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PREFACE

Some years ago, Dianne Flagello, Director of the Preparatory Department of the Manhattan School of Music in New York City, invited me to teach Eurhythmics to students from pre-school through high school. At that time I was Assistant to Robert M. Abramson, Chairman of Dalcroze Studies at Manhattan. Some of my classes were to include students of the Suzuki method of instruction. Dorothy Roffman, head of the Suzuki Department, was aware of the value of music and movement experiences, both before and during instrumental study. In fact, I was to learn as I travelled about the country that many other Suzuki learning centers and institutes require Eurhythmics classes to enrich their students' studies and bring added vitality to performances.

Within a short time, I realized that music/movement games specifically in connection with the Suzuki repertoire would be very helpful to teachers, parents, and students. With those special needs in mind I developed a curriculum that combined the creative aspects of Dalcroze Eurhythmics with the Suzuki repertoire. It seemed natural, then, that these materials be incorporated in a book that could reach other Suzuki centers as well.

Throughout this book I have tried to anticipate your needs as a teacher and the needs of your students. It will be your individual voice and spirit, however, that will bring musical life to the words on these pages, in much the same way that notes on a score come to life through the personal expression of Dalcroze Eurhythmics.

This project would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of many others.

I should like first to thank all my students in the Suzuki programs at the following schools of music where I have taught during the past few years: Hastings Talent Education Center, Dobbs Ferry, New York; Hoff-Barthelson School of Music, Scarsdale, New York; Music School of J.C.C. on the Palisades, Tenafly, New Jersey; and the Manhattan School of Music. Observing the children's sincere and ingenuous responses helped me refine the activities in this book. My student-teachers, Alicia Bashian, Melanie Johnson, and Diane Cas-

ale, were most helpful as well, frequently testing and observing the games. A very special “thank you” to Robert M. Abramson, who as mentor and colleague for many years exemplified the true meaning of educator, and through example and instruction helped me to realize my abilities as a teacher and improviser.

I was enormously impressed and helped by the astute and generously detailed comments of my colleagues and friends in Music Education who worked with the material at different stages of its development. My gratitude and heartfelt thanks to: Ruth Alpersen, Manhattan School of Music; Frances Webber Aronoff, New York University; Nancy Dexter and Susan Grilli, Hastings Talent Education; Marilyn George, Suzuki Association of Greater Tulsa, Oklahoma; Rosalie Holzman, Tune Ups for Tots and Toddlers, New York City; Ernest Johnson, Mamaroneck School District, New York; Sheila Keats, School for Strings, New York City; Esther Nelson, Dimension 5 Bronx, New York; Tom Parente, Preparatory Division of Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey; Dorothy Roffman, Manhattan School of Music and J.C.C. on the Palisades, New Jersey; Leslie Purcell Upchurch, Masters School, Dobbs Ferry, New York, and J.C.C. on the Palisades; and Vera Wills, Manhattan School of Music.

The noted teacher, trainer, and consultant Yuko Honda, one of Dr. Suzuki’s first pupils and daughter of Dr. Masaaki Honda, carefully reviewed the manuscript with me in terms of correct and beneficial application of Dalcroze techniques to the Suzuki™ Method.

I am deeply grateful to my editor Ken Guilmartin, fellow Dalcroze teacher and friend, for his meticulous scrutinization of the manuscript in all its phases of development. His commitment to the process of education inspired and supported me through the arduous tasks of writing, examining, testing, and rewriting.

And last, but by no means least, my husband, Philip, with his uncanny common sense and innate musical wisdom, guided and sustained me through many rough spots and was always there, giving me space, support, and enthusiastic encouragement.

Joy Yelin

INTRODUCTION

The publication of this book acknowledges a spontaneously begun and continuously evolving relationship between two of the most influential music education methods in the world today. In the USA, the SuzukiTM Method is perhaps the most widely recognized system of musical study operating independently of organized school systems. Its emphasis on training at a very young age and its tradition of parental involvement in the child's lessons give it a unique identity among music methods. Suzuki students can achieve startling progress at an early age because they are asked to do two things that young children are programmed by nature to be especially good at doing. They are asked, in a carefully planned and systematic way, to *assimilate* (through listening) and to *imitate*.

The principles and techniques of the late Swiss music educator, composer, and conductor Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1950) are known worldwide in their most popular manifestation, Eurhythmics. Eurhythmics is expression of music which exists in time through the use of bodily movement which exists in space. This was a revolutionary idea at the time that Jaques-Dalcroze was developing his method. Today, his influence is apparent in the successful combining of music and movement in many approaches to music education, especially those of Carl Orff, Maria Montessori, and Zoltan Kodály.¹ Shinichi Suzuki himself may have been exposed to these ideas during the period of his violin study in Europe.²

1. Choksy et al. *Teaching Music in the Twentieth Century*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1986, pp. 37, 69, 70, 92–94.

2. The period 1920–28, Suzuki's years of musical study in Germany, were significant years for the spread of the ideas of Emile Jaques-Dalcroze throughout Europe. This process had begun in Germany as early as 1910 with the establishment of his famous school and theater in Hellerau, but the war years intervened. Jaques-Dalcroze participated in a congress on music pedagogy in the International Exhibition held at Frankfurt in 1927, and the German Dalcroze Society was established in 1928. The mid-twenties was also the period Carl Orff and his collaborators began developing his *Schulwerk* in Munich at the Güntherschule. The music and movement contents of this work were strongly influenced by Dalcroze principles.

The study of Dalcroze³ Eurhythmics is successful because it also asks children to do what they have been programmed by nature to do extremely well: gain experience of the world through movement and bodily sensation. This experience is then turned into knowledge through a process of interaction and play involving musical activities, games, and improvisations.

Thus both methods take a child-centered, developmental approach to teaching new skills and dispositions by capitalizing on skills and dispositions the child already has. In *Movement That Fits*, Joy Yelin has skillfully adapted Dalcroze principles and techniques to the early Suzuki repertoire in service of this same principle. Her adaptation must be considered especially skillful in light of how different these two approaches are.

There are notable similarities in philosophy, however. Both Suzuki and Jaques-Dalcroze viewed the importance of music education as far more than simply preparation of performers. Nothing would be more abhorrent to either man than the kind of pre-professional program that brings music to the many in the hope of discovering the talented few by a process of elimination. Both advocate an early start, well before school age, although the Dalcroze emphasis is on a pre-instrumental program. And both emphasize, above all, the importance of listening. In the case of Suzuki, the goal of listening is to assimilate and then emulate an ideal model. The following excerpt illustrates this concept:

It has been an ancient Japanese custom to catch a wild baby nightingale in the mountains and place it in association with a domesticated bird, one with a particularly beautiful song. The wild creature from the mountains hears this excellent singing every day and in due time it, too, is giving forth the sounds it has been listening to. On the other hand, if the bird has for too long heard the croaking of the mother bird, then the capture of the little creature will prove to be too late, and the subsequent attempt to train it as described above will end in failure. This is another example of the Law of Ability.⁴

Jaques-Dalcroze viewed listening, or “ear-training”, as an interactional, highly cognitive activity:

Musical education should be entirely based on hearing, or, at any rate, on the perception of musical phenomena: the ear gradually accustoming itself to grasp the relations between notes, keys, and chords, and the whole body, by means of

3. “Dalcroze” is used to refer to the method; “Jaques-Dalcroze” is used when speaking of the man himself.

4. From “The Mother Tongue Method of Education and the Law of Ability,” excerpts of a talk given to the Japan Institute of Educational Psychology (1973). This talk has been reprinted in Starr, William *The Suzuki Violinist* (Knoxville, Tennessee: Kingston Ellis Press, 1976), pp. 1–6 and Hermann, Evelyn *Shinichi Suzuki: The Man and His Philosophy* (Athens, Ohio: Ability Development Associates, Inc., 1981), pp. 168–183.

*special exercises, initiating itself into the appreciation of rhythmic, dynamic, and agogic nuances of music.*⁵

That listening is fundamental in both methods is clear, although there is a different emphasis. This difference is in part due to a different focus. Suzuki's great contribution has been to demonstrate the potential of music learning in the very young child, whereas the Dalcroze emphasis on more cognitive learning is a suitable beginning with older pre-school children but also appropriate for advanced musicians. Techniques from both methods are applicable, however, throughout the early childhood years, as Ms. Yelin's skillful adaptations clearly demonstrate.⁶

It must also be noted that both systems are vulnerable to abuse by practitioners who mistake the form for the content. I am thinking of the overzealous Suzuki parent or teacher who, during intensive, goal-directed work towards a performance, loses sight of where the child is developmentally. This is especially unfortunate when an exceptionally creative child is given no musical outlet for this energy and *submits* to what is expected of him, thus rendering a totally mechanical performance with no heart. The same is true of the Dalcroze teacher who misinterprets the method as dance instruction and judges a student's performance on the way it looks rather than on what it communicates; or the misinformed teacher who emphasizes only accuracy of timing in movement as opposed to expression of the quality of the rhythm as well. Emphasis solely on timing will result in unmusical movement that is mechanical and boring for both teacher and student.

Despite these general similarities of intention, territory, and vulnerability, the two methods are really quite different. Yet they work extremely well together. How is it, then, that they complement each other so well, especially in the context of American culture?

Psychologist and MacArthur Prize Fellow Howard Gardner, writing in *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, describes as "virtually incredible" the performances he heard during his 1980 visit to the Suzuki Talent Education Center in Matsumoto, Japan. In his critique of the Suzuki approach, he comments:

To my mind, Suzuki has performed a superbly keen analysis of a whole range of factors, from the agents of transmission to the kinds of intelligence, which are relevant to the attainment of skilled performances. If one had to reduce the complex Suzuki Method to a formula, one might speak of strong interpersonal knowledge being used as a means to negotiate a

5. Jaques-Dalcroze, Emile, *Rhythm, Music, and Education*, revised, (London: The Dalcroze Society, 1973), p. 57.

6. For another perspective on the nature of listening and musical perception see Gordon, Edwin E. *Learning Sequences in Music* (Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1980, 1984). The concept of *audiation*, or the ability to hear music through recall when the sound is not physically present (pp. 2–7), and the distinction between *informal* and *formal* instruction in music (pp. 23–32) are important ideas to consider in early childhood music education.

complex musical pathway, in the context of a great deal of cultural support for such an undertaking.⁷

Pointing out that “all regimens have their cost”, he cites some of the usual concerns about note-reading, and the limited character of the Suzuki repertoire. Most interesting, however, for our discussion is the following comment:

Children receive the impression that the important thing in music is to replicate a sound as it has been heard and not to change it in any way. No wonder that few, if any, Suzuki trained children display any inclination toward composing. The whole notion of doing it another way, of decomposing a piece into one’s own preferred variations, is bypassed in such a highly mimetic form of learning.⁸

It is here that the significance of cultural support becomes a crucial issue. In the aesthetics of the East, such a replication can be the supreme test of artistry and even enlightenment. More advanced students are sometimes asked to play one note a thousand times in a week in search of the perfect tone. Such an aesthetic represents one polarity and enjoys great validity in its cultural context. Gardner further observes:

It is crucial to note, however, that Japanese success with a program like Talent Education does not simply reflect expert design. . . . the key to the success of the Suzuki program in Japan lies in the comfortable fit between the abilities and inclinations of the target population (young children) and the particular values, opportunities, and institutions of the society in which they happen to be growing up.⁹

The Dalcroze approach, in contrast, represents the other polarity. With its emphasis on improvisation, on multiplicity of experience, on the constant challenge “can you do it another way?”, it provides balance to Suzuki in the context of the American culture’s emphasis on individual expression. It helps to provide necessary cultural support, a more “comfortable fit”, and allows creative and interpretive ability to develop alongside mastery.

Although a detailed discussion of the Dalcroze Method is beyond the scope of this introduction, a brief summary of its evolution and key concepts follows. The method was shaped by Jaques-Dalcroze’s teaching experiences. He realized that his students at the conservatory had difficulty mastering lessons in musical rhythm that were taught in traditional ways. However, he recognized that these same students were extremely competent as walkers, runners, jumpers, skippers, and game players, all of which required highly complex rhythmic responses. Gradually, he evolved a technique to

7. Gardner, Howard, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), pp. 376–77.

8. Ibid., p. 378.

9. Ibid., pp. 381–382.

tap this largely unconscious skill in rhythmic capability by teaching his students to apply it consciously in their musical studies. From this beginning a whole system of rhythmic, ear-training, and improvisation study developed, based on a discovery technique of learning that relies on the student's conscious integration of input from eyes, ears, voice, body, feelings, and the kinesthetic awareness of movement. This system eventually developed into three distinct areas of study: Eurhythmics, Solfège, and Improvisation. *Movement That Fits* focuses only on beginning studies in Eurhythmics, but even in this elementary stage several general concepts are important to understand.

I have already mentioned the principle that music, which exists in time, can be expressed in movement, which exists in space. Another way of saying this is that for every sound there is a movement analog, and for every movement there is a sound analog. Three-year olds can understand the idea of creating movement analogs as well as twenty-three year olds, and are usually less inhibited. They can even improvise sound analogs on a suitable instrument after sufficient experiences under their teacher's direction.

Note that this is not the same as the synchronization of choreographed movement with sound, or movement or dance with its own aesthetic that is merely accompanied by music, or the use of movement to imitate or illustrate animals and natural phenomena. Even though perfectly synchronized, a clap or step on the beat that does not transmit the size, shape, feeling, and weight of that beat would be an unsuccessful expression in a Dalcroze class. Similarly, beautiful, dancer-like skill in moving through space, or preconceptions as to what the movement should look like, can inhibit the successful expression of a particularly unusual musical passage, or even simple expressions by a student with an unusually proportioned body. Regarding imitative movements, Robert M. Abramson comments:

*The imitation of nature and life has its purpose in song, dance, and rhythmic studies, but unless there is also attention to increased movement perception and ear training, and a connection to cognitive musical understanding, such exercises may become simple imitation rather than education.*¹⁰

The goal is always that the music functions as the motivating and controlling force behind the movement.

Recognizing that it was not enough to simply link music and movement, Jaques-Dalcroze developed a vocabulary and rationale for the analysis and interpretation of music and movement combinations. This truly unique approach drew on the fields of physics, physiology, and psychology for its terms and concepts. By making a new application of Newton's laws of mechanics of motion, Jaques-Dalcroze began to look at the dynamics of music and movement in terms of the interaction of *time*, *space*, and *energy* in a gravity field.

10. Choksy et al., *Teaching Music in the Twentieth Century*, p. 39. Abramson's explication of the Dalcroze approach in this book is, in my opinion, the foremost contemporary interpretation of Dalcroze principles and techniques. I am indebted to him for the summary that follows.

The performance of rhythms became a matter of movement at a specific time (tempo), located in and moving through a specific space (duration), and charged with an appropriate energy (dynamics). In the context of these three concepts, the subject of “rhythm” could encompass every aspect of the flow of sound events through time. Thus the study of Eurhythmics (literally “good rhythm”) includes such subjects as dynamics, articulation, phrasing, and form, as well as beat, measure, subdivision, and pattern.

In Eurhythmics, the students themselves become musical instruments. The musical interpretation of time, space, and energy therefore has a physiological and a psychological dimension. Musical understanding developed in this way is more easily transferred to performance on an instrument because it has been experienced in more than one dimension.

Jaques-Dalcroze postulated that the physiological mechanism for experiencing music consisted of the linking together of sensation, feeling, and knowledge. Thus, through the sensation of moving to the music you can discover the feeling that leads to the knowledge of how the music should be performed. Each mode provides access to the other, and all work together for optimal musical expression.

This combination of moving-sensing-feeling is known today as *kinesthesia*. It operates in all life situations involving the transmission of sensory movement information to the brain, which in turn makes decisions and sends instructions back to the muscles and organs. It can operate actively or passively: the champion gymnast in competition or the spectators watching him or her on television at home are experiencing similar sensations through the operation of the kinesthetic sense.

When asked how they experience music, many people will simply indicate their ears. Thinking about it further, they realize that the music stimulates an emotional response that is felt in the body: sadness in the eyes and throat or exuberance in the heart and chest, for example. They also realize that the music’s rhythms stimulate muscular tension and relaxation, imaginary movements of marching, dancing, or soaring, and other experiences of tension and release in the context of gravity. Even the phenomenon of pitch, the relative frequency of vibration of musical sounds, is expressed in terms of gravity: “high” for faster vibrations, “low” for slower ones. Kinesthesia plays the central role in all these musical perceptions.

It also plays, of course, an essential role in much of our daily lives. Kinesthesia is the process that enables us to move through a room full of objects or to instantaneously react when threatened by physical danger. This process is predominantly automatic and accomplished by the mind and body at unconscious or subconscious levels. In order to make use of this marvelous sense in music education, its operation must be made fully conscious. Eurhythmics meets this challenge with a battery of techniques for heightening musical awareness that Jaques-Dalcroze developed with the aid of the Swiss psychologist Edouard Claparède, founder of the Institut Jean-Jaques Rousseau for the study of child development, and teacher of Jean Piaget. Briefly stated, the teacher’s first goal must be the child’s *attention*, which is then converted to *concentration* on the subject matter of the lesson. This subject is then experienced at a group or

ensemble level of awareness involving expressions and response with other children. These expressions and responses are then experienced in a wide variety of *nuances* of sound and feeling.

The preceding discussion may seem remote from the world of a beginning Suzuki student. But as you read the carefully planned lessons in *Movement That Fits*, notice the quick reaction exercise that commands attention, the devices that concentrate this attention on the subject of the lesson, the suggestions for ensemble interaction with other students, and the repeated emphasis on working the material in varied nuances of tempo, dynamics, and other expression. Notice kinesthesia at work as you prepare the material yourself, and notice how moving-sensing-feeling is perhaps the dominant mode of gaining knowledge for the young child. Learn to analyze your musical responses, and those of your students, in terms of the interaction of time, space, and energy, and notice how such an analysis can help you and your students discover movements that truly “fit” the music.

Because the majority of Suzuki students working in the early repertoire are of pre-school or early primary school age, the presentation of the material in *Movement That Fits* has been styled with them in mind. By simply changing the style of your presentation and the pace of the material covered, you can adapt these excellent exercises for any age group studying the Suzuki repertoire. The musical examples outside of the repertoire have been kept very simple so they can be used effectively by leaders who are not accomplished pianists. Examples may also be played or improvised on any other instrument or even just a hand drum. In fact, the essence of the Dalcroze approach is to change, adapt, and improvise. Once the principles, goals, and techniques are understood, resourceful teachers will find ways to apply them in any situation, including music work with non-Suzuki populations and repertoire, such as kindergarten, pre-school, and special student music classes.

Although there is no substitute for actual Dalcroze training (no book could do that because of the experiential nature of the material), *Movement That Fits* provides direct and easy access for the capable teacher or parent to a most powerful process of enriching and strengthening musicality. Joy Yelin’s clear outlines of the lessons, explanations of the principles involved, and emphasis on teacher preparation make this book an effective and easy-to-use manual. For teachers with previous Dalcroze training, it will serve as a guide for lesson planning and source book when working with Suzuki students. For those with little or no Dalcroze experience, it makes it possible to begin exploring this highly effective and stimulating teaching method and philosophy. And, of course, many Suzuki parents will want to try leading these wonderful games and exercises!

Kenneth Guilmartin

Chapter 1

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

“My whole method is based on the principle that theory should follow practice, that children should not be taught rules until they have had experience of the facts which have given rise to rules . . . The important thing is that the child should learn to feel music, to absorb it, to listen to music not only with his ear but with his whole being.”

Emile Jaques-Dalcroze (1865–1950)

Every child has a natural sense of rhythm. No one teaches children the inner rhythms and natural body movements that come to them as a birthright. Why then do children struggle to learn the basics of rhythm when this subject is taught by music educators? More importantly, how can the natural sense of rhythm that is in every child be enhanced through education, rather than stifled?

This question puzzled Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, a Swiss-born educator and musician. His examination of this problem led him to develop a system of teaching music through natural movement. Today, the method he developed for rhythm training is known as Eurhythmics, which literally means “good rhythm”. Jaques-Dalcroze’s philosophy has proved to be a powerful complement to the work of a Japanese music educator, who also struggled with the questions of how to enhance children’s natural musical capabilities. This educator, Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, is famous today as the founder of the Suzuki™ Method.

In a Dalcroze class the students respond to the teacher’s musical stimulus, usually composed or improvised piano music. Other instruments may be used, and song, chant, and rhyme also play an important role. The students’ responses are expressed in many ways

Chapter 4

MUSICAL CONCEPT GAMES

This chapter focuses on musical concept games that are useful in any studio or classroom situation. These activities help develop awareness of specific aspects of musical expression such as the beat, dynamics, articulation, phrase, tonality, and register. There are also games to introduce various note values in simple meter. After several listening and movement experiences, the children learn to draw and identify the notation for each one.

Dynamics ***OBJECTIVE:*** To respond to changing dynamics (loud/soft) physically and vocally.

SUMMARY OF THE GAME: Using “Happy Birthday To You” or another familiar song, the children sing phrases with varying levels of dynamic energy and accompanied by appropriate gestures.

MATERIALS: Song and scores for piano or other instrument.

TEACHER GETS READY: Practice singing with gestures suggested in the activity. Practice playing, changing from soft to loud.

FORMATION: Children sit in circle or line, facing the teacher.

THE GAME:

Sing *mezzo forte*, encouraging the children to join you.