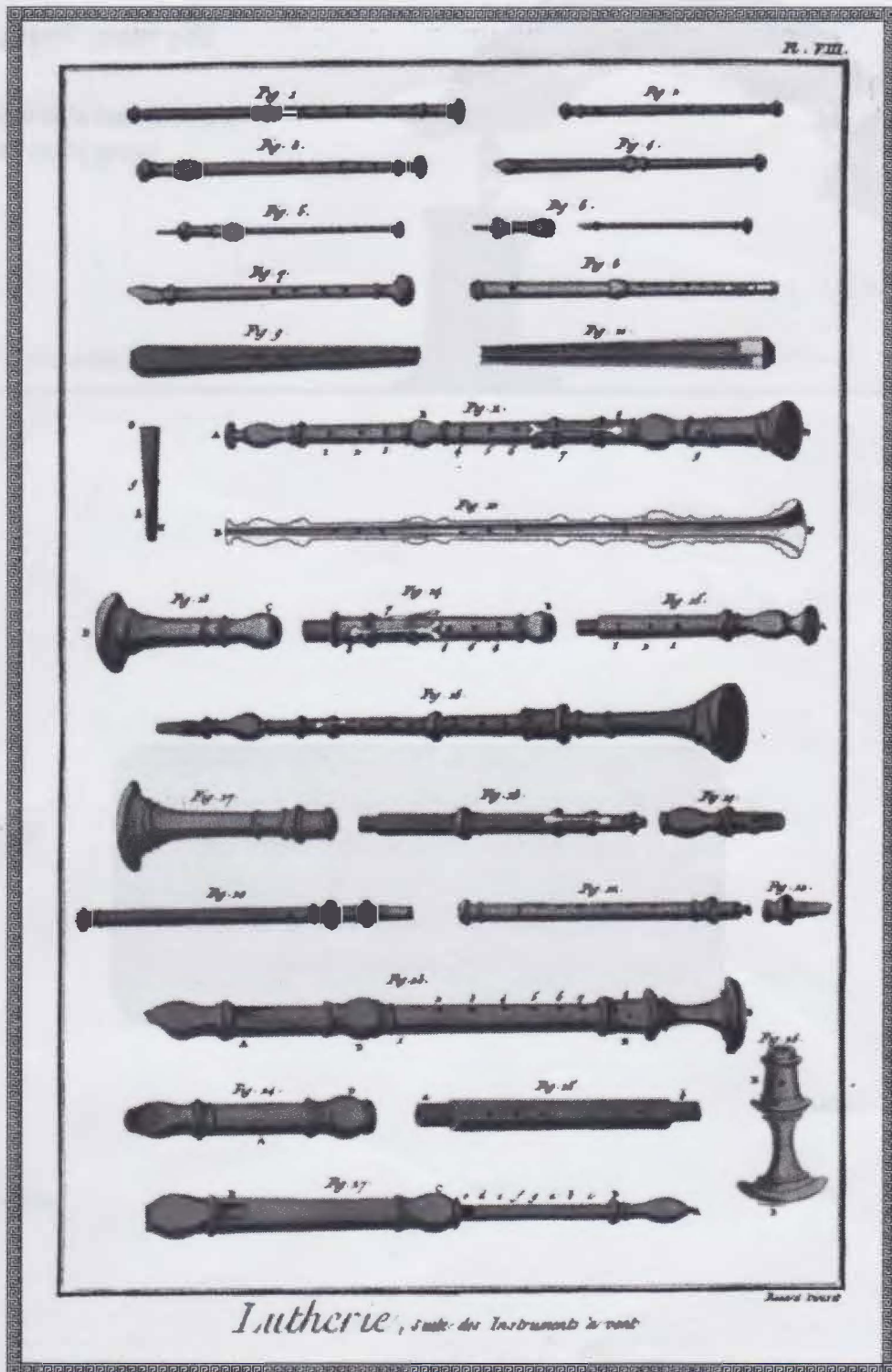


new zealand

Suzuki Journal

volume 15 no 1 summer 2004



new Zealand Suzuki Journal

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EDITORIAL

listen...

Catharina van Bohemen

In last the last issue of the Journal which came out just before Christmas, I published an essay of Gillian Bibby's called *Get a Life Mr Crotchet*. Unfortunately, I did not have the correct musical fonts installed into my computer. The result was a calamity. Gillian's words were mixed with a series of meaningless symbols, each of which represented a note. I apologise unreservedly for the distress this has caused her and reprint the essay with its correct musical notes in this issue.

I am always interested in how artists and writers respond to music. Picasso and Matisse painted or sculptured many works of musicians and instruments, and in New Zealand artists such as Gretchen Albrecht and poet Fleur Adcock have collaborated with Gillian Whitehead. CK Stead's mother was a piano teacher and although she failed to turn her son into a musician, he acknowledges the gift she developed in him.

Piano

'Third finger! Third finger!'
That was the voice
from two rooms away.
I'd used second finger,
or fourth.

That's how it was
having your teacher in the house
while you practised.

Not that the note was wrong,
just the finger.
How could she tell?

I was her worst pupil,
her biggest disappointment -
perfect pitch
and some failure of hand and eye.

Never mind Mum,
You trained my ears.
They're listening still.

The Editor thanks CK Stead for permission to print this poem.

PLEASE READ THIS ARTICLE:

EDUCATING PARENTS

Laura Reed

thinking & planning does wonders for harmony

I find it a little shocking, but I swear, the mother of one of my students is jealous of her little girl,' wrote Connie Sunday, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, to the Suzuki Chat email last March. 'I get a very strong impression that the parents never want the child to outshine them, and they show real signs of jealousy if I commend her. They downplay any accomplishment their child makes with a smirk.'

Strange, irrational, unreasonable or behaviour from students' parents is a problem faced by string teachers across the world. Constance Barrett, a private studio and public-school teacher in the affluent Greenwich area, Connecticut, was accused of being racist when an African-American child was not given first chair in her orchestra. Barrett was again accused of racism when she did not allow a Korean student to go on a field trip because of previous misbehaviour.

George Thompson of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was the victim of a parent who would stop at nothing to have him fired from his job - including false accusations about public intoxication. Why the vendetta? Thompson had disciplined this child for vandalising his classroom, after a long run of continually disruptive behaviour.

Dealing with problem parents can be a constant source of frustration, but adopting a proactive approach to teaching can help to diffuse tensions before they arise. 'Most of the problems string teachers experience with parents would go away if teachers would spend some time thinking about what they want, how to implement it and what to do when it doesn't happen,' asserts long-time Suzuki teacher Jeanne Leudke 'Teachers need to decide what to expect from students' parents in all aspects of their programme and communicate this information orally as well as in writing.' Leudke is a consultant and workshop technician who helps teachers to deal with students' parents; her printed materials are available at www.parent-child-education.com.

tion.com.

'One family became irate because they said they were only receiving 28 minutes of instruction each minute and they had paid for 30 minutes,' recalls Eva Bogren, an experienced violin teacher at the Smyrna Music School in Gothenburg and president of the Swedish branch of the European String Teachers' Association. 'I learnt that I wasn't as clear as I should have been about what is expected in the lesson time.'

Misunderstandings can be avoided if your printed studio policies very specifically address billing, scheduling, make-up lessons, home practice expectations and recital class participation. But, as Edmund Sprunger, a Suzuki violin and public-school teacher, points out, you must be consistent in enforcing these policies. 'Studio policies are really for the teacher,' he says. 'They help us to clarify for ourselves what we will and will not accept.'

'Early in my career, I was quite flexible about certain issues and I found that parents took advantage of me,' Bogren recalls. 'I find that the more rules I have and the more strict I am with these rules, the more willing parents are to adhere to them.'

Communicating policies and expectations to students' parents can take a lot of time, but the investment pays off in the end. Susan Kempter, author of *Between Parent and Teacher: a Teacher's Guide to Parent Education*, requires potential violin students' parents to attend a 15-week parent-education programme. 'Educating parents is crucial, especially at this time when education seems to be equated with short bursts of learning followed by testing, then on to the next subject or unit,' she says.

'In a society that stresses measurable achievement and competition,' Kempter continues, 'it is very difficult for some parents not to want their child to be the best in the class or learn the notes in a new

piece each week and then move on. Parents and teachers with product-driven expectations are setting themselves and their students up for failure. Teachers need to help parents realign their priorities from quantity to quality.'

'My most common problem has been parents who need to have their child be the best,' agrees Gail Taylor, a studio teacher and youth orchestra conductor in Dillon, Colorado, who recounts the familiar story of parents pressuring their son to sit as concert-master, only to have him miss the youth orchestra concert due to a 'prior commitment'. When Taylor moved him to the back of the section until a meeting could be arranged, the parents withdrew their son and called her all sorts of names; but they never made an appointment to discuss the situation. While disappointed that the student was no longer in the orchestra, Taylor thinks he may have been better off in the long run. 'You have to have your boundaries set very clearly and document everything and not give in. We can't make things work for us and not for everybody else,' she advises.

Barrett has noticed a common thread among parents who push their children to be super-achievers. 'Often both parents are working in executive-level positions and are not at home very much. I've decided that the level of parents' unreasonable response is directly proportional to how guilty they feel for not being around their child as much as they believe they should be. They somehow believe they are acting as their child's advocate by going in defensively and fighting, rather than addressing the teacher as a partner in the child's development. If I can address the parents' guilt, make sure they know that I believe that they are not terrible parents and reassure them that I am on their child's side, we can generally come up with solutions.'

'When I talk to parents about problems, I try to begin by letting them know that I really care for the student and am asking for their help in coming up with a solution,' Bogren concurs. 'I also try to be open to compromises.' Through experience, Barrett and Bogren have learnt the art of win-win communication and negotiation. 'These skills need to be included in our education,' Bogren laments, pointing out a fundamental paradox of string teaching. That is, to avoid as many problems as possible

and to resolve conflicts positively when they do arise, string teachers need to be skilled in strategic planning, finance and accounting, contract negotiation and conflict resolution. 'Yet none of these classes is offered in a typical music school environment.'

'We go to music school because we like music; if we liked business, we would have gone to business school,' Sprunger says. 'However, if we want to play and teach music, we have to learn business skills. Studio teachers often don't realise they are running a business and when they come to understand that, they're embarrassed. String teachers need to realise that we run an honourable business, and we can either run it well and respect it, or run it poorly and disrespect it.'

In his book, *Creativity*, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi examines the complex paradoxes that make up a creative artist - the same paradoxes that make the business aspects of teaching difficult for string players. Musicians, for instance, spend a lot of time alone in practice rooms and often do not have a great deal of experience of dealing with the public. Music is the main mode of communication, meaning that they are not necessarily adept at the assertive communication so important to business professionals. Csikszentmihalyi also finds that creative individuals tend to be remarkably humble but also proud at the same time. Consider how a string ego might seriously impede conflict resolution.

'Spending time on the business aspects of teaching presented a major dilemma for me, because it took time away from what I was there to do - teach the violin,' Sprunger admits. 'What helped me reconcile this problem was when I began to understand that the time invested in the business end of things really helps to facilitate teaching and learning. Your bottom line needs to be just that - at the bottom. But you cannot neglect it or you will not be able to do what you have set out to do - teach students to play the violin.'

Stephen Covey's book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, provides a palatable starting point for string teachers interested in improving their business acumen in order to avoid problems with parents or to resolve them successfully. The seven habits are principle-centred and based on concepts of fairness, integrity, honesty and spirituality.

Covey points out the importance of being proactive and advocates 'beginning with the end in mind.'

For string teachers, this habit translates into a clear philosophy of teaching. What are your thoughts and feelings about competition, for example? Will you allow students a choice in the styles of music they learn? Your attitudes about repertory, performance and an acceptable rate of student progress will be a natural reflection of your teaching philosophy and will allow you to weed out students whose goals do not coincide with yours.

'I think the most difficult sessions I have had with parents centre round my decision that I should no longer be the student's teacher,' says Doris Gazda, a retired teacher. 'Sometimes it is hard for a parent to grasp the idea that I will turn down a payment because the child is not practising, is not happy or resists even gentle correction. They do not understand that we are emotionally attached to what we do and get satisfaction from watching the growth of our students.'

Conversely, teachers can be very hurt when students quit or change teachers very suddenly. After a five year investment in a young cello student, Zeister Music School vice-director, Roeland Robert, was told one week that the next lesson would be her last, despite pre-payment of tuition for several more weeks. 'Although we had discussed that changing teachers might be the best solution for the student who was not progressing quickly, I was surprised at the sudden decision. Several years of hard work would be ended with one more visit. I had the feeling of being a supermarket and did not like it at all. We agreed she should go, but so suddenly? I was hurt and angry at this parent.'

'It's hard to give students up especially when they are good and even more so when the problem is the parent and not the child,' says Taylor. 'But you have to keep the welfare of the entire group in focus.' This advice also extends to maintaining the mental and emotional welfare of the teacher. If you've done your best to prevent difficult situations and have worked to resolve the conflicts when they arise, then sometimes you just have to let go and turn your attention to your other students who are happy and are thriving under your

instruction.'

Leudke says she has found periodic progress reports to be a very good way to end an unproductive relationship with a parent whose child isn't doing the work. 'In my spring progress report, I indicate if a student is not to return for September. This would not be a surprise to the parent because the demise of a student is over a period of a few months and during that time, there would have been several or almost continuous discussions about the problems I was seeing. After they received their progress reports, I made sure at the next lesson that each parent understood my intention.'

After three unprepared lessons in a row, Kempter will place the child on a three month probation period. 'During probation, I offer increased support and ideas for handling busy schedules and try to teach for immediate success via shorter assignments, more review and less technique. I also enlist the help of parents to assist with daily schedules. At the end of probation, we assess the changes. If the child has failed to meet minimal requirements, I say, "This isn't working, is it?" I have never had a child disagree with me.'

'On the last lesson, it is important to let the child know that she or he is still a worthy person,' Kempter advises. 'Playing the violin isn't everyone's thing. Some students write their departing students a letter. I am always sure to ask them to pursue their passions.'

FURTHER READING.

M. Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention*.

HarperCollins, New York 1996

S.R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*.

Simon and Schuster, New York, 1989.

S. Kempter, *Between Parent and Teacher: A Teacher's Guide to Parent Education*. Self-published, 1991; revised edition 2003, available from www.sharmusic.com

This article was first published in *The Strad*, September 2003. Reproduced with permission. For more information about *The Strad*, see www.thestrad.com

POINTS TO PONDER Winifred Crock

everything we play can be beautiful

Repetition is necessary for excellence in all things.'

No one can be truly excellent at anything without careful repetitive work. I cannot think of a profession or past time where repetition is not necessary for excellence.

'Tedium sometimes accompanies repetition.'

Tedium is part of life. I adore my profession, but if I never had to set up another chair or move another piano, I would rejoice. When I take my child to his favourite amusement park, the first thing we have to do is wait in line. (Creatively relieving tedium is another issue altogether).

'Know the odds and play the odds.'

It is human nature to make a mistake, fix it once and go on. Unfortunately, a 'once missed once right' practice session results in a 50/50 chance of missing it the next time. I am not comfortable with these odds. It takes disciplined work to break the 'fix it and go on' habit, but efficient practice requires it. My Hungarian teachers taught that it takes at least seven repetitions to erase an error from physical or aural memory. Thus, each time you miss a note in practice, you need to add at least seven correct repetitions to eradicate it.

'Conquer the Castle.'

When dealing with a technical programme, I often use the 'conquer the castle' analogy. You can attempt to batter down the front gate with a 'just do it again and again' approach, or you can do careful reconnaissance and try to find an easier way in. Most of us can improve our playing by just doing it again and again, but it is much more efficient and usually easier to isolate, analyze and work systematically to correct a problem. Often the door at the back of the castle is standing open.

'Slow practice is for the ear and for the hand.'

Most students seem to understand the importance

of slow practice for the ear. Many seem slower to grasp the importance for the hand. Students will fish for a note, finally find it and move on immediately. 'Great!' I say. 'You have practised sliding around for three seconds brilliantly. Now find the exact pitch and hold it for at least three times as long as it took you to find it. Your ear knows the note, but your fingers, hands and arms need time to learn the correct place too.' Time is necessary for muscle memory to develop. Everyone had had a rare student with instant muscle memory, but most of us mere mortals need more time to physically learn where things are.

'Develop your sense of touch.'

Playing an instrument is a very tactile process, but we seem to focus on eyes and ears most of the time. We must consciously feel where we are too! A tactile learner may do this automatically, but others need more encouragement to develop this process.

'Don't lose contact with the instrument unless you do it deliberately.'

Often the student will lift the bow or lose left hand contact unnecessarily. Each time the bow leaves the string, balance must be readjusted and control must be maintained. Each time the hand loses contact with the neck, intonation is compromised. Letting go or lifting off the instrument must be a conscious decision.

Don't be lost in space!

'Warning!' Danger! Special training and planning are needed before flying off the instrument.!

'Practice focus is backwards and performance focus is forwards.'

A simple way to begin to understand the psychological difference between practice focus and performance focus is as follows:

* In practice, mental focus involves reflection on what has just occurred.

* It involves analysis, reflection, evaluation and

adjustment.

* In performance, mental focus is forward...in the next moment, and on what is coming next.

* Analysis of what has just happened should not happen until after the performance.

* Practise practising and practise performing.

'There are no second chances in performance.'

As I approach a round of concerts I am always on guard for the 'second time is great' stage of performance readiness. Musicians must practise performing so that the first time is on the level to which they aspire.

'There is nothing more difficult for a performing musician than a one night stand.'

We must perform the same repertoire many times in concert to completely understand a piece and our relationship with it. Take it on the road and repeat repertoire in concert whenever possible.

'Play the music, not just the notes.'

Musicality and musical expression must develop as technique develops. We cannot wait until a student plays advanced repertoire to require and inspire them to play musically. Consider a technically flawed but expressive performance versus a technically perfect

performance that was ultimately dull. Which would you rather hear? Everything we play can be beautiful and everything we play can be musical. Many people play the notes, but not everyone can play the music.

Winifred Crock is orchestra director at Parkway Central High School and maintains a private violin school in suburban St Louis, MO. She holds music degrees from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and Kent State University in Ohio. She also graduated from the Suzuki Talent Education Institute in Matsumoto, Japan, and holds Kodaly certification. Winifred has received numerous teaching awards and is proud that Parkway Central High School recently received a Grammy Gold signature Award as one of the ten top high school music departments in the country.

In January this year, Winifred came to New Zealand to tutor at the Auckland Branch's Summer Camp at Eastern Beach where many of our students were lucky enough to receive an intense week of her inspired teaching. The Editor acknowledges the American Suzuki Journal for permission to reprint this article, which first appeared in Spring 2003 issue of that publication.

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like to win-win

Come on guys, it's time for us to have some fun -with Win-Win games!

Simon eagerly sticks his nose in his *Win-Win Games for All Ages* book thumbing through the pages, trying to get everyone in the teenage programme excited on their first day of camp.

The setting is Willow Park, Eastern Beach, January 2004. The teenagers are in the conference room, about sixteen of them, hyped up for camp. Yay!... maybe not... curfews... breakfast at seven-thirty... Many of us have been going to Suzuki camps for years, so we are well accustomed to the procedures: check-in, claim the best remaining bed.

Soon it's time for the annual play-in, where we meet the tutors from overseas. Winifred, the violin tutor from the United States, showed everyone new ways of doing things - American Style. Then it was time for dinner - basically a mixture of meat and ice cream. The teenagers especially had a hard time keeping it on the plate and off other people's faces! After dinner it was into the conference room and time for Win-Win games, something that would soon become a daily routine. Games like, 'This is my knee,' while pointing at a

nose, or, 'If this person was a shoe, what type of shoe would they be?' were particular favourites.

Classes were good, group lessons were invigorating, free time relaxation and the beach was cool.

Best of all though, was the fun-night. The teenagers produced two 'Sensual' acts: a group ABBA performance and a poem from two extra-sensual beings about Winifred Crock, which seemed to frighten her out of her wits. There was another performance by upcoming star - Benje on guitar.

Vanessa, mother of Floyd and Arlo, kindly offered to make a teenagers' video about our time at camp. This was a huge success and was played at fun night much to the amusement of Suzuki parents and children. The teenagers had a camp-out after the fun-night upstairs in the gym... but Simon had to supervise!

The play-out was emotional and nobody wanted to leave apart from the fact that they were exhausted.

Camp was great this year. It was definitely a Win-Win for all ages!

General Notice

Any recipient of the New Zealand Suzuki Journal should notify the local branch and not the Editor of their change of address .

The Branches of NZSI are responsible for the distribution of the Journal.

Branches requiring a change of membership numbers should notify the Editor well in advance of the next deadline date, which is always printed on the Contents page of each issue.

IN MEMORIAM: Dr Haruko Kataoka

Dr Haruko Kataoka passed away on 10 January. Having worked as a colleague of Dr Suzuki from the 1950s, she was the developer of the Suzuki study of piano and the piano course we know today. Dr Kataoka may be known to you as it was she who played on most of the recordings of Suzuki repertoire. Dr Haruko Kataoka was a dynamic teacher and the director of many important Suzuki events. We celebrate her life and are thankful for her dedication to music and the Suzuki method.

For over four decades, Dr Kataoka devoted her professional skills and personal energies to advancing the quality of piano instruction throughout the world. Her expertise in guiding students of all ages, especially the very young, as well as her ability to train teachers, distinguished her as an expert in piano pedagogy.

Born in Tokyo on 1927, Dr Kataoka began the study of the piano at the age of six, studying with the late Yoshime Hirata from the age of eight. In 1945, she graduated from Sacred Heart Girls' High School in Tokyo and continued her piano studies with Haruko Fujita.

In 1955, Dr Kataoka moved to Matsumoto City to serve as accompanist for the late Dr Shinichi Suzuki's Talent Education Institute, where she began to research piano pedagogy according to Dr Suzuki's innovative method of teaching the violin. She was instrumental in developing the Suzuki Piano School and has been widely regarded as an authority in the method since that time. Over the years, Dr Kataoka trained many teachers who travelled to Matsumoto to study with her, both long and short-term, at the Talent Education Institute. Dr Kataoka was responsible for the direction of eleven Gala Ten-Piano Concerts in Matsumoto involving more than thirty teachers from the United States, Canada, Singapore and Belgium who made the long trip to observe rehearsal and hear the inspirational concert. True to Dr Suzuki's

vision, 250 children made friendships and played beautiful music together - from Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star all the way to Franz Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody, No 11.

Please read this: ♪

Some of Dr Kataoka's reflections.

Listen

If you want to study music, you must first listen to music. For example, if you want to play a certain piece on the piano, the smart thing to do would be to sit in front of the piano and listen to a recording of the piece from morning to night. Then try playing the piece with the music after having listened to it for a day, two days, a month or even a year. You will be surprised at how easily you learn the piece. Of course it would be impossible for someone without any knowledge of the technique of playing the piano to play something difficult by Chopin or Liszt perfectly, but it would not be impossible to play simple portions of the beautiful melodies within the piece.

Listening is an extremely difficult task, is it not? There is no problem when we concentrate and want to hear something, or when we are listening to relax, but when we are listening to the same piece throughout the day, there will be times when we get tired of it, or we feel that it is just a nuisance. I have had such experiences.

How is it that this kind of listening can become a nuisance? It is because we are trying to listen. If we do not actively try to listen, it is possible to play the recording all the time without getting tired of it. We tend to define listening as just one thing, but there are many different ways of listening.

Please ponder the following passage by Confucius:

'Do not listen with the ears but with the heart. No, do not listen with the heart, but listen with the spirit. To listen only with the ears will create awareness of just within the heart. However, the



spirit is unattached so that everything exists there.

The left side of the brain is not fully developed in children, so that when a recording is constantly played softly, they listen with the spirit, and thereby may hear it completely and master the music fully. Their mother tongue, which they hear from birth, is heard by their spirit in the same manner, so that all children master their own language without complaining that it is a nuisance or that it is boring. Not once do they think they are trying to learn.

An American child, Lindsay, who recently attended the workshop in Bellingham, Washington, showed this to all of us.

She was a cute little girl of seven. During the lesson, she played the Christmas Day Secrets from Book 1 very well, so I asked, 'Can you play a little more advanced piece?' Her father replied, 'I have been busy so we have not had the time to practise.'

So I asked, 'How much do you listen to the recording each day?' The response was marvellous.

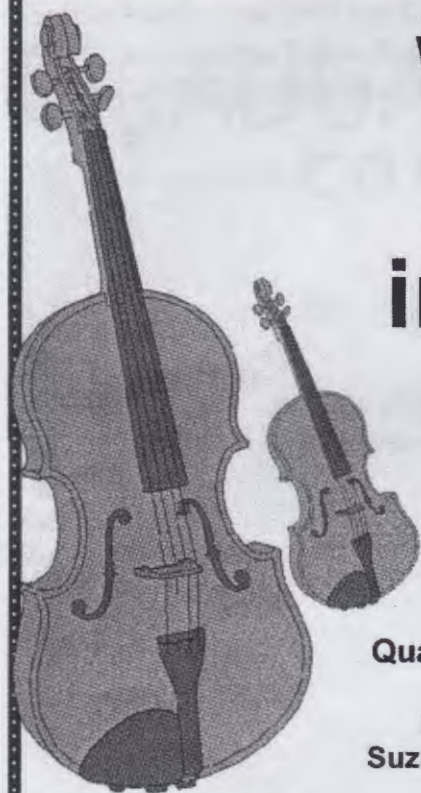
'Twenty four hours. That is what you always tell us isn't it? That is why we play the recording softly in

our house twenty four hours a day.' As I was thinking to myself that though she did not practise that much, she was able to play so well because of all this listening. Lindsay said, 'I memorised this piece.' Even though it was only with the right hand, she played the third movement from the Clementi sonata in Book 3 extremely well - the tempo and rhythm were excellent.

Hearing this, the fifty or so teachers observing the lesson were astounded. After all, she was only in the process of studying Book 1. Childhood, when we can openly listen with our spirit, is a wonderful time. We adults can only be envious..

LISTEN first appeared in the Newsletter of the Matsumoto Piano Teachers Association of the Talent Education Research Institute, Volume 6, No 2, July 16, 1996. Translated by Rev Ken Fujimoto and edited by Karen Hagberg

This tribute to Dr Haruko Kataoka first appeared in Suzuki Notes, No 35 February 2004, the Newsletter of Suzuki Music, Suzuki Talent Education Association of Australia.



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Phone 07 348 1485

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Phone 07 578 8415

TEACHERS' CONFERENCE 24 - 27 September 2004

For Suzuki teachers, the above dates mark the most significant event for the year. Over the last few months the Conference Committee has successfully sought the services of some outstanding tutors and put together a conference programme will challenge and inspire teachers professionally, and provide an opportunity to enjoy the company of other Suzuki teachers from throughout New Zealand. Included in the programme are sessions designed to address the needs and wishes of teachers, as expressed in the written survey conducted by NZSI last year, and reflected in the 'Feed Back' given at the conclusion of Conference 2000.

The Conference venue is the Grand Tiara Hotel, Rotorua, formally the Sheraton Hotel where Teachers' Conference 2000 was held. Accommodation at the Hotel will be available to teachers attending conference at the special room rate of \$110.00 +GST per night. Rooms at this rate provide for single, twin or double occupancy so it will be possible to share this cost. The Conference fee has been set at \$185 for NZ Suzuki teachers, and \$165 for Suzuki teacher trainees in full time tertiary education. These fees have been made possible as a result of a considerable contribution by

NZSI towards Conference costs, and are inclusive of morning and afternoon tea and lunch on Saturday and Sunday.

It is hoped that as a result of publishing these advance details of Conference, teachers will be assisted in deciding to take advantage of this important professional development opportunity. If financial assistance is required notwithstanding this notice, teachers should consider approaching their NZSI branches and to do so at an early date. This will allow branches to plan any fundraising activities that may be required.

At this stage registration of interest in attending Conference and staying at the Grand Tiara Hotel is not sought. Registration forms both for Conference and the hotel accommodation, will be mailed to every NZSI teachers during the last week of June. At that time, further details pertaining to the Conference programme will be made available. In the meantime should you have any queries please feel free to get in touch with Conference Coordinator, Juliet Le Couteur (NZSI Administrator)

TEACHER GRADUATIONS congratulations

Congratulations to the following teachers who successfully completed a level of Suzuki teacher training and were awarded certificates:

Yvonne Cave of Auckland	Level 1 Piano
Karen Prince of Auckland	Level 1 Piano
Emma Goodbehere of Wellington	Level 1 Cello
Marie Watson of Wellington	Level 1 Cello
Margaret Cooke of Auckland	Level 2 Cello
Heather Miller of Wellington	Level 1 Violin
Lynette Carson of Wellington	Level 1 Violin

TEACHER TRAINING announcements

Guitar - NZSI would like to continue with Suzuki Guitar Teacher Training and is working on developing a three year programme possibly beginning in the Term 3 School Holidays. We need anyone interested to register your interest as soon as possible.

The entry level requirement is AMEB Grade 7 Classical Guitar or beyond. Please let any Classical Guitarists that you know, who might be interested, know about this opportunity.

Violin - Unit 2 and Unit 4 Christchurch July 11 - 15, 2004

Violin - Unit 7 Term 3 School Holidays 2004

Piano - Continuing Level 4 - Term 3 School Holidays 2004

Cello - Book 6 - Term 3 School Holidays 2004

Flute - Continuing - Term 3 School Holidays 2004

Anyone interested in entry level Piano, Violin, Flute or Cello please register your interest immediately with the Director of Teacher Training so that appropriate training opportunities can be organised.

Please direct ALL enquiries regarding any teacher training matters to

Stacey Shuck, NZSI Director of Teacher Training

Phone 09-372-9583 or E-Mail ssstdir@pl.net

GRADUATIONS congratulations flute and cello

LEVEL 1

Tracy Dixon
Sacha Milojevic
Madeleine Powers

Josie Ludlow
Vicky Williams
Nicola Manoa

LEVEL 2

Rachel Manning

Helen Lee

CELLO GRADUATION - OCTOBER 2003

LEVEL 1

Alistair Denize

Martin Griffiths

GRADUATION PREPARATION

The graduation dates for this year are **15 May and 15 October**. For the forthcoming graduation in May, tapes should be posted in time to reach the Administrator, NZSI at P O Box 74092, Market Rd, Auckland by **no later than 15 May**. Tapes received after this date will be returned for re-submission later in the year. Therefore if you are likely to be late in preparing and posting your tape, please consider submitting it for the October graduation.

Below is a check list you may want to use before submitting your tape.

Has your NZSI branch membership been paid this year?

Have you listened to your tape after making your recording to ensure that your playing can be heard easily and clearly by the Listener? If not, please make a further recording.

Has your teacher listened to your tape and signed the label provided below?

Have you printed your name clearly on the label so that it can be correctly recorded on your graduation certificate?

Have you enclosed with your tape the graduation fee of \$30? Cheques should be made payable to the NZSI.

Have you completed all the information required on the label below?

If you can tick off all the above matters as having been attended to, and checked that your teacher is a current financial member of NZSI, then your tape is ready to submit. In the event that your membership is not up-to-date, it will be helpful if you will attend to this matter before sending your tape. Please do not post your membership fee with your graduation tape to the Administrator. Your membership fee needs to go to the branch address shown on the Branch Membership Form at the end of the Journal.

Your co-operation in complying with the items on the check list will ensure that the graduation process runs smoothly and efficiently for all concerned. If you have any queries about what is required, please feel free to contact the Administrator, Juliet Le Couteur, Ph 09 529 0321.

NEW ZEALAND SUZUKI INSTITUTE GRADUATION	
Instrument	
Piece	
Level	
Student's name	
Date of birth	
Teacher	
Teacher's signature	
Date of recording	
Years in Suzuki	

BRANCH REPORTS

B.O.P and Chch

Christchurch Branch News

Winter Workshop 11-15 July.

Venue: Cashmere High School.

Tutors: Tony Robson, Haruo Goto and more to be confirmed.

The New Year started off with another fantastic camp in Rotorua thanks to the organisation of Hamilton Branch. The weather was hot and dry so there were lots of classes held under shady trees, and families heading for the lakes and pools (the cool ones!) during free time. Victoria had a scary moment during the Twinkle Parade in town - a hairy, giant of a man grabbed her violin and proceeded to tell her how it should be played. It turned out that he used to perform in Russia, so he then played a variety of music to the Twinklers before they could get on with their own parade.

The BOP students made parents and teachers very proud at our March Annual Concert at the Holy

Trinity Church. A huge thank you to the parents for the practice at home, transport to rehearsals, and encouragement to get the children to the high performance standards. There were five piano soloists, 11 flutists, 16 cellists and 50 violinists. It is wonderful to hear more advanced pieces each year. The Bach Double was capably lead by two students, Claire Meyer and Tim Haxell.

We now look forward to being challenged at the April workshop at the end of the holidays.

BOP Branch is a motivated branch and growing so we would like to invite more Suzuki teachers to live in the area.





Music in the Bay of Plenty

GET A LIFE MR CROTCHET^{Gillian Bibby} how our notes got a bad name

This article was first published as *Have Crotchets got a Meaning in Life any More?: A Good Word for the International System of Notation*, in NZSI Journal Volume I No.1, April/May 1990 and is reprinted here in revised form.

For some dozens of years American music tutor books have been flooding the international music markets, with colourful, intriguing and sometimes challenging ways of learning piano, orchestral instruments, band, jazz, for students, adult learners and the very young.

Particularly in the latter field appears material of great value to the Suzuki beginner-reader: vivid pictures, large notes, well planned, one-step-at-a-time series of readers, technique, theory and concert support books, with teacher instruction manuals, and international workshops (frequently brought pretty much to our doors by the publishers) helping us to familiarise ourselves with the new ideas and work sequentially with their materials. There are tutor books for the visual learner with wonderful illustrations of the stories within the music, CDs for the auditory learner, CDRoms for the digitally facile learner, songs and dances, little musical soft toys (like Mozart Mouse and Beethoven Bear) and puppet plays to help the kinaesthetic learner, and there are suggestions for appropriate language for each style of learning, and advice on working out which style your child has. The United States has worked with Landmark readers, spatial notations, gradual additions of single lines at a time, five finger approaches, multi-key systems, all avoiding the monotony of the standard middle C approach where one finger at a time is built up, and ensuring that music of some sophistication can be played right from the start. And this is what makes it attractive to the early Suzuki reader.

For years their appeal and planning as total learning systems were unsurpassed, though a number of British and Hungarian and Polish publications are now cashing in on the colourful picture and tutor-series ideas - however none, to my knowledge, yet

work with the really large notes and the repetitive learning styles that very young learners find easiest to use.

But the American books remain, and always will remain superior in one very large respect - that of the teaching of rhythm, and the rhythmic aspect of theory.

They call a spade a spade.

What do I mean by that?

The Americans call their *largest note* in common use exactly that - a *whole note*, complete. And all other notes are seen as simple divisions of it.

This is in sharp contrast to the 'English' name which is itself a mediaeval Latin word, *semibreve*, meaning *one-half-of-a-short-note*. How did that happen?

Let's look at how our notes got their names.

Our systems of nomenclature were developed originally by monks in the European Middle Ages.

Their original written notes were the *long*, ≡≡, the longest commonly used note, whose function was more or less equivalent to the present day whole note, and the *breve* or *short note*, ≡, equal to one half of a long. When a shorter, or running note was required the *semibreve*, ◦, was used, a note equal, as its name implies, to half of a *breve*. There was no need for shorter notes until music became more complex at the start of the Renaissance and an ultra-short note was found to be necessary. It was named for what it was - a note of minimal length - the *minim*, ♩!

Now human nature having always been what it is, musicians like doing the fast notes best, and as the shorter notes became what was commonly written and performed, so the longer notes, the *long* and the *breve*, were less and less written.

A strange situation arose. The human physique can

not actually perform constantly shorter and shorter notes. And human brains need the contrast of long durations along with the shorter ones for the sake of musical completeness. So although the original *written* signs for the long notes, the *long* ≡≡ and the *breve* ≡ became less commonly used, it was the written signs for the *semibreve* and *minim* which replaced the actual sounding lengths of these notes! So the *long* ≡≡ came to be notated by the ◦ sign and the *breve* ≡ by the √ .

By this process of attrition composers effectively lost their signs for indicating notes of the lengths of a half and a quarter of the (new length) minim and found eventually that they needed new notes and signs to replace them.

The process did not happen overnight: it was a gradual progression taking some hundreds of years to complete.

It was in the sixteenth century that English composers found it necessary to divide the minim for the purposes of ornamentation. As always the written method was preceded by performance practice: *crocketing* became a common way of ornamenting the *minim*. The name was, as usual, borrowed from another art-form. In the terminology of sculpture, *crockets* of intricately carved and ornamental vine leaves and buds were commonly sculpted in stone over archways, so the ornamental *crocket* or *crotch-et* became the name for the new 'smallest' note, √ , used for intricate, decorative music.

By a century later a smaller note again was required to name the types of notes used by singers doing their trills or 'shakes'. Those who have listened to singers trilling will know how fast this can be. Today we would say they were singing in demisemiquavers (√). To them this vocal shaking

was called *quavering* and the notes used to do this tiny shaking sound were written with this symbol: √, the *quaver*.

After another century it was found necessary to divide this quaver into halves to make two *semi-quavers*: √ : the Latin word *semi*, meaning *half*, was used with the currently used *quaver* to show that the length was exactly half of the quaver. These were the smallest units in common usage up to the middle of the Baroque era (up to about 1700 or so).

By the time of the classical age this steady process of diminution had developed to the extent that the shortest notes could no longer be written short enough, and the new written symbol r was devised for what was now half the length of the semiquaver. But what to name it? Since the Latin word *semi* was already in use it was necessary to find another, *demi*, (from the Latin words *deminuo*, to diminish and *dimidium*, a half) to add to the 'little' word for the littlest note to indicate it was worth half-of-a-half-of-a-quavering-shake. Hmm. So *demisemiquavers* were born.

By the turn of the century and with the arrival of neoclassicism in thought and art, the Greek language had to be called on to provide yet another prefix to denote a further halving of the value of the latest short notes. Thus *hemidemisemiquavers* - written with *four* tails on a quaver - appeared on the scene. If you look in your volumes of Beethoven you will find them in some of his late sonatas.

And so it was that the English arrived at a system containing the *semibreve* or half-of-a-short-note, a *minim* or minimal-size-note, *crotchet* or ornament-note, the *quaver* or note-the-length-of-the-smallest-sound-in-a-vocal-trill, *semiquaver* half-the-length-of-a-vocal-trill-sound, the *demisemiquaver* -half of the above, and *hemidemisemiquaver* - half-of-half-of-half-of-the-length-of-the-smallest-sound-in-a-vocal-trill. And just ever so occasionally they would throw in a note so long it has almost been forgotten, the 'short', or *breve*, where we began this historical tour. A hotchpotch of Latin, English, French and Greek words, *all* of which are hopelessly outdated in their meanings, and ALL giving one to understand that this is the very shortest possible note. As indeed they all were when invented.

Were the English alone in their confusion? How did other countries survive the transition from the Middle Ages?

The Italians, inheritors of the Latin language, naturally enough also inherited the *semibreve* and the minim, which they called the *minima*, but thereafter were a little bit more logical. They divided the *minima* in two and called the new short note the *semi-minima* (√). The next one down, however, proved a problem, until they thought of the fact that dividing the *semiminima* would give all the aspects or

'colours' of possible time divisions – and so the *croma* (♩) (or 'coloured' note, a name rather confusingly like our English name for semitones in a scale-chromatic) came into being. Logically enough, its eventual division into two became known as the *semicroma* (♪). The resulting Italian system is already a great deal more logical than the English system, but is still stuck with the basic illogicality of calling the longest notes 'half-short' and 'minimal' notes.

Both this and the English system may be seen to be inadequate. They are in fact out-classed by systems in other languages which thought the changes through more clearly.

The French for instance tried to work on note shape and colour – round, white, black.....

The ◦ they called the *ronde* or round note (i.e. it has no stem), the ♩ became the *blanche* or white note and its black equivalent, the ♪, became the *noire* or black note. So far so good, though we may object that all notes are round, that there are two white notes and at least four different sorts of black notes. Their next notes were again named by their appearance: the ♫ is a *croche* or hook note (think of a crochet hook – but for goodness sake don't confuse this name with the English name *crotchet*, no matter what the similarity in pronunciation!). And the ♬ is a *doublecroche* or double-hook (for the two tails on the stem).

The French system then is basically a tenable one when looked at in isolation, but one whose basic premises on colour are a trifle wobbly.

A logical alternative

Against these attempts to deal with the mediaeval system, which, like Topsy, 'just grewed', the logic and simplicity of **the International System** becomes very desirable and a real relief to work in, especially if one travels to work in the field of music in other parts of the world – or if one is working with the young. In my own younger and more bigoted days I was very suspicious of the names used in the USA, declaiming that anything which upset an established English usage must constitute slipshod non-language. But I had not realised that the Germans, the Russians, the Estonians and Latvians, the Danes, the Dutch, the Hungarians and in fact

almost all other peoples/languages of European origin use it too! And a good many others too, like, for instance, the Japanese.

(As an aside I should add, in case you are wondering, that Pacific Island languages have no concept of individual note lengths but deal in rhythmic patterns given labels by association with the dance in which they are found or with the verbal pattern which is sung to this rhythm. Where Western notation is called for, the nomenclature used depends entirely on which nationality of missionaries got there first!)

In this system the ◦ is indeed called a whole note!

Some examples are in German, where the word is *eine Ganze*, and the Russians know it as *belaya nota*, both meaning 'whole note'.

The ♩, being exactly half of that is called just that:

eine Halbe in German, a *half note* in English, and *polu nota* in Russian.

A ♪, worth just a quarter of the whole note is called

just that: *viertel*, *quarter note chetvyernaya nota*.,

A ♫ is an eighth of a ◦, hence *eighth note* or *Achtel*.

A ♬ simply is a sixteenth of a ◦, its name says it all: a *sixteenth note*. In German that's a *Sechzehntel*.

Any of these notes can be subdivided indefinitely, and the largest note, the whole can without problem be multiplied by two (to make a double-whole note) or more if necessary. It can be subdivided indefinitely. The simplicity of the system can be confirmed by comparing the descriptive, mathematically correct and (comparatively) short *thirtysecond note* with the bulky *hemidemisemiquaver* (what?) or the sixty-fourth with the *semihemidemisemiquaver* (!).

A rose by any other name may smell as sweet, but a note whose length is easily understood even by a pre-schooler, just by hearing the names whole, half, quarter or eighth has to be superior to any of the old, odd, English names. It is time that teachers using the enormous variety of tutor books from the States use their simple rhythmic systems too. Dare to get out of your comfort zone and try them. The world will thank you for it.

Onwards and upwards with the International System of Notation!

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