

International Suzuki Journal

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Welcome to the latest edition of the ISA Journal. We're pleased to bring you articles and photos about Talent Education activities from around the globe.

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August 2025 marks the 80th Anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. This event had a profound impact on Dr. Suzuki's thinking in his development of the philosophy behind what he came to call "Talent Education." His response to that war, and previous ones, was not one of despair, but quite the opposite. Dr. Suzuki's response was to propose a better way to educate children into a self-awareness of their own abilities that can improve society in general. He worked without pause to achieve his goal. It is a question we have to ask ourselves about where we are now in our current global situation; and how we persevere with the knowledge that parents and children can achieve great potential to change the world. This issue of the *ISA Journal* reflects the varied aspects of that work: important scientific research supporting the ideas and effects of Talent Education, fascinating historical considerations of the Suzuki repertoire, and multitudes of teachers and families sharing their knowledge and the joy of their studies in conferences, performances and celebrations in every region. So, yes, we persevere through the understanding that we can change the world as we change ourselves. Enjoy reading about how Suzuki teachers and families demonstrate that understanding.

Allen Lieb
CEO/ISA

Visit the ISA website at [InternationalSuzuki.org](https://www.internationalsuzuki.org) for up-to-date news from each Instrument Committee, important announcements, and events from Regional Associations, and read past editions of the *ISA Journal* dating from 1983.

Visit and like the ISA Facebook page for important announcements about Suzuki events across our Association and the latest developments in all the instrument areas: <https://www.facebook.com/InternationalSuzukiAssociation>

Visit and join the ISA Facebook [SUZUKI™ Teachers](https://www.facebook.com/SuzukiTeachers) page for postings, discussions, and questions from Suzuki teachers around the globe.



From Chair of the ISA Board

Martin Rüttimann

For the first time, the ISA is experiencing a decline in membership. While regional fluctuations usually balance out, we've seen nearly a 20% drop in two years. This returns our membership levels to those of 2007 and raises pressing questions we need to address.

Our slogan, "Every child can," encapsulates our mission. However, with 2.5 billion children globally, and approximately 10,000 Suzuki teachers each teaching an average of 20–40 students, we reach only 200,000 to 400,000 children. This represents a mere 0.5‰ of the global child population who have the privilege of being part of the Suzuki movement. Whether considering Suzuki teaching specifically or music education in general, the reach remains at only 1–2‰ of all children worldwide having access to music instruction.



Consequently, we must ask: should every child have access to quality music education? While this may seem like a rhetorical question to many of us, it prompts us to consider our role amid a potentially declining number of members.

From another perspective, the Suzuki Method is officially taught in 73 countries around the world. Teachers in these countries are affiliated through their national and regional Suzuki associations and are consequently associated members of the ISA. To put this into context, even when excluding the 44 least developed countries (as defined by the UN), we are present in only 50% of the remaining countries.

Despite the commendable nature of our ideas and the collective aspiration for a more enlightened world, it is imperative to acknowledge the challenges we face. To train more teachers and provide more children access to Suzuki lessons, substantial financial resources must be secured. Given the current global political climate and ongoing conflicts, it is unrealistic to expect an increase in public funding for cultural and educational sectors at this time.

In the face of these daunting facts of the real world, we retreat to our idealistic world, where we all feel more comfortable. What can we do within our movement to reset the trajectory toward future growth rather than decline? I propose we debate the following questions before seeking answers:

1. **Online teacher training:** Aside from situations where online training helps foster equity and accessibility for teachers living in remote areas, it also offers convenience in other cases—but does it support sustainable growth? Can online courses alone foster community ownership and social cohesion? How beneficial is online training for promoting the Suzuki Method, and when might it become a hindrance?
2. **International teacher accreditation:** A decade after the ISA began creating a system to allow teachers to travel without losing credentials, progress is ongoing. Comparing “short-term” and “long-term” training systems has not been very successful. Simply comparing the number of hours in a training course will not lead to a successful system of international accreditation. How can we incorporate essential aspects like philosophy, methodology, supervised teaching, and some form of assessment (examinations and the like) into a teacher training program that promotes long-term growth and development for teachers?
3. **Pedagogical adaptation:** How can we adapt our teaching methods to the 21st century without losing the core philosophy, amid changes in family structure, work models, and school curricula?
4. **Flexible outreach:** What outreach options do we have for families unable to attend weekly lessons, group sessions, or concerts? How flexible can the “Suzuki triangle” be while maintaining quality?

It is hoped that the aforementioned questions will serve as a starting point for further debate. Ideally, these discussions will lead to answers in the near future and help bring our five regions closer together. Our movement depends on strong bonds supported by vital international exchange. What other pedagogical approach can bring 100—or even 1,000—children on stage to perform together without even rehearsing?

Announcing the winning design for the ISA Twinkle Graduation Sticker Competition

The ISA is pleased to announce the winning design for its international Twinkle Graduation Sticker Design Competition. The winning design, selected by the ISA Board of Directors, was submitted by the TERI Regional Association. TERI has provided an English-translation version for use by the other Regional

Associations. Now that the design has been prepared by the artist, ISA has granted approval for all Regional Associations to print and distribute the Twinkle Graduation Sticker for use by teacher members for their students to promote the graduation process in the Suzuki materials as first outlined by Dr. Suzuki and encourage students in their progress through the repertoire.



The ISA wishes to extend a hearty “Thank you!” to everyone from all the Regional Associations who submitted a design for the competition. There were many excellent ideas from students and teachers across the global Suzuki community. We know you will enjoy having this sticker for use with students in your respective Associations. Some Regional Associations may choose to use a design submitted by one of their members. Please contact your Regional Association office for details.

Stay tuned and keep practicing!

Memorial Donation to the ISA

The ISA wishes to acknowledge the memorial contribution by the family and friends of Suzuki violin instructor Ellen Schmidt in her honor.

Ellen Schmidt was a Suzuki violin teacher in Racine and Kenosha WI. She became involved with Suzuki when her daughter Liesl started taking lessons and began teaching students in 1983 with guidance from Judy Lanning. For many years she was a regular participant in summer camp at the American Suzuki Institute at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point. She was also a longtime member of the Racine Symphony Orchestra and played in Irish folk bands. She retired from teaching in 2015.



The ISA does accept contributions as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions may be made through Zelle by searching: ceo@internationalsuzuki.org. Contributions by check should be made payable to the **International Suzuki Association** and mailed to the following address:

International Suzuki Association
PO Box 21065
New York, NY 10023 USA

Neuroscience Validates the Power of Listening: New Research Highlights the Suzuki Method

A new neuroscience study has provided compelling evidence for what Suzuki teachers have long believed: listening is fundamental to deep musical understanding. Published in *Cerebral Cortex* and conducted by the University of Tokyo in collaboration with the Talent Education Research Institute (TERI), the study shows that the Suzuki Method's "listen first" approach offers measurable advantages in brain activity and learning outcomes—even after just one week of training.



Prof. Dr. Kuniyoshi SAKAI (Brain scientist and Professor of Physics, The University of Tokyo), Prof. Seizo AZUMA (President of TERI and Piano Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts), Prof. Dr. Ryugo HAYANO (Board Chair of TERI and Professor Emeritus of Physics, The University of Tokyo)

The study followed 38 intermediate pianists as they learned four unfamiliar pieces using two methods: listening to recordings (the "Listen" condition) and reading sheet music without audio support (the "Read" condition). Suzuki-trained participants, particularly those with experience on more than one instrument, significantly outperformed their peers in detecting musical inconsistencies during testing.

Brain imaging (fMRI) revealed a clear neurological basis for these results. Participants trained through listening showed greater activation in the brain's left hemisphere—specifically in regions associated with language and auditory processing. In contrast, those who learned by reading relied more heavily on bilateral and right hemisphere activity, suggesting a less efficient, more compensatory mode of learning.

Perhaps most compellingly, the Suzuki-trained group demonstrated stronger integration of auditory and cognitive functions. This mirrors how children acquire language: by listening first, long before reading or writing.

"We're seeing, through brain science, that Shinichi Suzuki's intuition was remarkably accurate," says Dr. Kuniyoshi Sakai, the study's lead researcher. "Musical phrasing and linguistic structure engage similar areas in the brain. Listening builds the foundation for understanding both."

These findings also align with a hallmark of many Suzuki programs: early and diverse musical experiences. Students who had trained on more than one instrument showed more flexible and efficient processing patterns—not simply due to greater practice time, but due to the quality and modality of their musical exposure.

As music and arts education face increasing pressure in school systems worldwide, this study offers timely scientific support for emotionally rich, listening-based learning. It suggests that musical training, when approached naturally and holistically—as in the Suzuki Method—can enhance not just musical skills, but cognitive development itself.

The research team has already begun work on a third phase of the study. For Suzuki teachers and families, the message is clear: keep listening

The full study can be found at [Oxford Academic](#)

Origins of the Suzuki Violin School Repertoire

Kiyoshi Tamagawa, D.M.A.

Few if any instruction methods have transformed instrumental music teaching so thoroughly and completely worldwide as the method developed by and named after Shinichi Suzuki in the last century, now approaching its centennial (Hotta, 105; Mehl, 183).



While many other pedagogical approaches have published books of repertoire for students to study, the ten volumes of the Suzuki Violin School, originally published in the United States by Summy-Birchard in 1978, have a particular mystique. Students learn and regularly review this extensive body of common repertoire and play it together in groups. Because of this expectation the ordered and mandatory sequence of pieces contained in the Suzuki books takes on an outsize importance.

The violin being his chosen instrument, Suzuki created the ten volumes of the Suzuki Violin School first. They appeared in Japan between 1948 and 1959, though Suzuki had been using the repertoire for many years before publishing it (Hotta, 176). Suzuki developed the collection of compositions he taught to students as many independent instructors do, drawing on his own creativity and readily available literature. For the first volume, for example, folk songs widely taught and known to Japanese children and pieces borrowed from intermediate literature for the piano served as his sources (Howe, 182). He filled in gaps with his own short compositions and arrangements.

As the level of the books advanced in difficulty, Suzuki mostly stopped creating original music and arrangements and turned to compositions already available in publications of the time. Since these sources are not named or acknowledged in the original Suzuki Violin School repertoire books, identifying them can be challenging. The proliferation of open-source material on the Internet has facilitated this musical detective work. While not all works can be credited to their original sources without further research, the derivation of many can now be identified with a fair amount of certainty, even if the evidence is circumstantial.

Why should researchers go to the trouble of discovering and revealing how Dr. Suzuki assembled his canon of teaching literature? Multiple arrangers, editors and publishers were involved, presumably unknowingly, in this process. Although their names are largely forgotten today, they were musicians of prominence and accomplishment, skilled performers and dedicated pedagogues. Their contributions deserve acknowledgement. The music of the Suzuki Method is distinct from Suzuki's pedagogy itself (Brown disagrees; see Brown, 33). It does not diminish the latter to give due recognition to those partly responsible for the former.

Sources of Suzuki Violin School pieces, Volumes 2 and 3

Examination of the pieces contained in Volumes 2 and 3 of the Suzuki Violin School gives an idea of the frequently convoluted paths from original compositions to the final forms in the method books. Three anthologies of music for student and amateur violinists figure particularly prominently as source material for these volumes. All were published in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries.

Willy Burmester (1869-1933) was a German violinist and student of Joseph Joachim who enjoyed a successful career as a concert performer. His performances included several in Japan, where he toured in 1923 (Mehl, 136). Jean Sibelius composed his Violin Concerto with Burmester in mind. ("Willy Burmester: Life and Career") The violinist compiled a multi-volume collection of Baroque and early Classical violin pieces, most in his own

arrangements, *Stücke alter Meister* [Works of old masters], which appeared in Berlin between 1904 and 1908. Burmester's anthology is of particular significance regarding two pieces in Volume 2 of Suzuki's method that differ radically from the compositions from which they are originally derived.

The stylistic and pedagogical orientation of Ernst Heim's five-volume set *Palaestra* (1911) is rather different from Burmester's collection. The curious title either refers to a mythological woman who invented wrestling (!) or the ancient Greek wrestling arena itself ("Palestra (mythology)"). Heim (1854-1935), a German violist and conductor, offers something of an explanation in his preface to Volume 1:

Opportunity should be given to the pupil to play solo pieces before people. Pupils should thus play pieces amongst themselves after the manner of a competition. We have, therefore, prepared this new collection, arranged in progressive order, and named it "Palaestra," school of contest. (Heim, [iii])

Palaestra is more explicitly instructional than either Burmester or Suzuki, beginning with pieces that use only the open strings of the instrument. The bulk of its repertoire consists of music of the nineteenth century; nevertheless, Heim's versions of earlier compositions, Boccherini's Minuet in A major and J.S. Bach's Gavottes from the Orchestral Suite no. 3 in D major, found their way almost intact into the Suzuki Method. His version of the so-called Lully Gavotte also sheds some light on the transformation of this composition from the original to the form that appears in the Suzuki Violin School.

The third figure who casts a significant shadow over the early volumes of the Suzuki violin repertoire is the American Albert Wier (1879-1945), who distinguished himself not primarily as a performer or teacher, though he studied violin and composition at the New England Conservatory, but as a prolific compiler, editor, and arranger of music collections for home music-making (Covell). His *Masterpieces of Piano Music* remains in print today, as does *Violin Pieces the Whole World Plays*, which first appeared in 1916. One of Wier's arrangements in the latter collection, that of the two Bourrées from J.S. Bach's Suite no. 3 for unaccompanied cello, is reproduced almost exactly as the final work in Volume 3 of the Suzuki Violin School. In addition, Suzuki's versions of the Gavotte by Gossec (Volume 1), Minuet in G by Beethoven, and the Humoreske by Dvorak bear clear traces of Wier's editions in this collection.

Three compositions whose histories are especially complex, and that underwent the most substantial transformations from how they were originally conceived by their composers, will be examined in more detail here.

Handel: Bourrée (Suzuki Violin School, Book 2)

Original version: oboe and continuo. Handel's composition is the fourth of five movements making up a Sonata for oboe and continuo in F major, HWV 363a. The composer himself transposed the sonata into G major (HWV 363b) and published it as a work for flute in his Op. 1. Most violin versions of the Bourrée use the latter key.

The Suzuki version of this Bourrée differs notably from the original composition. This altered form appears to derive from Willy Burmester's compilation *Stücke alter Meister*, where the Bourrée is no. 19, the first piece in Volume 4. The piano part in Suzuki is practically identical to that in Burmester's version, even writing out the repeats of both sections as in the latter.

The entire first section of eight measures and the first six measures of the second half of the Bourrée are recognizably the same piece when one compares the Handel original and the Burmester arrangement, though the harmonization of the continuo is entirely the work of the latter. From measure 15 onward, however, the two versions diverge. Handel's original proceeds for eight more measures, with the melodic line rising to C6 in measure 16, and cadences without an exact repetition of any of the material of the first eight measures—a typical Baroque binary form.

Ex. 1. Handel, Bourrée, original version, measures 9-22. Bass line in small notes transposed up one octave.



By contrast, in Burmester's version the melodic line turns downward to a half cadence in measure 14, then repeats the opening four measures exactly. Then, the final four measures in Burmester are a modified version of the last four measures of the first section (5-8), transposed to the tonic key of G major. Handel's original is thus recomposed into what modern textbooks would call a rounded binary form, comprising a total of twenty-four bars, two more than the original.

Ex. 2. Handel, Bourrée, Burmester version, measures 9-24. Bass line in small notes transposed up one octave.

This version does not appear in any other contemporary source or easily available nineteenth-century arrangement and thus most likely is by Burmester himself. His motive for recomposing the piece remains uncertain. He may possibly have done so because transcribing the original exactly as Handel composed it would have taken the violinist out of first position.

“Lully,” Gavotte (Suzuki Violin School, Book 2)

Original version: Marin Marais, Rondeau for two viola da gambas and continuo. This is one of the compositions in the Suzuki Violin School that underwent the most changes from the original to its inclusion in the repertoire, including a change of title and attributed authorship. The original Rondeau appears in a collection of “Pieces for one and two viols” by Marin Marais dating from 1686. It is a richly contrapuntal duo for the two instruments and continuo, with flexible, wide-ranging melodic lines for both upper and lower parts (Polesky, <https://www.markpolesky.com/suzuki/vol.2/>).

Ex. 3. Rondeau for two viols by Marais, opening. The upper part has been notated entirely in bass clef.

It is not currently possible to pinpoint exactly when or by whom this composition was retitled and assigned to Jean-Baptiste Lully as its composer (Suzuki Skeptic). What is certain is that all editions and arrangements beginning around 1870 style the composition thus, and at least two of them share changes to the original music that suggest a common source.

In Willy Burmester's *Stücke alter Meister*, volume 4, a "Gavotte" by "Lully" appears as no. 23 in Volume 4, the same volume that contains the rewritten Handel Bourrée discussed above. Upon examination this proves to be a clear precursor of the Gavotte found in Volume 2 of the Suzuki Violin School. Burmester's version radically alters the original of Marais. The independent bass line originally assigned to the lower viol is missing, replaced by an entirely homophonic, rhythmically uniform piano accompaniment. The refrain is shortened from twenty-eight measures to twenty and what remains is stripped of the multiple stops of the original and in spots reharmonized. Wide leaps idiomatic to the six-stringed viol are modified. The central section loses its last eight measures as well, these being replaced by five newly composed cadential measures that conclude on a prolonged half cadence. As if in compensation, instead of the shortened return to the refrain in Marais's original Burmester gives his entire twenty-measure refrain unchanged and in full.

Ex. 4. "Gavotte" by "Lully," as it appears in Burmester's *Stücke alter Meister*.



It may also be noted that Burmester alters the descending minor scales of the central section from the original melodic (raised seventh and sixth degrees) form, found in bars 30 and 34 of Marais, to the harmonic (raised seventh but lowered sixth degree, creating an augmented second between these scale notes) (Brown, 29). This is worthy of mention as an analogous alteration of pitch material by another hand occurs in the trio (Bourrée II) of the Bourrée by J.S. Bach that concludes Book 3 of the Suzuki Violin School.

Ernest Heim's version of this "Gavotte" contained in Volume 5 of *Palaestra*, which appeared at roughly the same time, shares some characteristics with the Burmester arrangement but makes fewer cuts and abbreviations, though it can hardly be called an *Urtext* (Heim, Book 5a, 21). A similar piano accompaniment appears in place of the original second gamba part and the scales in the middle section are likewise altered to the harmonic form. The arrangement is credited to Friedrich Hermann, who created several others that eventually made it into the Suzuki Violin School, including the Bourrée in Book 3 discussed below.

The Suzuki Violin School version clearly derives from the Burmester but makes further changes, transposing the piece to A minor from D minor to avoid the solo violin having to go higher than first position, except for one C6. Since this lowers the music a fourth, most of the left-hand octaves are omitted in the piano part. In addition, most of the ornaments added in Burmester's arrangement are deleted except for the extended cadential trills, whose cadences they elaborate are not in Marais.

Bach, J.S. Bourrée in G major (Suzuki Violin School, Volume 3)

Original version: two Bourrées from the Suite for solo cello in C major, BWV 1009. To track the journey of this composition to Suzuki's method book, another important and perhaps more well-known figure in nineteenth-century string playing and pedagogy must be mentioned. The German violinist and composer Ferdinand David (1810-1873) is probably best known today for his role in shaping the violin part of Felix Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto (Bachmann, 350). His *Die Hohe Schule des Violinspiels* [The High School of Violin Playing] (1867) provided fertile source material for Suzuki. The Sonata in E minor by Veracini in David's collection was included without alteration in Volume 8 of the Suzuki Violin School, and Suzuki's edition of Corelli's *La Folia* sonata in D minor that opens Volume 6 is a simplified and abbreviated version of the arrangement by David included in his collection.

The influence that David's work had on the composition that concludes the third volume of the Suzuki Violin School, the Bourrée by J.S. Bach, is less well known. The history begins with the violinist crafting transcriptions for violin of the six suites for unaccompanied cello by Bach, published by Gustav Heinze around 1866 (David).

The differences in David's violin version as compared to the cello original in the Bourrées from the third suite are numerous and not confined to articulation and bowing. His pitch alterations from Bach's original are especially striking. In bar 22 of the first Bourrée the final eighth note in the original is F3, the fourth scale degree, and appears as such in most editions. In transposing his violin version to G major from C major David renders the corresponding note as D5, the fifth scale degree (dominant) instead of C4, the fourth (subdominant).

More notable still are differences in the second Bourrée in the parallel minor key, C minor in the original. In keeping with the practice of his time Bach used a key signature of two flats (B and E-flat) for this key instead of the

three (B, E and A-flat) which subsequently became standard. He added A-flats as accidentals into the score when needed. According to the original manuscript source material, a copy by Bach's wife Anna Magdalena, the composer did *not* indicate an A-flat in the descending scales in measures 2 and 20, which thus use what is now called the melodic form of the minor scale, with both sixth and seventh degrees the same as in the parallel major. In addition, this copy does not indicate an A-flat in the ascending scale in measure 4 (a scan of this copy is available at <https://www.bach-digital.de>).

Ex. 5. J.S. Bach: Bourrée II from Suite in C major, BWV 1009. Asterisks indicate pitches altered in David's and other transcriptions.



David's transcription, which as already mentioned transposes the Suite into G major, also uses two flats in the key signature of the second Bourrée in accordance with what by then had become standard practice. To transcribe Bach's original exactly, therefore, he would have needed to raise the sixth scale degree E-flat to E-natural with accidentals in the measures discussed above. He did not do this, thus altering the scales in measures 2 and 20 to the so-called harmonic minor form and introducing a harsh augmented second between the sixth and seventh scale degrees (E-flat to F-sharp) in both cases. David likewise lowered the A-natural of the scale in measure 4, rendering it as E-flat in his transcription.

Ex. 6. J.S. Bach: Bourrée II from Suite no. 3, transcribed for violin by Ferdinand David, who lowered the pitches marked with asterisks from the original.



The edition by Heinze describes David's arrangements of the Cello Suites as "preliminary studies for the great violin sonatas of this master," i.e. the unaccompanied Sonatas and Partitas. The title page also advertises piano accompaniments by Friedrich Hermann. Upon examination Hermann's piano part to the Bourrées, later reprinted by Peters, is strikingly similar to that in the Suzuki Violin School volume, with only minor differences in ties and other articulation markings (Hermann).

The transcription by David/Hermann also appears to be the source for the arrangement in the collection by Albert Wier, *Violin Pieces the Whole World Plays*, whose first edition appeared in 1916. The violin part in Wier follows David almost exactly with only small changes in the bowing, and the piano part likewise copies the Hermann version (Wier, 28-30). (Allen Lieb notes that an edition by E.L. Winn published by Carl Fischer in 1910 also is a reproduction of David/Hermann, though the violin bowing here is more elaborate.)

One oddity of the editions by Wier and Winn is the retitling of these movements as *Loure*. This name also appears in Robert Schumann's arrangements of the cello suites for cello and piano. A misreading of the original dance title may have happened at some early stage: the word "bourée" appears spelled with a single "r" in Anna Magdalena's copy, and an elaborately calligraphed "B" might have been confused with an "L." Although the *Loure* is also a Baroque dance--examples in Bach include the fifth French Suite for keyboard and the third Partita for solo violin--it is entirely different in meter and character from the Bourrée.

Suzuki's version of these Bourrées, with wrong pitches and added piano accompaniment, thus likely derives from the mid-nineteenth century arrangement by Ferdinand David and Friedrich Hermann, possibly by way of Albert Wier and/or E.L. Winn (see Brown, 31. My conclusion differs from hers).

The above examples trace the histories of three of the pieces contained in the Suzuki Violin School. Further research remains to be done on the many sources from which Shinichi Suzuki compiled, revised and ordered his now universally known and taught repertoire. Without denigrating Dr. Suzuki's unique insight in sequencing his materials, tracing the processes by which these compositions attained their final forms will enlighten not only scholars, but instructors and students as well. In addition, the multiple performers, arrangers, and editors who provided his source material deserve recognition and acknowledgement for their contributions, however belated.

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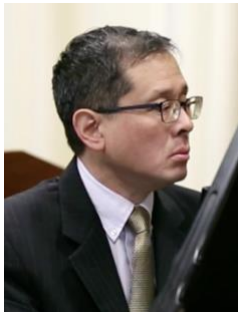
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Kiyoshi Tamagawa, Professor Emeritus of Music at Southwestern University in Georgetown, TX, has performed as a soloist and collaborative pianist throughout North America, Europe and Asia. With the late violinist Eugene Fodor he performed over thirty recitals and recorded a CD, *Witches' Brew*. Dr. Tamagawa is a past recipient of the Collegiate Teaching Award of the Texas Music Teachers' Association, and the 2016 Third Prize Winner of the American Prize Lorin Hollander Piano Concerto Award competition. His book *Echoes from the East: The Javanese Gamelan and its Influence on the Music of Claude Debussy* was published in 2019. Since leaving Southwestern in 2024 he has continued to teach independently. His students have attained the highest ratings and won top awards at local and state competitions. His Suzuki piano training was with Jeanne Luedke, Bruce Anderson, Martha Stacy and Yasuko Joichi.

Preucil School of Music Celebrates 50 Years of Suzuki Education

Throughout this past year, the Preucil School of Music in Iowa City, Iowa, has been celebrating this special milestone in the best way - through music. Preucil students have been highlighted in numerous performances. Alumni, friends and faculty have collaborated for recital in the community. Former faculty returned to teach and inspire current students.

On February 2, 2025, close to 90 alumni returned to join with students and faculty in the School's Hancher Auditorium to celebrate Doris and William Preucil's vision and dedication in establishing this community music school. "Serenade for String Orchestra and Piano," was commissioned from a Preucil School alumnus Peter Bloesch in recognition of the 50th Anniversary concert.

The ISA joins with all those celebrating this significant anniversary both honoring the work of the Preucil and the enduring Suzuki legacy.

Jason Aird, President of the Preucil Board of Trustees, and an alumnus himself writes, "We send a special thank you to Doris and Bill Preucil for making their vision a reality. They truly have embraced the philosophies of Shinichi Suzuki, creating not only outstanding musicians, but also outstanding people. There will never be enough thanks for the magic that Doris and Bill created, but we hope to honor their dedication and hard work by continuing to pass on the love of music for many generations to come."



The Iowa City Suzuki String Ensemble, 1971.



After 50+ years of playing the violin and 30 of them inhabiting all 3 points of the Suzuki triangle-student, teacher, parent-I can say with certainty that it's NEVER been just about learning to play the instrument. Dr. Suzuki's focus on nurturing beautiful hearts through music, and, as a Suzuki teacher, being part of the village raising a child, is the most meaningful aspect of the Suzuki Method. This has held true throughout my life, first as a student studying with Sonja and then Doris, as a teacher connecting with children of all ages and stages, and as a parent helping my kiddos learn how to learn and find meaning in making beautiful music. It's a gift that continues to nurture me to this day.

-Margaret Soper Gutierrez, Class of 1985

My Suzuki training at the Preucil School has had a prolific effect on my development as a person. The skills I learned through the study of my instrument continue to guide me through life, helping me to work through challenges, find meaningful relationships everywhere I go, and strive for the goals I have for the future.

-Adam Zeithamel, Class of 2023



The 8th Asia Suzuki Music Conference in Deoksan, South Korea



Kyungik Hwang; President of Korea Suzuki Association

The 8th Suzuki Music Conference was held in Deoksan, Korea from January 6 to 10, 2025.

This event featured 1,100 participants and over 50 instructors in violin, cello, and piano.

The conference offered a variety of programs, including group lessons by level, five orchestras by levels, violin, cello ensembles, individual lessons, Suzuki teacher seminars, and parent education. In addition, diverse concerts such as the Welcome Concert, Gala Concert, Faculty Concert, Twilight Concert, Afternoon Concert, and Ensemble Concert provided opportunities for participants from different countries to share music and make lasting friendships within the Suzuki philosophy.



I wanted to thank you for an amazing conference. I feel honored to be invited and thank you deeply for this. The level of teaching, music making and devotion of all of you was showing through every single event and moment. Environment in creation! Suzuki Talent Education in its best. Thank you for everything you do. Where love is deep, much can be achieved. With much love, Zohara, Piano Faculty, Australia



A heartfelt thank you to everyone for making the 8th Asia Suzuki Conference in Korea such a memorable experience. Special thanks to Anthony for handling all the administrative details, answering our questions, ensuring our registration was smooth, and getting us safely on the bus. To the teachers, thank you for guiding the

students through practices, rehearsals, and performances with such dedication. And thank you for encouraging us to sign up, wanting the kids to be inspired and grow. To all the kids, you are amazing -- putting in the effort and time to practice, always striving to do better, and giving your all in every performance. And to the parents, your support, teamwork, and ability to bravely face those "throw face" moments made everything run more smoothly than we could have imagined. Despite the fluid plans and unexpected changes, we all learned to go with the flow—such is life. Grateful for the shared effort and the unforgettable experience!

-Parents, Singapore





Opening Concert

My name is Anica, I am 11 years old and I will share my thoughts and experience about the Suzuki Asia Conference. First of all, I want to explain about the conference. It happens every three years and almost all of the countries in Asia unite together in one Asian country and they perform and learn from each other. I learned a lot of things from this year's conference.. I learned some new techniques and how to make my sound better. I also learned how to play more confidently. I also enjoyed so many things in this conference. The classes were very fun because the teachers were very interactive. I had fun playing along and being with other nationalities because we are united through music. I also enjoyed representing the Philippines by performing in the opening concert, ensemble concert, and farewell concert. I was also very proud to see other Filipinos performing as well in the concerts. I also enjoyed watching the other nationalities perform. The students and the faculties were very inspiring and outstanding. I also enjoyed the hotel very much. The staff were very friendly, the rooms were big and clean, the hotel amenities such as the arcade, the cafe, and the photo booth were very fun, the view was wonderful, and the food was amazing! I really had a great time tasting Korean food for 4 days. I would like to come back to the next camp because I'm very eager to learn more about music and to apply the lessons I learn. I'm also very excited to meet new people and to progress and mature in every camp.

-Anica, Student, Philippines



Poland hosts Ukrainian Suzuki Violin Workshop

Nataliia Koptienkova

On April 24-27, 2025, there was an extraordinary event - the first international workshop, which was organized by the Ukrainian National Suzuki Association (UNSA) abroad.

Ukrainian Violin Suzuki Workshop is a project that has gathered more than 100 participants, Ukrainian and Lithuanian children, their parents, and teachers together.

The venue was the Centrum Wydpoczynku "Jordanova", where nature itself inspired the participants.

Young Ukrainian violinists came not only from Ukraine but also from Poland, Italy, Finland, Germany, and Austria, with whom we had the opportunity to communicate only online. So it was nice to hug each other and then to play together.

We were joined by students from Lithuania.

We thank the parents of Suzuki Metodo Centras (Vilnius) for doing their best to their children to be with us. Participants were from Ivano-Frankivsk, from the city of Sumy, from Kyiv, Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Ternopil regions and from the city of Kyiv.

We had almost three days that were filled with individual lessons and rehearsals of the ensembles and the orchestra.



These classes with Ukrainian and Lithuanian students were conducted by teachers from different countries - Peter Nys (Belgium), Anna Podhajska (Poland), Jana Hrabáňová (Czech Republic), Jelena Bojarun (Lithuania), and Sofiia Fedorovych (Iceland/Ukraine).



Ukrainian teachers Mariia Herasymenko, Antonina Hordovska (Kyiv) and Sofiia Dimitriiieva (Ivano-Frankivsk) conducted interesting and useful art therapy classes and classes of studying musical theory using the games (Music Mind Games).

Olena Obydenkova (Kyiv) and Olha Shymova (Odesa) were piano accompanists at this event and did everything possible to help the participants confidently feel on stage during solo performances and at the final concert.



The final concert of the Ukrainian Violin Suzuki Workshop took place on the stage of Miejski Ośrodek Kultury in the city of Nowy Sącz.



The workshop's orchestra, which was conducted by Peter Nys, was the first on stage and performed the "Ode to Joy" by L. Beethoven. This piece is the anthem of the European Union, which was very symbolic.

After the participants performed arrangements of Ukrainian songs, pieces from the repertoire of Shinichi Suzuki. The ensemble of Lithuanian students with teacher Jelena Bojarun performed the work of the Lithuanian composer M. Ciurlionis "Mazurka".

The event is over, but we are still impressed. All these days we were united and strong because we were together. Thank you to everyone who joined this event!



During this difficult period, it is very important for Ukrainian children and their families to be able to support each other.

We do not know if music will really save the world, but we will do everything possible to ensure that Ukrainian children remember such wonderful moments of playing together on their little Violins.

The Power of Collaboration: European Suzuki Teacher Trainers Conference, Vilnius Lithuania

Margaret Parkin

There is a special feeling of community when groups of Suzuki Teachers meet since, wherever we come from, we feel as though we are stepping away from busy schedules to spend time with good friends for a few days. We talk about our students, our teaching, share ideas, find solutions and all of this is wrapped up with lots of laughter and being filled with a renewed sense of energy and purpose. Such was the experience of attending the recent European Suzuki Teacher Trainers Conference which was held in Vilnius, Lithuania 18 – 20 April 2025.



The theme for the conference was 'The Power of Collaboration' and from the start, this focus was evident. Delegates were treated on the first evening to heart-warming performances given collaboratively by the students of our Lithuanian colleagues; instruments included Violin, Piano, Guitar, and Flute.



Conference sessions, presented over Saturday and Sunday, included a wide array of topics focusing on various aspects of Teacher Training including Philosophy, Tonalization, Teaching Strategies, Book Reviews, various practicalities of Teacher Training, gathering thoughts around the content of both the Teacher Training and Examination Manuals, discussions on mentoring and ways of nurturing next generations of Instructors and Teacher Trainers.

There were opportunities to take part in thoughtful discussion groups which included Teacher Trainers, Instructors, Country Directors and Level 5 graduate teachers. Having teachers together who were at different stages in their own Suzuki journeys meant insights from a variety of perspectives could be offered to the benefit of all participants.

One of the most enjoyable parts of any Suzuki event is the opportunity we have to connect with colleagues and friends. Whether during sessions, in breaks, or after-hours social time, the chance to catch up with one another, discuss teaching, share ideas, and meet new people is an invaluable part of any gathering. This conference was no different.



There were many opportunities to sit together, unwind, and socialise over drinks and meals alongside time to explore the beautiful old town of Vilnius. Meeting together in ways which were inclusive of different generations, countries, and experiences led to fruitful and meaningful conversations, the value of which cannot be underestimated. At the heart of this conference was the spirit of coming together as an extended Suzuki family.

Our deep appreciation to Patricia Ruttimann, Sue Wimpenny, and the ESA Team for their meticulous planning, creativity, and care. Their vision for this conference gave a rich and thought-provoking experience for those who attended, and we left equipped with new ideas, connectedness, and renewed energy to continue in our work of upholding Dr. Suzuki's legacy.

The Power of Collaboration: Suzuki Teacher Training Beyond Procedures

Edith Code

- Teacher Trainer Manuals and Examinations - are there too many rules?
- Where did the manual and rules come from?
- Who should become a Teacher Trainer and how do we find the right people?
- How can we collaborate with other instruments on our courses and exams?

These are some of the questions that were explored at the recent European Suzuki Association Teacher Trainers Conference in the beautiful city of Vilnius, Lithuania, April 18-20, 2025. It was three days of inspiration and connecting/reconnecting with colleagues from 25 countries. The program was packed from morning to evening with presentations and group discussions, taking a look into the past, present and future of Suzuki Teacher Training.

There were 80 participants attending, and in the spirit of collaboration, it was not only Teacher Trainers who were invited. Instructors (soon to be Teacher Trainers), Level 5 Teachers (Teachers who have completed all the levels of training) and Country Directors (our link between ESA and the national associations) were invited as well. Most importantly, we also had ESA's Administrator, Sue Wimpney, who is essential to keeping the organisation running! This mix of participants allowed us to share our experiences from many different vantage points and for many of us this shed new light on the whole topic of Teacher Training.

The event started with a wonderful concert with Lithuanian students. Many thanks go out to the Suzuki Flute, Piano, Guitar and Violin students and Teachers of Lithuania who presented us with a beautifully prepared and very touching program where Lithuanian music was highlighted.

The program of the conference was well thought out by Patricia Rüttiman, alternating between presentations for the entire group, discussion groups with about 15 in each group, and smaller workshops/talks with 2-3 talks held simultaneously. This provided a good way to cover a subject from various angles.

The focus of the conference was very much on examining the structure of our Teacher Training Courses and in particular, the Teacher Training and Examination Manuals which ensure a uniform means of evaluation throughout the membership countries. But is the procedure too prescriptive? How do we balance freedom and flexibility for the individual Teacher Trainer against ensuring quality?

Other topics discussed included

- The roles of the Instructor, the Mentor and the ESA Instrument Committee on the Instructor's path to becoming a Teacher Trainer
- The importance of the Suzuki Early Childhood Education program as an integral element of the Suzuki community and a reminder of Dr Suzuki's vision to give every child an opportunity to develop their potential through quality music education from birth.
- Continuous Professional Development - should ESA provide courses and events for continuous professional development, and should these courses be required for maintaining membership? How proactive should ESA be in reaching all its members?

Fortunately, the planners also provided for time to be social and enjoy the company of our colleagues, which is always an important part of a conference! Thank you to the organisers for this inspirational weekend!

Children's Welcome Concert at ESA Teacher Trainers Conference

Lina Kasauskiene

The word “bendrystė” in the Lithuanian language dictionary is described as friendship, communication, and togetherness. *Bendrystė*, when created by listening to the voice of one's heart, expresses a belief in a beautiful future, because it helps shape a beautiful person. This belief gives meaning to everything we do together. Shared work and shared faith are like a light that makes hearts tremble with joy, and the sounds of music, filled with this trembling, touch each of us deeply, personally, and lift us above the everyday.

The concert that recently took place in Vilnius, where nearly a hundred children played various instruments, still resonates in our hearts. We began selecting the repertoire for it during our journey back from the European Suzuki Teachers Convention in Denmark. A small bus carried Guitar, Violin, and Piano Teachers. The journey was long, which gave us plenty of time to discuss. We all agreed to present music by Lithuanian composers—what remained was to choose the pieces and align them with the Suzuki repertoire.



The next stage was preparing the children. Naturally, the number of pianists was limited by the availability of instruments. However, more children could participate if they played string or wind instruments. Children from Vilnius, Kaunas, and Nemenčinė prepared for the concert. When the Violinists gathered for their first rehearsal in Kaunas, it became clear that there were quite a few participants.



We had to solve the puzzle of how to fit all the children beautifully into the conference hall, which also needed to accommodate the audience, Pianos, and children playing Guitars and Flutes. We went to the hotel and measured the space by walking it out, carefully planning the placement of instruments and the children's entrance and exit from the stage. As one conference participant later joked, "the 'choreography' of your concert was one of the best parts." That comment truly lifted our spirits.



Indeed, we received a wealth of heartfelt and touching feedback about the children's performance. Conference attendees were delighted by Lithuania's first Flute students, who performed a folk song, as well as the beautifully played Violins, Guitars, and the original Piano performances.



Shortly after, Teacher Trainer Guillem Calvo shared his impressions on Facebook: *“Loving the children’s tone, how it flowed effortlessly, all the different instruments (Violin, Piano, Guitar and Flute!) and Lithuanian repertoire. That last Twinkle—from singing to playing together—touched our hearts.”*

Our colleague from Kaunas, Elvyra Kriškčiūnienė, who came to hear the concert program, also praised the performance: *“It was a beautiful concert—from the thoughtfully chosen, engaging program to the well-groomed, well-prepared children and teachers. Everything was rehearsed and well thought-out. Excellent work.”*

Violin Teacher Jelena Bojarun, who prepared the children and participated in the concert, shared her reflections: *“The concert at the Artis Hotel was a warm and inspiring celebration that brought the entire Suzuki community together for a noble purpose. It was a wonderful opportunity to once again remember the essence of the Suzuki Method™ — to nurture the child through music and togetherness — and to strengthen the feeling that, by walking this path together, we can achieve so much more.”*

Suzuki Association President Violeta Ancienė shared her joy:

“I am truly pleased that the entire Lithuanian Suzuki community contributed to organizing this concert. The teachers worked with dedication, tirelessly devoting their time and energy to help their students learn the concert pieces. The children studied the music sincerely and patiently, rehearsed diligently, and gave their best. Parents, too, played an essential role — tirelessly driving their children to rehearsals, listening to teachers’ feedback, and making sure the children practiced at home. My heartfelt thanks to the entire Lithuanian Suzuki community.”

We are proud to have raised such a group of young musicians, whose beautiful sound brings joy not only to us. A beautiful sound reflects a beautiful soul.

The Conversation

The 2025 SAA Leadership Summit

Andrew Braddock



Charles Krigbaum (left) and Lionel Thomas (right) in conversation during the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit. Photo by Andrew Braddock.

A group of flutists chatted, laughed, discussed, and smiled with each other in a conference room in Atlanta. Sheet music, notebooks, coffee cups, and even chocolates spread across the round table. They shared ideas and stories, repertoire and teaching techniques, and even at one point, a flute came out for an impromptu performance of a student's composition, *MOMP* (Mouth Over Mouth Piece), by Ilaria Hawley, a former student of Zara Lawler. While this session was officially entitled "Sustaining the Vision for Twenty-First Century Suzuki Flutists," it was, in its essence, something more straightforward, more human, more effective: a conversation. It perfectly encapsulated the spirit of the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit, and I'm not just saying so because they had chocolate (although that always helps!).

Over three days in March, Suzuki teachers from across the Americas gathered in Atlanta to participate in this one, long conversation. Like any conversation, the Leadership Summit had its own rhythms, from standout moments (such as the keynote plenary sessions), to improvised chats (breakout sessions), difficult discussions (navigating generational change), and business to take care of (workshop sessions). Throughout it all, what shaped the Summit wasn't the specific information exchanged, but rather the gathering, the dialogue, and the ideas sparked from just being together. Angelica Cortez, the Executive Director of the SAA, put it best during the week's concluding session when she emphasized the importance of being together in real life, of capturing the energy of in-person contact to reaffirm our determination to reach all children in all regions of the SAA.

There were certainly brilliant sessions with a clear, lecture-like format, many of which I'll cover below. But rather than simply being a "stand-and-deliver" kind of conference, the Summit embodied the ebb and flow of conversation, of dialogue, of rolling up our sleeves and getting to work.



Zara Lawler's impromptu performance her former student Ilaria Hawley's composition, MOMP (Mouth Over Mouth Piece), during the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit. Photo by Andrew Braddock.

The Conversation Begins

A good conversation begins with an introduction, a way of easing in, rather than a pre-scripted, formal launch. The Leadership Summit did just that, with the Thursday afternoon Welcome Reception (snacks included!). It was the perfect way to gather, see old and new friends, and to connect that Zoom-boxed face to the real, living person—all free from any agendas or details to cover. It immediately defined the person-to-person, connective nature of the Summit, much more so than a keynote lecture or 8:00 a.m. convocation.

The Suzuki Training Committee (STC) Office Hours session on Friday morning exemplified the Summit's blend of pedagogical insight, detail-driven work, and exchange of ideas. Moderators Sachiko Isihara and Danette Warren framed the discussion as an "open-mic with Teacher Trainers" with a general idea of "growing skills as a Suzuki ambassador and developing yourself as a teacher." They fielded questions about work/life balance in a healthy studio, creating meaningful programs and institutions, and surrounding oneself with exciting teachers and colleagues. They then transitioned into covering the incredible, and honestly, staggering amount of work going on in the STC, including developments in the Certificate of Achievement, alignment with international training credentials, and more.

A session in a typical conference would end there, but what happened next is what gave the Leadership Summit its unique flavor. Attendees split into three discussion groups, posted around the hallways, bringing the conversation to a more personal level. Charles Krigbaum's group dove headlong into credentialing details and the SAA's organizational functions (see his article later in the issue of the *ASJ* for a crystallization of his ideas). James Hutchins and Judy Bossuat-Gallic led an amiable chat perched on sofas and armchairs. The beauty of these breakout conversations is that they allowed for a free exchange of ideas—further-out, creative, and experimental ideas that might not emerge if they depended on someone raising their hand in a conference room crowded with 100 strangers.



Judy Bossuat-Gallic among friends at the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit. Photo by Andrew Braddock.

Creating the Future

Envisioning the future of Suzuki was a major theme of the Leadership Summit. In his session “Building for the Future,” Edward Kreitman clarified the focus of our weekend-long conversation: “Having a vision is good, but realizing it is better.” While the wisdom shared throughout the Summit in this realm would fill a dozen issues of the *ASJ*, I’d like to highlight two sessions that showcased the incredible opportunities for the growth of the Suzuki Method.

Moderated by pianist Annette Lee, the panel discussion “Big and Little Meet in the Middle” gathered Suzuki teachers from a wide variety of instructional areas: Zara Lawler (flute), Amelia Seyssel (voice), Kyra Sovronsky (trumpet), and Mary Halverson Waldo (recorder). As each teacher shared their unique pathway with Suzuki, their stories were nevertheless bound together by a sense of discovery that taps into the core, foundational principles of the Suzuki movement: creativity, flexibility, and passion. Amelia Seyssel pinpointed the sentiment, remarking, “We as small instruments are in the same position that the violin was when the Suzuki Method first began: nobody believed children could do this!” They shared nimble ways of introducing Suzuki to their community, including using *Twinkle Variations* to illustrate teaching points in high school brass sectionals, or Meret Bitticks’s book *Working with Young Flutists* for its Suzuki approach. Their creativity and group solidarity inspire hope for the growth of the method.

In terms of the number of instructional contact hours, in-school education offers unparalleled opportunities for achieving the goals of the Suzuki Method. Teacher Trainers Winifred Crock and Laurie Scott shared a detailed and actionable framework of Suzuki in the Schools in their wide-ranging presentation. As Scott reminded us, the concept of review is baked into classroom education: “The idea that you’re starting from scratch every day, circling back, and revisiting.” This method of instruction allows teachers to separate the strands of learning—technical skills, musical skills, literacy skills, and ensemble skills—and cycle through them regularly. The detail, design, and systematic rigor of Crock and Scott’s approach to Suzuki in the Schools situates Suzuki pedagogy as a pillar of strength in our current, volatile education climate.



Winifred Crock (right) and Laurie Scott (left) present about Suzuki in the Schools at the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit. Photo by Andrew Braddock.

Large and Small Conversations

Two plenary sessions gathered all participants of the Leadership Summit, with the first addressing the “Suzuki” aspect of the Summit, and the second addressing the “Leadership” element. Historian Eri Hotta, author of the recent book *Suzuki: The Man and His Dream to Teach the Children of the World*, drew our attention to Suzuki’s past as we look to the future of Suzuki. (See Hotta’s article in *ASJ* Vol. 51, no. 2 for more.) In her Friday evening address, she approached “knowing” Suzuki through three angles: 1) The personal, as a former Suzuki parent; 2) The historical, as a student of early-twentieth-century history and international relations; and 3) The present, as someone engaged with current Suzuki practitioners. Because we were in Atlanta, she noted that Suzuki was made an honorary citizen of Atlanta in 1979, as well as Atlanta’s connections with US President Jimmy Carter, whose daughter was a Suzuki violin student, and who Suzuki met in 1977.

Her historical lens zoomed in on the 1930s as a period that particularly shaped Suzuki’s educational philosophy. It was an era of deep political unrest, unpredictability, and social division—much like our current time. Though not a particularly spiritual person, she found that her study of Suzuki and her countless conversations with Suzuki teachers were a way of channeling Suzuki and his music. Heads nodded throughout the audience in agreement as she created a new kinship between historian and music teachers.

After the broad, historical perspective of Hotta’s address, Stefanie Faye’s plenary talk on Saturday morning brought the Summit’s focus to an elemental and personal level. Faye drew on her background as a neuroscientist to elucidate how our internal states affect our interactions with others. Citing a famous study, she pointed out that a genuine smile moves muscles around our eyes, so it cannot be faked, and that the “physical signs we emit are reflections of our internal state.” Through crystal-clear demonstrations—using subtle changes of voice, or slightly shifted body position—Faye showed how minute adjustments can help us guide and positively interact with others. Her emphasis on responding to others and our physical presence dovetailed beautifully with Yumi Kendall’s earlier positive psychology session, and it also resonated with the inclusive approaches presented in Christine Goodner and Tamara Gonzalez’s session, “Unlocking Strengths of Neurodivergent Learners.” Taken as a whole, these two plenary addresses offered a circumspect view of our role in both continuing a pedagogical tradition and leading others.



Executive Director
Angelica Cortez
addressing attendees at
the 2025 SAA Leadership
Summit. Photo by Andrew
Braddock.

Teaching, Learning, and Working

In any conversation between music educators, technical and practical teaching topics will most certainly arise. While these weren't the primary mission of the Leadership Summit, there were still plenty of insightful teaching ideas to take in. The "Tone Session" typified the blending of the collaborative and teaching elements at the Summit. Cellist Bruce Walker moderated a multi-instrumental panel that featured Daniel Gee Cordova (violin), Sachiko Isihara (piano), and Kyra Sovronsky (trumpet). The panelists shared teaching videos, discussed their pedagogies, and demonstrated on their instruments, showing the immense value of learning from all instruments, not just your own. As Isihara aptly said, "tone must be intentional."

Similarly, Caroline Fraser's session "Beyond Review, Toward Refinement" at once continued Suzuki teachers' long-standing engagement with the concept of review, while also broadening it to include all aspects of a student's study. Her positioning that "each lesson is a process of refining each piece," instead of just a run-through, emphasized the continual development and renewal of artistry made possible by review. She shared pedagogical touchstones such as "If you want the child to do it at home, you must hear it at the lesson," that, no matter how often I hear them, continue to refine and sharpen my own teaching.

Beyond musical pedagogy, many sessions offered useful tools for professional development. Charles Krigbaum reminded us that "marketing isn't about selling—it's about connecting" in his session "Marketing 101." He underlined that recruitment doesn't end when the student enrolls, and that teachers must work actively to retain their students. I was particularly struck by his emphasis that parents *need to be taught* how to observe lessons and how to see progress. This allows them to see that things are working, even if incrementally, and builds commitment to your studio. Krigbaum's session fit hand-in-hand with Beth Guerriero's "Nonprofits 101," in which she covered the practical matters of running nonprofit companies and managing boards. She emphasized the importance of not only having a distinct vision for your organization but being able to easily explain it in a few sentences.

Members of the SAA team were active throughout the weekend, sharing their work and engaging in conversation with all attendees. Erin Rushforth, in her role as the Learning Manager of the SAA, led several sessions centered on Teacher Trainers: an orientation for new Teacher Trainers, a packed session with April Losey on becoming a Teacher Trainer, and a vision of the future of Teacher Training with James Hutchins. She was later joined by Angelica Cortez (Executive Director), Dalanie Harris (Marketing and Events Manager), and Laura Yasuda (Director of Operations) to present their vision of the organization's future. All of this, along with multiple presentations from the Board, offered a complete and full-bodied portrait of the SAA's important work.

An overflow audience at the final session, led by Trina Christensen, at the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit. Photo by Andrew Braddock.



An End, and an Assignment

Like any good teaching segment, the 2025 SAA Leadership Summit concluded with a beautiful summary . . . and an assignment. It wasn't scales (thankfully); rather, it was a call to bring this weekend-long conversation to our communities at home. Trina Christensen led an overflow audience in reflecting upon the Summit. Similar to much of the weekend, this session was a way to continue our long conversation. Christensen introduced discussion topics and set timers for attendees to gather and discuss each idea. As each timer went off, the conversations continued, and she eventually had to interrupt and quiet everyone down.

After three days full of ideas, dialogue, and conversation, there was still so much left to say. That's as hopeful a sign as any for Suzuki's Bright, Bold Future.



Andrew Braddock is the editor of the *American Suzuki Journal*, and was previously the editor of the *Journal of the American Viola Society*. He teaches viola at Western Kentucky University and serves as the co-director of the WKU String Academy. In the summers, he directs the Hilltop String Festival and teaches at the Indiana University Summer String Academy. He is the principal violist of the Paducah Symphony Orchestra and regularly performs with the Nashville Symphony. For his recordings, writings, presentations, arrangements, and more, visit andybraddock.com.

Guitar Ensemble at the SAA Leadership Summit

MaryLou Roberts

At the 2025 SAA Summit, the guitar coordinator, Manuela Iparraguirre expressed interest in a guitar performance to bring the community together. It was a very short time to prepare, about 2 months, and we didn't know who would be available. The shorter preparation time seems to be happening more often, so here is how we put together a guitar ensemble performance in a short time. I have been exploring the idea of creating an ensemble experience with the Suzuki repertoire pieces. The newer students can then participate and be a part of the bigger sound of an ensemble.

The first step was to find the students and teachers in the area. Once we knew who was available, we had less than 2 months to prepare. I proposed some pieces that would work at a meeting on Zoom. The first was Aunt Rhody followed by Aunt Rhody in the Country with a Travis picking folk pattern, and Aunt Rhody in Arabia with an A flat and E flat melodically and pizzicato in the accompaniment. I recorded the accompaniment for the teachers to play and help prepare the students with the new sounds. This strategy was also used in accompaniment to Greensleeves and Nonesuch.

Another way to make a longer piece that included the book 1 students was to pair two pieces A B A. This works with Fuhrmann Tanz from book 1 and La Volta from book 5. Both have a D tuning ostinato of D A D. The newer students play, then listen to an advanced piece, then have to listen to come back in. I love this La Volta from the Italian Renaissance; it is also in Respighi's "Ancient Aires and Dances". Everyone played the Tanz, and the teachers and one student played La Volta.



We had video preparation, teacher accompaniment shared, and a short motivating program, with one partial rehearsal the night before, and 30 minutes before the concert! We did tonalizations to get our group together. A partial rehearsal was very helpful to get a heads up on helping the students be more supported, with seating adjustments and placing the teachers in the most helpful places. Everyone enjoyed getting together, and the teachers met new colleagues. Thanks to the SAA for creating opportunities to collaborate on such a meaningful experience. Thanks to the teachers Olivia Weber, Alejandro Olson and Manuela Imparraguirre for preparing students and performing with the group!

39th Suzuki International Festival in Lima, Peru, January 6–8, 2025

Caroline Fraser

Toward a bright and bold future: What does that mean? For me, it means nurturing those around us, reaching out beyond our own community to ensure that more and more children can benefit from the wonderful, all-embracing philosophy of Shinichi Suzuki. Knowing that developing every child's potential is our responsibility, that a child's development depends on the environment, and that we will shape that environment—this knowledge and our action change lives! With the 39th Suzuki International Festival held in Lima, Peru in January 2025, the Suzuki Association of Peru (ASP) sought to embody the Suzuki philosophy and extend it to our entire community.

Festival Overview

Our thanks first go to the school, “Colegio de la Inmaculada,” which gave us the use of its outstanding facilities. Thanks also to donations from a group of San Francisco Bay Area piano teachers, which allowed us to offer scholarships to teachers and students, and to the SAA for economic and administrative support. Our festival would not be possible without ongoing financial assistance.

Many thanks also to the ASP team: the hard-working ASP Festival Committee; director Luciana Castillo; administrator Maria Pia Beltrán; Festival coordinators Roberta Centurión and Annika Petrozzi; Nayat Cardenas, Kio Cardenas, Nico Ponce, and Caroline Fraser; to our ASP treasurer of more than 40 years, Adriana Paliza, who was helping virtually, and to all of the supporting office staff and the ASP Board of Directors.

This year, we offered several courses aimed at the wider musical community, thereby exposing new teachers and musicians to the Suzuki approach and to the work of our Association. These successful courses were: Alexander Technique, with Clara Sandler (Argentina/USA); Orchestral Conducting (2 levels), with Dario Dominguez (Argentina); Group Instruction, with José Marcio Galvao (Brazil); Recorder for Classroom Teachers, with Kathleen Schoen (Canada); and Early Childhood Music with Roxana del Barco (Peru).

In addition, we offered Filosofía with Caroline Fraser and unit courses in cello with David Evenchick (Canada), guitar with Diana Chagalj (Argentina), piano with Flor Canelo (Peru), and violin with Fernando Piñero (Argentina). Cello, recorder, piano, and violin students participated in master classes, group classes, workshops, and performances.



Pianists Talía, Juan Pablo, Siwara Mercado, and Ana Sofia performing the Bach Concerto for Four Pianos at the 39th Suzuki International Festival in Lima, Peru.

A Concerto for Four Pianos!

This year, four piano students of Flor Canelo from the Cusco Suzuki Association, Qantu, had the opportunity to perform a movement of Bach's piano concerto for four pianos in A minor with a teachers' orchestra. Here is what they wrote from Cusco.

Siwara Mercado Oróz writes:

With great affection, I thank the teachers and the association for the scholarship, which made my attendance at the festival much easier. I had a very enriching experience thanks to the organization and the teachers from whom I learned immensely. It is also unforgettable to have shared the stage with the teachers' orchestra, and how my pianist friends and I were welcomed by them and the community. They were beautiful days.

Ana Sofia writes:

I would like to thank the entire Suzuki Association of Peru for this wonderful experience. Having had the opportunity to participate with my friends for the first time using a much more advanced book from the Method has been very interesting, and I learned many new topics that are incredibly important to me. I deeply appreciate all the amazing teachers who taught us with so much patience and dedication. I am also profoundly grateful for the great opportunity we had to perform Bach's Concerto for Four Pianos. We were able to grow so much in such a short time, and I felt very welcomed. I'm also left eager to continue learning more with them. This is why the scholarship they provided us has been so special, as without it, none of this would have been possible. It greatly facilitated access to this experience.

Juan Pablo writes:

It was an incredible and beautiful experience, filled with adrenaline and laughter everywhere. Obviously, I feel very grateful for the support we received, as I will undoubtedly treasure this amazing experience, surrounded by great musicians and people, until the day I die.

Talía Beltrán writes:

The Suzuki 2025 festival has been one of the experiences I have enjoyed the most this summer. The scholarship granted by the Association made it possible to travel with the four-piano project which I have with my friends. This project grew in the company of the Suzuki teachers' orchestra and with Dario, the conductor of the orchestra. At the same time, having the opportunity to take the other courses, such as the master classes, where we were able to analyze and discuss in greater depth the pieces of the later piano books, understanding the manner of interpretation at a more advanced level and finding enjoyment in it, enriched this whole experience.

Congratulations, Talía, Siwara, Ana Sofia, Juan Pablo, and your teacher, Director of Qantu, Flor Canelo! This spectacular performance took place during a final concert when, in addition, all forty piano students played solos in under an hour. The evening and festival ended with a heartfelt performance of Astor Piazzolla's *Adios Nonino*, given by Unit Three violin teacher participants and friends, directed by Fernando Piñero.



Suzuki violinists performing at the final concert of the 39th Suzuki International Festival in Lima, Peru.

Views from the Festival

This in-person festival was a wonderful coming together of many old friends, and it was an excellent opportunity to make new ones. In total, 280 students with their parents and 120 teachers attended. We had participation from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, and many regions of Peru—from the Andes, the jungle, and the coast.

We held a one-day, well-attended Teacher's Encuentro, in which we shared our dreams for the future. Yes, our "bright and bold future"! It was exhilarating to see many teachers taking the lead in presenting ideas for future collaborative projects, some of which are already on their way to fruition. Direct results of that one-day get-together include a National ASP Workshop will take place in Huánuco, a city in the Peruvian Andes, close to the jungle, in October; a celebration of 20 years of Suzuki in Paraguay will take place in Asunción in August, organized by an international group of teachers, "Promesa"; and the ASP Peru Festival Committee (members living in Brazil, Finland, USA, Peru) is already working towards celebrating the 40th Suzuki International Festival in January 2026. In all these events—in Huánuco, in Asunción, and in Lima—Filosofía will be one of the course offerings. This course changes hearts and changes lives.



Caroline Fraser leading the Filosofía course at the 39th Suzuki International Festival in Lima, Peru.

The remainder of this article shares some views from teachers and participants at the 39th Suzuki International Festival. First, Ruben Solano, a piano and recorder teacher from Huancavelica, high in the Peruvian Andes, writes:

I want to thank those responsible for the financial help via scholarships for my process of training and musical education in this prestigious and wonderful method of the mother tongue, the Suzuki Method. I am the seventh child of a large family of eleven siblings, none of whom are musicians, not even my parents. My passion for music began at the age of twelve when I first saw a piano at my high school; at the age of fifteen, I began to have piano lessons with Father Carlos López. When I finished high school, one of my dreams was to study music professionally, but it was not possible due to lack of economic resources, because of the size of my family.

In 2009, I was teaching recorder in my town, Huancavelica, and thanks to Father William López, a member of the ASP, I was invited to take the Suzuki Philosophy course in Lima, made possible through a scholarship from the ASP. From that moment, my wonderful musical life began. Later, I took the piano courses through Book Five, and recorder and cello Book One. For each course, I had financial support from the ASP, for which I am eternally grateful. From that moment on, in Huancavelica, Peru, I have been spreading the Suzuki philosophy, in recorder and piano.

I am thankful that, in 2014, two of my recorder students and I traveled to the SAA Biannual Conference in Minneapolis, USA. My students performed in the Latin American Ensemble. It was an unimaginable and unthinkable experience for my students and for me. We also had financial support from the SAA.

Thank you very much to the Suzuki community and benefactors for the financial support you provide to the teachers. I especially thank you for the support you gave me; you changed my life into a musical life. Thank you!

Daniel Manriquez writes from Iquitos, a city in the Peruvian Amazon jungle in the department of Loreto, who came to Lima with a delegation of 17 students and parents.

Receiving the scholarship for the Youth Orchestra Conducting course at the Suzuki International Festival 2025 has been a transformative opportunity both for my professional development and for the growth of my orchestra project in the department of Loreto. The orchestral management strategies I learned have helped me to optimize the processes of my project in Loreto, achieving greater cohesion in the group and a

more solid advance in the musical level of the participants. This experience has not only elevated my capacity as a teacher and conductor, but has also strengthened my commitment to music education in my region. The Suzuki approach, with its emphasis on learning from empathy and motivation, has enriched my teaching methodology, allowing me to better connect with my students and foster a more inclusive and stimulating musical environment. I am deeply grateful to the Suzuki International Festival Lima 2025 for this invaluable opportunity, which will undoubtedly continue to have a positive impact on my work and on the lives of many young musicians from Loreto.

Finally, Yuko Hiramata, a Suzuki piano teacher from San Francisco, attended the Peru Festival for the first time, giving master classes and observing courses and performances.

Yuko writes:

A group of students played recorders so beautifully. Many came from a seminary in Huancavelica, a remote city in the high Andean mountains. Padre Roosevelt was once a boy in the seminary learning to play the recorder. He now teaches there using the Suzuki approach, creating the next generation of musicians and possible teachers. I saw people giving back to the community what they had received.

I saw something most beautiful at the Suzuki Peru festival. Music traveled across borders. Teachers from various Latin American countries and students from all over Peru—Cusco and Huancavelica in the Andean mountains, Iquitos in the jungle, Puno, near Lake Titicaca, and the capital city on the coast, Lima—were all together making beautiful music. Their families watched proudly.

Suzuki programs existed in a few Latin American countries in the 1970s. When the Suzuki Association of Peru started to offer training through the annual Peru International Festivals (39 festivals ago!), the Suzuki philosophy spread rapidly, thanks to scholarships offered to students and teachers. As teachers from other Latin American countries traveled to Peru, thanks also to economic support, more countries started to organize festivals and training programs. The Peru Association additionally offered training in regions of Peru outside of the capital city, where Suzuki music education is so needed. Dr. Suzuki would have been happy to see students and teachers making music together at the Peru Festival. He wanted to make the world better through music.



Caroline Fraser is from Scotland. She graduated from Edinburgh University with a B.Mus and studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London, obtaining the diplomas LRAM (piano) and ARCM (violin). Caroline obtained a MMus with Kodaly Emphasis from Holy Names University (HNU) in California where she was lecturer in music theory, and where she directed the Summer Suzuki Piano Teacher Training Institute. Caroline is an ESA and SAA teacher trainer and has given teacher training courses all over Latin America, the USA, Canada, Europe, Asia, and Australia. She is passionate about promoting a natural approach to learning.

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