

## **THE SUZUKI METHOD**

by Tanya Carey

### **The Mother Tongue Concept**

Dr. Suzuki has based the Suzuki Method on the Mother Tongue method of learning. Children can learn music in the same way they learn to speak their language:

- Just like every child has the ability to learn his/her own language, so too does he/she have the ability to learn an instrument.
- Musical ability is not inborn but developed.
- Beginning the learning process during the very early years when the child is learning his/her mother tongue is beneficial. The child has a strong ability to imitate the sounds he/she hears, and has a strong desire to learn.
- The human being is a product of his environment. Make music part of the child's environment, just like language is part of his/her environment.
- Repetition is important for learning.
- Positive attitude of parents and teacher is crucial to the learning experience.
- Positive reinforcement is needed to build self-esteem.
- Daily practice is recommended.
- Cooperation (team work), not competition, is the motivation.
- Through the process of learning an instrument, we aim to develop the child's abilities that will give him/her a feeling of self-worth.

### **Step-by-Step Learning**

The learning steps, and especially the pre-Twinkle steps, are so essential that they remain forever a part of the review process with infinite continuing variation and refinement. Each small step along the way is important to understand and execute before the next is undertaken. By mastering each step with a total sense of success, the child finds happiness in his/her new found abilities, thus building his/her sense of self-worth and enthusiasm for learning. The beginning steps might seem slow but it leads to a more rapid advancement later since less remedial work is required. Most importantly is that each child progresses at his/her own pace.

### **Repetition**

Children love repetition. Repetition results in technical and musical security, and this gives the child a feeling of satisfaction and self-worth. As part of the repetition/review process, use the hundreds charts.

### **Listening**

Listening daily to Suzuki pieces will cut your practice time in half. The recorded pieces are a model for beautiful tone and style of playing. When a piece is listened to many times, the melody enters the subconscious, and makes it easier for the child to play the piece thereafter.

Listen while dressing, eating, as bed-time music, in the car, and on threshold volume when doing homework or reading stories.