

IN DEFENCE OF SUZUKI

Over the last few years, *The Strad* has highlighted many fine violinists as the magazine's cover stars: Rachel Barton Pine, Hilary Hahn, Sarah Chang, Chad Hoopes, Ray Chen, Nicola Benedetti, Julia Fischer, and most recently Randall Goosby. When they were little, all these wonderful violinists were Suzuki kids; listening, repeating and memorising before learning to read the music, and proud of it! Nonetheless, unfortunately we still see letters like the one in the October issue of *The Strad*.



Helen Brunner with Shinichi Suzuki

The letter says: 'For some children the Suzuki Method will be enough for them to play for fun and maybe join a community orchestra,' and 'the ABRSM has now stopped including Suzuki pieces in the exam books. This is because the violin students had not actually learnt to read musical notation but instead learnt the stupidly complicated pieces by listening to the pre-recorded CD.'

Tell that to our chosen new Suzuki recording artist, Hilary Hahn, who has written saying how grateful she is to Suzuki for her ability today to listen to the music first before reading it. Also, just for the record, in the 2024 syllabus the ABRSM does include two pieces from Suzuki Book 1, one from Book 2, two from Book 6 and two from Book 8.

While we appreciate the significant support *The Strad* has given to the Suzuki Method worldwide quite recently, it was such a pity to have to come across yet another letter like this from one of your readers.

HELEN BRUNNER

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