasking is a helpful skill to acquire. The term "multitasking" used to be a badge of accomplishment, proving one could manage their time and do more with less. Neuroscience is showing that multitasking is actually antithetical to peak performance.¹⁰ Researchers have argued that multi-tasking is neither real, nor good for our executive functions. The only tasks that we *do* multitask (perform simultaneously) are thoughtless ones

such as walking, talking, or chewing gum. What we today call "multitasking" is actually a practiced rapid switching between tasks. Each switch has an associated cognitive cost. Too much switching, or juggling of cognitive resources, and output quality decreases.

In other words, although the upcoming generation of children has developed the ability to switch rapidly between different tasks on different media, studies have shown that carrying out tasks with rapid switching behavior leads to more mistakes and more time to get everything done than if tasks had been done sequentially. Students self-reported that instant messaging multitasking had a negative impact on their homework, but continued to multitask with IM anyway.¹¹ The attraction of technology is strong and can override a student's best efforts to focus on the task at hand. Ultimately, the learning process can be negatively affected.

The Emotional Pull of Distractions

In our lesson and practice space we strive to create a place of focus and nurturing that is conducive to learning music. But media multitasking at all times of the day may make it more difficult for young people to resist distraction from irrelevant environmental information even during practice. Although we try to give our students discrete practice tasks in which they will be successful, students still experience frustration during practice. These negative feelings can be addressed and overcome, but if technology is present, students may elect to task switch rather than work through the frustration.

For example, when participants in Adler and Benbunan-Fich's (2013) study were told to complete five real-life tasks in a

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given amount of time, researchers found that participants switched tasks when they got stuck on a task (i.e., felt negative emotions).¹² Participants who were more curious (i.e., felt positive emotions) were less likely to switch tasks. Researchers concluded that negative feelings led people to “self-interrupt” and switch to another task. Switching tasks was related to feelings about one’s progress and self-assessed prospect of goal attainment. Carrier et al. suggest that if this is the case, the following would take place:

.....
IMAGINE THE STUDENT WHO IS BEGINNING TO FALL FURTHER AND FURTHER BEHIND IN UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE INSTRUCTOR IS SAYING. UPON REALIZING THIS, THE STUDENT’S NEXT THOUGHT, ACCORDING TO THE RESEARCH, IS LIKELY TO BE, *I WONDER IF ANYONE RESPONDED TO MY FACEBOOK POST. LET ME CHECK!*¹³

The temptation to self-interrupt and begin another task is strong, particularly when a student feels they are not making progress. This could have serious implications for practicing an instrument. Task-switching moves the student away from negative emotions toward something more positive. For example, switching to social media satisfies a need to feel included in the social network. “Fear of missing out” is the phrase that has been coined to explain why youth constantly check their mobile devices. One student reported, “When I’m unplugged, I worry that I’m missing out on something.”¹⁴ Anxiety results from not being able to connect with social networks, text messages, and cell phone calls. Older students who practice with a cell phone or other electronic gadgets in the room may be undermining their efforts to focus, or to orient to the learning task.¹⁵ Efforts to focus solely on practice tasks are undermined by the learned behavior of task switching, which is modeled and encouraged in most other domains of the day. As teachers, we must recognize that to practice with a careful, thoughtful, intentional focus has never been so challenging for students.

Creating an Environment of “Slow Scholarship”

Recently, young faculty in universities across Canada and the United States have begun taking up the “slow scholarship” movement in response to the impossible demands of institutions.¹⁶ Similar to my students’ experiences, these faculty are being asked to produce more, give more, and do more, in less time and with fewer resources. “Multi-tasking” is the prescribed mode of production, but it is ineffective and actually compromises learning and output. Thus, there is a deliberate effort to slow down scholarship, be more mindful, and give learning the time it requires.

Learning and teaching take time. Itzhak Perlman is known for his saying, “If you practice something slowly, you forget it slowly. If you practice something fast, you forget it fast.” Perlman also recommends that young violinists (and other musicians, I’m sure) practice in small sections with an approach that is thoughtful, purposeful, and patient. The idea is to cultivate an attitude of quality over quantity.¹⁸ This can be challenging, because it is the exact opposite of what multitasking has been proven to achieve (i.e., quantity over quality). It takes time to engage, to innovate and experiment (as Dr. Suzuki often did), to organize, to evaluate, and to inspire one another. Here are some strategies to cultivate a slow practice environment in the studio and at home:

- **Explain the benefits:** Share information about the impact of media multitasking on students’ learning. Explain to students that lesson and practice time is not a time to multitask in the way they might do elsewhere. Practicing is a time to draw attention inward to the task at hand and enjoy the pause in the day’s frenetic pace.
- **Out of sight out of mind:** Eliminate technology from the learning environment. Even if the phone is on silent mode, its presence can be distracting. Young teachers may struggle to put the cell phone or iPad away during lesson time, but if you are not actively using it with a student, put it away. I have made the mistake of leaving my cell phone and/

or iPad visible during a lesson. I did not realize the student even noticed the devices until they started pleading with me to show me their favorite game that they promised was related to the music. It is simply better to put it away.

- **Put it in writing:** Address cell phones and mobile devices in your studio policy. Decide what will work for your studio. Suggest to parents that they create house rules around mobile devices and practice time.

Just as it is important to set up the environment for good learning, it is important to carry that through the session. Hold in your mind a vision of your student who resists distraction, focuses with great interest, and does not interrupt their own process in fleeting moments of frustration. Maryellen Weimer developed a list of seven characteristics of good learners.¹⁹ I have adapted this list to Suzuki students. These characteristics can be nurtured in the lesson and during practice to break the cycle of rapid task switching and to encourage the student to stay with the musical moment.

- **Good learners are curious:** Encourage discovery. Show the student something interesting that may puzzle them and encourage exploration.
- **Good learners pursue understanding:** Some skills and concepts will come easily to students, but most require effort to acquire. A good learner persists and puts in the time to ask questions, analyze, and investigate until they arrive at a clear understanding.
- **Good learners recognize that sometimes learning isn’t fun:** Learning music requires a journey through tasks that require repetition, attention to detail, and periods of intense mental focus. As teachers, it is okay to advise students to expect these moments and to look forward to the rewards and great feeling of mastery that follow hard work.
- **Frustration frightens good learners, but they know it’s beneficial:** Encourage students to be confident that they will be successful, even in the event of repeated frustration. Teach students to recognize frustration and give them the skills to break

down difficult passages, practice smaller units, and put the passage back together successfully.

- **Good learners make knowledge their own:** Use group class as an opportunity to integrate what students already know to something they want to learn. Holidays are a good time to introduce extra pieces and demonstrate how skills from learned pieces are helping them to learn and play the new piece beautifully.
- **Good learners never run out of questions:** Teach students to ask questions. Group class can also be a space to practice this. Early in the year, I try to model questions and hand out two or three questions for students to read aloud. Later in the year, they get better at developing their own questions.
- **Good learners share what they've learned:** Group class is a great time to get students to work together. On or off the instrument, set up activities where students can work in small groups and then share their ideas in new small groups or with the larger group class. It can be useful to adapt classroom strategies like "pair and share," "apples to apples," and "expert knowledge matrices," which can be useful for older students.

A Contemplative Way Forward

As technology becomes increasingly present in our lives and the lives of our students, we as teachers need to consider ways to work with it productively. That can mean integrating technology into our studio practice through digital music tools. It can also mean restricting the presence of digital technology in the lesson and practice environment. When the presence of technology promotes a rapid switching activity in our students that is detrimental to their focus and careful practice, then the environment needs to be changed. Fueled by the rapid-speed technology in our environment, multitasking becomes a habit that our students may have difficulty leaving outside the studio and practice rooms. As teachers, we may also have difficulty bracketing music lessons and practice as a time for slow, contemplative work. It is to our benefit, however, to ground ourselves and resist the frenzied and distracted cycle

of multitasking. With deliberate effort, we can create environments of focused, self-determined, slow work for ourselves and our students. •

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Megan Graham

is a doctoral candidate at Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario. Her research encompasses lived experience, communication, and creativity through music and the arts among children and seniors. As a violinist and violist,

Megan performs in chamber ensembles and orchestral groups and enjoys sharing her love of music with her students and fellow teachers.

What should my child practice this week?

By Glenda Gail Walsh Crouse

I have come to expect certain practice-related questions from studio parents. I wish parents would add another question to their repertoire, however: "What should my child practice this week to become a good person with a beautiful heart?"

Parents, as a teacher it's my job is to be a mirror for your child. As a mirror, I reflect any behavioral issues that your child may have back to you. Some situations call for an adult only conversation. In this situation I'm not going to directly state what the issue is. But if you are fully present during the lesson, you will have a good idea of what your child needs to work on. If you are distracted or playing on your cell phone, you will miss the cues I'm giving through my body language and the tone of my voice. When you are not fully aware of what is happening during the lesson, you lose the most important part of the lesson, and that is my reflection of your child.

What I really want is for my students to find ways to practice my big-picture expectations during the week. Big-picture expectations are the character traits and life skills that I hope my students learn by being part of the studio community. Of course, there is no substitute for the discipline gained through daily violin practice! It is my hope that parents will consider adding one of the big picture items to their practice list this week. Teachers should also reflect on their own teaching to be sure that they are modeling their own big-picture list.

Fellow teachers, when you sit down and make your big-picture lists, I think you will find that your big-picture items form the very heart of your studio policies. Try constructing your studio policies around your big-picture list. You'll find that you have a more positive environment and less dissonance within yourself regarding studio policy.

I think teachers forget to explain their big picture to studio parents. Understandably, if we don't communicate our big expectations to parents, the Suzuki triangle breaks. If we never mention character development, parents will assume we are

only interested in the child's technique. If we lose sight of our big picture, our parents will lose sight as well.

Parents, I cannot say just exactly what is on your teachers' big-picture list, as all teachers are different. It's important for you to ask your teachers what *their* big expectations are.

Of course, I have included my own list of big-picture items:

Dear Students,

It is my hope that you will consider the following:

1. **Be kind to yourself.** If you wouldn't say it to a friend, don't say it to yourself. You cannot have true compassion for others if you don't first have compassion for yourself.
2. **Be kind to everyone you meet, and do your best to brighten someone else's day.** Even a simple smile is an act of kindness.
3. **Cooperation over competition.** Items above are often disregarded in the spirit of competition. You don't win by being unkind to yourself or others. If you must compete, please honor the first two items. We call that healthy competition.
4. **Know that your attitude matters.** You might not be able to control everything that happens to you, but you can control your reaction.
5. **Honor your commitments.** If you say you are going to do something or be somewhere, be sure you follow through. This is how you develop trust with others.
6. **Know the difference between an accident and a mistake.** Accidents are sudden, unintentional, and unfortunate events. Mistakes are choices which are made because of lack of planning, lack of knowledge, lack of focus, and or lack of discipline. Growth occurs when we realize our mistakes and correct them. It's irresponsible to insist that mistakes are completely unavoidable accidents; this is the very definition of cowardice.

7. **Perfect is a dirty, nonsensical word.** Perfection doesn't exist in nature. When you watch the sunset, you accept its beauty as it is. You don't pick out its flaws; it never occurred to you to do so.
8. **Fail.** Failure is not bad. It takes a great deal of courage to fail. Failure shows that you are pushing your ability to greater levels. If you have yet to fail, you need to work harder.
9. **Consider the seed whenever you feel that you aren't progressing.** A seed needs the right environment to grow. Do you water your seed? Do you give your seed air and light? Don't forget that any growth that has previously occurred will wither and die if you don't continue to nurture the seed. When you are really stuck, remember that "can't" is a four letter word. You have all the ability in the world to be extraordinary; don't waste it on "can't."
10. **Strive to become a better person every day.** Please make this your first and most important goal. ♦♦



Glenda Gail Walsh Crouse is the director of Westminster Suzuki Strings in Maryland, has over a decade of teaching experience. She has completed Suzuki teacher training for violin with Ronda Cole and Linda

Fiore. She studied violin with Dr. Frank Hardy, and Nicholas Currie. Glenda believes that learning and education should never stop. As a teacher, she strives to see things from the perspective of the student. She has a "Mary Poppins" attitude towards teaching, that is learning should be fun and ideas introduced by games (which makes her a great talent when working with very young children). Her main goal is to teach her students to have a beautiful personality, to have a beautiful heart as Dr. Suzuki says! Her second goal is the love, passion and discipline for music.

The Older Beginner

By Sigrid Karlstrom

Suzuki students typically begin from age four to six. In most schools and studios, the Pre-Twinkle curriculum and classes revolve around this age group. When a family calls asking for lessons for a beginning eight, nine, or twelve-year-old it can be difficult, because these students don't fit into the prescribed mold. How do we change our teaching suitably for these children's more mature development and support them with an appropriate network of peers? Understanding these age groups is the first step to successfully teaching them.

Characteristics of the Older Beginner (Grade-School Age)

Grade-school students are a joy to teach and progress much faster than four or five year olds.

Better Developed Fine Motor Control

It takes less time for a grade school child to get "set up," that is, to learn rest and playing position, bow hold, and play rhythms in the square of the arm on the E string ("home position" is the term used by Susan Kempter).¹ In most cases I can teach these things in one lesson, reviewing and refining the skills in the following weeks.

Longer Attention Span

The challenge of teaching the standard Pre-Twinkler is working around his short attention span. While an older child will appreciate a change of activities after ten minutes or so, he is used to focusing for a set period of time.

Socialized and Appreciate Activities with Set Rules

Older beginners have been in school for a few years and are socialized. They enjoy activities with set rules. I've found that these children respond positively to a concrete, step-by-step curriculum, including a method book, and I use far fewer fantasies and props during the lesson. Because the

Suzuki books are aimed more toward teachers and parents it may be a good idea to supplement the Suzuki materials with child-centered material such as a beginning reading book, music theory book, or another way of concretely seeing and marking progress.

Enjoy Some Independence

Older children like solving some problems independently although they are not ready for complete independence. If given concrete instructions, they may enjoy taking responsibility for a small portion of their practice assignment (perhaps with a parent still in the room). Teachers can try to ask questions rather than giving answers directly to foster independence and critical thinking in the lesson.

Improved Verbal Skills and Communication

Young beginners (our typical Suzuki students) are physical learners. They will not respond to prolonged verbal instructions and may not answer open-ended questions. While physical instruction is still a good idea for older beginners, they can understand, respond to, and intuit verbal instructions and answer questions—e.g., "What does second finger need to do?"

Characteristics of the Older Beginner (Middle School Age)

Self-Conscious

Middle school beginners may feel out of place in a studio where other children their age are playing at a relatively advanced level. I've found it's best to change a standard Pre-Twinkle Suzuki curriculum to suit the middle-school aged child's interests, giving them material in a normal progression of skills but adapted for their cognitive skill level. Never place these children in a group class with young Pre-Twinklers!

Increasing Independence

It may be best to put the middle school child more in charge of his home practice, especially if parent and child are experiencing a time of increased conflict. In this case, it is extremely important for teachers to give specific, detailed assignments and ensure the child can produce in the lesson what is wanted at home. "Practice your bowing" is not enough for the middle-school beginner; "practice mississippi stop stop, at the square of the arm, ten times everyday, using two inches of bow, making sure your elbow opens and closes" may be specific enough to gain an improved result.

Social world shifts from home to peers

Middle school beginners are beginning to be heavily interested in and influenced by their peer group. Every effort should be made to find these children a peer group of students at their level. Beginning school orchestra can be a good experience but should also be treated with care; extra emphasis should be placed on posture in the lesson and home practice.

Teaching Ideas for the Older Beginner

Group Class

This can be the most difficult decision to make with an older student and the most meaningful decision for his motivation. Eight and nine-year olds will *not* be motivated by a typical Pre-Twinkle group class meant for five-year-olds and a pre-teen might roll his eyes, refuse to participate, and later decide he wants to quit. One good solution is to create a beginning class purely for older students. This way, things move faster and students make friends within the school or studio. Often there are not enough children of this age and level, however. In that case, the older beginner must either join a more advanced

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class with peers his own age or spend some time learning the beginning repertoire without playing in a group. Each of these choices presents problems, but I believe it's best to motivate the older beginner with peers his own age rather than have him lose interest. Make sure to have an honest conversation with the parent and explain that the child will not participate much in group class but that he will still be learning.

Lesson Material

An eight-year-old learns and thinks differently from a five-year-old. It's important that when dealing with older beginners we use different teaching tactics so as to maximize the older child's skills and interests and minimize teaching down to him. This can be a hard transition for a teacher; we have fabulous songs, rhymes, and poems that young students love and the majority of our beginners are young. How can we present the Pre-Twinkle and beginning Suzuki material so that the older beginner can feel empowered and motivated?

Suzuki Rhythms

I've had success with changing the words of Suzuki rhythms for an older student. While the five year olds are playing "Mississippi stop stop" an older beginner might play "huckleberry jello" or "four sixteenth notes two eights." This can feed into a reading curriculum and make the older beginner feel as though he is playing something different and more interesting than the "babies."

Pre-Twinkle Pieces

I try not to present these pieces with the words designed for younger children. While a five year old may appreciate learning "See the Pretty Flowers," an older student may find these words to be juvenile, especially if he hears them being used by younger students. Instead, I strive to emphasize the techniques to be learned and change or eliminate words as needed. Another option is to create new pieces for only older beginners. I knew one creative teacher who used popular video games and shows to create words for new "older beginning" songs: Angry Birds, etc.

Teacher/Student Duets

Usually older beginners want to play the violin because they want to make music. This is different from the standard Pre-Twinkler, who may ask for the violin at home but is more interested in pleasing their parent and conquering the physical aspects of playing. It can be hard to satisfy the older beginner's desire to play music while satisfying your own standards for violin technique, but one strategy is through teacher duets for Pre-Twinkle pieces. Teachers can invent these for pieces they normally give to students. Another possibility is to take appropriate repertoire from a variety of "traditional" method books, which often include teacher duets. I've used pieces from *Essential Elements*² Book One and *Learning Together*³ (they also include a play-along track that is exciting for some grade-school students), *Young Strings in Action*,⁴ *Red Parrot Green Parrot*,⁵ and *Abracadabra Violin*.⁶

Reading

I often introduce beginning music reading concepts away from the instrument as soon as the older beginner starts lessons. Music Mind Games materials are one way I do this, by taking five minutes of the lesson and instructing the child to practice every day at home or alternatively, hosting a Music Mind Games class.

Another possibility is to use the book *I Can Read Music*, a great resource for the older student because of its straightforward, self-instructional layout and opportunities for repetition. To begin reading, the older beginner must be able to properly place the violin, produce a good bow hold, and play rhythms in "home position" while opening and closing the elbow joint. On the pitch page I simply have the student identify and say pitches without the instrument, practicing one line per day. On the rhythm page they say the rhythms out loud, then play rhythms on the open E string (even though the book notates it on A string). I've found that older students enjoy having a concrete method book where they can see their progress and feel very mature compared to the standard Pre-Twinkler, who can only play by ear.

As soon as my older beginners are able to use first, "high second," and third fingers on the left hand, I start introducing the concept of fingerboard geography,

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Creating Little Composers

The Craft and Art of Coaxing Original Music from Suzuki Guitar Students

By Darrel Mayers

The lion's share of my 40 minute guitar lessons is spent working through the wonderful early Suzuki books. But I reserve the final 10 minutes for "back-porch guitar."

This is where the kiddos learn "Smoke on the Water," or take baby steps, strumming chords for "Amazing Grace" or "Deep in the Heart of Texas" (where I live).

I also use this time to coax and cajole them into making up their own original pieces, if they so desire—and thankfully, they often do.

I am a huge fan of the Suzuki repertoire and all of the amazing music that's been written for the Spanish guitar over the years. But I also firmly believe that everyone can write music, everybody's got a tune in them, and that there's still an infinity of melodies out there yet to be discovered.

Just as in art class, where you paint your own landscapes or throw your own pots on a wheel, I believe that we can all craft our own special pieces of music. We just need a little nudge and some guidance. For fellow teachers seeking new experiences in your studios, this might be a fun musical avenue to explore.

Create the Foundation

The process begins with some general questions. I will ask my promising young Beethoven what kind of feeling they want their piece to have. Happy or sad? Major or minor key?

Follow through with thoughts on rhythm. A 2/4 march, a 3/4 waltz, or that old workhorse, 4/4?

Then I introduce a simple scale. Often I choose G Major for happy, a minor for sad.

(The G scale starts on the open G string, and ascends up to the G on the third fret of the E string. The a minor scale begins on the second fret of the G string, and ascends up to the fifth fret of the E string.)

We go up and down the scale many times together, building memories of the notes into our fingers.

The scene is now set. We have a time signature, key signature, and a fairly good notion of which notes to play. Let the writing of the music begin!

Baby Steps with Melodies

"Let's fool around with some melodies for a while," I'll say. The novice ice-skater is venturing uncertainly out across a frozen pond for the first time. Provide support, reassurance, and humor.

The first stream of notes might seem like a run-on sentence . . . a very long run-on sentence! One note is followed by its neighbor, and on and on.

"Let's try breaking it up a little," I'll suggest. Maybe play three or four notes and then pause. Think of singing a few notes and then taking a breath.

(At this stage I start to play exploratory chords in the key and time signature that they've picked.)

We work on pushing out the distance between intervals to veer away from English hymnal-style melodies.

The Treasure Hunt

As we play around with the music, the student exploring melodies while I guess at chords, we are treasure hunters on a beach, eyes narrowed slightly, searching for pottery shards, nautilus shells, or pirate's treasure.

Is this it? No. Is that it? No... meh... maybe...

When a melody appears it's pretty obvious to student, parent and teacher, and everyone in the Suzuki triangle or even nearby will be in full agreement. "Yes!"

Or actually, let's make it a "YES!" (Writing music is exciting!)

I follow through with the analogy of a conversation. The first phrase is a form of saying "How are you?" to a friend. How would they reply? Have them sing it or play it. Often singing works best. Write it down, and play through the two phrases together. Do they work?

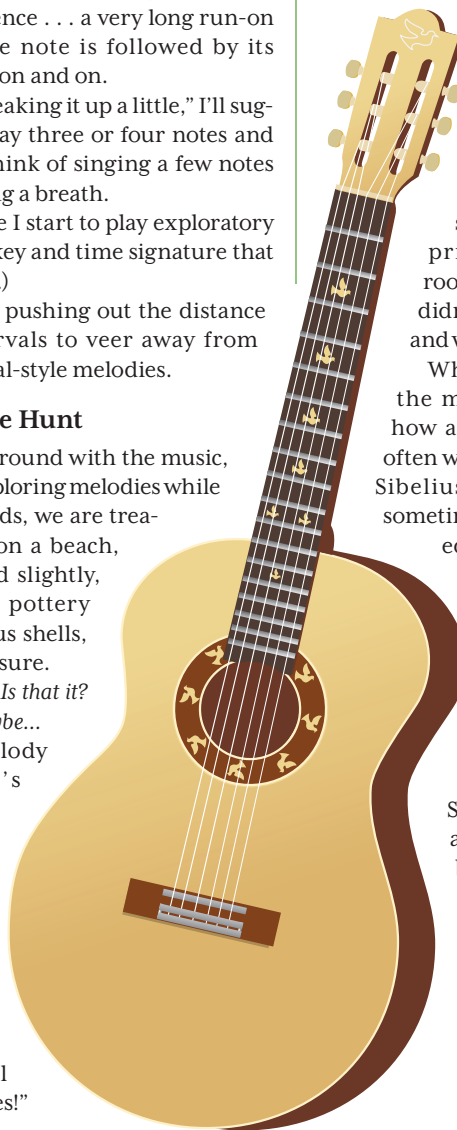
If all is going well you'll soon have two phrases, then four, and then a new section—and the chords are working—and before you know it, it's time for the arranging and the naming of the piece.

Final Stages

By now the student's sense of achievement and pride will probably fill the room. Until recently, the melody didn't exist. Have fun naming it and working up the arrangement.

When it comes to writing out the music, this will depend on how advanced your student is. I often work with the music software Sibelius and present it to them, sometimes with a picture. But this, equally, could be an exercise for the student to write out, depending on how far along they are with music reading.

Two musical highlights of my year are the guitar concerts I present at St. Andrew's Episcopal School, where I work: one at Christmas in the library before a beautiful Christmas tree (with piles of guitar cases everywhere!) and one in May, on the eve of summer. In May, nine students presented their compositions.



Continued on p. 58

The Older Beginner, continued from p. 57

which is an adaptation of the ideas introduced in Bill Dick and Laurie Scott's *Mastery for Strings*.⁷ The idea is to teach students the note names associated with fingers on each string without adding the additional mental capacity needed to read music. This way, students are still using most of their focus for posture but also preparing for music reading. They are also continuing to practice their basic bow stroke. Here is the exercise on E string

- Student says "E go," then plays Mississippi stop stop on open E
- Say "F sharp go," play Mississippi stop stop
- Same with G sharp (high two), then A (third finger)

I may leave it there for a newer beginner or continue onto the A, D, and G strings. Then we go backwards, using third finger on E string as our first note and going down. I try to mix things up as much as possible moving forward so that students are not just learning a pattern

but identifying each finger on each string with a note name.

To recap, I have older beginners study reading concepts in three separate spheres from the very beginning: identifying note names on the page, reading and playing rhythms on an open string, and learning the names of each finger on each string away from the music.

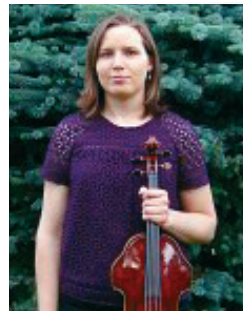
Older beginners are a joy to work with, but as primarily Suzuki teachers we do have to accommodate them with some extra effort and adaptations in our teaching. The main thing is to embrace them at their developmental level, create or adapt teaching materials and methods specifically for them, and provide a similarly aged or older peer group for motivation. ••

Notes

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Dick, William, and Laurie Scott, *Mastery for Strings* (Austin, Texas: Mastery for Strings Press, 2006).



Sigrid Karlstrom is currently teaching for the Suzuki Music Schools of Westport and Orange and for the Neighborhood Music School in Connecticut. She registered her Suzuki long-term training, Violin Books One

through Ten, with Susan Kempton at the University of New Mexico Lab School and viola training with Elizabeth Stuen-Walker at her home studio. Sigrid holds masters degrees in violin, viola, and string pedagogy. She resides in West Haven, CT.

Creating Little Composers, continued from p. 57

When Things Don't Go So Well

I will try different approaches. A student can bring in a simple poem from an English class, and we work on setting that to music—which is a little less open-ended and less of a blank canvas. In another case we had fun turning a student's name into a melody and then put it through some changes and variations.

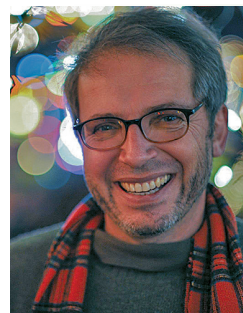
Are the Kids Actually Composing?

As with all teachers, I wear many hats, which I change from moment to moment during a lesson: collaborator, catalyst,

co-conspirator, cheerleader, accompanist—and composer. Technically, yes, the final pieces are collaborations—but the idea behind the whole exercise is for students to enjoy the thrill of the creative process.

Spreading Music to Band, Strings

Once the music is written, if you teach in a school with other music programs, it can be fun to share some of your tunes with fellow teachers. At the end of the school year I handed a sheaf of original compositions to the band and strings teachers—and I was even able to rearrange a couple of pieces to incorporate into my world music percussion class for a school play. ••



Darrel Mayers teaches Suzuki guitar and world music percussion at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Austin. He also teaches percussion as an enrichment course at the Heart of Texas Suzuki Organization in San Marcos, and last year taught at

the Houston Area Suzuki Piano Association event in Bay City, Texas. Darrel is grateful to Andrea Cannon for sharing the artistry of her teaching with him.

Suzuki in the Dolomites

By Gianna Weidman

Who would say no to music in the Dolomites? Nestled in the valley of the Pale di San Martino, Fiera di Primiero (Fiera for short) is surrounded by some of the most majestic mountains of the Dolomites and home to the magnificent regional cuisine of northern Italy, which is too delicious to describe. This past summer, I had the opportunity to participate in Suzuki in the Dolomites as a pianist and a cellist. The Suzuki program was part of a larger music festival, Music Academy



International, which includes musical theater, opera, chamber music, and orchestral programs.

One of the advantages of living in Fiera is the accessibility to the school, restaurants, and social activities, all of which can be reached by walking. Our apartment was located next to a supermarket, a bakery, and a church that was used multiple times as a concert hall. The food is totally affordable (and extremely tasty), and we had the choice of cooking in our apartment or going out to one of the many restaurants. And, in most of these establishments around the area, students of the program are offered a small discount. I went out many times with friends to different restaurants in Fiera and surrounding villages. But when my family was tired, we would buy food from the market and cook in the apartment. I shared an apartment with a piano student I had met at another institute. We often walked to the school together in the morning and had fun relaxing together at the end of the day. Our mothers would take turns preparing suppers when we didn't go out to eat.

In combination with the jam-packed daily music schedule, there was also time for wonderful guided sightseeing excursions. Because of Fiera's proximity to Venice, many families took advantage of the day trip to the lagoon, where they could enjoy a ride in a gondola, visit a glass blowing factory, or savor some of the best Venetian dishes. My family and I decided to spend three days exploring Venice before the program began. For those who appreciate opera, Verona is only a short bus trip away. Although guided hiking tours in the mountains were available, my friends and I often went out with our families on our own expeditions. If we didn't want to travel far, there were dozens of small local shops and stores to browse.

My day would consist of about five different classes, including a master class and two ensembles. I also had a cello repertoire class, and a piano master class every other day. Lunch in the school cafeteria was freshly prepared and very inexpensive—and delicious as well! For performing experience, formal and informal recitals were organized at many unique venues



Continued on p. 60



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Tchaikovsky *Rococo Variations*



Dolomites, continued from p. 59

including churches and museums. The recitals were well attended by tourists and local residents of Fiera. One morning my mother was stopped on the street by a woman who had attended a concert the previous night. She wanted to know when the wonderful musicians would be performing again. She was amazed at the young talent. The cello group class performed a spontaneous concert, or flash mob, outside a cafe, which drew a large crowd of appreciative spectators. As a reward, we all earned free gelato. I also went to listen to chamber concerts and opera performances, which were offered in a nearby town by the college program of Music Academy International several evenings a week.

One of the highlights of my trip was listening to Mischa Maisky perform the Bach Suites at the top of Rosetta Mountain. I took the afternoon off and rode a bus with a friend to San Martino, where we traveled

by tram to the top of the mountain. The performance site was like an amphitheater, with Mischa Maisky in the middle, and the audience spread out across the mountain side. Mr. Maisky was happy to spend time talking to us after the concert.

If you love extraordinary music, breathtaking scenery, and mouthwatering food, than Suzuki in the Dolomites is an experience not to be missed. If you want to know more about the program, this is the link to the website: <http://musicacademyinternational.org/wordpress/>

The “Right” Part of the Repertoire

By Kelly Williamson

A student of mine recently attended a weekend workshop in another city and had master classes with a respected colleague. For her master class she played a piece in the middle of Book One; she is learning a piece two pieces beyond that. I was not able to be there, but was very glad to hear about the class from another colleague who had observed it. Her comments were that the student was playing

was playing her other repertoire pieces. Again, isn't that exactly what we are after, both in the work that is done beforehand and in the master class experience itself? And if how she played didn't meet expectations (because the expectations were exceeded), what would it look like if she had met the expectations? Do we want to see students who appear at ease, or students who are in-process on the piece they are

idea how much better they could sound, because they are so busy dragging poor habits along with them. Rather than offering them the joy of faster progress and constant newness, we are doing them a disservice by letting them move ahead before they have sufficiently mastered a piece, and all of the technical expectations contained in that piece.

Of course this is nothing that has not

Rather than offering them the joy of faster progress and constant newness, we are doing them a disservice by letting them move ahead before they have sufficiently mastered a piece, and all of the technical expectations contained in that piece.

very well, and in fact seemed as though she should be farther ahead in the repertoire than she was, based on her excellent set-up and demonstrated ability. My first reaction was sort of to agree, though I pointed out that this student loves to play, over and over, what she knows and plays well. (Don't we all?) I also explained that at this stage, this student really struggles with anything new—even something very simple is greeted with an immediate mental block before she can assess the task, realize that it is within her capability, and accomplish it successfully. I think it is a phase, and her mom and I are observing it carefully to make sure that she is 100 percent prepared for each new challenge and that new steps are so small that she can feel completely confident of success. In this way she will gradually change her mind-set about new things, and hopefully greet them with more enthusiasm!

Today as I did some chores, the comment suddenly came back to me, and I reflected more deeply on it. The student showed mastery of the piece she played in the master class, though the teacher still found something to work on and improve. Isn't that what we want our students to demonstrate? I know from what I observed in the lessons following the work with the guest teacher that she had deepened her skill level on the piece, and what they worked on was transferring through to how she

playing, have weaknesses in their set-up, or are even struggling? Would that show to observers that they were in the correct part of the repertoire?

Of course, the answer is no. So are we seeing too many students at institutes who are not playing the right piece and are playing *too far ahead* of where their real level is? Might we even be so accustomed to seeing students in that kind of situation, that students who have mastered the piece that they are playing seem over-prepared in contrast?

I suspect we are. As a master class teacher, I find it exciting to have a student come who is so well-prepared that I have to dig deep to give them something further to take away. On the opposite hand, it is so frustrating to see a child who has the ability to do more exciting things fighting with balancing their flute or playing the correct fingerings. So many kids have no

been well described in Dr Suzuki's writings. But it is always good to have another reminder.

As always, I am so glad to be a Suzuki teacher. To have access to, and also training and experience in, using this well-designed repertoire so that I can help students to reach a high level on the instrument. To have access to Suzuki workshops and institutes, where even very young students can have the experience of working with a different teacher and getting fresh perspective and inspiration, and teachers can be confident that the experience will be a positive one for their students. To the open atmosphere of discussion between Suzuki teacher colleagues, in which we can all make new discoveries, new realizations, and continue to grow together as a community which aspires to excellence in all aspects of our work. ●●



Kelly Williamson holds a BMus in performance with Distinction from McGill University, and a MMus in performance from l'Université de Montréal. As a student, she participated in private lessons and master classes with Geoffrey Gilbert and Peter Lloyd, as well as other well-known flutists, and has studied privately with Toshio Takahashi, founder of the Suzuki Flute School. She was an active freelance musician and private teacher in Montreal for many years, and was also Suzuki Flute Coordinator at the McGill Conservatory, before relocating to Cambridge, Ontario. Kelly has been a frequent clinician in schools

and an adjudicator at music festivals, and is invited to teach at workshops all around the world. She was appointed a Teacher Trainer in flute in May 2006, serves on the teacher development committee for the SAA, is the current SAA representative to the ISA flute committee, and contributes regularly to the American Suzuki Journal.

In Celebration and Memoriam: The Penfield Suzuki Program and Joyce Dumm

By Cynthia Andrews

The Penfield Suzuki Program (Rochester, NY) celebrated its 50th anniversary of Suzuki string instruction in the Penfield school system by hosting multiple events throughout the 2015–2016 school year. An October district-wide playing session had a 1960s theme, with a history of our Suzuki program and facts from the era included in a Suzuki story written by one of our teachers. Our beginners played their first concert in January, representing a new generation of Suzuki students in our 50th year. In February, we had a string extravaganza for grades 5–12 and commissioned a former teacher from our district to write a multi-level orchestral piece, with tidbits of both Suzuki and traditional tunes that our Penfield string students perform throughout their school years.

The anniversary celebration culminated with a teacher and alumni recital on April 10 and a student concert on April 11. We had 33 alumni return to Rochester from California, Florida, Massachusetts, Maryland, New York, Ohio, and Virginia for two days of special workshops presented by alumni for the current Suzuki students, and rehearsals for the recital and concert. Some alumni are members of several professional orchestras and/or string teachers, while others maintain their music making as a hobby. The student concert included more than 250 current Suzuki violin, viola, and cello students in grades 1–12, with alumni and teachers playing in an accompanying orchestra. Of course, the concert concluded with the Twinkle Variations!

The Penfield Suzuki Program was part of Project SUPER, (SUzuki, Penfield Central School District, Eastman School of Music, Rochester City School District), which began in the fall of 1966. Dr. Shinichi Suzuki made frequent visits to Rochester to personally work with the teachers involved in those three programs during their formative years. One of those teachers was Joyce Dumm, who passed away August 15, 2016, at the age of 81. Unfortunately, she was not well enough to join us for the 50th celebration in April, but she was later able to enjoy a DVD of the performances, which brought a smile to her face.

Joyce Dumm taught in Penfield for the first 23 years of the Suzuki Program and continued to help and assist after her retirement in 1989. In the late 1960s through 1970s, she took groups of Penfield Suzuki students to various cities in the northeast US and Canada to share how the Suzuki program could work in the public school setting. In 1989 she received the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra's Outstanding Music Educator's Award.

She and her husband, James Dumm (deceased in 2013), received the 2006 Distinguished Service Award for their contributions to the Penfield Suzuki Program, presented at the 40th anniversary celebration. Joyce and Jim shared their music teaching skills around the world by starting a music program at an orphanage in the Philippines during the summers of 1975 and 1976. In the early 2000s, they spent several summers teaching English to teachers in China as well as sharing their love of music and the Western arts and culture. We are grateful for the legacy of Joyce Dumm and her dedication in helping the Penfield Suzuki Program.



Joyce and James (Jim) Dumm

Photos courtesy of Mary Ann Christman and the Dumm Family Archives



April 11, 2016 Penfield Central School District's 50th Suzuki Program celebration (Rochester, NY)



Joyce Dumm teaching a young Suzuki student (circa 1970)



Cynthia (Dumm) Andrews was in the first group of Suzuki students to start in the Penfield Suzuki Program. She received a bachelor of music education from Wheaton College (Illinois) and a master of music in music education from the Eastman School of Music. She began her public school teaching career in the Lynchburg Public Schools (Virginia) as an elementary Suzuki violin teacher in 1982, and has taught strings in the Penfield Central School District (New York) for more than 30 years. She

taught Suzuki violin in the Eastman School of Music Community Education Division from 1986 to 1990. Since then she has continued to teach private Suzuki violin lessons in her home, and she plays in area community and church orchestras. She has also taught violin and theory for six summers at the Csehy Summer School of Music. She is married and has two college-aged children who played Suzuki violin, cello, and piano. £

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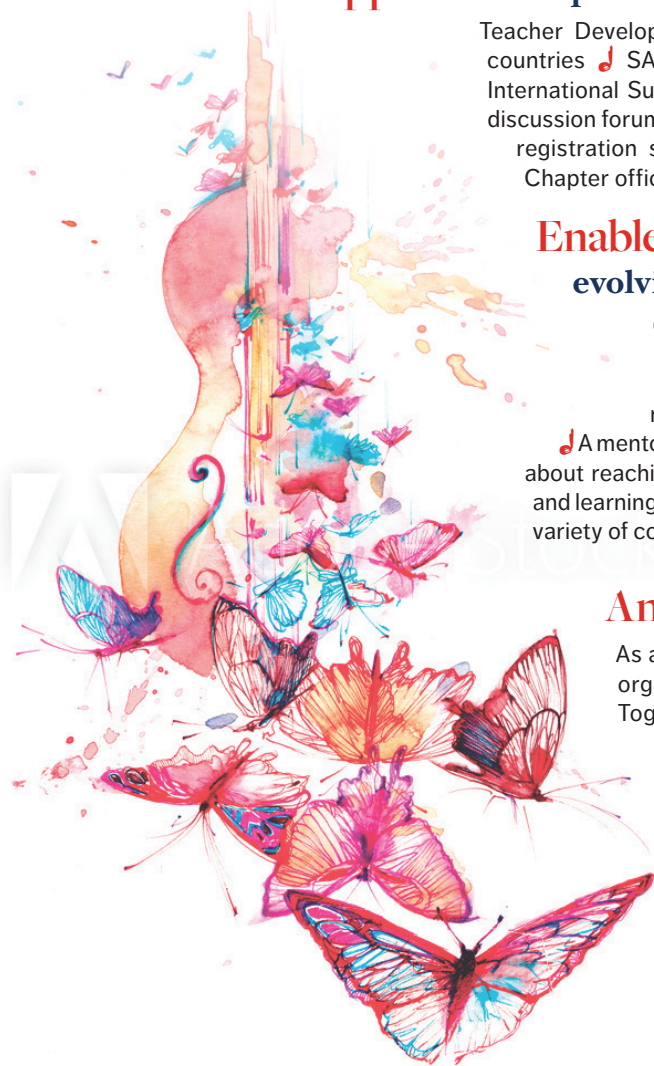
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