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Mrs. Waltraud Suzuki, Honorary President

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Editors: Masayoshi and Eiko Kataoka
Suzuki Institute of St. Louis
311 Elm valley Drive, St. Louis, MO 63119 U.S.A.
Phone: (314) 962-9568 Fax: (314) 968-5447

THE INTERNATIONAL SUZUKI ASSOCIATION®

ISA OFFICES

Japan: Yukiko Kono, Sec.
3-10-15 Fukashi, Matsumoto, Nagano 390, Japan
Phone: (263) 33-7710 Fax: (263) 36-3566
U.S.A.: Jerri Williams, Office Asst.
P.O. Box 2236, Bothell, WA 98041-2236, U.S.A.
Phone: (425) 485-4934 Fax: (425) 485-5139

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Office: Mitsuko Kawakami, Secretary,
3-10-3 Fukashi, Matsumoto, Nagano 390, Japan
81-263-32-7171 FAX: 81-263-32-7451

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Australian National Council of Suzuki Talent Education Association (ANCSTEA):

President, Harold Brissenden
Office: Janet Clarke, Sr. Admin. Officer.
P.O. Box 814, St. Ives 2075 NSW, Australia
612-9440-9388 Fax: 612-9440-9231

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ABILITY IS NOT INBORN

From *Ability Is Not Inborn* (1951)
from
The Complete Works of Shinichi Suzuki, Volume Two
The Evolution of the Suzuki Method

Shinichi Suzuki

Ability Development Observed in Language Acquisition

I began to have questions about human ability, which was never said to be other than inborn. This was about twenty years ago around 1930 or 1931.

The skill of eating with chopsticks and the sense that has developed in those fingers must appear as accomplished abilities in the eyes of foreigners.

The delicacy of finger tips for eating with chopsticks and the sensitivity of finger tips for playing the piano are, technically speaking, similar abilities. Further, in music, too, everything depends upon how it is taught: sensitivity and technical ability change greatly when instructors change.

"What is ability?" I asked myself.

Was there a distinction in cultural achievements between those which were attained by means of ability and those which were not? When outstanding power was demonstrated, people ascribed it to inborn ability, and to its absence when clumsiness was observed.

However, when a student supposedly lacking inborn ability was given good training under a different instructor, the child would gradually begin to demonstrate outstanding power. Then people would say that after all he had innate ability.

I felt in a fog as to exactly what ability was. In other words, I could only think that there was, in society's common sense, no fixed definition of the term ability, and that people were merely making arbitrary use of the term to explain consequences.

If such was the case, I thought, there was a need to create a clear definition of ability. As long as the specter, ability-and-the-inborn, hovered in the air, educational circles would remain haunted: bewildered by the inborn gift and ability, educators would be unable to comprehend the essence of the development of human ability. Until the essence of ability development was grasped, education would be impossible. If an educator succeeded in education, therefore, others explained it away as a result of an inborn gift in the student; if education failed, they again ascribed it to an inborn quality. Educators shifted their responsibility to the specter, ability-and-the-inborn.

I thought we had learned the clear truth about historical inevitability or cause and effect. Yet human society confused cause and effect in thinking everything

inborn, after ability had already been created;

inborn, after growth had already been impaired.

This being the situation, it was impossible for the results of education to receive recognition.

Around the time when I was thinking about these things, something happened which made me aware of a contradiction. The contradiction was that "society at large was convinced that children who are poor at such subjects as math and language have poor brains." I had thought so myself until then. I realized, however, that these children supposedly with poor brains "speak Japanese with absolute fluency, and, moreover, freely utilize a vocabulary committed to memory with as many as 2,000 words at age six and 3,000 at age seven."



Dr. Shinichi Suzuki at the Summer School in 1987

They had wonderful brains! Depending upon how they were raised, children beautifully demonstrated their ability.

Countless children on earth who had looked like mere glass balls suddenly manifested their true forms before me as brilliantly shining diamonds.

The specter, the-ability-and-the-inborn, had been misleading human beings for thousands of years.

"Every human ability is a talent."

I made this tentative definition. A human being has only one brain. This singular brain adapts to all things in the environment, functions in daily life, and comes to demonstrate a variety of abilities.

"Speech is a beautifully fostered talent!"—this was my realization.

Thus, children's brains are far from being no good; if fostered, they have the potential to display such fine ability as they do in speech.

Children's failure to do well in an academic subject like math or Japanese indicates nothing more than failure in education in that field.

Adults are all bewildered by the specter when they judge those children to be weak-brained, for in fact they have such fine brains.

Whether in math or Japanese, if the teaching method and conditions are changed to those for learning speech and children are taught after the manner of speech education, they are certain to achieve well, displaying the same degree of brain efficiency as they have shown in speech.

This I can emphasize with confidence on the basis of my own experiments for the past twenty years as well

as an experiment conducted at an elementary school during the last three years.

Ability

I observed human ability from a variety of angles. As a result of this I believe that ability develops wherever there is training (stimulation and repetition), and that the development faithfully reflects the given conditions, whether good or evil, beautiful or ugly, skillful or clumsy. I also believe that human heart, personality, speech, motion and behavior, artistic abilities in literature, music and fine arts, anger and laughter, skill and sensibility are all abilities. They develop in response to the environment and the conditions *by which they are fostered*, and under the influence of *what grows within* (hereditary and physiological conditions).

Therefore, our movement and research in the name of Talent Education aim at the education of the total person, or education in truth, good, and beauty. As a research field, it involves the study of human ability and talent. While advancing it from our viewpoint and from psychological, physiological and pedagogical angles, we ultimately wish to make it a socio-philosophical theme.

Inborn

I thought about the relationship between inborn gift and ability. I found it curious that, when observing facts around them, people talked of pre-existing ability or of an inborn gift after a cultural achievement had already been displayed.

The Bach family, which produced 120 musicians, is considered to have enjoyed the hereditary gift of musical traits. This is mentioned in genealogical studies.

No acquired character, it is said, can become heredity. At least I firmly believe that "culture cannot be inherited." Thus, I cannot believe in heredity through lineage of special traits inherent in musicians.

I can say the following in clear terms on the basis of my twenty years' experience and observation, and our recent experimentation:

1. There is no heredity of special musical traits;
2. Anyone can be raised to be musically tone-deaf;
3. Sensibility in music can be created (physiological adaptation);
4. No child is born with the musical scale;
5. It is possible to develop fine musical ability in everyone.

Thinking in this way, I no longer find convincing the traditional idea that "the brain contains pre-existing traits, which are later developed." If I were to accept the idea of *innate* cultural traits, I would have to accept the idea that culture can be inherited.

When I consider what people call traits (of cultural ability), after all it is merely a theory deduced from consequences; no one can correctly predict a newborn's traits.

Therefore, I do not believe that specific (cultural) abilities exist in the brain. A human being can develop ability in any area by means of education.

On observing the performance of the brain, I also conclude that:

1. The brain performs the function of adaptation;
2. What is hereditary is the superiority or inferiority of this function (the quality of adaptability);
3. The superiority or inferiority of the brain's performance shows as the degree of sensitivity in, and the speed of, adaptation.

I further think that

human ability is fostered in response to the environment; it develops within through adapting to what is outside.

Neither Is Sensibility

A newborn heard a beautiful piece of music each time she cried (a record of a Haydn Symphony was used). She would stop crying and listen quietly. This was repeated every day for a year. Besides the identical piece, a few pieces by Bach and Beethoven were occasionally played.

At age one the child could distinguish the pieces she heard.

She would listen to Beethoven or Bach and, when the music changed to the Haydn Symphony, she would suddenly swing her upper body, and try to keep the tempo, looking happy. At one year and three months, she chose the piece she wished to listen to. When the Mozart Rondo was played, she moved her body keeping the rhythm, quite pleased. When it was switched to another record, she said, "All gone," demanding the Rondo back. When it was played again, she excitedly swung her upper body trying to keep the rhythm. The situation was the same with my niece who was raised from the beginning on Tchaikovsky's "Serenade for Strings."

At one year and five months the child had a good violin playing posture, imitated violin playing with two chopsticks. The bow (chopstick) in her right hand moved in tempo with her mother who sang by her side. I have seen similar examples now and then in classrooms in various local chapters.

Sensibility, which is fostered in this manner, is a power of physiological adaptation endowed by the environment.

Outstanding musicians like Bach, Beethoven and Mozart were all raised in outstanding musical environments, and went through physiological adaptation in the areas of intelligence, sensibility, and music. German children grow while listening to German pronunciation, and through physiological adaptation develop a voice for German speech which a Japanese cannot reproduce.

Vegetables fertilized as needed at the appropriate time taste good. When the timing is flawed, there is no apparent result. It is too late when fertilizer is added past the proper period.

Sensibility, which is thought of as an inborn gift, corresponds to the taste produced by the added fertilizer in the process of human upbringing. It is not something people are born with.

In short, I deny the traditional concept of ability or specific inborn (cultural) traits; and I am trying to discover what, instead, is really inborn, and how it is possible to develop such abilities.

Conditions for the Growth of Ability

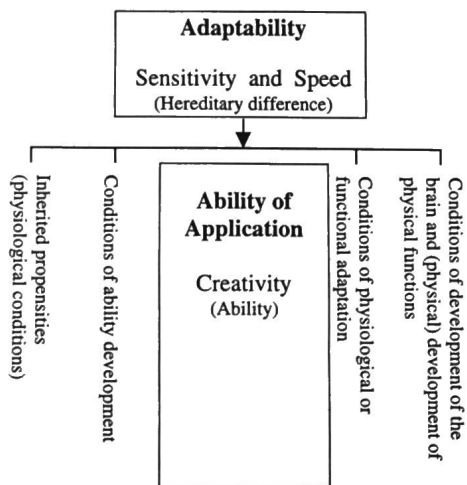
Brain Performance

As already stated, my idea of innate gifts and ability is that "the essence of heredity is the quality of brain performance; culture itself is not inherited." On this basis, I have been observing and experimenting with human ability. The following diagram of brain performance is an outcome of the process.

1. Brain performance starts with the function of "adaptation."
 2. Differences in hereditary quality of the brain merely exist in the sensitivity and speed of response. No cultural ability is inherited.
 3. The stages of development from response to the ability of application (talent) are as follows:
 - a. conditions of the (physiological) development of the brain
 - b. conditions of functional adaptation
 - c. conditions of the development of ability
 - d. inherited propensities (physiological conditions).
- These four sets of conditions create differences in the way ability develops.

BRAIN PERFORMANCE

STAGES OF ABILITY GROWTH



Conditions of Brain Development

The physiological development of the brain is said to cease at age seventeen or eighteen. It is natural that the conditions of this development affect the development of ability.

When brain development is delayed due to illness, it is probably unavoidable that ability lags behind in accordance with age.

Environment is expected to affect the process of brain development. Again, when there are problems in the internal organs, this affects not only the growth of the body but the growth of the brain.

The nourishment of the nerves, or conditions necessary for the development of the nerves, must also be related to the development of the brain. The complex, marvelous mutual relationships between the brain and the other organs of the body involve delicate communications. These communications affect the growth and activities of both the brain itself and the other organs.

What is observed and experienced in the process of the development of the brain are the changes in the sensitivity of response.

Along with the development of ability, ability to reproduce information that is fed is naturally reinforced. Although this may, at a glance, seem to indicate the increase of ability to respond to external stimulation, the heightened ability to reproduce is simply a matter of better developed ability. In fact responsiveness is at its highest in infancy and diminishes with age. I consider this the essence of the stages of development of the human brain.

In other words, reproduction of the input is an ability. Responsiveness, on the other hand, means the basic power to adapt to external stimulation and environment. It is the power to silently respond, prepare, change and adapt both physiologically and functionally, regardless of whether the ability of reproduction is displayed. The younger the child, the stronger this power in the stages of development and formation of the brain. With the years, its sensitivity is gradually dulled.

The question of this physiological or functional adaptation translates into the question of the sensitivity and speed.

In other words, there is some power that precedes the demonstration of the ability to reproduce the input. In order to adapt to external influences, it silently prepares for functional changes and adaptations, or urges the ability of reproduction to be displayed. I call this power physiological or functional adaptability. This is a crucial issue.

Physiological or functional adaptability determines the quality, as well as the limit of development, of the capacity of application (talent) which becomes demonstrated as ability later on.

While listening to parents' conversations, German infants delicately perceive the characteristics of tone color and pronunciation of German speech and prepare to reproduce them. Preparation for functional or physiological changes takes place, and soon conditions for pronunciation impossible for Japanese are formed so that eventually these babies develop as German-speakers. Hearing outstanding music and good musical intonation in infancy helps prepare for musical delicacy and sense of intonation in functional and physiological terms. This is the kind of power I am talking about. People used to think this an inborn gift. Human heart, too, is nurtured in this way.

Report from Mrs. Waltraud Suzuki

Many of you have been inquiring about Mrs. Suzuki's health. To bring you up to date, in the summer Mrs. Suzuki was very ill. Her niece, Erika Volhontseff was with her in Matsumoto for three months.

On September 15th Mrs. Volhontseff took Mrs. Suzuki to California to be with her family. This has been very good for her. She is feeling much better and beginning to be mobile again.

Mrs. Suzuki is now looking for a house near the ocean in California where she can get the sea air. If a suitable home can be found, she will make her permanent residence there.

For the present you can reach her:
c/o Erika Volhontseff,
2320 Redberry Ct., Pleasanton, CA 94566
Phone: 925/846-3586 Fax: 925/846-5969

Conditions of Ability Development

All growth is determined by the conditions of nurturing and the conditions of spontaneous growth. Let me give the *conditions for growth* of human ability:

1. Hereditary conditions
 - a. superiority or inferiority of the genes (quality of brain performance, i.e., sensitivity and speed of response)
 - b. inherited propensities (physiological conditions of the body aside from brain performance)
2. Health conditions

The above can be considered conditions for internal development. Development is also prompted by external influences, i.e., *conditions for nurturing*:

1. Environmental conditions
 - a. superiority or inferiority of environment
 - b. superiority or inferiority of the method and timing.

From the educational viewpoint, the best conditions for ability development are:

- the earlier period;
- the better environment;
- the more training;
- the superior instructor;
- the better teaching method.

The Earlier Period

Whether growing human ability or vegetables, conditions for growth are naturally the same.

"The earlier period" is of course taken for granted. In vegetable growing, if someone asked when to start growing them now that he has planted the seeds, people would laugh and suspect that he may be going off his head.

Yet, some among those engaged in human education seriously debate whether or not early education is

good. There was a time when even fine educators and scholars met and argued for hours about "whether to nurture the planted seeds or wait awhile before starting to raise them." Today, people are generally content with the educational policy of the state, which decided that it is better not to start growing the seeds too early. What a relaxed attitude this is.

Hence the world as you now see. Education starts the day of birth, however. This is all too clear if we look at the conditions for growth.

A woman asked Darwin:
"My child is one and a half years old. When should I start education?"

Darwin is said to have replied:
"You are one and a half years too late."

Today's parents still share the same common sense with parents of Darwin's time, and direct their seedling's future in gradually less promising directions.

I am almost embarrassed to have to include "the earlier period" in the conditions for education. I feel that farmers may laugh at me. But, anyway, this is an age of amazing culture, amazing education. You and I are living in an old era which will, one hundred years hence, appear in funny stories.

What Happens If Children Are Left Alone

What happens if children are left alone—this, too, is a rather miserable question. Obviously it is wrong to leave them alone. A better theme of study would be to query why such a foolish question is asked only in regard to development of human ability.

Let's begin by thinking about what happens if children are left alone, in other words, about the inborn.

I would first like to list what are thought of as common sense.

First, everything is explained away by "the inborn." Common sense relies on a handy and easy-to-handle tool called heredity, which is in fact incomprehensible, and keeps calling everything inborn. This is the single answer to whatever is unknown.

- What obstinacy my child is born with;
- born light-fingered;
 - born with a literary sense;
 - born with a poor brain which can't handle math;
 - a born charmer;
 - a born artist;
 - born elegant or inelegant;
 - my child is born to be no good;
 - born with a good or poor hand (writing)....

There is no limit to the enumeration. However, even though people go so far as to talk of a born artist, they do not mention "a born green grocer" or "a born fish monger."

Again, it is said that there may be damage to the brain if knowledge is fed early and the brain is stimulated. When even a scholar appears who expounds this idea, lazy parents think, "That's nice and simple. It is easier for us to leave children alone." They go around propagandizing: "If babies use their brains early, there will be damage."

Continues on page 10

Message from the Chairperson of the Board

Hiroko Yamada

To the members of the extended 'Suzuki Family':

How are you?
Thank you for your participation at the World Convention held in Japan this Spring. I am grateful that everyone gathered from around the world to unite as one "Suzuki power" and contributed to the success of the conference.

I would like to take this opportunity to formally introduce myself as the chairperson of the International Suzuki Association.

First, please allow me to write about my background. When I was three years old, I began studying the violin with my uncle, Shinichi Suzuki. Although I grew up with the Suzuki Method, the Talent Education organization had not yet been established. In those days my uncle traveled throughout Japan to give lectures on his educational philosophy. Sometimes a few friends and I also went to perform. I remember these tours with fond memories. My mother, the late Shizuko Suzuki, was the piano accompanist, and Mr. Koji Toyoda, the current president of the Suzuki Method, was also one of the performers when he was in junior high school.

I have now been a violin instructor of the Suzuki Method for over thirty years. During this time, I have

been able to witness the results of the Suzuki philosophy and my belief in the Method has grown even stronger. Presently I have a studio in Tokyo, and act as an assistant instructor to Mr. Koji Toyoda at the International Academy of the Suzuki Method in Matsumoto.

Since accepting the role of chairperson, I have had the opportunity to step back and access the development of the Suzuki Method throughout the world. I am astonished by the widespread progress of the movement in recent years.

Personally, I admire a certain dedication that I find in many people outside of Japan. The complete dedication of one's self to a cause is an example that I wish more teachers in Japan would follow. I know that this loyalty and warm enthusiasm was a strong support for Dr. Suzuki throughout the years.

Why did Dr. Suzuki form an organization called ISA? He wanted to spread his philosophy worldwide for the happiness of all children, by asking existing Suzuki families to contribute a membership fee equal to the cost of a cup of coffee. His strong wish for world peace was his underlying motivation.

As one Suzuki family, I hope we will continue to search the meaning of Dr. Suzuki's purpose of the ISA organization.

I will continue my work, always trying to perceive Dr. Suzuki's heart.

I appreciate your warm support.

English translation by Chizu Kataoka

A Contribution to Education Reform

On the Talent Education Kindergarten

Shigeki Tanaka

Principal, Shirayuri Kindergarten

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki believed that his philosophy of Talent Education applies to all areas of education, not only music. This was the reason he built "Yoji Gakuen", the Talent Education Kindergarten, in Matsumoto (erected April, 1956).

At this Kindergarten, he wanted to pursue a new method of education for young children. This would, in turn, spread to the reform in other areas of education.

His philosophy included the following ideas:

- Man's ability is not inborn
- Ability develops according to the environment
- Modern education emphasizes teaching and not enough on development

These ideas could be summarized as: "Every child grows, everything depends on how we raise them."

But it was the era of IQ tests, and the conservative, stubborn world of education would not easily accept Dr. Suzuki's ideas. And to protect themselves, these educators formed a campaign against Dr. Suzuki.

Dr. Suzuki bravely continued to defend his opinion even though the situation seemed to be forsaken. He was supported by his previous success in music education and his unlimited love for children during this time.

In the local circle of educators of Shinshu (known as the Nagano region, today), traditional ideas on reform were firmly rooted. Important school principals voiced opposition against Dr. Suzuki's ideas. Mr. Kamijō, the principal of Hongō Elementary School, came forward to form an experimental class of Talent Education in the outskirts of Matsumoto City. Later, he became known as the last important figure of education in Shinshu.

Inside of the association, eventually the method became recognized to the point that it received the support of pioneers such as Mr. Yakunori Hiratsuka, the head of the National Research Center of Education, and Mr. Masaru Ibuka, the founder of the renown Sony company. But it was a long, uphill road until this point.

At that time the Kaikan building, the headquarters of Talent Education, was still being built. Due to the lack of funding, however, the construction had to be temporarily postponed. I know that only a few of us still remember when the Kaikan area was deserted like a ghost town.

The Kindergarten was located in a run-down section of the city, in a rented building where geishas previously dance class. Arrangements were made so the kindergarten met in the mornings, and in the music school (Matsumoto Ongaku-In) held classes in the afternoons.

Every child was accepted to the kindergarten in the order of enrollment. The school's motto was that no child could fail. This difficult responsibility was taken by Ms. Miwa Yano, the head teacher. With her many years of experience teaching young children in Osaka, her firm loyalty toward Dr. Suzuki, and her deep love towards children, she produced impressive results at the kindergarten.

The first class consisted of thirty students of various ages. Ms. Yano explained to the mothers; "Rather than training the children to look at the result of an activity as the goal, I would like to foster the tools that will be necessary for their education in the future such as concentration, memorization, perception, and judgement. These abilities will be developed through fun games and activities."



A student receiving a certificate from Author at the Talent Education Kindergarten's Graduation Ceremony (March, 1999)

When teaching the Issa's Haiku, for example, instead of just having the children memorize each poem, Ms. Yano removed the words pertaining to the seasons of the year. She then taught the children about the changing of the seasons, how plants grow and humans change during their lifetime, learning to love animals, etc. through ideas in their everyday lives that are easy for them to understand.

Professionally trained teachers in English, drawing, Japanese calligraphy, and physical education would come regularly to give lessons. These teachers were highly experienced in their fields, and each of them had a deep understanding of Dr. Suzuki's teaching philosophy.

Dr. Suzuki realized that the training of correct pronunciation was the most important factor in language education through his own experiences of living in Germany. The fact that we speak our native tongue flawlessly is because we grow up listening to our surroundings, and as we learn to imitate words, we eventually can speak the language unconsciously. Dr. Suzuki called this "the mother tongue method" and explained that this is the basic philosophy for all types of education. The fundamental mistake in teaching the English language in Japan for many years was that the emphasis was on reading and writing. Listening and speaking skills were overlooked. Today, our junior high and high schools are finally bringing teachers from abroad so students can listen to proper pronunciation.

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Dr. Suzuki always stressed the importance of repetition. Some scholars reacted with the argument that repetition is a traditional, slow style of learning.

As part of the physical education curriculum at the Kindergarten, the children practiced doing somersaults on floor mats. Somersaults are a fun activity that the children enjoy, and everyone can learn to do. But to do somersaults well; to reach the level of that of a judo wrestler, for example, takes repetitive practice. The body must be flexible and roll into a small ball, and the children have to learn how to avoid injuries. The body must be trained to learn these, not the brain.

- How can you do a somersault without hurting your body?
- How can you roll on a hard surface without pain?
- How can you roll fast, many times in succession?
- How can you jump and roll into a somersault, without hurting your body?

Children enjoy repetition. They practice because they are eager to do the somersaults well, and to look better each time.

This fun activity doesn't end here. The children do somersaults on the vaulting horse; they do them before, and after jumping. Eventually they can easily do the tumbling exercises at the level of the fourth grade.

The idea of the Suzuki Method is to introduce an activity that is easily accomplished and bringing this to a level of perfection.

Ability Is Not Inborn

Continued from page 7

Then there appears Ms. So-and-So, who assumes an air of wisdom, lecturing that "early stimulation to the brain greatly hinders later development," etc. Among these people are the so-called intellectuals who, faithful to what they have read, broadcast it as though it were their own idea and mislead society.

If you think best not to stimulate the brain early, go ahead and conduct an experiment in child raising: put your child in a white-walled square room devoid of stimulation, with no sound and nothing to see; isolate the child from the human world, spare him from stimulation, and just provide meals. If you leave the child in this condition till age six, you will have created a brain that is perfectly impossible to educate. This also serves as a fine answer to the ludicrous question as to what happens if a child is left alone.

That every child begins excellent brain activities through stimulation from an early period is *best demonstrated by language acquisition*. In no other area can such intensive daily stimulation be seen.

All those who displayed outstanding ability received, from early childhood, high-quality, good stimulation from their parents and environment. Their brain activities were well prepared. All benefited by

Dr. Suzuki taught us that ability is not inborn, but is developed and influenced by the environment. Today, scientists have finally concluded from their research that the environment is a crucial factor in brain development, and they have started new studies in this area.

In addition, at our Kindergarten, we use unique games to strengthen basic motor skills. These include practice of drawing lines, and routines for developing the mouth and finger muscles. The results of these training exercises have finally begun to be recognized.

The danger that exists in the educational system in Japan today is painfully obvious.

Dr. Suzuki founded the Talent Education movement with his goal to foster the ability of every child to its utmost, and to nurture their hearts into beautiful human beings. The Kindergarten has contributed to this educational reform. After Dr. Suzuki's efforts in the success of this Kindergarten, I feel ashamed that the school that has been closed (temporarily).

As long as we follow Dr. Suzuki's teachings, in order to keep his light shining, I believe that it is imperative to leave the doors of the Kindergarten open.

From Talent Education, No. 128

English translation by Chizu Kataoka

their diligence, or effort to heighten ability, and by the assistance of fine instructors. We should look squarely at this fact, which constantly recurs in society. On seeing such outstanding human beings, people yield to superstition and idolize them as outstanding by birth.

This is a form of idol worship which exists in varying degrees in most people's minds today.

A child left completely alone will become totally hopeless. Beginning with utter failure, we can think of gradations of hopelessness. If left alone 10 percent, 10 percent of potential ability is impaired. If left alone 50 percent, 50 percent of potential ability is impaired. According to how far the child is left alone, the degree of injury differs.

It is the same as that the hand, if unused, loses its function. A child who had to go through such an experiment in infancy will be crippled for life. The hand will stop growing, lose the senses, and fail to gain any ability.

It is simply horrifying not to know that the same thing can happen to the development of the brain.

-To be continued-

Reprinted from Talent Education Journal, No. 24

English translation by Kyoko Selden

In Memory of Elizabeth Mills

Pioneer of the Suzuki Method in the United States, has died at age 83.

1916 - 1999

Elizabeth Morgridge Mills, violinist, music educator and pioneer in the introduction of the Suzuki violin teaching method to the United States, has died in Pomona, California. She was 83.

Born June 10, 1916 in Sierra Madre, CA, Elizabeth was the daughter of George Burton Morgridge, a printer, and Hazel Hill Morgridge, a piano teacher and graduate of USC School of Music. By her early teens she was committed to becoming a performing violinist. Her principal teacher was Vera Barstow, one of the great women performers in Europe and America during the early part of the century. Under Barstow's guidance Elizabeth began to give concerts and appear as soloist with orchestras. In 1937 she won first place in the western district and second place in the national finals of the young Artists Contest of the National Federation of Music Clubs.

In 1934 Elizabeth met Harlow Mills, a composer, pianist, and recent graduate of Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia. Harlow had returned home to Pasadena and was looking for a violinist to perform his "Italian Sonata for Violin and Piano", which had won the \$1200 Bearn's Prize in Music from Columbia University. The two began performing together both as duo artists and in larger ensembles, including the Mills Chamber Music Ensemble. They became a permanent duo when they married in 1937. In the early years of their marriage they made concert tours throughout the western states until the war made travel too difficult.

While raising a family the Mills' energies went increasingly into teaching. They established the Mills Music Studio, offering violin and piano instruction at their home in Pasadena. They moved to Altadena in 1959. They were also very active in musical organizations. Elizabeth was a founding member of the Pasadena branch of the Music Teachers Association of California, later serving as its president in 1956-58. Harlow also served a president of the Pasadena branch of MTAC and of the Music Arts Club of Pasadena.

Harlow served from 1948 to 1971 as manager of the Coleman Chamber Music Association, the oldest continuous chamber music society in the United States. He was one of the founders of the Pasadena Area Youth Music Council, and of Encounters concerts, a Pasadena concert series featuring modern composers. In addition he was chairman of many benefit concerts for the American Friends Service Committee and Pacific Ackworth Friends School, featuring artists such as John Raitt, Marais and Miranda, Joan Baez, the Vienna Choir Boys, and Odette.

In 1959 Elizabeth became intrigued with the teaching methods of Shinichi Suzuki, after reading a report by John Kendall of his visit to Japan. At the core of Suzuki's method is the belief that every child, without exception, has great innate ability that can be nurtured and developed. After further correspondence with Mr. Kendall and attendance at his Suzuki workshops she established an active program of Suzuki violin instruction in Pasadena. In 1964 she traveled personally to Japan to further study Suzuki's methods, and in 1966 she and Harlow hosted Dr. Suzuki first concert tour to the Los Angeles area with ten of his students.



Elizabeth and Harlow Mills (Photo by Frieda Kack)

Additional tour groups came in 1968, 1970, and succeeding years, and the Mills also made several more trips to Japan to observe the teaching first hand, bringing back many videotapes of lessons and concerts. They brought over 100 students, parents and other teachers with them on these study tours.

Elizabeth was a director of the first three summer Suzuki Institutes in the West, held at College of the Holy Names in Oakland. Harlow was founder and first president of the Suzuki Music Association of California, established in 1977. They both were board members of the national Suzuki Association of the Americas, and they taught master classes at many Suzuki institutes and workshops throughout the country. Elizabeth co-authored two books; *The Suzuki Concept* (Diablo Press, 1973) and *In the Suzuki Style* (Diablo Press, 1974). Mrs. Mills is also fondly remembered for the keen aesthetic sense she applied in everything she did from newsletter design to home craft and decorative arts. Her original stencil designs are currently being adapted by her daughter for print media.

The Mills have been recognized for their contributions to the community by several organizations. Elizabeth was honored by the Pasadena Arts Council Gold Crown award in 1986, and the Pasadena Area Youth Music Council Music Educator of the Year award in 1986. Harlow was honored by Sigma Alpha Iota in 1964 for "significant contributions to the musical life of the community", and by the Pasadena Arts Council Performing Arts award in 1967. They were profiled in the Pasadena Star-News, April 4, 1971, p. A-9, in an article titled "Harlow Mills Crowns One Success With Another - Couple Helps People Appreciate Wonders of Music."

Continues on page 15

A Parent Development Program That Really Works!

A Lecture Given

at The 13th Suzuki Method World Convention

April 1, 1999, Matsumoto, Japan

Susan Grilli

ISA Committee, Early Education

Parents are naturally and instinctively the best teachers of their own children when they teach their children to speak their own native language. Parents use the example of their own speech, and repeat and refine that example every day, without thinking of themselves as teachers; they do this *instinctively* and without formal training. Parents never think children may *not* learn to speak: they communicate their confidence and joy in the process to the child. Dr. Suzuki told me he thought parents were wonderful teachers of their own language to their children, but as teachers of other early learning he thought they were not so good. He said, "Why not everything, *same*?"

When parents teach a baby to speak, a delightful and playful method is used. Every new step in the baby's learning charms the parents. The child catches the joy and naturally wants nothing but to learn more and more and better and better. Without thinking of it as teaching, the parent gives the child every reason to succeed, *by only thinking success is possible*. The parent clearly communicates to the child: "You can do it!"

I have been thinking about my own parents as teachers: what made them such good teachers for me? Of course the most important thing I understood from the way my parents taught me, was that their love for me would always be my biggest support, no matter what! They let me know by the way they behaved toward me, that they thought I could do anything I tried to do, and that I was going to have the *time I needed* to learn whatever I needed to learn. They also made it clear that a lot of hard work would be involved and that it would be my responsibility to shoulder it without depending on others to do it for me. My parents were so calm when I got frustrated and screamed and yelled, that soon enough I gave up the screaming and yelling because nobody was getting upset along with me. They let me know: "Go ahead. Have a fit! We have patience and all the time in the world to wait for you to get over it and go back to being a useful and cheerful member of the family again." I was expected to help with work at home; to contribute my effort to the life of the family. And to be cheerful about it.

My parents cared about beautiful things and sensitive people and protecting the environment. We had little money, but the things in my home that I most loved were music and books and pictures on the wall that really meant something to our family. My parents loved beautiful color combinations - both in their home and outside, in their garden. They loved beautiful music and wonderful stories. When my father read to me, I loved the *sounds* of the language, even if I did not understand all the words. When my father played "The Nutcracker Suite" by



Susan Grilli and her parents - Summer, 1942

Tchaikovsky on our victrola, he did it because he so enjoyed watching me dance to it in our living room. And how I loved to dance! When my father took me to the opera for the first time, it was Puccini's "La Bohème". I saw his very real tears at the end when Mimi dies and Rodolfo calls her name in vain ... I saw an emotion in my father that thrilled me, and I wanted to know those feelings myself.

My parents believed people should take care of the natural world in which they live, and pass it on *unspoiled* to future generations. When my parents built a house, they were proud that they only had to cut down one tree, and could keep the land around the house as natural as they found it. My father read to us at breakfast, from the Audubon book about birds, and he himself painted his favorite birds, in simple paintings that showed a great deal of love and care. My parents had many serious problems in their lives as I grew up, but they never burdened me with them; I was allowed to be completely a child - to grow up at my own pace and not carry the burden of adult worries. I was deeply affected by the tragedies in our lives, but I was not expected to deal with them as if I were an adult. When I think back on it, the *time* to be a child was the greatest gift my parents gave me.

My mother and father encouraged my very active imagination and gave me the feeling of enjoying entertaining myself and developing a rich life of the

mind. I now think that it was of great importance to my development that there was no TV in the house until I was thirteen. I learned that being alone was not being *lonely*, and loved to read, play music, and draw. My parents appreciated simple things. They taught me by their example that being able to take pleasure in such things as a beautiful sunset, or the sound of a bird we'd never heard before, or two colors that went together especially well, was to be fully and joyously alive. They hated cruelty to animals, and when a persuasive young friend of mine succeeded in making me help her take a terrified cat out into a lake to struggle to swim home, my father was so angry at my being a part of such a miserable project endangering a helpless creature, that I never forgot ... the shame of it remains with me to this day.

In our family we liked to make up words and stories with imaginary characters. There was a special sense of humor that seemed to be just for our family alone, and I loved to come home into the nice warm comfort of that sharing of enjoyment of each other that I always had, no matter what happened in the world outside. We had our own private family jokes, songs, stories, and I had an imaginary friend whose name was "Sukey Blodge". My parents let me alone to enjoy a rich life in my own imagination, where I saw everything as more dramatic and exciting than life really ever is. I often think it would have been perfect for me to have been an actress, who could play out the emotions of any role, and then happily go back to normal everyday living. But in actuality, I was much too shy when on stage or in the limelight in any way, to perform even the smallest parts without extreme nervousness. I often wonder how much more confident I would have been at an early age had I had Suzuki instruction; perhaps I could have shared more of my inner world with the outer one.

Our family friends were like an extended family of unusually sensitive adults who encouraged me in whatever I tried to do as I grew up. These very interesting other adults and their special talents, and warm, thoughtful personalities made my rich environment much, much richer, and I loved them very much, as almost a part of my own family. I was always included with the grown-ups and enjoyed their conversation, their humor, and their wisdom every year of my growing up ... and *still*, in memory. My parents did not make me "be" a grown-up, but they did let me see their sorrows and sadness, and what inspired their passionate devotion in life. I remember one couple we knew and loved, who had a favorite son who ran away and never wanted to see them again. Although I could not understand why this had happened, I did understand the power of those parents' tears. He was their most beloved and brightest

child, and he had fallen under the influence of drugs and people who convinced him his parents, who loved him so much, were no good! This experience taught me a lot about compassion, as I saw the desperate and helpless tears of the mother who had *lost* her son, though he was still alive.

My parents taught me by their example, to be suspicious of people who are not genuine, authentic, or natural. As Masaru Ibuka said in *Kindergarten is Too Late*, children will discard the fake in favor of the real. Children *know* when something or someone is genuine and they know quality when they see it. We as teachers are nurtured by the parents of the children in our classrooms and the genuineness of their experience with their own children - that experience of parents and children *before* the children come to school, needs to be shared with teachers. Teachers can learn a very great deal from parents' sensitive observations of the children they know and love better than anybody. Teachers need to show parents how they have already been wonderful teachers of their own children in teaching them their native language, and how they can continue to use this most natural and effective teaching method to encourage *all* early learning. In The Suzuki Pre-School I asked parents to write or tape their impressions of what they had shared with their own children before coming to school. In this way teachers can build an important bridge between the home and the school.

How can parents be their children's most important teachers?

1. Give the child the feeling that parents *know* the child can succeed. Through words and actions, let the *eyes* tell the same story as the words: "We *know* you can do it!"
2. Give the child the *time to be a child*.
3. See the child as *strong* and full of potential, rather than weak and needy.
4. Be a bearer of *JOY* to children.
5. Always respect how hard children work to learn something new.
6. Show children how to laugh at themselves; not take themselves too seriously. Adult example is essential in this.
7. Surround a child with quality so that he or she will develop a taste for it right from the very beginning of life.
8. Make of the whole community an extended family for the child's learning. The influence of talented adults of sensitivity on a child's earliest memories makes all the difference. Lead the child to expect it is natural for all ages to learn together; each generation nurturing the others, by love.

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki and His Evolution of His Instruction and Performance Practice

A lecture given at the 8th SAA Conference in Chicago, U.S.A. on May 22-25, 1998

—Continued from the Summer issue, 1999—

Fumiyo Kuramochi

Violin Instructor, Kanto District

Now I will proceed to the history of the Suzuki Books.

Following his return home from Germany in 1928, Dr. Suzuki taught at the Imperial Music School in Tokyo. The texts published in the 1930's, as I said before, were based on traditional German pedagogical methods.

In 1931, Dr. Suzuki was asked to teach a four-year-old. It was at this point that he began searching for an early childhood pedagogy. That four-year-old, incidentally, was Professor Toshiya Eto, who is now the president of one of Japan's most illustrious music schools, the Toho Gakuen University. In his subsequent experience of teaching young children, such as Professor Toyoda, Dr. Suzuki awoke to mother-tongue education methods.

I have encountered several accounts to the effect that, during the grim days of W.W.II in the first half of the 1940's, Dr. Suzuki's words and music were hand-copied for circulation. Even under those conditions, a Copernican shift in thinking can be observed in his movement away from teaching whole notes first, and toward his 'Twinkle' idea.

Among the materials I gathered, the oldest Suzuki Method books that contain this idea are handwritten copies used at the Matsumoto Music School after Dr. Suzuki moved to Matsumoto in 1946. In the books of that time, however, pieces other than 'Twinkle' were not yet standardized.

After the war, in the latter half of the 1940's, several printed versions of musical scores were published. However, each series ended at Volume Four. The contents also changed several times, and traces of Dr. Suzuki's trial-and-error approach are visible in these editions.

In 1948, the first volume of a series of ten was published. The rest of the set was published over the course of seven years, ending in 1954. Dr. Suzuki poured all of his efforts into this project, and it continued to be reprinted without major revision for nineteen years. In 1959, an eleventh volume was published but went out of print in the 1960's.

Explanatory texts for the Method books mentioned above are *Violin Practice and Performance* (1949), *My*

Study of String Playing (1951) and *How to Practice, Volume One* (1955).

I would like, now, to introduce the 'Teaching Plan' that Dr. Suzuki published in the Books in 1950's. In order to encourage students to practice from a variety of angles, he presents his etudes, ensemble work, music-reading, and Method books as a system. I should note that in regards to the *Position Etudes*, he revised his comments in 1952 to suggest that students should study them as early as Volume Two.

In 1973, the Books were heavily revised for the first time in twenty years and published as a bilingual edition. Unfortunately, even the publishing house has little record of the revising process. Dr. Suzuki's explanatory remarks were extensively condensed in the 1973 edition. Someone besides him apparently was involved in the editing, but I have been unable to find any record of the process. Also, the commentaries mentioned above were all out of print, and nothing specifically tailored to this work was ever published.

Later, some of the pieces were revised under Dr. Suzuki's request and with guidance from Professor Toyoda. This edition was published without substantial change until February 1998.

The first revised edition in twenty-five years was published in March 1998, under the direction of the Textbook Revision Committee. In it are included a portion of Dr. Suzuki's manuscript for a text by the title of *The Suzuki Method* that he had planned, and also quotes from the explanatory texts I mentioned above. We have also resurrected some of Dr. Suzuki's concepts from before the 1973 edition that seem most relevant to contemporary education.

Conclusion

The children of each age live in history. This history is one of continual shifts and changes in all things, including musical and educational styles. However, I believe that the Suzuki Method has a universality endowed with the capacity always to thrive in the present.

If Dr. Suzuki were healthy and in his prime, he most probably would have continued to create texts to reflect the present age. However, since that is no longer a possibility, each of us as individual Suzuki instructors must construct, within ourselves, a methodology to make concrete the universality of the Suzuki Method.

Certainly, Dr. Suzuki is larger than life. However, we must do more than be in awe of his ability and accomplishments. We must carefully and dispassionately study the humanity, and the unusually prolific efforts and accomplishments, of this exceptional human being.

In closing, I would like to relate an incident from my teens. After my lesson at his studio in Matsumoto, Dr.

Suzuki turned to me with a grave expression. "Sometimes," he said, "I wake up in the middle of the night, and when I think about all the deprived children in the world, I can't stop crying." He also told me, "Each and every one of you is my heir."

In order to help realize Dr. Suzuki's lifelong dream of 'Happiness for the children of the world', let us all, as heirs to the Suzuki movement, go forth hand in hand with self-awareness and pride.

[Errata: The translator was unable to review the first installment of this article before it went to press. As a result, besides the usual infelicities that arise in the process of preparing and formatting galleys, several passages in need of adjustment for a reading audience were left obscure. In addition, some of Dr. Suzuki's texts have since been translated or are being considered for translation. In the interest of consistency, it seems important to list English titles as they will appear in publication. Here, only the most problematic oversights from the first installment will be treated.

P. 24, left column, paragraph six: the Appendix Two mentioned in the first sentence (and on page 25, right column, first paragraph) is a condensed version of the list of texts and tables of contents described in the talk. It was meant as a visual aid for audience members, but is redundant for readers. Therefore, the Appendix will not be printed here.

P. 25, left column, first paragraph, second sentence should read: "In this illustration on the overhead projector, Dr. Suzuki explains how the angle of the left hand affects intonation."

P. 25, right column, fifth paragraph, second and third sentences should read: "But this text advises students to read the fixed-do note names repeatedly from the time they learn G Major in Volume Two. Following the accepted practice of violin pedagogy at the time, the note-names suggested are in German."

Throughout page 26, the title, *Research on Performance Practice and Pedagogy* should read, *Research on Violin Playing and Pedagogy*. Similarly, *Research on Performance Practice* should read, *Research on Violin Playing*. The series title, *Compositions and Arrangements* by Shinichi Suzuki, should be entirely italicized: *Compositions and Arrangements by Shinichi Suzuki*.

P. 26, item no. 17, the second sentence should read: "Vol. 2 apparently was used quite extensively, but is now out of print."

P. 26, item no. 20, the second sentence should read: "They are arranged for four violins; beginners and advanced players alike can enjoy playing them."

P. 27, item no. 23, the third sentence should read: "A unique feature of the text is that he advocates the intensive study of pianissimo as fundamental to tone production."

P. 27, left column, fourth paragraph, final sentence should read: "For example, words commonly used at the time of publication may since have assumed negative connotations,

or an editorial oversight has caused erroneous transmission."

P. 27, final paragraph, penultimate sentence should read: "Its members have been organizing the resources, but the project has been delayed by the amount of time it takes to determine the contents of the tapes.]"

English translation by Lili Selden

Elizabeth Mills, pioneer of the Suzuki Method

Continued from page 11

Mrs. Mills last years were spent at Mt. San Antonio Gardens in Claremont. Quieted by Alzheimer's disease and finally a stroke, her rich life ended peacefully on September 12, 1999. Harlow preceded her in death in 1985. She is survived by her brother Howard Morgridge of Newport Beach, daughter Chris Mende of San Francisco, son George Mills of Palo Alto, and three grandchildren.

A musical memorial held 2:00 Saturday, November 13, at Dabney Lounge on the Caltech campus, Pasadena. A Quaker memorial meeting for worship held 2:00 Sunday, November 14, at Claremont Friends Meeting in Claremont. Memorial donations may be made to the American Friends Service Committee, the Coleman Chamber Music Association, or the Harlow Mills Scholarship Fund for Teachers of the Suzuki Music Association of California.

Contact: George Mills, 3215 Emerson, Palo Alto, CA 94306, 650-494-1606 (evening) 650-494-1607 (fax), 408-447-0298 (daytime)
June Manner, 835 N. Holliston, Pasadena, CA 91104, 626-798-3458

Five Mottos of the Suzuki Method

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THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE SUZUKI METHOD

Guide and List of Entrance Requirements

*Wish for beautiful tone, beautiful heart!
This is our eternal theme for the next generation.*

Ability Must Be Fostered

Shinichi Suzuki

Founder, Suzuki Method

Children learn to speak fluently by exposure to the mother tongue that is spoken by their parents. When I noticed the teaching method of the mother tongue, I developed the Suzuki Method and have since taught by it for the past half century.

"Every child can be educated, everything depends on how a child is raised". "Ability is not inborn". My teaching is strongly based upon these points. The International Academy of the Suzuki Method is a teacher training institute where early childhood education through music is taught with the

realization that every child can develop outstanding ability through the proper teaching method.

I ask all students to pledge the following when I present them their graduation certificates:

"We realize the unlimited possibilities to early education. We also realize that every child can be educated. Our purpose is to develop this ability, and present this fact to the world. We are delighted to be teachers of the Suzuki Method and fully comprehend the responsibilities we have as teachers. We will continue to study teaching in the future with much reflection, and through this continuing study, we will be better able to concentrate energies toward better teaching. We solemnly affirm that we will keep this promise as a Suzuki Method teacher, and always do our utmost for our common purpose of educating the children of the world."

Along with our world-renowned teaching staff, extensive training in technique and musical sense, and specialized study in musical theory, we offer the latest research and instruction regarding teaching methods that can maximize the potential of any child.

History of the School

Under the direction of Prof. Koji Toyoda, we are currently in the process of recruiting additional top music teachers to booster our staff.

Prof. Koji Toyoda began studying under Dr. Shinichi Suzuki at the age of three. Distinguishing himself immediately, Mr. Toyoda quickly became one of Dr. Suzuki's top pupils, and was virtually a member of the Suzuki household for the next nine years before leaving to continue his studies in France.

The International Academy of the Suzuki Method offers two programs. The Performance Program, for aspiring professional musicians, provides training in advanced techniques and specific areas of music theory such as harmony, counterpoint, musical analysis, and composition.

The Teacher Training Program provides aspiring teachers with a comprehensive grounding in the fundamentals of music and teaching, together with the practical exercises that are intended to develop natural talent and bring out the very best in every child.

The Talent Education Music School was established on April 1, 1974. Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, the President and Director of the Talent Education Research Institute, worked as the Director and developed the teacher training program for 20 years. There are more than 180 students that have graduated from the school, and most of these graduates are members of the Talent Education Research Institute, teaching all over Japan. In the past 20 years, more than 200 students from North America, Europe, Asia and Australia have come to study the Suzuki Method. Many foreign students who have graduated from the Talent Education Music School have gone on to become leaders of the Suzuki Method in their own countries. The Suzuki Method is presently active in about 32 countries. The Talent Education Music School received new accreditation as The International Academy of the Suzuki Method starting April 1, 1997, and it will enrich its present program with additional teaching faculty. Future graduates of the International Academy of the Suzuki Method will receive "Diploma in Professional Music Studies" (Senmonshi) accreditation.

Koji Toyoda, Vice President

Koji Toyoda was born in Hamamatsu, Japan. He began his violin studies with Shinichi Suzuki at the age of four, and continued his studies at the Conservatoire National Supérieur in Paris. He later studied with Georges Enesco and Arthur Grumiaux. He received the Bach medal of Harriet Cohen Music Awards in London, and also received premiums at international competitions in Paris, Geneva and Brussels. Mr. Toyoda was the first concertmaster of the Rheinischem Kammerorchester in Cologne and the Radio-Symphonie-Orchestra in Berlin. From 1979, he has been a professor at the Hochschule der Künste in Berlin. He has also been the music director of the Kusatsu International Summer Music Academy and Festival and the Gunma Symphony Orchestra. He has given numerous concerts and has made many recordings in Japan, Europe, and America.

Faculty

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Suzuki Method 2 (Suzuki Philosophy): Selected TERI Teachers

Suzuki Method 3 (Academic Approach): University Professors

Foreign Language (English):

*Department Head

1. Number of Students to be Admitted

A total of 40 students in the following programs will be admitted to the freshman class of the International Academy of the Suzuki Method.

I. Performance Program II. Teacher Training Program

Violin	Violin
Cello	Cello
Piano	Piano
Flute	Flute

Teacher Training Program

Number of School Days: 240, Weeks: 40, Hours: 920 per year

Subject	Hours per week	Hours per year
Private Lesson: Major Instrument	1.5	60
Group Lesson	3	120
Secondary Instrument:		
Piano or other Instrument	1	40
Ensemble 1: Chamber Music	1	40
Ensemble 2: Orchestra/Chorus	2	80
Performance/Observation	2	80
Intern Teaching: Observation	2	80
Music Expression	2	80
Music Theory: Musical Grammar		
Solfege	3	120
Music History	1	40
Suzuki Method: Suzuki Philosophy	2	80
Other Academic Studies	0.5	20
English	1	40
Total	23	920

2. Program Length

At least two years of study will be required for each program.

3. Requirements

The following three requirements apply to all applicants:

I. Applicant must have graduated from high school or the equivalent. This requirement is also true for foreign students.

II. Applicant must have graduated from the Suzuki Method post-graduate level or the equivalent as follows:

Violin Mendelssohn: Concerto in e minor

Cello Saint-Saëns: Concerto in a minor, op. 33

Piano Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in f minor, Op. 57

"Appassionata"

Flute Hisatada Otaka: Concerto for Flute, Op. 30b

III. Applicant must have a recommendation from a teacher and must be accepted by the president of the IASM.

4. Student Selection Method

Student selection by an audition organized by the IASM, an interview, transcripts from schools and recommendation forms.

5. Application Acceptance Dates

Application will be accepted from February thru March 7.

6. Required Materials

1. Application form (1)
2. Teacher recommendation (1)
3. Most recent school transcript (1)
4. Resume (1)
5. Health Statement (1)
6. 4" x 3" photo (2)

Application Fee: ¥20,000.00

Remit check or money order to:

Asahi Bank, Matsumoto Branch

Savings Account: #907034

The fee must be paid prior to the audition in March

7. Mailing Address for the Required Materials

The International Academy of the Suzuki Method
c/o Talent Education Research Institute
3-10-3 Fukashi, Matsumoto, Nagano 390, Japan

8. Audition Repertoire

Violin Mendelssohn: Concerto in e minor, 1st mvt.

One short work (within five minutes)

Cello Boccherini: Concerto in B-flat Major

One short work (within five minutes)

Piano Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in f minor, Op. 57

"Appassionata"

One short work (within five minutes)

Flute Mozart: Concerto No. 1, 2nd & 3rd mvts.

One short work (within five minutes)

9. Audition Date

Audition will held in the middle of March.

For more information, please contact:
THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF THE SUZUKI METHOD
3-10-3 Fukashi, Matsumoto, Nagano 390-0815 Japan
Phone: 0263-32-7171 Fax: 0263-32-7451

THE GENTLE GAZE

Kikuko Takatsuki

Instructor of the Piano Research Group
Kansai District

My encounter with the Suzuki Method occurred when I was a music college student and I went with a friend to listen to a lecture/performance titled, "Talent is not inborn," sponsored by Talent Education.

I listened with pure amazement to the Hungarian Dance played by a boy and girl who were then fourth graders. They were playing with such vitality and sensitivity! I took off my hat to them. I was told, "Anyone can be nurtured in this way," and since I was simply moved by the interesting lecture and the passion towards music, I immediately enrolled as a member. I judged Dr. Suzuki to be around 70 years of age. "Ability is not inborn, it is created by the environment... Similar to the way in which anyone can speak his mother tongue, if one is raised in Osaka, one will speak the Osaka dialect. Anyone can speak in his province's dialect. I was surprised at this fact."

I became even more excited. I think I was force-feeding my students that I taught at the time as a side-job. "Why don't their fingers move...?" I learned later that beginners require the most experience. The piano research conference did not exist yet, so whenever there was some kind of meeting, senior teachers taught me little by little.

"Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" is difficult, isn't it... Both hands are suddenly used in "Cuckoo" and "Lightly Row"... It is difficult to teach written music, isn't it... "I teach the first two or three pieces solely by ear. Each hand by itself until they learn it..."

Three year olds don't last for 30 minutes, do they... I can't get them to listen to me. You know, Dr. Suzuki says, "A three year old's concentration span is one second." "If you do 30 minutes from the beginning, they will never come back for another lesson. Become buddies first..."

Isn't it wrong to receive tuition when I'm only playing with them?... Many questions arose. "A child's ability is the teacher's ability." At his lecture, Dr. Suzuki mentioned, "There are people in this world that say bad things about those who mimic others, but it is impossible to mimic a genius (master) even if one spends his entire life on it. People talk about individuality, but it is the difference in that person's ability. I would be more than honored if people say I am a mimicker of Kreisler and others. I could care less about my individuality." He also gave advice such as, "The masters play with the utmost ease. Please experiment..." How should I incorporate it into the piano? I rejoiced that post-graduate level students emerged with my style of teaching.

Students who have good concentration skills learn quickly. Is that enough, though...?

It was then that a teachers said, "Everyone is trying to play so hard, their tone is not beautiful." As I was

listening to him talk, memories came floating back to me. Before, when I was still a music college student, there was a person with exceptionally beautiful tone that no one was able to beat. I never thought that I would be able to produce tone similar to it. That teacher's tone was very gentle and beautiful as if it were shining. The tone I was seeking! I am still learning from that lesson.



Author receiving a teacher's certificate from Dr. Suzuki
(at Talent Education Hall in 1975)

"To produce sound, the body is important. The center (lower back) must be stable and the upper body relaxed. Pianists (the masters) have good posture. Balance is important. Move the fingers." I think I am able to move them, but I am actually pushing them down. Everyone's "basics are not there." I am appalled... "If the basics are there, then playing should be effortless. There is a limit when everything is not relaxed...when there is tension somewhere in the playing." The do-mi-sol, do-mi-sol that I thought was easy in Twinkle Twinkle Little Star becomes bad if I don't play it carefully everyday. "Practice the left hand more than the right hand. Don't wave your head..." etc... "Musicians and sportsmen are the same. They must repeatedly practice the basics of posture and balance everyday so that their body memorizes them. They cannot get good results if they only think with their head. And also, practice correctly! Do not allow incorrect practice. It is bad for the child." Dr. Suzuki taught me step by step everything that he researched, and I am directly experiencing his "where love is deep, much can be accomplished" and "sound breathes life". I express my thanks for teaching me to have the slightest bit of confidence in lessons and to produce tone more lightly and easily.

To spread this wonderful method that Dr. Suzuki created for us to as many people as possible. To nurture patience and concentration through music. "Create ability that can progress to professional courses anytime..." I think he told us every time. After a concert, I remember he performed the "Prelude and Nagoya Lullaby" for us, and when I close my eyes, "Please do well!" the image of his gentle gaze is still there.

From Talent Education, No.127
English translation by Noriko Kataoka

Report on ISA Board Meeting

September 10-12, 1999 Matsumoto, Japan

MINUTES

Friday, September 10

Hiroko Yamada, Chair, presided and called the meeting to order at 9:45 a.m.

Directors in attendance: Hiroko Yamada (Chair/TERI), William Preucil (Vice-Chair/At-Large), James Maurer (Secretary/SAA), Evelyn Hermann (CEO), Birte Kelly (ESA Deputy), and Akira Nakajima (At-Large).

Apologies: Harold Brissenden (ANCSTEA), William Starr (At-Large)

Motion 1: That James Maurer be elected Secretary of the ISA Board of Directors.

Moved: Nakajima Second: Maurer Passed

Motion 2: That Birte Kelly be elected Assistant Secretary for this meeting only.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Motion 3: That the Minutes from April 3-5, 1999 be approved as corrected:

1. Akira Nakajima's name is spelled correctly.
2. That "by the by" be changed to "by the" in the last sentence on Page 4.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Motion 4: That the CEO's ISA/USA Financial Report be accepted with correct date, July 31, 1999.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Motion 5: That in the future one set of financial statements covering both USA and Japan offices will be produced in include:

1. A budget for the new fiscal year with a comparison to the previous year.
2. A statement of income and expenses.
3. A balance sheet.
4. A cash flow sheet.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Motion 6: That the Japan Financial Report prepared by the auditor, Mr. Iwabuchi, be accepted.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

— Break for lunch 12:30 p.m. —

Meeting reconvened at 2:05 p.m.

Motion 7: That Evelyn Hermann will write to Frances Gall of the Pan Pacific Conference International that the ISA does not have money at this time to be able to assist with the conference, and that the ISA has no plans to hold a board meeting in conjunction with the conference.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 1: That in the future all costs of holding conferences and conventions will be the responsibility of the regional associations without assistance from ISA.

Motion 8:

1. That over the next two years ISA will gradually cease to publish the Journal in its present form.
2. That at least once a year the ISA will send a few pages of information to all regional

associations to be published in the regional journals.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 2: That the regional association representatives will discuss with their regions the possibility of raising the contribution level of each region to \$12 per year from each teacher as Dr. Suzuki suggested long ago, the equivalent of one cup of coffee per month. However, the budget shows that \$18 per teacher per year would be necessary to pay all of ISA's annual expenses.

— Break for dinner at 7:00 p.m. —

Discussion after dinner at 8:30 p.m.

Consensus 3: That the SAA will host a meeting of teacher trainers in 2001 or 2002 in conjunction with an SAA conference. 1 or 2 teachers trainers in each instrument will be chosen by each region to attend a meeting to share ideas and concerns about teacher training. The travel, lodging, and meal expenses will be paid by the teachers themselves or their regions.

— Meeting recessed at 9:30 p.m. —

Saturday, September 11

Meeting reconvened at 9:30 a.m.

Directors in attendance: H. Yamada, W. Preucil, J. Maurer, E. Hermann, B. Kelly, and A. Nakajima

Motion 9: That the Chair, CEO, and Treasurer will decide on a substantial sum of money from the ISA funds in Japan to be deposited in a certificate of deposit in a bank in the U.S. with the Chair, the Treasurer, and the CEO as signatories.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 4: That the Japan ISA office will keep enough money in Japan to pay costs of operating office in Japan.

— Break for lunch 12:30 p.m. —

Reconvened 2:00 p.m.

Consensus 5: Next Board meeting will be held in Cincinnati, OH, USA, May 29-31, 2000.

Motion 10: That the Proposed Policies for Regional Associations written by James Maurer as amended be accepted as ISA Board Policy.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Motion 11: That the recent revision of Violin Book I published by Zen-On will be published throughout the world by Summy-Birchard.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 6: That Mrs. Yamada will talk to Prof. Toyoda regarding the ISA Board concerns about not having input form the ISA Violin committee before publication.

Akira Nakajima excused himself and left the meeting due to prior commitment.

Motion 12:

1. That James Maurer write a letter to Michi North on behalf of the Board asking her to reconsider her resignation from the ISA Piano Committee.

2. That Michi be asked to consult with the Piano Committee and ask them to consult with piano teachers in their regions about making a piano video of teaching points to be used only by teacher trainers, and other concerns of the Piano Committee.
3. That the Piano Committee be asked to submit a report outlining their recommendations to the ISA Board prior to the next Board meeting.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Motion 13: That the Instrumental Committees: Proposal for Guidelines by Haukur Hannesson as amended be adopted as ISA Board Policy.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 7: That E. Hermann will write to Summy-Birchard, TERI, and Toshio Takahashi regarding selling of Zen-On publications abroad, and to Summy-Birchard regarding publication mistakes and availability.

Consensus 8: That E. Hermann will write a letter to the Republic of China Suzuki Asso. Commending them for working hard to improve quality and to organize an association.

— Meeting recessed at 7:00 p.m. —

Sunday September 12

Meeting reconvened at 9:42 a.m.

Directors in attendance: H. Yamada, W. Preucil, J. Maurer, E. Hermann, and B. Kelly

Consensus 9: That E. Hermann will notify the Flute Committee of Mr. Takahashi's resignation, and that Mrs. Yamada will notify TERI to replace Japan's representative on the Flute Committee.

Motion 14: That Article 1 of the ISA Bylaws be changed as recommended by the Bylaws Committee and amended.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 10: The ISA no longer has country memberships, therefore in the future, E. Hermann will send a letter or document of appreciation to any individuals, schools, or associations for any donations received. There will be no mention of memberships.

Motion 15: That Article 2 of the ISA Bylaws be changed as recommended by the Bylaws Committee and amended.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Consensus 11: All Board members will consider who would be good candidates for the ISA Board. Nominations should be sent to E. Hermann one month before the next meeting.

Consensus 12: Mrs. Yamada will write to Thailand to encourage them to form a Suzuki association and to congratulate them on their work so far.

Motion 16: That the meeting be adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

M: Nakajima S: Maurer Passed

Submitted by James Maurer
Secretary ISA Board of Directors

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SUZUKI ASSOCIATION

from ISA/USA Office

(Fiscal Year, August 1, 1998 thru July 31, 1999)

Reporting Period: July 31, 1999

Cash on hand (checking account) 8/1/98: \$43,762.29

INCOME

Memberships	\$40,856.68	
Gifts	5,689.13	
Total	\$46,545.81	+\$46,545.81

EXPENSES

Secretarial Services	\$2,832.23	
Office Supplies	4,893.51	
Postage	979.33	
Telephone	2,595.19	
Printing	1,340.81	
Officer's Salary	12,385.48	
Taxes:		
withholding	2,926.46	
FICA (Soc. Sec.)	3,042.12	
Washington Employment	21.51	
Washington Dept. of Labor	30.15	
Bank charges + check ret.	94.61	
Travel	3,548.35	
Rent	1,200.00	
Conferences	4,739.78	
Legal Fees	747.50	
Total Expenses	\$41,377.03	-\$41,377.03

Income for fiscal year 5,168.78

Balance on Hand, from 1998 43,762.29

New Balance, July 31, 1999 \$48,931.07

C.D. August 6, 1999 7,176.41

Total funds on hand: 7/31/99 + \$56,107.48

Submitted by Evelyn Hermann, Sec./Treas.

SHINICHI SUZUKI TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FUND

This fund is used for grants for programs in lesser developed countries to promote the Suzuki Method to improve the children's education.

Savings Account:

June 30, 1999

December 31, 1998:

Balance	\$15,185.16	
Deposit	500.00	
Interest	211.40	
Total	\$15,896.56	+\$15,896.56

CD investment \$55,981.10

Interest, 7/30/99 688.04

Total \$56,669.14 +\$56,669.14

Total Assets \$72,565.70

Submitted by Evelyn Hermann, Sec./Treas.

Policies for Regional Associations

Adopted by the ISA Board of Directors
September 12, 1999

SECTION 1: REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

1. The ISA recognizes five regional Suzuki associations. All of the countries of the world are included in these five regions. These regions and their associations shall be:

- Japan – Talent Education Research Institute (TERI)
- North, Central, and South America – Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA)
- Europe, Middle East, and Africa – European Suzuki Association (ESA)
- Asia (except for Japan) – Asian Suzuki Association (ASA) – yet to be formed)
- Pan-Pacific – Pan-Pacific Suzuki Association (PPSA) – yet to be formed).

2. There shall be only one regional association for each of the regions identified above that may use the name "Suzuki" for its activities in accordance with the Name Agreement and Sub-License between that regional association and the ISA.

3. Each regional association shall have a representative as a member of the ISA Board of Directors. The representative shall be the head of the regional association, or his or her appointee. The head of the regional association, or his or her appointee, shall be a citizen and resident of one of the countries in the regional association.

4. The ISA recognizes that each of the five regional associations may have different statutes and legal prerequisites depending on its country of operation. The ISA recognizes the statutes and formal structure of each regional association provided the following principles are observed:

- Each regional association shall have a set of statutes which state that the purpose of the association is to promote Suzuki education. The statutes are to be in line with Dr. Suzuki's philosophy of talent education.
- Each regional association shall have memberships which are open to all countries, groups, and/or individuals within the region. The classes and categories of membership may vary with each regional association.
- Each regional association shall be democratically structured.
- Each regional association shall have the right and responsibility to establish and maintain teacher training.

SECTION 2: NEW REGIONAL ASSOCIATION APPLICATION

1. The ISA will only accept an application from a region that does not already have a recognized regional association.

2. The applicant regional association shall submit a formal letter of application to the ISA Board of Directors, which signed shall be signed by all board members of the applicant regional association.

3. The applicant regional association shall submit a list of the names and addresses of the board of directors of that association.

- The board of directors shall include members representative of the entire region.

B. Each member of the board shall be a citizen and resident of the area he or she represents.

4. The applicant regional association shall submit a list of the names and addresses of the officers of the association.

5. The applicant regional association shall submit the bylaws, articles of incorporation, policies, and all other statutes of the applicant regional association to the ISA Board of Directors for consideration.

A. The applicant regional association shall have a set of statutes which state that the purpose of the association is to promote Suzuki education. The statutes shall be in line with Dr. Suzuki's philosophy of talent education.

B. The applicant regional association shall have open membership policies for country, individual, and/or group members. The classes and categories of membership may vary with each regional association.

C. The applicant regional association shall have the right and responsibility to establish and maintain teacher training.

D. The applicant regional association shall be democratically structured.

6. The applicant regional association shall submit documentation which shows the support of 75% of the country association with in its region, or 75% of the individual Suzuki teachers within its region.

Submitted by James Maurer

Policies for New Instrument Areas in the Suzuki Method

Adopted by the ISA Board of Directors
April 5, 1999

Based on the value that all future adaptations for new instrument areas will be created by a international committee.

1. When initiator begins to actively experiment and develop a "Suzuki" repertoire for a new instrument area, he/she must:

- Receive permission from the home regional association to use the Suzuki name in conjunction with the experimentation and in accordance with guidelines established by the regional associations, and

B. Become a member of the regional association in which he/she resides.

2. The home regional association informs the other three regional associations of the permission granted. These make a reasonable effort through country associations to learn if there is a similar interest or work being done in their own regions.

3. If interest is found in at least two additional regions, an International Committee is formed with representatives from each of the regional associations which report to and whose work is funded by the ISA, Warner Bros. and Zen-On.

— Continues on the next page —

