

A Great Inspiration for Nigeria

The European Suzuki Teachers' Exchange Conference in Germany

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When I received the invitation from a friend to attend the two day meeting of Suzuki teachers at the Remscheid Academy as an observer, I was thrilled. For me as a Nigerian violinist, it was an opportunity to meet with many interesting musicians and to learn more about Mr. Suzuki and his highly praised teaching method, little did I know how much the weekend at the Remscheid Academy was to influence my future plans.

On my arrival at the Remscheid Academy, I was welcomed by very friendly people, everything was very well organised with that punctuality peculiar to Germans. The mixed program held a wide spectrum of activities ranging from different teaching methods and excises on the viola to ensemble playing and historic recordings from Suzuki's youth presented by various musicians from different European countries, it was simply sensational!

The highlight of the weekend for me however, was the presentation by Prof. Hartmut Lindemann on the historic recordings from Suzuki's youth. It was a visual presentation paired with original audio recitals from great musicians like Jacques Thibaud, George Enescu, Mischa Elman and William Primrose just to name a few. The interpretations and clarity of these pieces were both deeply touching and inspiring. The structure of the presentation, first a bit of history on a piece, followed by names and pictures of various artists and their interpretations of the piece and then to crown it all sounds, repertoires of the same piece by different interpreters using different fingering positions, make it so easy to follow and awe-inspiring. Prof Lindemann did a great job, the presentation was magnificent! I was so happy when at the end of his presentation Prof. Lindemann was duly thanked with standing ovation by the participants. It was indeed well deserved.

From the experiences over the weekend at the Remscheid Academy, it was obvious that Kerstin Wartberg and her team had put in tremendous effort to give us such a memorable experience. I wish her strength and continued courage. After my departure from the Remscheid Academy, I made two decisions which I hope will take root in the year 2009. The first is that I will become a member of the German Suzuki Society and the second, is to engage in founding a Suzuki Society in my home country Nigeria.

I would like to use this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Mr Rudolf Gähler for this invitation and opportunity, I hope it will also mark the beginning of activities in Nigeria to promote and support the Suzuki teaching method.