

Buona Sera, tutti gli amici nello spirito Suzuki,

The 14th Suzuki Method World Convention is triumphantly being held here in Torino where the city is still filled with a brilliant glow after the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. I am very pleased to be able to share the joy of opening this Convention.

Thanks to the dedicated preparation and devoted leadership of Maestro Antonio Mosca and the teachers, staff and others who have a deep understanding of the Suzuki Method this convention was made possible. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of them, on behalf of the Suzuki Method organizations throughout the World.

Dr. Suzuki studied music in Europe. Today, after 60 years, this great educational revolution established by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki known to us as Talent Education or the Suzuki Method has returned to Europe again.

This revolution takes firm root in the “humanism” of Dr. Suzuki.

One day, he saw a son of the gatekeeper at his residence in Tokyo sitting all alone turning a bike’s wheel. Dr. Suzuki asked him “ Why don’t you go to school? “ The boy answered immediately, “ I was dismissed from school because I was stupid.” Dr. Suzuki suddenly thought, “Why does he say he is stupid, yet he can speak Japanese quite well.” Human society destroyed this boy with one word – “stupid” – in the same way as one throws away waste matter. But he has gained the skill of speaking the Japanese language!

Dr. Suzuki found that the wonderful ability that man has in speaking his mother tongue is not a little matter. Since that day Dr. Suzuki devoted all of his life and made every effort possible to seek an educational system that does not create dropouts. The idea that “All children can be educated depending on how they are raised” is firmly based on this human experience.

All of us gathered here share a common language. It is music, of course. More than anything else it is music that rings through our bodies and hearts.

Music can convey a message without reason and without judgment.

Today we are gradually learning that music can not only quench the thirst of our souls, but it also has a healing power for our bodies.

The top runner of this is none other than this year's favorite, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

The research on this subject is going on not only in the U.S.A. or in France but also in many other countries in the world.

Do you know of any other better "Esperanto" than music ?

Italy, the motherland of European music, has produced many great musicians such as Palestrina, Vivaldi, Verdi, and so on, and has taught us unfathomable greatness and joy through their music.

The aim of the Suzuki Method is to nurture every child to be a noble person with ability raised to its highest potential through this wonderful music.

The Suzuki Method is, however, continuously questioning and researching the "know how". This World Convention is obviously the most suitable occasion to give and take our thoughts.

Dr. Suzuki, you know, is watching us smiling in heaven.

Let's all join hands and work together toward the happiness of all children in the world and bring world peace.

Grazie mille.

April 12, 2006. In Torino

Koji Toyoda

President

International Suzuki Association

(Translated by Mitsuko Kawakami)