The Orff Echo

Official Bulletin of the American Orff Schulwerk Association

Vol. 7, No. 2 January, 1975

PITTSBURGH CONFERENCE

"In Honor of Carl Orff's 80th Birthday" is the theme of the AOSA National Conference in Pittsburgh, Pa., April 10-13, 1975. Selections from his *Music for Children* and other compositions will be played by students from Hartwick College and by the Percussion Ensemble of W. Virginia University for the occasion. Our dynamic European guest will be Trude Hauff of Sweden, a former student and teacher at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, now teaching in a comprehensive school and at the Music Academy in Stockholm. Ms. Hauff's sessions will include the use of the Arabic scale in the elementary school classroom, changing time and irregular meter in music of different countries, and a "Tutti" celebration.

Doreen Hall, to whom we owe the introduction of the Schulwerk in North America, will speak at the opening general session on the *Schulwerk: Past, Present and Future*. She will also present one session for all participants. Most of us remember the remarkable children's demonstration at the Boston Conference by Lisa Parker, the Dalcroze movement specialist, and look forward to working with her ourselves in a general session.

Three additional sessions will offer a choice of Indonesian music on Orff instruments, performance techniques of African rhythms on western instruments, and the use of American black folklore, presented by Gerald Dyke of Mass., percussionist Phil Faini of Virginia, and Ann Burt of Maryland, respectively.

For the Orff neophyte there will be three sessions on how to introduce the Schulwerk at the primary, intermediate and junior high levels, given by Marion O'Connell and Lillian Yaross of Illinois, and Nancy Ferguson of Tennessee, and an introductory recorder session—Orff style—by Mary Stringham of West Virginia.

For our increasing number of experienced attendees, two sessions on Improvisation, led by Jane Frazee, Minnesota, and Don Slagel, New York, and one on Modal Harmony with Martha Pline, Massachusetts, should be a challenge. The distinguished recorder artist, Colin Sterne, of Pittsburgh University, will also present a session on Expressive Recorder Playing, and Mavis Serries, Massachusetts, will do one on Creative Drama in the Classroom, for those who missed her last year.

A number of single bonus sessions will be

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Improvisation— the Life-Blood of Music

Lecture by Friedrich Gulda

Reprinted with permission from Musikforum Magazine, Vienna.

"When considering the situation of music in our time we should begin by asking ourselves whether the conventional method of musical education helps to develop or is more likely to suppress the natural musical talents of the students. When I started music lessons at the age of 7 or 8, I was immediately confronted with written music. I had to learn to read music before I came into contact with music itself. The common result of this method is that children play mechanically what they read, without grasping it, and when they are requested to sing what they have played, they are unable to do so because they have been taught to read notes and not to make music. Naturally a strong musical talent is able to overcome the limitations imposed by such training, but it is definitely a waste of time. In my opinion it would, therefore, be much better to start musical education by teaching children to hear music and repeat what they have heard and by encouraging them to improvise and make music before they are taught to read notes.

On the other hand, the conventional kind of musical training enables even a less gifted student to acquire a certain skill on an instrument like the piano, the organ, the violin, etc., and if he is the hard-working type who practices about 8 hours per day for ten years or so, he may eventually become a fairly successful virtuoso. — I have a strong suspicion that this mechanical way of playing an instrument, this "drumming of notes" as I would call it, has very little to do with making music but is simply a means of making money, and what is worse — a means of gaining power: power over competitors, power over musicians who may be far better than the applauded virtuoso himself.

Where, then, is genuine love of music to be found and where does it begin? Children love to play, they actually want to improvise, they sing the nursery rhymes they hear from their mothers, they enjoy marching and like rhythm. This natural interest should be developed — but when a child starts music lessons he is immediately confronted with the authority of written music. From the very beginning he is given the impression that what is written is far more valuable that what is only heard and experienced. It simply follows from the traditional kind of musical teaching that playing what is written and organized is more important than anything else in music.

The history of music shows that in the course of time more and more value has been attached to written music, but the thick volumes of, for example, "official" Spanish music contain only part (and the less important part) of the music which exists in that country. They say nothing about the art of flamenco which was created in the 16th century by Jews, Arabs, and Gypsies who, being outlawed by society and persecuted for religious reasons, withdrew to the mountains of Southern Spain, where they lived more or less as bandits, but nevertheless as excellent musicians. Similarly, in Hungary there is an official Hungarian music as distinct from the music of the Gypsies. We have classical music and jazz, and formerly we had sacred music and court music on the one hand and the music of minstrels on the other. Perhaps I should mention that 'jazz' and 'flamenco' originally were abusive words.

So it would seem that the written, official music can be identified with the art of the rich and the unwritten, improvised unofficial music with the art of the poor. One might also say that the written, official art is the art of the oppressors and the unwritten, improvised art, the art of the oppressed. Pursuing this line of thought one might come to the conclusion that written music is an art which places rationalism above creative irrationalism. Furthermore a written, unchanging art is apt to appeal mainly to older people who dislike changes and are inclined to look down their noses on an unwritten, ever-changing music as they look down on the younger generation. So the two types of music may be regarded as representing the old art and the new art, the conservative and the progressive attitudes, the static and the dynamic factors in the world.

Let us try to analyse our special case, that is our occidental, European music. What are we so proud of? We are proud of a development which began about 2000 years ago and culminated in the creation of perfectly organized musical forms, such as the symphony, the sonata, the fugue. Unfortunately, however, we are inclined to believe

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Improvisation (Cont'd)

that generous, perfect organization is the ultima ratio in music and that music which is not organized in this way must necessarily be inferior. This is not only arrogant but probably wrong. Indian classical music, for example, is a purely improvised art. It is based on very strict rules, an extremely complicated code, and although unwritten, it is just as old, elaborate, awe-inspiring and laden with tradition as our own classical music.

Arrogance can be traced throughout the history of music. It is reflected in the disregard for the music of the minstrels, which was perhaps better than the sacred and court music of the time but was found unworthy of being written down, and nowadays it is expressed in our attitude towards flamenco and jazz.

Unfortunately the gap between the different types of music seems to have widened and the situation has become increasingly dangerous for music as a whole. Today there are two parties who know next to nothing of each other and categorically refuse to talk to each other — the reason being not even animosity but simply lack of interest. In the radio stations, for example, music is split up into serious music and light music, and the head of the "serious music department" thinks that light music is trash while the head of the "light music department" thinks that Beethoven is dull — and they don't talk to each other.

The state of affairs is very bad for music and what is worse, it appears to be an image of the political situation. The rich against the poor, the powerful against the powerless, race riots in the USA, student rebellions all over the world. It is the same phenomenon everywhere. Similarly, in the world of music it seems that we can only choose now between violent revolution and conservatism — and from conservatism to fascism it is only a small step which in connection with what we call "enjoying our musical inheritance" has already been made in many cases.

Where is the way out of this dilemma? What can we do to bridge the gap, to re-unite the two parties, to avoid violence at least in the world of music?

First let us try to define the word "improvisation". Improvisation is the quickest and most spontaneous way of composing. Thus from the musical point of view there is no reason whatsoever to play off improvisation against composition, because the difference between them is mainly a difference in speed.

Secondly we should bear in mind that since the invention of the gramophone record the writing of music has lost some of its former importance. Nowadays music can be 'recorded' much faster and communicated much more directly than by way of writing. I am sure that many great composers hated the endless trouble of writing, all the more so since a lot — and sometimes the best — of the music is lost in the process, but they had no alternative. Some of Chopin's contemporaries, for example, reported that he produced his greatest music when he sat at the piano and improvised, and wouldn't it be wonderful if we could hear Bach playing his own music?

I think that in view of all this we should make up our minds to reassess the value of the written, lasting, organized work as compared with the element of spontaneity in music and above all we should refrain from conveying to children the idea that only what is written, lasting, and powerful can be of true value.

After such re-orientation the idea of the lasting, unchanging work of art will probably regain the value it has lost in the mendacity of our "cultural life". Perhaps the youthful element of improvisation will help us to reach a position once again where spontaneous reciprocation between artist and audience on the one hand and spontaneous mutual inspiration of improvisation and written composition on the other hand will enable new works to be created with new means.

Now I must address a few words to the radicals, to those musicians who would like to smash everything and know nothing about Beethoven. They say that classical music is dull — but what they don't know is that in its heyday classical music was just as lively, spontaneous, and wild as jazz is today.

What can we do to revitalize music here in Europe? I think we should study the various types of improvised music which existed and still exist in Europe, for example preclassical music, flamenco, and even the most despised kind of music, that of the Gypsies. Coming from Vienna, I should also like to mention the Viennese Waltz, the last world-wide musical event which originated from my home town. Perhaps the incorporation of the new musical experience of our time into our own traditions will pave the way for new musical achievements here in Europe and help to bridge the gap between the two hostile parties in music."

Pittsburgh (Cont'd)

offered: Ms. Hauff will do a children's demonstration, and also explore the *Christmas Story*, by Carl Orff. Others are: *Orff in the Church*, Ron Springer, Pa.; *Orff and Other Contemporary Approaches*, Michael Salzman, Tenn.; *Movement Therapy*, Brunhilde Dorsch, Pa.; *A Handicapped Children's Demonstration*, Joanne Pasquinelli.

The famous Tamburitzans of Duquesne University will give an evening program, and international folkdancing will be led by Annabelle Joseph, Pittsburgh, after the banquet. At our luncheon we will charter our new chapters, and at the banquet we will recognize our clinicians and Dr. Orff himself. But our spirit and dedication to creative music education will be the best tribute to this 80th birthday celebration for Carl Orff.

Jacobeth Postl, Conference Chairperson

WORDS OF WISDOM

From the Canadian Music Journal, Feb., 1961.

"Orff's Schulwerk may not be a foolproof method or a ready-made system; it is nevertheless the embodiment of thoughts that hang together; one cannot use it in bits and pieces. It is conceivable that one may change the words, the music, the scoring even—but one cannot change the sequence of the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic development without destroying the pedagogical value of the work. A teacher, for instance, who had no patience with the pentatonic improvisation or felt that tonic and dominant chords could be taken for granted from the outset would be wasting his time on Schulwerk. We can either teach as we were taught ourselves, starting with a ready-made style, with 18th century tunes and chords in dominant relationship; or we can begin at the beginning and build slowly so that music is not put into the child, but grows in it and with it. Art teachers have learned to use a similar approach; it is hard to see why music teachers should be incapable of doing the same. There must be some, at least, who are longing to abandon the old routines and all the superficial tricks of the trade in current use; for those Orff's Schulwerk will be a godsend."

Arnold Walter

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Susan Van Dyke is spending the current school year at Colegio Maya in Guatamala as an exchange teacher from Memphis. She will be organizing the first Orff-Schulwerk program in the area.

Our president, **Konnie Koonce Saliba**, is now Assistant Professor of Music Education at Memphis State University. She is busy working on curriculum development in Orff-Schulwerk at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Tommie Pardue is the new Resource Orff Specialist at the Board of Education of the Memphis City Schools.

Herbert Rothgarber's little book for two soprano recorders, Orff ensemble and voice, "Make a Glad Sound", has just been published by Magnamusic.

Many thanks to **Nancy Savin** for being Chapter News Editor for the last couple of years, a job fraught with frustrations. She has done a fine job of rewriting news releases from our various chapters and getting them in on time.

Dr. Katherine Crews is teaching Elementary Music Education at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. Her booklet "Music and Perceptual-Motor Development" has just been published by the Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., a division of Prentice-Hall.

Isabel Carley reports two new books just off the press, "Simple Settings," Book II from Magnamusic, a second collection of easy arrangements of American folk material, and "Recorders Plus" from Belwin, a collection of original pieces for recorders and Orff ensemble.

Peg Van Haaren has been teaching an extension course for Michigan State University this fall.

Lorna Dee Mistele is project director for the Birmingham Creative Music Project and E.S.E.A. Title III Orff Research Project. She is also Michigan Chairman for a Bicentennial music book for elementary pupils to be published next spring.

Murray McNair presented an in-service workshop for Birmingham teachers and administrators from twenty school districts as part of the Title III program.

Lucya Prince conducted a graduate course in Montessori-Orff Techniques at George Williams College in Downers Grove, Illinois last summer, and also taught a group of prospective Montessori teachers Dalcroze Eurhythmics for the young.

Maydelle Meier of Albuquerque, N.M. attributes her last year's award as Teacher of the Year to her use of Orff in her kindergarten classroom.

Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa, 50112, is interested in finding an Orff Specialist to teach a special methods course one term a year, probably from late August to Christmas time. Please contact Ms. Judith Glyde, Chairman, Department of Music if you're interested.

DENVER CONFERENCE REPORT

Virginia Ebinger, Los Alamos, N.M.

It was fitting that the first AOSA Conference to be held in the west carried a strong feeling of ethnic cultural identity and integrity. Denver, sprawled at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, is situated near the heart of the oldest living communities on the North American continent. And the offerings of the Conference, from the curriculum to the table appointments to the German and Chicano and Indian and Southwestern dancers, developed the theme of our one-ness with those groups who make up our many-cultured society.

A brilliant exercise in improvisation was the first order of the day for local Conference Chairman Barbara Grenoble and her co-chairman Edith Morris, when it was discovered, just hours before the sessions were to begin, that Helder Parente-Pessoa would not be arriving. And though it was a disappointment to all that he could not be present, it was at this point that the strength of the Conference began to take form and to grow in a steady crescendo that continued throughout the four days of shared joy as 465 participants made music together.

When Joe Matthesius walked down from the platform, guitar in hand, and started us singing "Viva, viva la musica," we knew we were off to a good start.

A stirring speech by Dr. Herbert Zipper, Director of Special Projects at U.S.C.'s School of Performing Arts, reaffirmed our conviction that the arts-centered curriculum is the direction in which public schools should travel, and gave us hope that it may someday be a more widespread reality.

Other featured clinicians and speakers were Dr. Louis Ballard, American Indian composer, Music Specialist for B.I.A. Schools, author, educator; Claude Caux, professor at Houston University, student of Marcel Marceau, mime artist; Cleo Parker Robinson, director of New Dance Theater in Denver, choreographer, teacher of dance and movement; and Dr. Harrison Collins, Superintendent of Schools, Northfield, Illinois, who spoke on "The Arts in Education from an Administrator's Point of View," reminding us all of Herbert Spencer's statement: "Music must take rank as the highest of the fine arts. It is one which more than any other ministers to human welfare."

If we'd been asked to name the five most thrilling activities, there could not have been consensus — there were so many! But surely on every list, and probably at the top, would have come the first Tutti. In this session, led by Barbara Grenoble, the hard-working Rocky Mountain Chapter, barely one year old, performed a great variety of music from all five volumes of the **Schulwerk**. During the Tutti Jacobeth Postl, Joe Matthesius, and Isabel Carley took turns at conducting.

A thrilling evening of folk dancing followed Saturday night's banquet, beginning with Denver's Schuhplatte Dancers of the Edelweiss Club, clapping and stamping their way into the heart of everyone present. Then came the unforgettable family from Taos Pueblo. Andy Luhan played the drum and sang while four of his young children performed their own traditional dances with amazing élan and precision. The ongoingness of the drum beat, the concentrated agility of the dancers, the bright costumes complemented by bells and shells and rattles, all together made an auditory feast. And finally, when we thought nothing more could be added, another Tutti began. This time the Lloyd Shaw Foundation, whose objective is "to recall, restore, and teach the folk rhythms of the American People," led the group through hours of dancing — squares and circles and lines.

Clinicians who offered varied fare of outstanding quality in the multi-choice sessions were Carol Bitcon, Millie Burnett, Pat Hamil, Arvida Steen, Marcia Beck, Konnie Koonce, Janice Rapley, Jim Coffin, James Grigsby, Corlu Collier, Eloise McCormick, and Mary Ann Cummings, Virgil Hughes, Jo Jean Lynn, and Grace Nash.

Children involved in the Conference included Donna Medina's Dance Ensemble from Jefferson School in Greeley, Barbara Eberhardt's students from Westminster School, Denver; and Nancy Heil's students from National Jewish Hospital in Denver.

Unscheduled happenings which gave great satisfaction to the participants were a recorder session with Isabel Carley and a singing session with Joe Matthesius on Friday evening.

And when Sunday morning came, the program was in Sonata form. Exposition: Claude Caux working with children in mime; Development: Claude Caux in solo mime; Recapitulation: A reprise of happenings from four of the multi-choice sessions, ending with "Glory to God in the Highest."

And it was over.

Viva Denver! Olé the Seventh Annual!

Virginia Ebinger

Congratulations, Avon!

Avon Gillespie, of Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, has accepted an invitation to teach at the Orff Institute in Salzburg for the school year 1975-76. He feels that his appointment may help to dispel the notion that Orff is a European movement, and to kill the rumor that the English course will no longer be offered at the Institute. He says, "I will be responsible for the course during the year, and will be a part of the summer experience. The invitation has been given to me, but the recognition is a statement of the thrust of the entire Schulwerk movement in this country. I am a product of workshops, people, and philosophy basically American, and as a result, I would like everyone to celebrate with me."

The Use of Improvisation in Recorder Teaching

Isabel McNeill Carley

It is my conviction that improvisation can serve as a magic key to the early and rapid development of musical skill and sensitivity on any instrument. In improvisation, aural memory is trained, pitch awareness is cultivated, a feeling for phrase and form develops naturally from the simplest echo exercises to song forms, dances, rondos, and free large-scale improvisation. Improvisation always focuses the student's attention on the *musical* results of his efforts, since there is nothing to distract him, and gives a peculiar sense of achievement and release, even on a very simple level. Once anyone has the courage to start improvising, his pleasure in doing so can only grow as his skill and musical imagination develop side by side. The use of improvisation from the very beginning of music study leads to a much better technique and to more sensitive playing than any other approach I have ever tried. The techniques are readily transferable.

It was the emphasis on improvisation and ensemble that first attracted me to the Orff approach when I encountered it in Toronto in 1962, when Carl Orff, Gunild Keetman, Wilhelm Keller, Barbara Haselbach, and Doreen Hall were all on this side of the Atlantic together. I shall never forget Gunild Keetman's demonstration of improvisational techniques with recorders and Orff instruments, or the choral improvisation at the end of her session when the whole large hall burst into song. This, I felt, was what I'd been looking for, techniques of teaching improvisation that I could use with my own students.

Thanks to a German Friend, I had known the German edition of the Schulwerk long before I ever saw or heard the Orff instruments. I found the books far from self-explanatory, and after trying some of the rhythmic exercises in Book I, I put them aside. After I was familiar with the English editions, I found the same problem. The techniques of improvisation were really never spelled out in the five volumes of the Schulwerk, only hinted at in the rhythmic sections of Book I and Book V, and in a few rhymes for improvisation, melodies to be completed, tunes to be worked out, and suggestions here and there in the back of the books. Nor was there any hint in the books of the extensive use of improvisation in movement training.

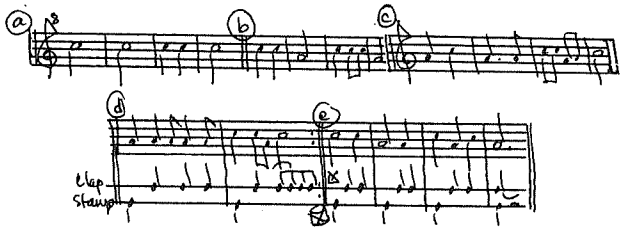
Some idea of the procedure can be gained by examining the captions through Part II of the first book: Speech exercises; Rhythms for imitation: Rhythms for clapping, melody-making, and fitting words to rhythmic patterns; Rhythms to be completed; Rhythmic rondos; etc. The examples in the books presuppose a sood deal of preliminary training on a more basic level. They are too long and complex for young children or inexperienced adults.

In my training at the Orff Institute in Salzburg, I found the same lack of development of the techniques of improvisation in the actual teaching process. There was, for instance, no hint of the relationship of these principles to the teaching of the recorder, nor was any of the recorder literature from the Schulwerk used in the required recorder lessons. The training in improvisation in other areas was very erratic, just an occasional session through the year. I understand that there's more nowadays.

What follows, then, is my own application of the techniques of improvisation I discovered in the Orff approach applied to the teaching of the recorder. In the last eleven years I have introduced hundreds of classroom and music teachers to the delights of recorder playing in my summer Orff workshops, and dozens of children and adults in my private classes during the year. I have found that recorder players of any age or stage play more musically and progress much faster with a generous dose of improvisation. And they learn to look forward to and to love this part of their lessons, when they are allowed to play their own music in their own way.

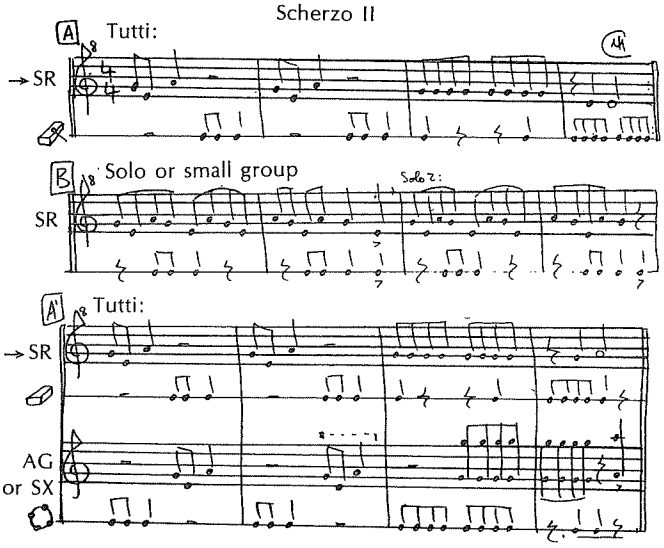
Improvisation begins with echo play, first on one tone, then on two. I like to start with C' and A, the falling third, the "natural chant of childhood", the basic interval for both the Orff and the Kodaly approaches. Why begin with imitation? Because aural memory and inner hearing must be developed before individual ideas can be expressed. And, of course, one has to have some tonal vocabulary to work with. Also, hearing and reproducing the correct pitch with proper tonguing, hand position, and breath support comes most easily by imitation. Listening, after all, is basic.

Here, for example, are some very simple patterns for a class of rank beginners to echo:



To make the texture more interesting, assign a slap-clap pattern to half the class while the other half echoes your phrases, and then change assignments. Keep the patterns simple enough that most of the class is immediately successful. (This is one of the main virtues of using improvisation: you always know exactly where each member of your class is, musically speaking. No one ever improvised beyond his own ability!)

More experienced musicians can, of course, do more complex rhythms and longer phrases even when they are just starting on the recorder. It is up to the teacher to challenge them musically from the very beginning. I find that everyone needs a lot of practice in making up interesting tunes with a very limited range no matter what his previous training. This little Scherzo[1], for example, uses only three notes on the recorders, a wood block, a tambourine, and a glockenspiel.



To vary the assignments, play a phrase for half the group to echo, then the other half, then tutti. As soon as confidence has been built up, go round the class individually, giving each child his own pattern to imitate. If he misses after a second try, have the whole class join in, and give him an easier one next time. Incidentally, everyone fingers each phrase, and thinks it to himself, until his own turn comes to play. One soon learns to gauge the phrase to the child's ability so that he is almost always successful at the first attempt. But the teacher does need to learn to think up new patterns fast, without any interruption of the rhythm from one to the next.

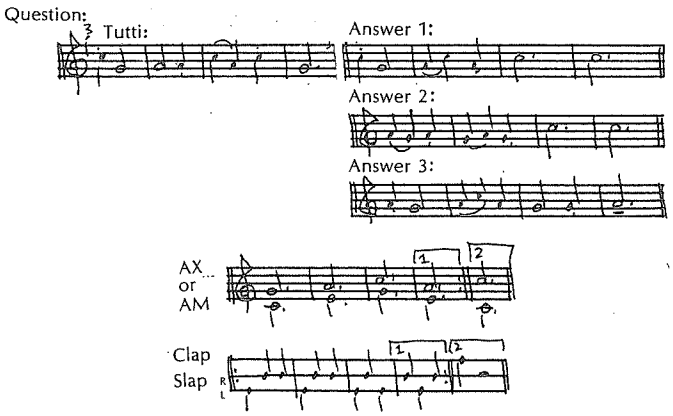
The next step is to let a volunteer from the class take the teacher's role, inventing, say, four phrases in turn for the whole class to echo. The word volunteer is all-important here, for the pupil knows when he's ready and will only fail if he's forced into the teacher's role

[1]Carley, Recorder Improvisation and Technique, pg. 15.

The Use of Improvisation (Cont'd)

before he has the confidence to do it *well.* This stage can be helped by establishing a simple rhythmic ostinato with part of the group to support the soloist and his echo. The rhythmic accompaniment gives continuity to the effort and helps to maintain a steady rhythmic flow from one phrase to the next.

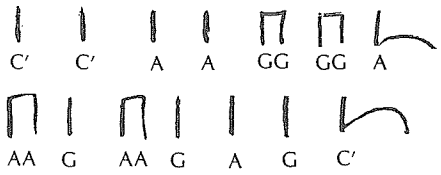
After the children have become adept at echoing simple melodic phrases, and after most of them have willingly taken the teacher's role, a new stage is reached in which individual invention is cultivated through the use of question and answer phrases. The teacher asks a musical question (being careful to leave it up in the air) and the pupil replies without breaking the rhythm, using the same notes as the teacher. (The notes to be used in any improvisation are always introduced first in echo exercises). To keep the entire class involved, have them echo the question until everyone knows it, and then play it together for each member of the class in turn; or have part of the group do a body-rhythm accompaniment while the rest of the class answers the question; or add an ostinato on an alto xylophone (or other bar instrument) to encourage rhythmic flow and accurate pitch. For example:



This is a crucial stage for the development of sensitivity to phrase length, rhythmic flow, and musical sense. By this I mean the perception and use of musical motifs from the question in the answer, so that the listener is aware that both soloists are, so to speak, talking on the same subject. The teacher needs to ask many questions to make the class aware of what they've done, aware of what makes a good question (i.e. a definite musical idea, a feeling of incompleteness, characteristic rhythm, limited range, etc.) and a good answer (continuity, usually using a motif from the beginning of the question but with a more final ending, or going on from where the question left off, reaching a definite and convincing point of repose.) This is all very obvious to musicians, but is new to children or adults who are just beginning to think music.

It is very important not to interrupt or criticize until any improvisation is finished, especially at this initial stage when we need to build confidence, in a climate that encourages growth. When the improvisation is over, ask questions that provoke self-criticism and peer judgment. The children can tell just as well as we can whether the questions and answers were the same length, whether there were breaks in the rhythm, whether the specified notes were used, whether the answer was a true answer, whether the melody was happily related to its ostinato accompaniment, etc. The occasional use of the tape recorder helps too, especially early in such training when the children have not yet learned to remember what they did themselves, let alone what anyone else did. At first, the improvised phrases may be halting and unbalanced, but fluency comes with practice. When a particularly good phrase pair occurs, sieze on it and teach it to the whole class, perhaps as the basis for further improvisation, perhaps as the grist for a lesson in musical notation.

Encourage the students to find practice partners to work with outside of class, and to make up their own echo phrases, questions and answers to bring to class, using whatever notes they're comfortable with. Some of them will be ready to make longer pieces and play them for the class. It is usually at this stage that the development of some system of notation becomes imperative. When my classes start writing their own pieces down, they use a simple shorthand of stick notes and note names, like this;



There never seems to be any particular problem about transferring to reading and writing regular notation as they become more familiar with it. (They are already well schooled in using rhythm notation before pitch notation is introduced[2], and they have had some experience in reading and singing from a two or three line staff before I start them on recorders in second or third grade.)

For the insecure, words can be an enormous help in improvisation, whether they're invented on the spot or already familiar. The words reinforce a feeling for rhythm and phrase length and give confidence to the tense child (or adult) who either peters out in the middle of a phrase or keeps interrupting himself to correct what he's already done. A ready repertoire of folk rhymes and short poems is indispensible in this kind of teaching, the shorter the better, like these:

Apples, peaches, pears and plums,
Tell us when your birthday comes.

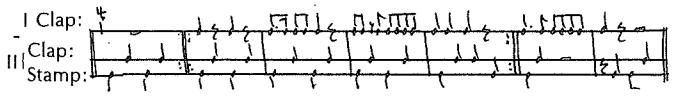
*

or: Higgledy piggledy, my black hen,
She lays eggs for gentlemen.

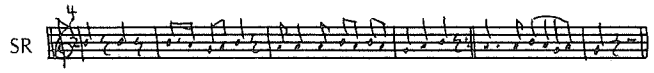
*

or: Acka backa soda cracker,
Acka backa boo,
Acka backa soda cracker,
Out goes you!

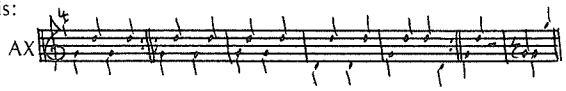
At this stage, when echo-playing and question-answer technique are relatively secure, it is possible to begin building simple little melodies to given rhythm patterns or to familiar rhymes. Here, for instance, is the rhythmic version of a spirited little march from Book I of the Schulwerk: (Murray, p. 62)[3]



The clapping solo might first be transferred to a hand drum or a wood block; later to a glockenspiel or a recorder, still over the same stamp-clap accompaniment, like this:



Or the accompaniment could be transferred to an alto xylophone, like this:



As new notes are learned, echo-phrases introducing new connections, new tonguings, new rhythm patterns are used, first by the teacher, then again by volunteer soloists, finally all around the class, with each child ready for either role. Similarly with questions and answers: first the teacher asks the questions, then a volunteer soloist takes the teacher's role; then questions and answers are alternated all around the class. In either type of exercise, the tonal range is first set with echo exercises.

It is, of course, equally necessary to practice making up questions to fit a given answer. Often, I teach an answer phrase to the whole class for them to play *tutti* in response to the improvised questions.

Gradually phrase lengths are extended and new demands are made. For instance, using only E G A and C′, make your answer end

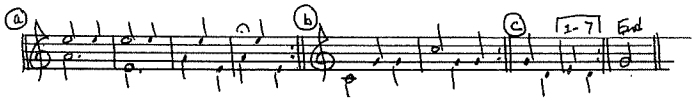
[2]Cf. my *Song Primer,* Third Edition, Brasstown Press,

[3]Used with permission from Schott and Sons, Mainz

Continued on page 6, col. 1

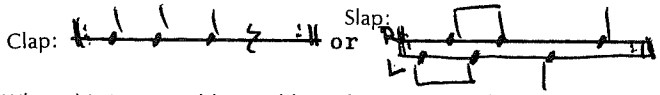
Recorder Improvisation (Cont'd)

on A (or on E, or G, or the more obvious C'). This shift in tonal center which is one of the charms of the pentatonic scale, is more easily felt if it is reinforced on one of the bar instruments with a simple ostinato on A and E, or whatever is appropirate. Eg.



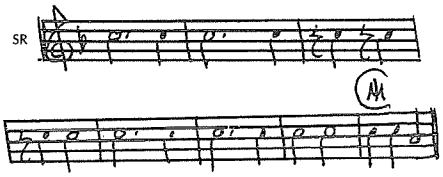
Sometimes the ostinato may be played by part of the class on their recorders, while the teacher (later a soloist from among them) improvises a tune above them. It is also very good practice to have the children walk at an easy tempo while they're playing simple ostinati. The movement helps cultivate a feeling for a steady tempo, and the need of breath, a feeling for phrasing. Simple movement patterns may also be used, particularly with children who have had previous movement training, such as 4 steps forward and 4 steps back; or change direction after two phrases in the solo part.

Multiple ostinati can be introduced as soon as the children can hear them and stay together, using body-rhythms, rhythm instruments, Orff instruments, voices, and recorders singly or in combination. The first step is to have the class echo and sustain a simple rhythm pattern while the teacher improvises against it, like this:



When this is no problem, add another ostinato. Then transfer these familiar patterns to rhythm or bar instruments while some of the group continues to do the original body-rhythm version with the chosen soloists. The possibilities, even at this initial stage, are endless, so don't be tempted to move along too fast, before the musical ideas of repetition and contrast, of rhythmic flow, of rhythmic tension between parts, of phrase balance, of the expressive use of timbre and dynamics, etc. have been absorbed.

Another useful idea is to work out simple descants to familiar songs, even at the two or three note stage. Not everyone will be able to hold his part against the familiar tune to begin with, but it's a good challenge for the more capable and musical in the class. For instance, here's a possible descant to "This Old Man" from my children's book[4].



As soon as low E is introduced, the song can be sung in the key of C, and the recorders can transpose their part to G and E.

When questions and answers flow freely it is time to improvise longer forms involving two questions and two answers or combinations of echo and question-answer phrases. One of the more difficult assignments is to ask a question, wait for the answer, then repeat the same question before a more final answer is given. It requires great concentration and takes a lot of practice, even for an accomplished musician. Try it and see.

This 4 phrase form might be used as the A section of a 3 part song form, with a new phrase, perhaps with a new tonal center, introduced and echoed for the B section before the first melody is repeated. Or the same little composition could be used as the A section of a rondo, with the whole class playing the theme together between contrasting improvised episodes. The contrasting sections should usually be the same length as the theme, but with new material and in a new mood and with new rhythmic motives, sometimes with a new tonal center. Volunteers might be asked to play successive phrases in a question-answer period, echo phrases, or, if the theme is long enough to warrant it, a combination of assignments. Sometimes I give very definite assignments as to form and tonality, sometimes I leave it open for the students to decide on the spur of the moment. Soon individual members of the class will be ready to improvise entire sections by themselves, and begin to bring entire compositions to class.

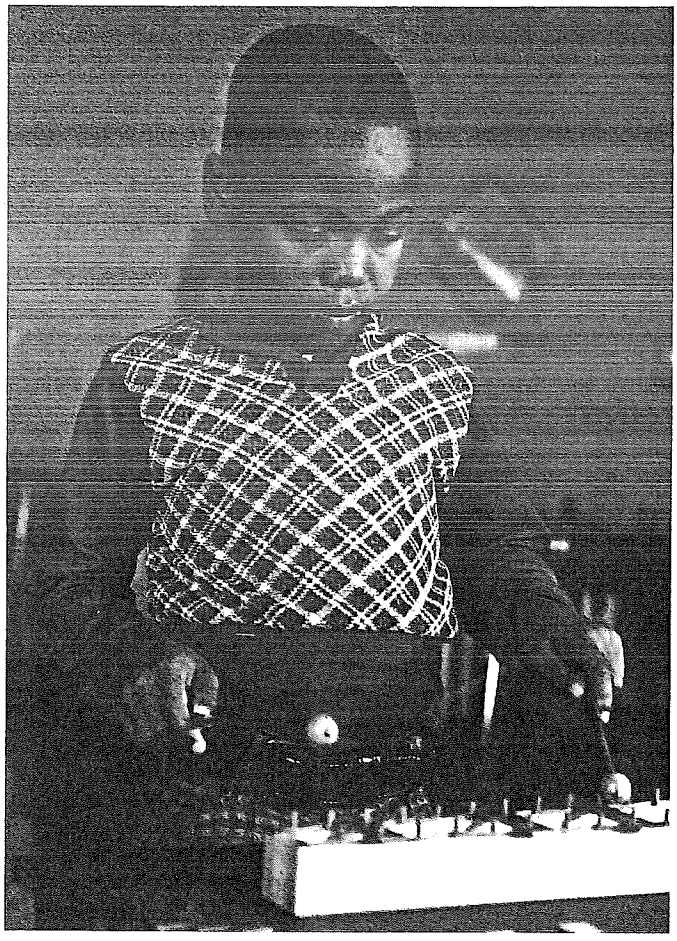
Rhythm and pitch percussion accompaniments add enormously to the effect of these longer improvisations. Sometimes we begin with the ostinati, building them up one at a time, each one filling in the holes in the previous ones and playing a pattern that becomes it. Simple dances can be worked out too, with solo dancers or small groups improvising the contrasting sections in movement just as the recorder players are doing. The movement thus clarifies the musical form while it adds a new dimension to the improvisation.

The same techniques of improvisation continue to be used as new notes and new scales are introduced — first the C D E G A pentatonic, then the D E G A B pentatonic and the C D F G A pentatonic, including, of course, the minor pentatonic and other possible tonal centers. Later the major scales are introduced, one at a time (G, C, F etc.) Then the minor modes are explored in turn, Aeolian, Dorian, Phrygian both in their natural positions and transposed, until the whole range of the recorder is mastered and the flavor of each scale has been explored.

Improvisation on the recorder is also used very extensively in movement lessons as the teacher plays for walking, running, skipping, for listening games, or for simple singing games and dances. When the children have a secure range of even three or four notes they may also begin to take part in improvising for movement, either accompanying the class's movement or determining the class's movement by the character of their improvisation.

Larger spatial forms are gradually developed along with longer musical forms, sometimes with the movement following the music, sometimes with the music accompanying the movement, but always in an intimate symbiotic relationship, each element dependent on the other.

Let me urge you to experiment with these techniques at your own level, whether you have anyone to work with you or not, whether you are a teacher or not. There is no pleasure to compare with that of making your own music in your own way, at your own level.



A Child in the I.E.M.I. Project in Tennessee

[4]Recorder Workbook for Beginners, not yet in print.

A MUSIC DAY TO REMEMBER

Shauna Eccles,
Elementary Music Specialist
Ogden City Schools, Ogden Utah

The 6th grade class sat smiling, half giggling, as their teachers rose to lead them in their opening number. These children were giving their first performance using the Orff instruments and playing the recorders for ten different audiences.

The children would get tired, the teachers realized, but the music supervisor wanted these instruments demonstrated at eight schools which would be receiving and playing these instruments next year. What was hoped to be a valuable music experience turned out to be that and more.

At the first school, the two performances were commensurate with the performers' behavior and attention.

At Mound Fort their surroundings were shockingly different. They found themselves on a huge stage with the audience scattered in the huge auditorium. Again the performance could have been better. The performers laughed and giggled and paid little attention to the teachers directing them.

Their lunch at Edison, the next school visited, was gratefully received and again they began their concert. The children became more observant now as they met the firm principal. They observed the quiet manner in which their new audience entered the hall. Their laughing subsided and their eyes at last found their teachers. The performance was heartily accepted by the audience which included student teachers from Weber College. The children and the teachers felt at last that they had done a good job. The children hadn't yet realized how their own behavior had improved.

"With the sweet sometimes comes the bitter." The last school that day was a neighboring school in the colored section of town. Cousins and friends were in the audience. The children entered the hall and began to set up their instruments. Their audience arrived noisily, with teachers themselves using loud voices to gain attention. The principal called the audience to order and the concert began. "Boo's" were heard coming from the older classes as each number was concluded. The performers glanced at each other and the smiles on their faces disappeared. Again their eyes found their teachers, full of hurt and bewilderment. Desire to perform well had vanished, and they wished only to get it over with. "That was the worst school," the children were heard to comment. The rude audience left a poor impression of the **whole** school.

The next Friday found the children less enthusiastic about going on tour, but their first concert for the day was excellent. Their eyes this time immediately found their directors. "Look at the way those children are coming in so quietly," the children said. "Our school doesn't come in like that." The audience was immediately ready and so were the performers. The performance was good, the audience appreciative, and mutual admiration and respect surrounded the hall. The children began to have an air about them of being performers instead of a giggling 6th grade.

"I don't want to go to the school on the hill," said a Spanish American child. "They're prejudice." The bus headed for Bonneville School anyway and the principal warmly greeted the children and helped them set the stage. The concert again was excellent. The performers had watched and the audience was quiet and appreciative. "This is the best lunch I've had," said the children. Two pieces of chicken, milk, two hot rolls, potatoes and gravy, green beans, lemon pudding and chocolate frosted cake. Wow, thanks a lot! Carpeted school too! Were the children ever impressed!

At Hillcrest School the children were slow and sleepy. The big meal had been too good. They watched and played well, but their singing voices lacked enthusiasm. All, including the teachers, felt like taking a nap.

The children did not want to go out on the other side of the tracks, but again the bus followed orders and let them out in front of Hopkins. Again the children were astonished at the good behavior of their audience, and the quiet respectful way they entered the hall. The performers put forth great effort even though they were tired, and gave a good concert. Smiling and happy the 6th graders returned to Washington, having had more than a musical experience in performing and sharing their talents with others.

New and valuable lessons were learned as the children themselves evaluated what had happened to them. They gained insight into their own problems:

1. How to be a better performer (watching)
2. Putting forth effort affected the more appreciative audiences.
3. A considerate audience affected the desire of performers to perform well.
4. Children up on the "hill" did like them! They were kind to them and clapped for them!
5. Children who lived around them were the ones who had treated them badly.
6. Their own behavior as an audience could stand improvement and they would be willing to better themselves.

Through performing and listening, valuable lessons were learned. Integration was achieved for a few hours through a healthy musical experience where both colored and white children, performers and audiences, could show mutual respect and genuine admiration for their accomplishments and talents.

"I just love those children at Washington," said a little girl who had just seen the performance.

NOTE: Leona Pederson and Harold Thompson were the 6th grade teachers.

CHAPTER NEWS

Connecticut Chapter

In September Connecticut Chapter President **Rida Davis** initiated the current season by introducing **Maureen Kenney** in an all day workshop on diverse Orff techniques. **Judy Thomas** appeared at the State Convention in New Britain in October and dispensed general Orff pedagogic theory in a very interesting confrontation between the Orff and Kodaly approaches to Music Education in a session entitled "Keep Your Meter Running."

Detroit Chapter

Grace C. Nash was the headliner for 120 people at the annual fall workshop at the Brookside School in Cranbrook. **Carolyn Tower** was hostess for the occasion.

DOSA now has over 91 members who cordially invite you to the November 1975 AOSA Conference in Detroit. DOSA, with **Peg Van Haaren** as Conference Chairman, has many AMERICAN surprises in store!

South Central Minnesota Chapter

Last year's meetings included "Body Movement as Applied to Vocal Technique" by **Vern Sutton**, "Teaching Recorder" with **Jane Frazee**, "Orff in Music Therapy" by **Dorothy Timm, Mary Jo Robinson** and **Roberta Metzler**, "Creative Dramatics" with **David O'Fallon**, and a sharing session after the Boston Conference.

The '74-75 program began Sept. 14 with an introductory Orff session called "Processional for Beginners" by **Arvida Steen**. The all-day Basic Orff Workshop on Oct. 12 featured **Nancy Ferguson** and **Konnie Saliba**. Preschool, primary, and intermediate demonstrations with children were presented by our members on Nov. 9. An all-day mini-convention in January will deal with various needs of Orff leaders, including recorder repertoire and creative dramatics, and will allow time for sharing ideas from the Denver Conference. The March meeting will be on Basic Movement, and in May **Jane Frazee** will lead us in Orff for Junior High.

The first National Conference of the Orff-Schulwerk Society of Canada will meet at the University of Toronto Jan. 25-26. Guests will be Dr. Regner, Barbara Haselbach, and Mario Duschenes.

NEW SCHEDULE

Please send all news and articles to the editor well before the deadline for the spring issue, March 15. Chapter news should be sent to Nancy Ferguson, 6912 Brookside Cove, Memphis, TN 38138, our new Chaper Coordinator, who is planning a monthly newsletter to all chapters. In accordance with a Board decision, the Echo will no longer attempt to cover news from our 34 chapters. Instead there will be feature stories on one chapter in each issue. Minneapolis has agreed to do the spring feature. Who's next?

Isabel Carley

REVIEWS

ELEMENTARIA, Gunild Keetman, Schott and Co. London, 1974. $17.50

Margaret Murray's translation of Keetman's "Elementaria" is finally available, with English rhymes and song texts in place of the original German ones. Let me reprint my original review, issued 3 years ago when the German edition came out:

Elementaria, *A First Introduction To The Orff-Schulwerk* by Orff's lifelong associate, Gunild Keetman, is designed to show aspiring Orff teachers the basic principles of the Orff approach in a very practical way, so that they learn to use their own imaginations, and experience for themselves the pedagogical value of the Schulwerk.

This is an excellent and long needed book by the one person in the world best qualified to write it. It brims with valuable practical suggestions, far more than any one of us could ever use, all very succinctly put. There are two main sections, one called Rhythmic and Melodic Exercises, which includes basics, rhythmic training, melodic exercises, and speech exercises; and a second part concerning the whole field of Basic Movement. This includes sections on gymnastic exercises; movement training (i.e., walking, running, hopping, jumping, etc.). Variations and combinations of basic movements; playing with movement, basic improvisation in movement; accompanying movement, possibilities for movement lessons with beginners.

Get it. It is indispensable. I.M.C.

PIECES FOR FLUTE AND DRUM, BOOK II, Gunild Keetman, Schott, 1974, $3.75

My husband and I have just finished playing through all the pieces for recorder and hand drum in Keetman's new book, and reluctantly stopped only when the score required more than two instruments. Almost every piece merited a double check, which in our private code means "Let's perform it". Those of you who have already delighted in her first set of similar pieces will welcome this sequel. If anything, it is still better than Book I. No one, in my judgment, surpasses her in rhythmic invention and imagination. There is great variety of articulation, of mood, of motive. This is not mere pedagogical work; this is real music of permanent value and great universal appeal, of transparent texture, full of musical delights. Get it and play it for your own pleasure even if you have no students ready for it yet. I.M.C.

MUSIC OF THE MIDDLE AGES, ed. Frank, (S, S/A, A/T) Marks, $1.50

This is a practical edition of short three-part instrumental transcriptions from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The first and earliest selections are complete in themselves, transposed for easy recorder playing. The later pieces are selections of longer vocal works. Too bad the words are not included to increase the registration possibilities beyond the high and low choirs the editor suggests! Double reeds would add another color where they are available. A valuable addition to the repertoire. I.M.C.

AN ELIZABETHAN SONGBAG, arr. Lois Raebeck, Marks, $3.00

Ms. Raebeck has chosen good tunes for her settings, and the publisher has made a handsome book of her arrangements, with large print well laid-out on the page. But it is completely impractical, since there are no parts available, and there are frequent page turns, sometimes after only two or three bars. Each player would require his own page-turner!

I find the arrangements questionable, not because it's a poor idea to use Elizabethan tunes in Orff arrangements, but because the arrangements themselves are not distinguished, with many changes of figure and even style within a single piece. And somehow, I balk at using maracas in an Elizabethan setting! There are enough percussion instruments in the Orff ensemble corresponding to instruments of the Elizabethan period that we should conscientiously avoid stylistic anachronisms of this sort. The end result is neither Elizabethan nor Orff.

I.M.C.

All the above books are available from Belwin-Mills.

A BAKER'S DOZEN, Classroom Ensembles for Voices, Recorders, and Orff Instruments, Jane Frazee and Arvida Steen, Schmitt, Hall & McCreary, 1974, $4.25

Our own members Jane Frazee and Arvida Steen are to be congratulated on their new collection of arrangements of American songs. There are four songs at each of three levels, from the three-tone chant to "Cinderella" with which the book begins to the catchy Mexican song "La Raspa" at the end. There is nice variety of pentatonic scales in the first 6 songs, then two hexatonic tunes, before the full major scale is introduced or the Dorian mode is presented. The progression is much too fast, in my judgment, but then, this small book never pretends to offer a complete diet.

The arrangements are transparent, with sensitive use of timbre. The vocal range, except in the first song, is comfortable. No sources are given, so in a few cases it's impossible to know whether the tune itself is an obscure folk song or composed by one or the other of the two arrangers. Although most of the settings include preparatory exercises, they assume a good deal of previous rhythmic training. THe first two arrangements, for example, involve interrupted patterns and prolonged rests, which pose a serious problem for beginners.

A small matter, but I cannot help objecting strenuously to the indiscriminate use of the German word "Patschen" as a noun, a verb, an adjective, and a present participle, as the occasion warrants. Why not use the perfectly good English word *slap*? Or *knee-slap*, if you must? Eg. "Sing the song, *patschen* every other beat . . . Transfer *patschen* pattern to BX." Or "All then sing and *patschen* at the same time."

I particularly like the provision for improvisation and the imaginative suggestions Jane and Arvida have made to start the class thinking and making their own music. Recommended. I.M.C.

Available from Magnamusic-Baton, Inc.

BACK ISSUES

Back issues of the Orff Echo are available for $4.00 per year from Executive Headquarters, plus .50 handling charge. The first three printed supplements, *"Orff Schulwerk Past and Future,"* by Carl Orff; *"The First Five Years,"* by Arnold Burkhart; and *"The Orff-Schulwerk in American Education"* by Dr. Arnold Walter are all to be had at .50 a copy plus .10 handling charge on request from AOSA Headquarters. Extra copies of the new supplement are also available at the same price.

THE ORFF ECHO
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