

RIGHT HAND

New approach from Variations Book 1 to Andante by Carcassi Book 2

Note: the parts in italics are taken from William Kossler's report

Seven general considerations

1. Behind the guitar there is a child: if our focus is on the child, music and motivation will follow. We use music to build their self-esteem, emotional growth, joy and overall health.

2. Second priority position; third priority tone, but first priority child.

3. Dr. Suzuki states that there is everything in the variations and that it is necessary to return to them continuously: it is therefore essential to internalize these variations if we want to build on solid foundations. All the great musicians frequently return to the basics, which for us are the Variations

4. *Dr. Suzuki's principles regarding the bow:*

i. the start each piece with the same bow

ii. keep the bows alternating.

Irregularities are deliberately limited and made manageable as when they appear, they are always clearly determined by the musical needs of the piece.

My experience with the cello comes to my mind! I have been the home teacher of my son Michele (now in career) with the cello for ten years and I confirm these two principles.

Rigadoun, Brother John and French Folk Song derive from the cello book

5. Our goal is to walk/alternate with fingers, first with two fingers (i and m), then with three fingers (i, m, a), then with four fingers (p, i, m, a). It is a skill, a gift that will remain for life.

Why avoid a necessary skill? Inverted fingerings are a necessary skill that must be mastered by the guitarist. This approach recognizes that fact from the very beginning of the student's training and my experience is that students take to it easily.

6. Our current approach to the right hand is too complicated. The child learns anything, but what does it hold in depth? what does it internalize? Teaching to repeat a finger without a musical need introduces too much technique and distracts us from the child behind the guitar. Too much heavy is the request to the student to remember the insertion of all the "repetition points", where the same finger must be specifically repeated (m-m).

The test is in the review: the child forgets these fingerings, they do not involve him and in fact almost deliberately forgets them. It is as if he chose the most natural, direct and simple way to express himself. The repetitions in fact are supported only by its automatic memorization.

7. Rest assured, we do not eliminate the foundations, everything does not collapse. It is a reflection that comes after about 40 years of experience with many students happily involved in the field of music. In the current approach there is too much rigidity: only with greater flexibility is it possible to proceed.

It is a freedom that arrives, which gives us new impetus and frees up energy and time for musicality.

My ten points approach

- i. I agree with William Kossler's proposal. This has always been my experience, even with all peculiarities and differences.
- ii. First Idiomatic formula: alternation of fingers, walking with fingers. Throughout Book 1 and most of Book 2 this is the only rule to follow.
- iii. I start with the index. Why? Because it is the finger that points, because it is the one that orients us, because it is the one that, if it could speak, would say: "It was you who ate the chocolate !". However, there are children who, despite my proposal to start with the index, continue to start with the middle after months. Here comes an interesting test for us: are we able to respect the child and notice his natural approach? What does the child express with this proposal? In these cases it is important to accept the child's orientations and ask ourselves if this choice has anything to do with laterality. I am not able to answer. It would be necessary to ask some experts of lateralization.
- iv. So for me it's okay to start with the middle finger too, but I don't think it's the most logical finger; here I would need arguments to support this thesis.
- v. I start with the index up to Lightly Row
- vi. From Go Tell to Tanz II, I always start with the middle finger
- vii. In Song of The Wind we encounter the first sounds repeated with the same finger. I use the WHISTLE – FISCHIO (). (Look down)
- viii. Second Idiomatic formula: "a m i" in Tanz II
- ix. The other pieces from Steady Hands to Carcassi's Andante have obvious musical needs and do not require any particular explanation in this list.
- x. There are only four songs with the WHISTLE (FISCHIO), with the repetition of the same finger, always middle: SONG OF THE WIND, RIGADOON, BROTHER JOHN and ALLEGRO. The repetitions are deliberately limited and made manageable because when they appear, they are always clearly determined by the musical needs of the piece.

Book 1

The following proposal assumes that it is natural for the child to start with the index. *Finger crossings are deliberately introduced in the Pre-Twinkle period, so that the student can master this skill when required and grow awareness of the fingers and their alternation, one of the stated goals for the new fingerings in Book 1 (Revised Edition)*

• Twinkle Variations

I propose the beginning of all the Variations with the index, while I repeat I have children who start with the middle. They immediately learn to cross the strings with the unnatural finger (finger inversion): each string changing string towards acute is with the index finger; each changing string towards grave is with the middle finger. The first encounter of the unnatural string change is with Variation A; then with Variation B, then with Theme.

This skill needs to be prepared and is treated in my workshops and in my training courses. I use three specific sequences:

Manuality sequence,

Rhythm sequence,

Position sequence

(30 songs pre-twinkles with and without guitar).

When the child is ready to play we will take care of where the fingers are reversed in the string change:

Ex. n. 1 : changing string with i

29 VARIATION A i i

Ex. n. 2 changing string with m , pay attention to Bar 2 – 6 – 8 - 10

Variation B
guitarra i m m i m i m i m i m i m i m m
5 i i m i m i i m i m i m i m m m
10 i m i m i m i m m i m m

Ex. n. 3 changing string with m , pay attention to Bar 3-4 / Bar 8 / Bar 11-12

17 THEME m i m m i
23 m i m i m m i m m

- **Lightly Row**

I start with the index and propose always alternating. Why do I start with the index? Because I want them to face the Teaching Point Do-La (first time of two fingers together of the left hand on fingerboard) without having to even think about reversing the fingers of the right hand. In the final part at bar 14 they will be ready to perform it by inverting the fingers. This inversion was prepared with Variation B and with the Theme.

LIGHTLY ROW

Mis. 14

- **Go Tell.**

I start with the middle and always alternating. Bar 1 was prepared with Variation B, with Theme and with Lightly Row

GO TELL

Mis. 1&2

- **Song of the Wind**

Here I introduce the middle finger repetition for the 1st time. Why? Because it is a need dictated by music and it is a short and simple fragment to memorize. I use the WHISTLE (FISCHIO) game. When the child arrives at the sound that must be repeated with the middle finger, he whistles and thus emits a sound signal that reminds him of the continuation with the same finger. This is all a lot of fun.

How do I further prepare the notes repeated by the same finger? Using the Song of the Wind melody by walking (Walking Song). The feet are as if they were the index and middle fingers: we mimic the fingering of the right hand by walking and proceeding with the same foot when I have to repeat the middle finger.

SONG OF THE WIND

36

41

- **May Song**

I start with the middle: all alternating. It was not easy to get people to accept starting with the medium. The previous BOOKS editions in fact reported the beginning with the index . Take care Bar 1

- **Allegretto**

All alternating beginning with the middle. Take care Bar 12- 13 (B- G –D)

48 ALLEGRETTO

- **Perpetual**

All alternating beginning with the middle.

When do I prepare Perpetual? With all the previous songs! In this sense it is a Review piece! But I also prepare it thanks to proprioceptive games that allow me to solve Bar 12-13

MOTO PERPETUO

Mis. 10-11

- **Variations**

At this point, arrived at Rigadoon, I begin the review rhythms 2 - 3 - 4 with "ami"

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- **Rigadoon**

I start with the middle finger. WHISTLE to Bar 10 and 12

m FISCHIO m

- **Brother John**

I begin with middle. I use the WHISTLE as in SONG OF THE WIND. The fragment is very short and easy to memorize. TWO WHISTLES: in Bar 9 and Bar 10. I start with the middle. Here I can use the Walking-song, too.

Brother John FISCHIO! FISCHIO!

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef. The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The third measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The fourth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The fifth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The sixth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The seventh measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The eighth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The ninth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The tenth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. Blue arrows point to the 'm' notes in the third and fifth measures.

- **French Folk Song**

All alternating beginning with the middle.

- **Tanz 1**

All alternating beginning with the middle.

- **Tanz 2**

All alternating beginning with the middle. Bar 10-11: the execution of index on first string and middle on third string is prepared with Perpetual, yet. Here, however, I prefer to introduce the anular finger

TANZ 2 Mis. 9-12

The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The first measure is a whole note 'm'. The second measure contains a quarter note 'i', an eighth note 'm', and a quarter note 'i'. The third measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The fourth measure contains a quarter note 'a', an eighth note 'i', and a quarter note 'm'. The fifth measure contains a quarter note 'i', an eighth note 'm', and a quarter note 'i'. The sixth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'a', and a quarter note 'm'. The seventh measure contains a quarter note 'i', an eighth note 'm', and a quarter note 'i'. The eighth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'a', and a quarter note 'm'. The ninth measure contains a quarter note 'i', an eighth note 'm', and a quarter note 'i'. The tenth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'a', and a quarter note 'm'. The eleventh measure contains a quarter note 'i', an eighth note 'm', and a quarter note 'i'. The twelfth measure contains a quarter note 'm', an eighth note 'a', and a quarter note 'm'. A blue arrow points to the 'a' note in the fourth measure.

- **Steady Hand**

I start with index and always alternate

- **Minuet**

I always alternate; it doesn't matter which finger to start with

Book 2

- **Long Long Ago**

I always alternate; it doesn't matter which finger to start with

- **Allegro**

I use the WHISTLE as in SONG OF THE WIND at Bar 4-5; 8-9; 12-13 . Good test: start with index using same point of finger repetition. The Walking Song is very funny!

- **A Toye**

I always alternate beginning with index

- **Andante**

I always alternate. Here a question arises: is it a repetition the sequence m- p-m ? i-p-i?



“I hope from the bottom of my heart that a finer method of teaching ... will be established as soon as possible through exchanging better ideas ... between teachers in the world and through cooperative study... “
(S. Suzuki- His Speeches and Essays Summy Birchard Edition)

Open communication, transparency and honesty on the state of what Dr. Suzuki called "our research" are the basis for the continuous development of our methodology, I hope that everyone - during their training courses - will faithfully present all the "Suzuki research" currently underway.

Elio Galvagno 22 March 2021