THE PREUCILS: A LEGACY OF MUSIC, PEDAGOGY, AND THE SUZUKI VIOLA SCHOOL.

by

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Chapter I

Introduction

In 1978, when I was two years old my mother, a music teacher and musician, began to teach me Suzuki violin. Two years later, although we lived 180 miles from Salt Lake City, she decided that it would be best to enroll me in weekly lessons with a different teacher, Catherine Manning. Manning was more familiar with the Suzuki method of teaching violin and was also a violist with the Utah Symphony. After three years of lessons with Manning, due to her maternity leave, I began to take lessons with Jack Ashton, noted Utah Suzuki teacher and principal second violinist of the Utah Symphony.

It was during my studies with Ashton that my family became increasingly involved with the Suzuki Association in Utah and I first heard the surname Preucil. I was attending a Suzuki Institute in Logan, Utah with my family. My sister, who was a violist, had daily master classes with William Preucil Sr. It was apparent that people throughout the institute were captivated by both Doris Preucil and William Preucil Sr. and their teaching and playing abilities. That early experience with the Preucils would be the first of many. I have had the privilege of being taught by both of them (albeit only through short-term training), watching the Suzuki Viola School grow because of them, and seeing many of their students become professional musicians and teachers.

During a course on pedagogy at University of Oregon I attempted to engage in a unit on William Preucil Sr. in particular. I was only able to find small snippets of information from some Suzuki journals and a few online sources that contained data on

both Mr. and Mrs. Preucil. There is limited availability of scholarly literature regarding the Preucils and the creation of the Suzuki Viola School. Academic searches for William Preucil Sr. yielded results for William Preucil Jr. – the successful son of Doris and William Preucil Sr. Academic searches for Doris Preucil yielded volumes of information on the Suzuki Viola School as well as her listing as a teacher of various musicians.

In my searches, I came across the February 2014 issue of the *American Suzuki Journal* in which William Preucil Sr. had written an article that consisted of a short introduction to his wife and to himself – nothing of detail. [1] More recently, an article in the August 2014 issue of *American Suzuki Journal* authored by Christie Felsing and titled, "Doris and Bill Preucil: Inspiring a Music Vision," briefly mentioned that Doris wrote the Viola School and William performed on the Viola School recordings. The main content of the article was a recap of the Preucil event that was held during the 2014 National Conference. [2] Other entries exist in the *American Suzuki Journal* database; however, all are short and offer only generic information. The Iowa City Public Library released a series of videos entitled *Tell Me Your Story.* Both William Sr. and Doris participated in the series, which contained some historical information about their time at Eastman, their development of the Preucil School, and their lives in Iowa City.[3]

The purpose of this Lecture Document is to analyze and discuss the lives, musical backgrounds, pedagogical approaches, and contributions of Doris and William Preucil,

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[1] William Preucil, "Meet the Preucils," *American Suzuki Journal* (2014): 19, accessed September 14, 2014. https://suzukiassociation.org/news/meet-preucils/

[2] Christie Felsing, "Doris and Bill Preucil: Inspiring a Musical Vision," *American Suzuki Journal,* 42.4 (2014): 32, accessed September 24, 2014. https://suzukiassociation.org/news/doris-bill-preucil-inspiring-musical-vision/ (Suzuki 1969)

[3] Buchanan, Ellen. 2008. *Tell me your story.* [Iowa City, Iowa]: Iowa City Public Library.

Sr. to the Suzuki Viola School. The document will reveal the importance of the contributions made by the couple to the realm of music, their unique approach to pedagogy, their process for developing the Suzuki Viola School, and the purpose behind the music the Suzuki Viola School contains. This information offers teachers and violists insight into how the Preucils became involved in the Suzuki Association, their approach to teaching students, and an understanding of the organization of the various works within and the creation of the nine volumes of the Suzuki Viola School.

Methods

Few interviews have been conducted on this particular subject matter. As such, the main body of this document consists of excerpts of the interviews that took place at the home of the Preucils in Iowa City from March 18 to March 20, 2014. These interview excerpts have served as the primary source of the information used for this lecture document. In order to make the excerpts easier to understand and read, there was an edit of the interviews where questions and answers were changed, despite their correspondence to what was actually said, for the benefit of the reader. This included punctuation, grammar, wording, etc. This was done throughout all of the interviews that are contained within this document. To ensure accuracy of information within the document, I used editing as well as the technique of triangulation. This ensured the clarification of some words, phrases, or names by the Preucils; included having four different music experts look for spelling and accuracy of musical terms, names, and words; and reviewing the document for general editing issues.

Chapter II

Histories

The Suzuki Method and Philosophy

"Teaching music is not my main purpose. I want to make good citizens. If children hear fine music from the day of their birth and learn to play it, they develop sensitivity, discipline and endurance. They get a beautiful heart. ~ S. Suzuki"[4]

After initially struggling to find success with his own playing, and following the devastation of World War II, Japanese violinist Shinichi Suzuki used the events and lessons he learned in his life to develop the Talent Education movement. In the United States, this movement is now most commonly known as the Suzuki method. Although proponents of the movement have found success, as represented in professional musicians such as Sarah Chang, William Preucil Jr., and Jennifer Koh,[5] the primary purpose for Suzuki was to develop a whole child who would, "Have a noble mind, a high sense of values, and splendid ability."[6]

The reason for this all-encompassing approach to music can be attributed to Suzuki's background. His father owned a factory that produced violins. However, instead of making Shinichi and his siblings appreciate music and the instruments, the constant exposure made the Suzuki children careless with the instruments:

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[4] Suzuki, Shin'ichi. 1969. *Nurtured by love; a new approach to education*. New York: Exposition Press, 104.

[5] Yoshihara, Mari. 2007. Musicians from a different shore: Asians and Asian Americans in classical music. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 38.

[6] Suzuki, *17.*

> I was brought up in the violin factory, and, at times, when I had a fight with my brothers and sisters, we would hit one another with violins. I then thought of the violin as a sort of toy.[7]

It was not until just before his graduation from college, when his family purchased a gramophone, that Suzuki heard a recording of Mischa Elman playing the "Ave Maria" by Schubert. Only then did Suzuki realize that the violin, "made a tremendous impression on me. To think that the violin, which I had considered a toy, could produce such beauty of tone!"[8] After this revelation, Suzuki brought a violin home from the factory and began to teach himself to play by listening to a recording of Elman performing a Haydn minuet and attempting to imitate what he heard.[9]

Suzuki practiced and learned many pieces by ear. In fact, he did not receive formal training on the violin until, at 21 years of age, he began studying with Ko Ando in Tokyo.[10] Even though Suzuki began his official training at a relatively late age, he found success as a violinist. In 1922, Marquis Tokugawa took Suzuki on a world tour, which included a stop in Germany, where Suzuki was able to study violin for a short time. Suzuki did not complete the world tour, but remained in Germany to delve deeper into his musical studies.[11]

While in Germany, Suzuki studied with Professor Karl Klingler of the Klingler String Quartet. His entry into study with Klingler was based on a quick decision. For three months, Suzuki observed various artists and attended nightly concerts. Finally, upon hearing Klingler play, Suzuki determined that, "It was music of profound spirituality. It

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[7] Ibid, 67.
[8] Ibid, 68.
[9] "Suzuki History," Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, accessed September 15, 2014, http://ccm.uc.edu/prep/music/suzuki/history.html
[10] Barrett, Carolyn M. 1995. *The magic of Matsumoto: the Suzuki method of education*. Palm Springs, CA: ETC Publications,14.
[11] Suzuki, 72.

completely charmed my soul with its beauty and it spoke to me gently. At the same time it had superb order and technique."[12] Shortly thereafter, Suzuki asked Klingler to be his instructor, and after Suzuki played a short audition, he became Professor Klingler's only private pupil.[13]

While in Germany, and being influenced by music—that of Mozart in particular—Suzuki determined that, "If a musician wants to become a fine artist, he must first become a finer person [and] . . . A work of art is the expression of a man's whole personality, sensibility, and ability."[14] These sentiments established the foundation of the Suzuki philosophy, that of developing a whole child.

Suzuki left Germany in 1928, accompanied by his German wife, Waltraud Prange, and returned to Japan. Upon returning to his native land, he took a teaching position at the Kunitachi Music School and formed the Suzuki String Quartet with three of his brothers.[15] It was during a rehearsal with his string quartet that Shinichi famously bellowed, "All Japanese children speak Japanese!"[16] This realization of the truth was the catalyst for Suzuki's development of the Mother Tongue method of teaching music. As Suzuki understood, all children learn to speak their respective native language because they are taught that language from birth; they are immersed in that language by the people who surround them. A newly learned word was used over and over again until it became a part of the child's everyday vocabulary. It was Suzuki's belief that, just as children learn to speak their native language, all children have the capacity to learn

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[12] Ibid, 73.
[13] Ibid, 74.
[14] Ibid, 82.
[15] "Personal History of Shinichi Suzuki," Talent Education Research Institute, accessed September 18, 2014. http://www.suzukimethod.or.jp/english/E_mthd20.html
[16] Suzuki, 2.

anything. Likewise, if children do not learn, it is the fault of the education system, not the fault of the children. Suzuki reasoned that no child should be deemed un-teachable because he or she is slower than others, but that each child should be able to learn at his or her own individual pace. Suzuki believed that ability is, "A matter of patience and repetition" and that, "Ability breeds ability."[17]

Shortly after launching his Mother Tongue approach to education, the outbreak of World War II halted all of his educational efforts. Shinichi moved to Kiso Fukishima, where he lived with his aunt, younger sister, and her two children. Although the group struggled to find enough food to feed themselves, they survived through the war.[18]

In 1945, after the war had ended, Suzuki was contacted by a Mrs. Tamiki Mori, who expressed her desire that Suzuki teach violin in Matsumoto. She had been evacuated to Matsumoto during the war and she wanted to start a music school there. Suzuki, who was still living in Kiso Fukishima, agreed to relocate to Matsumoto on the condition that he could implement his new teaching method with new, younger students. Mrs. Mori agreed to his proposal and, after he established himself in Matsumoto, he launched the Talent Education movement.[19]

The Talent Education movement is based upon eight educational elements: parent involvement, early beginning, listening, repetition, encouragement, learning with other children, graded repertoire, and delayed reading.

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[17] Ibid, 6.
[18] Ibid, 24 – 25.
[19] Ibid, 28.

Creation of the Suzuki Association of the Americas

The Talent Education movement flourished in Japan in the mid-1950s. Kenji Mochizuki, a Japanese violinist and Oberlin graduate theology student, was quite familiar with the success of the Suzuki method. He believed that the movement would be successful in the United States. In his capacity as a member of the staff of the Japanese Consulate in New York, Mochizuki was able to obtain the film of the 1955 Talent Education annual concert in Japan. This film showed approximately 1,200 students playing together with good intonation and good technique. Even more importantly, the film revealed young children not only playing difficult works, such as the Bach Concerto for two violins in D minor, BMV 1043, but also playing them well.[20]

Mr. Mochizuki contacted Oberlin professor and orchestra director Clifford Cook about the film. Cook arranged for a showing of the film to the Ohio String Teachers Association during the conference of the association. John Kendall and Robert Klotman were in attendance at that conference.[21] The film intrigued John Kendall, a professor of music at the Muskingum College in Ohio. He began writing letters to Suzuki asking if he could visit Japan to learn more about the movement. Kendall wrote so many letters that they began to pile up onto Suzuki's desk. Mrs. Suzuki urged Mr. Suzuki to respond to Kendall and invite him to visit Japan and study Talent Education.[22]

In June 1959, after receiving funding grants from numerous organizations, Kendall traveled in Tokyo to immerse himself in the Talent Education movement. After

[20] Hermann, Evelyn. 1981. *Shinichi Suzuki: the man and his philosophy*. Athens, Ohio: Ability Development Associates. Pg. 38.
[21] Starr, William J. 1976. *The Suzuki violinist: a guide for teachers and parents*. Knoxville, Tenn: Kingston Ellis Press. Pg. v.
[22] Aber, 9.

six weeks of in-depth study with Suzuki, Kendall returned to the United States and began to implement Talent Education in his own program.[23] Inasmuch as the Suzuki literature was not available in the United States, in 1961, Kendall published a book called *Listen and Play*, which included illustrations of and detailed instruction in the Suzuki method. This first book was so successful that a second book was published in 1962, with the third book following shortly thereafter-in 1965. The Kendall books, which were eventually replaced by the current Suzuki books, are no longer available.[24]

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, string music educators were having trouble getting students to sign up for orchestra. The current system of string education made it difficult to produce quality players. According to Margery Aber, professor of music at University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point,

> American string teachers felt themselves in a losing battle for students. Band instruments and other exciting pursuits were more appealing than the long and arduous effort needed to master a string instrument, and more suited to a public school environment. Adequate instruction was not available in most localities. Questions were being asked about whether classical orchestral music had any future in the United States.[25]

These problems compelled educators such as Clifford Cook, Margery Aber, and Robert Klotman to look for ways to revitalize the orchestral education system in the United States. Cook toured various programs throughout the world. Following Kendall's lead, he visited the Talent Education center in Japan. After witnessing firsthand the success of the Talent Education movement, Cook implemented a program modeled after Suzuki's program at Oberlin in 1963. Hiroko Yamada, Hiroko Toba, Yuko Honda, Eiko Suzuki,

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[23] Honda, Masaaki. 2002. The vehicle of music: reflections on a life with Shinichi Suzuki and the Talent Education movement. Miami, FL: Summy-Birchard. Pg. 107.
[24] Garson, Alfred. 2001. *Suzuki twinkles: an intimate portrait.* [United States]: Summy-Birchard Music. Pg. 139.
[25] Aber, 10.

and Kazuko Numanami – all graduates of Suzuki's program in Japan – were hired to teach at Oberlin to ensure the program was conducted appropriately.[26]

In 1964, Robert Klotman was the President of the American String Teachers Association. He was among the group of individuals who viewed the film of the 1955 Talent Education annual concern screened by Mochizuki. The film made a great impression on him, as had his observations of the successful programs implemented by Kendall and Cook after their visits to Japan. Klotman invited Dr. Suzuki to bring a small group of children to perform at the Music Educators National Conference in Philadelphia.[27] Many of the audience members at that performance saw the potential of Talent Education and become founding members of the Suzuki Association of the Americas. Among the audience was William Starr, first President of the Suzuki Association of America,[28] as well as Margery Aber, who subsequently hosted several events for the Suzuki Association of the Americas as well as the American Suzuki Institute.[29]

Following the successful tour by the group of Suzuki students, in 1967, the American String Teachers Association sponsored a group of teachers to visit Matsumoto and to observe the Talent Education summer school.[30] The teachers returned to the United States ready to implement the Suzuki method of string teaching; however, they were inadequately trained and their efforts were not wholly successful. At about that time, Dr. Suzuki began touring the United States with his students, giving workshops at

[26] "Clifford Cook Scholarship," Suzuki Association of the Americas, accessed October 03, 2014. https://suzukiassociation.org/giving/scholarships/cook/
[27] Hermann, 56.
[28] Starr, v.
[29] Aber, 9.
[30] Ibid, 10.

the concert venues. Many U.S. teachers trailed him on the tour to learn more of his teaching methods. Suzuki grew weary of touring and many teachers were unable to continue to follow him. Consequently, Suzuki began to offer summer workshops for teachers in Matsumoto, where he provided teacher training in his methods. The cost of flying to Japan and attending the workshops was prohibitive for many U.S. teachers. As a result, in 1971, the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point began hosting a US summer institute. This institute enabled more U.S. teachers to receive training in the Talent Education method.[31]

The American Suzuki Institute at Stevens Point was the site at which the first summer institutes were held. The program was so successful that other summer institutes were implemented throughout the United States. An organization was formed to unify the many teachers and institutes in the Americas. Originally called Talent Education USA, the association needed a new name to reflect the increasing numbers of Canadian teachers who were involved. Following a vote, the name was changed to Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA) in 1972.[32] The official formation of the Suzuki Association of the Americas was completed in 1973. The officers were William Starr – President, John Kendall – President-elect, Louis Behrend – vice President, and Milton Goldberg – secretary. Board members included Margery Aber, Clifford Cook, Kenji Mochizuki, Alfred Garson, Evelyn Hermann, Anastasia Jempelis, Shirlene McMichael, Sanford Reuning, Marian Schreiber, Diana Tillson, Howard Van Sickle, and Harriet Mogge. The membership was approximately 300 people by December 1973.[33]

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[31] Ibid, 12.

[32] Hermann, 54.

[33] "American Suzuki Journal 1.3," Suzuki Association of the Americas, accessed October 10, 2014. https://suzukiassociation.org/news/journal/1.3/.

Pedagogues and their Approaches to Pedagogy

According to the *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, pedagogy is "the art, science, or profession of teaching,"[34] and according to *Oxford Dictionary Online*, a pedagogue is, "A teacher, especially a strict or pedantic one."[35] There are many different pedagogues, with numerous approaches to violin and viola pedagogy, all of who are well known for their teaching. Several of these educators and their approaches to teaching viola and violin are mentioned throughout this document. In order to provide the reader some background on these teachers, the following general information on the pedagogues and their approach to pedagogy is presented.

Ivan Galamian:

Born in 1903, Ivan Galamian began playing the violin at the age of eight and attended the School of the Philharmonic Society in Moscow.[36] Galamian was so interested in teaching that he began giving lessons at a young age. He stated, "I was always interested in teaching. I started when I was thirteen, and kept a special diary, I remember, for every lesson I gave – whole pages written about each pupil!"[37] In 1930, Galamian was the vice President of the Russian Conservatory in Paris, and in 1939, he began teaching at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia as well as at the Juilliard

[34] Merriam-Webster online definition, pedagogy, accessed October 10, 2014. http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pedagogy,
[35] Oxford dictionary online definition, pedagogue, October 10, 2014. http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/pedagogue.
[36] APPLEBAUM, Samuel, and Sada APPLEBAUM. 1955. "With the Artists." World famed string players discuss their art. [With illustrations.]. John Market & Co: New York. Pg. 282.
[37] Ibid, 282.

School of Music in New York. He also founded the Meadowmount Music Camp in the Adirondacks.[38]

Galamian believed music students needed to receive a solid technical foundation. He is quoted as saying, "Children are not given enough technical groundwork. Many mature performers are handicapped because they fail to possess the necessary equipment indispensable to express their musical ideas."[39] He believed that teachers should take time and care about ensuring that students establish particular techniques in order for students to become successful musicians who can play with comfort, as demonstrated in the following quotation:

> First emphasis should be placed on teaching absolute and unchangeable values, which are: the development of accuracy of intonation, mastery of the fingers and the bow, technic of sound, mastery of vibrato, different glissandi, connections in bow changes, accents, etc., etc. In short, the first goal must be perfect control of the instrument. And, of extreme importance, comfort while playing.[40]

Galamian also believed that each student should be seen as an individual. He believed it was a mistake for a teacher to demonstrate only one way of teaching and to expect all students to learn in only one way. As he explained, "The making of rigid rules is a dangerous procedure, since rules as such should be made for the good of the students rather than using the students to glorify the rules."[41]

When a teacher treats each individual need of his or her students and ensures each student has a strong technical foundation, Galamian believed that the students would be able to transcend the purely mechanical aspects of playing and could gain mental control over their physical movements, as demonstrated in this quotation:

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[38] Ibid, 283.
[39] Ibid, 274.
[40] Ibid, 274.
[41] Galamian, Pg. 1.

> The key to facility and accuracy and, ultimately, to complete mastery of violin technique is to be found in the relationship of mind to muscles, that is, in the ability to make the sequence of mental command and physical response as quick and as precise as possible.[42]

Galamian's pedagogical basis was founded on both physical as well as mental control over all aspects of his student's playing.

Ivan Galamian died April 1981. He taught many famous violinists, including Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zukerman, Jamie Laredo, Arnold Steinhardt, Kyung-Wha Chung, Miriam Fried, Charles Treger, and Dorothy DeLay.[43] His pedagogical legacy is studied to this day, and the success of his students stands as proof that his approach to pedagogy was effective for many of the fine musicians who studied with him.

William Primrose:

Born in Scotland in 1904, William Primrose was the son of a violinist. He began studying violin at a young age and subsequently graduated from Guildhall School of Music in 1924. [44] Although he achieved success on violin, while studying violin with Eugène Ysaÿe, he found that he preferred the sound of the viola to the violin. With Ysaÿe's encouragement, Primrose switched from violin to viola in 1930, remarking, "I had become a violist full-fledged. I had burned all my bridges. I had walked the Damascus road, seen the light, repented of past transgressions, and turned to the viola."[45] Primrose found even greater success as a violist than he had experienced as a violinist. He joined the London String Quartet and later the NBC Symphony orchestra, where he

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[42] Galamian, pg. 2.
[43] "Obituary of Ivan Galamian," New York Times, accessed October 08, 2014. http://www.nytimes.com/1981/04/15/obituaries/ivan-galamian-teacher-of-famous-violinists-dies.html.
[44] Dane, Matthew. 2002. Coordinated effort a study of Karen Tuttle's influence on modern viola *teaching*. Thesis (D.M.A.)--Rice University, 2002, pg. 21.
[45] "William Primrose's Life and Career," Brigham Young University, accessed October 09, 2014. http://music.lib.byu.edu/piva/wpbio.html.

performed as a viola soloist on numerous occasions – which helped him to launch his solo career.[46]

Primrose held many teaching positions throughout his career. Although he was well known as a soloist, he also became known for his skill as a teacher. Primrose held teaching positions at the Curtis Institute, University of Southern California, Indiana University, Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music, Toho School, and Brigham Young University. Primrose also served as an occasional faculty member of the Juilliard School, as well as the Eastman School of Music.[47]

Regarding the teaching of techniques he considered crucial for violists, Primrose had a long but exact list. In an interview with David Dalton, published in the book *Playing The Viola: Conversations with William Primrose*, Primrose spoke of his priorities for his students. First, Dalton and Primrose spoke of what kind of student would make a good violist (mostly those who to switch from violin to viola), what kind of instrument should be purchased, teaching the alto clef to students, and "insolent" violinists who play viola as a hobby and perform poorly, thus giving violists a bad name.[48] Next, they spoke of choosing a teacher, what kind of person would make a good teacher, and the basics of how long and how much to practice.[49] At this point, Primrose began to discuss more specifics about what violists need for a strong foundation in order to be successful on the instrument. This foundation includes how to hold the instrument in a natural position. Primrose acknowledged that holding a violin and viola is more awkward than holding other instruments.

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[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Dalton, David, and William Primrose. 1988. Playing the viola: conversations with William Primrose. Oxford [England]: Oxford University Press, pgs. 5-13.
[49] Ibid, 5-59.

Primrose offered great detail regarding the bow. He believed it was important crucial for violists to not use excessive force to try to produce a large sound. He said, "Ours (the viola) has to be wooed and won and resents manhandling and outrage."[50] He also believed that the right wrist should be flat and that the elbow should never get disproportionately high. Although he recognized his bow hold was similar to the Franco-Belgium hold, he claimed to ascribed more to a cello bow hold than that of a violin bow hold.[51] He believed that through a good bow hold and relaxed posture, "Exceptionally good sound is usually by way of natural endowment, and anything that is natural is better."[52] Having thoroughly described the differences between the viola and violin early in the book, in the section regarding the left hand, Primrose drew attention to the differences between the violin and viola. He stated, "Almost for longer than I care to remember, I have held that to finger the viola as an analogue to the violin has been the downfall of most violists, and the fault persists to this day."[53] With regard to the left hand position, he stated that whatever feels most natural for the violist is fine as long as there is no pinching between the thumb and other fingers. He recommended the left fingers should refrain from striking too forcefully – and that vibrato is a good way of relaxing the left hand.[54] The book concluded with sections regarding (a) the concepts of only allowing a student to perform when a teacher is absolutely certain he or she is ready, as well as the challenges the violist, in particular, faces in performances; (b) the "rules of etiquette" for

[50] Ibid, 62.
[51] Ibid, 75.
[52] Ibid, 109.
[53] Ibid, 114.
[54] Ibid, 130.

a performance;[55] (c) viola repertoire and the importance of Lionel Tertis for the instrument; (d) interpretation of various kinds of repertoires; (e) how to program a performance; (f) the pros and cons of music competitions; and (g) the possibilities for a career in playing the viola.[56]

Primrose had strong beliefs regarding what was necessary in order for viola students to have a strong foundation of playing. Even so, he was unable to clearly and consistently explain to his students how to achieve these techniques. Karen Tuttle credited her success to this particular characteristic, noting that Primrose often remarked that she knew more about his playing than he did himself.[57] After seeing Primrose play, Tuttle asked if she could study with him. He told her to learn how to play the viola, move to Philadelphia, and get into Curtis. She did just that.[58] Tuttle asked specific questions regarding his technique, and sometimes he could not answer. She believed it was because he thought that being overly analytical of his own playing would cause him to lose his natural way of performing.[59] Because he could not explain his process, he allowed Tuttle to closely observe his playing – what he seemed to not be able to do himself. Upon becoming his assistant, Tuttle was able to put into practice what she had studied, although she was still refining her approach. In 1986, she began teaching at both Juilliard and Curtis and began devising her coordination system.[60]

With the help of Karen Tuttle's system of coordination in playing the viola, the playing technique and legacy of William Primrose is alive and well.

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[55] Ibid, 172.
[56] Ibid, 160-234.
[57] Hannah Hanani, "The Intuitive Path," The Strad 98, no. 1164 (April 1987): 309.
[58] "Remembering Karen Tuttle," Juilliard Journal, accessed October 11, 2014. http://www.juilliard.edu/journal/remembering-karen-tuttle.
[59] Dane, pg. 13.
[60] Ibid, 8.

Josef Gingold:

Gingold was born in Poland in 1909. He immigrated to New York in 1920 and began studying violin with Vladimir Graffman. In 1927, just as Primrose had done, Gingold began studying with Eugène Ysaÿe. Gingold credited Ysaÿe for making him a better player and a better man. [61] Gingold also played with the NBC Symphony Orchestra, as had Primrose and Tuttle. In 1947, Gingold accepted a position as the concertmaster for the Cleveland Orchestra and began teaching at Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Music School Settlement. In 1960, he became a violin professor at Indiana University and directed the chamber music program at Galamian's Meadowmount School in New York.[62]

Although Gingold was a great performer, his real fame came from developing very successful and famous musicians. Among his most famous students are Joshua Bell, Jaime Laredo, William Preucil Jr., Joseph Silverstein, Sara Caswell, Jacques Israelievitch, Eugene Fodor, Herbert Greenberg, and Yuval Yaron.[63] In an interview with one of Gingold's successful students, Andrés Cárdenes, Chris Baker asked about the teaching style and emphasis of Gingold's pedagogy. Andrés Cárdenes said that Gingold stressed the Franco-Belgian school technique. This school emphasizes right arm and bowing technique.[64] With the exception of the Franco-Belgian school and his specific style toward the bow hand, Andrés Cárdenes said that, "Mr. Gingold was a master of identifying people's talents and identifying their weaknesses and their strengths, and so

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[61] "Josef Gingold," International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, accessed October 12, 2014. http://www.violin.org/josef-gingold.
[62] "Violin legend Josef Gingold remembered in 100th birthday celebration," Indiana University News room, accessed October 12, 2014. http://newsinfo.iu.edu/news-archive/12101.html.
[63] Ibid.
[64] Baker, Christian Matthew, and Eliot Chapo. 2005. *The influence of violin schools on prominent violinists/teachers in the United States*. Treatise (D.M.A.) Florida State University, 2005. http://etd.lib.fsu.edu/theses/available/etd-, pg. 4.

he assigned repertoire of technical studies according to each individual."[65] Because of this approach to each individual student, Gingold had no one specific approach to the whole education process.

Josef Gingold died in Indiana in 1995. During his long teaching career, he touched the lives of both violinists and violists. He was historically one of the most prominent teachers of successful musicians.

Dorothy DeLay:

Dorothy DeLay was born in Kansas in 1917. Although her mother and father were both amateur musicians, her mother's optimistic view regarding life being full of opportunities is credited with leading to the foundation of DeLay's teaching approach.[66] DeLay was a genius with an IQ of 180. She completed high school at the age of fourteen and at the age of sixteen, enrolled in Oberlin College, where she studied with Raymond Cerf, himself a student of Eugène Ysaÿe. Her father was concerned that Oberlin would be too limiting of an education for her, so she enrolled at Michigan State University and studied with Michael Press. After she graduated from Michigan, DeLay defied her father and enrolled in the Juilliard School. At Juilliard, her primary teachers were Hans Letz and Felix Salmond. DeLay married Edward Newhouse. After Newhouse joined the Army during World War II, she left New York and followed her husband wherever he was stationed as much as she could – ending-up in Washington, DC for the remainder of the war. Though she performed extensively during this time, she was not satisfied with herself as a musician, so she began to study with Ivan Galamian. DeLay grew close to

[65] Ibid, 5.
[66] Koornhof, Piet. 2001. The basic teaching strategy of master violin teacher Dorothy DeLay. Thesis (M.Mus.)--Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, 2001. http://hdl.handle.net/10394/2628 , pg. 10.

Galamian and his wife, often joining them for dinners at their home, where she learned many of his teaching methods. In 1947, she accepted an offer to teach part-time at the Preparatory Division of the Juilliard School and quickly realized that she thoroughly enjoyed teaching. DeLay's relationship with Galamian remained very strong until a dispute over teaching methods in 1970 ultimately ended their friendship. DeLay held teaching positions at Meadowmount, Juilliard School, University of Cincinnati, Philadelphia College of the Performing Arts, Sarah Lawrence College, Aspen Festival and Summer School, New England Conservatory, and the Royal College of Music in London.[67]

According to an article written by Piet Hoornhof about DeLay's teaching titled "Sweet Genius: The Teaching Skills of Master Violin Teacher Dorothy DeLay," there were three primary aspects to DeLay's teaching. First were her beliefs regarding teaching, second was having a strategy for teaching each student, and third was her ability to communicate with her students. By applying all three aspects to instruct each individual student, she helped many of her students find great success.

DeLay followed three beliefs in teaching. DeLay believed that a student could do anything he or she wanted to be able to do. She also believed that her students should feel as if they were capable of accomplishing their goals. Finally, she believed that the path her students had been sent down was the one that would to lead to their success. To help manifest her beliefs, DeLay was known to repeatedly utter certain phrases, such as, "You can teach anything if you can figure out how people learn it," "Teaching is helping people learn," "Learning is becoming more aware," "People learn best when they feel

[67] Ibid, 11-13.

successful at it," "People learn best when they're having fun," "Everyone has talent; the types differ," and, "It is necessary to give students all the support I possibly can." These beliefs became the mantras upon which DeLay's foundation for teaching was based.[68]

Her strategy for teaching each student was completely dependent upon the student standing in front of her. The only thing constant element was that she kept her students in a positive state during their studies. By ensuring positivity, DeLay could witness the absolute pleasure on her students' faces when they did something that they had been unable to do before, or when they were able to do something that they may have not believed themselves capable of doing at all. She had a strategy for determining what to work on with each student. She first listened to the student play and watched for intonation, sound production, and phrasing. Once she determined which of those three areas was the weakest, she determined what she needed to do, and the order in which she needed to do it to help her student find absolute success. She believed there was no one-way to accomplish this process with all students. As a teacher, she believed she needed to find out how to communicate with each student.[69]

Communication was her final aspect of teaching. She believed that she must find the best way to speak to each student to enable each student to flourish. This process included speaking of what the desired outcome was instead of focusing on what was being done incorrectly. For example, she might say, "I believe a wider vibrato should be used in this section," instead of saying, "Your vibrato is too fast in

[68] Koornhof, P. 2001. "Sweet genius : the teaching skills of master violin teacher Dorothy DeLay : teaching aspects". *Musicus.* 29 (2): 78-86.
[69] Ibid, 81.

this section." Another aspect of her communication style to all students was to clearly state her instruction. She was cautious of being too vague. If she told a student something that needed to be done regarding his or her playing, she was sure to make her instructions something that could be measured, like how much bow speed to use or contact point of the bow on the violin. She did not want a student to leave a lesson not understanding exactly what she wanted or exactly how to do what it took to produce what she wanted. DeLay was also infamous for using metaphors and analogies for teaching – often using famous musicians to do so. She used the failures and successes of people like Perlman to make her students feel that they, too, could achieve greatness. Her wording was never demanding, and she never embarrassed a student or spoke to a student in a condescending manner.[70]

Though she followed these few aspects for all of her students, DeLay knew what worked and did not work for each of her individual students She prided herself on being the champion and cheerleader for each and every one of them. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that, although she died in 2002[71], her students remain fond and loyal to her.

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[70] Ibid, 85.

[71] "Dorothy DeLay, Teacher of Many of the World's Leading Violinists, Dies at 84," The New York Times Archives, accessed October 16, 2014. http://www.nytimes.com/2002/03/26/arts/dorothy-DeLay-teacher-of-many-of-the-world-s-leading-violinists-dies-at-84.html.

Chapter III

The Preucils as Musicians:

The Musical Education of Doris and William Preucil Sr.

"We each have had the good fortune to know many people, whose lives having touched ours, have left a lasting impression for the good in our own. There are teachers and mentors in our past, but also friends and family in the present, and colleagues whose programs have inspired us to reach for our own personal best."[72]

William Preucil Sr. was born April 30, 1931, in Joliet, Illinois. His father was an amateur violinist, but was not a career musician. William began to study the piano when he was five years old and studied piano until he was eight, when he switched to study violin. Although he is known for his viola playing, Preucil did not begin playing the viola until the age of fifteen, and he did so to obtain scholarship funds to attend Interlochen Summer Camp. William Preucil later attended the Eastman School of Music for his collegiate studies prior to beginning his professional career.

Doris Preucil was born on December 10, 1932, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She came from a long line of musicians. Her mother was an amateur pianist and singer, and her father was a professional violinist who had attended Eastman Music School. Doris's grandfather taught all of his children to play, and her great grandfather taught her grandfather to play. Her first interaction with the viola was in high school, when her father played duets with her and they took turns playing each instrument. Doris Preucil played many professional engagements prior to her time at Eastman, learning much from

[72] William Preucil, "Annual Fund Drive 2010," *American Suzuki Journal* 39.1, (2010), accessed October 18, 2014. https://suzukiassociation.org/news/annual-fund-drive-2010/

this exposure. Doris and William Preucil both attended the Eastman School of Music, where they met and formed their relationship.

Following are excerpts from the interviews with William Sr. and Doris Preucil. These excerpts delve into detail regarding their musical education and how they met - in their own words. [73]

Oviatt: Were any of your family members, such as parents, siblings, or grandparents musicians?

W. Preucil: My father was an amateur, but it was not his profession.

Oviatt: What did he play?

W. Preucil: He played violin.

Oviatt: What about your family, Doris?

D. Preucil: My father was my violin teacher until I went to Eastman. He learned from his father. My grandfather probably learned from his father who came from Germany when he was young.

Oviatt: So your family played music for many generations?

D. Preucil: My father was a professional musician and my mother studied piano. She was an amateur pianist and singer.

Oviatt: Did your father primarily play violin?

D. Preucil: Yes, but he also taught piano and played trumpet in the Legion band.

W. Preucil: He played trumpet in the First World War, didn't he?

D. Preucil: Yes, he was a bugler in the First World War. He was also in the Milwaukee Symphony and in the Legion Band with Liberace's father.

Oviatt: Was you father your primary music teacher when you were growing up?

[73] William Preucil Sr. and Doris Preucil, interview by author, March 18 – 20, 2014, transcriptions. To avoid an excessive amount of citations, the reader is informed that, unless otherwise notated, all quotations and observations/narrations without citation are from the interviews conducted at the Preucil residence in March of 2014.

D. Preucil: My mother taught me to play piano when I was three. She also taught me to sing. Singing was actually a big part of my upbringing. My father took over the piano lessons when I got a little bit more advanced, but he was my only violin teacher. I remember that when I started piano lessons my mother taught me by ear. When I started playing with notes my dad took over. When I first started it was so much like the Suzuki method because I played by ear. And when I did start reading he used the Hohmann Method, which is just the antithesis of Suzuki because it starts on the E string with whole notes. I thought that was kind of interesting because that was the only way my start on violin really differed from the Suzuki Method. I had the environment, I had the loving parents, and I had the learning by ear and listening a lot.

Oviatt: And for you, William, when did you first begin playing music?

W. Preucil: I began playing the piano when I was five. I studied piano for three years. I started with a John Thompson book on piano and, "From a Wigwam" was my favorite piece. It's the only piece I ever played every day. My father loved the violin and he was an amateur…but every boy played the violin in 1920. The teacher I studied violin with taught in the public schools. He'd come in and take you out of study hall. This was in fourth or third grade. I loved the class. There were duets and trios and quartets for four violins and there were four kids in the class. My folks knew the teacher; Albert Haroth was his name, because my brother had also studied with him. My father loved to play duets with us and at night put music on the dining room table. I do not think we had a music stand in the house, but we'd play all these duets and that is how I played.

Oviatt: When did you switch from violin to viola?

W. Preucil: Not until I was in college.

Oviatt: When was the first time you ever played viola?

W. Preucil: At Interlochen when I was 15.

Oviatt: Did you like playing the viola?

W. Preucil: Yes, I did. One reason was because I was more important as there were fewer violists. Dr. Joseph E. Maddy, the founder of Interlochen, had a theory that everybody should be in orchestra. During the summer program, one week out of the eight weeks of the string player's life, we had to play in the viola section. Two years later I went back to Interlochen after I graduated from high school, my final summer before I went to Eastman, and I had a viola scholarship. It was important for my family. In the first year I went I had a scholarship from the National Federation of Music Clubs. I got $100 and the tuition was $300 for the summer. That is room and board and instruction. So in 1948 they offered me a work-study viola scholarship. I had to be on the stage crew two hours a day and play the viola.

Oviatt: So you had to earn your tuition to Interlochen by playing viola?

W. Preucil: Even though I played viola in the orchestra I still studied the violin. I studied with a wonderful teacher up there, Otakar Čadek, who was Czech. He taught at the University of Alabama after he left Europe.

Oviatt: Doris, what interactions did you have early on with viola?

D. Preucil: When I was in high school there were three other serious advanced players who wanted to make up a quartet. However, they played violin and cello. Therefore I asked my dad to purchase a viola so I could play viola in that quartet. We got together for fun at each other's house about once a week and enjoyed playing a lot.

W. Preucil: Did your father play the piano for you, as well?

D. Preucil: Yes. Basically, the way I was taught violin was by growing up on orchestra music. I so admired my father and what he was doing, and I always wanted to be an orchestra player. We would play together where he would play second violin and I'd play first violin.

Oviatt: So you didn't just play excerpts but the actual symphonic parts?

D. Preucil: Yes, the full parts. Also, when I was playing solos or when he was playing solos we would take turns accompanying each other. You can imagine the experience that gave me. I never wanted to be a pianist, that was not my goal, but everybody found out that I could accompany. I was able to raise money by accompanying a vocal coach, my school choir, and I accompanied a community choir. When I got to Eastman and I needed money, I accompanied a community choir. Playing the piano was a wonderful way to learn, plus I learned a great deal of orchestra repertoire.

Oviatt: It sounds like playing the piano is an important skill to have. So my next question is: how would you both describe your musical education throughout the years? Would you call your musical education formal or informal?

D. Preucil: Well, I would think his would be more formal than mine. I think mine was very informal.

W. Preucil: Mostly because I had a private teacher.

D. Preucil: Correct. My father and I would just get together and start playing. If there was something I needed help with, he would explain it. The environment was also so great because I would listen to him teach. This was the depression. We were very poor and if the students had a dollar they would come to their lesson and we'd have supper. If they didn't have the dollar they wouldn't come. He would teach in the living room and I would sit by the door and listen. So it was very much an environment of listening and playing music. It's interesting because this is a lot of the way that my two children learned to play the violin. They would also listen as I would teach. I had very little

memory of practicing alone. It was mostly always making music. When my father's quartet would come over he'd let me sit in for a piece, playing with him on a part – even when I was very young.

Oviatt: William, how much exposure to music did you have growing up?

W. Preucil: My family was a little more well off so I bought 78 RPM records of Kreisler and others. I was always absorbing concertos. During high school I would occasionally get to go to Chicago to hear a recital. I never had heard Kreisler like Doris did, but I heard many great violinists in recital. Milstein was my favorite. But in those days there were live radio programs of orchestras. I do not mean just symphonies, but salon orchestras like Ralph Ginsburgh and the Singing Strings from Chicago. So I decided I wanted to do that too, so after supper every night I had my own radio program. I would prop music up on the piano stand and I would announce my own numbers. So I would say, "And now we bring you, from the Preucil family home…" and I would play a solo. If I couldn't play something I would skip it. However, when it got to a slow melody it was great. I'm sure she (Doris) still played better than I did.

D. Preucil: Our backgrounds are totally different, but put us together and you have something great.

Oviatt: Next question. What made you both choose to make music your careers?

D. Preucil: I got to meet many artists because I would go to my father's orchestra rehearsals. When I was very little Szigeti came and played with the orchestra and I was sitting in the front row. He came down to where I was sitting and he asked me, I must have been around six, if I played the violin. I said, "Yes I do," and he said, "Well, I'll teach you a finger exercise." So he actually sat there and taught me this little exercise that you do without the violin that involves trying to raise each finger individually.

Oviatt: William mentioned that you saw Kreisler?

D. Preucil: I saw Kreisler at the Pabst Theater in Milwaukee.

W. Preucil: The Blatz Legion Post band and the Pabst Theater were owned by all of these beer companies because they were all philanthropists.

D. Preucil: I had a lot of exposure to musicians. I remember a girl violinist came and gave a talk at the library, so my father took me to see her. He really exposed me to so much musically.

Oviatt: So what made you both choose music as well as teaching music for your careers?

D. Preucil: Well, there really was no question.

Oviatt: Because music was so much a part of your life?

D. Preucil: When I was about 14 the professor at Carroll College in Waukesha started the Waukesha Symphony and asked a number of professional musicians to help him for a very small stipend. My father was one of these people. My father also invited me to come. I started playing in that orchestra, which was a mix of professionals and amateurs, when I was 14. When I was 16 I tried out for the symphony that my dad played in, which was actually the forerunner of the Milwaukee Symphony, and was a totally professional orchestra.

W. Preucil: The Chicago Symphony also played ten concerts a year in Milwaukee.

D. Preucil: Before my father actually retired, the Milwaukee Symphony was actually as it is now. The day I was 16 I joined the union and tried out for the Milwaukee Orchestra. From that point I was a professional violinist. My father became librarian for the orchestra, and while I was in the orchestra we had summer concerts every week where there would be guest soloists like Jan Pierce and Lily Pons. My father also taught in the public schools at that time. He would have to go school to school and be paid on how many students were taking lessons. Each school would have a small orchestra. In the summer the kids could take private lessons. Because my father was all over town, he gave me the south side. So when I was 16 I started teaching these kids on the south side of Milwaukee while he taught on the north side. I would help him with the organization of all of the music. With serving as a librarian, writing the music, and teaching the kids on the south side, I already had a profession.

Oviatt: So by the time you were a teenager you already had a profession?

D. Preucil: By the time I was 16. Also, the conductor of the orchestra took an interest in me when he heard me audition. He had given me the last movement of New World Symphony and was surprised that I got the rhythm right, but of course I knew it from hearing it for years. So he got me a job in the Milwaukee Courthouse as a runner because the city or the county sponsored concerts. The courthouse was where the concerts were being organized. While I played for the Milwaukee Orchestra Walter Hendl came to guest conduct. He was conductor of the Dallas Symphony. He programmed a concert that I believe was all Tchaikovsky.

W. Preucil: We also ended up with the score to the Franck Symphony. Remember that story?

D. Preucil: Yes. We played Franck's Symphony, but we played Romeo and Juliet. Here I was 16 years old sitting there in the violin section, and everybody else was older. So Hendl picked me out and talked to me during intermission. He asked me what college I went to and I told him that I was in high school. He said, "I can tell you want to be a violinist in an orchestra." He said, "You ought to go to Eastman." He asked where I was going to go to college and I said, "Well, probably Milwaukee State Teacher's College." He said, "Well, you ought to go to the Eastman School of Music." I told him that I

wouldn't be able to afford to go to Eastman, but he told me that I would be able to get a scholarship. So, when the time came to apply for college, I thought back to that conversation and that is what made me apply to go to the Eastman School of Music.

Oviatt: And so William, what was it that made you choose making music and teaching for your career?

W. Preucil: Well, I went to Interlochen in the summer and it was a watershed experience for me. I had grown up in a blue-collar town and we only had one high school. It was a huge high school. Our Joliet High School band was national award winning and they were very proud of themselves. I would carry my violin case to school and would get snowballed in grade school. So when I went to Interlochen, after my sophomore year in high school, I realized that I was surrounded by all of these people who could spell Sibelius, who could talk about what they felt regarding music, and who would play all of these wonderful pieces with me. At the end of the eight week summer program, my parents picked me up in the car and on our way to Traverse City my mother asked, "Well, Billy, did you get anything out of it?" And I said, "Yes, I want to become a professional musician." My dad almost swerved off the road because I had never said anything like this, something so shocking, to my parents in my whole life. That was the beginning of my musical career.

Oviatt: So it was that exposure of being around other musicians that made you decide to become a professional musician?

W. Preucil: Yes, but the kind of musicians who were supportive. We were comfortable around each other and nobody would bully or tease each other about being a violin player.

Oviatt: It sounds as if both of you were in supportive environments and not competitive environments. For example, even though you, Doris, were younger and surrounded by older professionals, they all seemed to support you.

D. Preucil: They were all very supportive. In fact, from the time when I was little, I got to know all the men in that orchestra. At that time they were all men except for one woman, but they were like uncles to me.

Oviatt: William, it seems that your experience when you went to Interlochen was supportive and inclusive?

W. Preucil: It was competitive there in a way where we had tryouts every week for chairs. However, looking back on it, it was not cutthroat or anything. People may run out and cry on Friday afternoon after they lost their chair, but that was okay because there was still this love of trying to do the best you can.

D. Preucil: Well, you also played in a quartet for the first time at Interlochen.

W. Preucil: My first time at Interlochen, when I was playing the violin in the orchestra, I became homesick. My parents stayed the first week up there to vacation and then they went away. After they left I was homesick but this nice boy, who had been to Interlochen for a couple of years, came up to me and said, "Some of us are going to get together and play quartets tonight at the hotel." The "hotel" was the student center. His name was David Klein and he was a violinist from Cleveland. I said, "What's a quartet?" He just told me to come that night and I believe we played the Mozart Dissonance. I played second violin to him. Well, 50 years later, Klein was the father of the Cleveland Quartet that Billy (William Preucil, Jr. – their son) was in. He supported the quartet financially to get it started.

Oviatt: As you both attended Eastman, is that where the two of you met? Had you met any time before Eastman?

W. Preucil: Interlochen was sort of an axis of Eastman. There were a lot of influences at Eastman there at Interlochen. Howard Hanson wrote his Second Symphony at Interlochen. I had the audacity to audition at the Curtis Institute in February or March of my senior year in high school. All of these famous violinists like Efrem Zimbalist and Ivan Galamian were sitting at the table clearing their throats. After that I went to my Eastman audition in Chicago. They sent the head of the theory department out to do the auditions in Chicago while I was there, and she (Doris) went to audition in Chicago as well (though in later years). Anyway, we both got into Eastman.

Oviatt: How did you meet?

D. Preucil: Well, we both grew up as kids listening to Jolly Joe on the Chicago radio station. Every morning before you went to school he would be on the radio.

W. Preucil: This was back in the 30's.

D. Preucil: Yes. He (Jolly Joe) would have a dressing contest to see if the girls or the boys would get dressed first.

W. Preucil: You'll love this today. Jolly Joe.

D. Preucil: So you would hurry up and dress then you would talk to your radio and say, "I'm dressed."

W. Preucil: Yes, but Jolly Joe had the magic telescope and he'd say, "Oh, the girls are really crying out." Can you imagine today?

D. Preucil: When I found out we were both listening to Jolly Joe that really (attracted me).

Oviatt: Where exactly was it where you two met. Was it at a class that you were both taking together, or orchestra?

D. Preucil: The first time we met was the end of my freshman year, right before school closed.

W. Preucil: And I was a junior.

D. Preucil: I knew the name because I had dated a violist in his class and they were both competitors trying out for the Civic Orchestra. I was helping his friend learn the Walton Concerto.

W. Preucil: He (the other violist) and I were both violinists for our first two years and he switched to viola before I did. A few months before I switched, he had switched to become a viola major. In fact, we were roommates.

D. Preucil: A cellist friend of mine said there was a quartet that would be playing on the radio.

W. Preucil: A local college station.

D. Preucil: The local station for the University of Rochester.

W. Preucil: We played the Antonín Dvořák "American" Quartet.

D. Preucil: So we played on that radio program. He played viola for it and that is when I met him.

W. Preucil: Karen Mesch played cello and broke her string at the broadcast and had to change it while we were (on air).

D. Preucil: So much happened at that broadcast, but I thought he was nuts because…

W. Preucil: I was the announcer.

D. Preucil: He put on this modulated voice and introduced all of the pieces. The whole thing was hysterical. I mean, the whole event, breaking a string, him announcing, and everything. And then he walked me back to the dorm, though it was probably on his way. I didn't think anything of it at the time. The next fall when we got back to school we were put in the same string quartet.

W. Preucil: Though we had this wonderful viola teacher at Eastman who had been there two or three years, Francis Tursi, who had beautiful and gorgeous tone and taught in a Zen like way, I did not study with him because I needed the nuts and bolts. I knew what I wanted in the music, but I still couldn't play in tune enough to be viable. So I remained with my violin teacher. We had a big public school music division at Eastman. In fact, half the students at Eastman were Public School Music majors. Most of them lived nearby in New York State and that was where they went to get their education

degrees. The other track at Eastman was the performing major and that is what you always heard about when you're far away. You go to Eastman to study with these great teachers if you want to be a performer. At the end of my second year, while I was still playing violin, they were sort of doubtful about me. That is the time that my friend had switched to viola, though he was doing okay on violin. My friend studied violin with Francis Tursi but became enamored with the viola tone and wanted to be a violist, so he switched. By my third year I was playing viola in the Rochester Philharmonic.

D. Preucil: You then wanted to play the Béla Viktor János Bartók quartet.

W. Preucil: Yes, we were in this quartet and I wanted to do the Bartók Sixth Quartet. I had heard it performed by the Fine Arts Quartet in Chicago.

D. Preucil: It starts with a big viola solo.

W. Preucil: I had these three girls in the quartet. You (Doris) were playing second violin, and we had a Hungarian cellist as our coach, Gábor Rejtő. Doris went out and bought the score to the piece. I was dumbfounded. I had never seen the score to it, really. Doris said, "Well, I wouldn't study anything without a score." That impressed me. And through that our relationship began to grow.

Oviatt: So it was a Bartók quartet that brought you together?

W. Preucil: Yes. Well, I found that Doris had a lot of qualities of music and playing that I didn't have. And she probably thought I was nuts the way I emoted around.

D. Preucil: No. That year we were in the quartet I was a sophomore and you were a senior. You were playing your Performer's Certificate because you got the performer's your senior year, and you played the Bloch Suite.

W. Preucil: With orchestra.

D. Preucil: The way he played that Bloch Suite was something I could never do. I never pictured myself as a performer. I won competitions and had opportunities when I was younger, but I never felt like I wanted to be a performer. In fact, when I was at Eastman and had to play my recitals, I would get very nervous. However, I always felt good in an orchestra. I was concertmaster. However, hearing him play that Bloch Suite was just an awakening for me. It was so expressive and as he had improved his playing, he played well in tune.

W. Preucil: Well, the Bloch was a piece I could play perfectly technically, because when I was able to play a diminished fifth I could vibrate on that and make it sound great. I could hear C natural to F sharp and I could bend the tone. Everything about intonation was great for me in the Bloch.

D. Preucil: But I'm sure that when he tried out for Eastman, even though he had these shortcomings, they recognized something special in his playing.

W. Preucil: You must pick your repertoire carefully. I instill that in my students.

D. Preucil: At Eastman I had to take Mr. Tursi's viola class. We had viola class for a year and he recognized right away that I was already playing viola. We had a Mu Phi Epsilon quartet that performed a lot and I played viola in that quartet. I was playing viola at Eastman as well as violin.

Oviatt: You only played viola in chamber work, though?

D. Preucil: Yes. I only studied viola one year with Mr. Tursi.

Oviatt: Was it a requirement to play viola?

D. Preucil: Yes, it was a requirement. There was also a requirement for a semester of pedagogy, which I took with Mr. Tursi, too. He discovered that I already had been teaching and before long I was teaching the children of faculty members. My senior year at Eastman I had a job teaching at Indian Landing School in Penfield. They had a Supervisor of Music who was really very well respected and she had a wonderful school there. She would bring people in from the Rochester Philharmonic. I was in the philharmonic from my junior year on with Erich Leinsdorf and Bill was in it as well. The supervisor would hire us to teach the students during the school day and we would get paid by the student. All of these kids were getting private lessons in this school and then they had orchestra. I would teach a full day out at Indian Landing School and she said to me when she hired me, "Now, here's a wonderful opportunity because you're going to have so many students that are all within the first three years of lessons. Why don't you use a different method with every couple students?" There were many methods in print to choose from.

Oviatt: And that was in your senior year where you were teaching?

D. Preucil: That was my senior year.

W. Preucil: Before the Suzuki method.

Although William's playing attracted Doris to him, and Doris's skill in working through Bartók attracted William to her, there was a little more to the beginning of their relationship. Doris' strong will and her ability to help him made a great impression on William.

W. Preucil: When I gave my senior recital at Eastman I remember the dress rehearsal

was supposed to be in Kilbourn Hall at 7:00 o'clock at night. We went down there and it was dark. The janitor was not there, they hadn't opened it up, and we had to figure out what to do. We finally got into the hall and there was a janitor that came to us. I said to Doris, "Well, I guess this isn't going to work out, I will not be able to rehearse." She found this janitor and said, "He's supposed to be in here rehearsing right now and the lights are supposed to be (on)." And I thought to myself, "I need this." And that has been the story of our life, if you want to stop right there.

Oviatt: Our whole story could just stop after that?

W. Preucil: Well I've become more like her and she's become more like me after 60 years of (being) married.

Two people from different musical backgrounds came together during their musical studies at Eastman School of Music. Both found appreciation for the viola through their years of studies, in their childhood, and at Eastman. Because of the differences in their backgrounds, each had different strengths and weaknesses in their playing and musical study. However, when they came together, they helped each other both technique and musicality. This relationship would help each in their professional careers as musicians and as teachers; it would also serve as a catalyst for the Suzuki Viola School.

The Musical Careers of Doris and William Preucil, Sr.

William, Sr. and Doris Preucil have both enjoyed active and fulfilling performance careers. From performing in symphonies to playing in chamber groups and as soloists, both husband and wife have gained considerable experience in many genres of performance. William and Doris's performance careers began prior to their graduation from Eastman, flourished before and throughout their work with Suzuki, and continue to this day.

Doris began her performance career at the age of sixteen when she won a position as violinist with the Milwaukee Symphony. Although she thought she only wanted a performance career, and performed for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra during her time at Eastman, she knew how difficult life could be for musicians. Therefore she taught as well as performed to earn money:

Doris: I didn't think that I wanted to be a teacher, but I knew I had to teach to earn money. I put myself through Eastman with what I earned in the philharmonic and teaching as well as what I earned in summers in Milwaukee. However, growing up through the depression, you never knew where your next meal was going to come from. Teachers couldn't depend on their (students to pay), and besides that, the teachers were all trying to get each other's students so that they were able to make more money. I never wanted to be part of the teaching world.

Although she did some teaching prior to her marriage and her children, Doris was primarily focused on a performance career in the time during and directly after her studies at Eastman.

Doris and William worked for many excellent professional orchestras. They learned a great deal during their formal musical studies. Both William and Doris believed that their most valuable education came during some of their professional experiences.

One such instance occurred when they performed under the baton of Erich Leinsdorf with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra:

W. Preucil: I believe that in all of my years at Eastman, the biggest influence on my musical upbringing was Erich Leinsdorf.

D. Preucil: Mine too.

W. Preucil: When I went to the first rehearsal and sat in that orchestra with him conducting, it was the most amazing thing. He had a delayed beat so he was over here on two and you were still on one. You could see what to do and it seemed like the music expanded as you played. It felt like you had time technically to do everything you needed to do to fill in that beat. You lose that in conductors who move so quickly. Leinsdorf had been a vocal coach in Vienna, he was an excellent pianist, and he had a brain that was (excellent).

D. Preucil: Well, Erich Leinsdorf was a major conductor who had even conducted the Cleveland Orchestra. I believe he was drafted for the war.

W. Preucil: He was conductor of the Cleveland Orchestra and after one year he was drafted. Though you were supposed to get your job back when you got out of the service, that didn't work for him.

D. Preucil: The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra was not a big budget orchestra, but it was a wonderful orchestra. The Eastman professors were the first chairs. My teacher was the concertmaster, the first flute was Mariano, and the first oboist was Sprenkle. Leinsdorf took this wonderful orchestra to New York, made records with them, and even played in Carnegie Hall.

W. Preucil: He went on the to Boston Symphony as soon as he was invited, where he remained for a long time.

D. Preucil: That was where he really wanted to be.

Oviatt: Leinsdorf went to Rochester after his military service because he couldn't get back to Cleveland, and then he went to Boston after Rochester?

W. Preucil: Yes, after he was there, between seven to ten years.

D. Preucil: Though Rochester was not an orchestra on the level of other orchestras he had conducted in the past, Leinsdorf made Rochester sound like a high level orchestra. It was an amazing experience to be at Eastman and have the opportunity to play in that orchestra. As my teacher was the concertmaster, it really enhanced my experience. I thought that my teacher had the best editing off concertos and other music. I loved the way he edited and thought he had a special knack for it. Playing under my teacher in

the orchestra, getting his bowings, and feeling everything the way he was feeling it really had a big influence on my Suzuki editing.

Years after his time with Leinsdorf, William still appreciated the knowledge and experience he had gained under the baton of that Masetro.

W. Preucil: I think one of the things that gave us confidence was having experienced this greatness of Leinsdorf. I can still remember about every word he ever said in two years of rehearsing with him. We learned great pieces with him. By the time I became Principal of Detroit Symphony, people probably wondered what experience I had. However, I already knew a lot of repertoire from the very finest way of learning it, via Leinsdorf. It was just amazing.

Toward the end of their studies at Eastman, both William and Doris began to look at their professional futures. Inasmuch as he was nearing the end of his Master's degree program, and was likely to be drafted into the Korean War, William took an unexpected step for his first professional job outside of Eastman:

W. Preucil: I was in the midst of my Master's degree when I met Doris. Although I was thinking of going somewhere else for my Master's degree, I thought that if I stayed at Eastman I could be together with Doris before the draft took me. As long as you stayed in school (during) the draft you were exempt. So I knew that I would have two years before I would be drafted in the Korean War. After the first year of my Master's degree one of my friends, an oboist, walked into the hall at Eastman wearing a blue Marine uniform. It was very spiffy. Everybody gathered around him and asked, "What are you doing?" He talked to me because he knew my playing and told me that they were looking for a violist. There was an opening in the Marine Band. He said, "I'll mention you to the leader, but write him a letter." I wrote the letter and I flew down and auditioned. In the audition I played the viola and I played Don Quixote amongst other pieces. I made up an audition for myself. The man who auditioned me said, "Well, you know, everyone in the strings has to double on a band instrument too." He asked, "What's your experience?" I knew he was going to ask that, but I also knew they weren't too careful about it. I said, "Well, I studied clarinet." I had eight weeks of lessons at Interlochen and I could play although at that point I hadn't played for six or seven years. He asked, "Do you know which end to put in your mouth?" And I said, "Yes." So he said, "You're hired." He said, "How do you pronounce your name, Pricel?" I said "Preucil." He said, "Okay Pricel." He was a violinist himself and the leaders of the band traditionally were very good violinists.

When Doris completed her degree from Eastman she was engaged to William, so it made sense for her to be close to him. Because William was stationed in Washington D.C., Doris decided to launch her professional career in Washington D.C.:

D. Preucil: By the time I graduated from Eastman, Bill was in the U.S. Marine Band in Washington D.C. and we were engaged. I wanted to get into the National Symphony so I auditioned and I got in.

Oviatt: In your opinion, what were some of the more interesting facets of being professional musicians?

D. Preucil: Playing with different conductors and learning so much from them. When I was in the National Symphony we had two weeks where Leonard Bernstein was our guest conductor…

W. Preucil: I didn't get supper those two weeks.

D. Preucil: I was walking about two feet above the ground that whole time. We played the Shostakovich Fifth as well as Prokofiev Fifth.

W. Preucil: He was 35 then, Bernstein.

D. Preucil: It was an experience playing with him. I'll never forget it.

Throughout their professional careers their musical education continued. As they began to mature and play more as professionals, this continued education resonated with them, perhaps even more than during their formal studies.

Oviatt: It sounds like, even though both of you were professionals, you continued to learn and educate yourselves?

D. Preucil: Oh yes.

W. Preucil: Being young and appreciating the greatness of being with an organization like the National Symphony after coming from a student orchestra was great. But nowadays, student orchestras sound even greater than some of the big orchestras. However, to feel that professionalism that just comes to you via osmosis. Your bowing would become more concise and correct.

D. Preucil: And the other thing was the greatness of the music. Getting to play such wonderful music in a symphony where you are surrounded by that wonderful sound. Bill was always crazy about quartets and I enjoyed quartets. However, to this day, I go to a

symphony and I just bask in it. You hear a Mahler symphony or Brahms symphony you feel it in your fingers.

W. Preucil: When we got engaged we said to each other that we wanted to play symphonies. That was what our life was going to be. We would have the same schedule where we would be in the same orchestra and it would be so much fun. We'd go to work together and we'd come home together. We never achieved that ourselves, but we achieved it through our daughter married to our son-in-law who's principal in the Cleveland Orchestra. Now we see all sides of that picture and what you have to do to both be in the same orchestra.

D. Preucil: When you have children (it is difficult).

While in Detroit, the life of the Preucils made an unexpected turn – they had their first child. This event made it important for William to work as much as he could, and having a child made it more difficult for Doris to continue to pursue her own professional career. However, both William and Doris kept their careers going while their family continued to grow. They continued their careers by moving to Iowa City, Iowa.

D. Preucil: Billy was born in Detroit. When things didn't work out for me in Detroit it seemed like a good time to have children, although I didn't think we would have any. However, I did, and Billy was born in January. We left Detroit after that season and moved to Iowa City. So he was really practically raised here (in Iowa City). That was a kind of a hiatus for me. When we came to Iowa City we played for a little while in the Cedar Rapids Symphony, but we also played in what was called the Tri-City Symphony in Davenport, Iowa. Now it's called the Quad-City Symphony and it's quite a good orchestra. And we would be the extra people that would play for the weekend of the concert. We would go to two dress rehearsals and two performances once a month. We played in that and I started private teaching. People sent me their students and I taught privately even though that was not what I always wanted to do.

Oviatt: And Bill, you were teaching at the university, is that correct?

W. Preucil: Yes. The thing that attracted me here was the string quartet. The violist, who was at Eastman with us contracted multiple sclerosis. He was five or six years older than me. He had been in the Second World War and he'd come back to study.

D. Preucil: He became our good friend when we came here.

W. Preucil: He was a good violist but then he had to stop playing. They let him keep going for five years so he'd get a certain kind of retirement. However, after about his first three years he was not able to do much playing, but he was teaching. I had another

friend from Eastman who was older, too. He'd been in the Second World War, and he (was) your (Doris') stand partner in the Rochester Philharmonic. He played second violin in this quartet. Stuart Canin was the first violinist who went on to some other things later. He was concertmaster of San Francisco for a long time. He's still alive and we see him once a year. So they said, "We have every morning just for the quartet to rehearse, and then we teach in the afternoon." It was like a gift, you know. It was like being in this ivory tower where you can learn all the quartet literature.

We wanted to get management and really take off and do a lot of things. And at that time, when it actually happened that we (Stradivari Quartet) went under New York management, we were one of the first five quartets in America to be managed in New York. This was because all the chamber music was brought over from Europe.

D. Preucil: Except the Smithsonian and the Budapest.

W. Preucil: The Oklahoma Chamber Music Society brought in these European groups. But the Juilliard Quartet started in 1946 or so, and the Budapest was in Washington. But after ten years there were 40 American quartets and there were another 200 ten years later. Chamber Music of America has tracked this all out. Now there are probably 400. So we were able to just savor the time we were given to develop.

D. Preucil: And at that point I had a baby, so it seemed like a good place to bring up a child. I thought, "Well, we'll see how it goes here and then maybe we'll go back to an orchestra together after our child was a little older."

Oviatt: Did you join a symphony when you were here in Iowa?

W. Preucil: Well, that was just sort of a hard time. Our quartet would play, mostly first chairs, and make some money on the weekend.

Oviatt: Doris, were you primarily a private teacher?

D. Preucil: Yes. I had also joined the Peninsula Festival when I was in college. I was a charter member of that Festival. Thor Johnson had come to conduct us in Milwaukee and he hired me for the first season. I played in that for 12 years. And we played the Moravian Music Festivals in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, (and) and Wisconsin.

W. Preucil: And you went on tour with little orchestras?

D. Preucil: Well, I toured with the Chicago Little Symphony. I was also a sub with the Dallas Symphony on a big tour. I was looking for places to play and I played when I got the chance. In 1962 we had our third child in April. I had three children under five and the next year my parents retired here and made it possible for me to go off and do these things. Playing with the Dallas Symphony was great. It was a great orchestra. I flew to New Orleans and got the bus to Biloxi and met them that day. I sight read the concert that night, second stand, first violin. I had neat experiences.

Through their busy and productive professional careers, the Preucils moved to Iowa City. William became the viola professor at the University of Iowa and the violist for the Stradivari String Quartet. Doris was raising their growing family, teaching, and playing with professional organizations throughout the United States. Their location and reputations as musicians made it possible for Talent Education to find the Preucil family.

Chapter IV:

The Preucils Involvement in Talent Education, the SAA, and the Creation of the Suzuki Viola School

First Exposure to Talent Education, the SAA, and Suzuki

"The children are our joy and our reason for being here. Their laughter, shy smiles, concentrated efforts and the beautiful music they make are our reward."[74]

In the early 1960s, the Preucils had two young children at home. They were busy both personally and professionally. They were taking what they had learned in their time at Eastman and in the professional world while making a life with their skills. Doris was mostly teaching in Iowa City and word spread quickly that an Eastman graduate was available to teach:

Oviatt: How were you introduced to Suzuki and the Suzuki philosophy?

D. Preucil: Well, I met a teacher from Chicago who was an older lady. Ruth Ray.

W. Preucil: She had studied with Leopold Auer.

D. Preucil: She had also soloed with the Chicago Symphony as a child. She was very active in ASTA (American String Teachers Association) and went to a meeting where they showed the film from Japan (of the Suzuki students in concert). Anyway, she had a former student who was the orchestra director in Cedar Rapids. He hired her to come on the weekends and teach. She got too old and was taking care of her elderly mother, too. I didn't really know anything about her at the time, but one day she appeared on my doorstep. We lived out on the edge of Iowa City where you had to take a taxi to get to us. This lady, unannounced, had taken a bus from Cedar Rapids and a cab to our house and appeared on the doorstep. I answered the door and had these two little toddlers. She said she wanted to ask me if I would take over her students in Cedar Rapids as she had heard that I had graduated from Eastman. And that is the last thing I wanted to do but, you know, here this lady had gone through all of that so I said that I would do it on Saturdays. So as we were talking she saw the little boys and she said, "You know, you need to find out about the Suzuki method because you'll want to teach your children." She said it was

[74] Aber, Margery V., and Gail Shoemaker. 2001. *Hip! Hip! Hooray!: 30 years with the American Suzuki Institute in Stevens Point, Wisconsin*. Stevens Point, WI: American Suzuki Foundation of Stevens Point Wisconsin. pg. 112.

so wonderful but that she was too old to change what she was doing. Those were the first words I heard about Suzuki. Of course, in one ear and out the other because I had my hands full. Shortly after that we saw this film and then I thought, "I've got to do it."

Oviatt: And how did you see that film?

D. Preucil: On the Captain Kangaroo Show. Nowadays people see violin students and you do not get that reaction because people are so used to it. However, I got goose pimples when I saw it. You couldn't believe what you were seeing, and John Kendall said the same thing.

Oviatt: So was the film shown on Captain Kangaroo the same film that John Kendall had seen? Were they just re-broadcasting it?

D. Preucil: Yes, they were just re-showing it. It's a very bad film. I do not know if you've seen it.

Oviatt: I've seen it, yes.

D. Preucil: I mean the sound is bad and the picture is bad, but when you see it you're still just overwhelmed by it.

Although Doris did not pay much attention to Ruth Ray telling her about Suzuki, it was much like an afterthought. It was not long until the method was again presented to Doris. Just as Kendall and the other teachers who saw the film originally shown to the Ohio String Teachers Association meeting by Mochizuki, Doris was impressed by what she saw. Seeing it broadcast on *Captain Kangaroo* and remembering it being mentioned by Ruth Ray piqued Doris's curiosity and she decided to learn more.

D. Preucil: When John Kendall saw the Suzuki group playing he couldn't believe it. He thought there was some trick to it. That is why he wanted to go to Japan. I was convinced it was real, but I had to be like a spy. I couldn't find out anything about it. And the other thing, I never joined ASTA. I never joined any teaching organization. I just was my own little self down in our little house in the living room. I basically didn't belong to anything so I never heard anything. This was in 1962, so I went to the music library and I kept reading periodicals and saw this little article about John Kendall going to Japan. So I called John Kendall and he was wonderful.

Oviatt: Had you known Kendall before your interactions with him over Suzuki?

D. Preucil: No. The thing is, what he did for me I'm sure he did for hundreds of people. He returned phone calls and sent me a copy of what he had written for his grant to get to Japan. That is what I had to start teaching on.

Oviatt: Now, this music that you were sent, were those his transcriptions of the music?

D. Preucil: No, it was called *Observations and Report* or something like that. He had traveled over (to) Japan and observed these various teachers and spoke to the Suzukis as much as he could, and wrote this report. It included all of the pieces through the ten books as well as other things about what he saw while he was there. He got permission to write the first two books for America. And the first two books are actually what we know as book 1. The first book went through "O Come Little Children" and the second book went (from) "May Song." It was published as "Listen and Play." Have you ever seen those?

Oviatt: I haven't seen them, but I know of them.

D. Preucil: He told me that the first book was either coming out or had just come out and in the back of the book were some suggestions of how to teach. With his list and that book with the suggestions (of) how to teach, I took time to learn it. I decided that I was going to teach by ear and teach the way I had always wanted to teach. However, it had never dawned on me that you could teach the parent. I knew I could teach the way I had been taught, but I didn't want my kids to be isolated by being the only ones learning this way. I wanted them to have other kids around, so that meant I would have to have other students. I kind of psychoanalyzed that list (from Kendall), thinking of the developmental steps in each piece. As I became a Suzuki teacher I was convinced that Suzuki was blessed by heaven because everything worked out so well. The way the music presented its opportunities for teaching was so wonderful. That is what I advise prospective teachers to do: not just take Book 1, but to analyze how you are going to take that student from Twinkle to Mozart. I had time to do just that before I started my first class because we were building this house and were building a place where I would have room to have more than one child at a time.

Oviatt: I think it was Bill Starr (who said) that when he worked with Suzuki, Suzuki said, "From the beginning of the Twinkles you're teaching your student how to play Mozart."

D. Preucil: That is right, and that is why at the beginning there were a lot of people who latched on, especially after ten years or so when it became known. There were a lot of people who latched on to teach who really were not advanced enough players themselves. This gave the method a little bit of a questionable reputation because they could not teach with the excellence that they could imagine ahead for their students.

Inasmuch as Doris had done her research, she decided that Talent Education was a perfect mix of what she knew should be done to educate children in music and of certain aspects that she had not considered, which were proven to be successful. She began to build her own Suzuki studio. While Doris's studio began to grow, she was still one of the few Suzuki teachers who were actively teaching – not just in her area, but also in the entire United States. Because of this limited number of teachers, she attended as well as hosted workshops.

D. Preucil: I started in 1963. I was one of the first five outside of Japan, I think. But in 1965 Kendall had a workshop at Godfrey, Illinois. He did this in conjunction with Paul Rolland from the University of Illinois. I'm trying to get ahold of the film that was made at that workshop, "Suzuki Teaches American Mothers." That was right before John Kendall moved to teach at Southern Illinois at Edwardsville. He was teaching at Miami University in Ohio when I initially contacted him. Anyway, I went to that workshop with a few other teachers, as well as a lot of people who were interested in Suzuki. I took students and it was just an amazing thing to see how the students could all play together. I mean, that was something that had never happened before Suzuki: take a bunch of students, put them on a stage and hear how they could make beautiful music together without ever rehearsing.

Oviatt: How many years was this workshop from the organization of the SAA?

D. Preucil: SAA didn't form until 1972. This was way before. I didn't know anybody else that was teaching Suzuki except John Kendall, but when I went to this workshop I met Yvonne Tate and a nun from Vancouver. Those are the two that I remember, but Suzuki brought four teenage girls to demonstrate. He could hardly speak English but he demonstrated. He spent one hour with one student working on Tzigane. I've often thought it was, what's her name?

W. Preucil: Yuko Han.

D. Preucil: Yuko Han. But I'm not sure if it was. But working on the first six measures of Tzigane, to get the right tone and the right rip and everything. I had never seen anything like it. You never saw teaching like that. It was just amazing. This was in the summer and the dormitory windows were open, and the most amazing thing was that we heard that student in her room practicing the next hour on that. I mean, what we learned about the commitment to tone at that workshop was just amazing. And that was my first experience with Suzuki.

Oviatt: Do you think that it was how Suzuki presented the material to the student that made her want to work so hard?

D. Preucil: Yes. There's a tremendous respect for the teacher in Japan, but also there was something very compelling about the way he worked. That was my first experience with him, and then I was again in the dark after I came back home. It turns out that in about 1967 or 1968, I'm not sure, the Eastman School had Suzuki come and they had what they called, "Project Super." They invited some of their people that were teachers from the area to come, but they didn't know about me. Here I was an Eastman grad and I didn't know about what was going on there. I totally missed the whole thing. So I'm working away here (in Iowa) and then in spring of 1969, the orchestra director of Iowa Wesleyan University was excited about our Suzuki program, and asked me if I would help her write a Title 3 grant to bring Suzuki to that area. I helped her write that grant and they got it. For three years they paid for teachers, all of the instruments, and paid for all of the music.

W. Preucil: To be into the public schools without the parents, right?

D. Preucil: No, they were actual lessons. The idea was to have these teachers as a string quartet that could also perform, but that didn't work out. Along with that grant they brought Suzuki here for a week. Our students met him at the Iowa City Airport, Dr. and Mrs. Suzuki, and we all had dinner together. During that week my students were his guinea pigs. All he did was have group lessons demonstrating teaching the group with my kids. And then my orchestra gave a concert. Now, this was 1969 and we had been doing Suzuki for six years, so we had a nice little string orchestra. Right from the first I wanted to make sure these kids learned how to read because there was so much negativism about what I was doing with Suzuki. So we got to know Suzuki a little bit then, but I never was pushy. So I was just kind of like a shadow to him.

Oviatt: So most of your understanding for the first years on the Suzuki philosophy was really coming from Kendall?

D. Preucil: Just what I learned at the beginning. After that it was me mapping out how to teach. And that is why I say you either can teach or you cannot. There's only so much training you can do, and some people will never be a good teacher no matter how much training they do. Others are just natural teachers. I was teaching at Western Illinois and I was on the full faculty, not just as the Suzuki Adjunct. It was a hard job. I had started a Suzuki program there and it grew. Everything got too big. But I took my Iowa City Orchestra to ASTA to perform in 1973. It was a regional conference and somebody had asked me to bring my students. Our Suzuki program traveled around and demonstrated because we were trying to pass the word, you know? And so we went to Milwaukee and performed. After the performance Marge Aber and Loraine Fink came up and talked to me and invited us to come to Stevens Point that summer. Marge asked if our Preucil family would give a concert there as well.

While Doris had discovered Suzuki, and through her diligent research, she found it to be a beneficial way to teach. William was busy with his own teaching and performance career. However, it was not long before he, with his wife's encouragement, discovered the benefits of Suzuki – even if it was by trial and error.

W. Preucil: Well, at that point she was busy with Bill Starr and John Kendall and all that. I was busy writing letters trying to get colleges to hire our quartet for a concert or dealing with a manager in New York or helping plan a European tour. She was doing her Suzuki teaching. When we finally discovered Stevens Point and went there, I felt like she had this group of all of these Suzuki people—it was such a young experience of Suzuki at that time.

D. Preucil: We went to Stevens Point in 1973.

W. Preucil: I felt like a little bit of an outsider because my priority was playing the viola in my quartet and these people were doing their thing. I was off to my side because I figured I needed to devote all of my time to the quartet. And then I became part of it (Suzuki) because I think they embraced me as someone who was an example of performance. They had their performers but not many. The best teachers there were these women who were in their basements and found Suzuki. They were like these mung beans coming up out of the steps. And then before there were teacher trainers I became the first viola teacher trainer by accident, you know, at Stevens Point with manuscripts of music. I had never taught a Suzuki student and I remember one time in Utah telling the class about "Oh Come Little Children." The question was, "Do you lift your bow during the rest?" I said, "Yes, it feels good to me." So I went home and I said to Doris, you know, I explained how you lift your bow and she said, "You did what?" So I had to come back in the afternoon and say, "Remember that when I said…?" And finally it became sort of a private joke. I told everybody that I would write AD when there was a question, (which stood for) "Ask Doris." I would say, well, we will talk about that later, and then I would run home. However, Doris said, "You've got to start a Suzuki student from scratch." So that is when I started Brad Attison and Liz Stefanik. I'm sure there were bumps on the way there, but I realized as I went that I was always a Suzuki teacher as far as my attitude. It was just getting these technical points in my quiver to expound on.

As both William and Doris were finding their stride within the teaching ideals of Talent Education, the Suzuki Association of the Americas (SAA) was coalescing. Although still in its infancy, the SAA and teachers of Talent Education in the United States were trying to form a more solid foundation.

D. Preucil: So the Preucil Family went to Stevens Point and performed. We then stayed for the week and I taught at the conference.

W. Preucil: I think I coached chamber music. They almost didn't know what to do with viola because there was no viola repertoire for Suzuki.

D. Preucil: No, there was no viola. I think you (William) went home early, actually. I do not think you stayed.

W. Preucil: That year was when the SAA got started, right?

D. Preucil: The SAA had gotten loosely started the year before.

W. Preucil: 1972.

D. Preucil: At the first conference (in Stevens Point).

W. Preucil: And Bill Starr was President, right?

D. Preucil: I think so. I found out that there were factions who took teachers to Japan. In about 1968 I think there was this man that started an organization. It was not the SAA, but he took a group of teachers to Japan. At that time somebody I knew went and they brought me the books back from Japan. That was the first that I had books to teach from. All these years I didn't have the Suzuki books. I had Kendall's book and that was the end of it. And that Kendall book only went through Book 2.

Oviatt: To the end of Book 1 and into 2?

D. Preucil: Yes. Then Kendall eventually came out with a Book 3, which was Book 2 (of the Suzuki books). The rest of the time I was going by this list and finding what music I could and substituting what I couldn't.

Oviatt: When did we get the Suzuki books that were in Japan here in the United States?

W. Preucil: Nobody used them over here because Summy-Birchard had republished it in America.

D. Preucil: Summy-Birchard at first served kind of like the secretary and for SAA, but then Kendall and Starr realized that they did not want it to be run by a business. They separated and started the SAA as a non-profit organization. I joined the board then in 1974 and kept going to Stevens Point from that year on. Suzuki came to Stevens Point frequently. In 1975 I went to the first international conference in Hawaii and there I got to meet Bill Starr and (got to know) John (Kendall) quite well, as well as other Suzuki teachers that were teaching at that time.

W. Preucil: When they started the SAA it was in the gymnasium of Stevens Point. I was not there that first year, but the next year I remember Milton Goldberg sitting at a card table saying, "Come over and join, everybody's got to pay their dues and join this organization." And somebody said, "Well, what's it called?" He said, "Suzuki Association of America". And he said, "Well, why not say Americas?, I mean, as long as you're going to start one, just call it *Americas* then we've got South America. You know, 20 years went by before we even tipped our hat to South America. We were so busy trying to work here and now (in the 70's) it finally got off the ground in a big way.

Oviatt: It did become quite big.

W. Preucil: Just because somebody said, "Why not call it the Americas?"

As the SAA became a more established organization, the Preucils became increasingly involved within the organization. Doris and William were of the first to actually join the organization in Stevens Point, and they were some of the first to become teacher trainers – making them pioneers in Talent Education in the United States. The more Suzuki began to spread in the United States, the more involved the Preucils became.

Oviatt: So Doris, when did you become involved in the SAA? With your involvement with Kendall and being one of the first Suzuki teachers in the states, was it at the formation of the SAA?

D. Preucil: No. They formed in 1972 and my first time there when I met everybody was in 1973. I joined the board in 1974. I do not remember if I was on two terms, but then in 1980 or sometime around then, Yvonne Tate contacted me and asked if I would serve as President of the SAA. Yvonne was President from 1980-1982. In the meantime we were having meetings on teacher training and we evolved a way of naming people that were kind of grandfathered in to be teacher trainers. The people that had been invited to teach at an institute were respected and had been at it for some time, so they were the initial teacher trainers.

Oviatt: So Doris, you joined in 1973, you were on the board in 1974, and then you were President in 1980?

D. Preucil: No, it's a two-year term and Yvonne became President in 1980. She needed a President-elect and so she asked me if I would serve as President-elect. At that time she established a teacher training committee of which I was the chairman, and we were to evolve a system for teacher training. I know that it was very difficult to try to get some standards because people were very much for (that idea that) this is for everyone. We had a wonderful committee with John Kendall and Bill Starr, and Yvonne as well as myself and a couple more people. So anyway, I served as President-elect and then I

became President in 1982. I ran the very first teacher conference in 1984 in Chicago. And we had Suzuki and Starr come. I was also President in 1983 for the first International conference to be held in Matsumoto. And in order to try to get our American teachers to go I personally put all the rooms together in the hotels, matched people that I knew from teacher training and knew would be good roommates. I had a lot of new first things happen while I was President.

Oviatt: So when you first joined the SAA, was it pretty small?

D. Preucil: Yes, and most of the people that were there are dead…John Kendall passed away.

Oviatt: So here's a dual question. As your names are both identified with Suzuki and the Suzuki Viola School, did you ever know that your careers would become so centered on Suzuki?

D. Preucil: Well, I never knew that. First of all, I was surprised to be invited to be President. I never had expected that. I never thought about writing the viola books initially. I mean, things just happened. I knew I would be a Suzuki teacher forever, that much I knew.

Oviatt: What about you, Bill, did you believe your name would be so connected to Suzuki?

W. Preucil: Well, of course I never pictured myself with Suzuki until she wrote the viola books and I did the recordings. I started going to the institutes and people asked me to do teacher training. Then Doris said that I needed to start with some beginners so she sent me to John Kendall. I said to her, "You've been showing me all these pointers" and she said, "No, you go to John Kendall and have a crash course in teaching Book 1 and two." So I did. I went and I stayed at his guesthouse and I did two solid days with him on teaching points.

D. Preucil: Before beginning students on viola?

W. Preucil: Before I taught my first Suzuki student. I have all that on little cassette tapes, but Kendall did a lot of Socratic teaching. He would ask me questions about what movements of the arm to make, or what the small muscles were doing. He was very physically minded. I didn't think conceptually quickly enough to get all those things, but when he demonstrated I understood it. Anyway, I felt fairly equipped to try to start with those two kids. For me, it was through the recordings, building into the institutes, starting those two kids, (maybe I took one or two more), then getting involved with the Suzuki movement friends of hers and being with the Suzukis that I became so connected with Suzuki. And then, just as I was about to retire, I had a stint on the board. However, Suzuki was always at the board meetings. As Suzuki got older, the board got more active.

Oviatt: Did you also become a member of the SAA in 1973 with Doris?

W. Preucil: I do not know. It was probably close to it. Maybe a couple of years later.

Oviatt: I was planning to ask when you (William) were on the board.

W. Preucil: After Doris became President I believe I came on the SAA board.

D. Preucil: Jeff Cox became President of the board, a former student of mine, and changed the way the board worked.

W. Preucil: He was a Fellow of the Kellogg Leadership.

D. Preucil: Jeff had a lot of administrative training.

W. Preucil: Jeff was a wonderful person because the SAA was growing so much and we had problems with teacher trainer designations. It was not really fair the way it was being done, and we couldn't find a way out of it. However, Jeff Cox brought somebody in to analyze our board and make a ten-year projection plan of what we wanted to have happen.

D. Preucil: There was not a President anymore after Jeff.

W. Preucil: We cut out the position of President and we made everything on this side volunteer, all the board and the chairman of the board and all that, and then the hired staff was the CEO. Before that, the President got a salary because the President had to operate everything.

D. Preucil: I did everything while I was President.

W. Preucil: The Presidents had to do everything from home and maybe get a little secretarial help, so they were given a stipend.

D. Preucil: I had no computer.

W. Preucil: Only the office had a computer in those days.

D. Preucil: Yes. I worked hard.

W. Preucil: The Presidents really did the work of the board and at that time the meetings were twice a year. However, the meetings were moved to meet four times a year, and everybody on the board had assignments and duties.

D. Preucil: They board had assignments as well as board training.

W. Preucil: We had endless board training. They sent me to Atlanta with Pat D'Ercole, who was going to come after me (as President). We went to this high-powered business

training and there were 17 people there. The Vice-President of Burger King and General Motors and then we had these three Suzuki people.

Oviatt: What year were you (William) President?

W. Preucil: I think I stopped being in ’96 so I probably was ’93-’96.

D. Preucil: Was it three years then?

W. Preucil: I was President only two years. I was three years President-elect because we extended our board one year as we were in the midst of a lot of change.

D. Preucil: There was one year where there was a moratorium. No election and no new teacher trainers.

W. Preucil: We stood still because we were in chaos. We were trying to adjust to our new system.

D. Preucil: Anyway, it made it so that it’s all working well.

Oviatt: These changes were probably major adjustments in how the SAA was being run?

W. Preucil: We had an expert come in to analyze us and train us in everything. They said, “The way you’re running this organization now you will be gone in five years. You are a bunch of violin teachers trying to run an organization.” After that we started to put a lawyer and a financial person on the board.

D. Preucil: I was head of the teacher training for 12 years, from 1980 up to ’92. After that is when things started to change.

W. Preucil: That is when I was on the Teacher Training Development Committee, which created all those descriptors so that everybody has an equal chance. People know what descriptors are going to be presented and then each person is judged on only those descriptors of your product.

Even with such great involvement in the SAA, both Doris and William were still professional musicians. William was still a professor of viola and had an active career as a touring violist with his quartet.

Oviatt: With Suzuki being so much a part of your lives, especially at that time, did you have professional careers outside of Suzuki?

W. Preucil: Professional careers were what we were doing.

D. Preucil: We were playing music festivals, like Bach festivals in Michigan, Colorado, and here (in Iowa).

W. Preucil: I was touring with my quartet.

D. Preucil: When the Iowa City Bach festival began we hired people that I had met on my Little Symphony tours. There were wonderful oboists, flutists, and singers. The oboist was also a conductor and he started a Bach festival in Michigan, which we have played for 20 years. He also started a festival in Boulder, Colorado, which is still going strong.

Even with active careers as musicians, the responsibilities that both assumed for the SAA and International Suzuki Association (ISA) kept the Preucils extremely busy. Because the ISA and SAA were having a turbulent time trying to find a strong foothold for their relationship, and because William and Doris held positions in both organizations, the Preucils were able to resolve many issues over the dinner table – again making their involvement with Talent Education a very key and important role.

W. Preucil: When I was chairman of the board of the SAA, Doris was an original member of the ISA founding board and was on the ISA board at the same time as I was on the SAA board. I must say it was a turbulent time.

D. Preucil: I went to Japan for my meetings.

W. Preucil: There was all this tension between the ISA and the SAA about funding the ISA. I would come home from an SAA meeting in Boulder, get off the plane, and she'd say, "You did what?" In this living room we pretty much settled the course of Suzuki in the world.

D. Preucil: Me at ISA and him at SAA. After I had been on the ISA board for 12 years in Japan, Pat D'Ercole became President of SAA. She was of the SAA, which automatically made her on the ISA board.

W. Preucil: She was Chair of the Board for the SAA.

D. Preucil: D'Ercole used what had happened here to try to straighten out the ISA board. At that point I thought it was time for me to get off the board. I had been on it since the beginning, and it needed new blood. So at the meeting I said that I was going to resign. Mrs. Suzuki said, "Oh no, you cannot resign." And I said, "Well, I am going to." She said, "Well, then, we need your husband."

W. Preucil: Actually, you said, "My husband could take my place." And she hit you with her purse and said, "No, I want you!"

D. Preucil: Well, I got along well with Mrs. Suzuki.

W. Preucil: Yes, you two got along.

D. Preucil: I think it was because (of) my German background. But she loved Bill.

W. Preucil: During the World Convention in Matsumoto, Pat (D'Ercole) got all of her papers together and streamlined that ISA board. Everybody had to resign and now and then we re-filled the positions. All of the terms were going to be a certain length unlike a lifetime membership as it was before. Mrs. Suzuki got so tired of going to meetings with all these guys she said, "I want some women." So she picked Tove Detrekoy and Doris…I called them the three little maids, like Mikado. So Mrs. Suzuki felt more comfortable having these three Suzuki people on the board that could be with her from a feminine standpoint.

With the help of people like John Kendall, Bill Starr, Marge Aber, and Doris and William Preucil the SAA and ISA became strong and well-established organizations. It was because of the hard work and dedication of these teachers and musicians that Talent Education became hugely popular and successful in the Americas. Though there were many growing pains and many slips along the way, these pioneers of the Suzuki movement in America are the reason that the organization is such a well-run and respected organization today.

Though it was because of people like the Preucils that Talent Education became successful in the United States, it was because of Shinichi Suzuki that Talent Education even exists. Although they did not become close to Mr. and Mrs. Suzuki initially, both William and Doris formed a friendship with the Suzukis – a friendship built upon mutual respect and admiration not only from the Preucils to the Suzukis, but also from the Suzukis to the Preucils.

Oviatt: So, just to recap, when did you first meet Suzuki?

D. Preucil: I first met him 1965 at Kendall's workshop and then I met him again in 1969.

Oviatt: During Kendall's workshop how much interaction did you have with him?

D. Preucil: None. I just shook his hand and said hello.

Oviatt: And what was your meeting like in 1969?

D. Preucil: In 1969 he was working with my students. Here I was at a college town where I was trying to prove that this was a good method. I was digging up all of the music myself because I had none of the Suzuki books. When my students got to the Vivaldi Concerto I bought what I thought was the most authentic edition, which was the Galamian Edition. I taught my kids that edition. By this time I had about 100 kids who played the Vivaldi Concerto with the Galamian edition. When my group of students were working with Suzuki, he called for the Vivaldi Concerto. The students started to play and got to the place where the Suzuki book changes. Suzuki threw up his hands and said, "I do not know this piece" in his broken English. It was one of the worst moments of my life. Here I was really meeting him, I mean, we had dinner and everything. I was there as the teacher of these students and I had this terrible disaster. And that was really the first time I had met him person-to-person.

Oviatt: What year was that?

D. Preucil: That was 1969. I was pregnant with Jeannie.

Oviatt: Was that here in Iowa?

D. Preucil: It was down in Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Oviatt: After that workshop, when was the next time you met Suzuki?

D. Preucil: I went to the workshop in Hawaii in 1975 and then I think I went back in 1976. From that point on I went to all of the workshops except the one in Germany.

W. Preucil: Yes, we missed the one in Munich.

Oviatt: Is that when you met Mrs. Suzuki, in 1975 and 1976?

D. Preucil: I met her in 1969 when they came here, but it was just to say hello. I never really got acquainted well with either Dr. Suzuki or Mrs. Suzuki until we went in 1982.

Oviatt: And did you (William) meet them at the same time as Doris?

W. Preucil: No, I didn't go to the workshop in St. Louis.

D. Preucil: And you didn't go to Hawaii, either.

W. Preucil: No, I didn't go to Hawaii.

D. Preucil: He didn't really get involved until the Suzuki books came out in 1981.

W. Preucil: We made recordings in 1979 and 1980.

D. Preucil: Bill started making recordings in Christmastime of 1979.

Oviatt: After you all became more acquainted, what was your relationship like with the Suzuki's?

D. Preucil: I became a very close friend of Mrs. Suzuki when I was President here. I brought the Suzukis to the teacher's conference in 1984, and from that point every time we had a conference in Chicago I would take Mrs. Suzuki shopping. We would even eat together.

W. Preucil: Mrs. Suzuki's dress sizes weren't in Japan too much, so Doris would take her to Marshall Fields.

D. Preucil: I arranged outings. I was allowed to go back to where they got off the plane to greet them in Chicago. I arranged for them to have business-class or first-class tickets – I've got letters upstairs thanking me for them – and meeting them in Chicago and a wheelchair for Dr. Suzuki so he would not have to walk that long concourse. They always had the top floor at the Hilton and I visited them there. That was when Suzuki and I talked about the viola books. I went up there and we'd have a meeting. But at first, in 1984, we were out in Oak Grove, we were not downtown. We went downtown after that.

Oviatt: Did you (William) ever have a relationship with either one of them?

D. Preucil: In 1982, when we went to Japan.

W. Preucil: I do not know what year we were at Stevens Point. They came to Stevens Point more than we went to Japan.

D. Preucil: Yes, they did.

W. Preucil: And we went out to dinner with them at restaurants and he needed to go to the men's room, so I would take him there and then he'd be gone for a long time and we would wonder where he went. I had to tell people he was smoking again. We took him to get his honorary doctorate at Oberlin.

D. Preucil: That was in 1984, after the conference.

W. Preucil: He disappeared on the campus and we had a hard time finding him. He was smoking somewhere.

D. Preucil: It turned out that he got the honorary doctorate at Oberlin the same day as our daughter, Ann, graduated from Oberlin. We were at the conference in Oak Brook and we left on Saturday afternoon and flew to Oberlin and went to the graduation concert that night. We sat in the front row and a violinist played, and Dr. Suzuki said he'd get a better tone if he'd lower his elbow, and it was true. Beautiful violinist, but the tone was thin. The next day, he and Ann graduated, and then we flew back to Chicago to finish the workshop. We got to know them well then.

Just as the Preucils formed a relationship with Mr. and Mrs. Suzuki, they also formed lasting friendships with founding members of the SAA, such as Bill Starr and John Kendall. It was through these friendships that the organization was able to gain its strength and that Talent Education was able to take root in the United States.

Oviatt: What about other founding members of the organization, like Starr and Kendall. Did you develop close relationships with them?

W. Preucil: Yes.

D. Preucil: We are close friends with the Starrs. I knew Louise Behrend and Anastasia Jempelis well. I actually knew Anastasia from Rochester Philharmonic. We got together a several institutes.

Oviatt: If you had to, in one sentence, say what they were like, what would you say about John Kendall?

D. Preucil: I was a close friend of John Kendall's, yes.

Oviatt: If you had to, in one sentence, say what they were like, what would you say about John Kendall?

D. Preucil: He was a thinker in many ways. His mind worked in many different directions and I think he brought a lot to the Suzuki method. I think the Suzuki method needed to be a little bit Americanized or Europeanized to work outside of Japan, and I think he realized that and brought a lot of the thinking.

Oviatt: What would you say about the Starrs?

D. Preucil: Bill Starr has a wonderful way of talking to people and spreading the word and living the word. For him to pick up and take that huge family to Japan, the expense,

everything else involved, it was just amazing. He was a good player who could demonstrate that Suzuki went beyond Twinkle, but I think he had a great ability to put the method into words. We went to John Kendall's funeral. Bill Starr spoke and Sandy Reuning spoke, and both speeches were amazing. I get tearful just thinking about what he had to say.

W. Preucil: Bill Starr is so respected in Japan because of the same reason I respect him. He is often invited to speak in Japan and, when he was on the ISA board, when he spoke, he knew how to speak to the Japanese. You do not just say it out, "Blah, blah, blah," you have to couch your words.

D. Preucil: The Japanese had a great respect for someone who is a professor. Having professors like Bill Starr John Kendall who were interesting to them. Bill Starr took his family over. John Kendall went over there and spent these times, but Bill Starr became much closer to Suzuki than John Kendall did. John Kendall was not afraid to say things that probably were not exactly what Suzuki was saying. John was very much his own man, even though he was very much a disciple of Suzuki. So Bill Starr got to be much closer to the Suzukis and it was a wonderful relationship because it certainly helped the SAA and helped Suzuki spread in this country.

Oviatt: What about Louise Behrend?

W. Preucil: Louise Behrend.

D. Preucil: Louise Behrend. Bless her heart. Here was a teacher at Juilliard Prep who had studied with all the greats and who had been quite a recognized player. She was willing to adapt this method. She became a wonderful voice for the Suzuki method and she gave wonderful technical advice and workshops and talks. She brought in all her training, and she could speak very well. She could impart information very clearly.

Oviatt: She was one of those highly trained artists who was willing to change to Suzuki?

D. Preucil: Yes, Louise Behrend was willing to do this. She talked about how she heard the tour group on the first trip to America in 1964, which we missed. I did not know about all these things that were going on then. She heard one of these little children, a nine-year-old student, who played the Veracini Sonata. She said, "I was playing that piece in a recital the next week and it was wonderful." She was willing to adopt this method and did so much. She built that beautiful school in New York, School for Strings, and we shared information. We were friends because we were both starting a school. I started mine earlier than hers, but we had a lot in common.

Through the trials and tribulations of forming the SAA and ISA, and bringing

Talent Education to America, William and Doris Preucil, Mr. and Mrs. Suzuki, John

Kendall, Bill Starr, and others formed lasting friendships and professional relationships that made Talent Education such a success in the Americas – even to this day.

The Suzuki Viola School - Its History, Creation, and Content

Prior to the Preucils there was no Viola School in Talent Education. Because William was a violist and a viola professor, and because there was the need for orchestra teachers as well as at the Preucils' own school, Doris decided to take advantage of her large amount of down time to remedy the situation of no viola books.

Oviatt: How and when did you become involved in creating the Suzuki Viola School?

D. Preucil: I had back surgery in 1976. I went to the hospital in November and I did not get out until after New Year's. I do not recall what was going on all that time, but when I came home, I had to take it easy. Everything has changed so much since then. Now, they send you home the next day. Then, I had to take it slowly and be careful. In fact, I did not feel back to normal for about a year and there was not a lot I could do. In the meantime, we had started our school, but there were people using Suzuki in the String Class. Did you ever hear of that?

Oviatt: I have heard of that, yes.

D. Preucil: Someone took the Suzuki in the key of D so that people could use it in the public schools. This was some distant relation of one of Mrs. Suzuki's relatives.

W. Preucil: Howard Van Sickle in Minneapolis.

D. Preucil: Howard Van Sickle, yes. He was in Minnesota. It was an American who wrote this book and it was used in a few places. This American had viola and had string bass. Then Dr. Suzuki decided he did not want that book out and he called it back. Now these places had nothing in the meantime. I was a friend of the teacher who was using the book in Des Moines and she came crying to me, wondering what the basses were going to do and what were the violas going to do without the book.

Oviatt: Was Dr. Suzuki aware of Van Sickle when the book was initially released?

D. Preucil: Yes, Dr. Suzuki was aware of the book and he had given his permission and then he changed his mind. Several things about the book are not true Suzuki. First, the book calls for putting these kids together so they are playing in different octaves. With Suzuki group lessons, one could try to tune up by ear by playing in the same octave. We started our school and we wanted to have an orchestra – I already had an orchestra, the one I had way back in 1967.

Oviatt: You had your ongoing Little Symphony?

D. Preucil: We were playing and I had to go out. I did not have violas. I had violins and cellos. I went out and found a cellist and a pianist. That was our orchestra. I could show you that film from 1971. We did not have a viola and now we had a school and viola was on the curriculum, but there was no viola book. I decided I was going to write the first four books and I was going to write them exactly like the violin because I believed so much in that great foundation.

Oviatt: Similar to the graded repertoire that was present for the violins?

D. Preucil: Yes. It was a matter of translating, going down a fifth, but then the piano parts had to be rewritten because one cannot just put them all down here where they do not sound good. They had to be re-voiced. Those books gave me a very nice activity while I was recovering from my surgery.

While Doris was busy creating the viola repertoire, William was busy working at the university and playing with his quartet. However, inasmuch as their school had to offer viola to students, William and Doris hired some of his university viola teachers to teach at the Preucil School – although they did not have a Suzuki viola book to use.

Oviatt: Were you (William) teaching violin students in the meantime before the viola?

D. Preucil: He was just teaching at the university.

Oviatt: In 1976, before you really were getting involved, was it that people assumed that he is a violist and then not realize that there was no viola Suzuki? Would they come to the school or come to you and ask for viola lessons?

D. Preucil: I had viola teachers.

W. Preucil: I taught some viola.

D. Preucil: Not right away. Not in 1975.

W. Preucil: In my university studio.

D. Preucil: You had those kids who taught for me.

W. Preucil: Wanda King. Yes, my students.

D. Preucil: We hired his students at our school when we opened.

Oviatt: And did you have a methodology that you would use?

D. Preucil: They would just teach viola. We opened in 1975 and we had viola, but there was no viola book, so I was basically writing these viola books for myself.

After Doris had written the first four volumes of the viola repertoire and piano accompaniments, she submitted them to Suzuki for approval. However, Suzuki had already asked William Primrose to write the books. Due to Japanese tradition, he could not approve Doris's viola books unless Primrose declined the offer or enough time had elapsed.

D. Preucil: I somehow notified somebody that I had written these books and, by this time, someone I knew was with the publishers company.

W. Preucil: Yuko Honda was employed the publishers company.

D. Preucil: But nothing was published until we started dealing with them in 1980. We made those recordings in 1979.

W. Preucil: First, you had to get Suzuki's permission.

D. Preucil: In the meantime, Dr. Suzuki was thinking about starting to have viola books, but he asked William Primrose to write the viola books. He really admired William Primrose, and Primrose had spent a lot of time in Japan because of Hiroko. After I wrote these books – Yvonne Tate was President-elect and she found out about the books – she started saying we should get these books printed, but Dr. Suzuki really wanted Primrose to do it, and he did not know anything about me at that time. I really did not get to know him until after these first four books were published. Yvonne kind of worked at it and finally got Primrose to tell Dr. Suzuki he was not interested in the opportunity to write the books.

W. Preucil: In Japan, once you ask somebody to do something, you cannot ask somebody else five years later if they have not done it until the other person says, "No, I will not be able to do it." In other words, Dr. Suzuki had to hear it from Primrose if he, Primrose, was not going to do it. So Suzuki would not act on Doris's books until Primrose wrote to him saying he, Primrose, was not going to do the books. So Yvonne Tate actually wrote the letter and had Primrose sign it because she knew him. How did she know Primrose?

D. Preucil: I do not know that she knew him, but she just took the bull by the horns.

W. Preucil: Was he at BYU then?

D. Preucil: I think so. He was in this country.

W. Preucil: And Hiroko (Mrs. Primrose) was here.

D. Preucil: Yes.

Oviatt: So when you initially transcribed the violin books 1 through 4 just as they were, you transcribed them for viola?

W. Preucil: But she put in practice suggestions.

Oviatt: But you were doing this for your own, for the Preucil School?

W. Preucil: Probably with the hope that they could become the Suzuki method.

D. Preucil: With the hope because people were crying for it. In the meantime, this was 1979. Actually, it was 1976, when I had my surgery, when I started it. At Stevens Point, there was an interest in viola and that is when Bill got involved with viola.

W. Preucil: I started teaching the teachers using her manuscripts.

D. Preucil: People wanted viola. There were many viola players there who were taking teacher training in violin, but they wanted to play their violas, so we got together a big group of people and played through these pieces. That was really where the viola got started.

Oviatt: Was that when the SAA was getting started?

D. Preucil: We were using my manuscript from 1976 until all this was cooking and, finally, in 1979, we got permission to go to print – after Primrose said no. Then it was okay.

W. Preucil: In 1979, Primrose sent the letter to Suzuki that Yvonne had prepared for him.

With permission being given, and the books being approved by Suzuki, the Suzuki Viola School recordings needed to be completed and the books needed to be released.

D. Preucil: I got in touch with Summy-Birchard and they decided they would print the first four books and gave permission for Bill to make the recording. We made that first recording during Christmas vacation, 1979.

W. Preucil: We had been making them throughout the fall, I think, in my studio.

D. Preucil: Do you think so?

W. Preucil: It was when we got the Telemanns. We had to get Billy and Molly involved in this recording because of it being a two-viola concerto. Molly played quite a bit, and Christmas Day was the only day when we could do it.

D. Preucil: That is what I remember, that recording.

There is a misconception by many; perhaps because he was a famous violist and did the recordings, that William was the author and engineer of the Suzuki viola books. However, this entire endeavor was the brainchild and hard work of Doris. Not only did Doris transcribe the initial four violin books, but also she is responsible for all of the current books as well as any edits or adjustments that have been made to the viola books. Although she did have William pre-view the books, and he was the one to do all of the initial recordings, the entire Suzuki Viola School curriculum is due to the hard work and dedication of Doris Preucil.

Oviatt: Was Doris the one who was the most involved in putting together the initial viola books?

W. Preucil: She was the author.

D. Preucil: The entire viola books.

W. Preucil: I had nothing to do with it.

D. Preucil: He did not write the viola books, but everybody thinks so.

Oviatt: Does that include the more recent ones as well?

D. Preucil: Every book, yes.

W. Preucil: You always say that I edited with you.

D. Preucil: Yes.

W. Preucil: I had to play through all those things and discuss the fingering, but she convinced me she was right.

D. Preucil: I marked all the fingerings and bowings, and then he played them, and where he had ideas that were different, we argued about them and he won about 50% of the time.

W. Preucil: We argued about the ISA and the SAA. No wonder we have such a strong marriage.

Oviatt: In between arguing about ISA and SAA, you took breaks to argue about editing? Was there a reason why it was all you (Doris) and not so much Bill?

W. Preucil: I had no interest in writing music.

D. Preucil: In 1979 he had never taught a Suzuki lesson.

W. Preucil: No, but I did not write the pieces or select the pieces in editing, either.

D. Preucil: I knew the teaching points, the way the progression of material should go. After the first four books, then we had a viola committee because then the viola was an accepted part of the SAA.

W. Preucil: This was before the international committees.

Although, after Book 4, there was a committee to give their thoughts and suggestions on edits and bowings and fingerings, Doris was (and is) the author of all of the viola books. She decided which pieces to include and she set all of the initial fingerings and bowings. The first four books were almost identical to the violin books, with two exceptions in Book 1, one exception in Book 3, and a departure from the majority of the violin repertoire in Book 4. The later viola books contain a few of the violin works, but the majority is music only for the violists – including standard viola repertoire. As the viola books and repertoire began to grow, Doris, with the help and suggestions of her husband and committee, began to go back and revise some of the earlier books. For example, the Nina was replaced with the Mozart Minuet – as well as other edits/revisions.

There were revisions being made, but the viola books began to spread all around the United States, which created a necessity for William to perform more frequently. William's performances and Doris's wonderful organization and transcriptions made Suzuki look upon the Preucils with great respect. Though many years passed between books 5 and 6, and it took quite a bit of time to finalize the books with Book 9, Doris was able to reach her goal of completing the viola books by the time she turned eighty years old.

Oviatt: Were the first four books printed before there was review by a committee?

D. Preucil: Yes. Then we started a viola committee and in one of the books, there is actually a list of names.

W. Preucil: Book 5.

D. Preucil: Is that Book 5?

W. Preucil: It says Betsy Stuen-Walker and Virginia Schneider. Virginia Schneider is actually the mother of the viola method. She kept pressuring Doris to write it.

D. Preucil: I know. Virginia Schneider deserves so much credit. She was a fine player and a fine musician.

W. Preucil: She was principal of the Louisville Orchestra.

D. Preucil: She pushed so hard for Suzuki and started all these Suzuki institutes there, and she was on the viola committee from the beginning.

Oviatt: Initially, the viola books were just a direct transcription of the violin Books 1 through 4, is that correct? What was the process for creating the viola books that we know now? Now, there is Bohemian and French folk song and then the Mozart in Book 3.

D. Preucil: In Book 1, I managed to get those two things in the book because John Kendall had those in his Listen and Play and those of us that started early relied on those pieces. He had a group of supplementary folk songs in the piano part. They were not in the violin part, but they were in the piano part, and I thought they were so valuable that I wanted to give the violas something that the violinists did not have.

W. Preucil: She also made practice suggestions but they were in the body of the work and the publisher said we could not disturb the liturgy of Suzuki's method, so he put them in the back of the book, which is actually a nice compromise.

D. Preucil: I really wanted those suggestions. Many of them were what I learned from John Kendall, but mostly because I thought maybe the viola school would bring violas to Suzuki and they had not been in it before and that would give them a sense of how to use this music. Even if they were not Suzuki teachers, they might want to use this music. But they were limiting me as to how much I could put in there. It was interesting. Suzuki did not want anything in his books except the music. His books did not even have the A major scale – nothing except the pieces, and he was very strong on that. My editor at one point was Yuko Honda, who brought the Japanese feelings, and I had to fight to get those practice suggestions in because they really did not want anything like that. Now you look at the Suzuki violin school, half the book is not the music.

Oviatt: In Book 2 the violas go into treble and also shift. Did you do that or was that a committee decision?

D. Preucil: Those were all my decisions. Basically, I wrote the book. What the committee talked about was the way we evolved the repertoire in the later books. We planned out the repertoire as close as we could to the end with ideas from the committee. We could not adhere to everything because of copyright issues, but basically, that framework is what was followed to the end. I was not forced to have a committee. Suzuki gave me permission – passed the torch – which I should be the writer of the viola school and to have no limits, but I felt I wanted to involve other people and get their ideas.

W. Preucil: Some of their ideas were good. Committee people asked why there was no contemporary music in it. Contemporary music is completely foreign to everything I did. There is contemporary music right outside of it. They can use that, unlike Hindemith or Trauermusik.

D. Preucil: Copyrights were not the only thing we had to consider. I was also taking into consideration many of the sonatas that were brought up – Hindemith sonatas, Brahms sonatas. If one has a sonata for pre-college kids, how much are they going to get together with a wonderful pianist and be able to have the interchange that makes a work a sonata? That is not the type of training that a high school student needs, for the most part. If one has a really outstanding student who can do that and can afford to hire an accompanist, that is wonderful. However, that is beyond the range of most Suzuki accompanists.

Oviatt: I was just going to mention Brahms and Hindemith.

D. Preucil: They can do that on the outside. We are supposed to be following the violin books. What did the violin books have? They did not have things with terribly difficult piano parts? They did not have music that was that extremely difficult, although we carried the viola school.

W. Preucil: Book 9 is hard.

D. Preucil: It is pretty difficult.

W. Preucil: You did that in Book 9.

D. Preucil: Yes, we have the two Mozart concertos.

W. Preucil: Linda Perry said the Hummel Sonata is the most difficult piece in the repertoire of all Suzuki to play, which is true.

Oviatt: Was it a committee decision to put the Telemann in Book 4?

D. Preucil: No, there was no committee after Book 4 was printed.

Oviatt: So you decided then. How did you go about deciding to put the Telemann in?

D. Preucil: I was married to a violist.

W. Preucil: Telemann Concerto is the first viola concerto historically ever written, and the Double; I did not discover the Double until later in life. It must have been the early 1970s, and it was so great. I thought it was so beautiful that it had to be included, that was so appealing to study.

D. Preucil: In the meantime there was another woman writing viola books at the same time I was. I cannot remember her name. She was putting in all kinds of obscure pieces.

Oviatt: More contemporary pieces?

D. Preucil: No, no. Old Christian Bach and people way back.

W. Preucil: But she had some Suzuki pieces in it.

D. Preucil: She was also putting in many duets.

W. Preucil: Did Suzuki stop her from publishing, or did she just publish anyway?

D. Preucil: I do not know whatever happened.

W. Preucil: She thought she was writing a Suzuki method book.

Oviatt: Did putting in the Telemann Double actually have anything to do with the Bach Double? Is it the equivalent?

D. Preucil: It did serve that purpose. I was looking for something that would give people a chance to play together and that hit the spot.

Oviatt: The established books were piano and violin, mostly for Suzuki. Did you use those as a reference for how to continue to put them together? You mentioned you wanted to follow the structure of what the violin books were doing.

D. Preucil: I, myself, was teaching all these books and I was seeing all the teaching points and the development. I wanted to see the same development in the viola books, so that was the way they evolved. There would be a plateau piece here where there was a chance to stop and really just play relaxed and have a good time. Then there would be some challenges and there would be chances to develop certain kinds of bowings. I have heard from some people that the work is controversial. For example, some of the fingerings in the Telemann Double are troublesome because we were trying to keep the string crossing instead of pulling on one string. We were using that kind of information, which is how the viola books evolved.

W. Preucil: The cello books were created by an international committee. It took them years and years and years. I used to observe some of their meetings, peek in the door. There were some rough times.

D. Preucil: Even so, we have been blessed with wonderful cellists involved in the Suzuki method.

W. Preucil: Yes.

D. Preucil: The cello has developed so amazingly. That was, for the most part, the type of thinking that evolved the Suzuki school. Now, when I met with Suzuki in the Magic Tower there at the Hilton, I told him what we were doing and I showed him what we were doing. He was always, "Fine." The viola fascinated him. When we were there, he had some really neat discussions with Bill and stuff, but he never seemed to want to add it over there (Japan).

W. Preucil: I think he recognized – how do I say this without bragging – there's two things that got me through school and through my life in music that I never had to be taught. One is my tone and the other is my vibrato. Suzuki spent the last twenty years of his life teaching only tone. When I played a recital in Japan and he heard me perform for the first time, we were going up in the elevator, and he said, "You play from the heart." If I could choose the repertory to make an audition of music that I sound good at, and I often think about – I love his teaching in tonalizations. I talk about the bow arm and the weight and all that I know how to do, but I think it's almost more difficult for me to teach that. Technique is what I really had to learn myself, so I probably know more about what the student is going through and can help them because I was such a klutz at one point.

Oviatt: Because that was where your deficit was when you were young?

W. Preucil: But I think I'm pretty good at teaching tone too.

D. Preucil: Being on that trip in 1982, Suzuki planned in advance for us to have a little concert tour, and Bill brought along his student, Michael Straus, who is the one who recorded the last two books, and I brought Jeanie, and the four of us played recitals. That was when Suzuki heard Bill play. They were so good to us and we ended up at Lake Biwa, where they were having their teacher training summer school. We were the guests there, but we also gave the final concert. We left the next day and we said goodbye to everybody at night after that concert. We went up in the elevator with the Suzukis and thanked them for everything. We were leaving at 6:00 o'clock in the morning, we were sneaking out, and we got out there and everybody was lined up to say goodbye. It was so touching.

W. Preucil: Actually, that was the first day of the conference and we had to go home.

D. Preucil: We had to leave, yes.

W. Preucil: When I went up the elevator with them after that, and I said, "I'm so sorry I won't be here," because we heard his first lectures the first day. "I won't be here the whole week to hear you lecture." He said, "Doesn't matter, I'm going to say the same thing every day." It's true – repetition.

D. Preucil: I don't know if you watch *Downton Abbey* on TV.

Oviatt: Yes, I do.

D. Preucil: When everyone is going away or coming in, all the maids are lined up. It always reminds me of when we left there.

Oviatt: Did you send your transcriptions to Suzuki and did he like them?

D. Preucil: He approved them and named me the writer.

Oviatt: In Book 4, though, it really started. In Book 3, there is that little Mozart and the Bohemian that is in Book 1.

D. Preucil: That Mozart was not added for a long time.

W. Preucil: Nina was added.

D. Preucil: At the beginning when we were writing Book 5 this was a chance to give the violas some music and there was nothing, I mean, so

W. Preucil: Doris, Book 3 is where you put Nina in the beginning and that was not in the violin book.

D. Preucil: We put Nina in Book 3 because we wanted to have something where violists could work on their tone, but it was really much too difficult for Book 3. It was added there because we needed something. Then, in Book 4, we needed something else. Suzuki realized that, but we took a few key pieces that built upon that foundation technique that was found in the violin repertoire and put them in the viola repertoire. We left out one Seitz, which Suzuki hardly ever did anyway.

W. Preucil: We left out the Vivaldi G Minor.

D. Preucil: That was Book 5. But I mean for the books.

Oviatt: You have two Seitz, two Vivaldis that are shared with the violin.

D. Preucil: We had the crucial things, and then we were able to add viola pieces. But we did not add that Mozart Minuet to Book 3 because we have Nina there, which we knew was too advanced, but we did not know when we were ever going to get Book 5 done.

Oviatt: So, much later you moved Nina and replaced it with the Mozart.

D. Preucil: Yes, we replaced it with the Mozart and moved Nina.

Oviatt: You put out the first four books relatively quickly, but the fifth book took longer. Why?

D. Preucil: It was not just me working on Book 5. I was working with others, and Summy-Birchard was going through changes. There were new people and different people and people living in different places. There had to be a book in their budget, too. I had to send the book to them and they had to check on all the copyright laws. By the time I had written a book, it probably took at least two years to get it published.

Oviatt: Did the publisher start with Book 1 while you wrote the rest, or did the publisher try to put them all out together?

D. Preucil: I think they did the first book in 1981. Book 2 was 1982. Book 3 was 1983, and Book 4 was 1983. And then Book 5 didn't come until 1986.

Oviatt: Did you work with multiple people on Book 5?

D. Preucil: No, I did not work with any other people.

W. Preucil: We sent out manuscripts out and people put in fingerings and bowings.

D. Preucil: No, I never got fingerings and bowings from those people.

W. Preucil: Yes, you did.

D. Preucil: We met at an institute and had a meeting where we talked about repertoire.

Oviatt: I see.

D. Preucil: That meeting occurred at the end of the book. I never sent any music out until we had the International Viola Committee, and that was when I started sending out things.

Oviatt: I see. So for Book 5, you took the time to put it together yourself? I ask because there was time between Book 4 and Book 5.

D. Preucil: When I could devote the time to the book, I worked on it. I had things going on in my life at that time.

Oviatt: Did your back get better during that time?

D. Preucil: One cannot just write a little bit now and a little bit later. To finish Book 9, I took a summer and I committed myself to concentrate on getting the material together. I pushed myself and tried to work uninterrupted. There was time on my part and time on the publisher's part.

Oviatt: Starting with Book 5, the material looks to have become its own system of books. There are still some of the same pieces from the violin books, but there is also much more viola repertoire.

D. Preucil: Yes, there is very little from the violin books from Book 5 onward, just a few things that I thought were major teaching points. In Book 5, we have the Country Dance, which is so important, and the Gigue. And Book 6 has Fiocco Allegro, and I think those are the only ones that are in the viola school.

Oviatt: That are still followed.

D. Preucil: We do have the Corelli Allegro.

W. Preucil: Veracini Gigue

Oviatt: Right.

D. Preucil: Because that is such a developmental (piece).

Oviatt: Did you apply your knowledge of various viola repertoire, or how did you research to decide on the pieces to use?

D. Preucil: I have been hearing viola music right along since Book 1.

W. Preucil: On the Marcello Sonata you took the F Major Cello Sonata and put it in G.

D. Preucil: Yes, I took the Marcello F Major and transcribed it for viola into G Major and wrote the piano part. In Book 6, I took La Folia and wrote the piano part from figured bass.

W. Preucil: There were all sorts of variations, so you had to pick.

D. Preucil: I chose which variations to use.

W. Preucil: You chose your variations so that your book would not be exactly the same as what Paul Doktor had chosen for his book.

Oviatt: There was a large gap between Book 5 and Book 6. Why?

D. Preucil: Book 6 was published in 1993.

Oviatt: Was the gap because you ran out of time to work on them?

D. Preucil: I do not know. I had that hanging over my head. I started with this project in 1976 and I told myself if I could finish this by the time I was eighty, I would be happy. I finished. I just made it.

W. Preucil: One of the issues that crops up, too, involves timing and availability. When I was growing up, Handel Viola Concerto was a really benchmark piece on the viola. I auditioned on that piece for the Cleveland Orchestra. It was an acceptable piece. We wanted that staple of literature somewhere in the viola method, but it was difficult to get copyright permission because it was written in the 20th century. We encountered the same problem with the JC Bach Concerto.

D. Preucil: In Book 5, we have the Country Dances and the Marais Dances, and both of those pieces were difficult to obtain the copyright. That was part of the DeLay for Book 5.

Oviatt: The Marais was a hard copyright?

W. Preucil: Five French Dances, or Four French Dances.

D. Preucil: Yes, those.

W. Preucil: That was the book.

D. Preucil: That was Book 5.

W. Preucil: The JC Bach used to be in Book 5, the first two movements. Now that piece is in Book 6. We could not get those rights, but Yuko Honda knew we wanted that,

and she went to a publisher's convention in Sweden. She got a call when she checked in at the hotel. There was this other publisher who wanted to talk to her about a piece over which Summy-Birchard had the copyright. The other publisher wanted permission to publish the piece that Summy owned and Yuko knew this was the person who had the JC Bach copyright. They met for cocktails and signed over their permissions.

W. Preucil: Then there was the Handel. I wrote to the publisher, Max Eschig, in Paris. I wrote in English, telling about this great educational method and how everyone had grown up on the Handel Concerto and we wanted to use all or part of it, and never heard from him. I tried it twice. Then Summy-Birchard sold off to Time Warner. We told the representative at Time Warner that we had been trying to get this thing and he had his local agent there contact Eschig. Of course, the Time Warner agent in France spoke French fluently and bingo, we got the Handel Concerto. As David Dalton always says and as I tell my students, "If you want to spend $50 for the original version of the Handel concerto or $12.95 for the Suzuki one, it's your choice."

D. Preucil: I simplified a little bit the piano part for the Handel because it is so difficult. It is still difficult, but it is easier than the other one.

Oviatt: If you had to choose one piece from each book that you believe is the most important for violists specifically, what would that piece be and why?

D. Preucil: I do not know. Maybe you ought to ask him.

Oviatt: Consider each book. What in the books is most important for violists?

W. Preucil: It would be the same answer as for violin: Book 1 and Book 2.

Oviatt: Why do you think that Book 1 and Book 2 are most important?

W. Preucil: I do not know. I think if you can play Suzuki Allegro, you learn a lot. I cannot choose one book over another. That would be like asking me what my favorite Beethoven quartet is. But I do think later in the books – in Book 5, for example – they are all so different, like Spinning Wheel.

Oviatt: Book 4 appears to focus more on viola repertoire. Do you think of the Telemanns as being more important than the Vivaldis or did they just serve their own very specific purpose?

D. Preucil: I could answer that one because I am teaching a viola student right now who just started Book 5. No, actually, she's finishing Book 4, and we just started the Telemann.

W. Preucil: That is Book 4.

D. Preucil: End of Book 4. I actually started her on the Telemann Double. We were polishing the Vivaldi Presto because they are different things and that is why it is difficult to choose. For example, in Book 5, is that not where your Spinning Wheel is?

W. Preucil: Yes.

D. Preucil: That is developing so much left hand technique, but Country Dance is developing so much bow and so much shifting. Each one has its own strength, so it is difficult to choose what book or piece is most important. But I do feel that in Book 4, the Vivaldi Presto is probably the piece that is going to get your technique firmly ingrained. You have all the string crossings in the middle and you have all the different techniques. I always felt that the Bach Double is the most important thing in Book 4 because it ties all the techniques together, but violists do not have that and, technically, both Telemanns are easier than the Vivaldi Presto. But you are developing viola tone at the same time.

Oviatt: Would you choose the same things again, with just all of the later books as well?

D. Preucil: Yes, each one serves its important needs, and that is why the series was developed the way it was.

Oviatt: As you were putting the pieces together in these books, were you thinking about having a student who is at a particular level and what techniques the student needs to build and then trying to find pieces to match that need?

D. Preucil: I had violin students in Book 6 and I know what I am trying to do with them. The viola books are so big that, actually, Book 5 is almost comparable to Book 6 for violin.

W. Preucil: Book 7, Book 8, and Book 9 could all be mixed up together. I suppose Book 9 is harder than any of them, but 7 and 8, after a while, one cannot go step by step.

Oviatt: Are the pieces not as graded in the later books?

W. Preucil: No.

D. Preucil: One is making sure that the book has all the teaching points growing, which means that the books are somewhat sequential, but as far difficulty goes, probably things that are in Book 7 are playable by somebody in Book 5. The skills are transferable. For our concerts, the advanced viola class, there are just so many violas and one has to choose a piece that they can all play, and we might pick a piece out of Book 6 that the kids from Book 5 and Book 6 are all playing. They will still come and study around it when they get to it, but in the meantime, the kids in Book 5 are going to learn it sooner. It is not going to hurt them. We did the same thing with violin.

W. Preucil: One example of what you are talking about is the reason the third movement of JC Bach is in Book 7 instead of Book 6, where the other two movements are because it is more difficult.

Oviatt: Especially that first page.

W. Preucil: I have some ideas about how to teach that.

Oviatt: I know, I took training with you.

W. Preucil: Which book did we do?

Oviatt: I got four, six, seven, and eight with you.

W. Preucil: Where was that besides Utah?

Oviatt: Most of them were in Utah. I think they were all in Utah.

D. Preucil: Well, after Book 5, Book 6 was not published until 1993, and then Book 7 in 2000, Book 8 in 2005, and Book 9 in 2013.

Oviatt: Publication spread out quite a bit.

W. Preucil: We had grandchildren to visit.

D. Preucil: The longest span was between Book 6 and Book 7. I do not know why that book took from 1993 to 2000.

Oviatt: I realize this question is akin to asking you to choose among your children, and I want each of you to answer the question, but do you have a few favorite pieces in the books that you either love to teach or to play, and if so, what are they?

D. Preucil: Mine is the La Folia. I had so much fun writing that.

Oviatt: Is it your favorite both to teach and to play?

D. Preucil: I am trying to think, I must have taught that. No, Book 6 was not published when I was teaching Suzanne. I lose track. I do not know if I've ever taught La Folia. I have not taught a lot of viola. Now and then, I have a viola student.

Oviatt: Was it just a matter of going through all of the different variations and picking?

D. Preucil: Yes, picking, the variations, of writing the piano parts because one can be creative in writing the piano parts. Writing piano is not like transcribing something that was already written.

Oviatt: So when you were doing the accompaniment, did you have to transcribe all of the piano as well as the viola?

D. Preucil: Yes.

Oviatt: You mentioned earlier that you had written down a piece to simplify it. Was it the Handel that you had written for piano?

D. Preucil: I simplified it a little bit.

Oviatt: Was your process for working with the piano parts the same as your process for transcribing the viola parts? You were not teaching piano. You expected someone to be an accompanist and know what he or she was doing. How did you decide what you were going to do with these piano parts?

D. Preucil: If it were something that was already written, such as the Vivaldis or the Telemanns, that chose for me. The Telemanns, I just took the piano parts the way they were. All those later pieces that are viola pieces, those piano parts are pretty much the same, except in Book 9. I had such a headache with piano parts for Book 9.

Oviatt: What was your most difficult book?

D. Preucil: I am trying to remember. It was. The biggest problem was the Carl Maria von Weber.

W. Preucil: The Hungarian Rondo, Introduction to the Hungarian Rondo.

D. Preucil: Yes, because Summy-Birchard would not use anything that they had to buy from another publisher.

W. Preucil: You mean Alfred Music.

D. Preucil: Alfred would not – there were perfectly fine piano parts out there, except they had a lot of wrong notes in them. We could have just taken that and all I would have had to do is edit, finger, and bow the viola parts, but the publisher would not allow that. I had to find old original first printings that are out of copyright. Some of them were done for the bassoon because this piece was written for bassoon, too. Then some of the editions that were out did not go along with the orchestral score. We had a student who was playing it with an orchestra and suddenly it did not fit.

W. Preucil: A measure different, or left out.

D. Preucil: Even the Primrose is totally different from what the other one did. I had to basically rewrite the piano parts, putting together old bassoon accompaniments. It took a lot of time.

Oviatt: Was it more time consuming for the piano parts than it was for the viola parts?

D. Preucil: Definitely. The piano parts took much more time, and just writing them down, there are a thousand more notes.

Oviatt: Did you do orchestration parts as well for some of those pieces?

D. Preucil: No, I did separate orchestrations for the Seitz and D'Hervelois Suite and the After a Dream, but I did not do them originally.

Oviatt: You went back and did them later?

D. Preucil: Yes, because people were crying for things to play with their orchestra. I have always written things trying to fill a need, not what would specially sell. At any rate the Suzuki Viola School was a work of love. I was proud to be able to do it and I felt like I had the best of two worlds. I had lived for so many years teaching the violin school and I was married to a top violist, so what more could one want?

Oviatt: William, what are your favorites? Can you choose one or two?

W. Preucil: I think I enjoy teaching certain pieces most that give me the opportunity to share my joy of the music. The closer one gets to one's heart, one's inner soul – the Kreisler piece – and show a student how touching one can make three levels of da, da, de, dum, da, da, de, dum, you know, a different way to use one's bow instead of just playing the notes. More and more, I think of expressing that one goes to a recital and one just see arms playing music and there is no connection to anything else. If one can awaken that connection in some small percentage and make someone's eyes open up, that is wonderful. For me, pieces like that Kreisler and the D'Hervelois Suite, which is a difficult piece to teach, that first movement, but it has such rewards in it. Then the second movement, I think, is one of the most perfect pieces of music to express a long line, and how does one get that? One does not just think of the phrases as going like that, but there is something overarching in the whole thing that one cannot interrupt besides doing the inner parts. I enjoy that kind of teaching rather than a Veracini Gigue where the fingers have to go in certain ways.

D. Preucil: The D'Hervelois Suite I wrote for Bill back in 1957.

W. Preucil: 1956.

D. Preucil: Or 1956. We were playing the Peninsula Music Festival up in Door County, Wisconsin, with Thor Johnson. Thor asked Bill to be soloist the following summer in 1957.

W. Preucil: So I played my Bloch Suite with Orchestra.

D. Preucil: So I re-orchestrated the Bloch Suite for Bill.

W. Preucil: For a chamber orchestra. That is like Shalom with 40 people or something.

D. Preucil: It worked very well. We used a second oboe for a second trumpet. It really worked. I orchestrated D'Hervelois Suite at that time. I edited and wrote out D'Hervelois Suite so we had that from 1957, and when we wrote the books, then it was already there, and then I had the orchestration. The orchestration was done originally with winds because we had winds in Door County, so it works both ways – with just strings or with winds. At that performance in 1957, when Bill played it, that was the day that I first felt life with Billy (William Preucil Jr.).

W. Preucil: Also on that date, *Time* magazine came to see what was going on at this music festival and wrote an article about Thor Johnson starting this festival. They happened to hit the night I played, so I had three or four sleepless nights waiting for *Time* magazine to come out to review me. Her piece got reviewed but I did not. I do not think it mentioned my name – it must have. It said there was an elegant piece by Louis D'Hervelois.

D. Preucil: It said something very nice about it without anybody's name. That was all right.

Throughout the process of putting all of the viola books together much time and energy was spent selecting the repertoire, transcribing pieces from the violin repertoire, and putting the piano parts together including the creation of bowings and fingerings. Most of the bowings and fingerings that Doris decided to use, with some input from William, were specifically chosen for pedagogical reasons. However, inasmuch as the violin books were revised, the pieces that were shared within the violin and viola books also had to be revised in the viola books. All of the newly revised pieces had to be re-recorded.

Oviatt: What was the process for editing the bowings and fingerings? You mentioned that you would put them in and then have William play through and then you and he would have a discussion.

D. Preucil: If one were doing the Minuet in G, one would need to go to third position. It goes back to me not having any Suzuki books for at least the first five years of my teaching. I was inventing my own fingerings for these pieces and I taught my violin students to shift in Book 2. I still do. I did that in Book 2, which prepared for what was necessary to use in Minuet in G – to go to third position.

Oviatt: What about a piece like the Bach Suite Prelude in Book 5? Most of it is grouped in fours.

D. Preucil: I went to Bill for ideas because he has spent so much of his life dealing with Bach, so he could answer that. We worked together on the fingerings, but I left the decisions about the bowings to Bill.

Oviatt: Did you choose the music yourself? Were there specific pieces that you went to Bill about?

D. Preucil: We went through everything together. First, I needed help proofing. By us playing and going through the pieces together, we both knew everything very well and we knew what to look for when we were proofing. It was collaboration as far as the editing. As I said before, I felt privileged to study with my teacher in Eastman, who I thought had a real knack for fingerings and bowings. I felt as though I had learned so much from him. We shared many ideas about fingerings; for example, we hate to cross strings on a half step, and shifting is nicer on half steps. There are things that we both feel strongly about, so our ideas of fingerings are alike, but where we diverge is where he will say, "Well, on the viola, one would not do this because of the different size. I never liked to use the fourth finger." For me, the fourth finger is difficult for intonation. We are trying to teach a major third between one and three, and then suddenly to try to scrunch that down with a four when there is nothing there. In viola sometimes, Bill thought it was better to use that four, so we went with that four.

Oviatt: You re-edited the violin books. I have noticed that not all the viola books with the similar pieces have had the same edits done. Is that just because the viola books have not yet been re-edited or because they will not be re-edited?

D. Preucil: The violin books are done by an international committee. They have nothing to do with the viola books. In order to make it easy for the teachers that teach both violin and viola, I had to revise the viola books to match the violin books. I did that as truthfully as I could except, for when we got to the Bach Minuet in Book 3. I could not bear to depart from our nice Suzuki arrangement. In a few places, I have changed the bowing when I felt it was easy enough for the teacher to deal with it; and if they did not like it, they could change it. I do not think the committee always thought the musical things through on some of their editing. In fact, I just went through the books. Do you teach violin and viola?

Oviatt: I do.

D. Preucil: Then you understand. I just went through and edited the new Book 5 and the new Book 6 and the new Book 7. And re-edited my way. I am not going to teach it the way it is. I am using their bowings, except I am not going to use their bowings in Bach A Minor third movement. Actually, my kids just performed that and I made my own edition of that, which is more of a Baroque style, not the way they did it in the books. They had two things to choose from: they had the International Viola Committee and they had Japan. They did not have an alternative in the middle.

W. Preucil: International Violin Committee

D. Preucil: Yes. Which could have come up with a better edition. Doing things by committee, what do they say about? Something about designing an elephant? There are so many compromises, it is far better to have someone do it and if one does not like it, one can change what one does not like. One can buy an edition by Primrose and one either play it that way and one can come upon something one does not like and fix it. That is what people can do with the viola book or the violin book.

Oviatt: Did you have to make adjustments to the actual viola pieces that are not the violin equivalents?

D. Preucil: I had to adjust the violin pieces that are in the viola book, I had to change them.

W. Preucil: You had to change the notes.

D. Preucil: I had to change the Veracini Gigue in Book 5 – I did not like that bowing, but I had to change it because the violin committee did.

Oviatt: Did you have to change the bowing in the Musette in Book 2?

D. Preucil: One must start up-bow on the Musette.

W. Preucil: We had to re-record two pieces with notes changed.

D. Preucil: We had to change the Bach, the other Bach in Book 3. The books are still wrong. The piano part is totally wrong and they are not releasing a revised Book 3 for piano.

Oviatt: That E flat is incorrect, is it not?

D. Preucil: Yes. I changed it. In the meantime, they started re-editing the violin books. Then they recorded Book 1 or the first Book 3, I cannot remember. They hired a pianist who played Book 1 by ear. The whole thing was crazy. They had the committee there, the members of which were telling Billy how to play every note. The recording turned out just awful. All of us went to Summy-Birchard and demanded to have the recording done again. They sent me to the recording session so I could argue some of the points out with the gal from Japan who wanted something else. We had to fight for every little thing. That experience got me the job of being the editor for the Suzuki violin books.

Oviatt: Are you involved with all of the Suzuki piano books?

D. Preucil: Yes. Now I am. As a volunteer.

W. Preucil: For violin

Oviatt: Are you doing any other instruments as well or only violin and viola?

D. Preucil: When we brought in Linda Perry for Book 4, she and I started collaborating. Now for the new Book 7, we re-wrote the piano parts completely for both Handel Sonatas. Now, in Book 8, she wants to make changes to the Eccles and I like it the way it is.

Oviatt: In your opinion, when we speak about the viola pieces – the non-violin book pieces – that are in the viola books, if a teacher had a student who has smaller hands and there was something had many extensions, as a teacher, does one need to make a call, or somebody with longer fingers, instead of playing the lower form, to reach for three? What do you think would be best for that student?

D. Preucil: I do not imagine that everyone is even going to use all my fingerings. I think they are good, but they follow a certain pattern. If one follows my fingerings through all the books, there is a system to them. If one does not like one thing, one may not many of the things in the books. One is probably going to make a lot of changes. That is everyone's right. It does not hurt to get the kids to play together. They can all finger different ways.

Oviatt: What about bowings?

D. Preucil: With bowings, I have adhered closely to what they have, simply for the sake of one of the very important aspects of Suzuki: the group lesson and the play-in. I think one must protect that aspect. Even if I would like something different – for example, I do not like in the Veracini Gigue, the dump dadada dump dadadada dump – it is difficult for the kids, it is awkward for an adult – but I teach it the way it is written.

Oviatt: Do you teach it the way it is written so that, if they go to an institute they are all the same?

D. Preucil: They are doing it like everybody else.

Oviatt: Because fingerings are easier to hide.

D. Preucil: Once in awhile, I will do something and I will say, "If one goes to an institute, one can quickly fix that, it's not going to be difficult," and I do it my own way.

Oviatt: That answer brings me to my question about the Bach Prelude. William, are the bowings your idea?

W. Preucil: For that piece, I walked into a violin shop in Chicago looking for a cello for Wally – this was in the 1970 – and Frank Miller was there, first cellist for the Chicago Symphony. He met my son and asked him to play something for him. Wally played the Prelude and I think he played four on a bow. I do not know where he studied his cello. Wally played the piece and Frank praised him, then told Wally that he used to play it that way, too, but now played eight on a bow. Nobody agrees on Bach bowing. My son, Billy, will not play Bach in public because half the people are going to like it and half the people

are going to hate it. I thought, well, this is a method book. I play that piece now exactly as it is written in the Suzuki book. People are attracted to bringing out that phrasing. If one does eight in a bow, one gets out to a balance point that is going higher and higher as one get to the point and I always tell the students that if they learn it this way, then they can go to the great master teacher in the conservatory where they learn an entirely different bowing because that is what happens. For instance, the first four measures of that piece – I call it the *Reader's Digest* version with chords –is static. If one uses the bowing I have provided, one is then talking with one's fingers. One is creating the phrasing, but bowing should never attract attention away from or taking the role of phrasing of a piece.

Oviatt: Does bowing, then serve two purposes: bowing not to the phrasing but phrasing through the bowing? I am uncertain sure how to express that. How would you express that?

W. Preucil: Donington was a wonderful writer. He said there are some great musicologists who know how to write. They write nothing because it is easy to memorize that piece.

Oviatt: And then when one has to re-do it because everyone has to re-do it later, it is not so difficult to have to break the habit of the difficult bowings one had to learn.

W. Preucil: Correct.

D. Preucil: If you look at it Bill's way, there is never any need to change it – one can phrase within the bowing.

W. Preucil: Many traditional teachers have their own way. That was how they learned and that is the way one is going to learn. We all teach the way we learned.

D. Preucil: One learns something as a youngster or early and then one can part from it.

Oviatt: Regarding the piano, with all of the piano excursions Doris has going on, do you, William, ever have anything to do with that?

W. Preucil: No.

Oviatt: Are you not involved at all with any of the piano transcriptions?

W. Preucil: No. She was going to Pasadena to supervise Viola Book 7 and then when the International Committee changed the notes in the Bach, we needed to re-record the music. I imagined I would not be going out to Pasadena to record two notes, so I gave my viola to Doris and she gave it to Billy, and he recorded those two pieces over again. They inserted those recordings into the CD. I do not think I have ever listened to it.

D. Preucil: When we recorded those viola books, people were talking so much about the violin book recordings being too fast. Therefore we recorded the viola books pretty slow.

W. Preucil: Those tempos are the way I feel it.

D. Preucil: The slower tempos are very nice, because the violas can work on their sound.

D. Preucil: He had to record the triplet version of Twinkle, too because that was not in the original book.

W. Preucil: So did William Jr. record all of the Twinkles?

D. Preucil: Yes. He had to do all of the Twinkles.

W. Preucil: Our names are the same on the records. They never changed it.

Oviatt: Did they not distinguish between Jr. and Sr.?

W. Preucil: It does say William Preucil, Sr.

D. Preucil: On the recordings it says William Preucil, Sr.

Oviatt: How quickly after you finished the books did the recordings usually follow?

D. Preucil: Pretty quickly.

W. Preucil: Sometimes, we would record while the books were still being completed.

D. Preucil: We waited too long for book 9 – it took us a long time to record.

W. Preucil: It took so long because there was something going on with the publishers. I forget who our publisher was at that time, but they wanted the music printed before William recorded it. However, we had done some recording before the book was printed. Because of this, whatever came out on the record, if there was a dynamic or something, it was put in the book. I love Book 6 because the metronome marks were taken – that is an example of recording before it was printed - because the metronome marks were whatever I played.

Oviatt: They actually took the metronome markings from your recording?

W. Preucil: Yes, but after that, they no longer allowed me to do this because they wanted a finished product.

Oviatt: For the later books, then, the books were completed before the recordings?

W. Preucil: Yes, but I never listened to the records.

Oviatt: Have you never heard yourself play through them?

W. Preucil: I suppose I heard the final take.

Oviatt: How was the decision made for you to do those recordings?

D. Preucil: I do not remember.

W. Preucil: The publisher probably approved who would play the recordings. Nowadays, we have an international committee who is in charge of everything. Her manuscript has to be sent to that committee. They look at it but only person who usually responds with any ideas or suggestions is Koji Toyoda. He is on every committee, so he usually says something to Doris.

D. Preucil: Koji made a comment about the two movements of the LeClair Sonata. He wanted me to use the entire sonata but there was not enough room in the book for the whole work. You can probably buy that sonata arranged for viola somewhere. As you can see, I couldn't always do what Koji wanted.

Oviatt: Right.

D. Preucil: Do you remember what he wanted the last piece to be?

W. Preucil: In Book 9?

D. Preucil: I believe that doing the Schubert Arpeggione Sonata was a big thing for him.

W. Preucil: He had a suggestion for that sonata. That is where we changed a note – where Milton Katims did, as well.

D. Preucil: The original of the Schubert is very awkward. Paul Doktor sticks to the original and Katims uses the simplified version where it's an octave higher.

W. Preucil: We put Koji's suggestion in a footnote.

Oviatt: How many other people were involved in choosing the viola repertoire? I know initially it was all you, but in the end, how many people?

D. Preucil: We mentioned that there was a committee who began to give recommendations at about the time of Book 5.

Oviatt: Did that same committee work on Book 5 through Book 9?

W. Preucil: No. It was the SAA committee at first, and now there is no SAA committee.

D. Preucil: The SAA committee became the ISA Committee.

W. Preucil: Every instrument has a committee now. There is only one representative from each region of the world. Consequently you have a European, Australian, Asian, Japanese, and American representative. They must approve all core material. All core material has to go

through their hands. Therefore, Doris sends the manuscript, when she is done, to them to approve.

D. Preucil: Then if the committee members provided comments we consider them.

W. Preucil: We do not have to tell the committee members the percentage of comments we accept. The committee also must approve the recording artist. While I was the recording artist for the viola books, there was no question of their approval. However, when we changed to Michael Strauss, I had to send the committee his biography. The committee also required that all manuscripts be approved. It was required of me to get a majority of signatures from the viola committee, many of whom were on the ISA board. Ultimately, I had to get at least three out of five signatures.

Oviatt: Did the last four books have to be done within this larger process?

D. Preucil: Yes.

W. Preucil: The new process was good. Dividing the world into regions and having no election of a board chairman was a positive action. When Dr. Suzuki died, Hiroko Suzuki replaced him.

D. Preucil: Now there are terms.

W. Preucil: There are term limits so one person cannot be on the board for twenty years, for example.

Oviatt: Did these changes to the board alter your process of putting the books together?

W. Preucil: No.

Oviatt: Did you follow the same process for creating the books regardless of the changes in membership of the board?

D. Preucil: After the manuscript is completed it is sent to the board for approval. The only person who sent any comments was Koji, and he only made a few remarks.

W. Preucil: Last time, we did receive one comment from Hiroko.

D. Preucil: We did what she suggested.

W. Preucil: She is now the director of Talent Education, but she is on the viola committee as the Japanese representative. Koji is on all committees.

Oviatt: For book 5, you only had the SAA committee. Who was on that committee?

W. Preucil: It is printed in the front of the book.

Oviatt: I have a book 5: "The compositions in this volume were arranged for viola and piano by Doris Preucil. The viola parts were edited by William and Doris Preucil with the assistance of the Suzuki Association of America viola committee members, Leroy Bauer, Louita Clothier, William Foster, Virginia Schneider, and Elizabeth Stuen-Walker." Really, then, the process before the committee was that they just gave you their ideas for pieces that they thought should be included in the book?

D. Preucil: Yes, basically. It has really been a very smooth process. The biggest challenge was trying to find the time to do it. Because I do not do anything on the computer, my work is all done by hand.

W. Preucil: She means writing music.

D. Preucil: For the last ten years, I have had arthritis in my hand. It has been painful.

Oviatt: All of the transcriptions for all of the viola pieces as well as the piano accompaniments have been transcribed by hand?

D. Preucil: Yes, by hand.

Oviatt: Are there any pieces in the Suzuki repertoire where bowings are different from the standard repertoire?

W. Preucil: If you consider the Bach Prelude in book 5, I would not play it any different if I were in Carnegie Hall. It is a matter of bowing preference. If people want to change the bowing, they may.

Oviatt: When you initially learned that Prelude, I assume that you did not learn that bowing originally. I assume you have come to that bowing on your own?

W. Preucil: Yes, except I think many musicians do four in a bow, I try to be consistent.

Oviatt: Are there any other pieces in the books that you have altered the manner in which you play them?

D. Preucil: There are other Bach movements that Suzuki had in the violin school. We kept them the same as violin school. Actually, I should not say they are the same as the violin school. I have changed them to use as teaching points. Some of it was not necessarily done in performance-wise fashion.

W. Preucil: In the Courant?

D. Preucil: Yes. I use that as a bowing practice for what I call Sicilian bowing.

Oviatt: I see.

D. Preucil: I use Sicilian bowing in all the books, but I start talking about it in Book 6. After teaching them about it in Book 6, we can go back and use it in Book 4. I do not waste the time talking about it until the student can understand.

Oviatt: The purpose is not to use an Urtext. The purpose is to teach a technique.

D. Preucil: Teaching technique was Suzuki's thing. There is such a movement now for playing early music in its original fashion. If we would go back to the original Vivaldi, the one that I originally taught, the kids do not learn as much as the version in Book 4 because the original is so much easier.

Oviatt: Is there anything that you would like to add about the creation of the viola books? Is there something that you want people to know?

D. Preucil: I think what I would like people to know is that I was really trying to follow Suzuki's ideas with music. Because he was not familiar with viola repertoire, he trusted me. I tried to choose music that would give the violas the same good development as the violin books had given violinists.

With diligence and dedication, Doris Preucil was able to obtain her goal of completing all of the viola books by the time she turned eighty years old. Though there were some suggestions made, and though she went to William for his thoughts and advice, the entire Suzuki Viola School is what it is today because of Doris Preucil. She chose the works to be used in the books. Doris took the lessons she learned during her time in Eastman as well as her career as a professional to edit fingerings and bowings. She wrote the viola and piano parts all out by hand and she stood her ground on the ideals she felt were important. Doris Preucil created one of the most popular methodologies for teaching viola.

Chapter V:

The Preucils and Their Approach to Pedagogy

Inspirational Pedagogues to the Preucils

"The teacher must realize that every student is an individual with his own personality, his own characteristic physical and mental make-up, his own approach to the instrument and to music."[75]

To understand the pedagogical ideals of the Preucils, one must first know who their former teachers were and how those teachers influenced the Preucils in their playing and in their lives. Both Doris and William spent their grade school years primarily studying with one teacher. It was not until their time at Eastman, and at some summer festivals, that both Doris and William were exposed to various pedagogues who taught various genres in music

Oviatt: Let us shift to the topic of pedagogy. If you had to pick one music teacher in your past who meant the most to you, and/or changed your view of music and pedagogy, who would it be and why?

D. Preucil: I have not had many teachers. The most influential pedagogical teacher to me is definitely Suzuki. My most influential teacher for my performing career would have to be my father. I loved my teacher at Eastman and I thought he did a lot for me. However, my father taught me how to play and brought my playing to a level where I could do many things by the time I left him as a student.

Oviatt: What about you, Bill?

W. Preucil: I had one teacher who really influenced me, my early teacher in grade school and high school. He did his best to make me play in tune and play the right accidentals. When I was accepted to Eastman, the choice of faculty was listed in the catalog and one was supposed to identify with whom they wanted to study. Based on that experience, I have to say that Abram Boone was the best pedagogue because he was "nuts and bolts." He kept me on the straight and narrow.

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[75] Galamian, Ivan. 1999. *Principles of violin playing & teaching*. Ann Arbor, MI: Shar Products Co. Pg. 1

Though they found great inspiration from their teachers before Eastman, from their teachers at Eastman, and from Shinichi Suzuki, the Preucils have found other pedagogues – both famous and personal – from whom they learned a great deal. Through books and personal experiences these pedagogues have helped to shape the kind of teachers the Preucils are today.

Oviatt: Who were some of the pedagogues that you have studied – not necessarily studied with, but studied?

D. Preucil: I read a lot. I probably cannot remember all of them.

W. Preucil: Galamian's book.

D. Preucil: I think Galamian's book is extremely important. I even show that book to students. Certain things I read to students or I show students.

W. Preucil: I love reading biographies – Zimbalist, for example. With this question, you have made me really think. I believe that where I really solidified my playing was with Doris being my teacher. While I was in the Marine band, I would be practicing in the bedroom of our apartment and she would be cooking in the kitchen and getting ready to go to symphony.

D. Preucil: Just like our kids. Cooking in the kitchen and hearing somebody in the other room.

W. Preucil: From the kitchen Doris would say, "B sharp, higher." She made me do technique studies and was always [finger snap] right on helping me with my ear. I think that had the biggest influence on me because when I graduated from Eastman, even though I got in the Marine band, without her help I could not have passed the later auditions such as the Boston Symphony and the Cleveland Orchestra.

D. Preucil: I taught you a lot of scales as well.

W. Preucil: You also taught me how to play on the mark.

D. Preucil: That influence worked both ways. Being exposed to his playing and his creativity is something that I had never experienced before. It has been a two-way street.

W. Preucil: Somehow our children have inherited both of our strengths. How did that happen?

Oviatt: It is a perfect mixture.

Their daughter, Jeanne Preucil Roads, also thought that the two of them together made the perfect teacher and that they provided a great team teacher experience. Her statement, below, expresses this thought:

> …He (William) is more flowery, more descriptive, you know, more tangible in a way of telling stories, feelings, kind of guiding me to come up with my own interpretation through my own emotion he would help guide as where my mother is more it should be like this, you know, and I think there is good aspects to both of them and they probably would make a great team teacher because he has a great sense of humor and he can lighten the mood, and my mom is more serious and wants to get down to business, so I think the mix of the two is really great for me.[76]

In the opinion of Jeanne Preucil Roads, Doris's great ear, as well as her specific practicing ethic, and William's descriptive and emotional playing and teaching style, combine to make the pair a perfect teacher. More important was that they were great teachers to each other. They both had a wonderful effect on the musicality and teaching style of the other.

D. Preucil: When one plays together with someone, one starts to imitate phrasings. If I had not been quite that conscious of certain aspects, he became more conscious. My father taught me to do exactly to do what was written on the page. When one is playing in an orchestra, one wants to be precise. And so I had that precision drummed into me and what I needed was to get the other side, and of course Millard Taylor did work with me on that and exposed me to that, but Bill took it further.

One non-Suzuki pedagogue in particular influenced both William and Doris: Ivan Galamian. Through his books, the teachings of his students, and their experience observing his teachings, the Preucils have applied many of the concepts of Galamian to help in their playing and teaching.

[76] Jeanne Preucil Roads, interview by author, April 17 2014, transcriptions.

Oviatt: You had mentioned Galamian. What is it about his approach to pedagogy that makes him stand out for you?

D. Preucil: When Galamian began teaching, it was perhaps 1948; he started to have students come to Meadowmount. After their studies at Meadowmount, students saw a large improvement in their bowing. It seems as though almost everyone who had not studied with Galamian was playing with a high elbow.

W. Preucil: I used to play with a real high arm because I thought it looked choreographically brute, and then I lowered it.

Oviatt: Do you think that Galamian and Suzuki complement each other?

D. Preucil: Almost. Suzuki just added a little more weight to the elbow.

W. Preucil: It is that "drop play" (place the bow on the strings and then drop the elbow down). It is just used to get the elbow weight down.

D. Preucil: What I see sometimes in a student is not that the elbow is too high; it is more of a case of pronation. When you pronate the hand too much, it causes the elbow to seem higher.

W. Preucil: Watching Suzuki, when he would have students play Chorus in Book 2 with their arm close to their side, I always felt that he was just trying to help to have a certain feeling in their arm. But he always went really far to get them to do some things.

Oviatt: Do you think that going really far, as Suzuki did, helped keep the shoulders down, too?

D. Preucil: The last time I took Jeannie to play for him I said, "Now, do you object to this elbow?" I really wanted to find out if what I was teaching was right. He said, "Yes." But when I took him to that recital at Oberlin, the night before he got his doctorate, we sat in the front row and a student played Franck Sonata. I thought, "My gosh, this boy is not drawing the sound out of the violin." Suzuki right away said, "His ear was not quite there. If he had lowered his elbow one more inch, it would have done it." I think a low elbow is much more natural on the viola. Another thing that interests me is that I do not see many students developing a change at the frog and tip with the right hand and fingers to play with a smooth bow change.

Oviatt: Do you mean circular bowing, like the Franco-Belgian idea?

D. Preucil: Yes. I see a lot of people play where there is no change at the frog, even fine violinists. I cannot believe that it is so imperceptible that I cannot see anything, and I do feel like you have to teach that a little bit exaggerated.

W. Preucil: A good thing about the viola is that you can exaggerate those bow changes and it will be just right. However, if you go back to the violin you would never get the exaggerated feeling to start with.

D. Preucil: On the violin I often do not see anything, whereas on the cello one always sees this. It makes me wonder why more people do not develop this bowing style.

Oviatt: Do you think it is a matter of finger dexterity?

D. Preucil: It is the whole motion.

W. Preucil: Well, Galamian always taught *collé.*

D. Preucil: Yes, he teaches *collé*, but then one watches a lot of Galamian-trained students and they hardly do anything.

W. Preucil: When students get to a certain point, it depends on how they hear themselves play, and if they like what they are hearing?

D. Preucil: In terms of pedagogy, I think teaching bowing is really important.

W. Preucil: I would say Doris was the best influence in pedagogy for me. I trusted her implicitly. I trusted my teachers, but she had more of an interest in successful results than anybody else.

Oviatt: So she had more of a vested interest.

D. Preucil: If one watches his viola students, and they get such a nice full stroke.

Though they were great admirers of Galamian and his ideas on teaching the right arm in particular, Doris felt that she got the majority of her pedagogical repertoire from Suzuki. The Preucils found that Suzuki, as well many other great teachers, experimented with various strategies and ideas about violin technique. According to the Preucils, one aspect about Talent Education that exists to this day is the sharing of information amongst teachers. It is common for Suzuki teachers to give credit for where they got the teaching idea they are using. It is with the influence of Suzukis sharing and experimentation that other members of the SAA felt comfortable sharing their teaching concepts to others.

Oviatt: Do you think that Suzukis approach was centered on bowing?

D. Preucil: His approach was very much centered on bowing. That is why there was so much lowering of and working on the elbow.

W. Preucil: Throughout twenty years we embraced Suzuki and his teaching concepts, but he was changing his ideas as well.

D. Preucil: People observed Suzuki teach and observed something he would do. They would come home and that was the new Suzuki method. However, it was not the total Suzuki method, so he would say, "This is a basic motion to learn and then you play." The first time I saw Suzuki, the elbow was high, and if one looks at those tapes of Bill Starr's, everyone was playing with a raised elbow. I went to that first Suzuki workshop in 1965 and saw that high elbow, so I came back and I raised all my students' elbows thinking this is the way Suzuki works. Later, as Suzuki's elbow came down, I brought mine down as well.

W. Preucil: One of those leadership conferences on the off years, I think it was the first one, Bill Starr arranged for people who had studied in Matsumoto over the time span of fifteen years to line up in front of the audience. There were fifteen people. He wanted them to demonstrate what they were taught in their bow arm by Suzuki while they had studied with him, and it just changed all the time.

D. Preucil: Suzuki was always looking for a new idea. Those were his two words. "New idea." He was so happy to get a new idea from somebody else. But since Suzuki is gone, and for the last several years of his life, things have settled. People do not talk about the elbow anymore. Teachers are doing a much better job of getting a good bow hold and getting a good stroke.

Oviatt: Do you think the world of Suzuki – of sharing our ideas with each other – is based on Suzuki and his two words: "new idea?"

D. Preucil: It has always been about sharing. I told you how I never wanted to join anything and when I went to my first Stevens Point convention I saw how giving and sharing people were. We sat up for hours at Stevens Point in those early years with everybody sharing ideas.

Oviatt: I have noticed that not only do Suzuki teachers share ideas, but also they give credit to those who gave them those ideas. Maybe that was stemming from Suzuki and his approach of always trying to learn new things.

D. Preucil: Another thing he always said was, "It is not the Suzuki method, it is the Suzuki Preucil method" or the, "Suzuki Oviatt method," because every teacher is going to give part of themselves, no matter what. What you have learned is not just from Suzuki. It is from all the teachers you have had in the past and all the things you have observed. That is what makes each individual teacher unique.

Oviatt: Are there any other pedagogues whose approach you admired?

D. Preucil: John Kendall. I think he put a number of wonderful things together in his teaching and had wonderful ways of imparting knowledge. He knew a lot about the joints and the way one's body works. He incorporated exercises for relaxation and strengthening and I think he really had a very good eye to detect problems. He had simple little ideas that I use all the time. I learned from John Kendall that, for example, whenever one has a run in a Suzuki book, if one always practices the runs forward and backwards, one's finger strength would improve. Little things like that. He was always looking for places to develop fast fingers because he said there are not enough places in the Suzuki method to develop speed. One can do them with rhythms, a technique derived from Galamian. It never had occurred to me to play the runs backwards. A simple little thing, but that made a lot of difference. When I teach that, I say, "I learned this from John Kendall." Bill Starr also was concerned with developing fast fingers. That is one of the reasons he developed all those Twinkle variations. He used to go around in a group lesson and make people play five different notes very fast, five notes, and different combinations of notes. Bill likes to play five notes and then move over one note and play five more.

W. Preucil: When Billy went to Indiana and played his audition there, I met with Mr. Gingold afterward. He was interested in Billy as a student. He said, "I'll take him and I'll try not to hurt him." Billy was sixteen and coming from Interlochen Arts Academy. I had already written Gingold a letter in advance and told him my background as well as Billy's. He said, "There is one man who should teach your son, and that is Ivan Galamian. We will, put him there in the summer because Galamian has the eye for setting them up."

D. Preucil: Billy probably came home from Meadowmount bowing correctly because that is what happened to students when they went there. There was a concert artist from England who came over and completely changed his bowing by going to Meadowmount.

Oviatt: William Jr. studied with Galamian in Meadowmount?

W. Preucil: He studied with Galamian for two summers. Gingold knew that Galamian was good at fixing bow holds.

D. Preucil: Because that was Galamian's strong point. People went to him to change their bow hold and learn how to bow. They spent the whole summer playing the A major scale. In the back of his book is the rhythmic and bowing studies.

Oviatt: Were there any pedagogues and their approach to the students themselves that you think stood out?

D. Preucil: Bill mentioned reading the Zimbalist book. I read books by Zimbalist, Kreisler, and Heifetz. And then there used to be those books, *How They Play* by Sam Applebaum. One could read a lot of those books and how they approached the student.

W. Preucil: Do you know Sam Applebaum?

Oviatt: I know of him.

W. Preucil: Sam Applebaum is Michael Tree's father and Sada is his wife. They are both wonderful intellects. Our quartet spent a lot of time with them at a summer camp for two or three summers, up in North Dakota. Sam Applebaum has all these books on beginning methods.

Their General Philosophy, Using This Approach on Particular Pieces, and Their Approach to Scales & Etudes/Exercises.

Through their years of teaching, performing, and education, the Preucils have developed their own approach to pieces and techniques as well as their own philosophies on pedagogy. String music educators have their own ideas for both right and left hand technique. Some concentrate more on one side than the other: the Preucils are no different. Both Doris and William have goals for their students to obtain within their teaching. They have certain technical aspects, on which they focus while teaching.

Oviatt: How would you describe your approach to pedagogy?

D. Preucil: I have always been interested in developing a good left hand frame and good intonation. For so many years at workshops all one heard about was the bow. Lately I have gotten really interested in developing intonation and believe that if many things were used intonation could improve. For example, there is something I call the Hot Cross Buns syndrome. I like to give crazy names to things because then I think students will remember them. The Hot Cross Buns Syndrome is when one has two descending whole steps in a row. So often the middle note is flat. It also happens when one has a double stop. I learned something new from my daughter-in-law when we went to the opera and we stayed in their house. Because her studio is going all day long and she has so many students, one lies in bed and hears the lessons going on downstairs. I heard something that I liked very much. Learning major scales and getting a sense of where the half steps occur and why, and understanding how that relates to all the sharps and flats. When kids are playing a scale passage that is not starting tonic-to-tonic, or root-to-root, they often add different accidentals because they want to change it to make it sound like it is major. I heard this student play a scale, but they started on every note of the scale. In other words, playing the C scale but going from D to D or E to E, etc. while remaining in the correct key. That was wonderful.

W. Preucil: Do you know Erich Booth?

Oviatt: I do not.

W. Preucil: I will show you one of his books. Erich Booth says that 80% of what one teaches is who one is. When a student enters the room, one begins teaching. The way one puts on one's sweater and the way one reacts to some mundane thing influences that student. Of course, that does not help the student's intonation.

D. Preucil: This is Bill. It rubs off on the students. One sees it in his teacher training classes, how everybody is drawn to him, much more than me talking about my fingers.

W. Preucil: When I started my first Suzuki students, Brad and Elizabeth, I assumed that the Suzuki method is all one needed to teach because as they learned their pieces, one could just correct what they were doing incorrectly and then explain the correct way to do it. That got me through the first three books before I had to think about anything else. Doris was always suggesting things about the pieces to look for. For my students on the university level, we always had our big piece, our sonata, our etudes, technique, and scales. We did not expect to get through everything in one lesson. I had my set books that I had used when I was a student in college. The Lillian Fuchs books did not exist. I had studied Kreutzer on the violin during my first two years in college, but I substituted Campagnoli for Kreutzer for the viola. If the student was not ready for Campagnoli, I would use Bruni. I depended on the Bruni studies for my students as they came in as freshman, unless they were more advanced. I would take my more advanced students through the Fifteen Characteristic Studies of Lillian Fuchs after the Campagnoli, or at the same time. Those were enough etudes, so we did not need Paganini in those days and I do not know anything about Paganini etudes. Between using those Bruni, Campagnoli, and Lillian Fuchs (including the Caprices), four years can go by very quickly. So that was my concept of developmental pedagogy at the college level. In Book 7, we have the three octave scales and fingerings that we liked. I knew that when teachers opened up that book and saw the scales, they were going to ask about the fingerings. Those are the fingerings that I learned, and we wrote them out. It is not a book like Carl Flesch's, where you get confused right away, unless your teacher is right on you all the time. These are scales that can be memorized easily with easy fingerings, and then one can work on the intonation.

Oviatt: Do you either of you believe that there are wrong and right fingerings for scales?

W. Preucil: There are principles.

Oviatt: Do you use only one set of fingerings, or do you believe that scales should be used to help the repertoire on which one is working?

W. Preucil: That is why we wrote that preface to the scales. One can take it or leave it. When one is learning a piece, one can play everything with the second finger, if one so desires. That is something that is significant for the particular music one is studying. If one crosses strings on half steps in the fingering or if one is extending an augmented fourth, I do not think there is ever a good reason to violate the principles of not doing those particular things. My principles in a scale would be use open strings going up, fourth fingers going down, but never cross a string on a half step. Those are the things that I have taught my university students.

D. Preucil: When I was in the National Symphony, I was teaching as an assistant to the concertmaster, who had been a student of Mr. Klinger, who was Suzuki's teacher. He had very specific rules about scales. They all had to start in first position. He also had the,

"Do not cross on a half step" rule. Teaching that fingering was overwhelming because every scale had different fingering, and every minor scale was different. One had twenty-four different fingerings to memorize. It is easy enough to start arpeggios in first position because there are so many ways to play them and they all make sense. But trying to remember all those fingerings seems like more of a mental exercise. I think about the teaching that we do as Suzuki teachers. In my studio, for many years, all my students who were taught out of the books were playing major concertos while they were still high school. They were going through these pieces for the first time though and were going to learn them again in more depth with their next teacher. No matter how well they played them now, they were going to do it again and maybe again past that. When we start a Suzuki student at Book 1, we set that goal of teaching them correctly so that they will get to that point, but that does not mean that they always will do everything the way they do it now. Why try to do difficult fingerings? I looked for fingerings where one can play all the major scales the same, except for a few.

Oviatt: If you create the same set of fingerings for two different sets of scales, life is easier for the student.

D. Preucil: I decided that when one has a student who played really well on a small violin, that did not sound good in fourth position, it sounds better closer to first position.

W. Preucil: All the major scales go four four four at the top and all the minor scales have the half step shift.

D. Preucil: But I like the fingerings that we did on the viola.

Oviatt: In book seven?

D. Preucil: I think they are logical and they are worth studying. One does not have to memorize them and do them that way the rest of one's life.

Oviatt: If you have a student who comes into your studio from somewhere else, probably a more advanced student, do you still change the student's fingerings to the fingerings that you use?

D. Preucil: I change the student's fingerings because I have seen some really crazy fingerings. My goal is to make the kids sound as good as possible when they play that scale. Why give the student something that is going to be difficult?

Their Methodology to Approaching Students

Because the Preucils taught the very young beginning violin or viola student up through the more advanced college student or professional violinist or violist, they had to develop a way in which to approach each individual student. The Preucils needed to determine if they would be able to work with the student and/or the student's parent(s), they needed to observe what technical issues a transfer student may have that would require instructional focus, and they needed to find a way to communicate with and to give the appropriate support to the particular student in front of them. In this chapter, Doris and William discuss the strategies they have utilized through their many years of teaching to reach their students and to help them find success in their technique and musicality.

Oviatt: Doris, when you first begin teaching a student, what do you do initially to determine the best way to approach that student?

D. Preucil: First, I ask new students to play for me. I try to put students at ease by the way I greet them and try to make them feel comfortable. I ask them to play something that they would like to play but do not ask them for a specific piece. I ask if they have studied scales and if they would like to play a scale for me. I watch and I analyze what I see and decide what things need to be worked on, although probably not at the first lesson. I explain what I have seen and what I would want to work on to probably get a more neutral bow hold, a better bow hold, and probably give them a demonstration. I would see how quickly they could understand what I teach them. If the bow hold is good but everything is stiff, I would probably want to work on the stiffness and get some motion.

Oviatt: Is your objective to make them feel at ease but be honest with the more advanced student or an older student?

D. Preucil: I want to be honest. I tell them areas that I think can be improved and why. For example, I tell them their playing would improve if they would deal with working on, "These areas," and I am happy to help them, probably in different ways than they are accustomed to being taught.

Oviatt: What about working with an intermediate student, someone who is a little younger. What if the student is a transfer student who is hoping to come into your studio, how do you approach that student?

D. Preucil: I ask the student if he or she ever practiced tonalization. If the student is coming from a Suzuki studio, it is very interesting to see how many students have never done tonalization. Perhaps the student has done it back in the beginning of Book 1 and then never again. There are several things that can be thought of as tonalization. A scale played carefully can be tonalization, a three-note little vibrato exercise; any of those little things can be tonalization. Tonalization is just something that the student has concentrated on. If the student tells me he or she has not worked on tonalization, then I tell him or her that this is where I would start because tone development is so important. I would start each lesson with working on tone.

Oviatt: What if a student came to you who had many technical problems? What if that student could benefit from going back a little bit, someone who still has a parent at the lesson? How do you approach that student?

D. Preucil: I took on a new student who needed some work on her bowing and her bow hold. One can tell her teacher was working with her and she had been well taught. She was very musical. The first technical issues I saw, I had her fix. However, as she had more lessons, I realized what I really needed to fix her intonation. It was good enough but not perfect. It was a little bit in the cracks, just generally, so that you get this feeling that it is just not in tune. The matter of intonation did not hit me when I first heard her play because whatever she was playing, she was playing pretty well in tune. One cannot see or hear everything when one first sees a student. Basically, I will often just assign something and start them working, little by little. Then finally, I get to the point of knowing what I need to concentrate on. I focus on trying to fix this one point, one thing at a time. "In everything we do," I tell the student, "Let us think about this one thing, get to the end of a line and check this one thing – your bow hold."

Oviatt: How do you explain to a parent when you feel as though a student who is in the middle of Book 2 needs to go back to at least the beginning of Book 2, if not Book 1, to get the student to where he or she needs to be?

D. Preucil: I might do both things at once. I might go back. I just met a former student when we were in Miami with whom we had to go back to Book 1. He is just now going to solo the Sibelius with the New World Symphony. He is doing very well.

Oviatt: What about with a very beginning student?

D. Preucil: In my old age, I have relaxed a little bit. I want the kids to be happy about what they are doing. I have three little girls now who are in Book 2 – I started them with Book 1– and they are not perfect. However, little by little, we are improving and we are beginning to grow. In the meantime, I am able to teach them a lot of general things. We talk about the music and the composer. I think they are getting more of a broad education

than just a music lesson. I do not think everything has to be done immediately. One can kill a child's spirit. One can work with them in a way that allows them to make a little improvement or they become aware of something without making it such drudgery.

Oviatt: William, can you answer these same questions?

W. Preucil: First of all, I look at their posture and their relaxation at the viola. I look for anything tight – shoulders – make sure they are comfortable. I hope they have got the right shoulder pad and chin rest. I check them.

D. Preucil: I did not think of that, but I do that, too. That is actually the first thing I do.

Oviatt: Do you start, then, with the equipment?

D. Preucil: Yes.

W. Preucil: But on violin, there are fairly set ways to deal with equipment. Viola is unusually difficult.

D. Preucil: It is more difficult on violin. I think it is easier to feel comfortable on the viola.

W. Preucil: They may have a viola that is extending them too much.

Oviatt: How do you manage the transfer student whose viola is too big but who wants the bigger instrument because it produces a bigger sound?

W. Preucil: If the size difference is extreme, then we have to change it. Up until most students go to college, instruments are fairly interchangeable. One can cash in one size and get a different size from the dealer.

Oviatt: What if a college student who would be more comfortable on a sixteen is using a sixteen and a half because the sound is bigger on the bigger instrument? Do you tell the student he or she needs a smaller instrument or do you work with the student and his or her larger instrument?

W. Preucil: I will likely recommend a smaller instrument, but I do not agree that a bigger instrument necessarily yields a bigger or better tone.

Oviatt: I agree with you about the tone; there are some amazing smaller violas available now that sound wonderful.

W. Preucil: I downsized in the 1980s to a smaller viola. I was not intentionally looking to downsize. I was looking on behalf of a student and I was just stunned by this viola that was out of the student's price range – and that viola became my viola.

Oviatt: Do you approach a new student by looking at the equipment and basic posture?

W. Preucil: Yes, and I immediately subliminally assess the vibrato and what the student and equipment together contribute toward the sound and the music.

Oviatt: When you work with an older student, by which I mean someone of college age or older, does it matter to you whether you believe you will get along well with him or her? Do you think that not getting along well with someone would deter you from accepting him or her as a student?

W. Preucil: I am so conceited I believe I can help anybody.

D. Preucil: No.

W. Preucil: It is just that with some people, there is a better fit.

D. Preucil: Some lessons are more of a trial than others, but I think it is because these children are having problems. Sometimes kids in high school, adolescent age kids, become difficult to reach.

W. Preucil: What is hard is when that becomes a soliloquy lesson where the student does not talk at all, but I can deal with that.

Oviatt: How do you approach the intermediate student who is a transfer student and whose parents still come with him or her to lessons? How do you analyze that student for the first time?

D. Preucil: Oftentimes, one has known the student from group lessons when they have come to us in our school.

Oviatt: Do you ever analyze the parent to see if he or she is taking notes and being active yet quiet?

D. Preucil: One does not know at the first lesson what the parent is doing.

W. Preucil: I have had parents in the last few years that come to lessons and tell me they know nothing about music. They just bring the child to the lesson and they just read a book. Those kids are probably old enough to not need the parent there. In a few cases, I had younger ones whose parents waited.

D. Preucil: I have had students who are twelve or thirteen years old. I have always had parents who want to come and their kids are out of the books, but kids can do perfectly by themselves. When I have a student who is not getting much parental help, I

just am stricter. If I sense the parent is very strict, I feel much more relaxed. If the parent is relaxed, the child is going to get a stricter teacher.

Oviatt: What is your approach, then, with a very beginning student?

W. Preucil: I approach them in a playful way, a fun way. I do not know how to do like a lot of Suzuki teachers do, with all the games and statues and tricks. I am a little more old-fashioned about beginners, but I certainly do not want them to be scared. You asked, in your written questions, whether I ever yelled at a student. There was a lot of that going on when I was a student, not by my teachers, but I heard about it all the time. Was it Galamian who said, "What do you do when you get a stage mother with a precocious student?" He said, "Shoot the mother."

D. Preucil: He (William) is so creative. I do not know if you told your teacher training class about your little box from India. He had these two students, Liz and what's his name?

W. Preucil: Brad.

D. Preucil: Brad. When it was time for them to try to put their thumb in the grown up bow hold, William had them put their old bow holds in this little box. It was just like a rite of graduation, they came and very carefully put their (beginning) bow holds in that box and then the box was there and they could come back and they could visit their old bow hold.

W. Preucil: They would occasionally try it on again.

D. Preucil: Things like that are wonderful.

W. Preucil: But Suzuki – I remember this class in which he had everyone stand up and demonstrate his or her bad habits. Then he had the students imitate their friends. Then he stood up and played and they imitated him – then that fixed them. You have to get their attention. You have to reach the student before you can teach the student.

D. Preucil: Right.

Oviatt: For beginners do you all do parent education beforehand?

W. Preucil: Our school does.

Oviatt: What books do you want parents to read?

D. Preucil: First, I want them to read William and Constance Starr's book. *To Learn with Love, Nurtured by Love* by Suzuki and then I tell some parents to read Ed Kreitman's first book. Beyond that I might tell them to read *Ability Development from Age Zero* – that is my favorite book, and I talk about that all the time.

Oviatt: Which Kreitman book is that?

W. Preucil: *Teaching from the Balance Point*.

D. Preucil: One sees different things in different parents, so different books are probably more important for them.

Oviatt: Do you have a general parent class?

D. Preucil: No. I have not taught a lot of beginners since I started my program. For perhaps the first fifteen years, I was starting a lot of beginners, but I started in 1963. In 1975, I opened the school. I had fifty students from the first year. I had enough students continuing and they were young enough they were not graduating and I was not taking a large proportion of new students. When we opened the school, I already had several advanced students, although I did take new students then, but for the past twenty years, I have hardly started any new students; I can count them on one hand. I kind of started again with these three little beginners, but I am not doing a lot of that – teaching beginners – so that is not really in my outlook right now. Right now, I have students that I have mostly acquired by transfer and I am trying to help them improve. I do not have as many students. I have about half as much teaching as I used to have, so it is not enveloping my life as much as it used to do. I am not thinking about a lot of things like parent education.

Through their initial contact with a student and/or parent the Preucils begin to assess the way in which they can help a student succeed. They do their best to put the potential student at ease and to feel comfortable in front of them. They are gentle but honest with what they believe the student will need to focus on as their lessons begin. Although they claim to have few young students who are just starting to play, they are sure that all beginning students with whom they work have a solid foundation from which they are able to build their playing abilities.

As do many teachers, the Preucils teach the way they were taught, but they have also learned to incorporate new teaching methodologies they discovered throughout the years as well as new ideas they have created themselves.

Oviatt: Doris, how do you approach pedagogy differently from how you were taught to play?

D. Preucil: It is always different when you have your own children or, in my case, my own father. I think, basically, I am more particular about setting the kids up than in the days when I learned. I do not remember being taught how to do anything in the beginning. I think it was pretty much that one picked up the violin, picked up the bow, and one started to read music and all kinds of bad things happened to one's body. We saw that in all the kids back then. I am more particular about getting off to a good body position, which includes the whole set-up. I really feel like I learned the Suzuki way. I think learning to read music was quite natural back then. Same thing with our kids learning to read music. I do not remember that there was ever much structured effort into it because they just got it, just like learning to read a book. They learned that by themselves, mostly. I probably am a little more structured as far as teaching reading, just to make sure that this happens. So those are probably the two things: setting kids up and teaching note reading.

Oviatt: William, how do you approach pedagogy differently from how you were taught to play?

W. Preucil: There is an old saying that we tend to teach the way we were taught, but I think that is an old saying, especially in Suzuki, because we did not have that way to teach. We did not have the method books and all the other principles.

Oviatt: How do you approach teaching differently now than how you were taught initially?

W. Preucil: I think I am smarter now than when I was taught, so I know that one has to have basic principles covered and one does that in Suzuki. One has the repertoire, so it is sort of an outline in one's mind. I think I am more careful about going on to the next step than when I was taught, so success in every step. We all idolize that, but it is so hard to do.

D. Preucil: Being more careful about going on to the next step, yes. I think back when I was a traditional teacher: there are always these places in the music that the kids do not get. First of all, the music was not as carefully prepared sequentially, and often, one had ten kids who are going to have a recital and were about on the same level. One went to the music store and looked through all this music to find pieces for them to play. There was always a spot in the music somewhere that someone – or all of them – could not play well. In Suzuki, things are geared more so that we can really finish something up before we do go on. Is that what you (William) were saying?

W. Preucil: Yes. If I had not had Suzuki, I still am smarter than I was when I was taught. At the university level, I am thinking of me and my teacher at Eastman. How I teach in college compared to the way I was taught is – maybe I was more forgiving as a teacher in college, more patient. Iowa was one of two schools in the whole world that

does not have juries. The reason we did not have juries was because our quartet was so busy and we did not want to give up that time with juries. Our enrollment was not as big as Eastman; so our juries were mainly the recitals and viola class every week and lessons. Eastman had juries. I had the jury system while I was there. At Preucil School, we spent a lot of time preparing for Musical Achievement Week, which is our sort of purified jury thing where we give positive comments in writing to the students

D. Preucil: Actually, the way it was intended, since I was the one that started Musical Achievement Week, is that one should be able to just treat preparation lessons like any other lesson. In other words, one's teaching should be the same way all year long. We established Musical Achievement Week, which is like a little jury, and the pianists have it mid-year. They have it in around January or February. We violinists have it the first week of May, so that it is a chance for students to have another performance. We have one scheduled recital every year in our auditorium.

Oviatt: Does Musical Achievement Week occur once a year?

D. Preucil: Once a year. They come and we have so many students and we try to keep it close to their lesson time for the most part, but they come for an hour. There are either four or six kids in an hour, or sometimes five.

W. Preucil: There's a panel of teachers.

D. Preucil: There is a panel of three teachers and one of them is the student's own teacher who introduces the student and takes care of the student there. And then the teachers write comments, and they are always kind comments. We treat it informally, kind of like a little extra recital. Then, after they are finished, they get a treat. We always have apples in strings.

W. Preucil: They get a certificate, too, on participation.

D. Preucil: Yes, and they get a certificate.

Oviatt: Is that your way of introducing them to what juries are going to be like?

W. Preucil: Yes.

The Preucils have worked through the years to ensure that their lessons were educationally, technically, and musically sound. They are attentive to keep their activities, such as the Musical Achievement Week, structured and positive. They do this and through their dedication, ensure that their students work diligently to obtain a high level of playing and to gain self-confidence in the process.

The Preucils both believe that a positive approach is the most successful way to get results from a student and to keep both teacher and student happy.

Oviatt: What if a student comes back, week after week without having practiced? How do you deal with students who do not practice?

D. Preucil: I have not had that problem. For the most part, I have had committed students.

W. Preucil: I just talk to mine logically and unemotionally, but the lesson is not where one learns how to play. One learns from preparing the lesson and that is where one learns not to depend on me. I ask the student what he or she is trying to get out of this lesson if he or she is not prepared or has not practiced.

Oviatt: Is it a matter of you looking at how you will approach the teaching of that student?

D. Preucil: Yes.

Oviatt: Even if that may mean you become frustrated because the route you have chosen that might work for other students might not work for every student? Are you suggesting that you really have to look at yourself and see what you need to do for that child, where you (as the teacher) need to adjust?

D. Preucil: Yes.

W. Preucil: I think one commits oneself that way after two or three weeks of them not practicing. Each week after that the commitment becomes less and less. Pretty soon, if they do not have the desire to play, they quit.

D. Preucil: If there were a case like that, one would talk with the parent and tell him or her that this situation is not working. If the child is not interested in doing it, there is no point. If I had one like that, I would tell him or her to stop.

Oviatt: You mentioned encouraging students by having a logical conversation with them about going into music. Would you do the same thing with all of your students, regardless of age?

D. Preucil: I had a little boy signed up for lessons. They moved here from somewhere else. He came to his first lesson and he had a violin that was too big and his posture was terrible. He was playing Boccherini Minuet. First, I talked to the mother and I asked if they still had his smaller violin. She said they did. I told her I wanted him to use the smaller violin at least for six months to see if we could improve his posture. I did not want him to think I was taking away his bigger violin. Then we started to work. The kid had a good ear, but he came every week and nothing had happened. I asked the mother

whether he had been practicing. I was very specific about what to do. She told me that he had not really been practicing, to which I responded that the situation was not working and she was wasting her money. What I was trying to do was take him back, do some review to try to straighten out his posture. I asked her how long her son had been taking lessons, and she said he had been taking lessons for two years at that other school and that he never practiced there either. Obviously, he had a really good ear to pick up these tunes, but it was not done well. I told her I thought he should take lessons in the public school because I thought he was at the grade that they started them. I told her that might be a better approach because there would be less expectation and maybe he might enjoy himself. Then I asked the child what he thought about that idea. He said he would rather just quit. He did not like it. Here they were, bringing him to lessons because his previous teacher told them to bring him here, to the Preucil School in Iowa. I hardly knew this student. He had about six lessons, but one could tell that it was not going to go anywhere.

Oviatt: Would you do that with an older child as well – tell the parent the child does not seem to want to play violin? Would you tell the parent of an older child to quit?

D. Preucil: I certainly would think you should do that, and that is what I did with that boy. That is the only instance. I mean, I was Director of the Preucil School and people know that I have a national reputation. People that come to me are really committed. They really want to be here and that is what makes the teaching worthwhile. No matter what level they're at you feel like you're giving them something that they want and that they appreciate it.

Oviatt: You do not believe in forcing a child to stay in lessons when the child very clearly does not want to be in lessons, do you?

W. Preucil: Fifty years ago, there was more of that because of the income of the teacher; the teacher felt he better keep taking the money and then he could yell at them at the lesson, that would make him feel better. I think there were a lot of resistant kids in the old days.

D. Preucil: Our school is an example. We register the kids in August for the whole thirty-seven weeks, up through May or early June, and the parents pay the first and the last month at registration. If the kids quit during the year, they do not get that last month back, but if they stay, they get to May and they do not owe any money. The whole purpose of that is because Dr. Suzuki said everyone should have 100,000 chances. We do not want people to sign up and just find out how much work it is for the parent and then quit. We try to let them know what is expected of them at first, and once they are in it, we hope they will stay through the whole first year because whether they are shy or slow in getting started, it gives one a chance to give the child a chance. Yes, they could quit, but we probably are not in a hurry to say quit and lose your money.

Oviatt: What if the child really just likes playing but is not a big practicer? What if the child is still in Book 1 after a few years and the parents are unhappy with the child's lack of progress – but the child is quite happy in what he or she doing? Do you

tell the parents that the child is happy and advise the lessons continue, or do you let them decide?

D. Preucil: First, I would wonder why the child is not making progress. Sometimes changing teachers can help. We can do that at our school; sometimes just a different way of teaching that child could be what is needed.

The Preucils are not alone in their belief that a teacher should be honest with a student and that the overall happiness of a student is more important than forcing him or her to remain in lessons. Many other pedagogues demonstrate that commitment to the general happiness of a student as well as sharing Doris and William's pedagogical practices and principles.

Oviatt: We spoke earlier about different pedagogues and you had mentioned how Galamian and Suzuki, though there are differences, are also similar. Do you think there are any pedagogues who are close to following your approach to pedagogy and who compare to how you teach?

D. Preucil: Pedagogues?

Oviatt: Yes.

D. Preucil: Probably Kimberly Meier-Sims at Cleveland. She grew up as a student of John Kendall, but I was so influenced by John Kendall. She claims to have been influenced by my teaching at our school for so many years, so maybe she might. Sonja (Berven Zeithamel, current Preucil School Director) was my student from junior high age on, so I feel like my teaching has continued in her. The teachers at our school, some of them had more or less training with me, but everyone is their own person, too. Our students who have gone on to become teachers and players were exposed to much higher levels teaching when they left us. If they remember what we were doing, and they are not even that conscious of what our pedagogy was when we were teaching them as high schoolers, then who are we influencing? Perhaps people who took several units with us, but even so, that is not that much or that many.

W. Preucil: Mark Jackobs studied with both of us. The question from his interview in *SAA Journal*, Volume 42, Issue 2, is, "Do you feel like you've integrated any aspects of the Preucil's teaching style into your own studio?" Mark He responded, "Yes, absolutely. One of the greatest things that I took away from Mr. Preucil was the way he would play in lessons. He had such a beautiful sound and way of phrasing that I would feel inspired me to practice as soon as I left the lessons. That is something that stuck with me as a teacher. Also, I want to encourage my students and meet their needs as individuals instead of using a single way of doing things for everybody. I saw how Mr. Preucil

treated everyone as individuals and cared about his students. And the same is true for Mrs. Preucil. I was much younger then, but I wanted to work and practice so I could take things to my lessons that were polished and were a representation of what she wanted. She inspired me to work hard even, though I was only 14 years old."

When you asked that question, the first thing I thought of was that the question wants the answer to be, "Yes we did." The third year with Jackobs, we did scales and octaves. All that stuff is repellent to me. I do not like to be pinned down to things like that. I do not have a set way of teaching

Oviatt: Is your approach to pedagogy based on who the student is in front of you and what that student needs?

W. Preucil: Yes, the individual student. There was a great teacher who was teaching to keep one's hand turned against the fingerboard lined up severely (making a motion to turn his hand in play position toward the fingerboard, making the hand straight with the fingerboard) to make the fingers stronger. I play with a floppy hand (showing his thumb pinned back to his hand). That is called hyperextensible joints. If you get a teacher who tries to set you up their way and you keep plunking off there, that is when using an individual method is better than a dogmatic method. Those people really never know what it feels like to be like this. When I play my fourth finger, my thumb pushes out suddenly, like that, so I look like this. But I do not teach that unless –

Oviatt: You had a student with a hyperextensible joint?

W. Preucil: I teach to be relaxed and flexible, but all this drill, drill, drill, is better on the violin. However, once you get to the viola, it is quite painful.

Oviatt: If you have a student with a small hand, you know you are going to have to teach them differently. Likewise, if you have a student like Kim Kashkashian – someone with really long fingers – you know you are going to have to teach them differently.

W. Preucil: I have a boy now who has a weird position but his fingers are so long and his fourth finger – so beautiful – (it) works. I cannot identify with it. I can tell him when he is out of tune, but it is tough. Primrose said in one of his books that there are more and more girls playing the viola and many of them with small hands and he does not see how they could be able to play the viola but, by and large, they do it somehow. As a teacher, I cannot help them, but they just do it, and that is my teaching too. If one wants the ability to play, one will get it, and one may invent another way of holding the hand.

Oviatt: So you figure out how to build a student's technique rather than fit the student into a particular technique. No one technique works for every student?

W. Preucil: Right. One other point about my teaching. I find, in my own retirement, that I can feel my hand getting less strong if I do not practice every day. Some days I do

feel like I did in the old days, but now I understand how most people feel, that if one does not play the viola or any music, one's hands probably feels like this as one gets older.

D. Preucil: I feel that way all the time now.

W. Preucil: But the point is…

D. Preucil: The point is our family has kind of a motto about stamp out boring playing.

W. Preucil: Yes. "Help stamp out boring performances."

Doris and William are not alone in many of their concepts of teaching, particularly the idea of changing teaching techniques based upon the individual student, as well as their motto, "Help stamp out boring performances." There are other pedagogues with whom they share many similarities, according to their daughter, Jeanne Preucil Roads, who compared their teaching styles to that of some other well-known historical pedagogues:

> My mom, I compare her to Dorothy DeLay. In that you, know, she is relentless, umm, high expectations, will not say no, she'll teach a lesson and if someone begs for an extra lesson, or an extra half hour, she's not going to turn them away…My dad…ummm....I think William Primrose. William Primrose was also kind of a quiet, what I have heard of him, anyway...not an in your face personality, but also a loving person.[77]

In the next section the Preucils discuss their efforts to create a positive environment while maintaining a very high level of excellence within their studios.

Oviatt: Do you ever feel as though it is appropriate to push a student to progress? If so, when?

W. Preucil: I will say, "Look, we have been on this page for three months. When are we going to turn the page?" I am very forgiving of kids who do not practice stuff because I figure it is their life, their ballgame. I tell them what they should work on, tell them how to work at it, and if they want to do all these other things, the choice is theirs.

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[77] Jeanne Preucil Roads, interview by author, April 17, 2014, transcriptions.

D. Preucil: I think there is a difference. Bill taught for all of his life at the university and the students wanted to be there. They had to pass juries.

W. Preucil: No, we did not have juries. We had recitals.

D. Preucil: Well, they had to make some progress. They had to give a recital; they had to do something. They had to graduate, so they were committed. He could be there and the students would come and there was no problem with scheduling because they had the daytime to work with – it is a different kind of a life from teaching younger students, and so one takes a different approach. I am there and I will teach them and the heck if they do not want to practice. That is their thing. It is up to them to do it. I feel that when one is teaching younger kids who do not have everything that I just said that is at the university, it is up to the teacher to make the students want to do it. One has to work harder at making them want to do it. Just like Suzuki said – the parent should be creating the desire to learn. I think the teacher has to be helping that desire by trying to push the kids along in a certain way, and I do push them along, but if I have a very sensitive child, I am very careful about doing that. But I am constantly challenging my students and that is how I could get so many of them to be through the books at an early age. I think that is what parents want. They are pushed in school. They are challenged in school. They are given all this homework and the kids that do the best are on the honor roll. I think there is a different psychology between people who have spent their life teaching in university and people who have spent their life teaching young children. For that reason, I often do not think that is a good idea for a parent, even one who has an extremely talented kid, to go to a university professor.

W. Preucil: But I am probably more effective as a Suzuki group teacher.

D. Preucil: Yes.

W. Preucil: I get the most fun out of it (group class) and the kids seem to be entranced with it, and they do so well. It's not the one-on-one but it's what I am best at in Suzuki teaching.

Oviatt: Do you give the younger kids specific instructions every week on what you want them to work on to make continuous progress?

D. Preucil: I do.

Oviatt: What about the college students? They are older and there is a greater need for them to make progress on their own. Do you say to those who need to do more, "We've been on this for a while, move on now"?

W. Preucil: Yes, I guess so.

Oviatt: Are you, William, as specific on instructions on what to do for the week, as Doris is with the younger child?

W. Preucil: I think I am specific enough.

Oviatt: But with a really young child, you might have to literally say, "Do this five times every day." Are you that specific with college students?

W. Preucil: One is teaching the mothers of young children.

Oviatt: Yes, but what about a college student? Do you tell them, "Get the first page done for your next lesson"?

W. Preucil: Yes.

D. Preucil: Yes, and I could be that way with my high school kids, too. I do not have to be as specific.

Oviatt: Both of you have a helping way of pushing your students to progress. Within general categories of skill or mastery, do you push differently? I mean, William, for a college student, do you push a freshman differently from how you push a graduate student?

W. Preucil: The thing I think I am disappointed about more and more between a college student and even the high school students is that – in this Erich Booth book, *The Everyday Work of Art*, which you do not know about yet, I am going to tell you – He said we have to create yearners besides learners. One you have to really want it. Do those high school kids actually go out and listen to six recordings of the Lalo Symphony Espagnol?

D. Preucil: You know why they do not want it, why they do not work for it?

W. Preucil: When I was in high school I went out and listened to records.

D. Preucil: Right, and they are not listening. They are not going to concerts. They have no idea what listening to music can do for them. Ronda Cole, for a while – I wonder if she still does that – and I tried it for a while, but the lesson is so short one forgets to do things – but she had kids listen to a specific piece every week and write down what they were listening to, who it was performing.

W. Preucil: It could be done on You Tube.

Oviatt: I do that. I assign them a specific symphony and a quartet every week.

D. Preucil: That would not be a bad thing to do because they are not going to concerts. They are not doing these things and it makes me mad because the parents are

spending money to take lessons but then they will not spend the money to go to the symphony concert and take their child. There are some who do, but not enough.

Oviatt: Even with this constant helping them to strive to make progress, is it important to both of you to keep your lessons positive?

W. Preucil: Oh yes.

Oviatt: Would you ever put a student down? Let me clarify. If a student was not making sense on something or was just not getting a certain shift, would you still try to keep it positive or would you yell at them?

D. Preucil: I would find other ways to go after that passage.

W. Preucil: Have you ever heard of Suzuki's hundred ways to answer after a student plays?

Oviatt: I have not.

W. Preucil: A hundred different things you can say positively.

Oviatt: I have not seen that.

W. Preucil: If the thing is absolutely terrible and obnoxious and it is just the most excruciatingly bad thing ever, Suzuki said, "You played," so that is positive.

D. Preucil: When we do our Musical Achievement Week, I do not just say positive things.

W. Preucil: But you say them in an educational way.

D. Preucil: I will find something that could be improved, something to continue to want to work on. I tell students they have shown so much development in this area and now maybe this one thing could do with a little bit more effort.

W. Preucil: You want to know what an egotistic teacher does? In the hierarchy way up, they get a student and then they manipulate them.

D. Preucil: And they make them over.

W. Preucil: Make them cry.

Oviatt: Do you believe in breaking down students and then building them back up?

W. Preucil: I went to a viola congress in Ann Arbor and Emanuel Vardi was the master class teacher. Vardi stood up and the first thing he said was, "You did two things wrong." That is the way that era of teaching was done – "We do not waste time, I am not here to tell you how beautifully you played this or that." Back then, they just got to the point. Now, I would never ever say that. I would always say something positive first and then I would not ever say the pejorative of wrong. I would make it humorous somehow.

D. Preucil: When he (William) received that Artist's Teaching Award - that was at the ASTA conference in what town?

W. Preucil: Atlanta.

D. Preucil: Two or three people played in a master class for him and one person played something that was quite unusual to play at a master class. You weren't really familiar with the piece.

W. Preucil: It was a violin Bach I think, unaccompanied?

D. Preucil: That was such a good example to give a really worthwhile master class and be so positive and so uplifting at the time.

W. Preucil: You asked about the teacher who tears a student apart?

Oviatt: Breaking them down and then building them up, yes.

W. Preucil: I think that teacher is a mental case. People want power over another person. It has nothing to do with music.

D. Preucil: I had a case like that and it colored me against this teacher forever.

Oviatt: You told me to never ask a question that has only one correct answer. What if you have a student and you are talking about an interval and you ask, "What is that interval right there?" Clearly, you are pointing to something that has only one answer, and it is a legitimate question.

W. Preucil: I Did that this week.

Oviatt: What if the student looks at you and cannot answer?

D. Preucil: I would probably say something, make a joke of it. I would say that I could see where we are going to add this to what we are talking about.

W. Preucil: Yes, but I would teach him right away on the spot. I would likely have told him once before, but how many half steps are there in a minor third? Three. If there are three half steps, then that (pointing) is an E flat. This is how I count. Okay, three half

steps. Then, how many in a major third? Four. So what is this interval? They always say it wrong – a minor third. No, it is a major third – look and count.

D. Preucil: See, but the way he is doing it they are going to have fun with it.

Oviatt: So do you sometimes ask the question to see if they know, if they can recognize that? If they do not know the answer, then do you think that that you need to look at it as a teacher – that maybe something needs to be revisited?

W. Preucil: What are they going to do, go home and read a book? They are paying you for lessons. You have to tell them.

D. Preucil: It might be something one has told them many, many times. However, you never put the student down.

W. Preucil: One never tells them how to go out and do it, so that is not good.

D. Preucil: That would be wrong.

Oviatt: Regardless of what age or level of student, do you constantly look at a different way of presenting something until the student in front of you understands the concept that you are trying to convey?

D. Preucil: Yes. I think all teachers are really looking for the right way to solve a problem for a student. I mentioned this little girl who is having trouble reading. I am going to all kinds of people to find different ways of reading. Even if it is something I have never tried before. I think that is a very common thing for any teacher who really cares about his or her students, or cares about even being a successful teacher.

Doris and William Preucil share certain ideals with other historical pedagogues such as teaching to the student in front of them and maintaining criteria for left and right hand technique. They are unique in their endeavor to mix the philosophy of Talent Education and their own creative ideas together to create a studio where the whole student is developed – not just the aspects of musical technique.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge that the Preucils' creation of the Suzuki Viola School has not been without controversy. Issues that have provoked criticism include repertoire selections and omissions; stylistic and performance practice considerations and their relationship to editing and bowing choices; and the Preucils' singular control of the Viola School - especially in light of Doris's primary experience as a violinist rather than violist. The purpose of this paper is to document the Preucils' life's work and provide a foundation for examining their pedagogy and the birth of the Suzuki Viola School. For further critical examination and evaluation, further research will be needed.

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