

## **How a Music Together Background Benefits the Suzuki Student**

Learning a foreign language is...well, foreign. It's like introducing a foreign object into our bodies; it's unnatural. We make all attempts to assimilate to these alien sounds and their meanings by listening to language course recordings, taking immersion classes, reading foreign literature, and perhaps even watching and re-watching foreign films.

If we do it right, we would apply ourselves daily to our newly found interest. We would listen to others speak in their native tongue, study the grammar, read and write, and maybe even attempt a few words ourselves. If we are lucky, we may even pick up some idioms and other forms of expression that are intuitive to a person from the particular country.

The concept of learning something "foreign" but making it a natural evolution was what Dr. Shinichi Suzuki invoked when he applied the Mother Tongue Philosophy to the learning of an instrument by a young child:

Suzuki realized the implications of the fact that children the world over learn to speak their native language with ease. He began to apply the basic principles of language acquisition to the learning of music.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the special features of the Suzuki approach are parent responsibility, role modeling, loving encouragement, constant repetition, breaking down the musical language and instrumental skills into child-friendly steps, and especially listening to recorded music of the repertoire. It has been a successful method for over fifty years worldwide.

The Music Together Program does all of this: adult role modeling, informal and child-friendly classes, the use of developmentally appropriate activities and instruments,

and the use of an audio recording at home to familiarize the child and adult to the songs that are experienced in the class.

The difference between both programs in this acquisition of musical language is that Music Together actually places the child *in* the foreign country, which is by and large known to be *the best* way to learn any foreign language. The baby or young child is totally immersed in this musical language, experiencing it not only with their ears and voices but with their entire body in the Music Together classroom. Their eyes see rhythms come to life by watching families in the room moving and dancing rhythmically. They have all types and ages of role models to observe – not just the adults accompanying them to class. These young children are not being directed to participate, and can experiment with their new found language in their own time and in their own way.

The historical connection between the Suzuki Method and the Music Together program is well documented. David Sengstack, the original publisher of the Suzuki music and pedagogy materials, is the uncle of Ken Guilmartin, founder of Music Together. Therefore it is no coincidence that the philosophies of these two programs are also connected.

What is surprising is how *specifically* a Music Together background positively affects the young children who eventually become Suzuki students. It is believed that an infant or young child exposed to any music and movement class has a supposed head start to eventually learning a musical instrument. However, the shared principles of these two programs are just the beginning of the beneficial effects of entering into the Suzuki Method after experiencing the Music Together program.

These shared principles are as follows:

1. Music Together: All Children are musical.<sup>ii</sup>  
Suzuki: Talent is no accident of birth.<sup>iii</sup>
2. Music Together: All children can achieve Basic Music Competence.  
Suzuki: We are all born with a natural ability to learn (music).

3. Music Together: The participation and modeling of parents and caregivers is essential to a child's musical growth.

Suzuki: The parent/caregiver is the "Home Teacher". Regardless of past musical backgrounds, these same adults learn the given instrument alongside the child (at the lesson and home) helping the child achieve their weekly goals.

4. Music Together: A young child's musical growth occurs best in a playful, musically rich and developmentally appropriate setting. No expectations are placed upon the child to "learn" music.

Suzuki: Lessons and practicing at home are undertaken with a playful, nurturing method. Music is initially learned aurally; a more organic approach to making music. Formal instruction is presented to the child in small easily accessible developmental steps. Adult expectations are guided towards the child's age appropriate, musically evolving stages.

I began teaching the Suzuki Method in 1980. I completed the full piano teacher training privately under the tutelage of Harlow Mills. I was further mentored by Idell Low, who was the Suzuki President of Los Angeles at the time. I opened my Music Together Center in 1997, and continued with my private studio of Suzuki piano students. I was attracted to the organic approach of both learning and teaching experienced in each of these programs.

Being a performer and studying piano accompanying at the University of Southern California School of Music I needed to learn music quickly. It was at this time that I was introduced to the Suzuki Method. I was already implementing its concept of listening to recordings in order to learn the large body of music that I was expected to perform in a short amount of time. It was a natural transition to apply this in my Suzuki piano lessons since I was already using the Mother Tongue theory in my own studies.

When my daughter was born, I had been teaching Suzuki Piano to young children for over 15 years both in Los Angeles and abroad. I was already aware of the benefits to exposing very young children to music education. As I took my daughter to Music Together classes, I was once again drawn to the natural process of instruction and learning I saw taking place.

Every spring for the past 14 years I have provided the families in my Music Together Center the opportunity to meet Suzuki families and their Suzuki teachers of various instruments (cello, violin, piano, guitar, flute, and harp) at our annual Music Together-Suzuki Parent Education Nights.

The evening starts out with a student recital on each of these instruments. Afterwards, each teacher explains how they teach young children on their particular instrument; sometimes even demonstrating a short segment of a lesson with their student.

It is important to point out that most of these teachers featured at the event have gone through the Music Together program with their own children. Those who did not (the harp and flute teachers) are Music Together trained. The cello teacher is both Music Together trained and a former Music Together mother.

Over the past 10 years, all the Suzuki students that come to perform for this special evening have evolved into being 100% former Music Together children. Their ages span from ages 4 to 15.

Because of my involvement with these Suzuki teachers as parents in my own Music Together classes, I have had numerous discussions about the Music Together pedagogy and it's effects on our various Suzuki students who started off with a Music Together "education." Eventually, our Music Together-Suzuki Parent Education Nights were followed up with a teacher-only discussion on the benefits of these same families going through the Music Together program specifically before entering a Suzuki lesson.

### NATURAL MUSICIANS

All participating Suzuki teachers at these special parent education evenings completely agree that these particular Suzuki students are positively affected by their Music Together experience, and that they came to their Suzuki lessons better prepared musically.

Carrie Salsbury, Suzuki violin teacher of 18 years observes that very little musical instruction is needed. "For the most part, I don't have to teach Music Together children 'musicality', it is intuitive."

A Suzuki violin teacher of 19 years, Laurie Niles, agrees. She finds she doesn't have to explain "certain things" like pulse. It's innate; the child inherently understands rhythm.

As my own piano studio evolved into being comprised of mostly former Music Together children, my observation of these students was that a natural pulse was ingrained in them when it came to playing a song on the piano. While the Suzuki recordings aim to help children get familiar with the melodies and rhythms of a particular song, I noticed that the Music Together child actually felt the meter of the music in their entire body: they were able to translate it to their fingers remarkably well, and it sounded more natural.

The Suzuki student by and large will be experiencing a more organic process of learning music by using their ears, compared to the traditional method of learning instruments. These latter students are taught to read immediately. This standard method relies mostly on the visual experience of reading music, which undermines the musical process. The Suzuki Method provides a more holistic approach to learning music, as it aims to engage the auditory sense early on.

Yet, what is still missing in the typical Suzuki approach is the full use of the body and voice in the learning of the instrument. When "sensing" music through small and large movement, as in a Music Together class, the child becomes comfortable with feeling a pulse in their entire body – not just in their hands. Having parents or caregivers at these children's sides, participating and encouraging them to playfully join in, solidifies this musical experience.

"The right hand is the bow arm of a string player," remarks Carrie Salsbury. "After a Music Together experience, this same arm, which evolved over the years from clapping hands to the egg shaker hand to the drum stick arm, goes through its natural process of acquiring rhythm in its playful Music Together environment. Now the natural rhythm is apparent in the arm holding the bow."

Over the past several years, I did begin to notice my younger piano students were learning their repertoire more quickly than previous non-Music Together students. I began noticing that I was spending less time in the lesson working with the meter of a given song. It was as though these new young students already understood the pulse of

the song; it seemed they could already feel it. For example, songs in triple meter were easily grasped by swaying, and duple-metered songs were bounced to. These were just the simple techniques I would begin to use to help all my students understand the meters of their songs. In the past with non-Music Together students, a lot of lesson time was devoted to this task (and it did feel like a task). The main obstacle was trying to get the non-Music Together child accustomed to moving their body freely before trying to introduce organized, rhythmic movement; they were just not comfortable moving their body at all.

It became quickly apparent to me that former Music Together children sitting at my piano captured this concept of meter better than their counterparts, when several non-Music Together families recently arrived to my studio at the same time. Their Suzuki piano teacher recently retired and they were in need of a new teacher. One family with three children in particular comes to mind. There is a 13-year-old boy in the second volume of the Suzuki repertoire, playing Bach Minuets, and twin girls in fourth grade that are beyond the midway point of the first volume, playing folk songs. Although the eldest can at times sound sensitive in his musicality, all three children rhythmically play their long notes vs. short notes as though they were TOLD to hold certain notes longer than others; it's obvious that they don't feel the meter, and at times sound mechanical. I inquired about earlier musical education and was told that they had taken Mommy-and-Me-type music classes when they all were around 2-years-old – it was not Music Together.

As Suzuki violin teacher Laurie Niles further notices, “Unusual meter is natural to the Music Together-Suzuki student.” She uses supplemental music by Erich Doflein, which incorporates a lot of unusual and asymmetrical meters. She feels the former Music Together children in her violin studio are “not thrown” by these meters, and “once they figure out what is happening rhythmically, they play it more naturally” than her non-Music Together students. She further observes that older beginner students “often have trouble executing these rhythms, but the Music Together background makes it much easier for (former Music Together students) to pick this up with less explanation.”

During the large movement and free movement portions of our Music Together classes in my Center, my teachers and I stress the concept of the importance of movement

to our families. One favorite Parent Education Moment is “without a full body rhythmic experience that we feel while dancing, one cannot expect a child to quietly be seated at their instrument and be able to choreograph rhythmically JUST their fingers. It is difficult to feel a pulse or meter only in their hands while sitting still.” I say this as we are standing and getting ready to dance. I move my entire body (almost dancing) as I talk about the full body experience. I then stand frozen when I describe sitting still, and mimic playing the piano or a stringed instrument while ONLY moving my fingers. I complete the Parent Education Moment by reminding the parents that it is in their child’s best interest (whether they choose to play an instrument or not) that they role model the love of large movement in their entire body so their child can eventually feel it in theirs. Through dancing, we hope that the idea of an inner pulse will enter a child’s body.

For those older children that are not ready to study an instrument formally, I stress to the parent the importance of having them in a dance class until they feel ready to take up an instrument. I even encourage my own piano students to continue some sort of movement class to further enhance their rhythmic experience.

A natural sense of rhythm is just part of what a Music Together child brings to their Suzuki lesson. An instinctive sense of tonality and (for non-piano students) intonation are also factored into these experiences.

After experimenting with their voices since they were much younger and observing their parents and caregivers singing not only in their Music Together classes but also at home, these children discovered their own singing voices in comfortable and playful environments. This was encouraged not only in a relaxed, non-performing way but these children were joined by their accompanying adult in the joy of singing for many years.

Singing songs at any age brings the external concept of playing an instrument directly into one’s body in the use of one’s voice and ears. Carrie Salsbury notes, “The left hand, (of a string player) which deals with intonation, has less of a struggle with these particular Suzuki students. The former Music Together children come in already with Basic Music Competence or they are well on their way to it. If they are not already singing on pitch, they don’t take long to do so.”

Music Together students are more comfortable singing in my piano lessons than their counterparts. I add lyrics to the folk songs in the first volume of the Suzuki Piano repertoire to help the learning process. These playful texts mainly tell the student how to play a long note or how to articulate a note in the song. We would add words to the beats of rests in a given song so the child can feel the sound of the silent beats in their voice. I find the Music Together piano student relates to these same lyrics more naturally than their counterpart mainly due to their comfort of singing from such a young age. Whether they have achieved Basic Music Competence by the time they begin formal lessons or not, these children sing out loud and relate to the lyrics of the songs more comfortably than those students that were not encouraged to sing as babies.

These same Music Together children also grasp the ideas of tone quality and articulation quicker and easier as they progress through their Suzuki lessons. Because their sense of rhythm (and for string players, intonation) have already been sharpened through their years in a Music Together class, time at the lesson can be devoted to a higher level of listening. As Carrie Salsbury observes, “Their ear is sensitive to the subtle differences in tone quality and their ‘practiced’ bow arm responds easily to attain the desired sound quality.”

The first volume of the Suzuki piano method incorporates various types of ‘staccato’ (detached notes of various lengths) and in the second volume, the ‘2-note slur’ (2 different notes that are to be connected but are approached and released a certain way by the hand) is introduced in a Mozart Minuet. Technique on the piano can be approached ‘mechanically’ – meaning that the teacher and student spend time discussing the actual mechanics of the hand and how the actual finger ‘attacks’ the key to acquire the desired sound. Or, if the ear already knows what sound it wants to hear, it can be transferred to the finger – almost dictating the mechanics of the finger to respond to the desired sound. I find more and more my former Music Together piano students approach their technique by doing the latter. Although discussing how to move a hand or finger is still incorporated in my lessons, articulation (how a given key on the piano is played) is easier to approach by ear. My Music Together/Suzuki student hears the subtleness of the different sounds they want to play at an earlier stage than the non-Music Together piano student. They hear it in the first volume of the repertoire whereas their counterpart



struggles through the second volume and starts really hearing it by the third book. By then, the Music Together child has learned and articulated more precisely pieces by Bach, Mozart and Beethoven.

There is one caveat to having a young child come into the Suzuki Method from a Music Together background. After experiencing many sessions getting comfortable musically in a Music Together class and beginning to acquire Basic Music Competence, this same young child is still developing physically. The one difficult thing that Carrie Salsbury finds with the very musical student is that their technique struggles to keep up with their intuitive musicality. “The Music Together child moves through the repertoire faster than the non-Music Together student since their ear is more sensitive to the melodies and the musical nuances. Physically they struggle to keep up with their musicality and their eagerness to learn more repertoire.”

The Suzuki Method (especially in the early volumes) for all instruments is designed to incorporate technique in the collection of songs found in each volume. Pieces in the repertoire are designed to present technical problems with gradual challenges to be learned and mastered in the context of the music, rather than through dry technical exercises.

I find the same challenge as Carrie with my former Music Together piano students. I have always used supplemental repertoire starting in Volume 2 of the Suzuki Piano Method. In the past I would incorporate it mainly to give the student a more vast knowledge of the piano repertoire, but lately, I have started doing this sooner with my former Music Together students (in Volume 1) – mainly to give the young child more time to apply their techniques from the original Suzuki collection onto other songs. Frankly, it’s an interesting challenge for an instrumental teacher to have since it is pleasant to work with a natural musician at this young age.

#### ADULT COMFORT WITH ROLE MODELING

There is one other positive element of having a Music Together child come into a Suzuki studio: they bring along a parent or caregiver that has understood the importance of music education in their baby’s young life for many years.

Role modeling music making comes naturally to a Music Together parent, especially after several sessions of Music Together classes. Therefore, the next logical step is transferring this comfort in role modeling to learning an instrument formally along side their child. The typical Music Together adult has just spent several years sitting on the ground with their baby, role modeling the playing of small hand instruments; they understand the concept of not manipulating their child's hands into conventional movements. This parent has recognized when to guide their baby and when to sit back and observe as their young child figures out how to play the drum with a mallet and not tap the drum with a tambourine. This same parent has relaxed as they watched their baby mouth the instruments. In turn, the young child watches their parent role model how to play the instrument. This involved, relaxed approach is then taken into the Suzuki lesson, and the former Music Together parent and child are natural partners in the experience of learning the instrument together.

After bringing his children to Music Together classes for several years, Felix Bullock, Suzuki Guitar teacher at the Pasadena Conservatory in Los Angeles, noticed that the small hand instruments used in a Music Together class – especially during the ‘play along jam’ – graduates the child and parent unconsciously to that of the more formal instrument. “The child understands the concept of music making at a young age, and that the hand instruments are the tools to create sound.” These young children have observed their parents and caregivers making music with these instruments. Respect is given to these “tools,” in that the families are introduced to the idea that they are not toys but real instruments of music making. Later, reverence to the more formal instrument is inherent for the young child, once lessons begin.

The time and commitment that was put into taking a baby to a Music Together class makes it now easy for the former Music Together parent in transitioning to accompanying their child to a Suzuki lesson. In preparation for this, I encourage my current Music Together families to find a “ritual time” at home to sit together and have a family “play along jam” with their baby or young child. They can play instruments or pots and pans for a few minutes along to music they all enjoy. I suggest they do this around the same time every day, which over time would translate to “practice time” once they begin formal lessons. I did this with my daughter, and jamming after breakfast

eventually turned into practicing piano. I remember her going on her own to the piano before school from the time she was 6-years-old all the way through high school. “This is a small step to start with NOW,” I tell them, “before an instrument is chosen. Those few minutes that a young child enjoys on their pots and pans with mom or dad incrementally get longer over the years with their practicing on a ‘real’ instrument.” Not to mention that time has been carved out of everyone’s day to spend musically from a child’s very young age.

“We are our children’s role models in life,” I say to my parents at the Music Together/Suzuki Parent Education Evening, “and role modeling the love of making music continues in a Suzuki lesson. The instrument has changed but the patience, and loving encouragement are still present.” What is also familiar to the Music Together family in the Suzuki lesson, is the child observing their parent learn to play the instrument. This time though, the parent is role modeling patience, and tenacity, along with the sheer joy of creating music at a higher level. The Suzuki child and parent are still united in the partnership of music making that they have shared for years. Now they have graduated to sharing the joy of actual music learning, and the Music Together parent is more than prepared for it.

#### DEVELOPMENTAL AND AGE APPROPRIATE STEPS

The fourth principle shared between Music Together and the Suzuki Method is the playful, developmentally age appropriate approach to teaching and learning music. No other adult understands this better than the Music Together parent/caregiver. These parents have experienced getting on the ground and playing like a baby with an infant, and then eventually toddling with their toddler. They understand more readily the concept of learning an instrument in small playful, developmental steps. Their adult expectations were checked at the door (so to speak) since they were rolling on the floor with their infant and have grown incrementally alongside their growing child. Now as a parent of a four or five year old, they truly comprehend not only their child’s idiosyncrasies but also the notion of how a young child understands things at a different rate than older children and adults.

The Suzuki method breaks down the learning of music and instrumental skills into small steps that are easily attained by the child. The “parent-home teacher” works with their child at home between weekly lessons. Although the parent moves at a quicker pace at the lesson, they are taught to understand these small steps in order to work with their child throughout the week. As the student progresses through their song, the steps are linked to form larger parts, which in turn complete a technique, or an entire song. Then looking back, the child and parent can see all the small stages they went through to achieve their objective, a process that is reapplied in the learning of upcoming repertoire.

Time and time again I see non-Music Together parents – especially former classically trained musicians – placing unrealistic expectations on their child once they begin formal lessons. They particularly have a difficult time holding back to the smaller steps described above. This is especially the case when these parents did not previously participate in a music and movement program with their young child. Music Together stands out over other early childhood programs as a bridge to formal lessons not only because of the expectations of parent involvement at the class, but of the general silliness and playfulness that is part of the learning environment. In general, Music Together parents that become Suzuki parent-home teachers approach their new role with less apprehension compared to those Suzuki parents that did not experience such immersion in the Music Together classroom.

As Felix Bullock observes of his former Music Together parents, “They are generally more relaxed and tuned into their child’s needs especially at the lesson. After experiencing the informality of a Music Together class and witnessing what goes on in this environment for so many years, this same adult understands the relaxed environment; their experience translates over to their easy going attitude as a Suzuki parent.” The non-expectations of their child excelling at their instrument are guided from their experiences in Music Together classes.

Although the Suzuki lessons are more formal in comparison to a Music Together class, the approach is the same. Working with the child is still playful. All information and expectations placed upon the child remain in small, digestible bites. The parent – now in the home-teacher role – learns this at the lesson; the former Music Together parent finds this approach familiar and comfortable.

Working with a former Music Together parent is a joy for Trina Carey. Trina not only has been teaching Suzuki Cello for over 30 years but is also a Music Together trained teacher. “It’s obvious that this parent *wants* to be involved at the lesson and as a home teacher,” remarks Trina. The Music Together parent class collaboration with their child has taught them to carry it over into other parts of their lives since their child was a baby. The relaxed parenting that takes place in a Music Together class not only inspires a parent to raise their child this way, but witnessing events in class with other families motivates parents to interact with their child in a more playful, relaxed way.

The Music Together parent that is now the Suzuki parent is comfortable in accepting this more formal approach of educating their child. Trina further notices of these same parents, “They also understand that learning an instrument is not about talent and they value the process more.” Indeed, these parents are familiar with trusting the process; they are not focusing on the outcome or goal, which is, in this case, learning a song.

For Laurie Niles, it is enjoyable to not have to “educate” the former Music Together parent to relax at the lesson and follow their child’s lead. “These particular parents understand to not place expectations on their child at the lesson or at home; they are okay with letting their child figure out things on their own.” The experience of the looser, child-friendly and child-driven environment in a Music Together class relaxes this parent at the lesson and during practice at home.

Most parents who are unfamiliar with the Music Together informal approach to learning come to their Suzuki lessons with presumptive attitudes that eventually stress the child as they practice together at home. This pressure is evident in the child at a lesson and sometimes even in the interactions between the parent and child. One week it is obvious that the child did not work enough on a given song or technique, as they are looking nervously at their parent during the lesson. The following week the child plays the same song flawlessly, yet without joy.

I have a unique situation with a Music Together family who had their two children in my classes for several years. The mother, a professional violinist, despite knowing the importance of early music education and the value of Music Together in it’s

musical variety of tonalities and meters, was not comfortable with the informal way of learning. Therefore she sent the children's father to the Music Together classes for years. She instead chose to later take on the more formal training of their eldest child's music education, and is the home-teacher for her daughter's piano lessons. I immediately saw the tension of her expectations, and her daughter's subsequent stress. It is apparent that this mother's idea of music education involves the goal and only the goal of learning a song. Because I have a relationship with the father from the Music Together classes, I was able to speak with him frankly about the situation and he makes himself available for the practice sessions. During the lessons, I guide the mother to understand the more child-friendly approach we have in the Suzuki Method. She is beginning to understand that, though there is the end result of learning a song, the undertaking of acquiring it cannot be approached formally; that it instead must be handled as playfully as possible in order for her young daughter to not only learn a the song, but to actually enjoy the experience along the way. It's an eye opener for her, and an interesting study for me how one parent can absolutely "get it" from his background in the Music together classroom, and the other clings to more traditional expectations of piano lessons.

Many parents find the concept of learning to play an instrument along side their child daunting, but they agree it is an important aspect to the Suzuki Method. The majority of all these parents have never played the instrument their child chose to study. These adults see the importance of their own struggles after finally achieving some sort of proficiency. They can better understand what their child is experiencing when they themselves as adults endeavor to accomplish the same techniques that their young child is grappling to learn. Music Together parents seem more empathetic to these struggles because they better understand the idea of celebrating the small steps it takes to grow. They remember how their baby that never left their lap for many Music Together sessions finally took a walk around the room during class. This parent, rather than being flustered by their child's behavior, sees their baby as growing independent, and praises the child rather than scolding them for being "inattentive." The small steps to learning any technique on a musical instrument can be lost on the average adult learning to play it. The goal of getting the song learned is the prize, especially when it's the adult attempting to learn the song.

I find the Music Together parents in my piano studio have not only more patience with themselves and their child, but readily celebrate the tiniest step towards proficiency for both themselves and their children. I'm finding this even with the classically-trained violinist mom: that she is finally understanding this concept, even though she missed seeing it all those years in her children's Music Together classes.

What was cause for celebration in a Music Together class, (your baby has stopped mouthing the mallet and is playing the drum with it; your young toddler who has never left your lap is now dancing on their own; your infant starts cooing around the home key of a particular song) has now changed to the context of the lesson, (your child is properly bouncing their arm playing a given detached-sounding long rhythm on the piano; your young violinist child is holding their bow on their own). Since the Music Together parent is more familiar with the importance of these smaller developments, they will more readily recognize and appreciate the small steps that are mastered while learning to play an instrument.

### MUSIC TOGETHER BENEFITS BEYOND MUSIC

While speaking to my Suzuki colleagues about the advantages to having a Music Together Education, they repeatedly brought up how this background positively affected families' non-musical experiences once they were done with Music Together.

Curious, I approached former Music Together families that did not continue with music lessons, and inquired about this. Many agreed that the child-centered, and play-based education that they discovered early on in their babies' life during Music Together classes inspired them to seek out this informal education academically. This included preschool, kindergarten, and beyond. Furthermore they witnessed their child's social awareness develop more naturally in the Music Together environment, and because of it, their child seemed more comfortable in their school settings. Through their child's openness to singing and having their impulses be accepted and included in a given Music Together class, these children learned at a young age that their voice matters in many ways; therefore, they were less intimidated socially when beginning school.

A Music Together class is the first educational experience for the majority of these families. Whether helping attain a musical language or giving a parent the insight to raising their child more progressively, without a doubt, a Music Together background positively affects a family's life.

---

Jeanina Quezada, Center Director of Foothills Music Together in the Los Angeles area, has performed in Europe and the USA both as an accompanist and soloist. She has taught Music Together since 1997 and is an accredited Suzuki piano teacher. Jeanina did her undergraduate work in Keyboard Collaborative Arts at the University of Southern California School of Music. She has taught Suzuki piano since 1981 in Los Angeles and Milan, Italy

Carrie Salisbury is a professional violinist and has been teaching Suzuki Violin for over 17 years. She and her pianist husband Ben co-own Gerona Rose Music Studio in the Los Angeles area. They teach and perform frequently together. Both have attended Music Together classes for years with their 3 children and are still a current Music Together family.

Laurie Niles is an accredited Suzuki Violin teacher for 19 years although she has been teaching violin for 25 years. She teaches with The Suzuki Talent Education of Pasadena group in the Los Angeles area. She has played violin professionally for 15 years and is the editor of the online publication [www.violinist.com](http://www.violinist.com). Laurie attended Music Together classes with her 2 children for several years... many years ago. They are now in high school and college.

Felix Bullock teaches Suzuki Guitar at The Pasadena Conservatory in the Los Angeles area. Felix attended Music Together classes with his 2 daughters for several years.

Trina Carey has performed as both soloist and chamber musician throughout Europe and the United States. Trina is one of the first generation of Suzuki Cello students worldwide. For over 20 years she has directed the Pasadena, CA based cello program: A-Cello-Rondo. Trina trained as a Suzuki Cello teacher in 1979. Trina is also a trained Music Together teacher and attended Music Together classes with her now teenage children who are also accomplished cellists themselves.

---

<sup>i</sup> "About the Suzuki Method," Suzuki Association of the Americas  
Accessed April 4, 2016, <https://suzukiassociation.org/about/suzuki-method/>

<sup>ii</sup> Kenneth K. Guilmartin and Lili M. Levinowitz, Ph.D. *Music and Your Child: A Guide for Parents and Caregivers*, Music Together LLC, 2003.

<sup>iii</sup> Shinichi Suzuki, *Nurtured by Love: The Classic Approach to Talent Education*, Senzay Publications, 1983.