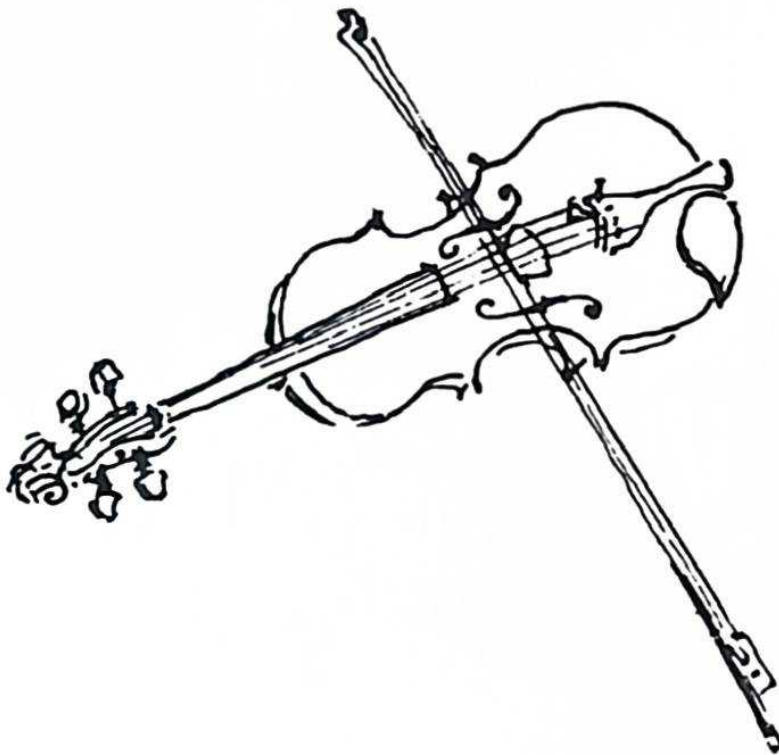


# TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL



No. 21  
SPRING  
1985

Cover by Kiyokazu Andoh



Editors Masayoshi and Eiko Kataoka  
236 Spring Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63119

© TALENT EDUCATION OF ST. LOUIS

Translation by Kyoko Selden

Please see subscription form p. 38.

EDITOR'S NOTE Masayoshi Kataoka	2
EDUCATION AT THE BEGINNING OF TRAINING: A NEW APPROACH WILL UNBURDEN TEACHERS AND PARENTS Shin'ichi Suzuki	3
IT WAS A PLEASANT JOURNEY, EVERYONE IN GOOD HEALTH: SUZUKI CHILDREN'S EUROPEAN TOUR Hachiro Hirose	9
EUROPEAN TOUR: BACKSTAGE NOTES Toshiko Hasegawa	15
IN A PLEASANT ATMOSPHERE: AMERICAN SUMMER INSTITUTES Yuko Mori	23
A REFRESHING EXPERIENCE: AMERICAN INSTITUTES Yumiko Takei	26
SUWA LI'L GUYS AND JUNIOR ORCHESTRA GO TO AMERICA Eiko Yamashita	29
EDUCATION IN YOJI GAKUEN, PART II From Shin'ichi Suzuki, <i>Talent Education for Young Children</i> Michiko Tsukikusa	34
A RECORD OF HOME LESSONS Chihoko Takezawa, with comments by Shoichi Yamamura, instructor	39



## EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

Last September, Dr. Shin'ichi Suzuki opened a new Beginner's Class in Matsumoto. In place of the standard weekly lessons, new violin students meet at the Institute for one to one and a half hours every morning, six days a week, to receive talent education training. Dr. Suzuki introduces this new idea in "Education at the Beginning of Training."

During the month of June, 1984, the Ten Japanese Children went on the second full scale European tour, visiting Sweden, Spain, England, Luxemburg and Belgium. We present two reports on this tour by Hachiro Hirose and Toshiko Hasegawa.

Yuko Mori's report, "In a Pleasant Atmosphere," offers her impression of the institutes in Nampa, Salt Lake City and Seattle which she attended with her student, Yumiko Takei. Another report comes from Eiko Yamashita, who attended the Summer Institute at San Francisco. Eiko and Kenichi Yamashita are violin instructors in Suwa, Nagano. They initiated one of the first Suzuki children's ensembles, which became the model of similar ensembles in other districts throughout Japan.

"Education at Yoji Gakuen, Part II," from the final portions of Dr. Suzuki's *Talent Education for Young Children*, contains a valuable article "On Instruction in Art." This will be followed by two other reports by Yoji Gakuen instructors in the coming issue.

With this issue, we begin installments of a mother's diary, *A Record of Home Lessons*, by Chihoko Takezawa. Her daughter Kyoko visited the States several times as one of the ten tour children and subsequently won first prize in the Mainichi competition in Tokyo. This diary describes the earliest stages of Kyoko's violin training.



## EDUCATION AT THE BEGINNING OF TRAINING

A New Approach  
Will Unburden  
Teachers and Parents



Shin'ichi Suzuki

Whether in violin or piano, the first problem in early childhood training is the difficulty of showing parents who wish to foster small children with music how to practice at home. Instructors, too, find it hard to readily achieve good results although they make efforts by giving small children one or two lessons a week and explaining at great length to parents how to practice at home. This is the situation today. The heart of the problem, I have come to realize, lies in the very beginning of training.

Why is there this difficulty? Why is it that, in mother tongue training, with no such difficulty every child grows with fine ability to speak the language? I have freshly given deep thought to this point.

The Suzuki method is the mother tongue approach which over fifty years has engaged in research in the education from birth which enables children to learn language. In that interval a revolution in music education began, and many tiny children have grown with really outstanding ability and superior musical sensitivity. Stirring wonder, it has spread throughout the world. However, when compared to the growth of every child in the mother tongue, our method in music education falls far short of universal growth.

It is a fact that in the mother tongue every child demonstrates the potential to grow with beautiful ability. Ability is not inborn; given conditions for proper growth of ability, every child can grow beautifully in any area. This I know clearly.

Yet, in music, due to deviations from ideal conditions of fostering in the light of mother tongue training, the reality is not quite "every child" although in principle "every child grows."

On reflecting upon this point, the first thing I came to realize was the deficiency in education at the very beginning of training. So, a "beginner class" has opened this September in Matsumoto as an experiment in the first steps in education which enables every child to grow. Let me describe the method in the following.

### Beginner Class

Thirteen children responded to our invitation for students between ages two and a half and three.

This is a violin class, but eventually we would also like to try it in piano. At first, the thirteen children in the violin class learn the basics of playing technique to the tape of Twinkle. Without the violin, each child holds the left hand, palm up, in front of the left leg. He practices the right hand movement by hitting the left hand, to the tempo of the taped music, from above and with a big motion. While hitting, the children listen and absorb the music of Twinkle. We get them started with this pleasant training. At lesson, we ask the parents to do this with the children. At home, too, parent and child are to practice this to the tape.

We also ask them to start learning Issa's haiku with the haiku tape at home. Soon recitation of Issa's haiku and other pleasant games start in class. We must make it a happy lesson.

This "beginner class" meets six days a week for one to one and a half hours starting at 9:30 a.m. and all enjoy group learning.



Under the leading instructor, two assistant teachers are assigned students. Sometimes all students receive a group lesson; for violin instruction, they are divided into two groups to study separately with the two teachers. The thirteen children advance in pieces together.

Parents carefully observe daily lessons and, when the students begin to play even a little, they are encouraged to play the same thing at home. This should help parents to gradually understand how to handle home practice.

Every day the thirteen students receive individual instruction or play the same pieces as a group, through which ability is created in class. Eventually they will be strengthening their ability by daily playing all the pieces they can play. This approach to ability development enables students to advance in new pieces quite fast. In this experiment, how far will the thirteen students advance in six months? In time I would like to report on their achievement.

The past practice in individual lessons at the beginner stage has often produced utterly slow progress even

---



*The earlier period*  
*The better environment*  
*The better teaching method*  
*The more training*  
*The superior instruction.*

*(Five Mottoes of  
 Talent Education)*



if the teacher gives two careful lessons a week, since parents are struggling. The fact is that in so many cases days and months pass with neither progress nor growth of ability due to failures at the beginning of training. I would like to advance our experiment in order to somehow correct this situation relying on the mother tongue approach by which every child grows. Our aim is good results at the crucial beginner stage. I hope this will help parents as well.

Let it be four months, or six months. After this "beginning of training" period, during which parents learn how to create ability at the initial stage and how to skillfully handle home practice, any of the students can join a regular class of more advanced players. They will then receive one or two weekly lessons. While carrying out this education system, I hope to deepen our study of the method by which every child grows.

To reduce parents' problems ought to be one of the conditions for a good educational method.

*Talent Education, no. 69*

---

*"Man is a child of the environment."*

*"Sound breathes life —  
Without form it lives."*

*"Strings are mindless  
They only sing forth the heart  
Of those who ring them out."*



— *Shin'ichi Suzuki*

## ISA NEWS

International Suzuki Association

### How Will My Dollars Be Used?

This question is being asked of the ISA office and we would like to give you an update on our work. Three major projects are in the works at this time. The first is the making of video tapes. We have begun to copy earlier tapes which Dr. Suzuki made to send to remote areas of the world, i.e., South American countries. Mr. Starr went to Japan in January and made new tapes with Dr. Suzuki which we hope will be available soon.

The second project is the translation of Dr. Suzuki's early writings. Some are difficult to translate because they are written in an erudite language that became obsolete after 1945. Once we have these books in English, it will be much easier to put them into other languages.

The third major project is to translate and distribute to ministers of education and other government officials, two works that succinctly tell of the philosophy and the simplified manner of teaching all areas of education.

We have made a good beginning by bringing Dr. Suzuki's work to the attention of educators everywhere, but to continue we need your memberships. Every Suzuki family who truly understands Dr. Suzuki's work will want to be a part of this great undertaking, and to help spread the word of its wonders by giving of their financial support.

### The Site of the International Conference for 1985

The site of the International Conference for 1985 promises to give us everything we would want. The facilities of the University of Edmonton are outstanding. Jubilee Hall is an exceptionally fine building. It is new and has all of the most contemporary features for



staging and other uses found in the newest concert halls in the world. Within very close proximity to this headquarters area is Lister Hall, a combination residence hall (with 50 rooms available to us) and a dining area that seats 900 people in the main hall. Other buildings to be used for the conference are all within walking distance on campus and are well equipped for our needs.

One of the most exciting of the facilities is the housing for families. The conference has secured the use of two very attractively furnished apartment buildings for families. They have one and two bedroom apartments with kitchens, and there are grocery stores very near. This housing is accessible to us because of the 30% devaluation of the Canadian dollar.

The Westin, which will be the hotel headquarters is very beautifully appointed. (The Westin Hotels have the highest rating given to any international hotel chain.) Buses will furnish transportation between the University and all housing.

\* \* \* \* \*

I would like the following to be known to everyone related to the Suzuki method: by this writing, I commit to the International Suzuki Association the right and duty to lead and supervise the continuation, development, and spread of the worldwide Suzuki movement in the future.

Since the International Suzuki Association is the only international representative organization recognized by me, let me ask every national organization and every individual in countries which have not yet organized to act together under the leadership of the Association. Its purpose is to spread true understanding of the Suzuki philosophy in child education, to foster human beings nobly through music, and to advance the Suzuki method.

With several hundred thousand members throughout the world, I am confident that the International Suzuki Association will occupy a big place in developing an innovative educational method not merely in music but in all educational areas of a worldwide scale.

Shin'ichi Suzuki



IT WAS A PLEASANT JOURNEY,  
EVERYONE IN GOOD HEALTH

Suzuki Children's European Tour

Hachiro Hirose  
Instructor, Kanto District

Our tour lasted approximately forty days from May 23 to June 29. European interest has increased in recent years, and the tour has become a biennial event independent of the American tour. This was our second tour following a visit two years ago.

On this tour we first visited Sweden, then Spain, England, Luxemburg, Belgium, back again to a different place in England, ending in Glasgow, Scotland.

### Stockholm

Of the three places we toured in Sweden, our first destination was Stockholm, where we had a leisurely schedule for adjusting to jet lag. We went by boat to visit a palace, and rode horse-drawn coaches to the fields where we had a picnic. Clad in beautiful national costume, our Swedish friends played folk dances on the violin. Joining them with their instruments, Japanese children had a lovely time.

At the first concert, we were told that the performance would be recorded, and, Mr. Suzuki granting permission, sold as records. I felt somewhat uneasy. Although the children had gathered twice for rehearsals, our plan was to gradually refine their performances through concerts and rehearsals in various places

during the tour. Making a record at the very start . . . I don't know about that, I thought. On our return home, to our relief Mr. Suzuki said, "The performances on the record were very good."

We had been to Stockholm not only on our previous tour two years ago but thirteen years ago during an extension of the American tour. I clearly remember the performance at a conservatory. When the first piece began, tears streamed down the face of a professor who, until then, had been smiling at the sight of the children.



Author instructing local children at the Stockholm workshop.

### **Participating in Music Festivals in Different Areas**

This was the season for music festivals everywhere in Europe. At several places, we were invited as part of the festival series: York and Cardiff, England, Luxemburg, and Glasgow, Scotland. The Luxemburg program which I brought home records the duo of flutists Rampal and Nicolet and the Cleveland Quartet before the Suzuki children, and after us, the pianist Richter. The capacity audience at our concert was almost all adults.



The Luxemburg concert took place in a church which had great acoustics and was attended by the Crown Prince who visited backstage during the intermission. He shook hands with everybody and applauded. The full house audience, too, applauded enthusiastically. We were lucky to be able to give a good concert in a heightened atmosphere.

### **The Cathedral Church of York**

Our concert in York was at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, the famous York Minster visited by many sightseers. During our noon rehearsal, several tour groups looked in, and, surprised by the children's performances, stood up in ovation. Before the evening concert, we spent some time at the fine city hall at the mayor's invitation. While chatting with the mayor, for the sake of fun I drew the long, heavy ceremonial sword and wore the necklace — a happy memory of playfulness.

Three weeks or so after our return home, I was shocked to read in the newspaper that half the cathedral had burnt and that they had just managed to save its treasures.

### **Professor Primrose's Native Place**

Our final concert was given at Glasgow. At the noon rehearsal the person in charge predicted that 1,500 would turn out, but we were greatly pleased to see as many as 3,000 people. The reason was that, on seeing the children's performance on BBC television, many surprised people came to hear them. Don't we wish to televise them in Japan, too? I am sure many would be impressed by the Suzuki children's performances.

Glasgow is also the home of the dear late Professor Primrose. When I spoke with him in Matsumoto after the children's performance in Glasgow ten years ago, he said, "You've been to Glasgow? That's where I was



born."

He started violin at age three. When he saw Kreisler's solo performance with the accompaniment of the orchestra of which his father was the concert master, Dr. Primrose said to his father, "I'm going to be a violinist like that." True to his words, he was the century's king of viola.

To my delight, Dr. Honda referred to him in his address half way through the children's concert: "Dr. Primrose, a product of your area as I learned from Mr. Hirose, gave recitals and lessons over many years for our talent education teachers and students."

I heard that the great auditorium which seats 3,000 was rebuilt from what was originally a gymnasium. We were happy that the children's sound carried beautifully. I was impressed by the many people in standing room in front of the stage listening intently without stirring, or sometimes moving their bodies as though to nod to the music.

### **The Mother Tongue Approach and Tonalization**

Where the children's concert occurred, usually we gave a workshop during the day, and explained the Suzuki method and instructional approach for local teachers. Swedes speak fluent English, so we communicated in English. In Spain, our Japanese, or English, was translated into Spanish. In Luxemburg we spoke in English, which the head violin professor of the area interpreted into German and French. Likewise, in the other countries the workshop was interpreted into their languages.

Despite language problems, the audience, surprised by the children's ability, rewarded us with their kind attention to our explanation of the educational approach of the Suzuki method.

We discussed the mother tongue approach: the child grows while listening to the records and repeatedly studying the former pieces. We also explained tonalization and the effect of the Panda tone, demonstrating

how lessons just on Judas Maccabaeus and the beginning of a piece can change the child's ability.

European Suzuki children are growing. English Children's growth is splendid under the guidance of many fine teachers. In Belgium and Sweden, teachers who have been in Japan are doing a great job in fostering children. It was good to learn that in Europe more than elsewhere people care for musicality in the best sense. We glimpsed this, for one thing, in children's performances.



A picnic in Sweden.

### **Nathan Milstein's Recital**

The day after our concert in London, Milstein gave a recital, which we were so fortunate as to attend. Nowhere in the eighty year old violinist's great performance could be found a sign of age. The lovely concert included the technically overwhelming Paganiniana in his own arrangement, the clean Bach, and the energetic Franck sonata, concluded by the encore of the beautifully singing Consolation by Liszt. Even the way he walked on stage suggested no age. I believe he is the greatest of currently active performers.





A mini concert in Truro, England.

### **It Was a Pleasant Trip, Everybody in Good Health**

Although a busy tour on the whole, including travel by bus fourteen days during the last half, nobody became ill. Above all blessed by fine weather, we were able to enjoy our journey from the flower-filled spring in the Norse country to the greener and greener leaves in the rest of Europe. I am sure we also partly owe this to our good team work, don't we?

Dr. Honda, Instructors Yajima, Hasegawa, Akiba and Osaka, thank you very much. And dear ten children, it really was a pleasant trip, wasn't it?

*Talent Education, no. 69*





## EUROPEAN TOUR: BACKSTAGE NOTES

Toshiko Hasegawa  
Instructor, Tokai District

Asked to write on the European tour, I was really at a loss. Starting with Sweden of flowering lilacs, we toured Spain, England, Belgium, Scotland and so forth. The season of flowers ended in the meantime, and it was already time for harvesting wheat, which at one point had been fresh and green. We travelled as many as 38 days, yet my attention went solely to such details of daily life as how to secure the children's lesson time at host families' homes and hotels, seeing whether they were lacking sleep, and looking after what they should wear the next day. I depended entirely on Mr. Hirose for the more public side of the tour: concerts, workshops, TV recordings, etc. How then can I report on anything?

However, from a journey shared with ten children who have made great efforts and grown with superior ability, I return with inexhaustible memories of touching experiences and emotions: we laughed together and we cried together. Let me, then, title my report on some of them "backstage notes." Please read it along with the "front stage" report by Mr. Hirose.

The majority being members from the American/Australian tour last fall, the children were already perfectly familiar with one another. Narita Airport presented a noisy scene of reunion of friends and parting of families. Since Makiko, Kinuko, Emiko, and Kanako had already said bye-bye to their parents at Nagoya Airport, they appeared as if they didn't quite know what to do.

Six year old Emiko said, "I wish I could see Mama." Kanako joined, already homesick at this moment of departure: "How nice it would be if our mothers came, too!" Not knowing what to say to them, I pretended not to hear. Now, it was time to leave. The mother of Saeko Oguma (8), who was touring for the first time, was almost in tears. Saeko herself seemed somewhat nervous.

At the time of the first tour, every family must part with such sentiments, I thought, recalling the parting scenes involving my own students. Kinuko experienced it four years ago when she was seven. At the gate where she was to lose sight of her mother who was waving, she suddenly started to cry, and was comforted by her friends. She was still sobbing on the airplane. Kanako, at age five last year, murmured as though to convince herself, "I don't miss home," and endured her loneliness by writing the names of her family from grandfather to little sister until there was no more space left in a page of her notebook.

We'll do our best, we'll come home safe and sound, I thought, prayerlike, at departure.

(May 23, Narita)



With a host family, Ipswich, England.  
Second from right is the author.



"Okay, number!" "One, two, three . . . ten!" Through the mouths of the ten children, numbers popped out. It would be tragic if we left a precious child all alone on a distant European tour. On leaving from Narita each child got a number, and it became a routine to count off each time we set out. The order we used was, let me note in parenthesis, by age: starting from the youngest, first was Emiko Yashiro (6), followed by Kanako Sago (also 6), Kinuko Komori (10), Reina Matsuyama (10), Makiko Yashiro (11), Shin'ichi Eguchi (11), Hiroki Sugano (13), Yuka Eguchi (13), and Naomi Picotte (16).

While the counting went smoothly, children were healthy both in mind and body and everything was fine. However, once any disorder showed, "O-oh," we alarmed instructors started to look sharp. If they got so carried away that their voices broke, our reaction was "More beautifully!" If the flow was poor, we demanded, "More musically!" If they were slow, "Presto!" we said. The count worked, for one thing, as a barometer of the children's health conditions of the day. Well, we decided that the accompanying teachers, too, should have numbers. Simultaneously we all shouted "eleven!" refusing to give in. It may seem that the party was, you see, eleven (?) of us, not sixteen.

The long winter over, in Sweden the longed-for spring had just come. Every bud was opening all at once, and the green was young and fresh. We were lucky to be able to visit in this beautiful season. "June bride" might be an expression born of this beauty in northern Europe, Miss Yajima said persuasively. Nineteen hours since departure from Japan, we were exhausted from the long plane ride, but we recovered completely during four leisurely days in this northern city, Stockholm. People of this country, I hear, are so happy in June that they can hardly concentrate on their jobs; they have a really enthusiastic and happy time in the natural environment. Under the sun which never sank during the "white night," our Swedish friends

danced in great glee wearing traditional costume and stepping to the lovely northern music . . . . We too joined and had a wonderful time.

The unrestricted schedule without a concert for three days following our arrival seemed to worry Emiko: "I wonder if it's all right to be playing like this. We already went on two picnics." Having started to count the days since the very day she left her parents, she knew she would go home after 37 days. To her this relaxing way of passing the days must have seemed quite strange.

(May 24-27, Stockholm)

Fantastic! How many times I heard this expression during the European tour. This was how European friends described the children's concert. The word was not only novel to us, for we have not heard it much on American tours, but was so frequently used that it remained in our memory. Their response of simple astonishment differed from the cheerful enthusiasm we encountered in the States, and I imagine that this expression conveys the nuance characterizing this difference. It seemed to reflect their feeling which might be verbalized this way: "How is it possible that these children can play our music so well?" This led me to freshly recognize the life of the Suzuki method on the other side of the globe. From Cardiff to York, Luxemburg and Antwerp, church concerts continued. The stage was set in the midst of big pillars, which naturally obstructed the view of the performers according to the seat. However, living accustomed to hearing the choir in the mass, they probably came to listen, rather than see, the children's performances. Music, I felt, must be pervading to the roots of their lives.

When I was sitting on the aisle in the audience at the church in Cardiff in order to take pictures of the concert, something fell in front of me. It was the cushion on which to kneel when praying. Put it under your knees so you won't be cold — the gentle, smiling eyes seemed to be saying. I was grateful for the act of



this genteel person in her early old age. Not only here but everywhere we were able to spend the time wrapped in people's kindness, thanks to the children's great performances.

(June 13, Cardiff)



Taping for BBC

At the rehearsal at the great cathedral in York, Hiroki said looking serious, "Miss Hasegawa, can children have cancer?" "???" On hearing more about it, I learned that a small bump which developed during the trip on the left side of his chest had become larger in the last week. "Isn't it from that shock when you fell?"

"That shock" occurred about ten days earlier at the entrance to the big cathedral in Truro, Cornwall. The stairs were big, high, and spacious with a long, winding railing in the center. It was a perfect play area for the children. Mounting it, the two boys were enjoying sliding down. After a while, having bravely crashed at the end of the railing, Hiroki came running in repeating "ouch, ouch."

Mr. Osaka came by, and put an end to Hiroki's fear by saying, "That's just a sign of growth." After a week, a similar symptom appeared on the right side, but Hiroki was no longer serious. "I'm already a grown-

up," he boasted. And as pleasantly as he always is. His performance of Saint Saens' Rondo Capriccioso is full of enchantment. His personality evidenced in this episode reflects itself here and there in his playing, and I cannot resist smiling each time I hear him.

(June 14, York)

Following the concert the night before, we were happy to be free all day. After the morning rehearsal, Miss Yajima, the children and I went out to the hotel lobby thinking of going shopping. A middle aged man stood at the entrance, looking as though waiting for someone. He spoke to us. We did not understand him well, since his English had a strong accent (although the fact is that with or without accent I do not understand English well . . . ). Somehow from his gesture we guessed what he was saying: he had been moved by the concert and he wanted autographs. In the paper he presented we saw the names of Mr. Osaka and Shin'ichi. We signed our names, and said, "Now, let's go." But as we started to go, we found him with us. Although he spoke to us in a friendly manner, we were helplessly incapable of conversing. We did not know what to do.

In the meantime we decided to have ice cream at a coffee shop on a street which resembled our pedestrian's paradise. The person drew a chair to our table, smiling. Children including Reina, Saeko, Emiko, and Kanako commented, "A nice uncle." We adults began to feel a little uneasy. We even started jokingly to ask ourselves, "What if our children were kidnapped?" Finally, we decided to leave the moment the ice cream was finished. What we realized on going to the cashier was that he had already paid for us. We felt sorry that on top of treating us, he was given a less than friendly reception. This made me compare our adult intuition which was clouded due to the language barrier and the children's intuition which allowed them to penetrate the language barrier. With a start I wondered when my heart had become this way.

(June 17, Luxemburg)



Makiko was asked to play the Tschaikovsky concerto by the Glasgow TV station. The children shouted with joy: "You haven't played that piece even once at a mini concert. How nice that you get to play it on TV!" "Do your best!" For the pianist who plays the orchestral accompaniment on the piano, this must be a big job. The rehearsal started. At one point they were not together. Yuka, Hiroki, and Naomi, standing behind Miss Akiba's piano, counted the beats waving their arms and bodies. Makiko played enthusiastically.

"They're together! They're together!" Seeing the three senior players jumping with joy, I was moved. I felt awakened to the beautiful growth of camaraderie through touring and concertizing together: a wish for our representative to perform her best. Due to the limited time, what was actually televised was the performance of *Fiocco Allegro* with her sister Emiko. Everyone watched breathlessly to see how well our representatives played.

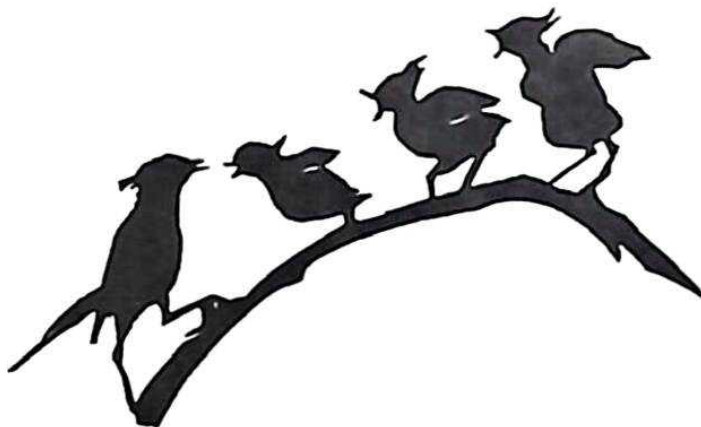
(June 26, Glasgow)

For Yuka, a ninth grader, school work is quite demanding. On this tour it was particularly noticeable that, no matter where we went, she took her textbooks and studied whether on a bus, on a train, or during the intermission of a concert. The term exams, I learned, were to start two days after going home. When everyone left for shopping, she remained on the bus alone, studying. If I remember correctly, it was my fifth tour with Yuka, and for the first time on this trip I felt I saw her agonizing with respect to performance. Almost dazzled, I watched her as a child fostered with ability both in mind and technique.

The Glasgow newspaper review dated June 26 included a superb praise: "Her *Zigeunerweisen* was a wonderful performance unparalleled in the past . . . ." Particularly because I had seen her struggle, I felt overjoyed as if I had been praised. I truly admire the large minds of her parents who let her go on this tour amidst

the trying situation, her high school entrance exams eight months ahead of her. "We are grateful that she was able to experience what she cannot through school lectures." Reading this comment in their thank you note after the trip, I freshly reflected upon the scope of the experiences children gain through this kind of journey.

*Talent Education*, no. 69





## IN A PLEASANT ATMOSPHERE

### American Summer Institutes



Yuko Mori  
Instructor, Matsumoto

American summer institutes occur in the three months between the beginning of the school vacation in June and the end of August. The schedule of the five days of the institute is quite similar to that in Matsumoto, reflecting the use of Mr. Suzuki's idea by teachers who have observed the Matsumoto version.

This year I was invited to Nampa, Idaho, Salt Lake City, and Seattle, and visited these places with my student, Yumiko Takei who is a tenth grader.

Collecting at least 200 students and sometimes as many as 700 in a big operation like the one in Salt Lake City, the American institute everywhere occurs in college classrooms borrowed for the occasion, an enviable environment. The campuses we visited were well cared for, and it was soothing just to go back and forth by richly green trees and along walks between lawns.

I had heard that Idaho produced the best potatoes in the world. True to my expectation, one step outside, the wide field extended all the way to the horizon, and how good the unpolluted air tasted. The agricultural land was peace itself. On flying to Salt Lake, we encountered a more city-like place; yet, surrounded by

beautiful snow-capped mountains, the cold air in the morning and at night was keenly refreshing, while lovely harmony between nature and man-made structures was appealing to the eyes. This is our sister city, yet between Salt Lake and Matsumoto, I found a big difference in view of the beautiful urban construction in the former. It happened to be Sunday morning, and we were able to attend the mass at the Tabernacle, the mecca of the Mormons. Listening to Yumi's account of how 28 Matsumoto students including herself had been invited to play here five years ago, I appreciated having an unexpected, precious moment in the midst of a busy day on the road.



Workshop at Idaho.

The American summer institute — my impression is that it takes place in a truly pleasant atmosphere. Not only do I get to see American teachers after a long time but I am filled with anticipation as to who will come where, which adds to the excitement of the first day. Participants from across the sea, Yumi and I were caringly treated as important guests, and this made us feel that we had no choice but to do our very best. American children who were watching quietly at first became friends through lessons in the course of the



first two days. By around the third day when Yumi's recital was over, they showed great friendliness. It goes without saying that they greeted us with smiles; they followed us around, took pictures, and in the end we even found ourselves giving autographs. I was greatly encouraged to realize that people were so pleased although I did nothing different from what I do when teaching at home. And it was good to see students change from day to day. It was a wonderful atmosphere created by our American friends' faith in the Suzuki method and their cheerful, open character.



Eager Teachers (Idaho).

In this atmosphere, with classes of about fifty teachers, I shared Mr. Suzuki's new ideas and instruction methods; with students I focused my demonstration again and again on the two points: the "panda" bow hold which increases volume and the technique of changing strings with the elbow kept low. This was because I thought volume and arm movement would be the most important for American students now that their posture has improved quite a lot.

In this respect, the presence of Yumi who played the role of an assistant was felt large. When she performed Sibelius at her recital, she received unexpectedly enthusiastic applause. Without hesitation I report that,

rather than receiving verbal explanation, seeing with the eyes and hearing with the ears had a far stronger appeal, and that her recital was best proof of this.

In Seattle which we visited last, Mr. and Mrs. Murray North, Mrs. Mihoko Hirata, and Mr. and Mrs. Katsutoshi Nakamura have been teaching over a dozen years. Students have grown enough to play the Mendelssohn concerto together. Eager parents gathered at a big hall for a lively question and answer period.

Although busy, every day was really fruitful. Back in Matsumoto, I am panting from jet lag and absent-mindedness after experiencing so much hospitality.

When I went to greet Mr. Suzuki, he already gave me plenty of new ideas.



### A REFRESHING EXPERIENCE American Institutes

Yumiko Takei  
(Mori class, Matsumoto)

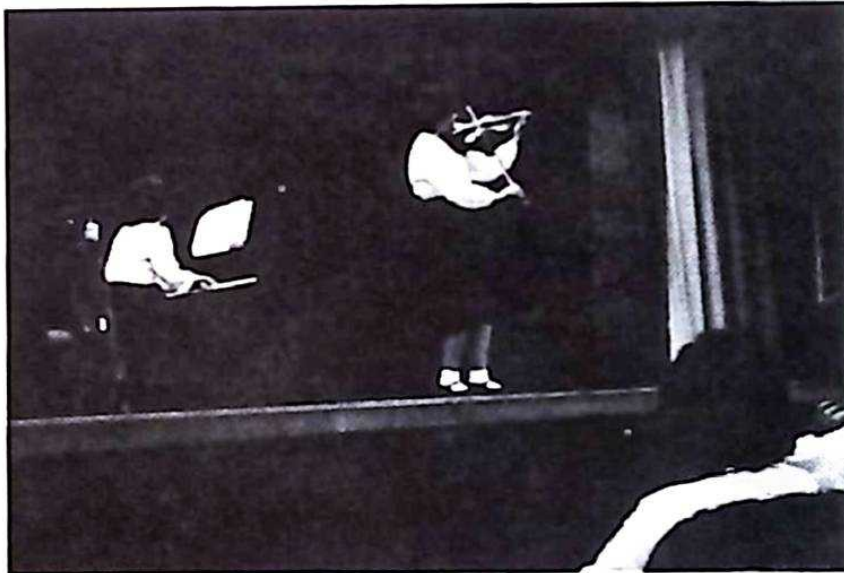
"Thank you very much. We look forward to seeing you again some day." Miss Mori and I were heading home from Seattle, feeling at once relieved that the workshops were over and lonesome that we had to part from people with whom we had become good friends. After a dreamlike month, my heart was filled with a sense of fruitfulness thanks to the learning experiences.

On June 8, Miss Mori and I left for the States to attend American summer institutes. Partly from fear of missing a month of school and partly from the need to prepare for exams starting on the day I return, I had



put school work both in my shoulder bag and suitcase. I remembered the face of my homeroom teacher who said, "Be prepared to remain in the same grade another year."

On the 10th, at the welcome party at Nampa, I made eight friends. I spoke in faltering English to the best of my ability, and they were good enough to listen. While having fun and eating together, I began to feel at home despite my initial fear of having to talk. Starting from the workshop the following day, they greeted us "hi!" whenever they saw us, which made me feel fresh every day. They were very eager at lesson, and, under Miss Mori's guidance, each day their tone was more beautiful than the day before. I was moved by their eagerness to learn and what is behind it, their appreciation.



Yumiko Takei's recital (Seattle)

When the first recital in my life was over, many people came backstage to congratulate. Facing their warmth, I felt very happy to have such a wonderful experience thanks to the violin. Not only that, potatoes, steaks, tastefully prepared shrimps, and the startling beauty of mountain green and houses and sun — there was constant discovery and joy before my eyes as I spent the days enwrapped with teachers' caring thoughts.

On the 29th, the closing concert was over, which concluded my schedule on the trip, and I was about to leave the stage. Friends surrounded me and gave me stickers, a book, a tape, etc., precious things they each treasured. Thinking that I might never again be as happy in my life as at this moment, I felt overwhelmed.

At night I looked vacantly at the big package in my suitcase. The school work I had brought to the States a month ago and which I had meant diligently to study now looked all too insignificant. What small fraction, I asked myself, did it represent of what I had gained in the States? I felt myself lucky just to be given an opportunity to reflect on this.

On returning to Japan, friends said, "Yumi, you've gained weight." Naturally. Didn't I, in one short month, gain hundreds of times more wonderful experiences than what I imbibe in my daily life?

*Talent Education*, no. 69



---

*Your contribution to Talent Education of St. Louis, the publisher of Talent Education Journal, will be deeply appreciated. Any contribution made to Talent Education of St. Louis will be entitled to U.S. Federal income tax deduction. Talent Education of St. Louis has been granted an exemption from Federal income tax under Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

---



## SUWA LI'L GUYS AND JUNIOR ORCHESTRA

### GO TO AMERICA

Eiko Yamashita  
Instructor, Okaya and Suwa Chapters

After the International Conference last year, Professor Walter Haderer of San Francisco wrote asking us to bring a young children's ensemble from Suwa to participate in and teach at the ninth west coast Suzuki method summer institute. On promptly consulting Mr. Suzuki, he was very pleased and encouraged me to accept the invitation.

After consultation with the directors and committee members of Suwa and Okaya chapters, we advertised for applicants in the name of both chapters. As a result, a tour of 33 was created: five instructors (Ken'ichi and Eiko Yamashita, Haruo Masuzawa, violins; Karan Nagase, cello; Junko Hayashi, accompanist), two parents, and 26 students (16 violins and 10 cellos).

#### **The Ninth West Coast Suzuki Method Summer Institute**

The summer institute took place between August 5 and 10 at the California State University at San Francisco. Thanks to the efforts of the Haderers, 19 children and parents were able to stay in homes. Our host families, most of whom spoke no Japanese, were all wonderful people and those welcomed into their homes enjoyed taking a glance at American family life.

We instructors were assigned five sessions a day, and taught group and master classes for five days. After one 50 minute class was over, we moved to another class in ten minutes, looking at the map, which was

hard work until we became used to it. Children and parents were very eager: although my English was inadequate, through music they understood my instruction very well. Many teacher trainees observed and eagerly asked questions or took notes.



From left, Ken'ichi Yamashita, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Haderer, author, Karan Nagase

### The Japan Day Concert

Under the name of Japan Day, at 7:30 in the evening on the second day of the institute, the Suwa and Okaya children gave a special concert. In the one and half hour program, we presented seven unison pieces on violin and cello, four violin and two cello solos, and two ensembles: Twinkle Variations by small children and Corelli's La Folia by junior orchestra members.

Each performance was followed by big applause, and when the final piece, La Folia, was over, we were surprised by the loud applause of the entire full house audience, most surprised being those of us on stage. Professor Haderer spoke through the microphone: "It is really great that children from one area, not those chosen from throughout Japan, were able to give such a fine concert. This is the true Suzuki method."



Following this, Mr. Nagase performed magic tricks to entertain American children. Starting the following morning, we received many words of encouragement and handshakes from teachers, parents, and friends in classrooms and hallways.



Working on the Bach Double

## Reunions and New Encounters

We were able to see many instructors we knew from before. Susan Shields, who studied in Matsumoto 19 years ago, is a friend with whom I shared my kenkyusei days. Healthy as ever, she spoke in Matsumoto dialect, told one joke after another, and showered us with cheerful laughs. We could not exhaust our memories.

We also saw Professor and Mrs. William Starr, Professor and Mrs. Harry Mills, Professor Milton Goldberg, Mrs. Jacquelyn Corina, Professor Yvonne Tait, and Barbara, who are all very dear to us. Nora was kind enough to come to see us with her two month old baby. We spent lovely days thanks to warm and caring thought of all these teachers.

I met Instructor Yoke Abe and piano instructors Yuko and Kurakata for the first time. Many children and adults helped us every day by providing interpretation or caring for us in matters of daily life.



Japan Day performance:  
Haruo Masuzawa conducts.

### **Farewell Concert**

At 7 o'clock on August 10, the farewell concert was held at the gym bringing together 500 students. Counting parents and teacher observers, the total was about 1,000. It started with small children's violin unison playing, followed by cello unison playing, piano solos, flute unison performance, a humorous chorus by 30 piano students, and ended with advanced violin students' unison performance. Finally, all of us from Japan stood up, and the concert ended at 10 with loud applause.

### **Another Memorable Event: Performance on Maui Island, Hawaii**

The exciting summer institute at the University of California at San Francisco over, we stopped over at Maui for a swim and shopping. This was to provide another pleasant memory for the children. Most of the tour were children, so we asked an acquaintance to arrange for us to stay at people's homes. Fortunately, all of us were distributed to homes, and we had a truly



wonderful time.

While we were there, a violin teacher living on Maui visited our acquaintance at his home to ask if the children could play for the Japanese settlers. It was 70 or 80 years since some of them had left home and they wished to see Japanese children. Unexpectedly, therefore, it came to pass that the children entertained a first generation Japanese audience. They were pleased to hear our 40 minute program, prepared *ex tempore*, which included "the Japanese Songs" and an orchestral arrangement of Twinkle.

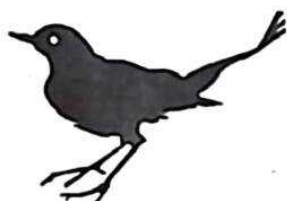
Elderly people listened to the children with tears in their eyes. We, too, were so moved that we did not know what to say. This added a wonderful page to our memories.

On the way back from the concert, a representative of those elderly people handed us some money which they had collected, saying, "Please buy something for the children." My husband and I felt at a loss, feeling both sorry and appreciative.

## Epilogue

By Mr. Suzuki's method, I felt the possibility and importance of holding hands with teachers, parents and children everywhere. Let me heartily thank Mr. and Mrs. Suzuki who gave us such a wonderful opportunity, the Haderers, the Corinas, and Mrs. Moroki of Maui.

*Talent Education*, no. 69



## EDUCATION IN YOJI GAKUEN PART II

From Shin'ichi Suzuki, *Talent Education for Young Children*,  
continued from TEJ, no. 20

### On Instruction in Art

Michiko Tsukikusa

I have been teaching art at Yoji Gakuen (Talent Education Preschool) over 13 years.

Since I was ignorant of children's art, I had no confidence when I accepted the job on Shigeki Tanaka's request.

I wrote to the late Tatsuo Miyatake who had published on small children's art, and consulted him about instruction. He wrote back, "No one is your teacher in what you will be doing; learn from children." I received inspiration from these words.

If I simply try to help children draw the kind of pictures I wish them to draw, it does not work. Unless the instructor and children become good friends tied with warm affection, their hearts will be absent from their drawings. Since children are sensitive, the instructor's tension will be immediately reflected in their work. Therefore I think it necessary to avoid making them feel uptight.

The ideal way to start is for the teacher and children to unite in a spontaneous and pleasant atmosphere, and to first discuss what to draw today. If children can freely express what is in their minds, it will be just fine.



I have children from other kindergartens as well in my atelier, some of whom can only draw stereotyped pictures as if stamped. Once stereotyping is there, it is hard to shake it.

Yoji Gakuen children freely draw pictures about their experiences: playing catch with father the previous Sunday, going to the mountains for mushroom hunting, and so forth. I make efforts trying this and that until children begin to freely express themselves.

One cannot tell children how to draw or paint. Pictures have to come spontaneously out of children. Unfelt effort is necessary on the part of the instructor as to how to lead them to draw without restriction.

At Yoji Gakuen, Miwa Yano, the principal, always helps children to open their minds and enjoy themselves, so they are well prepared for art. Their works of art are created in such an atmosphere as a synthesis of their activities.

When they begin to draw freely, it becomes possible to glimpse their home lives through their works.

Contemporary children generally lack creativity, whether due to family life or other influences. Some children are extremely realistic about everything while others have dreams, and such differences are faithfully reflected in their paintings.

Some worry that children tend invariably to draw similar pictures. If, for example, a child is interested in vehicles and wants to repeatedly draw them, I think that is fine. When he draws the same object, yesterday's drawing and today's may outwardly appear the same, but if there is growth in the mind, in time a change will spontaneously appear in the drawing. As Tatsuo Miyatake said, young children's drawings are windows through which to peek at their minds. I think we should watch them patiently, modestly, and quietly.

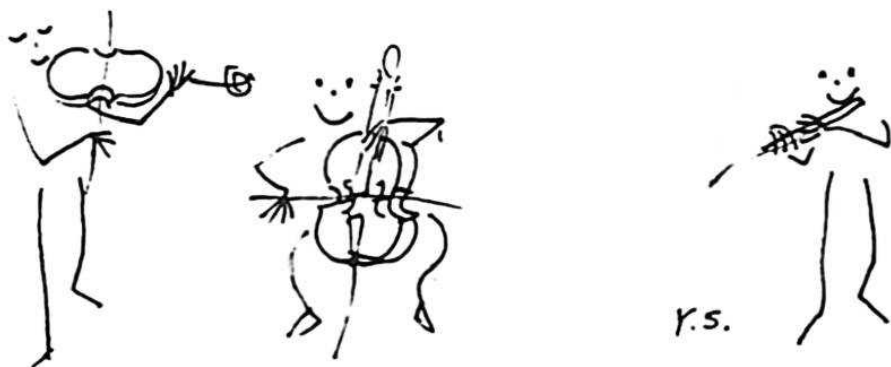
If the teacher, out of his own ideal, tries to force an image on children, he will fail. Since children are all different, that will blunt their creativity and desire to draw.

I let children draw freely, but I do talk about what is missing in their work. Since children are impatient, they try to draw in one quick sitting. Although some draw carefully, emotional children draw more with the senses, depending less on intellect, with the result that hands are missing, fingers are forgotten, or legs are carelessly attached. I give a little hint in such cases. Once I suggest to a child that without fingers it is difficult to catch a ball or that without shoes feet will hurt, he seems to pay attention from the next time. When advising a child, I think it good to do it indirectly so that he will think using his own head.

Child art specialists say that it is fine if four year olds paint as four year olds and five year olds as five year olds, that it is great if their work demonstrates to the fullest scope what is possible at their age level.

Children lead fully charged daily lives. If a child is scolded by his mother in the morning, or he is not physically well, even a single line he draws may lack life. His painting, too, will reflect this.

Mr. Miyatake explained how, before engaging in a tug of war, a child draws a picture of children simply standing, hands on a rope. After he is given a chance to perspire at tugging, Mr. Miyatake said, children in his picture really pull the rope hard. True, children's pictures are liveliest when they are directly based on experiences.





At Yoji Gakuen, children are divided for art into three and four year olds (red group) and five and up (blue group). Three year olds, too, draw from the beginning of the school year. I let them enjoy drawing whatever they like, whether lines or circles. After this initial stage, I gradually introduce colors. I bring out different colors, and watch what children do. They mix colors on the paper or paint all over without a plan, excited in their experiments. This period lasts for quite a while. Three and early four year olds do not yet try to make shapes, but by the time they are in the blue group, they begin to draw objects now that they have a developing awareness of expression.

At first I give them craypas, then introduce paints, mostly using powdered pigments. Sometimes I have them draw with a wooden chopstick dipped in calligraphy ink, or knead clay to enjoy making shapes.

Since small children cannot yet use tubes, I mix powdered pigments with water for them. Including both primary and intermediate colors, I prepare about ten colors, plenty of each in a big can. The size of paper we use is approximately  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$  inches.

Themes of children's pictures are often limited to a tulip and a girl, a stereotype house, a monster from TV or comics, or a rocket. When they break out of this scope and start to express what they have observed or experienced, their art work begins changing considerably.

Children are filled with the excitement of discovery and wonder of the unknown. They do not like making sketches of still life such as apples. They have keen interest in such live things as beetles and birds. I have tried chickens on them with really interesting results. Their pictures, although not like adults' sketches, reveal good observation in a rather unexpected way.

Children who keep beetles as pets observe them every day through looking, touching, and turning them upside down. When asked to make them with clay, they make lively beetles. Children with no such experience can produce nothing interesting.

Each month I show the class all the pictures children have drawn or painted, holding them in my hands one by one. For one thing this is a chance for them to discover in friends' art work what may be missing in their own products. "Neat," "beautiful," they comment, discussing one another's work. I think this atmosphere of mutual stimulation important.

Still faced with many problems, I am not yet confident about young children's art. However, I would like to continue to do my best while always remembering to "learn from children."

*Talent Education*, no. 69

\* \* \* \* \*

Please enter my subscription to **Talent Education Journal**.

Name (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

A one year subscription (4 issues)

- \$8     \$10 U.S. Canada and Mexico  
 \$11 U.S. overseas     \$14 U.S. overseas by air mail

Special bulk rates (10 or more subscriptions)

- \$7     \$9 U.S. Canada and Mexico  
 \$10 U.S. overseas     \$12 U.S. air mail

Qty. \_\_\_\_\_ Total cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ U.S.

Back issues are available at \$3 each U.S.A.

(\$4 each outside the U.S.A.)

Please make your check or money order payable to **Talent Education of St. Louis**.

Also, please remit check or money order in U.S. dollars.

I enclose a check     money order     TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Fund

Please send this form with your payment to: **Talent Education of St. Louis**  
 236 Spring Avenue  
 St. Louis, Mo. 63119



## A RECORD OF HOME LESSONS

Chihoko Takezawa

Shoichi Yamamura  
Instructor

This is a record by the mother of Kyoko Takezawa who at age three joined the Shoichi Yamamura class, Nagoya in November, 1969. It describes the week by week progress of home lessons during the first year of her violin training. It covers the stages from rhythm practice to Bach's Minuet no. 3 and tonalization.

### Kyoko Takezawa

Born on October 30, 1966

Joined Talent Education at three (November, 1969)

*Man is a child of the environment.  
Everything depends on how children are raised  
(practice is, I think, part of the environment,  
and also part of child raising).*

### November 2, 1969

*The lesson starts.*

*Taking a bow.*


*Practice holding the bow.*

*Practice holding the violin on the shoulder.*

*Practice preparing the posture (right before playing).*

*Practice the rhythm:*

*Twinkle is to be started with the best possible posture.*

*Taking a bow by way of greeting:* 

*"Everything starts with ceremony and ends in ceremony."*

## November 17 – November 23

The third week since starting lessons in November, I feel we are readier to receive instruction than at the outset.

How am I to carry out home practice with a child just past her third birthday who can barely tell different colors? I feel at a loss. Moreover, I deeply experience the difficulty of correctly understanding the teacher's instruction and of conveying it to the child.

"It's practice time." If I sound as formal as this, I cannot expect my child to show enthusiasm. I try to include practice sessions within play time even if just for three or five minutes.

The biggest problem is that, when I put on the record, she wants to play with it. Sometimes she takes out her violin and plays all wrong with the record. Although I suppose I can be pleased by her interest and desire to play along, I worry that bad habits may be formed.

She does not understand it when I explain that practice has to follow steps. For example, for holding the violin on the shoulder, she is to put her left hand on the right shoulder. But she insists: "I want to hold it with my arm stretched like other children." "When you learn to do this, Kyoko, your teacher will show you how to do it like others. So let's try to learn this first," I say, but she remains willful. Only lately, she has come to bring her hand to her shoulder without resistance. I realized that the only way was to simply let her do it any number of times without reasoning, for words would not avail.

We have been practicing three times a day, less than five minutes per session. She can hardly concentrate as long as 10 or 15 minutes. "My chin hurts," she says, and sometimes the session ends after she holds the violin just once. When she cannot hold it in the proper form as instructed, I tend to feel less than satisfied. However, after one week of this, I think there has been progress, for, unlike at the beginning, she now tries to



fix it when I say something, for example about the wrist of the bow hand.

Having started piano with my son, I have been practicing a little myself every day. I have come to realize through my piano practice how important it is to practice daily without skipping and to practice a few times a day rather than many hours in a row (particularly so with children, since they don't have much concentration).

I hope that daily practice will quickly become one of Kyoko's enjoyable habits.

*(Instructor) November 23*

*Concerning violin hold: put her chin on the chin rest.*

*The bow hold is fine, but practice holding with relaxed fingers, since they are stiff.*

*When the bow execution gradually becomes more relaxed involving the forearm movement, it can be called progress.*

### November 23 – November 29

Since she starts saying that her chin hurts five minutes after starting to practice, I divert her attention a few minutes, then resume practice. By this method, we have practiced three times a day all week. Now it has started to sound somewhat like a rhythm. She seems to like it, for she works at it proudly. However, the right arm moves backwards going behind the shoulder line.

She wants to do it as she likes rather than to be taught, and just refuses my helping hand. I have come to realize that this is where practicing with a little child is difficult. When I give her pencils in five colors and let her write the same letter using one color after another, she happily writes it five times, saying, "Now red, now blue," etc., and learns to write the letter. I am wishing to rouse her interest in the same way in violin and give her my support so that she enjoys prac-

ticing and making progress without feeling burdened.

Concerning the rhythm practice on the E string, when sometimes the bow catches the A string making an A sound, she says "oops." This seems to indicate that that she knows the difference.

After playing Mozart's concerto in A (Isaac Stern) for a month without skipping a day, the moment the record starts she enters the room with her picture puzzles, and hums catchy sections of the melody while playing.

Violin practice seems to have fairly well merged into our daily life.

### November 30 – December 6

A week has passed in a twinkling of the eye. Although we have practiced with care for each session and each day, I don't think much progress was made.

I know there is nothing to do but settle down to repeat practice patiently.

This week we have practiced the right hand, particularly the forearm movement which keeps the arm from moving backwards from the shoulder line. It didn't go too well. However, she seems to be aware of this, for the moment her father came home from work, she moved her right arm saying, "This is how you play violin."

*(Instructor) December 7*

*Great progress since last week.*

*We are to incorporate practice in the activities of life and let it flow on their stream. If we as fosterers think about the importance of 'giving' and try to be as conscientious as possible, eventually a shoot will come out.*

### December 7 – December 13


Mingled with occasional good tone, Kyoko often makes a crunching sound as though with the teeth of a



saw. Before I was telling her to "relax your strength." This seems to have been too abstract for her to understand. At lesson when a good tone came out, her teacher simply said, "That was good tone." This made her see the difference between good and bad tone. When practicing at home, she says "good tone" when she produces a nice sound, and "bad tone" when she crunches. I am surprised to find that a little clue can be so effective. It is quite difficult for me to create such a clue. Worried only about weak points, I am afraid that I have merely been critical. It is important, I realize, to find good points and praise her for them.

The duration of each practice session can now be somewhat longer than before (ten minutes).

*(Instructor) December 14*

*Now she can correctly play:* 

*Try it a little faster.*

*Practice holding the violin, too (left hand holding the right shoulder).*

### December 14 – December 20

Due to a cold, sessions were reduced from three to two times a day, with less practice done this week. She has either started to enjoy practicing or it is becoming a habit: as I was waiting because she looked uncomfortable, she asked on her own accord, "Mother, how about violin practice?"

Holding the violin on the shoulder— could I be doing a clumsy job putting it on her shoulder? – it looks as if she receives the violin on her chest. It didn't go well.

### December 21 – January 10

Kyoko stayed at her grandparents' in Shinshu from December 28 to January 3. Since she had her cousins to play with, she was having too much fun to really get down to practice, although she held the violin at least once a day. She returned to the normal life on the 4th,

resuming her usual practice.

Although inside her head she seems to know what is good tone, in actuality power gets in the way, pressing the string, so that good tone is hard to produce. I praise her when, on a rare occasion, she achieves good tone, and she looks very pleased.

*(Instructor) January 11, 1970*

*Lesson after the 2 week winter vacation.*

*Create an environment with records.*

*Playing the violin (emphasize lessons).*

*I think she has changed a great deal in two weeks.*

*1. rhythm; 2. string crossing (newly added).*

#### January 11 – January 17

String crossing practice has been added. When entering a new area, I feel that both parent and child experience great psychological difficulty. However, as the daily practice is repeated, it gradually dissolves with each session.

When it is going very well, I expect that, since she could do it well yesterday, she will do even better today. Sometimes she cannot do it at all. While it may be partly due to different degrees of enthusiasm toward the lesson, it may also have something to do with how much of what was taught has been digested. I hope to make efforts toward proper home sessions so that, through repeated practice, more stability will be achieved. For this purpose, it is necessary for me to know what is correct, see what points are to be conveyed to the child, and guide her accordingly. While I realize my heavy responsibility, unfortunately it is hard to feel confident.

*(Instructor) January 18*

*Practice three times a day. Study time: 10 to 15 minutes each.*

*E string: practice raising the right hand from*



*the string.*

*Add exercise for a good left hand shape.*

### January 19 – January 24

We had a hard time since the violin hold wasn't as good as last week. Although I wish we could always advance, I think I should keep at it taking a longer view of progress, believing in improvement through rebounds and setbacks.

As for concentration, 10 minutes is just about right; past that length, she starts to play in a messy way. Having known this, I came to realize that it is sometimes necessary to change the order of the three aspects of her practice: 1. rhythm on the E string; 2. string crossing; 3. the left hand shape.

Since we have no opportunity to hear live violin performances, I hope to let her hear records all the more frequently.

"Good tone" — we practice always with this in mind, but bad tone is still far more frequent.

*(Instructor) January 25*

*She has improved. This month I taught her a little about good contact between the bow and the string, and also encouraged her to produce somewhat livelier tone.*

### January 26 – February 1

Although we started out enthusiastically at the beginning of the week, since both Kyoko and I had a fever by turns, she didn't touch the violin at all for three days on the weekend; hence, lack of practice.

*(Instructor) February 1*

*The left hand shape was very well practiced. Please continue with good posture like today's. Check if fingers 1, 2, and 3 are on the string neatly together.*

*With a three or four year old, when the fingers are correctly on the string in a good shape, it is usually difficult to press the string with the desired firmness.*

*So, sometimes let your child check the finger pressure one by one starting with the third finger, while you bow for her. This approach seems more effective than expected.*

*I explained to Kyoko what "checking" means.*

### **February 1 – February 7**

Perhaps feeling better now that she got rid of the cold, she practiced with motivation.

I think that the left hand shape when putting down fingers 1, 2, and 3 is relatively good now, but the tone is unstable when she puts down one finger at a time, since she is far from pressing the string firmly. When I ask her to "press more firmly," other fingers stretch out taut with unwanted strength.

Although I play records for her daily, I wish to expose her even more so as to foster musical sensitivity.

*(Instructor) February 8*

*The right arm movement becomes somewhat restricted while playing. Try to correct it.*

*Practice correctly putting down the third finger of the left hand.*

### **February 9 – February 14**

We focused on correctly putting down fingers 1, 2, and 3 on the A string. No matter how many times it was repeated, she could not put it down on the correct spot, and it was an endurance contest between parent and child. At a loss as to how best to let her understand, I now explain with words, and now just let her press with her finger skipping reasoning. Her concentration being short, I don't know if she is listening once past that limit. So I try having her practice frequently,



spending a brief period of time at each session. Compared with when we began, I think she has started to understand somewhat.

*(Instructor) February 15*

*Well practiced. Even if the length of practice is short, the frequency of daily practice leads to great progress. Today I feel it in her movement.*

*\* Good left hand shape.*

### February 15 – February 21

Practice putting down fingers 1, 2, and 3 correctly: although she seems to understand it better than before, she goes higher or lower than the marked line, and it is difficult to press once and get it right. Although the finger is now curved when lifting, the third finger tends to be weak and also low. Sometimes the difference of a half tone between the second and the third finger cannot be heard. During my morning housework, she listens to the record, followed by a practice session. We have another session after her nap, and a third in the late afternoon (I have been avoiding practice in the evening). As might be expected, she can concentrate best during the morning session.

*(Instructor) February 22*

*Today the left fingers were able to press the string 1, 2, 3 more quickly than last week. Try to press the string a little more firmly. Let's gradually teach playing from 3 in rhythm.*

*Not practicing at night is very good, I think. So is three practice sessions a day.*

*I appreciate your playing the record for your child, which means that you are practicing talent education.*

## February 22 – February 28

One month since starting to practice placing fingers 1, 2, 3 on the A string. She can now press the string with a fair amount of precision. She practiced it so many times that, after putting down fingers 1, 2, 3 and playing the rhythm, she began to take the initiative in putting down her fingers and playing again. Although she can press quite a lot more firmly than last week, which I think is progress, sometimes she still cannot do it quickly with precision. When she puts a finger down in the wrong place, if I tell her, she fixes it so it will go to the right spot. This seems to indicate that she understands it. She also seems to understand the idea of rhythmic interval if I sing for her: she lifted fingers 1 and 2 skillfully, although finger 3 did not go up in tempo. Sometimes I lifted it for her, and at other times I picked up a violin and played with her. While repeating this, she came to be able to play the rhythm well.

I try to correct the right hand posture and the violin hold at each session. I would like to help her improve through repetition.

*(Instructor) March 1*

*Beautiful tone; the rhythm is improving, too.*

*String crossing: very much better.*

*When the left fingers are placed 1, 2, 3, the third finger inclines somewhat toward the E string. Press the A string correctly.*

*Now we are on to Twinkle!*

*Mothers' Notes, no. 1*  
Talent Education Institute, 1971  
To be continued in TEJ no. 22





K.S.

