



# European Suzuki Journal

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## Suzuki Singing – Experiment in Finland

by Päivi Kukkamäki

### The beginnings

I went to Japan for the first time in 1986 to study Suzuki piano. After many discussions with Dr and Mrs Suzuki, the idea of Suzuki Singing was born, working first with expectant mothers and continuing with babies and pre-school children. They asked me to start immediately upon returning to Finland.

We have done this work now for four and a half years. The oldest Suzuki singers are almost four years old, and we have already had very encouraging results. We have 80 Suzuki singers in Finland. At the present there are two teachers: Mette Heikkinen, who has two groups, and the author. Most of the groups began singing during the mothers' pregnancy.

There are many singing teachers in America (which has already experimented with Suzuki singing programmes for several years), and now in Australia, who are interested in Suzuki Singing and are willing to start.

This is a singing programme and is not intended to develop choral groups (although some day this will also occur). In this singing programme, we would like to encourage children to sing

solos. They do also sing in groups, as they are still very young. Afterwards we learn harmony by singing duets, trios, etc. Every child is an individual and has a unique voice and timbre of his own.

This is not a kindergarten school, because we need the parents' help in order for the children to develop. We have also given information to kindergarten teachers about the Suzuki method. As a result, Finnish children now listen more and sing daily in nursery school. I have also given lectures to nurses in child health centres and to members of the Society of Early Music Educators.

In Finland it is a prerequisite that any person who will eventually teach Suzuki Singing is first of all a qualified singing teacher who has had many years of vocal pedagogy. He or she must be a professional singer with basic keyboard skills, who enjoys working with small children. They will receive specialised

who knows how to develop the voice. We want to make sure that no mistakes will occur, as well as protecting Suzuki's name.

In Finland the family can continue singing as long as possible. The child may also decide to learn another instrument (usually Suzuki-taught) between ages three and four. So far most families have wanted to continue.

### The background: how we have started in Finland; reasons for starting early, even before birth

As a child I sang in Finnish children's television programmes from the age of two and a half. I believe that every child is able to sing if he is given the possibility

and a good environment. In Vantaa and Helsinki, expectant mothers who are five months pregnant meet once a week for one and a half hours. Groups are kept small (3–5) to ensure personal contact. We introduce Suzuki's ideas and classical music and recommend well known professional singers to the families. The mothers learn songs from memory as well as nursery rhymes and games for each song. We use tunes from the Suzuki books and national folk

songs, which are sung in Finnish. We help parents to sing properly in order to keep their voices natural, and in this way they are able to be a good model for their children.



*Twinkle, twinkle little star – small Suzuki singers before performing*

training in the Suzuki method after they have sung an audition which will also be videotaped and studied later. The demands are high, but it is important that the future singing teacher is a professional

(continued on page 3)





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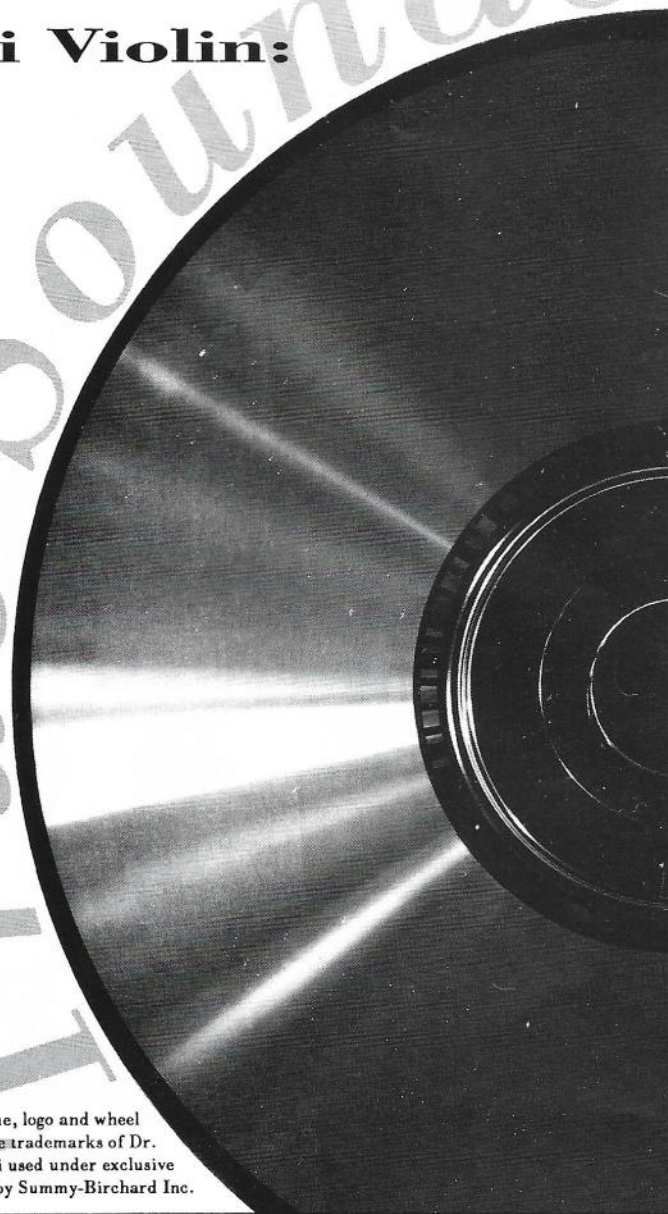
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*Päivi and the group in Australia*

Sometimes during my lectures, listeners ask why we have started singing so early. The past few years I have seen how important this has been for the families, especially for the children. 'Sing together, be together'.

When we have the parents' cooperation and when their attitude towards this work is positive, they are also supportive towards their children. The children learn much more easily, more quickly and more joyfully. The group itself becomes much closer. Each group supports its members.

#### **The newborn baby recognises familiar voices and songs**

It has been scientifically proven that at six months old the foetus is already able to hear and reacts to both high and low sounds. Some scientists believe that a four-month-old foetus is already able to hear. By the twentieth week all parts of the hearing anatomy are comparable to those of an adult. The newborn baby really recognises familiar voices and songs. We have noticed that the babies stopped crying when they heard the familiar song. It is amazing that a newborn baby is immediately ready to imitate the tongue movements and facial expressions of adults.

The Suzuki method is the most natural way for young children to learn – even babies. We learn new things first through imitation. Our aim is not to make infant prodigies or to change the child's voice into that of an adult. The vocal chords continue to develop until the age of 23. We hope to keep the child's voice clear, light, free and small until the whole mechanism is ready. Therefore traditional vocalisation exercises are not used with our young children. The exercises are simple, natural and light. In the beginning, sounds are used which every baby makes, irrespective of his native language – for example: mm, ää, oo, etc. Moving from high to low pitches are the most natural way for the human voice.

#### **Repertoire**

The main songs are Mozart's Lullaby, as Mrs Suzuki suggested, and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. Naturally the parents will learn other songs as well, but these

two songs are still the children's favourites.

Because the Suzuki method is learning by the mother tongue method, the songs should first be sung in the language of each country; especially as we are starting with babies. After children can understand and speak their own language, others are added, but we begin from the mother tongue language.

In the future there will be a book of songs, most of which are familiar Suzuki

repertoire. But I think that each country should also use its own folk songs which are unique to that country. The Suzuki tunes are international.

In Finland we have both group and individual lessons. The group lesson is once a week for 30 minutes. Individual lessons are approximately 15 minutes long, depending on the age and concentration of each child. These individual lessons are important, because we can help the child with particular difficulties; keeping the jaw loose, developing natural posture, etc. I also give exercises to the parents and teach them how to help their child. My hope is that singing in the family and listening to fine music will become a daily habit.

Our aim is that through singing, families can discover the joy of music, and caring and nurturing of each other will hopefully increase in our modern society.

The following article was given to us at the 4th International Suzuki Teacher's Conference in May 1990, San Francisco, by Mrs Suzuki.

(Päivi Kukkamäki graduated from the Sibelius Academy with the highest degree in singing in 1988. She is currently writing her doctoral thesis based on her work in Suzuki Singing.)

## **Singing Together – man is a son of his environment**

by Waltraud Suzuki

Tests have shown that babies still in the womb observe and catch outside stimuli. After birth, they recognise songs and other music played or sung to them while in their mother's womb. They stop crying, or they show joyful reactions if they hear their song or music.

A good musical environment filled with songs on tapes or records is essential to train the ears and musical sense of babies. Mothers may sing or hum melodies while bathing, dressing and playing with their babies. Without environmental stimulants there is no

musical aptitude in newborns. This ability has to be educated.

A child learns his mother tongue through listening and imitation in the beginning stage. It is a joyful experience and this should be the way with all learning.

One cannot judge a five-year-old's 'talents' without looking at his/her upbringing until then. A superior environment has the greatest effect in creating superior qualities. What does not exist in the environment will not develop in a child. Singing together is stimulating and joyful while planting the seed of ability.

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# Marianne Klingler

Following the sad news of Marianne Klingler's death on 5 February 1991, the *ESA journal*, which she established and edited for so many years, has received the following tributes.

## In memory of Marianne Migault Klingler

by Shinichi and Waltraud Suzuki

We were grief-stricken to hear that Marianne Klingler passed away on 5 February 1991.

Professor Karl Klingler, the father of Marianne, was my teacher in Germany. I deeply respect him, and his valuable lessons inspire me for life. It was our great pleasure to meet his daughter, Marianne, at our Golden Wedding in Japan in 1978.

Her interest and cooperation led her to devote her life to promote the Suzuki movement. For years she was indefatigable and untiring in developing the Suzuki movement in Europe. She was the managing editor of the *European Suzuki Journal*, which started in September 1981. Through the Klingler Stiftung she helped students financially to come to Matsumoto to study. Besides the ESA meetings, Mrs Klingler travelled to almost all international Suzuki conferences. The last one she attended was in St Andrews, Scotland, in August 1990. The beautiful European necklace designed by Marianne Klingler will be an ever present reminder of the donor.

ESA was formed in 1980 with Mrs Klingler as chairperson until 1986, when she had to retire owing to ill-health and Eleonore Fürstin zu Salm-Salm became the new chairperson.

We are very grateful for Marianne's unselfish work, and will always remember her warmly.



## Henry Turner writes:

For me, Marianne epitomised the European Suzuki movement. I first met her in Munich in 1979, when she was chairperson of the European Suzuki Association, which she had recently founded. In the following years, even after ill-health had forced her to give up this position, she was tireless in her efforts on behalf of Dr Suzuki's ideas.

I last saw her at the 1990 Suzuki Conference in St Andrews, where she was in good spirits, though becoming increasingly frail. She evidently felt that our garden needed cheering up, so before she returned to Munich she presented us with a handsome apple tree. Anne and I will treasure it as a reminder of a very dear friend.

## Letter to Marianne

by Eleonore zu Salm-Salm, chairperson of the European Suzuki Association

Dear Marianne,

I want to thank you for all the work you did for the ESA. The relationship with Dr Suzuki existed all your life, because your father, Karl Klingler, was his teacher. The European Suzuki Association was founded in 1980. You were the spirit of it: president, chairperson, treasurer and editor of the *ESA journal*. No. 1 was published in September 1981. In April 1983 you donated the European necklace to the ESA, symbolising the unifying of music as well as Shinichi Suzuki's ideas.

You were yourself an excellent musician, playing in piano recitals, and you studied psychology and religion and worked as a teacher. You set up a trust fund for chamber music in remembrance of your father.

I did not know you very long, though we were distantly related; but we became good friends. I admired your knowledge and think you a high-spirited, brilliant person with a sometimes unquiet mind, searching for essentiality. I used to call you

'Flamme die sich verzehrt'  
(flame absorbing itself)

May the eternal light burn for you! Thank you, Marianne, for everything I learned from you and thank you for bringing me into the Suzuki family.

Goodbye, we shall all miss you.

Eleonore

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# International Suzuki Association

In the early 1980s Dr Suzuki wanted to share his wonderful method with the people of Europe. To aid in this enormous task, the European Suzuki Association was formed to help spread Dr Suzuki's ideas, unite the practising members and promote a level of standards throughout Europe. This organisation was formed with Dr Suzuki's consent and approval for these purposes.

At the same time, the Suzuki Method was growing in other countries as well. Presently, the Suzuki Method has spread to over 30 countries. As a result, many other organisations have been established for these same purposes in each country, with the European Suzuki Association (ESA), the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA), the Suzuki Talent Education Association of Australia (STEAA) and the Talent Education Institute (TEI) in Japan being the four largest. This widespread recognition throughout the world is wonderful.

However, these various organisations are quickly becoming independent, fragmented and quite diversified from each other, as can be expected when considering something of this magnitude. Also, many unauthorised individuals are presently using the Suzuki teaching materials in an easy-going way and/or without joining a national association. There is a great need for an International Suzuki Association to coordinate and bring unification to this inconsistent state.

Dr Suzuki has been made aware of this condition and has designated the International Suzuki Association as the governing body to unite together the four large associations, as well as the many other national associations such as Korea, Brazil, Peru and Africa, as quickly as possible. To date, all of these associations have joined ISA except SAA and ESA, who have temporary membership.

## Dr Suzuki's Declaration

30 May 1990

*I would like to declare that I have designated the International Suzuki Association as the sole authorised organisation which can use or grant rights to use my name, trademarks and service marks based in my name for music products or organisations associated with me or the 'Suzuki Method'.*

Mr Masayoshi Kataoka, editor of the ISA journal, asked the ISA chairman, Mr Toshio Takahashi, about his plans for the future. 'I would like to make every effort', Takahashi said, 'to reshape ISA into an association that consolidates the work of all the Suzuki associations and conveys the true meaning of the method to every member in a logical and secure manner.'

## Press Release

*The International Suzuki Association. Only uses of Dr Suzuki's name which are authorised by the ISA are legally*

*authorised uses of the name approved by Dr Suzuki. It is Dr Suzuki's wish that by uniting all authorised Suzuki organisations under the ISA his goals of benefiting children around the world and the philosophy and standards he has established in teaching children by his 'Suzuki Method' will be maintained uniformly throughout the world and strengthened and expanded in the future.*

*Dr Suzuki and the ISA have authorised Summy-Birchard Inc, a subsidiary of Warner Bros Publications Inc, to manufacture, market and sell pedagogical works as part of the 'Suzuki Method' of musical education and training, and they have authorised that company to use Dr Suzuki's name in connection with such works. Requests for authorisation to publish pedagogical works for the 'Suzuki Method' should be directed to Summy-Birchard Inc.*

## The Aims of the ISA

ISA not only seeks the unification of all the Suzuki associations of the world but also recognises the necessity to disseminate more information about the research and developments directly from Dr Suzuki and other prominent teachers at the teacher training centre in Matsumoto, Japan, the birthplace of the Suzuki Method. As well, ISA desires an increased awareness of the various achievements and needs of the different Suzuki associations of the world. Recognising others' achievements and needs would further communications, promote cooperation among the associations and encourage the continuing evolution process and improvement of fine teaching.

(continued on page 7)

## SUZUKI – LEHRKRAFT FÜR VIOLINE in Moers, Deutschland

Die Moerser Musikschule sucht zum 1. September 1991 eine Lehrkraft für Violine mit Qualifikation für Suzuki-Unterricht (Book).

Erwartet werden ein abgeschlossenes Hochschulstudium, Suzuki Teacher-Training, Beherrschung der deutschen Sprache, Erfahrung im Gruppen- und Einzelunterricht und Bereitschaft zur Betreuung von Ensembles.

Zu besetzen ist eine volle Planstelle. Das Arbeitsverhältnis richtet sich nach dem Bundes-Angestellten-Tarifvertrag mit den üblichen Sozialleistungen.

Die Moerser Musikschule betreut mit 70 Lehrkräften etwa 2.200 Schüler in 950 wöchentlichen Unterrichtsstunden. Sie verfügt über ein gut ausgestattetes Unterrichtsgebäude mit Konzertsaal.

Von 130 Violinschülern werden etwa 50% nach der Suzuki-Methode unterrichtet.

Die Stadt Moers (100.000 Einwohner) liegt am Niederrhein, westlich von Duisburg. Sie bietet vielfältige Bildungs- und Freizeiteinrichtungen und außerdem günstige Verkehrsverbindungen zu allen Städten des Ruhrgebiets.

Auskünfte erteilt Schulleiter Hermann Heinemann. Tel. (02841) 13333.

Bewerbungen mit den üblichen Unterlagen sind bis zum 31. Mai 1991 einzusenden an:

**Moerser Musikschule  
Filderstr. 126  
D 4130 Moers 1**





## Information from ESA

### Annual General Meeting 1991

Formal notification  
The AGM of the European Suzuki Association will take place in Bonn on Sunday 15 September 1991, after the final concert of the German National Workshop.

For further information about exact times and venue, please contact the German Association or the ESA office, c/o British Suzuki Institute.

The meeting will discuss important constitutional reforms, and it is hoped that as many A and B members as possible will be able to attend.

There will also be an ESA committee meeting in Bonn.

For further details of the German Workshop, please see the news column (under Germany).

### Teaching Development Fund

At the recent meeting of the ESA committee in Hamburg it was decided to establish a fund to support teachers from countries in Europe which do not yet have their own associations in their efforts to train as teachers, and to support the establishment of teacher training courses in such countries and within ESA where necessary.

It is hoped that assistance may be found from companies and individuals or from trust funds. It was also recommended that member associations should organise benefit concerts and other events to support this fund.

It was the application of support from an Estonian teacher, together with the realisation that the ESA does not have sufficient funds for such purposes, which led to this decision. It is expected that a number of countries in Europe, particularly in the east, will want to join the Suzuki family over the next few years.

Please contact the deputy chairman, Henry Turner, if you are able to help in this endeavour.

### Fax

The ESA gratefully acknowledges the donation of a fax machine by the ISA. Our fax number is (44) 058283 4140.

## Workshops and other Events in 1991

### BRITAIN

**Violin teachers' reunion**, directed by Felicity Lipman at Hitchin, 28–30 June 1991.

**London Suzuki Group's Annual Camp**, 25 August–1 September 1991 (please see advert). This also incorporates BSI teacher-training for piano and cello.

### FINLAND

**National workshop for children**, 1–6 July 1991 in Vammala. Tove and Bela Detreköy are guest teachers.

### GERMANY

**National workshop**, 12–15 September 1991. Further details under News.

### IRELAND

**National day workshop** at New Inn, Galloway, on 24 May 1991. Directed by Maire Ní Dhuibhir.

### NETHERLANDS

**National piano-violin workshop**, 18–20 May 1991 in Bovendonk. Piano teachers are Elisabeth van Herk, Huub de Leeuw, Grietje Meter and Stephen Power. Violin teachers are Tove and Bela Detreköy, Jeanne Janssens, Susan Johnson, Brenda Smith, Barbara Parham and Marianne Rygner.

## Teacher Trainees' Examination Results 1990

Supplement to Vol. 10, No. 2

### GERMANY

#### Violin

Rita Cservenska  
Constanze Gähler  
Annemarie Großkopf  
Jan Raderschatt  
Jan Romanski  
Kirsten-Imke Jensen-Huang  
Maria Koszalka  
Elisabeth Palacios  
Gisela Wachinger  
Ursula Pohle  
Doris Laudinet  
Michael Klett

#### Examiners:

*Tove Detreköy, Denmark; Jeanne Janssens, Belgium; Kerstin Wartberg (course teacher)*

### SWITZERLAND

#### Piano

Julia Linussio  
Thomas Lorenz  
Sigrun Mjaasaeth

#### Examiners:

*Anne Turner, GB; Colette Daltier, France; Lola Tavor (course teacher)*

## The European Suzuki Association (ESA)

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1

1

1

1

1

1+2

3

3

3

3

3+4

4

4

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2

2

2

3



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**II. Suzuki Institutes and Associations in other Continents****Suzuki Talent Education Institute Japan**

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Matsumoto Nagano-ken 390, Japan

**International Suzuki Association**

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**Suzuki Talent Education Association of Australia (NSW) JNC**

President: Harold Brissenden,  
PO Box 87, Coogee 2034

**New Zealand Suzuki Institute**

The Secretary, PO Box 6058,  
Hamilton, New Zealand

(continued from page 5)

ISA will in no way alter the present services that each national association offers its members, but rather enhance and broaden the services available on an international basis.

**Additional Services**

An International Research Library of the Suzuki Method is planned to be available to members in the near future which would contain written and audio/visual documentation from the earliest stages of the movement throughout its history.

Scholarships and financial aid are being planned to assist qualifying members and programmes in furthering study and development.

ISA offers assistance in coordinating teacher exchange programmes with developing countries and programmes.

ISA will authorise and make available translations of a variety of written works, including a multi-volume bound history of Dr Suzuki and his development of the Suzuki Method in Japan.

ISA intends to offer planning and advising for early education programmes such as kindergartens, primary and possibly secondary schools.

ISA is presently planning further development of other instruments and subjects to incorporate into the authorised Suzuki Method literature.

ISA provides opportunities for international interaction and involvement in the Suzuki world for teachers, parents and students alike. This includes conferences, conventions, workshops and more.

Editorial Board: ESA - Committee

All correspondence to the European Suzuki Association should be addressed to the Deputy Chairman, Henry Turner, OBE

Correspondence related to subscriptions should be addressed to the Treasurer, Bertil Jacobi

Correspondence related to advertising to the editor

All articles and contributions for the Journal should be sent to the Editor, Birte Kelly. The Journal welcomes the contribution of manuscripts related to Talent Education, together with photographs

**The views expressed and the contents of this journal are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily represent the opinion or policy of the editors or the editorial board**

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for

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will be **20 September 1991**.

Please send longer articles and contributions as soon as possible.

Short announcements and exam results may be accepted until **1 October**, but please let the office know if you are intending to send material in late, so that the space can be reserved.

Examination results for 1991 will be included in the next issue.

Please note that we would like more news and features from *all* the member countries, as well as more photographs.



# ESA News

## BELGIUM

### TEI Belgium

The National Suzuki Violin Workshop took place from 9–13 February and was attended by 105 students. While there was ice and snow outside, inside we felt the warmth of friendship and music.

Our guest teachers were: Bela and Tove Detreköy, Caroline Goddard, Jeanne Janssens, Susan Johnson, Ursula Pohle and Marianne Rygner.

The daily workshop programme included two group lessons, one individual lesson, a solo concert, a reading class and a parents' class (Wilfried van Gorp).

A very interesting lecture on how to build a violin was given by Mr Theunis, himself a famous violin builder.

Violin teacher-trainees and former Suzuki students showed their abilities in a concert and they convinced the audience that the Suzuki method proves to be a valuable investment in musical development.

The final concert, performed by the 105 students, was impressive and formed the highlight of the workshop.

We all want to thank each of the teachers, accompanists, pupils and parents, but in particular Jeanne Janssens, who directed the workshop.

Three Suzuki teacher-trainees, Roos Bakker, Muriel Ruben and Wilfried van Gorp, completed their training and became A-members.

### Namur

Namur Suzuki Group participated in several Christmas concerts and other church events and is now planning its end-of-year concert in June, a music camp in July/August and, in September, a concert at the 'Fetes de Wallonie'.

## DENMARK

### The Danish Suzuki Association

The new association, DANISH SUZUKI ASSOCIATION, has published the first issue of its newsletter. It was sent out in November with great success. The next issue will be in May.

In November, Kolding had arranged a workshop for piano students. Around 60 children took part, being taught by 11 teachers. The children had one lesson and one group lesson. The workshop ended with a final concert.

Kolding is arranging a workshop for violinists on 20 April. Children from Kolding, Fredericia and Vejle are invited. On 6 April Elsinore invites the whole island of Seeland to take part in a workshop. The workshop includes all stringed instruments.

The association is running two courses in teacher-training. Tove Detreköy is teaching a beginner's course for five new violinists in Copenhagen. In Kolding Peter Hagn-Meincke is running a course for piano teachers who have taken their first levels. There will be examinations in connection with the national workshop in October 1991. New teacher-training courses are planned to start in October 1991 in Copenhagen and Kolding.

### Det Danske Suzuki Institut

For us the big event was the tour last October to Iceland and the Faroe Islands with the chamber orchestra. In 10 days we made seven public concerts, radio and TV recordings, a workshop, a demonstration for string teachers; and Bela had a master class in Reykjavik for conservatory students. Everywhere we were met with overwhelming hospitality. The tour made an unforgettable impression on all of us. The programmes included music by Bach, Corelli, Haydn, Mozart, Bartók, Massenet and Popper.

Two of our former students finished their conservatory studies with a public debut and got fine press reviews; one more debut is to take place in the spring. One of them won the competition to represent Denmark in the festival for young Nordic soloists in Finland in October 1991.

26 April is the date of our annual concert in the Tivoli Concert Hall, to which we are looking forward.

And now for the bad news: Edith Code feels that her family needs more of her time and has therefore decided to give up teaching for an unknown period of time. Of course, we are very sad about that, but we understand and hope to see her back some day.

## FRANCE

The 7th annual National Workshop was held from 24 February to 1 March at the Côte St André near Lyon. Over 190 students from France, Spain and Canada participated in lessons, concerts and the special 'ostéophonie' classes. The faculty included invited foreign teachers – Linda Case, USA; Samanya Barbeau and Hélène Hénault, Canada; Felicity Lipman, Carey Beth Hockett and Caroline Gowers, England; and Haukur Hannesson, Iceland. Added to these fine teachers were Judy and Christophe Bossuat, Ann Grabe, Karen Kimmet, Geneviève Prost, Colette Daltier, Claire Schatzman, Vicki Vorreiter, Marie-Pierre Guyot and François Louche of France.

The children and parents seemed decisively happy with their teachers and the high level of organisation. All are looking forward to next year's workshop. The dates will be published in the French and the ESA journals as soon as they are

fixed definitely. This workshop has quite a fine reputation for quality which may make places even harder to get next year. This year, registration was full after only six weeks – this over two months before the workshop was to begin!

The violin and cello exams held right after the workshop were a fine success. The new teacher-training courses will start in September 1991.

In the meantime, 17 students and four teachers from Lyon are preparing for their concert tour in and around Minneapolis, Minnesota, beginning the end of April. They are planning concerts of mainly French composers, plus Bartók Rumanian dances, Monti Czardas and others. The workshop in February was a good chance for these students to work together, as it was for the Lyon cellists of 8–11 years old who will play in Paris on 13–14 April.

## GERMANY

For the first time the 6th National Workshop, from 28–30 September 1990, was held in a German conservatory at Freiburg. Twelve teachers (among them the foreign teachers, Tove and Bela Detreköy, Jeanne Janssens and Susan Johnson) came to teach 250 children and 40 teachers. The workshop was directed by Kerstin Wartberg.

As guest teacher, one of the best known German conservatory teachers of violin, Professor Wolfgang Marschner worked with advanced Suzuki students, played a violin recital and presented 10 of his own students (from age five to 18) in a very special evening concert.

On the programme of the sold-out final concert there were, besides Suzuki group pieces, some solo pieces of violin concertos by Mozart, Mendelssohn and Rieding.

Among the enthusiastic audience were Mrs Waltraud Suzuki and Fürstin Eleonore zu Salm-Salm.

About the same time, a piano teacher training course, directed by Mrs Lola Tavor, started in Munich. It is the first time that the German Suzuki Association is able to offer a piano course besides the usual violin courses.

In October 1990, 12 teachers passed the violin examination. The year 1991 will become exciting for us, too.

The 7th National Workshop will take place at the Beethoven Halle in Bonn. The symphony orchestra of the Beethoven Halle will accompany the Suzuki students at the final concert.

For the first time some German Suzuki students will get the opportunity to play solo with a professional orchestra.

Besides many Suzuki teachers, the prominent conservatory teachers Professor Wolfgang Marschner and Professor Igor Ozim will teach the advanced students.

Subsequent to the workshop the AGM and the committee meeting of the ESA will take place in Bonn. We are looking forward to showing the country representatives of the ESA the work of the German Suzuki Association.

*The London  
Suzuki Group*

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Bryanston School, Dorset  
Sunday 25 August–Sunday 1 September 1991  
VIOLIN PIANO CELLO

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Patricia Barnes, The White House  
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## GREAT BRITAIN

The British Suzuki Institute is hosting a number of special teacher-training events and reunions. The First Annual Cello Conference was held from 15–17 February 1991 and was a great success. It was directed by Carey Beth Hocket and Haukur Hannesson and was a reunion of past and present cello trainees and other interested cellists. Following this, a training course has been planned to combine the advantages of some residential sessions at Hitchin with weekends based in London, and a week at Bryanston School.

The piano course is holding its reunion during part of the usual one-week teacher-training course at Hitchin, from 10–12 April. Esther Lund-Madsen from Denmark has been invited as guest teacher, and the other tutors will be Anne Turner and Caroline Gowers.

The violin teachers' reunion will be directed by Felicity Lipman and held from 29–30 June at Hitchin, in conjunction with the BSI's AGM. Interested teachers from other countries are invited to contact the BSI for further details.

Many of our local groups, which now number more than 60, have held important events, concerts and workshops throughout the season, and several are holding summer workshops and camps, notably the LSG at Bryanston in Dorset, which this year also hosts the BSI teacher-training courses in piano and cello.

Felicity Lipman's pupils organised a fund-raising concert for Romanian

children on 7 December 1990. In spite of heavy snowfalls which prevented some people from attending, it was a great success and raised over £800. Similar fund-raising events to benefit Romanian children are being planned all over the country for the weekend of 5–6 October 1991.

## IRELAND

Rosemary O'Shea Doyle and Dorothy Conaghan are running a chamber music concert for parents on 12 April.

Since returning from St Andrews, Magsi Goor's Chamber Music Group has performed at weddings and feis (music festivals). One of her students, Marcus Miller, won the under-13 violin class at the Dublin feis.

Welcome to Carole Leland from New Mexico, who is teaching violin and viola and attending the teacher training course in Cork. Noelle Robinson has returned from a year teaching in Marseille and exchanging national airs. We are all looking forward to benefiting from her experiences.

## SWITZERLAND

In February 1991 a highly successful concert was given by Judith Berenson's conservatory class within the framework of a series of Tuesday concerts organised by the Conservatoire Populaire de Musique. Also in February a number of Lola Tavor's piano students presented an

afternoon concert at an old people's home in Geneva. Both events were greatly enjoyed by the respective audiences and by the young musicians taking part in these special community events.

In other Swiss programmes, Sandrine Schär has now completed the first year of a new violin programme in Bienne, at the juncture of the French-speaking and German-speaking regions of Switzerland. The group is fortunate to have its lessons in a lovely old building, formerly the town music school, in a pedestrian precinct in the heart of the old town. Most of Dominique Jeanneret's students in Neuchatel are enrolled in the conservatory, where the Suzuki Method is held in high regard. Her older students enjoy participating in the Neuchatel High School Orchestra. An annual highlight is the orchestra camp before the final concert in June. In Lucerne, Peter Rüttimann's students have happily joined with students of Susanna Lussi (Basle and Schwyz), Sandrine Schär and Linda Felder (Winterthur) for a November workshop, and plans are underway to organise a week-long camp in the Basle area in August 1991.

There are also violin programmes in Lausanne and Winterthur, and piano in Lucerne and Basle – hopefully news will be given next time, and also details of the plans for a second concert bringing together students from all over Switzerland. The first such concert, in June 1990 in Geneva, was a real success; German-speaking Switzerland is the proposed site of the second one.

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# Violin Size Debate

Dear Editor,

I was somewhat surprised to see an article on 'the violin size debate' as I had not noticed that there was any debate – at least, not among Suzuki teachers. My impression is that most Suzuki teachers recommend a smaller size of instrument than most traditional teachers and nearly all shops. I was riveted lately to discover not only that one of my pupils had been taking additional lessons with a teacher at her school without my knowledge, but that this teacher had also issued a 'school violin' *two* sizes larger than that which the pupil already had, and of a markedly inferior quality. (I was unable to establish which violin she normally practised on, since she very rarely practised on either.) The mother's attitude was curious – she felt it meant that the child was in some mysterious way 'getting on' if she could handle the larger instrument, and the change of violin apparently substituted in her view for the serious business of actually practising on it.

I agree therefore with Ms Levin's observations about parent pressure. One can counter this by picking out at group lessons the child with a small violin whose tone puts that of larger children to shame – 'Who else can make this little violin sound so good?' – and, like her, when parents demand to know when little Johnny will be on the next size, I simply ask 'When will he need the next size of shoes?'. I also keep a picture of a large, well-built male violinist at work and say 'Look how small his violin looks, see how bent his elbow is; he must be having a really easy time. Why make things harder for yourself?'

I've never been able to improve on the sizing method used on my own daughter by Clare Santer back in 1974, which probably came from America via Helen Brunner – the exact same method of wrapping the left hand fingers right round the scroll which Ms Levin describes. It works at a stage when the child hasn't had

any lessons and can't do any of the clever exercises. Later on, the child should be able to walk around the room with both hands down and allow watching parents to 'Knock, knock, who's there?' on the body of the instrument, should be able to clap the rhythm of *twinkle* all through with violin on shoulder, touch both hands behind the back *and* keep a rubber balanced on top, fix the bow hold with both hands while the violin is up, etc, etc (we surely all have dozens of these gimmicks) – and keep the violin *rock steady*. I will do any amount of extra padding and experimenting with shapes and sizes of shoulder pad to achieve this, but very little will compensate for a violin that is really just too big.

I beg or borrow violins with which to size up children in week one or two, and never guesstimate; one can be caught out by unusually short necks in particular. I hire out from my own collection of 25 or so small instruments to as many pupils as possible, which keeps me in control. If I'm out of stock I *write down* the size for the shop. If I don't know where the violin is to come from, I discourage parents from taking the child with them, so that the shop staff will be less tempted to interfere.

Specialist violin shops usually have players on the staff, but these are usually not the kind of shops where small-size violins are hired. I have stood and cringed in places to be left unnamed where some little victim (whose fate is nothing to do with me) is being sold some monster, and the parent says 'The teacher says to get a violin for an eight-year-old.' One can see old stock being shifted in a pretty cynical way – or perhaps the shop staff really don't know any better. What is so strange is that so many teachers don't use the power they have to do something about this.

I'm unlikely to have much influence outside my own manor, but I have been round to the local hire shop and shown

them exactly how I size up children, and I react fiercely to the story, 'They didn't have that size in so they gave me this.' It's worth a shop's while to keep a busy teacher's custom, and you can easily keep the upper hand by returning too large violins or dodgy bows until you are satisfied. That's what Marks and Spencer does to its suppliers, and it works. The teacher is respected and the pupils get decent service.

Lastly, if the wrong size violin was a gift, I say 'I'll resell it for you or hire it out for you until it is the right size.' I point out that the giver – often a grandparent – wanted to help not hinder, and would understand if the point were explained. I may mention that Yehudi Menuhin's progress was hindered at first by a too-large instrument which he had to grow into (see his autobiography *Unfinished Journey*).

Ms Levin asks what criteria those teachers are using who favour larger sizes. Some apparently do not know that there are sizes below quarter. Many people do not know either that there are custom-made half violas; naturally, many shops would rather stock three sizes than six, and I have heard a shopkeeper tell someone, 'Those little tiny ones are only toys for babies – they don't really play them.'!

I know what parents say: they reckon it is an easier way of getting a bigger tone than slaving away over the smaller size. I agree, up to a point, but then I tell them how much more tired you can get on a large instrument, show them the greater convenience of playing on and carting about the smaller size, and how their good tone on it will translate into a huge tone on the next one.

The one problem I haven't entirely licked occurs when the family buys the next size in preparation, and gets a really quite good instrument. A keen child will want to try it out even if the parents sensibly agree to hire it out or put it away for the time being. Two of my most musical pupils have in the past insisted on using a good eighth instead of a tinny tenth before they were really ready. Reluctantly, we all had to admit that the child's response to a good instrument was forcing the pace and, hedged about with conditions ('If you don't hold it perfectly it goes back on top of the wardrobe'), I have permitted the change. But these were, pace Dr Suzuki, exceptionally gifted and conscientious children whose parents would not let them get away with bad posture. Nonetheless, this might prompt an extra rule – if you have the next size available, beware of giving the pupil free run on it.

Perhaps the BSI could create a poster for music shops and teachers: illustrations of child and violin showing the effect of right and wrong sizes and the hand-round-scroll method of measurement.

Yours sincerely,  
Hilary Potts

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# First Year Travelling for Veteran Suzuki Teacher

by Magsie Goor

Teachers – if you get an invitation to teach with the Institute Suzuki Toccatà Marseille at its Summer Workshop, don't hesitate, drop every engagement and accept! It comprises a group of hard-working, imaginative and caring Suzuki parents. They organised a very successful workshop in Aix-en-Provence last July to which I was very honoured to be invited.

Not used to teaching at a workshop without a teacher-organiser I was dubious,

speaking children under the age of eight years, I was terrified but soon discovered the children are the same 'disarming devils' in every country, with that wonderful acceptance and quick response for whatever was presented to them! Miming was an art I began to adopt, supported by experienced English-speaking parents.

Each teacher, plus his or her family, were looked after by a host family, the



but not for long. Every detail was prepared well in advance and we knew without being reminded exactly our duties, with plenty of space to use our own initiative. This led to a very happy relationship between teachers, working together as a team of friends, even though we were from different countries and some meeting for the first time. The wonderfully relaxed but nevertheless efficient atmosphere resulted in no one seeming overworked.

Barbecuing, tapenade parties, swimming and sunbathing organised by hard-working parents broke down any barriers within parent-teacher relationships. Worried by my lack of French language and teaching a group of French-

overall organising families being Mr and Mrs Frisch and Mr and Mrs Dagorn.

Everything converged into the courtyard of this lovely old Ecole St Eloi in Aix. Having set up a teachers' meeting for us, our day consisted of group and individual lessons, the children being involved also in ensembles, orchestras and art work. Every midday there was a Solo Concert on a platform in the church, and every afternoon folk music was part of the curriculum. Each student and teacher performed his or her national folk music, the highlight being the performance of the National Folk Fiddle.

Being invited on workshops is a habit to be indulged, especially as there are so many good French recipes to be collected!



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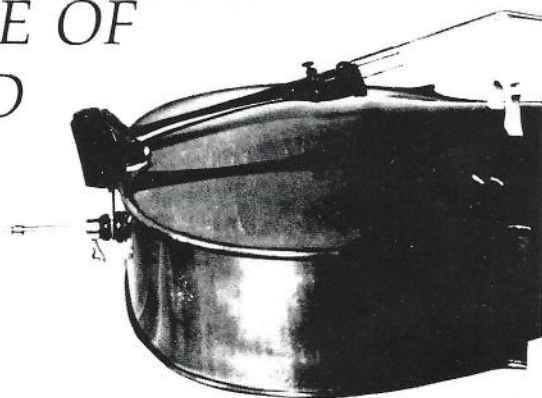
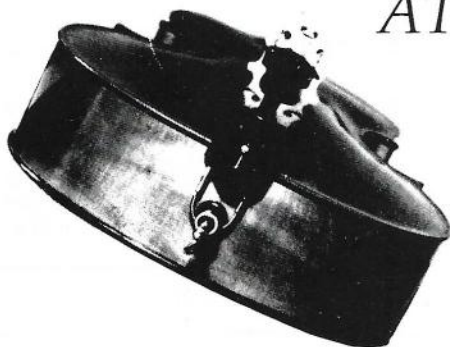
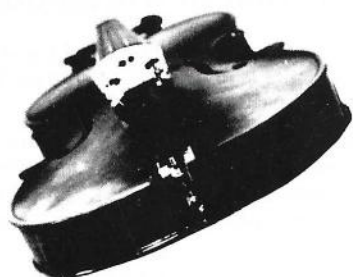
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