

ISA Guitar Committee Revision Progress Report

The ISA Guitar Committee has been engaging in a review of Book 1. This project started in 2012. The process is a slow one as it involves formulating ideas, which are then taken back to the regional committees for further consideration & research, then returning to the ISA committee. So whilst the wheels turn slowly, there is also much to gain for the strengthening of our Suzuki materials, for the benefit of all teachers & students, by moving methodically, or as Dr Suzuki said: 'without hurry, without rest.' Here is a summary of our current working areas:

- There is broad agreement across the regions that the core materials are good, and have proven to be a strong basis for the pedagogy. There is no intention to change the repertoire in Book 1.
- Some of the revision involves 'tidying up' and clarifying the layout in the published book.
 - Provide consistency in layout (for example, the indication of introductions is made in some pieces but not others)
 - Adhere to standardised classical guitar fingering layouts (i.e. - for the left hand, to the left of the note head, not below the note)
 - Clarify voicing in Meadow Minuet notation
 - Add to photos in current edition to illustrate other elements of technical development (for example: LH in Position II; introducing pulgar)
 - Support text: there has been discussion about whether a Spanish translation might be added; also about adding some further detail for parents &/or teachers.
 - Potential for additional preparation materials – review placement of current preparation materials
 - Review of accompaniment materials
- An area of major discussion and analysis has been the area of right hand fingerings. With over 25 years of teaching since the publication of Book 1, there is now a strong body of experience on which to reflect.

A range of opinions have been discussed & tabled, ranging from offering no fingerings to highly proscriptive fingerings.

In terms of vision for right hand technique, the goal of the materials is to establish the foundation through which a **balanced and relaxed right hand technique** can develop with a student's **conscious understanding and awareness of right hand logic and intuition**.

With this end in mind, the ISAGC has analysed every right hand technical development in Book 1, including every string crossing variation. The Suzuki philosophy is predicated upon small step learning, so this type of right hand analysis brings a new level of understanding, not previously considered, to this concept.

At this stage there is consensus on the right hand fingerings for the first half of Book 1 (i.e. Twinkle through to Perpetual Motion). Of particular interest are the following areas that teacher trainers & senior teachers have been researching & trialling over recent years:

- The concept of 're-take' fingering to be introduced in Twinkle theme (i.e. – i-m-i-m-i-m-i). Small fragment pattern facilitates conscious use of right hand, and reflexive relaxation. (The precedent for re-take fingering already existing in current edition in Song of the Wind)
- This is built on in Lightly Row & Go Tell Aunt Rhody. This enables further consolidation of the m-i descending string crossing, before introducing the i-m descending string crossing in Song of the Wind.
- Starting May Song with m (rather than i) which introduces a new forward string crossing, but then eliminates the inverted string crossing in current edition that may be challenging.
- The ISAGC is hopeful that we will continue to progress through the second half of Book 1 in the coming year.

- The ISAGC is aware of numerous expressions of concern regarding the Book 1 recording (which has served for over 25 years now). Consideration of the recording will follow completion of the revision of the published Book 1.

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Zeah Riordan

Secretary, ISA Guitar Committee

PPSA Guitar Teacher Trainer