

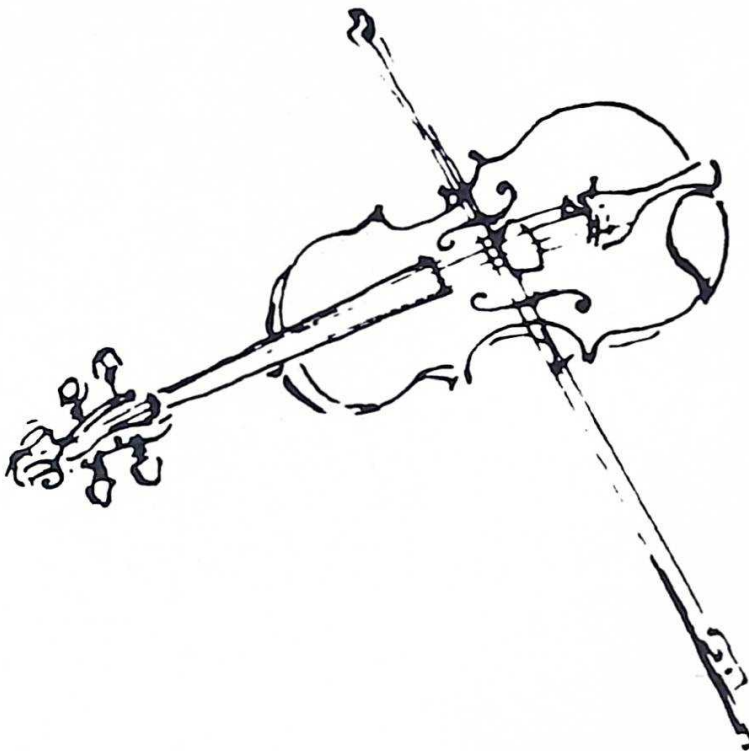
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

An old saying goes: "The soul of a three year old lasts till age one hundred." It means that the nature and sensibility fostered in a child by age three remain unchanged until he is one hundred. How a child is raised in infancy is crucial enough to determine his entire life. This, too, is the only period when superior musical sensibility develops. I would like to ponder more deeply than ever Dr. Suzuki's words: "Every child develops; everything depends upon how he is raised."

In his response to the graduation tapes, "Fostering Rich Tone," Dr. Suzuki makes a strong statement about fostering in every student the ability to produce beautiful, superior tone.

The 1988 Suzuki Children again left deep impressions in various places during their one-month fall tour. We introduce reports by Dr. Masaaki Honda, board member, and Hiroko Ishikawa and Kazuhiko Osaka, violin instructors.

The installment from "Lectures on Music Instruction" concerns instruction in string tone that rings with beauty and "two-tone vibrato."

This issue concludes the installments from Dr. Suzuki's "Ability Development in Music."

"A Mother's Note" was written by Kano Kawamura of the Osaka chapter who transcribed music into braille while raising her blind child.



FOSTERING RICH TONE

Shin'ichi Suzuki

I give lessons for the beauty of tone, the richness of tone. New students I teach at our conservatory make efforts in preparing the assigned piece without much progress in tone. As they gradually begin to understand my lessons, they start emphasizing tone exercise at home. When that happens, they take the first step toward a great musical development.

I am sure you teachers also find those who play with rich, beautiful tone to be the best among your students. To teach every student to produce superior tone is my joy and desire. I am still searching, as I have in the past, for a good instructional method for producing rich tone.

My Plea to All Suzuki Method Teachers

I would like to ask you to focus your strength on making your own tone richer and more beautiful and on giving lessons that will develop your students' tone. This applies to piano, violin, flute and cello.

It has been clear to me that the quality of musical instruction lies in the quality of tone instruction.

Music belongs to "the world of tone."

Always seek to make your tone more beautiful; seek to give life to your tone. Study toward richer tone.

I would like teachers nationwide to study tone production this coming year, and to instruct every student in beautiful, rich tone.

How will the tone improve your student's graduation tapes next spring? I look forward to listening to them.

Right now I listen to graduation tapes every morning from three. Since long ago it has been clear that the quality of student tone mirrors the quality of the teacher's instruction. This year I find teachers whose students have remarkably changed to become more beautiful and richer. I am very pleased, and, as I listen, I thank those teachers with heartfelt thanks for their contribution to the happiness of children.

Let me repeat: concentrate daily on tone instruction for every child.

Instruction for Developing a Superior Musical Sensibility

Every child alike has the potential to develop superior musical sensibility.

It is achieved by the Suzuki method on which I have been experimenting over fifty years. Any baby in the world, if fostered daily in an Osaka family, definitely develops as an Osaka dialect speaker with a sensibility for the Osaka dialect.

Let every student practice playing with the study tape in every family, whether in violin or piano. Let piano

students also play at their lessons with the tape as at violin or cello lessons, so that every student will acquire superior musicality. This is precisely what the Suzuki method is.

While listening to graduation tapes, I clearly see the great gap in musicality between the students of teachers who carry this out and the students of those who don't.

For one year from now, please practice the above as the core of the Suzuki method. I cannot wait to see the results of your fine instruction that will foster every student with beautiful tone and superior musical sensibility.

Unison Duet at Piano Lessons

This is a Suzuki approach which fosters superior musical sensibility in every child.

When a student has learned to play the assigned piece well, tell him it will be a unison performance the following week, and let him play the piece musically with another student at the lesson. Try this on every student. This has been done in violin since long ago. Help students form the habit of practicing with the study tape at home. As a result of this approach to fostering musical sensibility, two students can greatly enjoy playing in unison.

This is Suzuki method education.

Recently, two-piano unison playing has been included finally in annual student concert programs, and in Matsumoto, five- or ten-piano unison performances. Let me ask piano teachers nationwide to try such unison recitals. In violin, unison concerts of two to three thousand children have been held at the Budokan, where they play beautifully together.

This is the Suzuki approach to musical sensibility.

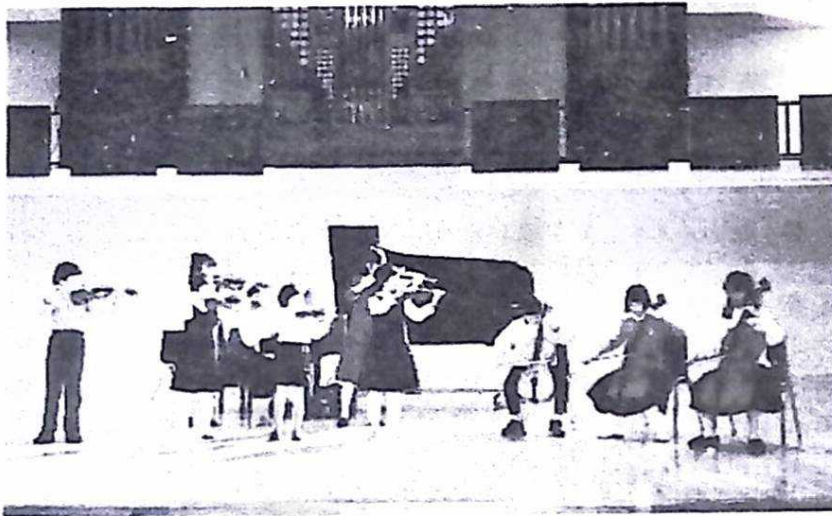
Talent Education, no. 87



TRANS-PACIFIC COMMUNICATION

The Twenty-Fourth Overseas Tour

Masaaki Honda
Tour Leader



At Sioux Center

The First Stop

On September 27, 1988 we left Tokyo International Airport two hours behind schedule in heavy rain, aboard United Airlines's Flight 150 direct to Seattle.

On our first overseas tour, too, we had taken a direct flight to Seattle. I still remember my hope and anxiety then. This time I could leave without a trace of fear in my mind, thinking of our 24 year tour experience and the worldwide understanding of talent education.

Arriving at Seattle at 10:40 on the morning of the same day, we headed straight to the University of Washington. This had also been the first location of the concert on our first trip 24 years ago. The moment we had arrived at the airport, we had rushed to the University to give a concert. This time our schedule allowed us to stay overnight at a hotel to recover from our trip.

We had supper that evening with the Norths, the coordinators of the event, and went over the schedule for our stay in Seattle.

We checked out of the hotel on the following morning, and each teacher took two children to a host family's place. I stayed at the Norths'. It was a scenic place with a view of the distant mountains beyond a grove of evergreens. Michiko North (maiden name Hirata), who studied at Juilliard soon after the war, teaches piano in Seattle.

The first workshop was held in the evening at a Jewish synagogue on Mercer Island on Lake Washington.

The purpose of workshops is to convey the theory and practice of talent education. First the tour children play two or three pieces to demonstrate the beauty of tone. This is followed by instruction on how to practice for richer and more beautiful tone. Often area children get on the stage to join the unison playing. The opportunity to play together and receive instruction at the workshop draws many families from neighboring communities.

While touring, I am often asked what is my favorite place in the States. "Here," I answer diplomatically first and then add, "but I also especially like Seattle, with its mountains, sea, and lake water." The climate is mild, the landscape beautiful — it must be a wonderful place to live. Three years ago when we gave a concert in the same Meany Hall at Washington University, we had a full house audience and additional chairs were brought out. Although this time it was less well attended, the performances went well, bringing success to the first concert of the tour.

An unprecedented happening occurred in the middle of a performance: as Yuya Nakajima played his cello, a string popped. A violin string had popped a few times on earlier occasions, but this was the first time with a cello. He had to return to the stage side to change strings, but he finished his performance well, to our relief.



Picnic at Stone Mountain near Atlanta; second from left is author.

In California

Modesto is a small city about one hour by bus from the Sacramento airport. Our bus stopped in front of a castle-like house in a large walnut orchard. This house belongs to Dr. John Padmos, dentist and host of the Hirose group. Soon other hosts, talent education teachers, and officers of the branch chapter gathered, and a welcome party was held in the spacious garden. In Modesto, located about 150 miles east of San Francisco, the weather is nearly subtropical with a low level of precipitation. It is a producer of melons and watermelons as well as walnuts and almonds. Almond Rocha, which we often enjoy in Japan, comes from this area.

Talent education is expected to develop here under the leadership of Leo Reynolds.

University of Nevada and Other Places



Workshop at Sioux Center

In Japan or overseas, the mention of Las Vegas always evokes the same response: "Oh, casinos." Actually this city with a population of 500,000, the largest in Nevada, has high standard cultural activities around the University of Nevada. This was the fourth visit of the Suzuki children. Approximately twenty Las Vegas Talent Education children played violin at the airport to welcome us. Reporters photographed us as we came out of the aircraft into the lobby and asked us questions about talent education. The Nevada Broadcasting Station, having planned to produce a documentary film on talent education, taped the activities of Instructor Ishikawa, Emiko Yashiro and Etsuko Hirose at the host family's place as well as scenes from the rehearsals and concert. It has just occurred to me at this writing that this video must be a good source of study. I will write for a copy to John Smith, the dean of the Department of Art of the University of Nevada. Writing about the past revives my memory of

various events from that time, and this in turn helps me think of things which I may not otherwise recollect.

In addition to talent education, the Department is actively involved in such areas as opera and dancing. The Suzuki program, headed by Mrs. Mary Straub, has made big strides every year.

My host was Mr. Rogers, president of the Nevada Bank. When Mr. Hirose asked how one could become a bank president so young, he impressed me by replying, "Hard work."

A Town of 5,000 Inhabitants

When I received the itinerary for this year, I had a hard time finding Sioux Center on the map. It is a small town with a population of approximately 5,000. Since the airplane to which we switched at Phoenix was delayed by two hours due to engine trouble, we arrived at Sioux Center at nine at night. Having come from a warm place, we found the cold penetrating. No wonder, I thought, when I found on the following morning that the temperature had dipped below the freezing point.

Dordt College Chapel where the concert was given was impeccable, with good equipment and acoustics. The audience, consisting of appreciative members of the area's music society, genuinely enjoyed the performances.

The deep blue sky of Iowa was an unforgettable sight.

Atlanta's Japan Festival

On October 10th, we flew from Iowa to Atlanta. A request came through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that a few children play that day at the Hyatt Hotel in the opening ceremony of the Japan Festival. Since this immediately followed our long trip, we hesitated somewhat, but accepted the opportunity. We were given to understand that the performance would take place upon our arrival. However, we were kept waiting fairly long because various ceremonies preceded us. Moreover, once

they started on the drinks, the Japanese people in the audience lost concentration and became raucous. Having to talk and perform amidst the noise left us exhausted.

Since my host was a math professor of the University of Georgia, specializing in computers, I took the opportunity to visit the univeristy and observed a lecture on computers. After the lecture, I felt as if I could imagine no further progress in any field without computers. The children performed in the hall of the World Congress Center. This large hall meant for international conferences did not have good acoustics.

Mr. Kimura, Consul General of Japan in Atlanta, came to the concert. When I greeted him, he mentioned that his younger brother had studied violin in Kanagawa. "Where in Kanagawa?" I asked. He told me it was in Fujisawa, my city. Pursuing the topic a little further, I discovered to my surprise that the Consul was the oldest son of my friend, the late Doctor Kimura, who had practiced pediatrics in Fujisawa. I have seen many people during the twenty-four years of annual touring overseas; yet this was a rare coincidence.

On the following morning the hosts and tour members went for a picnic to the Stone Mountain in the suburbs. The ride around the mountain on the hay-carrier train, in particular, made me recover a childlike frame of mind. I truly enjoyed the half day outing.

From the Stone Mountain we headed straight for the airport and flew to Nashville, our next stop.

A Concert at Church

We feel familiar and intimate with place names we have learned through songs and poems. I feel this way about Tennessee because of the "Tennessee Waltz" which Chiemi Eri sang long ago. However, few people in Tennessee know this song.

The Nashville workshop was held at the Blair School of Music attached to Vanderville College. While lecturing, I recalled the workshop we gave about ten years ago in the

same hall. Memory is a curious thing: as though a video tape was reversed, topics of our conversations, people we had met, and even minor events we had encountered then came back to me.

My host there on this tour was Mrs. Norton, an elderly person in a wheel chair. She skillfully folded her chair, sat in the driver's seat, and started to drive. At first I felt nervous, but she was a good driver. She told me unprompted that her walking was impeded due to progressive muscle paralysis, but that, strangely, her feet spontaneously moved whenever she sat in her car. She lives by herself in a beautiful mansion, and, as I found out, is a good cook. What impressed me most is that she lives cheerfully without at all complaining about her illness. She has full knowledge that her illness is terminal, and that she is gradually worsening.

The concert was given at a big hall in a Presbyterian church. The Kataokas came from St. Louis and fed us curry on rice. As always it was delicious, and we were grateful for their thoughtfulness.

The children performed frequently at churches during this tour. Unlike concert halls, churches may not come with sufficient equipment and acoustics. However, we find that the effective PR makes up for it, since church members reach outside the Suzuki community, bringing a large audience.

The Third Consecutive Visit

We have visited Virginia three years in a row, counting this year. Richmond is the capital of the State, a city with history and tradition. On the evening of our arrival, there was a welcome potluck party at Maymont Park. This kind of party can begin and end in food, unless those in charge are creative. Too much ceremony would make it meaninglessly formal, but some greetings and introductions would create a feeling of closeness and help conversations get started among strangers. We thought about this and made a suggestion that those

present introduce themselves. A really cordial atmosphere resulted.

The concert at Richmond was co-sponsored by the talent education and the State University of Virginia, but only nominally so. The University merely supplied the hall, where no music school student was in sight.

No Weak Soldiers under a Brave Commander

In the past several years, the entry of Japanese industry into various places in the States has been remarkable. We learned for the first time on the evening of our arrival that Hitachi was building a plant in Winston-Salem.

Alan Smith, Dean of the School of the Arts, State University of North Carolina, and his students met us at the Greensboro airport. He helped us load our luggage on a van. We stayed at the Hyatt, but attended a party sponsored by Hitachi that evening at a nearby restaurant. It is good that Japanese business makes contributions toward American-Japanese cultural exchanges.

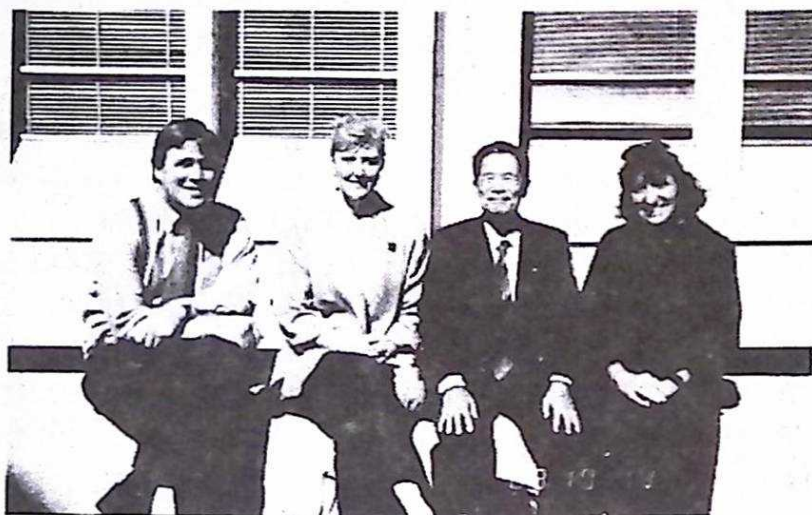
The University of North Carolina takes great interest in talent education, and acted as the sponsor on our visit this time. There have been past cases in which a university took a similar interest, but this was the first time that the head of a school took leadership. Scouted from Juilliard at the young age of thirty-three, Dean Smith has enriched the school greatly within two years.

We appeared on the morning show the following day. At six o'clock in the morning, Dean Smith came to pick us up at the hotel, and drove us to and from the Greensboro Broadcasting Station. Seeing his positive attitude, I thought of the old saying, "There are no weak soldiers under a brave commander." The impression I received is that this school abounds with strong people, and that its future will be fruitful. That night we had a good response from the full house audience in the University hall.

After the concert we talked about talent education and American music education with Dean Smith, oblivious to the passing of the night.

Finding an ice skating rink in the basement of a building in front of the hotel, the children asked through a teacher if they could skate. For an instant I thought that twenty or thirty minutes with gloves on might be fine; but I told them no, afraid of possible injury. When I told Dean Smith about this, he said, "Good. Many people unexpectedly break their bones skating." I thought it was lucky that I hadn't let the children skate.

It is too late once the milk is spilled. I freshly determined in my mind that we should avoid any suggestion of danger on this kind of tour.



Alan Smith, State University of North Carolina, and staff.

Parakeet Jungle

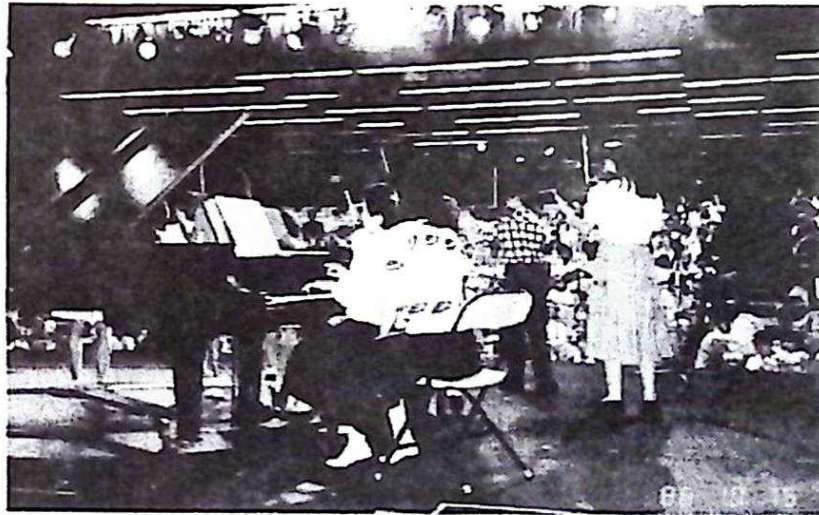
The Miami Airport thronged with sightseers. We were used to this because we had been there several times.

Last time we had given a concert in the city's large hall, but this time the children performed at a Methodist church, and were co-sponsored by the Miami Music Society and the talent education chapter there. Although

church pianos are not always good, since the purpose of the tour is to introduce talent education, it is more important to have manye people listen to our concerts than to have a better piano.

There was a swimming pool in the yard of the Yuskos who were my hosts, covered with a net to keep insects away. We had breakfast before it got light by the poor side. The reflection of several candlelights swayed in the water, creating a faintly strange atmosphere. It reminded me of a scene from *Phantom of the Opera*.

Before flying to New Orleans, we went to a parokeet jungle with Instructor Woodside and host families. The children were very happy to see the colorful birds.



A scene from the Miami workshop.

Consulate General Co-Sponsors

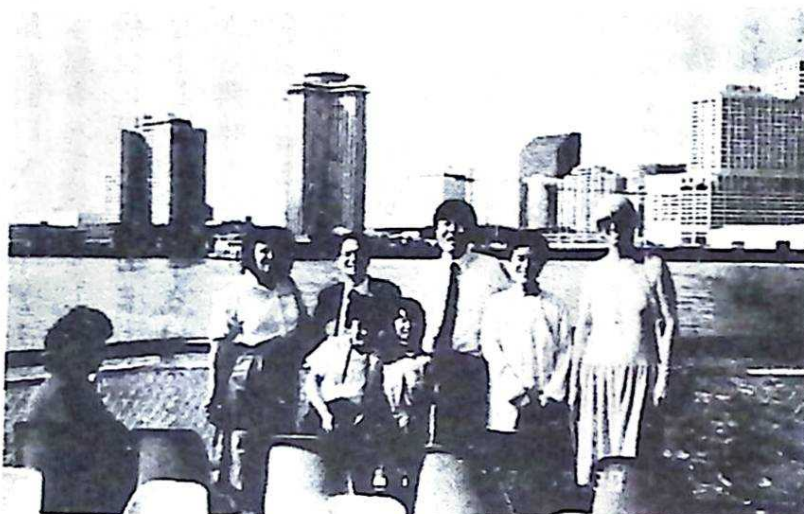
Our third concert in New Orleans was a rare event in that it was co-sponsored by Talent Education and the Consulate General of Japan. The cooperation of Japanese diplomats as here and in Altanta can help the movement develop greatly.

Mr. Nicolakis, a host, took us to the French Quarter. It was noisy, and I did not find its charm as before.

The workshop in New Orleans was divided into two sections: violin at Tulane University and cello and piano at Loyola University. Both were fully attended and we had good responses. We could tell that talent education had set its roots deeply in Louisiana.

Since our flight was in the afternoon, we enjoyed leisurely shopping and sightseeing. A shopping center had recently opened along the Mississippi River. American shopping centers tend to house stores of identical names and similar structures, but the center here was quite unique and attractive. What we liked even more was a round trip on a ferry across the river. The city of New Orleans we viewed from the center of the river was a wonderful, unforgettable sight. The ferry was free, a rare thing nowadays.

Loyola University specializes in education. It is deeply interested in talent education, I heard, and would like to offer a Suzuki method course in the future.



Ferrying across the Mississippi.

Louisville

I remember Louisville well because of the honorary citizenship conferred on me over a dozen years ago. At

the reception at Mr. Tooth's place on the evening of our arrival, we were able to rekindle our old friendship with the teachers there. Members of the Methodist church took turns transporting us from the hotel to homes and to the church, the location of the concert. Preparation for the concert and transportation, among other things, are tremendous chores for our hosts. Thanks to their efforts, the concert here also went well.

Mrs. Bloch's Kind Heart

There is a person in Peoria whom I can never forget. Over twenty years ago a daughter of my medical friend visited the States. She flew to Los Angeles, and got off the plane there in order to transfer for a Chicago-bound flight. Due to the domestic air strike, however, she was unable to fly. When she was waiting in the lobby shivering in the cold as the night drew on, an American lady came by to ask what was the matter, silently put her cardigan around the girl's shoulders, and stepped to the airline counter. I do not know how she explained the situation. She returned with the attendant, who managed to put my friend's daughter on the earliest flight to Chicago before many other passengers. This story moved me so much that I promptly wrote to Mrs. Fran Block: I am deeply grateful to you for your kindness, etc. Soon I heard from her: "Anybody in my place would have done the same. We walk daily a path which we will never tread again. Why shouldn't we do for others what we think best?" I was moved again by her beautiful heart, and resolved to invite her to a tour children's concert some day. This was realized three years later. It was my great pleasure to be able to invite her again this year.

The concert was held at the civic hall. Before the program, recognition was given to Mrs. Pat Hackler for her many years of contribution to the movement as a talent education instructor. I joined the ceremony by presenting to her Mr. Suzuki's shikishi (square poetry card with brush painting and calligraphy).

I was hosted by Mr. Goodale who works as an attorney for the Caterpillar Tractor Company. Although I had been well acquainted with him from before, I came to know him more deeply through the stay at his place on this trip. While talking with him I recalled having invited his daughter to the National Concert when she was studying at Nanzan University — another example of resurfacing of memories.

An anthology of proverbs I found in his house interested me. Mr. Goodale and I looked for the book in vain at bookstores, and I thought it too bad; but later he kindly made a copy of his book and sent it to me. Let me introduce a couple that are to me particularly interesting:

Give a man a fish and you've fed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you've fed him for life.

Everything comes to him who waits, if he works while he waits.

One Stone, Three Birds

Place names appearing in nostalgic songs remain in our memory. The "Tennessee Waltz" and "Old Virginy" are good examples. The "Moon of Colorado" is another beloved song often sung in Japan years ago.

On the car ride to Dr. Hall's place from Denver, I saw an unforgettably beautiful full moon which rose from the edge of a mountain.

We had visited Denver several times by the invitation of the university or talent education people. This time we were sponsored by Calvary Temple. As already stated, whenever a music series of a church invites us, thanks to its organizing power we enjoy a full house audience. Moreover, the movement is understood more widely because people outside of talent education attend the concert. Since it is also financially positive, it is like killing three birds with one stone.

Of the several concerts in Denver, this year's was the most successful. Those who listened to the children seemed struck by their wonderful potential.

Mesa, Arizona

Glenn Doman once said that the happiest thing in life is to have a great friend. I enjoy meeting people on tour.

Mesa, located about sixty miles east of Phoenix, is a city which has developed rapidly in recent years. Mr. Burns, my host, had just been elected State Senator of Arizona at age twenty-seven. Mrs. Burns had studied with John Cleveland in Monroe, Louisiana, moved to Mesa upon marriage, and established the talent education program here.

Since there was time on the day of our arrival, we went to see the cotton field owned by Mr. Burns. The cotton flowers, stretching as far as we could see over acres and acres of field, were really a gorgeous sight. Unlike in the "Old Kentucky Home" days, flowers are plucked by a big tractor and made into long rectangular three-yard heaps. I met Mr. Burns' father. He had the striking face of a Westerner who has survived wind and snow.

The concert was given at Central Christian Church. The audience which packed the spacious hall appreciated the beautiful performances, the last set on the continent on this tour, and gave the children a standing ovation.

At Kamehameha School

Honolulu was not included in the original itinerary. However, since a day or so of leisurely shopping would be desirable after the long trip, we asked Mrs. Tuffin to sound out Mrs. Marilyn Klein about the possibility of a concert there. The response was in the affirmative. The concert was given at seven at Kamehameha School on the evening of the last day of our stay in the States. Elsewhere the children always played "America, the Beautiful" for an encore, but here they played "Aloha Oe" arranged by Instructor Hachiro Hirose. The people of

Hawaii appreciated the children's beautiful performance of this familiar piece.

The evening scene of Honolulu we viewed from Kamehameha School was as beautiful as if the dust of diamonds was sprinkled there, befitting the last night of the journey that had lasted over a month.

Epilogue

I was greatly relieved that all of the tour members were able to return safe and sound. It's hard not to think it a near miracle that no accident has occurred during the concert tours that have spanned twenty-four years. I owe this last safe trip to the efforts of the accompanying instructors: Hachiro and Yuko Hirose, Yuko Ishikawa, Kazuhiko Osaka, Yoko Okahisa, and Etsuko Kubota. The children stayed healthy and continued to perform beautifully until the very end. American teachers commented that this group was the best they had heard. The student participants were Makiko and Emiko Yashiro, Kanako and Mayuko Sagoh, Saeko Oguma, Ryo Aoki, Chizu and Noriko Kataoka, Yuya Nakajima, and Etsuko Hirose.

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FIRST PARTICIPATION IN THE AMERICAN TOUR

Hiroko Ishikawa
Instructor, Kanto District

One day during the hot spell in July, Mr. Suzuki called and said (in our native Nagoya dialect), "May I ask you to go on this year's tour?" That decided my first participation in the tour.

Since my involvement in previous tours had always been more or less limited to enjoying the Return Concert, I was curious: "What kind of trip will it be?" But before thinking about that, I had to adjust my lesson schedule and find substitute teachers so that I could leave.

When all the tour members gathered for the first rehearsal, I met the children who would be in my charge during the tour. Emiko Yashiro, who plays violin, and Etsuko Hirose, who plays piano, were to be my family in the States: we were to share host families and always move together; I would be the Mother. Several "families" of one teacher and a couple of students formed in the same way.

This being my first tour, I had nervously wondered what it was going to be like; and my English being monosyllabic at best, I felt tense as we reached America. However, when friends of the Suzuki method welcomed us at the airport, they created a warm atmosphere which made me feel at home in spite of the language gap.

The first thing we had to tend to was rehearsal. It happened in a room of the local Suzuki school, which has

a wide lawn. When Hachiro Hirose started instruction, the atmosphere of the room assumed a refreshing alertness, and it was hard to believe that the players were the same children who had been running around on the lawn until minutes ago.



Children study during a rehearsal, Seattle.

When the solo pieces started after the rehearsal of the unison playing, the children not playing chose places to sit and busily studied for school, using a chair as a desk or holding a notebook on the lap. I was both surprised and impressed to see them work on assignments from school.

My experiences in the fifteen places during the 35 day trip are all memorable, but after all the first concert left the deepest impression on me.

The children played beautifully, displaying their different unique qualities. I felt that they were drawing to themselves the capacity audience. I was glad to see many people moved by the children's playing.

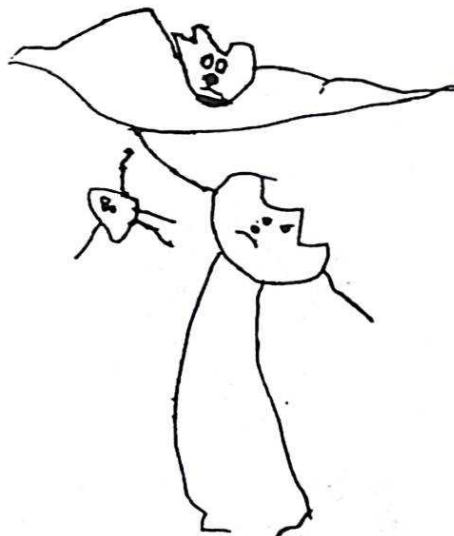
The entire hall became one as the concert progressed. When "America the Beautiful" was performed as the last encore piece, everyone stood and sang along. There was a sense of a strong tie between the audience and the stage. I cried, feeling what must be genuine international friendship.

Workshops were like this, too. In a distant country where a different language is spoken, we hear the same familiar pieces like Bach, Vivaldi, and the Suzuki Allegro - this is natural, but I freshly recognized the beauty of the Suzuki method.

I am grateful for the really good learning experiences I gained amidst the warm friendship with Americans as well as the contact between the ten children and the accompanying teachers.

Although it was a relief to be able to hand the the children back safely to their parents at the end of the tour, I was sad to part with them, all of whom I ended up loving like my own. Looking at photographs from the tour, I wonder if they are well and practicing. I also renew my gratitude to our American host families and all those concerned.

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BACKSTAGE ON THE AMERICAN TOUR

Kazuhiko Osaka
Instructor, Kanto District

In early December, I was told to write something about the tour. It was over a month after the journey, and the three return home concerts at Fukuoka, Matsumoto, and Nagoya had been finished. Since I had returned to the routine of my normal Japanese life and begun to forget all about the tour, I had to look again at the photos and my diary, and find the itineray.

Parting is the Beginning of Meeting

This subtitle does not mean anything profound. I participated in the Suzuki children's tour for the first time six years ago. There was a four year old in the group. When departing at the Tokyo International Airport she gazed at her mother's face until it was out of sight as though to imprint it in her eyes (she regretted that she had not brought her mother's photo), and promptly on the plane she set herself to quiet sobs. There was also an instance in which I put to sleep in my arms a homesick student who, days after the tour had started, did not stop crying.

On this tour the youngest was nine years old (six years ago she would have belonged to the core of the group), all could take care of themselves. My function as "luggage carrier and baby sitter" was virtually reduced to nothing.

At the departure at the airport, therefore, nobody was sad and the general mood was a happy one. The students even seemed to look forward to being as free as they liked, away from their parents' eyes. Toward the end of the trip even those who had not even talked to one another at the first rehearsal would be saying that they wished the tour would last forever so they did not have to part. Nonetheless, when they were reunited with their mothers at the airport on returning to the country, their smiles then looked even more joyous to me than at the happiest moments during the journey.

News Is Good News



At night in Las Vegas.

While meeting the demanding schedule of fifteen cities in thirty-five days, one of our pleasures when arriving at the next destination was receiving letters from home. The coordinator's name in each place (usually a violin teacher) had been given to participants in advance. The letters that had arrived were brought to us by the teachers who met us at the airport. The main link with Japan during our trip was, after all, those letters. The students rushed to get them, but if they started to read on the spot, that would

hamper our next activity — joining our host families and be taken to their places. So we had to ask them to refrain from reading their letters right away. Those letters about our friends and families made us feel close to Japan. Letters home about our trip must have equally pleased those who waited back home.

I received many letters from parents of participating students (though rarely from my own family). The younger female teachers, especially, found letters at every single city (perhaps from male friends?), and were always even more excited than the students.

Unforgettable People

Each time we tour, we enjoy seeing Masayoshi and Eiko Kataoka of St. Louis, whose two daughters were members on this tour. They had brought us rice balls and pickles a number of times, and this time they even packed home-made rice and curry in their car. The children were very happy. Yuko Honda also brought us sushi and green tea to the Chicago airport where we transferred.

We cannot forget the kindness of the host families with whom we stayed at each city. The tour would not have been possible without those people who worried about our health and cared for us as if they were our own families. My group (Ryo Aoki, Yuya Nakajima, and myself) often happened to stay with a Japanese family and, to our great luck, enjoyed tempura and sushi.

Well, this is getting to be like "Unforgettable Food." I hear that a participating teacher said, "The only one who gained weight on this tour is Mr. Osaka."

What impressed me deeply during this tour was that American children were developing beautifully. The posture and tone of children playing in the workshop in whichever city struck me as incomparably better than what I observed six years ago. The serious attitude of the American teachers spoke strongly to me.

This reflects the results of the efforts of the different children who have toured during the past twenty-four years and, at the same time, it is proof of the fact that the Suzuki method is spreading healthily.

In any case I was happy that all the tour members returned with no serious illness or accident.

Dr. Honda commented that alcohol must have worked as a sterilizer since we teachers gathered at the bar whenever we stayed at a hotel (four times during the tour) and drank bourbon and what not. I must thank Dr. Honda for his supervision, Hachiro Hirose who took care of all the performance aspects including rehearsals, concerts, and workshops, and all the other accompanying instructors. I would also like to thank the children who let beautiful tone ring all over the States and in my heart.

Talent Education, no. 87



HOW TO LET THE STRINGS RING WITH BEAUTY

Lectures on Music Instruction (60)

Shin'ichi Suzuki

At lessons I pluck the D string with a beautiful, big tone, let the student listen, and explain: "The string keeps ringing after it's plucked. Your bow stroke should reproduce this ring with the arm, bow, and horse hair." This is how I instruct in order to foster a listening ear.

I carefully teach the small semi-circular up and down movement of the bow, the arm, and the elbow, by repeating it again and again. With the movement involving the elbow, horse hair and bow, the same ring should be produced as when the D string was plucked with the finger. The horse hair should produce beautiful staccato tone on the same location of the string: pong, pong, pong. Please give this instruction.

What is important is the movement of the fingers holding the bow. With each tone, the thumb nail should repeat the "panda" motion while the other four fingers move in a semi-circle. This, with the semi-circular elbow movement, produces a beautiful, ringing tone.

The amount of tone is a matter of the size of the up and down movement of the elbow.

Following success with the above ideas, gradually increase the width of bow while still using the same approach to tone production. Lift the bow with each stroke. Guide the production of a beautiful, rich tone on

the open D string, one bow at a time. This is instruction in string tone with a beautiful ring, produced bow by bow with the elbow.

Then teach beautiful legato tone using the same tone on the open D string.

Important Instruction in "Two-Tone" Vibrato in Violin and Cello

The most important thing in vibrato instruction, on the violin, is the shape of the left hand and fingers. Please instruct each student properly.

At the lesson always listen to to your students' sound for the beauty of vibrato, and try to instruct so that, with the proper hand shape, they will be able to play with "two-tone" vibrato, in which the pitch can be heard, not just seen, to vibrate.

I always carefully listen to the quality of vibrato, and instruct toward more and more beautiful vibrato.

The beauty of the student's vibrato proves the quality of the teacher.

If the finger tip stays standing, the vibrato remains a "one-tone" vibrato even though the hand moves. I encourage you to study how to skillfully teach each student to vibrate so that the lower of the two tones can be as beautifully heard.

Good vibrato is a vital question of instruction. It is a question of the quality of the instructor.

Talent Education, no. 87

FINGER PLACEMENT

Ability Development in Music (1954-57, Part IV)

From the *Evolution of the Suzuki Method*

Shin'ichi Suzuki

FOR HIGHTENING TECHNICAL ABILITY

Finger Tip Shape

Listening to great performers and studying their beautiful vibrato, I come to the conclusion that the shape of the left hand is crucial. On further exploring the issue, I find that it boils down to the angle of the left fingers on the strings.

I have studied that shape for years. The common deduction from examining the tone and vibrato of Kreisler, Thibaud, Neveu, Oistrakh and others, as far as my present observation goes, can be summarized as follows:

1. The fingers should be as close to perpendicular to the strings without, however, letting the nails touch the string (fingers should stand on end).

2. The location of the finger tip pressing the string should be the same with all four fingers.
3. The finger tip should always securely press, with the center of its power, the center of the string.

These, I have come to know, are essential to the angle of finger tips necessary for producing that beautiful tone and beautiful vibrato.

"Make a circle with the tips of the thumb and the middle finger together. Put your middle finger down on the string just like that," I used to explain to my students. I have discovered, however, that my own fingers were not as nearly perpendicular to the string. This means that I was not strict enough toward myself.

I still think it a good method to show by making a circle with the thumb and middle finger tips. As long as I demonstrated this way, however, I should have looked at my own finger tip on the string and sufficiently corrected myself. Not only the middle finger, I should have properly arranged all four fingers in the same manner. Searching for the beautiful vibrato of Kreisler and others, for the first time I came to realize that my fingers were not standing straight enough.

I have also thought about Casals' cello. Imagine his left hand and fingers when he is playing. It seems one should be able to put the fingers down on the strings with a better shape. In fact I think it far easier to shape the left hand naturally on the cello than on the violin. I have tried to imitate the playing motions of cellists, especially paying close attention to Casals' finger shapes. It is easier, I have found, to press the string with a nearly perpendicular finger on the cello than on the violin. If so, we must correct our violin fingers so that they look similar to how it is done on the cello.

What about the need for pressing the string at the same location of the finger tip for all four fingers?

Study vibrato. You will notice that your tone will vary depending upon the angle of the fingertip when pressing the string.

Try to approach gradually the beautifully vibrated tone of Kreisler, Thibaud, and others. The angle of your finger, i.e., the way your fingertip presses, will change accordingly.

Further, you will realize that your tone varies depending upon which part of your finger presses the center of the string.

Then you will gradually see what angle the finger should be at and which part of the fingertip you should use.

If you understand this much, I no longer have to explain the rest: if the location of the fingertip pressing the string differs from finger to finger, the quality of tone will lack uniformity.

Therefore, it is important to watch the relationship between your fingers and the string, and, while playing slowly, remedy the unevenness.

If your fingers are extremely uneven, you can accidentally pluck the next string when you lift a finger. Again, some people form the habit of pressing the string by pushing it sideways. This has to be discovered early and corrected. Instead of bringing the finger from above the string, they are pushing the string away diagonally, bending the string as a result. This is an extremely bad habit. If you find this among your students, remedy it quickly and thoroughly. It is necessary to train the student to raise the finger directly above the string and to put it down slowly and perpendicularly on the string. Let him watch to be certain that the string is not bent.

As usual, of course you must go to the root of the problem: first correct the angle of the left hand. The poor left hand shape leads to the habit of fingers which automatically push strings aside. This is a fairly difficult problem to correct, so you can expect to have to spend a considerable amount of time allowing careful training.

A child who can remedy this kind of bad habit in a short period of time (about a month) will undoubtedly make great progress.

Those who can correct themselves well will be accomplished; those who do not easily correct themselves have little hope of progress until correction starts.



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Etudes are No Longer Needed

Qualitative differences of ability result from what is repeated and how it is repeated.

Children learn the mother tongue while correct pronunciation and intonation are repeated daily by their side. However, in music no such good environmental condition is provided. For this reason, in many cases wrong skills are fostered by wrong methods; or, due to the poor learning method, students never start to practice what is proper. The consequences are not good.

Therefore I think it crucial to teach a proper method of practice at the beginner stage. Those who have already experienced it know how harmful misdirected efforts are, and how much thought must go into the question of how to study.

Understanding this, I have long explored how to help students study. This is one of the most essential educational requisites in teaching violin. The following are the angles from which I have looked at the issue:

1. The stages in which man's skills develop.
2. The number of times an identical motion needs to be repeated before it becomes easy.
3. Giving preparatory training on the most challenging points of the material at the next level so as to develop the necessary skills ahead of time. This is so that students do not feel that the new material is difficult.
4. Constant instruction on bow execution that allows beautiful tone to be produced; making it the basic element of student practice. Studying proper training methods of string playing.
5. Beautiful, refined tone should be the first aim of instruction. Pay constant attention to developing this. Letting students understand as early as possible that a string can ring with

beauty. Teaching how to practice for ever better tone.

6. Exploring the principles of musical rhythm and musical tone, and teaching how to seek constantly for proper musical expression.
7. Studying to develop a beautiful octave and correct intonation.
8. Rationally developing a natural posture.

Constantly explore and deepen your understanding of these points, scrutinize them thoroughly, simplify them and put them in a daily frame of reference for student study.

In a musically underdeveloped country like Japan, I think the only good method is to teach with records so that music can enter through the ear. I am insufficiently equipped to teach children. Therefore I make much use of records by great musicians of the world who have my greatest respect. I ask Casals, Kreisler, Thibaud, Enesco, Neveu, Oistrakh and other major performers to be the children's "homeroom teachers" through recordings. In fact I say to the children, "Those great masters are your teachers. Many teachers are raising and instructing you." I try to let them appreciate this.

When they are advanced, records of these teachers are by their side at home. Listening to the recording of the assigned piece is part of the daily practice session so that sensibility will develop through the ear. I make this an important requisite of children's study.

To develop through daily contact with the world's most accomplished players — this means that I arrange children's musical development in the same way as in their linguistic development, which occurs in an environment of excellent language spoken by adults. Only those who have experienced it know how effective this approach is.

I have edited a ten volume literature based on this new idea needed for violin instruction. Since this method can foster even three year olds, today it is used in Japan by non-Suzuki people as well. It was published after ten years of practical teaching and sufficient examination.

I started out with an idea that, if the violin were one-stringed it would not be felt to be a difficult instrument to play. The confusion of beginners would be limited, and we would be able to help develop beautiful tone, correct posture, and free motions.

The same can be said of the piano. If it were an instrument of a single octave, children would think it easy. Wouldn't it be easy to use what is easy in training children thoroughly on fine tone, bowing, and proper fingering? I know that children develop outstanding skills while having fun with friends and repeating daily training. Under simple conditions, man's ability can be fostered to an endless height. If, once the basic skill has been formed, it is used to expand the scope to a higher level of complexity, man's ability can develop.

Violin is difficult because the four-stringed instrument has to be played with a bow that is difficult to handle; besides which, one is expected to start in C Major. Here, already, are the sources of confusion for beginners. Why we must study violin in C Major was my question.

The first objective is to be able to play violin well. If one can play well, I thought, one can play in C Major or in any other key.

Which key does not matter. To start with a key in which it is easy to play the instrument should be the common sense of beginner instruction.

Thinking this way, I focused my eyes on a one-stringed violin: my instruction started with the hypothesis that our violin had just the E string.



Hohmann, Keiser, and other methods begin with whole notes. In violin, producing tone using whole bows requires advanced technique. Why was it necessary to start with such a difficult use of the bow? This was my next question. I thought again that in violin (as well as other things) it should be common sense of beginner instruction to start with what was feasible.

By letting small children try, I found that they could play without difficulty and with good tone if I gave them something rhythmical for short bow strokes. I also thought that what three or four year olds could play should be fine for beginner instruction in violin, and selected the familiar Twinkle theme as the second teaching material.

Before playing this piece, students have to exercise takataka tatta sufficiently on the E string, and train for good bow hold, posture, and tone production until they can handle these areas properly.

When they are started this way, three or four year olds play the violin with clear tone. When playing short bow strokes, everyone can produce ringing tone. If so, it follows that teaching materials should be organized so that students can thoroughly train themselves with short strokes, form the habit of producing beautiful tone, then gradually learn to play longer strokes.

First, teach the intonation of the first, second and third fingers on one string, and at the same time help develop proper bowhold, posture, and tone production necessary for playing on one string. Allow sufficient time for this stage. Then start Twinkle. This is in A Major, in which the finger pattern for these three fingers is the same on both the E and the A strings.

Thus, the instrument has elevated itself to a two stringed violin. Using this two stringed violin, train children in what is extremely simple (though at first this is not so easy): the same finger pattern for fingers 1, 2, and 3 on both strings. I have arranged a sequence of several familiar pieces children know well. The finger positions staying the same, the melody changes; and everyone knows those songs. Therefore, the materials do not

become progressively difficult for the students. However, when ability develops, they can learn a piece of the same level faster and play it in a more accomplished way, so we can see development.

When these five or six pieces are finished, they move on to the next five or six pieces which they should be able to handle with the ability created by then. These dozen or so pieces are all in A Major, requiring the same finger locations. It is natural that three or four year olds can manage.

Foster ability in this manner on the two stringed violin with E and A. Then move on to using the two strings, A and D. Let them repeatedly play pieces they know and have practiced on E and A. Students play them easily, because, although the pieces are now in D, the fingers still press the same spots as on E and A. Through practicing playing on D and A, securer ability is fostered. The objective should always be sharply focused on fostering the ability to play violin in an accomplished way. Next, train on playing the D and G. If the locations of the fingers are the same and the pieces are the same, fostering the ability to play on G and D is extremely easy. Of course, it should not be limited to the same pieces; as you instruct students, gradually add new pieces to be played on two neighboring strings.

So far, students have practiced to play three two-stringed violins. It is now time to develop the ability to play the four-stringed violin.

The four-stringed violin begins with G Major. So, I have arranged the rest of Book 1 and all of Books 2 and 3 only with G Major and g minor pieces.

In organizing famous pieces from such composers as Bach and Beethoven, all with piano accompaniment, I have given careful consideration to the levels of the learner's skills. These volumes are designed to prepare for development of various skills while allowing children to enjoy music and appreciate famous classical pieces. I have arranged the order of the pieces so that there was

never any resistance even during ten years of experimenting on young children.

Why are Hohmann, Keiser, and other methods and etudes necessary? This was also my question.

I have chosen to scatter in famous pieces equivalents of such etudes, adhering to the idea of helping develop technique through teaching music. There are Kreutzer and other superior etudes. Of course they are fine teaching materials. At advanced levels when the technical ability and musical performance have started to develop, or in order to increase strength as professional musicians, it is necessary to adopt those masters' work at the appropriate time as one thinks fit, and try to enhance one's strengths.

I have abandoned, however, the idea of fostering technique by etudes from the beginner stage.

So that children would enjoy learning and that musical sensibility and skills would constantly be developed, I thought it would be better to let them learn one great piece after another, collecting and organizing pieces in such a way that the equivalent of etudes were skillfully positioned within the collection.

The success of this approach is demonstrated by, above all, the fact that many people started to think that everyone could play violin with ease. In the past ten years alone, tens of thousands of people have been enjoying playing masterpieces at their different levels.

Common sense in the past held that violin was difficult, it was for professionals, not for everyone to play. Today, new common sense has been created that everyone can learn to play it and enjoy music.

In fact I am surprised by the unexpected development. We no longer think it rare when a three year old plays the Beethoven minuet or a five year old plays the Vivaldi a minor concerto.

The Talent Education Institute annually holds a national concert. Twelve or thirteen hundred children gather from throughout the country, including the countryside of Shinshu. One thousand children or so,

five year olds among them, now perform the Vivaldi in unison.

This may partly result from the innovation in the instructional approach, but I think I can say that the approach to editing the violin literature, which allows even small children to develop, plays a major role.

A conclusion can be drawn here: for whatever new project, teaching materials and training for all must be planned with the idea of "starting from zero ability," and allowing the same conditions and processes as in fostering ability in a young child.

This means that an educational program fails if constructed with the idea that the student is an adult.

Adult or child, everyone starts with zero ability when introduced to something not yet experienced. We have to realize that ability develops only according to the principle of human ability development.

Because of the idea that adults are different from children, many adults who start something new never achieve a level of proficiency.

We are adults, so we can more easily learn, say, Ethiopian — this vain confidence leads people to drop out.

The same applies to editing of teaching materials. The stages by which young children develop are the stages of human ability development. Adults, I have discovered, must also follow similar steps.

Adults say that, when they start as adults, ability does not develop easily. This is because they do not use the right approach. What is difficult to develop in adulthood pertains to the world of sensibility, not that of ability. In other words, in such things as sense and character, even if we make efforts we cannot equal the qualities fostered from early childhood. On the other hand, I think technical ability and cognitive ability can develop. Anyway, adults do not make sufficient efforts. They must not skip a day and the method of learning must be correct, but they don't do it that way.

I'll do it as a hobby, I'll do it when I have the time — with such an attitude, ability cannot develop, just as it did

not even when you were a child. In this sense, the adult view that ability does not develop if one starts something in adulthood needs correction.

I tried an experiment to find out how my ability would grow at my age (fifty-nine). I placed the bow on a string, then produced beautiful tone with the well balanced bow. I carefully played a stroke at a time after checking the balance of the bow each time. I did this exercise 100,000 times (it took me about 25 days). People recognized the leaping progress in the beauty and clarity of my tone in those 25 days.

I too recognized the development of ability in myself. When I first started to experiment, I placed the bow on the string, thought about balance, and balanced the bow on the string before each stroke. However, when I had repeated it about 60,000 times, I came to a point where the balance was disordered, rather than achieved, when I tried to balance the bow.

In other words, I had formed such a habit that whenever I put the bow on the string, it was already balanced. As I approached the 100,000th time, I felt the balance on the string even when I held the bow in the air. This created confidence that I could now hit the string with the bow without preparation. Thus, I could tell the process of my ability development. Walking erect is in fact a difficult activity. Yet, thanks to our training from babyhood, we don't have to be conscious of standing with balance. In the same way, I had reached the point where I did not have to be thinking about the balance of the bow on the string. After 100,000 times, I had developed enough bowing ability where a further leap would be possible.

I consider this as proof that ability can develop no matter how old you are.

RAISING MY BLIND CHILD

A Mother's Note

Kano Kawamura
Yoshiko Nakajima Class, Osaka

The year the World Fair was held in Osaka, we had a baby girl. Born with poor eyes, she could barely see light. We could not afford to remain steeped in the joy of the birth of a baby. We had to think of something for her that would prove helpful in her future. Music occurred to us as one thing she would be able to enjoy like normal people. We were also reminded of an old saying, "artistic skill is a help in need." So we decided to let her study a musical instrument, in case it might help her become independent in the future.

Chiaki Starts Violin

Like now, piano lessons were popular then. However, we thought that piano might present difficulty for a blind child when carrying fingers across the wide keyboard. Violin might be simpler because it does not demand movements over a large space, we thought, knowing nothing, and decided to let her learn the violin. My husband knew, though faintly, of talent education, having read about it in some book. On his way back from the golf course near our home, he saw an ad for talent education pasted on an electric pole, and promptly dialed the number written on the torn paper. The teacher wasn't giving lessons due to illness, but introduced us to Yoshiko Nakajima. This is how we first met her.

When I explained our situation, she told me to come to observe the class. "This is the first time I teach a child with that handicap, so I don't know how we will do, but we will try hard together," she said, and so began our struggle.

At that time Chiaki was only one and a half years old. I felt at a loss when I was told to learn violin myself until my daughter was old enough to take lessons. I had never touched an instrument, I had no sense of tone, and my stiff fingers refused to move; moreover, during my lesson I had to ask other mothers to watch my child. I somehow managed to play the first four books, however. Since the Suzuki method encourages repeatedly playing good music for children, we decided to get a stereo. It was very expensive given our means then, so my husband assembled the amplifiers by himself. We put on the Suzuki violin records frequently.



Chiaki Kawamura, sixth grader, takes a lesson in Mr. Suzuki's master class, Kobun Kyoiku Kaikan.

By then our daughter who had started after me was already catching up. Around that time I was expecting another child. The teacher probably thought she could not demand more from me: I was excused from lessons.

I used to feel really awkward about having to perform with little children at recitals, but aside from that it was quite enjoyable learning to play the instrument a little.

Studying Braille

Pieces became more demanding in Book 4. In fast passages, it was not only difficult for my child to get details through the ear, but hard for me to teach her what the notes were. I was pressed by the need to show her the written music and let her learn from there. However, no braille music was available. Having just become a first grader, Chiaki started to learn the fifty-letter Japanese alphabet in braille at school. In the second trimester, the music teacher at school lectured to parents about the basics of music in braille, and offered to cooperate with anyone interested in studying it further. My task of braille transcription of music began.

Musical notation in braille is made by combining letters from the alphabet. "Do re mi fa sol la si do" in quarter notes are written in braille as "su sa ke se shi ko so." The same notes in eighth notes are written "ru ra e re ri o ro." To these basic combinations are added symbols for chromatics, expression, dynamics, etc. The result is extremely complex. First I would make a draft. Each time I encountered difficult markings which I didn't know how to transcribe, I would go to school for coaching, then continue on. The progress was slow. When I finished making a draft transcription of a piece, I would then emboss braille letters. If I make one mistake, I would do the page over again, because embossed letters could not be erased.

When the piece was finally ready, I would ask the teacher to check for errors. Despite his busy schedule, he willingly checked my work any number of times. Since he had to do this between classes, it used to take a month per piece. After errors were pointed out, I would make a clean copy of the whole thing. Since I could not erase or add as in normal written music, I had to start all over

again. With Book 5 or 6 and above, each book was as thick as one inch. After this experience, I came to be able to transcribe almost any piece.

Joining the Ensemble Group

In fourth grade, Chiaki joined the ensemble group. It helped much that I had learned to transcribe. I would get the music a week ahead of time and transcribe it right away, and Chiaki would learn it. Normal children can sight read the music, but a blind child cannot play in ensemble unless she memorizes the pieces. I felt as though I was always chased. Moreover, I worried until my stomach hurt when, for example, I had made a mistake in slurs. When the whole group played a down bow, there would be one up bow. Any other child would notice and correct herself quickly, but Chiaki paid no attention.

The Mainichi Music Competition for Blind Students

When Chiaki was a sixth grader, she won the violin section of the Mainichi Music Competition for Blind Students sponsored by the Helen Keller Association. Five or six children from her school, all sixth graders, also participated in the voice and piano sections of this national competition. Chiaki played the *Fiocco Allegro*. Since she had been feeling the limitation of her strength around that time, she felt happy, rewarded, and motivated.

Quitting the Ensemble Group

When she was a seventh grader, it became hard to practice. Since we moved, her school was now far, and commuting took nearly three hours each day. Training in daily affairs was also necessary now. I had to let her experience a variety of things and help her learn to do everything by herself. Until then I had done nothing, fully occupied by violin lessons. "Rather than doing

something like violin, give her a wide scope of experiences," I had been told at school. We had continued violin, however, since we had hoped that Chiaki would absorb knowledge not only through friendship at the blind children's school but through having contact with seeing children.

In the spring of her graduation from Book 10, she contracted a duodinal ulcer right before the recital, and was unable to attend it. This was the time when she was about to enter senior high school. She seems to have been worried about her future. She stopped practicing after missing lessons during her illness, and there was nothing I could do. "Please let her quit," I said to Yoshiko Nakajima. She suggested: "How about letting her quit ensemble? Let her continue just her lessons." So we decided to see how it would go. Chiaki was able to play at her own pace after quitting ensemble. This made me feel relaxed, and I stopped being irritable. Chiaki gradually resumed her practice. The following year, she graduated from the Second Stage of the Graduate Level.



With Yoshiko Nakajima at the Advanced Level graduation recital,
Ikeda Civic Hall.

Warm Friendship and Understanding

There was a dress rehearsal for all the students before the recital. Each of the students graduating was to play a solo. When Chiaki finished playing her piece, there was a momentary hush in the hall. "I cried listening to the performance," Yoshiko Nakajima started, and briefly introduced to the audience the circumstances of Chiaki's absence from the recital the year before and the first meeting when Chiaki was a baby. Although Instructor Nakajima had always said that she taught Chiaki like others instead of treating her in a special way, she was after all always thinking of Chiaki and her condition. Otherwise Chiaki would not have been able to continue. Supported by her thoughtfulness and inspired by her love of music, especially of violin, we were always encouraged to go on. By now Chiaki has been with the class longer than any of the others.

At present she is practicing for the graduation taping of the Fourth Stage of the Graduate Level. I am grateful for Yoshiko Nakajima's careful instruction, friends' warm friendship, other mothers' understanding, without any of which we would not have been able to be where we are. We were strangers to music when we started. It surprises me to realize that we have cried, laughed, and agonized for nearly twenty years. I hope Chiaki will always continue to love violin in the future.

Talent Education, no. 87



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(Five Mottoes of Talent Education)

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Man is a child of the environment.

Sound breathes life—
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Strings are mindless
They only sing forth the heart
Of those who let them ring.

——Shin'ichi Suzuki

