

Bartók score on a Hungarian tram! The use of all senses gives depth to our musical experience. Notation is necessary from the beginning if our players are to cope with the demands of modern orchestras. The essence of Szilvay's teaching is the art of singing through the right arm. The bow is therefore introduced as early as possible and length of stroke is encouraged. Excessive downward pressure in the left hand can get in the way of this therefore Szilvay goes even further than Rolland with his use of harmonics before stopped notes. Intonation also benefits from these harmonics. This was memorably demonstrated when members of the audience gave Szilvay's pupil random 'dohs'. She started her folk-song easily by sliding to the various pitches. Her ear, systematically trained according to Kodály philosophy, was helped by the agile correction movement in her left-hand technique. The social aspect of music is of paramount importance to this Finnish method. ('Dear friends, we have to compete with ice-hockey!') As soon as possible young children are meeting others through string playing. They can join in melodically with Colourstrings' excellent ensemble pieces. Although Szilvay treats every student as a potential professional and violin technique itself is taught in individual lessons ('Do not give the conservatoires remedial teaching') he emphasises the value of group music-making. His students learn true musicianship and humanity through chamber and orchestral music. This means that those who choose to remain amateurs are contributing to the civilisation

of our society. Around this special afternoon seminar was a wealth of further stimulation. When I next play an early 18th-century minuet, I shall undoubtedly have a mental picture of the exquisite Baroque dancing from Hof-Dantzer (Austria and Germany). The personal Alexander advice from Malcolm Williamson (UK) was invaluable. It was interesting to browse through the music and instrument stalls. However, the concert from Hampshire Music Service, though much appreciated (especially the last item) was perhaps more appropriate for a local than an international event. Finally there was an unexpected lesson at Tamás Ittész's early morning session (Hungary). When Ittész's delightful little child demonstrator suffered an attack of hiccups and, most understandably, dreadful stage-fright, it was a member of the audience who eventually released the tension mounting in the class. Over coffee, I learnt how her use of touch and mime had turned the girl's seemingly uncontrollable tears to a smile. Here was true humanity hand in hand with music, for children's needs must always come first in any ESTA conference.

*Rachel Greenwood*

Simon Fischer's approach was quite different, I think, from what most people expected. It was philosophical rather than technical, thought-provoking, spontaneous and thoroughly enjoyable. He began by saying that he did not like the term 'warm-up'; with a strong technique one should not need to warm up but simply be able to pick up the instrument and play.

He stressed the importance of

the way one thinks. Think well - play well. Know the quality you seek and if you can describe it simply you can attain it. When teaching, always try to find out what the pupil is thinking, send ideas back and forth between pupil and teacher to clarify on both sides. Use mental muscles on a new piece and start with the end result in mind. Being clear in mind is the fastest way to good music-making with, of course, the necessary dedication and practice with the right teacher.

Simon also recommended that one should read everything written on the subject, talk to others, go to concerts and listen to recordings, good or bad, not to judge but to experience. One may not like everything, but it will act as a sifter to discover what one wants from the music.

He also spoke about using time wisely. Liken time to money - you cannot spend it twice.

Invest time well and five minutes well used will return time saving later by one thousand per cent. Ask 'what have I learned' or what does the pupil feel was learned during a particular session. Although technique was not discussed a great deal, Simon did say that he thought that the 'master key' was proportion and quoted Leonardo da Vinci's Divine Proportionality and gave as an example spiccato - near the heel for heavier, longer bow strokes, lifting further from the string, and away from the heel for lighter, shorter strokes, nearer the string.

The whole lecture was summed up by Simon Fischer's appreciation of Tamás Ittész (Hungary) illustration of the footballer who does not think of the way in which he is kicking the ball, but where he is kicking it.

*Audrey Manners*

Participants were treated to a stunning yet visually striking world premiere of Richard Taylor's Music Theatre Workshop performance *Sea Stories* (see p. 20). This challenging and exciting production was directed by Wendy and designed by Carol Astel-Burt who have both worked with Richard on other projects. *Sea Stories* encompasses principal orchestral work at different levels combined with a variety of singing, speech and movement. Based on the work of Portsmouth, the work illustrates life at sea during the time of Nelson and utilises a number of sea shanties from that period. The performance was given to students from the RNC Strings Project combined with two theatre groups from the Portsmouth area. The work for the presentation known as the New Theatre Royal was in a wonderful setting. Built in 1834 and damaged by fire in 1972 it is being restored to its former glory. Following some refreshments and social chat conference members attended the candlelit concert given by the Dufay Collective presenting varied music popular in the 17th century, either for music-making or in the taverns. The ensemble gave a stylish and virtuosic interpretation of their repertoire. On Friday morning participants had the opportunity of listening to several students from the International String Orchestra performing solo works including Schumann, Kreisler and with the performance of Beethoven String Trio in finale. We were indeed fortunate to watch Phyllis Young in *Sea* she is a most inspiring