

# Alla

# Breve

Official Publication of the Kodály Society of Canada



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# Kodály Society of Canada

## Société Kodály du Canada

[www.kodálysofcietyofcanada.ca](http://www.kodálysofcietyofcanada.ca)

The Kodály Society of Canada/Société Kodály du Canada KSC/SKC is a Registered Charitable organization within the meaning of the Income Tax Act. The Society therefore provides tax receipts for eligible charitable donations of goods, services and funds.

### AIMS OF THE KODÁLY SOCIETY OF CANADA

To advance education in music by:

1. Providing workshops, seminars, courses and publications based on the Kodály concept;
2. Developing testing standards and training materials for music educators;
3. Providing scholarships, bursaries and awards to music students, teachers and researchers;
4. Gifting funds to qualified donees as defined in subsection 149.1 (1) of the Income Tax Act.

### VISION STATEMENT

The Kodály Society of Canada promotes and supports music education that

- a) fosters a life long love and understanding of music and
- b) recognizes music's inherent value, utilizing the ideals inspired by Zoltán Kodály.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Kodály Society of Canada will act for the direct benefit of Canadian society, so that educators and students of all ages and levels will be musically literate and have the potential to lead musically enriched lives. The KSC will establish a network of like-minded music educators through provincial/territorial branches and electronic media as well as Kodály inspired professional development opportunities including conference/workshops, teacher training courses, research, and publication.

### HISTORY

The federal charter for the Kodály Institute of Canada (KIC) was granted in 1973. The announcement that the organization was formed was made at the first International Kodály Symposium held in August 1973 in Oakland, California. The Canadian organization was established prior to the International Kodály Society (IKS) and the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE), both of which were chartered in 1975. In order to parallel the International Kodály Society, the name of the Canadian Kodály Organization was changed to the Kodály Society of Canada in 1986. Since its inception, the Kodály Society of Canada has had thirteen presidents.

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Gordon Kushner	1973 - 1978
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Pierre Perron	1980 - 1984
Lois Choksy	1984 - 1988
France David	1988 - 1991
Ki Adams	1991 - 1995
Amanda Montgomery	1995 - 1999
Kim Eyre	1999 - 2004
Velvet Sulymka	2004 - 2008
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Carolyn Neumann VanderBurgh	2012 - 2014 (interim 2014 - 2016)
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The Kodály Society of Canada is an affiliate of the International Kodály Society (IKS). Branches of the Kodály Society of Canada exist in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. Membership fees vary from branch to branch. Prospective members are asked to join KSC through their provincial branches. Where a branch does not exist, please contact Jaime Popowich, KSC Registrar, jamie.popowich@gmail.com



International  
Kodály Society  
[www.iks.hu](http://www.iks.hu)



[www.KodálySocietyofnovascotia.weebly.com](http://www.KodálySocietyofnovascotia.weebly.com)



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[www.bcksc.ca](http://www.bcksc.ca)

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In addition to our regular columns and news items, *Alla Breve* is a peer-review journal. Manuscripts read and evaluated by qualified referees (upon invitation of the Editor) and are identified as such in the journal.

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# Letter from the Editor:

## WHY KODÁLY?

BY JAKE AUTIO

This past winter I had the time, space, and happenstance to find and read the book *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to take Action* (Sinek, 2009a). Sinek's vignettes of people who lead and inspire corporations and organizations captivated me throughout the book. Periodically I would put it down to start to think about Kodály who has inspired multiple generations of musicians and educators throughout the world, including myself, and how I would define my own WHY as a musical leader in schools and in the community. This letter is an invitation to begin a journey of asking oneself, "why Kodály?".

Characteristics of a good WHY are that they are deeply embedded in, what Sinek refers to as, "The Golden Circle" (Sinek, 2009b). The WHATs of our lives equate to the products, services, and day-to-day tasks. These live on the outside of the Golden Circle. HOW we do these tasks are just inside. At the core is WHY we even do the tasks in the first place.

Sinek explains that the WHY and HOW of our lives live in our limbic brain, the part of the brain responsible for feelings and our behaviour. This is unlike the neocortex, which is responsible for our analytical thoughts and language (2009a, p. 56). To fully embody our WHY we are then able to tap into others' trust and feelings to create loyalty and inspire others to follow us, be it buy our product, use our service, or follow a way of doing things.

As the title of the books suggests, those who start with WHY and keep their WHY at the centre of their work, and, arguably in their own life, gain lasting and inspirational success. The main exemplar Sinek uses is Apple. Sinek says:

"A marketing message from Apple, if they were like everyone else, might sound like this:

'We make great computers. They're beautifully designed, simple to use and user-friendly.

Wanna buy one?' (2009a, p. 40)"

This is based on the WHAT aspect of their product. He then uses an example of when Apple puts their WHY at the centre of their sales pitch:

"Everything we do, we believe in challenging the status quo. We believe in thinking differently. The way we challenge the status quo is by making our products beautifully designed, simple to use and user-friendly. And we happen to make great computers. Wanna buy one (2009a, p. 41)?"

This example stuck with me throughout the book and continues to this day. Apple's WHY: to challenge the status quo. Sinek uses Apple's WHY throughout the book as it is so strong and it taps into a consumer's limbic brain, their own sense of self-identity, feelings, and behaviour. Its success has generated many loyal customers who are willing to pay extra money for a product that is, at times, inferior to its competition. Apple's WHY is so strongly embedded in all they do, and consistently so, that their HOW and WHAT can remain even at the 'good enough' caliber for their loyal users to continue to follow<sup>1</sup>.

With such a strong exemplar I am inspired to ask, what is my WHY as a musician educator? In a similar vein, I keep relating Sinek's theory to Zoltan Kodály, a WHY-centric person who continued to inspire me and other musician educators' across the globe. What is it about Kodály's WHY that continues to

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[1] The comparison of the Apple example and Kodály-inspired music education raises a question of loyalty to the point of blindly following due to a name brand and good marketing. Do we blindly follow Kodály's philosophy and inspired methodology? Do we buy products solely labeled with Kodály's name, with no research and reflection as to why? If we found a better way to teach a concept or sequence would we reject it because of tradition? Would that not go against Kodály's own words and teachings? This quagmire of questions must be left for another time.

inspire a worldwide movement in music education? What was is the essence? Why is it still relevant today?

As Kodály-inspired educators we are well-versed in WHAT we do: singing, playing, listening, creating, reading, and writing; and HOW we achieve the WHATs: the use of high quality materials and tools to build music literacy sequentially and joyfully through singing; but I believe for our movement to grow we must truly come to the essence of Kodály, and our own, WHY.

I offer two possible beginnings to address the Kodály WHY. The first could be that Kodály inspires us as musician educators to feel and be in connection with other human beings through musicking, be it in choirs, orchestras, or performing solo for a captive audience. Kodály is perhaps most often quoted for music belonging to everyone, regardless of class or ability, as well as the power of singing with others, working towards universal harmony.

Howbeit, as teachers, we have perhaps another WHY that goes beyond music; perhaps Kodály feeds our nurturing side, as we strive to fulfill the needs of children and their well-rounded upbringing. If Kodály stressed anything it was that children should have the opportunity to sing musically and joyfully before any sort of music literacy development can occur. Therefore, we must put the child's innate curiosity and playfulness at the centre of our teaching practice rather than the adult-driven pressure of content standards and public seasonal performances. Klara Kokas, a direct student of Kodály, is perhaps an ideal example of someone who nurtured musical practices with children working towards a focused listening and experiencing music with the whole-body using spontaneous movement, dramatic storytelling, visual art, and, of course, singing (Kokas, 1999).

For many of us, our Kodály why-journey began at summer courses. Therefore, taking my cue from Sinek, if I were to write a marketing message to sell Kodály summer programs (not to mention the whole philosophical study of Kodály and his work), a Kodály summer course being sold from a WHAT and HOW point of view might read as this:

"We have a great method. It's well laid out, time tested, and fun for children. Wanna take a summer course?"

With WHY-centred sales pitch it could be rephrased as such:

"Everything we do emerges from our love and deep belief in the musical lives of children and revolves around building and fostering connections through musicking. We believe in connecting to the centre of every child's innate musical ability. The way we do that is through rigorous study and reflection in our teacher education programs. These courses also just so happen to introduce sound methodology supported game songs, beautiful canons, joy, and laughter. Wanna take a summer course?"

In this issue you will find nuggets of Kodály-inspired WHATs, HOWs, and WHYs. Several of our articles feature reflections and resources on Kodály-inspired instrumental practices. The article by Dr. Eila Peterson invites you to write letters to the editor to continue the conversation surrounding the questions she poses. I sincerely hope you do. You will also find letters and invitations to the International Kodály Symposium where participants will be exploring the different aspects of the Golden Circle, the circle of life, and singing the circle! I am pleased to publish a sneak peek of this year's Symposium children's choir commission by Margaret King. Moreover, you will read about the experience of two scholarships winners from last summer and will find pertinent information regarding summer course offerings across Canada.

Happy reading,

Jacob Autio  
Editor of *Alla Breve*  
President of the BC Kodály Society of Canada

## REFERENCES

- Kokas, K. (1999). *Joy Through the Magic of Music*, Budapest: Alfa Kiadó és Nyomda
- Sinek, S. (2009a). *Start with why: How great leaders inspire everyone to take action*. New York, New York: Penguin.
- Sinek, S. (2009b). *How great leaders inspire action*. [Video file]. Retrieve from [www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action](http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

# President's Message:

## ANTICIPATION

BY DR. KIM EYRE

As I write this message, Mother Nature is still teasing us with hints of spring, followed by weather that is definitely un-springlike! As Canadians, some of the long days of winter are endured only with the anticipation that surely spring will come again. And we know that it will, following its own timeline.

Anticipation is something that those of us who embrace the philosophy of Zoltán Kodály are feeling as we look ahead to August 8 – 13, 2017 and the 23<sup>rd</sup> International Kodály Symposium and Music Festival, hosted by the University of Alberta, Augustana campus in Camrose, Alberta. In the history of the symposia, this is only the 6<sup>th</sup> time it has taken place in North America. The organizing team, capably chaired by KSC's own Dr. Ardelle Ries, has worked tirelessly, planning for a unique musical and educational experience to showcase the musical and cultural heritage of our great land and the world to music educators and scholars around the globe!

The selection panel has chosen approximately 70 submissions for inclusion in the Symposium programme which will be featured along with sessions by our invited presenters: Carol Beynon (Canada), Susan Brumfield (USA), Lois Choksy (Canada), James Cuskelly (Australia), Robert Fillion (French Canada), Lucinda Geoghegan (Scotland), Leela Gilday (Dené-Canadian), Takao Nakamura (Japan), Gail Needleman (USA), Dr. László Nemes (Hungary), Sr. Thérèse Potvin (French Canada), Susanna Saw (Malaysia), Nancy Telfer (Canada), Laurel Trainor (Canada), Jill Trinko (USA), and David Vinden (UK).

In addition to having a uniquely Canadian flavour, *Singing the Circle/Cycle de chant* will also have a strong international presence with selected presentations from Australia, Belgium, Canada, England, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Scotland, Taiwan and the United States of America. If you have not done so yet, please register at <http://www.kodalyposium2017.com>.

Even with the excitement of hosting the IKS Symposium, the regular work of your KSC board continues. The board met in London, ON in February 2017 for our annual meetings and continues to “fine tune” our approaches of promoting and supporting the contemporary understanding of the Kodály philosophy of music education in Canada.

We thank retiring KSC board members Jan Dammann (AB), Martha Healy (NS) and Marlene Nolet (NS) for their years of service on the board. Your insights, enthusiasm and collegiality will be missed! We are delighted to welcome Jake Autio (BC), Cathy Benedict (ON), Jamie Popowich (AB) and Helen Van Spronsen (BC) to the board and congratulate Jody Stark (MB) as she moves from the role of Director to the position of Vice-President.

I look forward to seeing you in Camrose on August 8, 2017!

Kim Eyre  
President of the Kodály Society of Canada



**SINGING  
THE CIRCLE  
CYCLE DE  
CHANT**

# Greetings from the IKS

BY DR. JAMES CUSKELLY

On behalf of the Board of the International Kodály Society, I send good wishes to our members and friends in Canada. In particular, I would like to send special thanks to all those involved in preparations for the upcoming 23<sup>rd</sup> International Kodály Symposium. The theme of the conference, *Singing the Circle: Kodály-Inspired Music Education from Birth to Adult* highlights the importance of music as a core activity throughout our lives and neatly captures the notion of lifelong learning. Such a theme suggests we need to extend our belief that “music is for everyone” to “music is for everyone and for all times.”

Kodály was witness to the power of music across the broadest spectrum of society and often spoke of the importance of music in the lives of humankind. From simple peasant folk maintaining traditional customs in rural contexts to the concert platforms in the great halls, Kodály recognised the importance of music and the way in which music moved, inspired and affirmed, and he stated that, “Real art is one of the most powerful forces in the rise of mankind, and he who renders it accessible to as many people as possible is a benefactor of humanity.”

While some equate Kodály music education with young children in the school classroom, the reality is that many who are inspired by the philosophy

are also involved in early childhood and parenting, geriatric, indigenous, youth, community, medical and therapeutic music programs. The upcoming Symposium has been cast with a wide net, reflecting Kodály’s vision for musical engagement that involves “as many people as possible.” The timetable for this event includes papers, workshops, lectures, presentations, workshops and concerts canvassing an extensive range of topics and interests.

I encourage you to make every effort to participate in the 23<sup>rd</sup> International Kodály Symposium. There is a wonderfully rich palate of ideas to offer and there is a wealth of opportunities for learning, reflecting and sharing. As a member of the IKS, you belong to a community of outstanding and inspiring educators and musicians. Kodály reminds us that, “Good music has to be fought for, and this fight cannot be fought with any success by one country alone within its boundaries.” We are all contributing to the development of a rich and diverse musical culture and this chance to engage with the international community is not to be missed.

With all best wishes,

Dr. James Cuskelly  
President of the International Kodály Society



**23rd International Kodály Symposium & Music Festival**

**FOR SCHOLARS & TEACHERS**

**SINGING THE CIRCLE**

**AUGUST 8-13, 2017**

Under the auspices of the IKS International Kodály Society

**THEMES OF THE CONFERENCE**  
The Circle of Singing • The Circle of “Musicking”  
The Circle of Teaching & Learning • Kodály’s Expanding Circle

**GUEST SPEAKERS**  
Lois Chosky • László Nemes • Laurel Trainor • Robert Filion  
Gail Needleman • Nancy Telfer • Carol Beynon • James Cuskelly  
Susanna Saw • Lucinda Geoghegan • David Vinden • Jill Trinka  
Sherryl Sewepagaham • Susan Brumfield and many more...

**PERFORMERS**  
Borealis String Quartet • Leela Gilday • Tradbadour  
Pro Coro Canada • Kodály Symposium Children’s Honour Choir  
Dallas Arcand • National Association of Teachers of Singing

**ACTIVITIES**  
Papers, presentations, workshops • Chamber & vocal recitals  
Singing games & dances • Open circle philosopher’s café’s  
and Community Singing

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Dedicated to Lois Chosky and Thérèse Potvin

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# Scholarship Winner:

HARMONIA MUNDI TO FRIDAY: TAKING PART IN LEVEL II AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA, JULY 2016

BY JO PETTERSON

With warmest thanks to Level II Instructors: Dr. Ardelle Ries, Jody Stark, PhD Candidate, and Michael Zaugg, Conductor.

"We gather here together with joyful heart and mind We raise our voices ever, our distant souls to bind" (*Harmonia Mundi*, 16th century German Chorale English Text by Sean Deibler)

Daily warm-ups begin at 8:30am and if you are taking this course you won't want to be late. For one thing, the warm up is a short 15 minutes; more importantly, this is 15 precious minutes dense with uplifting musical energy, stimulating education in musicianship and profound interaction with singing. Even the sleepest singer will stir into inspired musical action.

If you are a Level II student, you will then move to the Level II musicianship classroom and discover that the complexities of music theory can be taken off the written page and grasped actively together in a highly musical way. The lessons are infinitely inspiring, and it is the *joy* of music that escapes the room like a wisp of smoke under the door and into the hallways as we learn through *singing, singing, singing!* of all sorts. We sing with concentration, pushing the levels of our musical intelligence as far as we can. There are classical bits to sing in solfa by memory, a Buxtehude cantata, Kodály's compositions, a variety of Canadian folk songs, fast-paced solfa scales, triads, inversions and figured bass sung in solfa with hand signs, mind bending modes, fluid and intricate canons sung heartily with like-minded classmates, snappy body percussion ostinati, hand signs, movement, part-singing, improvisation, and focused *listening*. Here, we are immersed in practicing the first of Kodály's four characteristics of a good musician: "a well-trained ear."

As a Level II student, I was already "hooked" on the beautiful child-centred teaching philosophies of the great Hungarian composer, linguist, educator, and ethnomusicologist Zoltán Kodály. It's easy to be drawn to Kodály's noble goals: honouring children with the very best music as they learn, "music for everyone", the high standards for music education, the inspiration of dedicated music teachers and musicians, and "the *sine qua non*... the most basic of Kodály's ideas, that good music is necessary to enrich the life of every human being" (Sinor, 1997).

Even though I was already convinced that Kodály's philosophies for teaching music literacy provide the path to outstanding music education, the pedagogy portion of this summer program further develops critical thinking: "a well-trained intelligence" is the second of Kodály's characteristics of a good musician. This part of the Kodály study left me with a pedagogical awareness that is highly practical and authentically "Kodály", but always thought-provoking and organic. In the pedagogy portion of Level II we are exposed to contemporary, global and philosophical teaching issues, wrestle with them together and extract meaningful solutions to take back to our teaching assignments.

Situating Kodály's approach to music education in 21<sup>st</sup> century Canada is a challenge. We consider this challenge within the definition of praxial teaching. First of all, we consider that teaching praxially is the idea that music making is *doing*: it is practice, a verb. Therefore, we focus our Kodály "way" of teaching music in a manner that is constructivist, the focus of learning occurs *in the student* rather than on teacher "instruction".

Furthermore, we carefully think about praxial teaching as "the moral and ethical element" (J.Stark, personal communication, July 2016) of music in our classrooms and choirs. Staying true to

Kodály, we study folk music in the mother tongue of a variety of cultures. We analyze our sample of international folk music and discover a variety of tools for teaching world music with Kodály inspired musicality as well as respectfully considering the unique cultural context of each song.

I left pedagogy class with a sense of the importance of the mission that we have as music educators to enrich our students with the wonders of music. I also took away practical new tools and perspectives to make music literacy happen in a musical and Kodály-based way but also with a stance that fosters respect for the diverse cultures that we meet in our Canadian classrooms.

Another of Kodály's characteristics of a good musician is "a well-trained hand", and one of the ways we do this is to finish our daily schedule by practicing conducting and ensemble singing. By the end of the day we are tired, but singing refreshes. We actively and joyfully participate in the art of music making. We practice a rich and engaging body of new warm ups, singing skills, rehearsal techniques and apt communication as a conductor. We explore efficient conducting techniques and carefully try to emulate the precisely coordinated and finely tuned conducting finesse of our instructor, Michael Zaugg, as we take turns, under his watch, conducting our class in beautiful repertoire. And finally we meet with the

Level I class at the end of the day to *sing* under a master conductor, to further observe and explore the gestures helpful to enhance choral works from the podium, and to relish in the fine music that has been chosen for our closing performance.

Then, at the closing performance, we proudly share what we have learned in this comprehensive course covering musicianship, pedagogy and conducting. To me, it seems that bonds with the other musicians and instructors crystallize. The expression of high quality music, the sharing of ideas, and the unity of a group connected in the pursuit of music study is too beautiful for words to express, and I am reminded of the last of Zoltan Kodály's characteristics of a good musician: "a well-trained heart."

"To remember in this moment of friendship, love and joy, That music made together will one day heal mankind." (*Harmonia Mundi*, 16C German Chorale English Text by Sean Deibler)

## REFERENCES

Sinor, J. (1997). The ideas of Kodály in America. *Music Educators Journal*, 83 (5), 37-41.



## Sight Singing School- An Online Sight Singing Solution

Sight Singing School is an online sight singing program, created by Mark O'Leary based on his 25 years experience teaching sight singing to members of Young Voices of Melbourne choir. The program moves in many small steps from simple 2 note melodies to diatonic, modal and simple chromatic melodies. It is not a theory program, but a practical and inexpensive Kodály based sight singing program which has been developed over many years and works for young and old! Sight Singing

School develops aural skills which are valuable for all musicians and music students – not just singers. You might ask your students to sign themselves up, take out a bulk subscription at more than 60% off, buy a licence to use Sight Singing School on an interactive whiteboard or data projector, or buy a set a books to use in rehearsals.

Launched in late 2012, Sight Singing School now has users in 26 countries.

Sign up at [www.sightsingingschool.com](http://www.sightsingingschool.com) or get the books at [www.markolearymusic.com](http://www.markolearymusic.com)

# Scholarship Winner:

## SUMMER 2016, KODÁLY LEVEL 2: A SUMMARY

BY ANGELA MCKEOWN NEMETCHEK

This past July (2016), I had the privilege of participating in the Kodaly Level 2 program offered at the University of Alberta. The Level 2 class consisted of twelve music educators representing the classrooms, private studios, and community organizations of Alberta, B.C., and even New Zealand.

Each day began with a combined warm up, of Level 1 and 2 participants, lead by Dr. Ardelle Ries. We then split into our levels for the morning musicianship sessions. Level 2 students were lead by Ardelle through the mazes of modes and dizzying dictation. Thanks to her calm and steady guidance we were able to make sense of it all by the end of week two!

Afternoons began with pedagogy lead by Jody Stark. What I really appreciated about these sessions were that Jody was able to both communicate her deep understanding of musical pedagogy while challenging us to authentically place it into our own teaching context. Our class discussions also touched on presenting music of different cultures. This was greatly enhanced by guest speaker Ms. Laurel Nikolai who led us through some activities from FNMI (First Nations Métis Inuit) cultures.

One notable difference to the program this year was the extended time dedicated to conducting and combined ensemble singing lead by Michael Zaugg. The conducting class was open to Level 2 students and Level 1 students with sufficient conducting background. These sessions were run in a master class format where each student was given some time at the podium while the rest of the class gleaned pearls of wisdom as choristers. During the ensemble sessions, conducted by Michael, he shared with us some of his goals and methods when shaping an ensemble.

One thread that seemed to resonate throughout our lunchtime and classroom discussions was our role as music teachers. A further aspect that we noted is that our role reaches far beyond the classroom as we teach music from other cultures. As we strive to bring about musical understanding, the music that we utilize for this task has potential to bring about understanding of people. This is an aspect of our calling that some may overlook but that we as music teachers must remember in our day in and day out of teaching and rehearsing. We are helping to shape how our students see the world and the people in it.

*"We must look forward to a time when all people in all lands are brought together through singing, and when there is a universal harmony."*

*-Zoltan Kodály*

# Canadian Composer Feature:

## MIGRATIONS

BY MARGARET KING

*Migrations* was commissioned by the organizing committee for *Singing the Circle*: the 23rd International Kodály Symposium & Festival. The parameters included: writing for a string quartet and children's choir using the idea of circle as a guide and incorporating Canadian content by using English and/or French and/or Indigenous language/text. *Migrations*, comprised of four sections and five pieces, is a glimpse into life's stages.

### **Infancy – Lullaby**

My intention was to introduce a sample of the rich Indigenous languages/cultures that exist across the vast nation of Canada. The primary body of text is *Lullaby of the Iroquois* by Emily Pauline Johnson. Expressions of 'I love you'/'You are loved by me' are sung in Cree, Inuktitut and Mohawk. I love learning about language and have enjoyed discovering the diversity of sounds expressed in a term of endearment made by a mother or father to their child.

Tonal Centre – D  
Tonality – D Dorian and D Aeolian  
Melody – Pentatonic  
Vocal Range – C4 – D5  
Meter – 4/4 (with occasional 2/4 bars)

The choir sings verse one in unison. Verse two features simple two part harmony. Terms of endearment are sung both as solos and as harmony. The string quartet plays a relatively repetitive chord structure, reflective of ebb and flow. When I discovered I was commissioned for this project, I was standing on the shore at Newcastle Island (Saysutshun), part of Snuneymuxw First Nation traditional territory, close to Nanaimo, B.C. I thought it would be fitting to include the concept of ebb and flow in the work!

To depict the idea of circle, the choir will sing this gentle piece surrounding the audience.

### **Childhood/Youth – *La Bastringue* and *Ah! Si mon moine voulait danser***

These arrangements of two French-Canadian folksongs are energetic and fun!

#### *La Bastringue*

Tonal Centre – D  
Tonality – D Major and D Mixolydian  
Meter – 2/4

*La Bastringue* is played by the string quartet while the singers do some dancing – in large circles and with partners. Violin I and Violin II alternate sharing the melody and playing harmony while Viola and Cello provide harmony throughout. Besides the actual dancing, the great tune, pizzicati and lively rhythm in accompaniment lines make this piece come to life.

#### *Ah! Si mon moine voulait danser*

Tonal Centre – G  
Tonality – G Major and G Mixolydian  
Vocal Range – Soprano: D4 – G5, Alto: B3 – D5  
Meter – 2/4

*Ah! Si mon moine voulait danser* begins directly after *La Bastringue*. The singers start in unison and progress to two parts with added descant. Violin I and II are often in conversation and have rollicking 16<sup>th</sup> passages that appear in the forms of a *La Bastringue*-type figure, arpeggios, chromatics and circular patterns. Viola and Cello provide harmony throughout. These lines are at times straightforward and at times syncopated. To ensure the six verses are vibrant, this piece also features spoon-playing, interjections of toe-tapping (for the string players) and clapping (for the singers) and plenty of dynamic contrasts. *Danser!*

### **Adulthood – *The Enchanted Traveller***

*We travelled empty-handed  
With hearts all fear above,*

*For we ate the bread of friendship,  
We drank the wine of love.*

The text for this piece is wonderfully vivid and lends itself to a lot of word painting. The poem *The Enchanted Traveller* is from 'Echoes from Vagabondia' by Bliss Carman. This poem expresses that life is full of richness so I endeavoured to create very rich chords in the choral parts. There is unison singing, but the majority of the work is in two parts through to seven parts.

Tonal Centre – D  
Tonality – D Mixolydian and C Major  
Melody – constructed using material from *Lullaby*  
Vocal Range – Soprano: D4 – A5, Alto: A3 – D5  
Meter – 6/8 (with occasional 7/8 bars)

I played with the idea of the circle by using the neighbouring chords of C Major and D Major throughout. These two chords comprise the first five tonics (with the exception of F #) in the circle of 5ths.

The tempo does move (there is still travelling yet to be done!) however as the text is reflective in nature it is not hurried. The Cello opens with an expressive solo. Following this, the quartet plays the C/D cluster chords with tremolo, after which a more defined pulse and harmonic structure is introduced. The latter is carried through the majority of the work.

A highlight of this piece is the fourth verse. It is a cappella and features unison up to seven part chords:

*We found no other wisdom,  
We found no other way,  
Than the gladness of the morning,  
The glory of the day.*

*“And when my voice is silent in death, my song  
will speak in your living heart.”*

*-Rabindranath Tagore*

What a beautiful thought to remember! Open your eyes, ears and hearts to the wonders around you. Live your life in a way that reflects this.

### **Old Age – My Song**

The word 'Canada' comes from the Huron-Iroquois word 'kanata', meaning 'village' or 'settlement'. As we live in a global village, I thought I would step outside of Canada so that I could include text by one of my favourite poets. Rabindranath Tagore's *My Song* is from his collection 'The Crescent Moon'.

Tonal Centre – A  
Tonality – A Major and A Mixolydian  
Vocal Range – Soprano: D4 – G5, Alto: D4 – D5  
Meter – 4/4 (with 3/4, 2/4 and 5/4 bars)

I wanted this piece to be simple and peaceful, tender and warm. I strove to accomplish this by writing sustained string lines and repetitive vocal lines and chord structure. Once again, the richness of the text provides opportunity for rich sounds. The choir sings in unison through to seven parts.

The idea of circle in this piece is about legacy. This is found in the text. Here is the opening line:

*This song of mine will wind its music around you, my  
child, like the fond arms of love.*

And the closing line (sung a cappella):

*And when my voice is silent in death, my song will  
speak in your living heart.*

It was an honour to write music to celebrate Zoltan Kodály's indelible mark on music education. I am really looking forward to the premiere of *Migrations* in Camrose, Alberta in August!

# Musician's Musings:

## KODÁLY IN THE INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC ROOM

BY DR. EILA PETERSON

How can we best use what we know about the philosophy, sequencing, and musicality of Kodály-oriented teaching to more successfully conduct instrumental music classes within the context of Canadian schools? There have been attempts, both in the States and in Canada, to write, or at least propose beginner methods for instrumental music classes using the basic tools familiar to Kodály-based general music classes.<sup>[1]</sup> This is not one of those. Nor is it an attempt to transpose, wholesale, the approach to instrumental music teaching used in Hungary with students who have grown up with a solid Kodály-based general music program in their younger years.<sup>[2]</sup> This is a set of musings about how what we already do in Canadian schools might be adapted to take advantage of some ideas from Kodály practice. I hope it will serve as a springboard for other ideas, and promote discussion within the music education community. I would encourage readers to note ideas and questions that arise as a result of these musings, and write to the editor of *Alla Breve* with comments or queries that could be printed either in the form of a "letters to the editor" column, or some other appropriate format.

Ideally, our students would be able to focus on the mechanics of their instruments, on the physical requirements of producing tone with an appropriate timbre and in tune, and then apply that to an already developed set of reading skills. In other words, in the best of all possible worlds our instrumental classes would be populated with students who already read music vocally, but even if our "feeder school" was to enjoy a successful Kodály program, the mobility of our society always ensures that many of our students come from other schools, districts, or even provinces, and countries. Ideally, we could expect our instrumental students to learn to sing their lines, internalizing the style and phrasing of the music before they play, but the amount of teaching time that would be required to bring our less-enthusiastic singers to that stage is prohibitive when our schedules are constantly suffering cutbacks due to a myriad of

administrative reasons. We live in a less-than-ideal world, but frankly, we may not want to give up the things we gain by having a diverse, inclusive, mobile society, and the plethora of options and activities available to our schools that makes scheduling so difficult.

So, let's begin by investigating some Kodály-inspired strategies that might be implemented in our instrumental classes as they currently are. Let's set aside, for now, the "tools" (solfa/handsigns/rhythm syllables) and focus on more foundational concepts.

At the very beginning stages of Kodály-inspired music teaching we are less concerned with literacy than with developing musicality, a love of music, and a sense of how music moves and how it moves us. Even the earliest exposure to nursery songs and rhymes leads us to more comfortably use our voices expressively, to recognize pattern/repetition (form) and tension/expectation vs. resolution (affect), to feel beat and tempo and contour (elements of pitch and rhythm). An instrumental class could do worse than develop awareness of these things before (and while) plunging into the mechanics of instrument assembly, holding position, breathing, and embouchure. Can you imagine a class keeping a beat pattern physically (feet & hands) while chanting (rapping?) something that they need to internalize in terms of their instrument setup routine in the classroom?<sup>[3]</sup> Or something that they should have running through their minds to avoid constant reminders from you to "sit tall, feet flat on the floor, set embouchure & fingers - then breathe in tempo - then play". Or even the steps to assemble a clarinet safely (if the whole class knows it, they can catch and correct each other, avoiding costly repairs). There is so much emphasis on discovery learning in today's classrooms that memorization techniques are often overlooked, and throughout the ages rhyme, rhythm and music have been essential memory tools. In "rapping" the steps of a routine, they are

memorizing the material while keeping a steady beat and developing the coordination to perform a rhythmic ostinato, all of which will serve them later.

Both Kodály and Suzuki music education programs focus on the term “mother-tongue”, but in different ways. From a Kodály perspective, it refers to learning to identify the pitch and rhythm patterns that are most commonly found in the familiar language experience of the students. From a Suzuki perspective, it refers to learning to play an instrument as organically as learning your first language - through imitation and repetition, before a focus on its grammatical or literacy aspects. <sup>[4]</sup> Perhaps a combination of these two perspectives could work in an instrumental class. Can you imagine saying, then clapping the natural rhythm of a short phrase of words, and then tonguing it with clear articulation on your instrument at whatever stage of sound production you may have attained? (mouthpiece only, full instrument on whatever note is most comfortable, everybody on the same note at the same time, or finally an improvised “tune” on a limited set of pitches which the class could then imitate). Focus on the sound, the clarity of articulation, and the tone, without worrying simultaneously about reading rhythm or matching lines and spaces to note names and fingerings.

In preparation for reading within a Kodály context, much music-making is done, learning songs and singing games by rote. Higher-lower is demonstrated by physically moving up and down while singing and hearing different pitches. An instrumental class could certainly benefit from time spent early on with listening activities interspersed with sound production activities, and then for students to listen to each others’ sounds, especially because many instruments are not built to physically reinforce the concept of higher and lower in pitch. Can you imagine a band teacher demonstrating good tone and phrasing while students use their hands to show the higher-lower contour of the pitches? Can you imagine students who have learned even two notes being able to play (improvise) short phrases that other students can listen to and show which sounds are higher and lower? This could be done before even identifying the names and staff locations of the first two notes they learn to play more specifically than just “our first note” and “our second note”. Of course students can explore their instruments enough to discover more notes, but I would recommend that “our first note to play together” in band class be a Concert D. It puts the flutes on a pitch that cannot slip to the wrong octave, the clarinets on a pitch that allows them some stability holding the instrument with minimal chance for leaking



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fingers on holes, the alto saxes on a stable mid-range note, the trumpets on a note less likely to be mispitched. It's an accessible starting note for the majority of students, although granted that the horns are at the lower end of their beginning range, and the trombones are fishing for 4th position. If "our second note" is a Concert F a 3rd above the first note, then that adds stability for the trombones while giving everyone the possibility of a so-mi combination that can be used to play a number of "little kids' songs" by rote. And that particular so-mi combination (F-D) will eventually be seen on lines rather than spaces for *everyone* except the tubas, so they can be shown with a 2-line staff and labelled, and sung, and signed, so-mi, leaving the full staff and letter names for later. If the next 2 notes learned are Concert Eb and C, then the same so-mi songs and improvisation exercises can be played "in a lower place" on the spaces of a 3-line staff. At that point, with the lower so-mi combination (Eb-C) they already have available to them a "la" which can be added to play 3-note songs, and to show that when "so" and "mi" are on spaces, then "la" is on a line. Shortly thereafter, the full staff could be introduced, showing that because of the ranges of the instruments, it's easier to show some people's spaces higher on the staff than others, and in order to know *which* of the spaces you're on, you need more specific names than just "so" or "mi". I have yet to see a band method book that approaches reading quite this way, but I can imagine it being worth a try.

These are just a few ideas for starting band classes with Kodály-inspired strategies. Using these as a springboard, can you imagine a sequence based on foundational, philosophical ideas rather than simply "how can we use solfa, hand signs, and rhythm syllables in band classes?" Sure, there are

plenty of ways that those tools may be useful in instrumental classes, but unless the sequence of instruction and the repertoire chosen are appropriate, it might not be fair to call it a Kodály-inspired program.

[1] For one analysis and comparison of different Kodály-based band "methods" see Lois M.R. Buttery's 1971 MA thesis from UBC. It is available for download at: [summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/7951/b16672240.pdf](http://summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/7951/b16672240.pdf) Another paper (Sherry Black, U of Richmond, 1982) exploring these ideas can be found at: <http://scholarship.richmond.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1440&context=honors-theses>

[2] For a description of Hungary's approach, see: [https://www.midwestclinic.org/user\\_files\\_1/pdfs/clinicianmaterials/2004/jozsef\\_csikota.pdf](https://www.midwestclinic.org/user_files_1/pdfs/clinicianmaterials/2004/jozsef_csikota.pdf)

[3] Try to get some ideas from a youtube video on rapping for beginners, for example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6-s8bXi47c> Steps would include tapping a catchy ostinato, keeping it going while talking, determining how many beats to use for each phrase (4), taking turns saying something that length (either planned or improvised), creating a chant that conveys the info you want them to remember about their setup routine.

[4] Note that neither of these perceptions of mother-tongue in music is related to multiculturalism or promoting a welcoming atmosphere for ethnically diverse student populations. That is a totally different, however laudable, goal, and to confuse the issue of music education geared toward child development with the issue of "music as a universal language" is counter-productive.

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## Announcement:

The Kodály Society of Canada congratulates former board member Marlene Nolet and her husband Peter Weal on the safe arrival of their daughter Veronica June born on June 9, 2017.



# U for Ukulele:

## A CLASSROOM METHOD FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

BY WARREN DOBSON

Online article originally published September 2004 available at <http://ssrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/wdobson/article.html>, used with permission.

This method attempts to address two aims:

1. To provide a resource for elementary music educators on teaching ukulele to young (6-8 years) children.
2. To provide a web-based learning resource for students and parents that will assist with daily practice at home.

In this article, I invite my fellow music teachers to consider the application of Kodály vocal pedagogy to instrumental teaching, in particular, instruction for the classroom ukulele. Since 1990, I have been teaching the ukulele to children in the second grade (seven and eight year-olds) in preparation for the study of classical guitar. I direct a guitar ensemble for older students and I wanted a way of introducing younger children to playing guitar. The ukulele was a natural choice. Initially I experimented with a couple of different method books, but I was dissatisfied with the results I obtained with young children. It was only after I started writing out familiar songs in solfa that the students really started to learn. Here was something they could relate to and build their knowledge on! I wrote out dozens of nursery rhymes and musical games, illustrating each sheet with a small sketch, and photocopying them for my students. It wasn't long before people started to notice my young students performing in concerts and music festivals. Some of my colleagues inquired about what I was doing to get such young children to play so well.

Soon I was sharing my solfa ukulele method with other teachers, and they were getting results too. In October 2001, I was invited to attend the Nova Scotia Learning Interchange Design Studio, where I did the preliminary work for publishing this method on the Internet as a free resource to public educators. In May 2003, I completed the work as

my Masters Degree in Education (Learning and Technology) project at Acadia University.

This method evolved as a natural extension of my Kodály training in vocal music education at the University of Western Ontario, and my experience as a teacher of classical guitar. My influences in developing it have been my mentor and classical guitar teacher, the late Tibor Puskas and, although I have never met them, J. Chalmers Doane, the dean of ukulele teachers, and John Barron, author of *Ride With Me - A Journey from Unison to Part-Singing* (1993). Doane's slim volume *The Teacher's Guide to Classroom Ukulele* (1977) has impressed me greatly with its wealth of suggestions on everything from classroom setup to practical psychology.

### The Kodály Method

The Hungarian composer, Zoltan Kodály (1882-1967) believed that training the voice using relative solfa was the best way to obtain a secure musical footing. He cherished the folk songs and styles of his culture and developed his ideas for early childhood education around them. In particular, the emphasis on pentatonic scales was thought to make in-tune singing easier to achieve. He believed in using only music of the highest quality in providing musical experiences for all students. According to Kodály, singing, dancing and playing musical games in early childhood develops a sense of inner hearing that must be established before any work with notation commences. He helped to create a child-centered learning sequence that develops musical independence through literacy. Today, inspired by the prodigious accomplishments of educators in Hungary, Kodály's philosophy of music education has been embraced in many countries around the world (Sinor, 1997).

### Applying the Kodály Method to Ukulele Instruction

Howard (1996) says the incorporation of Kodály

vocal pedagogy into instrumental teaching, especially string teaching, can have numerous benefits. For students, it promises sound musicianship; for teachers, it offers creativity and flexibility. It is important to remember that the children should first learn to SING the songs accurately. This is generally part of their early music education and by the age of seven or eight, most children are familiar with The Counting Song, Lucy Locket, Rain, Rain Go Away, and many other nursery rhymes. Students should also be familiar with the hand signs, solfa syllable names, and the rhythm names (ta, ti-ti, etc.) (Richards, 1966).

In the beginning, we teach the children to play single notes - not chords (see guitar pedagogy below)! We teach them to play and sing the open strings first, and then melodies that the children have already learned to sing in their first two years of general music. As the students play and sing they will improve their tone and phrasing and develop inner hearing. Dalby (1999) describes Edwin E. Gordon's music learning theory by saying, "instrumentalists must learn to sing through their instruments in order to play musically."

The melodies progress from two notes (**so - mi**) to three notes (**so - mi - la**) to eventually encompass the entire range of the instrument in first position. Although the method is based on a "movable Do" system (Levine, 1997), we must not confuse the students at the outset. To establish the technique and to get them playing comfortably and confidently, for the first twenty-four lessons, we sing and play songs that use the notes of the D major scale. These notes were chosen for two reasons:

1. The key of D provides a comfortable register for the child's developing singing voice.
2. The key of D is the "natural" key of the instrument based on its tuning (A D F# B). This makes the notes of the D major scale lie more comfortably under the fingers and takes maximum advantage of the open strings.

Conventional notation is used, wherein the letters (**d r m f s l t**) refer to the solfa syllables (**do re mi fa so la ti**). A note lower than **do** is indicated by an uppercase letter and subscript, (examples: **S, L, T,**) and a note higher than **ti** is shown by a superscript ' (examples: **d' r' m'**). This allows us to notate the correct register using only seven letters. The open strings of the soprano ukulele are tuned to the standard "low A" tuning:

### The Range of the Soprano Ukulele in First Position



Fig. 1

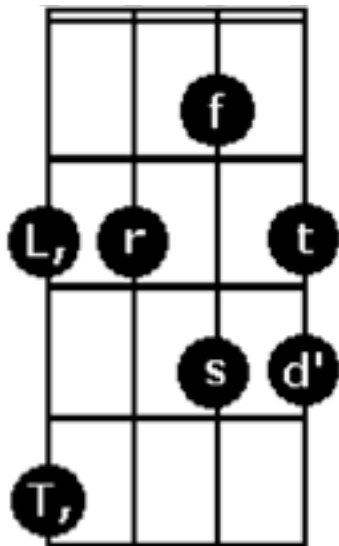


Fig. 2

**A D F# B** and the children are taught to sing them as: **so do mi la**. Figure 1 shows the range of notes found in first position of the ukulele as they appear on the staff.

Figure 2 shows the range of notes found in first position of the ukulele as they appear on the fret board. Open strings are shown as white circles and fretted notes as black circles.

### Applying Principles of Classical Guitar Pedagogy to Ukulele Instruction

First teach the children how to hold the ukulele with both hands for safety - the sound of a ukulele bouncing off the floor is not a pretty thing. Next teach them how to play the open strings using the thumb of the right hand. The right hand (RH) thumb should rest on the string with RH fingers

gently curled as if gripping an imaginary bicycle handlebar. **Always sing what you play**, and insist that the students do so as well. Play 'follow-the leader' or 'echo-play' until they can imitate you perfectly and instantly as you play and sing the open strings. Do this for a few minutes at the start of every lesson, making your open string melodies progressively longer and more difficult. Let the kids take turns being the leader - they love to show what they can do.

The ukulele takes **TWO** hands to play. In this way it is like a piano - both right-handed and left-handed people play it. No one ever suggests we string a piano backwards for left-handed players, nor should you let your students try to hold the ukulele backwards. The more difficult work is done by the

left hand - so left-handed students may actually have an advantage over their classmates (Doane, 1977, p. 43).

My early efforts as a self-taught guitarist and my later training under the Hungarian classical guitarist, Tibor Puskas, have made me aware of some pitfalls to avoid. In my view, the teaching of chords to beginners is a poor practice - it invariably leads to dysfunctional tension of the left hand. The coordination of the left hand must be established slowly and in a logical sequence to ensure a relaxed technique. For this reason, the ukulele teacher should begin the development of left hand technique by teaching single notes - not chords. Please note, this is the opposite of what you will find suggested in most popular methods, and it is

## Sample Lesson

**Tommy Tiddlemouse** Traditional

Ukulele

Lit - tle Tom - my Tid - dle - mouse lived in a lit - tle house.  
Some - one's knock - ing, me, oh my! Some - one's cal - ling: "Who am I?"

Lesson Nine	Notes: s m l	Song: Little Tommy Tiddlemouse
	1. Clap and say the time names: ti-ti ti-ti ti-ti ta...	
	2. Say the Solfa syllables in time: so-so so-la so-so mi...	
	3. Sing the Solfa names in time: so-so so-la so-so mi...	
	4. Sing and play the notes on the ukulele: s s l s s m...	
	5. Sing the words and play the notes on the ukulele: "Little Tommy..."	

## Tips on Technique:

- This song is played on two strings - the **(mi)** string and the **(la)** string. Use the right hand thumb to play the strings.
- The note **(so)** is created by pressing the **(mi)** string down to contact the third fret. Learn to press just hard enough to make a clear sound.
- Encourage the students to play the note "so" with the ring finger of the left hand. Use the tip (not the pad) of the finger and place it on the **(mi)** string just behind the third fret.
- This is a favourite guessing game song. One child is chosen to be Tommy who sits with his back to the class. All the children sing and play the song while the instructor chooses one child to stand behind Tommy. At the appropriate time, the child taps on his ukulele, then plays and sings (solo) "Who am I?" Tommy gets one chance to try and guess the mystery child's identity. If he guesses correctly, he gets another turn; if he guesses wrongly, the mystery child takes a turn. Children love this game, but some will try to fool Tommy by disguising their voices. Insist that they always use their best singing voices.

one of the keys to success with ukulele or guitar.

## Instruments, Classroom Setup, Tuning and other Tips

Students must have their own ukulele, whether provided on loan from the school or purchased by the parents. It is not the time spent in class that brings the ability to play, it is the time spent practicing at home. Two thirty-minute classes per week are ideal for this age group.

Have an open seating arrangement so that you can freely walk among the players. Seat two students at each music stand. Teach them to put their cases under their chairs - there should be no clutter in the traffic aisles of the floor.

You must tune the instruments for them initially. If the instruments are adjusted properly and handled with care, they will stay in tune for days and even weeks. Choose a helper - tune the helper's ukulele first at the piano. Then have the helper walk with you, playing the open strings on his/her ukulele, as you move throughout the room, tuning each student's ukulele in turn. 10 - 15 seconds per student is all it takes.

In a half hour class of twenty students it should take no more than 5 minutes to tune up when no repair or maintenance is required. Keep spare instruments tuned and ready-to-play so that you can trade them with the students whose ukuleles need adjustments. Do all adjustments after class time - don't keep them waiting while you change somebody's string! Try not to talk too much - 10 % instruction time and 90 % playing time is what the kids want and need. Read J. Chalmers Doane's book (1977)!

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U for Ukulele

# *From the Archives:*

## REMEMBERING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE KODÁLY INSTITUTE OF CANADA

BY MAE DALY

*Originally published in Alla Breve, June 2012*

I was a “late comer” to Kodály-inspired music education in Canada as compared with Ann Osborn, Richard Johnston and others. In Ottawa, in 1971, meeting with some music teachers from all over Canada, I observed that we in Canada were not aware of the work each of our colleagues was doing in music teaching. It seemed that in several centres, people were struggling on their own, to try to develop and teach according to the Kodály concept. For instance, there were the Highets in Nanaimo, Connie Foss More in Victoria, John Alfred Young in Vancouver, Richard Johnston in Calgary, Pierre Perron in Montreal, Ann Osborn in Toronto, Kaye Dimock (and others in Nova Scotia and in Ontario).

I had only begun to know about the Kodály concept in summer classes in Toronto with Ilona Bartalus. It was, as Ann Osborn says, a life changing experience which I call the “Divine Aha” that struck me, as it did the other teachers in the course. We became convinced that this was the only way to approach music from the beginning in the earliest years. At the time, music in school was considered a ‘frill’, instruments were pushed into dark closets and left to rust, un-played and neglected. Teaching music seemed to be the teacher playing loudly on the piano and children trying to find the melody.

In the second summer with Ilona, she said I should go to Bridgeport, CT where Kodály's pupils and co-workers would be teaching. She thought that with a double ARCT in singing and a BA in Music and French, I should be doing quality work with people like Erzsébet Szönyi, Márta Nemesszegy, László Vikár, Katalin Forrai, Klára Kokas and others. The experience was fantastic!

By 1971, I had contacted several Canadian teachers who were using versions of the Kodály concept, and

invited Gordon Kushner of the Royal Conservatory of Toronto to a meeting in Ottawa. The decision was made that the capital city of Canada would be the centre to start the Kodály Institute of Canada - KIC. At that time, the Hungarian government was trying to establish closer ties with Canada and this seemed the ideal place and time to do so, especially through cultural activities.

By 1972 the KIC had an Executive with President Gordon Kushner, Vice-President Kenneth Bray, and Secretary Kay Dimock (Pottie). I was named Executive Director, and I remained in that position until I resigned in 1981. Those ten years were very important to me. I worked very hard to convince Canadian and Hungarian authorities of the importance of such an institute. In 1982 there was an official announcement from the International Kodály Society stating that “The Kodály Institute of Canada will have the right to use the additional title ‘The Official Society of Canada’”. The Board sends its best wishes to the Kodály Institute of Canada for the Centenary Year (of Kodály's birth) and looks forward with great confidence to a future of mutual growth and development.”

In the summer of 1972 I got permission from the Carleton Separate School Board (Ottawa) to go with two other teachers to the summer school in Kecskemét taught by Márta Nemesszeghy. That helped very much as I was trying to use the Kodály method of teaching in Ottawa, in the twenty-five schools for which I was responsible as Music Consultant. I taught, as well as I knew how, first the teachers and also in some classrooms. I arranged with the School Board to invite Klára Kokas to give a workshop to which anyone in the community was invited. It was very successful and led to the Board inviting Gábor and Beatrix Finta from Hungary, to teach in our schools as well as in Ottawa University for two years (1972-3). In 1973, I announced the formation of the Kodály Institute of Canada at

the First International Kodály Symposium at Holy Names College in Oakland, CA. It was there that I met Sister Mary Alice Hein (who had studied in Hungary), Denise Bacon of Boston's Kodály Musical Training Institute Inc. and Lois Choksy, who was still in the USA. In fact we shared a room with a stray cat!

Sitting in the airport after the symposium Sister Mary Alice, Denise, and I looked at each other and Sister said, "Do you realize that we three women started Kodály Institutes in all of North America?" It was indeed something to think about.

I spent many hours formulating the necessary means of establishing the The Kodály Institute of Canada (KIC) as a non-profit, charitable organization - not as easy a task as it might appear. The KIC received Letters Patent from Consumer and Corporate Affairs in 1973. We invited John Whitehead, calligrapher, to design and draw the KIC logo. (Later, John was to design and complete the Canadian Constitution that the Queen presented to the people of Canada.)

I had no experience in this sort of thing, but with help from many people in government and business, (including the Canada Council, M. Tanguay of External Affairs, and George Ullmann of Boosey & Hawkes), and lots of time and effort, the dream became a reality. In addition to bringing up a family of six children and teaching, this was not the easiest thing to do, but with a helpful husband I managed.

Although the Minutes of the Kodály Institute show that I was supposed to get a salary of \$20,000 a year, I never received any remuneration. I want to stress that I always worked for no payment, and all my travelling was paid for by me. During this time, I met Brian Morrow, an agent for KLM and later SAS airlines, who took an interest in the Institute and the work I was trying to do. He arranged every trip I took to Hungary, taking music teachers from universities and schools to observe music teaching in Hungary.

He always insisted that I make three trips - one to make arrangements with Hungarian teachers who were willing to let us observe, one with the Canadian teachers and principals and a third, for me to go to Hungary to do an evaluation of these trips.

The Third International Symposium was held at

Acadia University in 1977 in Wolfville, N.S. for which I left the School Board to spend an entire year preparing for the Symposium. I arranged to have four Hungarian teachers (for the price of three) do a three-week summer course for the university, and I also arranged where everyone would be housed including Mrs. Sarolta Kodály. I invited Antol Dorati of the Detroit Symphony, who wrote that he was sorry he could not come because of a concert series. In my 'spare' time I did the income tax papers for the Dean of the Music department!

Earlier I had applied for a scholarship to go to the Kodály Institute in Kecskemét. Even though we were out of the age range for this, John Young and I applied and were interviewed for the scholarship. When I met with the adjudicators in Montreal, I coined the phrase, "Divine Aha", to describe what the Kodály concept meant to me. The scholarship allowed for the airfare to Hungary and back to Canada. Brian Morrow arranged for two other trips so I could visit my family at holiday times.

A few years earlier, a trip to western Canada had convinced me that the KIC should take a leadership role in Music Education in Canada. I quote from a letter I wrote after visiting Edmonton.

"At the University of Alberta in Edmonton I met with Drs. Ware and Stevens of the Education faculty. They told me that they were waiting for the KIC to show leadership and direction. They said there should be some guidelines regarding Kodály Music in Canada, and that we should provide these. They also said they wanted a course outline of summer courses given in the various universities. They wanted this first of all, because they did not know what they were offering, and secondly, they did not know how to evaluate students who came there after having taken a course or two elsewhere. They felt it was up to us to come out with this immediately. They also said they would like to be part of an advisory Board, with one of them acting as their representative and receiving ideas from us to discuss and think about and comment upon, in order that we really were in touch with the reality of the universities. They would want one such representation from other bodies, such as School Boards. They felt if Ottawa University would take an active lead in promoting the idea of credits by universities, theirs would be easy to convince at a later date, and looked forward to the yearlong teacher training.... Several Edmonton Public School Board Superintendents were in agreement that they would like to have representation on an advisory

board, and they felt that Music should be better structured and have a serious place in the curriculum.... Alberta College and the Separate School Board representatives agreed with the university professors".... In fact the Superintendent of the Edmonton Separate School Board offered to pay for printing NOTES - the name of the KIC publication.

Hungarian and Canadian Ambassadors displayed even more enthusiasm than I have written here. In fact, I became good friends with them and even taught the son of our ambassador to Hungary. But that's another story.

To complete the story of the beginning of KIC, I am writing a book, of which this is a summary. The book will be much more extensive, with more details. I hope to complete it this summer.

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## *In Memoriam:*



Mae Daly, Canadian Kodály Pioneer

A memory from Connie Foss More

*"Mae and I worked together during the early years of what was then called the Kodaly Institute of Canada (her "brainchild"), before our organization became the Kodaly Society of Canada. She & I were among the invited Canadian representatives at the 1973 international symposium in Oakland California at which both the IKS and OAKE were formed. Our chief subsequent connection was during the time I was Editor of KIC "Notes". She was a steadfast and energetic promoter of Kodaly's ideas in Canada, with far-reaching results.*

*The KSC has a copy of her 2013 KIC memoirs, The Divine "Ah-ha", stored in the Kodaly Archives at the University of Calgary."*

A Memory from Dr. Lois Choksy:

*"I met Mae Daly at the first International Kodály Symposium at Holy Names College in 1973. We were room-mates. We had long discussions about the complexity of bringing Kodály's ideas to North American teachers. At that time Mae was in the midst of organizing the Kodály Institute of Canada which later became the Kodály Society of Canada. She was one of pioneers in the Kodály method in Canada."*

A Memory from Dr. Eila Peterson:

*"I met Mae Daly at the ISME conference in London, Ontario, in the summer of 1978. There was a large contingent of KSC (then called KIC) and IKS members at that conference, including Dr. Laszlo Vikar, from whom I had just finished taking a summer course, and who we have now also recently lost.*

*That summer, Mae talked me into travelling to Hungary in 1979 to observe classes at all levels in Budapest.*

*She made all the arrangements, set up flights and a 2-week stay at an Ibusz (bed & breakfast apartment stay), and set up school visits. Mae coordinated her own travel so she could take me around to meet people. It was a real eye-opener. A highlight I will never forget was spending an evening with Mae and a couple of other people at the home of Laszlo Vikar and Katalin Forrai, singing Bach chorales and madrigals.*

*Mae was helpful, and generous, and did a lot to get things moving in the early days of the spread of Kodaly in Canada."*

# *In Memoriam:*

Dr. László Vikár  
(June 8, 1929 - May 12, 2017)



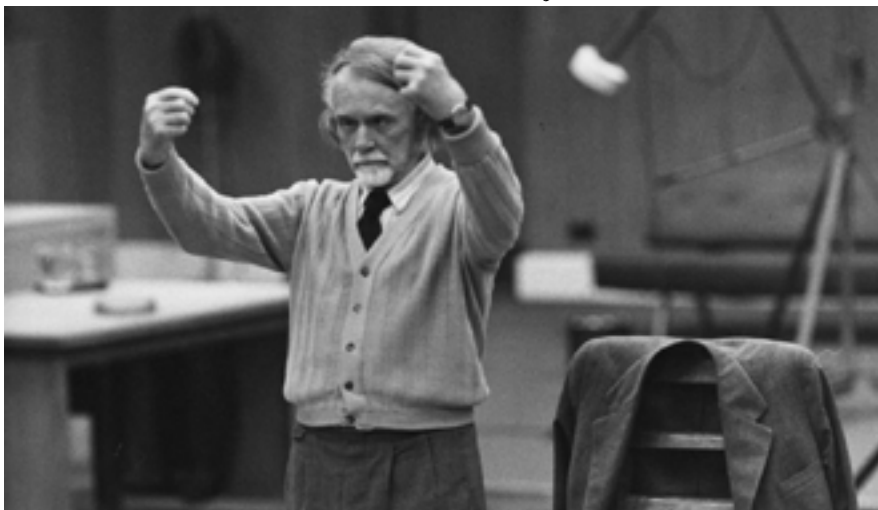
It is with sadness that we share news of the passing of Dr. László Vikár in Budapest, Hungary. Dr. Vikár studied ethnomusicology with Kodály, and became one of Kodály's close colleagues and assistant in the Folk Music Division of the Institute of Musicology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He also taught musicology at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music. Dr. Vikár served on the IKS Board as Vice President for 16 years and was active on the board of the Hungarian Kodály Society.

Canadians remember him as a faculty member of the University of Calgary summer Kodály program from 1985 - 1999, where he lectured on folk music. His students listened enthralled as he told stories of his work with Kodály and shared field recordings he collected. Dr. Vikár was predeceased by his wife, early childhood music pioneer, Katalin Forrai, in 2004.

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*"Real art is one of the most powerful forces in the rise of mankind, and he who renders it accessible to as many people as possible is a benefactor of humanity."*

*- Zoltan Kodály*





# From Singing to Playing:

## SHARING IDEAS ON TEACHING VIOLIN FROM A KODÁLY-BASED PERSPECTIVE

BY JO YAWNEY

When I was asked to submit an article for *Alla Breve* on teaching violin from a Kodály perspective, I started writing madly, wanting to share all I had learned over many years of teaching both Kodály classes and beginning violin. Before I knew it I had amassed over 40 pages – far too much! As I really wanted to provide practical and concrete information, I found it hard to edit that many pages. So I decided to write a synopsis in *Alla Breve* and to offer the whole “treatise” online at my website [www.tunetravels.net](http://www.tunetravels.net). It will be available there for download. As over the years I have published the teaching materials I used, I will quote them here. They form only a small part of the vast amount of resource material available published by many authors.

### Introduction

I was fortunate to have access to training in three internationally recognized methods of childhood education: Montessori, Kodály and Suzuki. Finding common pedagogical ground among these three greatly respected educators was not hard. Basic tenants of Kodály-based music education are shared with the Suzuki Talent Education Program and the Montessori Method of Childhood Education. All three educational innovators, at virtually the same time in history, came to similar conclusions regarding an organic way of creating a nurturing and success-based environment for learning, founded on the natural development of a child. For the purpose of this article I will not include Maria Montessori’s contribution, although I feel it is considerable.

I will outline the basic tenets of the Kodály Method, how Kodály-based songs can be used to teach violin and how knowledge of Kodály concepts can enhance and compliment a Suzuki beginning violin program.

### Music Education- Kodály & Suzuki

Kodály and Suzuki shared the following thoughts

on music education:

- Music is a natural expression, accessible to all human beings.
- Music education is best begun at an early age.
- Students learn through carefully chosen songs and games, which progressively build musical knowledge and self-confidence. Thus learning = fun! (Parents often comment, “When did he/she learn that?”)
- Students regularly perform for each other, in group classes and for parents in concerts. This is essential in developing confidence (in life as well as in music!).
- Repetition, refining and review are key factors in establishing a secure music foundation.
- *Most important is adherence to a sequential learning program.*

### Kodály’s Sequential Program

*The Musical Progression (Prepare-Present-Practice) as applied to teaching beginning violin.*

#### Prepare – students sing and play

- **Hearing:** listen to a song or watch a game.
- **Singing and playing:** learn the song or game by rote.
- **Internalizing:** Sing and play the song many times, learning the main concepts (beat, rhythm, solfa, technical issues etc.) and using these concepts in related songs and games for reinforcement. Use lots of rhythmic and melodic “echoes”. Much time should be spent internalizing. The concept (such as a rhythmic pattern or solfa or music on the staff) is still not shown to the students.

#### Present – students read and recognize

- Recognize and name the concepts one at a time (rhythms, solfa etc.), in the song when written on the board or worksheets. Observe the music in detail for visual study of rhythmic and melodic patterns, notes on the staff, clefs, time and key signatures, dynamics and tempo markings.

### Practice – students write and create

- Write a known song on board or worksheet.
- Improvise or compose a song based on the concept learned.

Ideally before beginning study of the violin, students should be fully conversant in rhythm syllables, solfa hand signs, and syllables used in a Kodály-inspired music program. These will form the foundation upon which a student's musical knowledge will develop.

### Music Building Blocks Taught Sequentially

When adopting a Kodály-based approach to teaching beginning violin using a sequential learning program, a teacher is advised to recognize the progressive nature of the music building blocks and, as much as possible, introduce musical concepts in the following order (in a North American English-speaking culture):

- 1. Beat:** begin with 2/4, then 4/4, then 3/4, then 6/8. Later introduce time signatures.
- 2. Rhythm:** teaching order – *ta; ti-ti; sh; tika-tika; to-o; ti-tika; tika-ti* and *tri-o-la*.
- 3. Solfa:** teaching order – *sm; slm; lsm; mrd; drmsl; lsmrd; low s-d;* (for violin *d r m* may be taught first thus putting fingers on the strings in consecutive order). Students should recognize solfa patterns when played by the teacher, play them, and learn to recognize them from hand signs and flash cards, eventually recognizing them when written on 3, then 5 line staff, and when changing *d*.
- 4. Notes on the Staff:** gradually introduce the notes in treble clef on the staff and ledger lines and

relate them to the violin fingerboard.

**5. Form and Phrasing:** rhythmic and melodic patterns studied aurally and then visually.

**6. Dynamics and Tempo:** practise with known songs.

### My Teaching Experience and Examples

I realized long ago the benefit of having a repertoire of Kodály-based songs available for my violin students. Thus when they begin to study the violin, music skills such as rhythm comprehension, ability to memorize, sense of pitch, development of inner hearing, understanding of form, dynamics and tempo are already developing before adding the challenges of an instrument. Also the transition from rote to reading music can be made much smoother as the students are very familiar with the songs they are learning to read and play.

Using Kodály principles for teaching beginning violin, I have taught my students how to recognise and play the rhythm syllables, to sing and play from solfa hand signs and recognize solfa patterns on the music staff, to play scales from the solfa modulator and to find notes using solfa on the violin fingerboard.

In my resource book *All Around The Fingerboard* I have used many Kodály-inspired songs, as they readily lend themselves to introducing such concepts as rhythmic and melodic patterns, inner hearing, pitch recognition, bowing techniques (staccato, string crossings etc.), study of intervals (5ths, 8ves etc) and scales. Students always sing the songs first, reinforcing their inner hearing and

The diagram consists of six boxes arranged in two rows of three. The first box shows six hand signs for rhythm syllables, numbered 7 through 12. The second and third boxes show rhythmic patterns (5 and 6) and solfa patterns (7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) on a 5-line staff. The fourth box shows a scale of notes (1-4) on a 5-line staff.

*All Around the Fingerboard p.11, p.51, p.17*

Fig. 1

music memory. There are work sheets and solfa/ rhythm puzzles.

The first few pages of the book have rhythm for bowing and left hand exercises to encourage smooth finger movements (Fig. 1)

After students can sing the song, recognize the rhythms and solfa patterns and use the hand signs, a teacher can use a song for teaching a specific violin technique. Songs included in the book useful for:

*Slur:* Doggie, Great Big House, Charlie over the Ocean

*Fast slurs (down-down, up-up):* Itsy Bitsy Spider, Vive la Canadienne, Ah! Si Mon Moine Voulai Danser

*Retakes:* Hot Cross Buns, Tideo

*Changing d :* Hot Cross Buns, See Saw, Lucy Locket, Dinah, Mouse Mousie etc.

*Using 4<sup>th</sup> finger :* Bounce High, Lucy Locket, Doggie

*Fast bows :* Dinah, Song of the Clocks

*Staccato :* Great Big House, Tick Tock, Cut the Cake, Cobbler etc.

*Détaché & legato bowing:* Rocky Mountain, Who's That

*Legato bowing:* Rocky Mountain, Land of the Silver Birch

*Anacrusis:* A Sailor went to Sea, Itsy Bitsy Spider

*Long bows:* Who's That?

*Variety of bowings:* Vive la Canadienne

The whole article introduces a number of Kodály-based songs, outlining how to use them for violin technique.

Here is an example of how the song Dinah can be used related to the violin:

### DINAH\*

*ta, ti-ti, tika-tika; d r m s (d m s arpeggio)*

1. Each phrase begins with tika-tika, a good bowing exercise.

2. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> phrases end s-m s-m which in the keys of D and A major involves quick 2<sup>nd</sup> finger and string crossings; if played in G major (*d*=3<sup>rd</sup> finger) the quick finger pattern 3- 1-3 can be reinforced. (Written in G major to facilitate singing).

3. Bars 1-2 and 5-6 *d m s* arpeggio, experiment with different *d*

4. A phrase game: have 4 students play one phrase each in the right order.

5. The song ends, as so many do, with *m r d* - experiment with different *d*

The image shows a page from a music book titled 'Dinah'. At the top left, there is a blue box containing the text 'FORM - RHYTHM A A A A - MELODY'. To the right of this box is the title 'Dinah' and a small drawing of a violin bow. Below the title, the text 'd r m s' is written. There are four staves of music, each with a circled rhythmic pattern. The lyrics for each staff are: 'No - one in the house but Di - nah, Din - ah,', 'No - one in the house but me I know.', 'No - one in the house but Din - ah, Din - ah', and 'strumming on the old ban - jo'. Below the first staff, there are three lines of text: 'R A', 'M A', and 'M A'. Below the second staff, there are two lines: 'R A' and 'M B'. Below the third staff, there are two lines: 'R A' and 'M A'. Below the fourth staff, there are two lines: 'R A' and 'M B'. At the bottom right, there is a green box containing the text 'What sign is in the green ovals?'.

See Saw & Solfa pp. 80-85;

All Around the Fingerboard pp. 62-63

In the same way as *All Around the Fingerboard*, my book *Seven Folk Songs*, which has folk songs used in Suzuki Violin Book One, offers the teacher materials to reinforce the same music skills as those listed above from a Kodály perspective.

The book contains rhythm studies, solfa & pitch worksheets, rhythm and solfa puzzles and quizzes for the following folk songs: Hot Cross Buns, Twinkle, Lightly Row, Song of the Wind, Go Tell Aunt Rhody, O Come Little Children, and May Song.

A synopsis for the 7 songs covered in the book is found on Figure 2.

In accordance with Kodály methodology, I would often use the following sequence in teaching each song (assuming that the students can clap from rhythm cards, sing solfa patterns such as *d-m, r-f* etc. and *d m s* etc.).

### Singing:

1. Learn words and sing

2. Sing successively with hand signs, rhythm syllables and solfa

RHYTHM	SONG	SOLFA
Z or z	Hot Cross Buns	m r d
d	Twinkle	d r m f s l
d	Lightly Row	d r m f s
□ Z z	Song of the Wind	d r m f s d'
d □	Go Tell Aunt Rhody	d r m f s l
□   y	O Come Little Children	d r m f s l
□   d	May Song	d r m f s l d'

Fig. 2

- Sing phrases in a circle, one phrase each.
- Sing with "Star & Cloud" (shown below) to reinforce the pitches, phrases and form. Use dynamic and contrast cards (shown below) to add musicality, variation and fun!
- Observe rhythm, solfa and pitch names in printed music noting any special features such as new rhythms and notes or patterns and technical challenges.

### Playing: Prepare

Introduce any technical challenges such as string crossings, difficult fingering etc. Follow steps 1. to 5. replacing words with playing rhythm on an open string, melody from teacher's hand signs.

### Present

6. Write rhythm and solfa on board or worksheet and play. For a private lesson, student does hand signs while teacher plays the song, then student plays each phrase from teacher's hand signs; for a group class - in a circle, students play in unison from teacher's hand signs phrase by phrase; have each student play one phrase, while others do hand signs.

7. Visual - read and play from song cards and music with big print on staff.

### Practice and Perform

8. Play whole song using dynamic and contrast cards - having fun with variations!

9. Play whole song, phrase by phrase, following the teacher, repeating many times, and gradually working a song up to memory performance level.

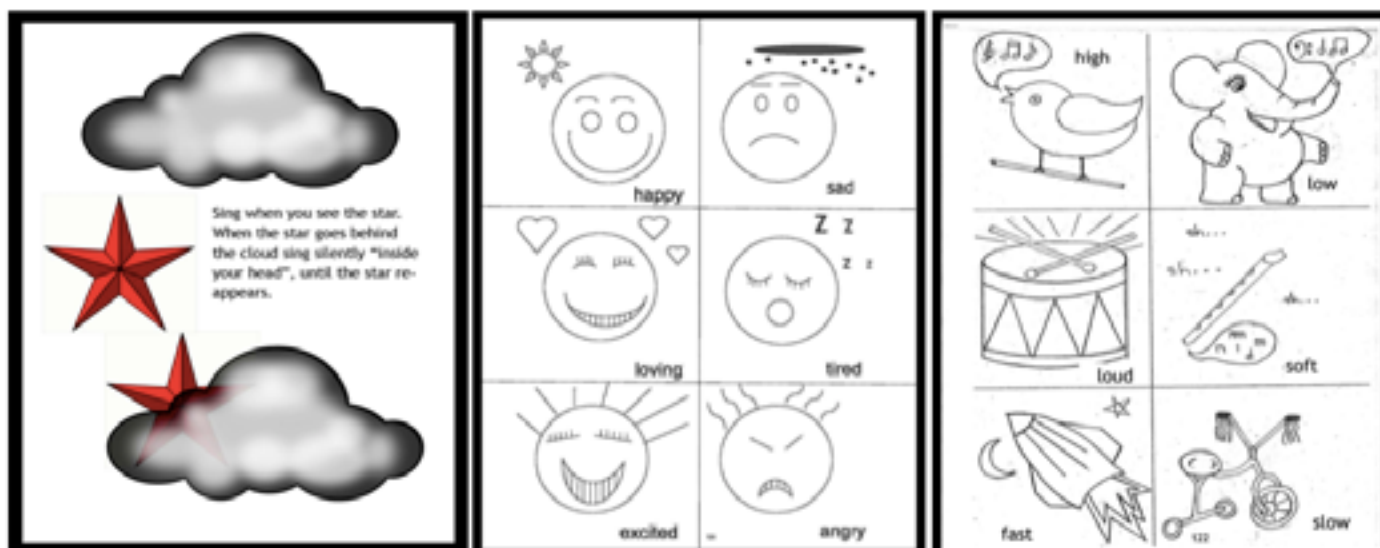
To use Twinkle as an example:

**TWINKLE\*** *d r m f s l d-s; ta, to-o to-o = "slow bow"*

**Singing:** Steps 1 through 5

### Playing/Prepare:

-String crossings: The *d-s* interval at the beginning, and other bars of *s-f* involving a string crossing can be easier for the students if they have played games with rhythms such as those in *All Around the Fingerboard* pages 10 and 11 quoted above, alternating strings by rote and from printed flash cards.



-Fingering: Review playing Hot Cross Buns with 2 1 0 fingering. To reinforce 3 2 1 fingering practise fingering exercises such as those in *All Around the Fingerboard* pages 14 and 15 also quoted above.

**Present:** Follow 6 and 7 above. Fill in the worksheet, the quiz and complete the cut up puzzle: Follow steps 8 and 9 ending with a musical and well polished performance!

*d* and *si* to *l* in the minor scales are always higher and must be accounted for on the fingerboard or, for that matter on any untempered instrument or when singing. Before singing or playing a piece, a student should be made aware of and allow for the *t-d* (or *si-l*) of the key the piece is in. I wrote in more detail on this topic in the whole article.

Seven Folk Songs pp.13, 15, 16, 18

### Solfa, Intervals, and Scales

Using solfa to teach younger students intervals is, in my opinion, much easier and more successful than using numbers (for example the sound of *s* to *m* is easier to recognize than a minor 3<sup>rd</sup>). Once confident in singing intervals in solfa, a student can more easily hear in their heads and then find a specific interval on his or her instrument. The fact that the North American English Kodály sequence starts with *s-m*, then *s / m* recognizes that they are the first intervals children sing, thus well rooted in their minds. Calling the intervals by solfa name is like learning words to a song – much easier than using numbers to describe sound. Ultimately students do need to identify intervals using numbers, but if they have grown up with solfa the transition is easy.

I cannot emphasize enough how useful solfa is when teaching scales! Students play with better intonation once they understand the “grid” solfa offers them – for example, semitones are better heard in their head and felt by their fingers on the fingerboard. Transferring this knowledge to the fingerboard is crucial. When playing scales, *t* to

### Conclusion

So there it is – 35 years of teaching in a nutshell – the short version! I hope I have provided some useful ideas and inspired teachers to seek out Kodály music education and to benefit from it the way I have.

If you have found this writing interesting *please* do download the entire article at my website: [www.tunetravels.net](http://www.tunetravels.net) or [www.teacherspayteacher.com/Store/Jo-Yawney](http://www.teacherspayteacher.com/Store/Jo-Yawney) (see My Publications section below).

I have published resource material related to the use of the Kodály Method itself and as it applies to teaching beginning violin. It is *not* my intention to use this article to “*promote and sell*” but rather to share ideas which have worked well for me, nothing revolutionary, just practical board and card games, puzzles, quizzes and worksheets to augment a music program. I extend many thanks to Montessori, Suzuki, and Kodály!

## My Publications:

My publications related to Kodály and beginning violin playing :

*See Saw & Solfa* – Kodály based songs, worksheets and puzzles for singing.

*Follow A Tune* – analysis of a few well-known Kodály based songs and ideas on how to teach them.

*All Around the Fingerboard* – using Kodály principles to teach violin, a massive 144 pages long!

*Seven Folks Songs from Suzuki Violin Book One* – songs introduced from a Kodály perspective.

*A Good Start* – a booklet for beginning violin students: reference pages, notes on each string, on staff, scales, worksheets, quizzes, puzzles and games.

*Violin Fingerboard Games* – to reinforce confident knowledge of the fingerboard, its relation to the treble clef and solfa scales.

*Beginning Violin* – a mini booklet containing exercise cards for use with individual students or with classes.

*Music Signs for Violin* – cards to use for various games to teach common signs used in violin music.  
*Solfa & Scales* – to sing or play on any instrument.

*Any Scale Any Clef* – to sing or play on any instrument. All are available for instant download at:

[www.tunetravels.net](http://www.tunetravels.net) and [www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jo-Yawney](http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Jo-Yawney)



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