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Our mission is:

- To demonstrate and promote the value of Orff Schulwerk.
- To support professional development opportunities.
- To align applications of the Orff Schulwerk approach with the changing needs of American society.

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The Orff Echo – Fall 2001

Table of Contents

Features

Focus on Improvisation Revisited	
Introduction	7
A Developmental Process	
<i>Lelouda Stamou</i>	8
Drum and Dance Improvisation	
<i>Danaï Gagné</i>	11
Inspiring and Using Children's Creative Musical Expressions	
<i>Jean Young</i>	16
Playing with Our Materials: Speech Play	
<i>Isabel McNeill Carley</i>	21
Orff Schulwerk in the Strings Classroom	
<i>Jennifer Lyne</i>	31
"The Sound of Those Instruments!": A Portrait of Barbara Grenoble	
<i>Liz Gilpatrick</i>	35
Columns	
From the Editor	3
President's Message	5
Reviews	39
From the Classroom	47
Video Preview	48

On our cover: Sunflowers inspired by Van Gogh. By Megan Boddy, Parma Senior High School, Parma, Ohio. Student of Jerry Devis. Megan attends Mr. Devis' class for students with developmental disabilities. She has Down syndrome.

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From the Editor

Fall has always been invigorating to me, a time of renewed energy that has often brought change. This is especially true this year. This is my last issue as editor of *The Orff Echo*. For the past seven years, while editing the journal, I've pursued a parallel career as a freelance writer and journalist. Now I plan to devote myself fulltime to writing. It's a bittersweet decision — a chance to follow a dream, but one that will take me away from working with some of the most wonderful people I have ever known.

Before I leave, I want to tell a story. Bear with me. It's a personal story, but one I really want to share.

My association with AOSA began many years ago, when I was a stay-at-home mom with a brand-new graduate degree in music education and a considerable amount of uncertainty as to whether I would ever use it. (Teaching was *much* harder than I had imagined.) I took care of the AOSA video library and wrote a column for the *Echo* (the column Beth Iafigliola now writes). Tossi Aaron was the editor. I looked forward to writing that column every three months about as much as I would look forward to a root canal. When the time came, I

would write and rewrite, all the while stewing, fretting, struggling and generally doing battle with words. But, in the end, I usually came up with something I liked. I used to joke with my family that it was a little like giving birth — painful to endure, but what a great feeling afterward!

Then something happened, which I'll tell you about in a minute. It changed how I felt about writing, and about myself as someone who wrote. I no longer looked at a blank computer screen with panic but with excitement. I began to write for pleasure, then I sold a few articles. Eventually I came to be editor of *The Orff Echo*, while continuing to write and be published. I had long since given up battling with words and came to love arranging, shaping and playing with them with a passion I would not have thought possible. I finally had discovered what I wanted to be when I grew up.

Here's what happened to precipitate this change that brought so much joy and fulfillment. It's really very simple. It was about 10 years ago. I had finished laboring over one of my columns and faxed it to Tossi. We were working out some of the details over the phone when she remarked casually, "You know, you're a good writer."

You're a good writer. Just four words. But I took those words and ran with them. They sent me off on a path I couldn't have imagined before. They changed my life.

As teachers you know all about changing lives. You do it every day — sometimes in small ways with a few words, a smile, a nod of encouragement. Once in a while — I can only imagine — you probably do it in a big way, with a soul-shaking experience.

Over the years, I've gotten to know many of you. You do a job I never could do. You do it with love, dedication and selflessness. I think you do it because you know that at any moment you might expand a child's universe. You might open a door to unimaginable inner riches and possibilities. You might change a life. And what a wonderful thing that can be.

-Donna Marchetti

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President's Message Carol Huffman, AOSA President

Raise Our Voices in Harmony

Orff Schulwerk has been a part of my life for so long that I cannot imagine a day or a classroom without it. Over the years, I have had such a wonderful opportunity to learn, grow and share ideas with some of the finest music educators in this country. I thank each and every one of you who have been so generous to me throughout my career. You have truly made a difference in my life, and my wish, as president of AOSA, is to make a difference in the life of our organization, which affects each and every one of your lives indirectly.

As your AOSA president this year, I am more keenly aware than ever of the work we have before us. I have been a teacher and member of AOSA for more than a quarter of a century, and the changes affecting music education that I see on the horizon will challenge each of us in new ways we may never have imagined.

One of the most important legacies we can leave for future educators is a strong, viable national organization. AOSA must be both a beacon and a refuge, offering support and inspiration that extends far beyond Monday's lesson plan or next month's meeting with the school board. Our challenge is to attract and keep dedicated young men and women involved with Orff Schulwerk and the priceless rewards of making an impact on the lives of children. This was the basis of our origins and is an imperative for our survival.

With few exceptions, young people who enter our profession today face enormous challenges. Not only are there fewer of them joining our ranks, there are increased pressures in every sector to fall into the generalist trap — offering a standardized, homogenized, synthesized approach to music that secures its place in American education not by virtue of its creative force, but by the need for survival. These young people need and deserve our support.

Yet even with the reality of these challenges right in front of us, it is often difficult to see how a single individual can make a difference. But without a united front, we will not be able to reach out to these young teachers or to meet the

challenges that face music education today. I know of no other national organization that does not ask for the support of all its chapter members. Strengthening our organization for the benefit of all must also involve us all — both local and national members. AOSA's founders recognized that the future of our movement depended on a strong, cohesive organization that collectively represented the needs and goals of its members throughout the United States. Strong national membership gives us a collective voice we can raise on behalf of all our members and music education as a whole. The National Board of Trustees, elected by our national members, believes that being a part of the national AOSA organization gives you a stronger, more focused role in determining the standards and professional requirements for future music educators. Every membership dollar we receive at the national level goes to continually reinforcing and emphasizing the value of our work for children everywhere.

I believe, however, that we are not moving forward nearly fast enough to spread the word about the Schulwerk. We must accelerate the pace of progress. But our membership is in a steady decline. We

must pull together in order to do the job we're committed to doing.

Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." I believe it is time for us as an organization to seriously consider requiring national membership of our chapter members. Only by doing this will we keep our organization strong so that we can speak with one voice that will truly have an impact on music education. Our local chapters will become the satellites capable of touching more and more people because of the strength of the national organization they support. I welcome your thoughts on this issue, which I believe is crucial to the survival of our organization and the contribution we make to children's lives.

In order for Orff Schulwerk to touch every child, AOSA must become stronger and more vocal in all of the areas above. If we stand together we can accomplish these goals. A single voice raised in song may be heard or ignored, but many voices raised in harmony create a song that is strong and beautiful and heard by all.

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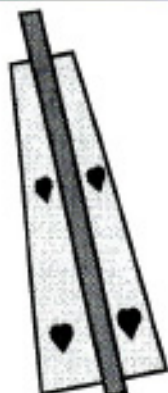
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Improvisation

About three years ago while Isabel Carley and I worked on an article she had submitted, she remarked to me that she wished she could write about improvisation activities for children using rhythmic and non-rhythmic speech. At that time, Janet Robbins and I had already solicited a number of articles for an issue of *The Orff Echo* devoted to improvisation and knew there was not sufficient room to accommodate another piece. Danaí Gagné also had wanted to write an article on movement improvisation, but simply could not spare the time to write it for that first issue.

Knowing there were two superb articles simply waiting to be written, and admitting that we could never exhaust the topic, the editorial board decided to re-visit the idea once more. So, again we have reached into the heart of the Schulwerk — improvisation — to bring you an issue whose contents will be useful for years to come.

Lelouda Stamou has written to us from Greece to remind us that improvisation and children's play are intermingled. She goes on to explain the role played by improvisation as the voice of intuition in music-making, and why it is so different from the voice of reason and planning that produces musical composition. Her article presents us with philosophical underpinnings necessary to help Orff practitioners understand the role and value of improvisation in the Schulwerk.

Jean Young, Danaí Gagne and Isabel Carley have presented readers with three practical articles filled with specific ideas and processes for improvising with children's singing voices, movement and drumming, and rhythmic and non-rhythmic speech, respectively. Reading each piece may feel a bit like attending a clinic on the topic, for all three are clearly and masterfully written and rich in detail.

Most people do not associate Orff Schulwerk with instrumental teaching. However, there is a small, but growing number of instrumentalists who are using Orff techniques to bring improvisation to their students. One such teacher is Jennifer Lyne, who has been improvising with her middle school string students for years. Jennifer tells how she introduced improvisation into classes of emotionally disturbed and developmentally disabled children, as well as into regular string classes, and the impact that creating had on her students.

It is always a pleasure to coordinate an issue of *The Orff Echo* that gives me the

Revisited

opportunity to work with authors who possess deep understanding and love for the Schulwerk, because for me, too, it is a "clinic." If you enjoy reading this issue even half as much as I enjoyed my role in bringing it together, you will have a great time.

- Liz Gilpatrick

Spontaneity — Creativity — Improvisation — Composition: A Developmental Process

Lelouda Stamou

Spontaneity in movement and expression is a basic characteristic of childhood, evident whenever children act freely without fear and threat, in their games and everyday activities. In order to be spontaneous, the child needs to feel that he or she is able to achieve. And feeling "able" means not being afraid of failure. As teachers we must create an atmosphere in which children feel safe and free from this fear.

Spontaneity is the starting point for improvisation, a requirement for the release of children's creative forces. Creativity can, under certain circumstances, lead to improvisation and much later to composition, all phases of the same developmental process. Improvisation cannot exist unless spontaneity is present and creativity is enhanced.

Helping children unchain their spontaneity, personal initiative and creativity does not, in any way, conflict with our efforts to transmit knowledge and teach technique. Our goal in every phase of teaching is to interweave technique and knowledge with imagination, so that children have the opportunity to combine these aspects in their thoughts and actions.

Combining imagination and knowledge is of utmost importance for leading a child from spontaneity to creativity and improvisation. Unless a child includes some gained knowledge and ability in the creative process, it is almost sure that he will soon start aimlessly exploring or repeating himself. Repetition will, in this case, prove unproductive and stop the creative process. This is why it is so important to stimulate children with new information and ideas, creating an environment that will promote the development of creativity.

Providing an atmosphere where the creative process is not judged as "right" or "wrong" will allow imaginal growth and promote creative forces. Creativity

is characterized by enthusiasm and the uniqueness of the experience. It is the inner force that leads children, through exploration and discovery, to unique personal expression. A basic requirement for activating children's creative forces is providing them with experiences — pictures, listening, emotions, thoughts, and actions — to which they respond with their own emotions, concepts and associations. Children's previous experiences become the constructing material for their personal creative expression. Only what the child has deeply realized through his personal experiences can be expressed in more complex forms in his creative actions.

Improvisation is a stage in the creative process at which children combine experiences and newfound knowledge with their emotions, thoughts and imagination to develop a concrete form of expression. We should, however, make a distinction between improvisation and composition, especially as it refers to music. Improvised music is music that is created spontaneously, immediately organized and performed. Composed music is first conceived and written down, and then performed, usually remaining unchanged in each subsequent performance. This is the opposite of what happens in improvisation, an organization of sound, rhythm and silence that was never heard before and will be never heard again. Improvisation and composition comprise the dual nature of musical creation: composition as the process of encoding musical elements into abstract symbols that can be realized by performers, and improvisation as the organization and simultaneous presentation of sound, rhythm, silence and space.

The contrasting properties of improvisation and composition are often compared to the ancient Greek gods Dionysus and Apollo. Improvised music is based on the archetype of Dionysus' music, created intuitively and spontane-

ously, leading humans into an experience of truth and ecstasy. The means by which this music is created are subjective and dynamic, intuitive and emotional. On the other hand, composition is based on the archetype of Apollo's music, characterized by thoroughness and rationality. The opposing qualities of improvisation and composition reflect the two sides of human existence: intuition and intellect, the imaginative and the rationally explained.

In recent years, the importance of the creative moment, even in the re-creative act of performing composed music, has been recognized. The introduction of improvisatory elements into modern musical works aims basically at offering intuition and momentary inspiration the space they need right next to the rationally and intellectually preconceived music.

The origins of improvisation

Improvisation in art originated in the will of primitive men to express their fears or gratitude to the unknown forces that governed their lives. Masquerades, ritual dances, masks and improvised songs were the means by which ancient people tried to communicate and identify with the supernatural.

As Elizabeth and John Paynter note:

Long ago men made up stories to explain how things had come to be as they are. How everything began; why the sky is where it is; why the seasons come and go; why we grow old and why we die, and what happens to us after death. The story-makers' sources of information were their own intuitions. There was nothing scientific or reasonable (in the modern sense) about their explanations. Neither was there anything of modern science in their ways of expressing these ideas. Because the answers to

continued on page 10...

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Improvisation Revisited

the problems were felt, so they were expressed intuitively in the most natural outlets of expression — vocal sounds and bodily movement and gesture; that is, in poetry, dance and music.¹

The continent that has had the greatest influence on the concept of improvised music is Africa. In the New World, this began with the slaves brought from West Africa. Written language or music were not a part of their cultures, so their music and rituals were transmitted through memorization, imitation and oral tradition. These African influences, amalgamated with the musical traditions of the European settlers, led to the creation of a special kind of improvised

feelings of freedom and creativity it brings.

Improvisation and play: The role of play in human life and art

Play makes its appearance very early in human life, offering children deep pleasure and fascination. Children literally “live” through play; they escape the existing reality and move to a different one, which they themselves form with their ideas and fantasy.

Play means coming out of routine and conscious reality and entering a new one that simultaneously engages our thoughts, senses and emotions. Play

to express oneself, act, intervene on reality and transform it. Whenever children (and adults, too) are given the chance to play, they improvise, creating scenarios and roles, imaginative places and situations.

Play and art have common roots. Author and educator John Paynter believes that “arts are nothing more than developed games.” As he notes, “it isn’t coincidence that we speak of ‘playing’ on a musical instrument or of going to the theatre to see a ‘play.’”² When play is missing from the arts, the process of learning the basic elements of those forms becomes a difficult and unpleasant task. That’s why so many children quit music, dance or drama lessons shortly after they begin.

Music improvisation should not exist only in the form of “improvisation activities” in a music class. Teachers should infuse the spirit of improvisation into the whole music lesson by creating a child-centered environment, providing stimulation for children’s imaginations, formulating musical problems that need to be solved, and encouraging spontaneity and uninhibited expression of musical ideas. When we do this, we enable children to be true participants and creators.

Lelouda Stamou is a music education specialist and researcher currently teaching at the Department of Music Science and Art of the University of Macedonia, in Thessaloniki, Greece. She received her Ph.D. degree from Michigan State University. She has published several articles and has presented at numerous local, national and international conferences. Dr. Stamou is a member of the Board of Directors of the Greek Society for Music Education (G.S.M.E.), an affiliate of the International Society for Music Education (I.S.M.E.).

Notes

¹ Paynter, J., & Paynter, E. (1984). *The Dance and the Drum*. London: Universal Editions. p. 10.

² Ibid.

Play and art have common roots... When play is missing from the arts, the process of learning the basic elements of those forms becomes a difficult and unpleasant task.

music that we now call jazz.

However, it would be a mistake to conclude that the emerging jazz form was the only music characterized by improvisation. Much European music was also improvised. Until the 17th century, organ music was often improvised to follow and aid the rituals of the Mass. In the Baroque era, improvisation in music flourished, especially on the church organ. Mozart was famous for his improvisations on the cembalo and organ, while Beethoven, who often improvised in his performances and participated in improvisation contests, claimed that improvising in front of an audience is the purest art. Improvisation was also a common practice in other art forms. In dance, for example, conceiving and immediately performing the dance steps was a typical phenomenon because there was no system to accurately note the dance steps in choreography.

Today, the value of improvisation is recognized in all types of human expression, not only for its contribution to authentic expression, but also for the

differs from other activities because it requires complete cooperation of these three functions. This is why play can be so deeply satisfying.

Today, it is less common to see children playing outside. They are more likely to be alone in their rooms watching TV or playing computer and video games. Backyards are much quieter today than they have ever been. But in no way can actual, physical play with other children be replaced with electronic games. Play should involve the body, the emotions, the intellect, and the joy of communicating with others.

We need to offer children in school what they often are missing in their everyday lives. Music and drama play are wonderful opportunities for spontaneity and improvisation. We need to stimulate children by creating an environment in which they can experience the magic of play, activate their imaginations, and transform themselves. We need to cultivate creativity so that our modern way of life will not forever inhibit their tendency for discovery and creation.

Play and improvisation are strongly interrelated because each is an element of the other. Both have the same basis — spontaneity — and require a willingness

Drum and Dance Improvisation

Danai Gagné

“In the beginning was the drum...”¹

-Carl Orff

When I was a child growing up in Greece, itinerant gypsies with their bears and tambourines would go from house to house staging impromptu performances for a few drachmas. The bears would dance to the tambourine playing. The urge to move along with the bear was compelling, and I remember tapping my feet and wanting to join in the dance. But, as I reflect on this event years later, I know that it was the gypsy's tambourine playing rather than the sight of the dancing bear that caught me on a visceral level. The rhythmic patterns, played with feeling and deftness, had a strength and dominance that entranced me with its power. Carl Orff was right when he said: "...drum induces dance."²

Every time I play the drum — any kind of drum — my students' immediate response is to move. This has always been my experience in the classroom. Drumming has the compelling power that induces us to move in an intuitive and spontaneous way; it releases a creative energy flow to body, mind and spirit. This, to me, is improvisation. Drumming connects with the pulse and rhythm of movement, and makes us want to move. Doris Humphrey states it succinctly in her book *The Art of Making Dances* when she says, "Movement without motivation is unthinkable."³

Drum improvisation awakens the urge for self-expression through dance, an expression dominated by pulse and rhythm in perfect balance and measure. It becomes visible when both drummer and dancer merge into one energy, one unity. I feel fortunate to witness such high-lighted moments in the classroom when I stare in awe as my students stomp, swing, whirl, leap and soar through space with remarkable grace and skill.

In *The Dancer's Image*, author Walter Sorrel eloquently remarks, "Movement is the essence of life, dance is its ultimate expression."⁴ Drum and dance improvisation unleash the elemental, the emotional,

the aesthetic and the contemplative, all rolled into the manifestation of nature called LIFE.

Drum and movement improvisation involve intuition, spontaneity and the willingness to take risks — to engage in an exploration that can reveal surprises and discoveries. Simple starting points like taking the shape of the drum and exploring drum sizes and sounds stir the "creative juices."

“Playing” the drum

In drama the most successful interpreters of characters are the students who have the ability and the courage to “get under the skin” of the characters they are portraying. Drumming is similar. Questions and suggestions that can provide impetus for isolating and moving body parts consciously, leading to drum size exploration, and bringing the concepts of size and force into focus, might be:

- Can you show the shape of the drum with your hands? Your arms? Your legs? Your whole body?
- Can you place your “pretend” drum in a different position?
- Can you show a light drum? A heavy one?

Students delight in rolling, curving and bending to acquire different drum positions. The possibilities are endless.



Students being drums, Molly Golanka (left) Samara Perlman (right)

“Pretend” striking

The excitement heightens when the children pair up, one being the “pretend drum,” the other the beater. Without touching the drum, (this is an important prerequisite) the “beater” plays on it. Again, the teacher can ask questions such as: “Can you use your fingers to strike the drum? Your hand? Elbow? Shoulder? Head?” The child playing the part of the drum responds to the child being the “drumstick,” with vocal or body percussion sounds that reflect the intensity and tempo of the player. Roles are then reversed so that each side experiences both aspects of the exploratory process.



Students being drums and beaters, Sophie Paci (standing) Blaize Adam (drum)

Working with real drums

The make-believe stage phases out and each pair of students is given an actual hand drum. One student (#1) is the drum holder while the other (#2) is the beater. After hearing a designated sound (such as a cymbal), the hand drum holder assumes a position. The drum beater then strikes it with a variety of body parts such as elbows, backs of hands, fingers, shoulders, hips, etc. The drumming stops at a different designated sound (i.e. claves). The activity resumes as the cymbal sounds again, inviting the drum

continued on page 12...

Improvisation Revisited

holders to assume a different drum position. The children then reverse roles. At this point the phrase lengths of drumming and movement are unmeasured.



Working in pairs with actual drums, Tyler Braswell (drum holder) Daniel Katten (drum beater)

Adding expressive quality

This phase of drum and movement improvisation explores the concepts of timbre and expression. The students begin in a circle. As the drum is passed around, each student plays on it in his or her own way, unmeasured and individualistic. Everyone is encouraged to play the drum using elements of dynamics (soft, loud, crescendo, subito loud/soft), tempo (fast, slow, accelerando, ritardando) and timbre (nails, hands, palms, etc.).



Adding expressive quality to the drum/movement game, Cosimo Borgogni (drum holder) Philip Paris (drum beater)

I then ask the students to find partners. One partner plays the drum in an unmeasured improvisation while the other student moves to the quality of the sound. Some students will find patterns and repeat them in a metrical way while others will improvise more freely.

Questions that evoke images leading to characteristic ways of striking the drum might be:

- Can your drum sound like thunder?
- Like a cat scratching?
- Like drops of water?
- Like a volcanic eruption?
- Like a snake hissing?

These images evoke creative drum playing which, in turn, results in inventive and expressive movements. The order can be reversed by asking the drummer to follow the partner's quality of movement. At times, this may lead to enacting a story through movement while the drum serves as an accompanying "sound track."

Improvisation or dance?

If improvisatory drumming is an auditory "smorgasbord" of pulse, rhythm, nuance of tone color, texture and pitch, dancing is its visual manifestation in space. Movement improvisation can develop into "dance," the distinction being that when movement shifts from its utilitarian purpose to the enjoyment of the beauty of its form, we call it dance, says Barbara Mettler in her book *Materials of Dance as a Creative Art Activity*.⁵ The principal characteristic of dance is that it has a deliberate form, but the common threads between dance and movement improvisation remain: time, quality of movement, dynamics and spatial relationships. Rhythmic sequences

Example 1



that arise from language, song or repeated made-up patterns invite the dancer to become the visual representation of these sequences, creating a dance form.

Drumming to the dance

Just as drumming can become a springboard for dance improvisation, dance can also elicit responses from drummers. A long-drawn arm, leg, or body movement can suggest a smooth, legato-like sound quality to the drummer. The quality of movement may also evoke a specific tone color in drumming. The fine nuances of this type of interplay require more practice by the drummer and dancer so that they look and sound seamless. Maja Lex, the most prolific choreographer in the Güntherschule, had an uncanny ability to accompany an improvising dancer on any small or large percussion instrument. I can attest to this, having had her accompany my dance improvisation while taking a summer course in Cologne. Her accompaniments were so rich and imaginative that they kept inspiring me to continue dancing.

Sources of materials

An outstanding source of drumming materials that provide inspiration for dance improvisation is the Orff Schulwerk volumes, especially Books I and V.⁶ There are many examples of rhythms for imitation and rhythmic phrases intended for body percussion. These are easily transferred to drums of all kinds and sizes. Another little gem is Gunild Keetman's book *Exercises and Pieces for Timpani*.⁶

One of my favorite examples from Volume V, page 77, No 30, can be developed into a rondo, or an ABA form. (See example 1)

continued on page 14...



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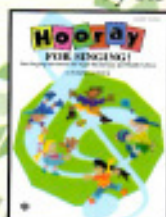
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Improvisation Revisited

In the same volume, rhythms for two or more players or groups and canonic rhythmic phrases abound from pages 81 through 94. They are excellent samples of departure points for drumming and dancing that can develop, through improvisation, into larger drum/dance forms.

Ostinato patterns drawn from these rhythmic phrases and, played on drums (hand drums, congas, bongos, djembes, tympanos, etc.), can create a rich texture that invites group dance improvisation. These wonderful gems of rhythmic phrase ideas ignite the dancer's inventive spirit to develop them into complete dance forms.

Drumming styles with ethnic flavors can also serve as sources, providing inspiration for movement or dance improvisation. Some examples are the Ghanaian Gahu, kinka or Agbekor drumming styles. Example 2 shows a sample of Gahu drumming:

Other ethnic styles include the wide variety of Afro-Caribbean rhythms, such as calypso, merengue and mambo, as well as Japanese taiko, and the Brazilian bossanova. Example 3 shows a Calypso rhythm.

Example 2

Example 3

Example 4

C = Closed stroke

O = Open stroke

Example 4 shows a mambo rhythm.

Whatever the rhythmic drumming styles and dances, I allow ample room for improvisation by both drummer and dancer. I find the improvisatory phase to be the most satisfying because it enables the improviser to experience a sense of freedom and lightness that feels wholesome and boundless. Furthermore, it empowers the drummer and dancer to find their own expressive voice in the process of creating their composition.

Nietzsche said that we must consider each day lost in which we haven't danced at least once — a very timely message in our fast-paced world. We all know that children are kinesthetic learners and they need to have movement and dance in their school life daily (adults are not excluded). We also know that dancing enhances socialization skills, opens the channels of communication and sharpens listening skills. Adding the drum to movement and dance heightens joy and vitality in the classroom, an inspiration to both students and teachers.

Notes

¹ Orff, Carl. (1976). *The Schulwerk*. New York: Schott.

² Ibid.

³ Humphrey, Doris. (1959). *The Art of Making Dances*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld.

⁴ Sorell, Walter. (1971). *The Dancer's Image: Points and Counterpoints*. New York: Columbia University Press.

⁵ Mettler, Barbara. (1960). *Materials of Dance as a Creative Art Activity*. Tucson, Ariz.: Mettler Studios.

⁶ Orff, Carl and Gunild Keetman. (1954). *Orff-Schulwerk: Music for Children*, Volumes I and V. London: Schott.

⁷ Keetman, Gunild. (1973). *Übungen und Spieltücke für Pauken* (Exercises and Pieces for Timpani) London: Schott.

Selected Discography

Initiation. Gabrielle Roth and The Mirrors, 1988. The Moving Center, P.O. Box 2034, Red Bank, New Jersey 07701.
Guinee Fare: West African Dance Rhythms. Produced by Jason Hann, 1998. Bopiland Studio, Los Angeles.

Rainforests. Shadowfax Live, 1995. Shadowfax, P.O. Box 2525, Atascadero, CA 93423.

Pieces of Africa. Kronos Quartet, 1992. Elektra.

Best of Kodo. Produced by Kei-ichi Nakamura, 1993. Sony.

Endless Wave. Gabrielle Roth, 1994. Raven Recording, P.O. Box 2034, Red Bank, NJ 07701.

Danai Gagné, Director of the Orff Certification Program at the Trevor Institute, holds diplomas from the Orff Institute in Salzburg, Austria, the Yvonne De Kiriko Modern Dance School, and the Hellenic Conservatory in advanced piano studies in Athens, Greece. A well-known clinician, Danai has presented numerous workshops throughout the United States and abroad. She has been on the faculty at numerous Orff Certification Programs around the country. In addition, she has co-authored A Seasonal Kaleidoscope, Dramas in Elemental Scales and is currently working on a book about Greek dances. Danai contributed many musical arrangements of folk songs to the Silver Burdett/Scott Foresman music series. She is currently the Music Coordinator of Grades 1 – 5 at Trevor Day School in Manhattan.



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Inspiring and Using Children's Creative Musical Expressions

Jean Young

It has been my experience in working with young children, age two and older, that if I take advantage of their wish to express their own ideas, they can be gently guided to express those ideas in a musically pleasing fashion. Improvisation may be a key in integrating what a teacher asks from the students, and what the students are ready to give to the teacher.

Children learn through play. If we structure our music classes to include the possibility of playing with musical elements, we invite our children to improvise. Before asking students to improvise, we must first be willing to serve as role models. That means including open-ended elements in the lesson, knowing that things may not proceed as expected, and that we will need to improvise.

What skills do our students need so that they may grow in their improvisations? What knowledge of musical elements do we need to give them? I believe they need the same skills and knowledge necessary for good musicianship, along with the confidence and opportunity to play with them.

Some of these skills are:

- 1) Recognizing and being able to use a singing tone
- 2) Understanding pitch concepts of high and low
- 3) Expressing thoughts and ideas using a singing tone
- 4) Playing music in a rhythmically competent way and recognizing different meters, beats and rhythm patterns
- 5) Understanding the use of timbre, articulation, tempo and tonality for expressive purposes

Warming up

An early childhood music class can be organized to routinely include many of these skill areas. Class might begin with the teacher playing a favorite "Hello" song on a recorder or other instrument while the children pat the beat of the music. (I do not ask them to sing the song until later.)

Patting is an easy starting point for improvisation. In the first few classes, I ask the children to pat the beat on a specific part of their bodies; later I ask them to choose where the beat will be. As they grow more skilled, I ask them to make a beat pattern using two different body sounds (patting lap, head, lap, head, for example). I watch and see who is able to keep a steady beat (and follow the beat of the music) and ask the class to follow that student's pattern. I also point out students who may be improvising a more complex rhythm pattern.

In order to encourage careful watching and following, I might ask the children to find a partner and try to make the same pattern at the same time. (Preschool children do this easily, without any planning or discussion.) Again, I choose one or more of the students' patterns and ask the class to follow those leaders. If the leaders set a tempo that does not match my recorder tempo, I follow the students' tempo. When the song is finished, I ask if the leaders changed the tempo, and, if so, how they changed it.

Now the children have heard the melody multiple times. Before I ask them to sing it, I like to review good vocal technique. I demonstrate how warming up the body and voice helps result in pleasant, tuneful singing. I ask the children to stretch their arms up, yawning and then audibly sighing in a light head voice. We follow this with gently turning and tilting the head from side to side, with stretching the muscles of the face by opening the mouth wide, with squeezing the face tightly closed, and with lifting and rolling the shoulders.

In my experience, even very young children will watch these warm-ups with fascination, and, after they become familiar with what is expected, they will be happy to join in. (This may take a few weeks.) With slightly older classes, I explain now and then why we are sighing and warming up our muscles: to help our singing voices to be free and beautiful.

We then take a relaxed breath, and begin the song, which preferably begins with the word "hello" (for good breath release), on a descending, comfortable interval. I demonstrate the close connection between a sighing and a singing tone, and the contrast between a speaking tone and a singing tone. Each time I do this, one or two children who habitually use their talking voices will venture into a singing tone as we all sing the "Hello" song. If I hear this happening, I mention to that child, with quiet enthusiasm, that I hear him using his beautiful singing voice today. (He may revert to a talking tone later in the class. It takes a long time to establish new habits.)

Opening song: musical concepts

I like to repeat the "Hello" song to explore musical concepts. We can play with tempo by singing alternate phrases very fast, then very slow. Children delight in this contrast, even when it has nothing to do with the content of the song. I try to use the same tempo concept again later in the lesson in a poem or song where it is appropriate to the words, for example, "Little Miss Muffet," using a slow tempo for the spider's descent, and a quick tempo for Miss Muffet's running away.

Another musical concept that can be demonstrated in the opening song is the contrast between legato and staccato: I demonstrate a "smooth" sound while drawing a long curved arc with my hand in the air; I show my "dot" voice while making little dots with my index finger on the palm of my opposite hand. We try singing the "Hello" song in both articulations, possibly dividing it into sections suggested by the children. I introduce the words "legato" and "staccato" casually at first. By the age of four, many children are able to pronounce the words while demonstrating the concepts on a hand drum. (A textured drum surface can be scratched in a circular motion or given a sharp finger tap by even young children.)

We can also play with meter in the context of the familiar opening song. If the

song is in 2/4 meter, try singing it in 3/4, pretending to rock a baby as you do so. Then change it back to 2/4, singing in a marching style for contrast. I like to play with dynamics as well, but here some caution is recommended. Emphasize that you wish the children to use only singing voices, not shouting voices. For crescendo and diminuendo, use the image of a parade of singers approaching, passing by quickly (so that not too much time is spent at full volume) and then disappearing into the distance.

What I have described so far might take the first five or at most 10 minutes of class: playing the recorder while the students improvise beat patterns, warming up singing voices, singing an opening "Hello" song, and repeating the song while playing with a musical element. Hopefully, the students now have a deeper understanding of beat and beat pattern, a clearer idea of singing tone, and a firmer understanding of the use of a particular musical term.

I want to emphasize that while it is important to teach the children musical vocabulary, it is even more important to allow them to put these ideas into practice and to have fun making music using them. I begin with the "Hello" song because the children know it well enough to be able to sing it in different articulations and meters, and to notice what happens to the song when these changes are made. The next step is to use these musical ideas in other songs.

Movement activities

During a typical nursery school music class, I will alternate contrasting activities: seated or standing, singing or speech, using the voice or listening to an instrument or a recording. In all the activities, I am looking for opportunities to play with musical elements and to use ideas that come from the students.

If we are playing a singing game with movement, I look for opportunities to change the tempo or meter of the song. If the train is going uphill, can we move more slowly? If the horse is galloping instead of trotting, can we sing the song with a dotted rhythm? If we no longer hop "Down to the Baker Shop," but skate instead, does our articulation change from staccato to a more gliding legato and do we even add a fermata or two?

I watch the class for movement ideas; if a student is participating in a game or dance, but doing a motion in a different manner, I ask the class to try it that way. The students learn that I want them to use their imaginations. I look for places in the game where I can ask, "Can you think of another motion, or another way we can keep the beat, in this part of the song?" If we change "Bow Belinda," to "Jump Belinda," I sing the song faster to match their jumping beat.

Improvisation Revisited Improvisation in singing:

We can also help children experience the beginnings of improvisation when we are sitting and singing together. My goal is to have children contribute their own ideas and learn to express them in a singing voice. For this purpose, I use songs that are about the children's own lives, that are simple in melody, that have a repeating and open-ended form,

continued on page 18...

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Improvisation Revisited

and that do not require a rhyming word scheme.

For very young children, I often use picture books to remind them of the range of verses they might add to a song: a book of beautiful things for the song "What is Beautiful?"* or a book about a mouse for "Where is the Mousie?"* These should always be a jumping off point, stimulating the children to think of their own ideas, not a limited list.

When I began to teach early childhood music classes, I found it difficult to find songs that were simple enough for my students — many of whom did not speak English at home — to sing with understanding. I began to write songs that asked them about their families, their food, or their feelings, and found they were always eager to share their stories. These songs work very well for the purposes of vocal improvisation, and I would like to share with you how I use one of them.

For the song "How Do I Feel?"* I first sing the opening verse, which asks the children how they are feeling today.

After a short discussion of different feelings, I might then ask the children to think about and show me with their faces a particular feeling, while I play the melody on the recorder. I ask one child how she is feeling, and what she does to show that she feels that way. She might say "angry" or "mad" and show me an angry face or clenched fists, or stamp her foot. Then I sing a verse using her ideas: "I feel so angry, I feel so angry, I feel so angry inside today, And when I feel angry I make a fist like this, I feel so angry today."

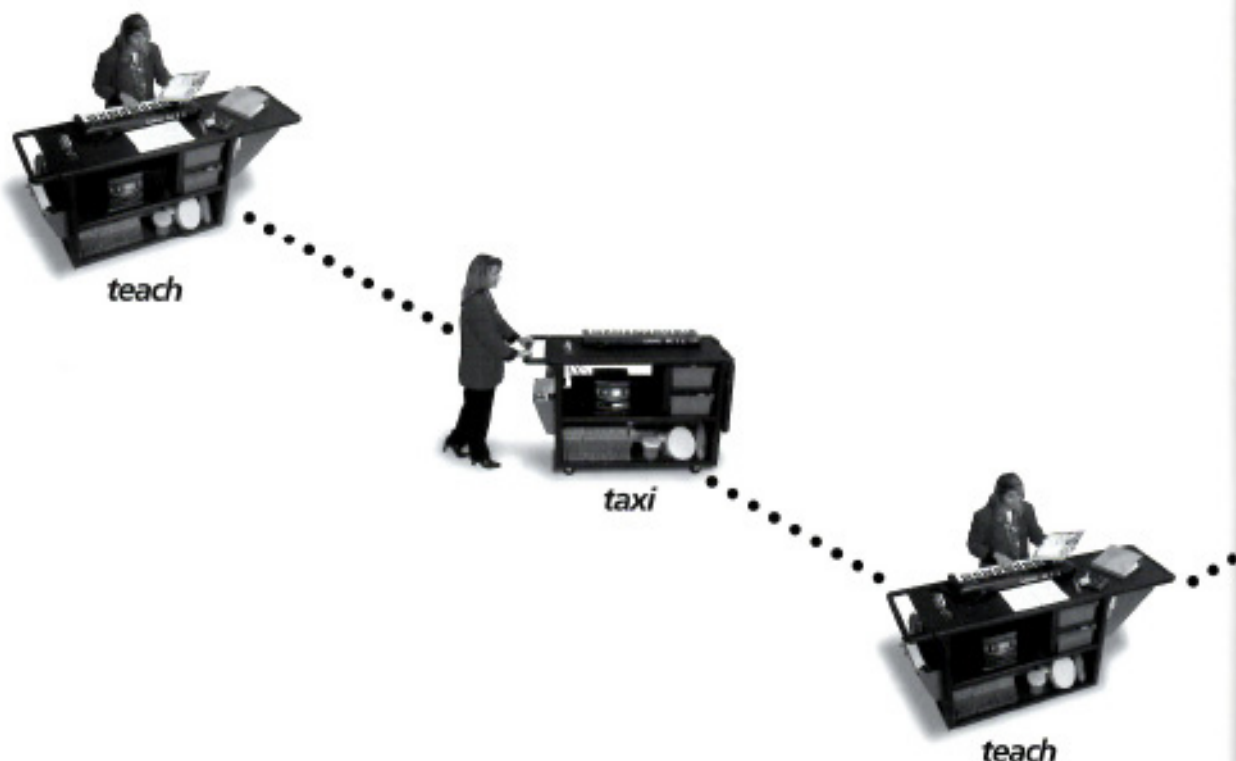
If the next child says "happy" and shows a smiling face or clapping hands, I sing another verse, using a different tone of voice, tempo and action to suit it, perhaps commenting on the changes. Now that the children have heard the model, I ask them to sing along on the next verse. Children not verbally fluent may participate with gesture or facial expression until they're ready to sing along.

With songs that ask the children for their ideas, everyone will usually want a turn. My classes have from 10 to 22 children, and to repeat a song that many

times is deadly. After four or five children have had a turn, I assure the class that we will sing the song again next week, and that they may have a turn later in a different song.

The next week, when I return to the song, I begin by playing the melody on recorder and asking if anyone knows what song I am playing. (With songs where the words keep changing, it may take three weeks for the students to be able to name the melody.) Then we sing the verses that the children ask for, usually repeating some ideas and singing some new ideas. I might add an instrument, like a drum or tambourine, and show how it can help express the feeling we are singing about.

When the children know the song well (perhaps in the third week), I ask the class to stop singing after the phrase "And when I feel angry..." and allow the child who chose the feeling to complete the phrase. This is asking a lot, and different children will be able to perform the task at different levels. A child who is comfortable with her singing voice,



may sing a tuneful phrase; another who is rhythmically competent may speak the phrase in a rhythmic style. One may be able to fill in a single word, while another may only gesture emphatically. As the teacher and facilitator, my job is to highlight the merits of the student's contribution so that he will want to try again next time.

As artist-teacher, after hearing the child's contribution, you may need to stretch the meter or otherwise play with the structure of the song so that it feels musically satisfying. But challenging yourself and your students can bring rewards. I used "How Do I Feel?" with a class of five-year-olds in an exclusive private school, and one boy in the class chose the feeling "homeless." On the phrase "When I feel homeless..." when the class stopped singing, he paused a moment and then sang in a heart-rending mournful wail, "I have no home," and it was with great feeling that we all ended the song, "I feel so homeless today."

I encourage you to try writing your own short, simple songs that will help

you inspire your children to sing about their own lives. Don't be afraid to share with them your process of composition. This year, I changed a new song that wasn't quite working, and I explained to the children why I had changed it. One boy came back to that song (a favorite of his) months later and showed me how he had changed it.

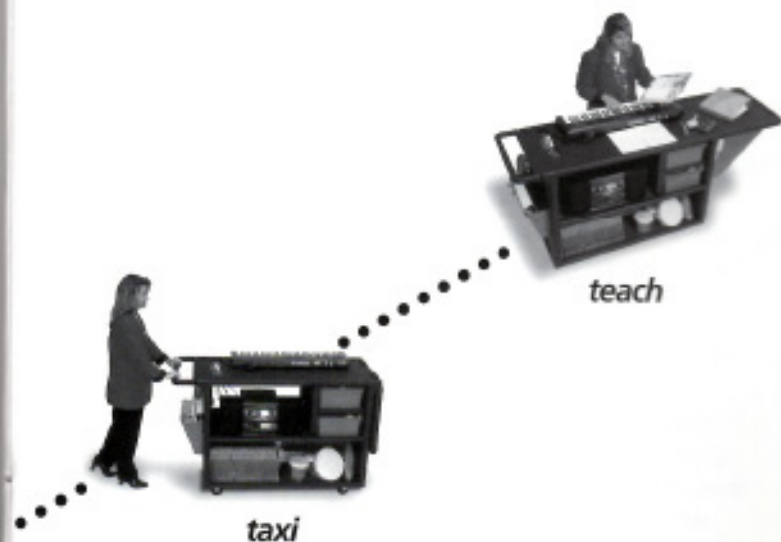
When asking children to use music to express their ideas, it is important to offer them a rich palette of rhythm patterns, tone colors, articulations and dynamics, and to allow them to use those elements in ways that might seem messy. (When children create works of art, we no longer expect them to color within the lines of someone else's drawing.) While we are teaching about tonality, meter and form, we need to be open to expressions that do not fit neatly into our established musical system. While we want the children to learn the tonal relationship of *sol* and *mi*, we need to encourage them to use the wide vocal spectrum of which they are capable. While we want them to be comfortable

Improvisation Revisited

in a light head sound, we need to join with them in the fun of the many timbres of their voices: nasal, hooty, growly or squeaky. We can model the use of this variety of sounds to express ideas they have suggested, and we can all delight in the contrasting possibilities.

**Just Imagine, A Song about Me!*
©1995, Jean Young. Available from the author.

Jean Young teaches music at Temple Emanu-El Nursery School in New York City and at Christ's Church Nursery School in Rye, New York. She teaches Music Together classes and directs musical theater productions in Larchmont, New York, where she lives with her husband and two children. Her first experience with Orff Schulwerk was with Tossi Aaron, in Philadelphia, in 1973. She studied at the Orff Institut in Salzburg, Westminster Choir College (now Ryder University) with Brigitte Warner, and at Hamline University (now University of St. Thomas) with Jos Wuytack and Jane Frazee.



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Isabel McNeill Carley

Speech is the most malleable of all our resources. None of us would say the same sentence, proverb, rhyme or poem in exactly the same way. Think of all the variables: pitch, voice quality, inflection, tempo, emphasis, rhythm and dynamics. Hence, speech is most appropriate as a basis for improvisation. Even the simplest rhyme or saying has vast possibilities. The obvious is only the beginning, and even at the initial stage of Orff training, our teaching can be greatly enriched by our early introduction of improvisation, the element of play, individual interpretation and variation.

Speech play is far more important in children's musical development than many realize, since it provides their first exposure to rhythmic and expressive sound. Folk and nursery rhymes and tales and songs have been transmitted orally from one generation to the next in every known human culture, and like other heritage resources, the rhythm, tempo, vocal color and range are determined by the words themselves. There is no set meter, so there remains a fluidity and a flexibility that is lost when meter is imposed. In Western culture, it took centuries for an inexact metrical notation to be attached to song texts, and still longer for our mathematically precise abstract signs and symbols for rhythm and meter to develop independently of spoken language. Our ancestors took over a thousand years to move from the free rhythmic speech of ancient poetry and drama to our current mathematical notation. We also need to take time to bring our children into our contemporary world of music through speech play and movement.

Speech involves long and short syllables; accent; duple, triple and compound meters; timbre; tempo; dynamics and variable pitch. All these musical elements can best be taught through speech play, as Orff and Keetman were wise enough to know. They consciously tried to parallel the historical development of Western music in their emphasis on speech and movement. Speech play affords both the basis for musical development and a continuing and increasingly subtle resource that we humans never outgrow. Our repertoire of sayings, rhymes and stories from our own cultural traditions provides an essential basis for musical development that we cannot afford to neglect. Furthermore, it is fun — children love it — and they learn to speak far more clearly than many of their parents in this age of careless speech.

Although the whole section on speech play and rhythmic training is misplaced in the middle of *Orff-Schulwerk Music for Children*, Volume I, speech play, body percussion and movement necessarily come first in any Orff curriculum, long before the printed song settings and instrumental pieces can be successfully introduced. There are, however, only a few speech exercises included in Volume I, and they are all either translations of German texts or are drawn from English tradition. We need to collect our own American rhymes, poems, folk tales and stories to supplement the English nursery rhymes and stories.

Most of the songs and instrumental pieces in Part I were designed, not for younger children, but for the older children in Keetman's demonstration classes for Bavarian radio, which were so hurriedly put together when Orff and Keetman began to transfer to the realm of childhood the ideas they had developed years earlier with their much older Güntherschule students. As a result, too many of us assume that we should begin with Part I and neglect the basic training in Part II that was intended to come first. Because the progression is not consistently developed in Orff *Schulwerk I*, teachers must make the effort to fill in the gaps and provide the essential basic training from our own tradition with the help of Keetman's invaluable *Elementaria*, in which she spells out the progression in great detail, and Brigitte Warner's thorough and practical *Orff Schulwerk: Applications for the Classroom*, a thoughtful guide to effective Orff teaching. Keetman's series of small gray books for xylophone are also essential: carefully sequenced from the easiest beginnings, and basic to our understanding of the intended progression.

Normal human speech has a limited range: a reciting tone, near which most of our conversation takes place; a somewhat higher range for emphasis; and a slightly lower range for less important, private or parenthetical communication. Exaggerating the vocal range makes anything sound false and phony. Meaningful speech requires a musical line — as does song — and a flowing rhythm, which is endlessly variable after the initial metrical stage. There is no one right way to say anything, but endless opportunities for variation and improvisation.

In the *Schulwerk*, we teach the basic principles of rhythm and meter through speech play, building from single words to phrases, sayings, rhymes, short poems, and on through folk tales and stories. Let's begin with single words.

With children, I like to begin with name play, choosing four children whose names have different rhythms, like David, Eleanor, Mary Helen, John. The chosen four stand in front of the class while I stand behind them, tapping their heads lightly as the class says their names aloud, in the obvious sequence, later repeating or skipping around to make more varied patterns. Then a volunteer or two has a turn before we choose another set of names. You can, of course, transfer the speech patterns to unpitched percussion once the names are familiar, or have the children work out their own name dances. With two contrasting names, you have two different steps to use, resulting in a longer dance.

This game works just as well with lists of fish, dogs, flowers, trees, or any subject the class chooses, but be sure the names have complementary rhythms.

Young children need endless drill on steady beats and regular rhythms. Fortunately there are lots of traditional rhymes to play with, many of which they may know, such as "One, Two, Tie My Shoe," "Hot Cross Buns" or "Bow, Wow, Wow, Whose Dog

continued on page 22 . . .

Improvisation Revisited

Art Thou?" Start with simple speech play, saying and clapping the beat or walking the beat while saying the rhyme together. Later add supporting body percussion patterns to reinforce the beat. Keep the patterns easy, so every child can be successful, starting with L R L R on their knees, with a good introduction before adding the words. Introduce slap-clap patterns when the children are ready. Before introducing stamp-clap patterns, use marching rhymes to help the children feel the beat in their feet. (You can leave snaps until later.)

Here are a couple of examples:

March, march, two by two,
Dressed in yellow, red and blue.
March, march, three by three,
Mary, Billy, march with me.

Or:

Higgledy, piggledy, my black hen,
She lays eggs for gentlemen,
Gentlemen come every day,
To see what my fair hen doth lay.

Or:

Two, four, six, eight,
Meet me at the garden gate.
If I'm late, do not wait
Two, four, six, eight

Young children also need experience with freer rhythms in rhymes, and poems with imaginative texts like this, with its built-in suggestions for improvisation and development:

Intry, mintry, tribbledy fig,
Deema, dima, doma, dig,
Howchy, powchy,
Noma, nowchy,
Hum, tum, too,
Olliga, bolliga, boo,
Out ...goes... YOU!

With older students I like to begin with a string of single words. For example, on the blackboard I write different words for ways of walking — words suggested by the class, such as saunter, plod, amble, meander, stamp, limp, shuffle, tiptoe, zigzag or march. Ask a volunteer to get up and move around the room to one of these words, then ask the class to guess which word is intended. Others can join the "meandering" leader until a different leader chooses another way of walking.

Colors are great fun to play with, since they elicit strong emotions in most of us. I like to ask for color suggestions from the class, and invite five or six students whose colors complement each other, both rhythmically and otherwise, to stand in

front of the class a few feet apart. Initially, I direct their colors with whatever gestures each color suggests, repeating as often as I choose, or moving on to another, in a very free non-metrical rhythm for everyone to follow. At first, the colors may be in a set sequence, just as the people representing the various colors are standing in front of the class, and later in whatever sequence I choose. Volunteer directors follow, exploring new ways, until we tire of the color combination and choose another set. People love to play this game, whatever their age and stage.

Older children and adults enjoy a more demanding name game that provides opportunities for both a variety of accompanying body percussion patterns and amusing word play. (See example 1)

Example 1



Jack, Mack, Rim ram rack, Ree rye row and a bobtailed buck!

The players sit in a circle on the floor, and after the accompanying body percussion pattern is established, the leader starts with the first verse and repeats it a time or two until it is secure. Then the fun begins, as each person in the circle inserts his or her name over the given pattern, as in example 2.

Example 2



Isabel, Misabel, Rim, ram, risabel, Ree rye row and a bob-tailed Bisabel.
(or Jerry, Merry, Rim, ram, rerry, Ree rye, row and a bobtailed Berry, etc.)

The next stage is that of folk sayings and short quotations. With teachers I like to begin with one of Orff's most important sayings: "All song must come from speech." How would you say it? What's the obvious way? How else can you say it? Another way? Still another? What does he mean? Jot down in stick notes three or four alternative possibilities.

When using traditional sayings and quotations, play with them, beginning with the obvious. Jot down three alternative rhythmic solutions for each one. And remember: rests are a great invention. Here are a few favorites.

Look before you leap.
Penny wise, pound foolish!
Time and tide wait for no man.
Take time while time is for time will away!
Once is never enough.
Some are wise, and some are otherwise.
Work keeps at bay three great evils: boredom, vice, and need.
(Voltaire)
He who *must* play cannot play. (Adam Carse)
When we *play*, we never know how the game will end.
Don't look back! Someone may be gaining on you!
(Satchell Paige)

Improvisation Revisited

One of the delights of speech play is the rich vocal paraphony that results when everyone speaks in his or her own natural range, with no attempt to match pitch. Find a common rhythm and inflection so that the rhythm, voice quality and "tune" are unanimous. Here, for instance, is a nonsense ball-bouncing rhyme I love to use with K - 2 children, especially around Halloween:

Ungai, mungai
Chicka-chaka chungai
Alligator ungai, Over!

Take the time to explore the possibilities of the long, slow nonsense syllables together as you lead the class with both your voice and your gestures. Then try saying the rhyme clipped and playful, with rests inserted between the words.

When the rhyme is familiar, bounce the ball around the circle, to each child in turn, as everyone says the rhyme. Then ask one child to bounce to whoever is looking and ready to bounce it back. Soon the children can take turns as the leader while everyone chants the rhyme.

If this game proves a favorite, let the class work out its own two- or three-note tune on A, G and E. Add body percussion, unpitched percussion, and/or a simple bordun on bass xylophone for the "orchestra" to perform as the rest of the children play the game. With its long "ung" syllables, the rhyme affords endless possibilities for rhythmic speech play as well.

Don't try to do it all at once! It takes weeks of delighted play to discover what each particular class most enjoys doing with it. Of course, the result will be different with each class, though the basic development would remain the same, from simple speech play to accompanied song and movement.

Mid-grade or older children and adults enjoy endlessly variable marching rhymes. Vary the position of the rests as you play with the marching chant shown in Example 3. (I heard soldiers singing this as they marched up a hill in San Francisco years ago when I was attending the Bellflower Conference. They always used *do* on the "lefts" and low *so* on the "rights.") Choose different people to lead the singing, each with his or her own variation for the class to join in on as they follow the leader around the room. Encourage the students to notate it simply with L, R and rests, like this:

L ♪ | L ♪ | L R | ♪ R, etc.

I've also found this game useful with beginning recorder players, since any new note can be used with an already familiar one.

Example 3

Left left left, right right, left right, right right left

Below is another marching rhyme for your students to enjoy, with its delightful shift of accent in the third line. (It's also great fun to play on hand drums, once you work out the accentual shifts from right to left hand and back.)

Left__, left__, I had a good job and I left__,
Left my wife with twenty-four children without any gingerbread.
Did I do right., __ right, __ right by my country when I
Left__, left__, I had a good job and I left etc."

"The Bangalory Man" is a favorite for movement improvisation by the chosen leader:

Follow the Bangalory man,
Follow the Bangalory man,
I'll do all that ever I can
To follow the Bangalory man.

A line of several classmates imitates his movement while he leads them around the room. The rest of the class chants and accompanies the rhyme with body percussion and/or unpitched percussion. There's lots of room for variations in tempo, movement and style from one leader to another.

I like to use "From Wibbleton to Wobbleton" both as speech play with a relatively complicated *patschen* pattern in which "Wibbleton" is always on the right knee and "Wobbleton" on the left, and, later, as a movement game, with the "Wibbletonians" at one end of the room and the "Wobbletonians" at the other.

From Wibbleton to Wobbleton is sixteen miles;
From Wobbleton to Wibbleton is sixteen miles.
From Wibbleton to Wobbleton,
From Wobbleton to Wibbleton,
From Wibbleton to Wobbleton is sixteen miles!

Students may move forward only when their town is mentioned in the rhyme, and must freeze in place when the other team is moving. Later, let them move on "sixteen miles" as well. It is great fun when they need to move around for a while.

I also like to transfer it to xylophones, with "Wibbleton" and "to" on low G and "Wobbleton" and "from" on low C, and "sixteen miles" on alternating G's and C's, or C's and G's.

Some of the insistently metrical rhymes, like "One, Two, Tie my Shoe" or "Hot Cross Buns," are very useful when your classes are beginning to learn their "Ta's," "Ta - ti's" and "Taa-aa's," and need to practice notating, saying, moving and playing them on sticks, wood-blocks, claves or drums.

continued on page 24...

Improvisation Revisited

At this stage, I like to give each child an envelope of rhythm cards in duple meter to arrange to match names, words in different categories, and short rhymes. We combine name pairs to make longer patterns and later, a string of names that sound good together, whether names of children, animals, fruit, reptiles or whatever catches their fancy. Then we move on to question-answer play. The sets of rhythm cards grow thicker as more duple patterns are introduced. Soon we graduate to finding tunes to match the word rhythms or rhythm patterns we've chosen, or transfer them to the timpani, unpitched percussion or the bar instruments.

Short rhymes like the following provide a good beginning for class or solo improvisation and composition. Be sure to start with speech play, finding many different ways to say each rhyme before settling on one and moving to instruments or written work. And keep asking, "How else could you say it?" as you explore a number of possibilities. Keep the patterns simple and complementary, whether for body percussion, unpitched percussion, or one or two bar instruments.

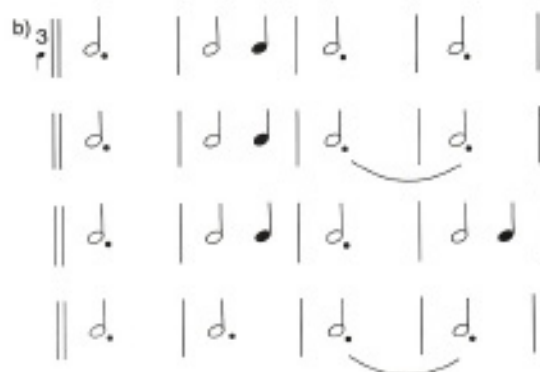
For example, let's play with "Rain on the Green Grass."

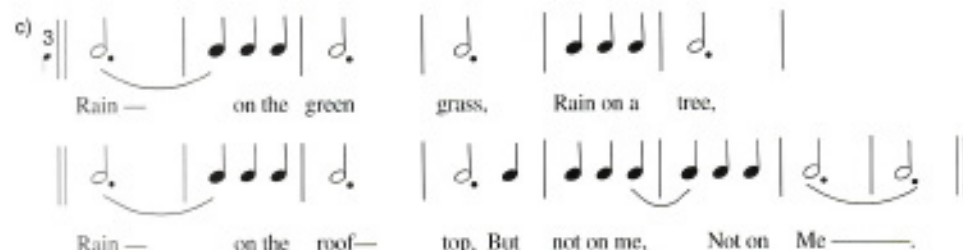
Rain on the green grass,
Rain on the tree,
Rain on the rooftop,
But not on ME!

Example 4 shows different rhythms that can be used.

Example 4

a) 

b) 

c) 

Rain — on the green grass, Rain on a tree,
Rain — on the roof— top. But not on me, Not on Me —

Here are some other rhymes that can be used in the same way:

Red sky at night,
Sailor's delight.
Red sky in morning,
Sailors take warning!
(British Columbia)

Whistle and hoe,
Sing as you go,
Shorten the row
With the songs you know.
(USA)

Whether it's cold
Or whether it's hot,
There will be weather
Whether or not.
(England)

A favorite of middle grade children is "I Saw Three Ships," with its invitation for individual choices of cargo and demands for accurate memory and interesting body percussion accompaniment:

I saw three ships a-sailing on the Main,
Three white ships a-sailing from Spain.
Those three ships, a-sailing on the sea
Were bringing ten coconuts home to me.
What were they bringing to you?

The leader turns to his or her neighbor to the right and the rhyme begins again without breaking the rhythm. Each player in turn adds a new item to the cargo as the game continues. Probably eight or 10 players in each group will be enough, with each group choosing its own body percussion accompaniment. Once the children know the game, it's fun to choose specific categories of cargo: animals, fruit, cars, trucks and so on.

In your personal rhyme collection, which suggest playing with inflection, tempo or vocal color? Which suggest movement

continued on page 29...



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or require dramatic play? Which would work in canon and which need a tune? Which need accompaniments or would work well in pairs?

Some traditional rhymes invite development as stories, like "Jack and Jill," "Humpty Dumpty," "Doctor Foster," "Three Little Kittens," or "Little Miss Muffet."

A less familiar rhyme that affords an opportunity for dramatic play is:

Father and Mother and Uncle John

Went to the market one by one;

Father fell off,

Mother fell off,

But Uncle John went on and on, and on and on, and on and on,etc.

My five- and six-year-olds had fun deciding why Father and Mother and Uncle John were going to market in the first place. Other questions arose: What were they taking to market? How did Father and Mother both happen to fall from whatever they were riding on? Why did Uncle John fail to notice that he'd lost them, and what happened when he finally discovered that he was all alone? Did he stay at the market all day to sell his fruit and vegetables? Did he find Mother and Father by the side of the road on his way home? Were they OK? What happened when they all finally got back home? When the story line was complete, the children acted it out — with a stick horse, an invisible wagon suggested by long reins on both sides of the travelers, and appropriate unpitched percussion accompaniment and an alto xylophone ostinato for the wagon.

A short and simple folk tale can develop easily into a "mini-opera" at any level. With children in the lower grades, the teacher has the responsibility of keeping the accompanying patterns flowing and, usually, singing the recitative that keeps the story moving, but the children can do the unpitched percussion patterns and whatever simple chants and songs worked out in class. A few will be ready for simple solos, but I urge you to avoid public performance at this level. Show what has been accomplished without drilling it in or insisting on perfection. The point is to *play* with the materials.

With older children, separate teams can work out different scenes for a very familiar short folk tale or story. One team could make accompaniments, while another adds movement, appropriate dances or minimal costuming. Volunteers can work out a few recitatives, group songs and solos to carry the story along. It seems to me that inviting the children to make their own mini-opera is much more valuable than using a ready-made musical.

Whatever the age and stage of your students, song settings and body percussion or ensemble accompaniments can be added when appropriate, and/or movement can accompany the speech play itself. Start by simply reinforcing the beat with clapping or a clap-slap pattern. Later, divide the knee-slaps into two eighths, so the pattern becomes "Taa ta-ti."

Keep a repertoire of simple body percussion patterns from Orff Schulwerk, Volume I, Part II in mind to use at a moment's notice. There are lots to choose from, and many more to invent.

Hand sign improvisation on two or three notes comes next,

initially led by the teacher, later by volunteers. When the children are ready, they learn to notate their tunes with stick notes and syllables as in Example 5:

3 | S S S | L - - | L - - | S S S | M - - - |
 Rain on the green grass, Rain on the tree,

3 | S S S | L - - | M M | S S | L - - - |
 Rain on the roof - top, But not on ME!

Here's a useful and challenging chant for canonic movement that I learned when we were teaching in Taiwan. The text couldn't be simpler, but the game is quite demanding and definitely for older students.

Saa sishi saa-aa,

Saa sishi saa-aa,

Saa sishi,

Saa sishi,

Saa sishi saa-aa.

The players are divided into two, three or four groups, according to their experience and skill, with four or five players in each group arranged so that all of them can see the leader. Let's begin with two groups.

The leader stands facing them as he or she does a simple repetitive movement pattern while saying the rhyme as the two teams observe. Then Team 1 does what the leader has just done while saying the rhyme and observing very closely what the leader is now doing. When Team 1 is finished, the leader starts movement pattern 3 as Team 1 imitates pattern 2 and Team 2 begins pattern 1, and so forth.

There are very few examples of sound settings of speech in the Schulwerk itself, and those that are included come almost as an afterthought in Volume V in the section titled "Pieces using Speech" (p.111 ff.), and in *Paralipomena*. There are, however, several examples appropriate for older students and adults included in my edition of "Carols and Anthems" from the Schulwerk II, including two speech choirs over three timpani in "Omnia Tempus Habent" and several examples of recitative and paraphony.

The term "Klang Ostinato" simply means "sound ostinato," and there is no reason to postpone using it until the advanced stages of Orff training. Indeed, they work very well from the very beginning, especially with short poems that have an element of magic.

Stories with repeated refrains provide a good beginning, as in my version of "Chicken Little" in which Chicken Little repeatedly says:

"A black fairy flew
 Played nicky nicky noo
 On my silly poo.
 And I'm off to tell the King
 That Babbin's fallin'"

continued on page 30...

Improvisation Revisited

I added the bell tree after "flew," three taps on a wood-block on "nicky nicky noo," a triangle on "poo," and a hanging cymbal on "Babbin" each time the rhyme recurred, with plenty of time between the lines.

There are many other short, magical poems and a few folk rhymes that suggest the same free, minimal treatment, like Lear's "Far and Few" or Lillian Moore's "Until I Saw the Sea." Here is one of my favorite folk riddles from North Carolina:

Green as grass, and grass it is not;
Red as blood, and blood it is not.
Black as ink, and ink it is not.
What is it? What is it? (solo).....A blackberry!

Another possibility:

Infirtaris,
Inoaknonets,
In mudeelsare,
In claynoneis.
Goatseativy,
Mareseatoots.

"Infirtaris," with its overlapping words, has a mysterious air that makes it an unusually stimulating Klang Ostinato setting or a mock-serious unaccompanied speech play. Each line could be said by a different soloist, each of whom freezes in place until the rhyme is complete.

When making settings for poetry, take time to say the texts aloud until everyone knows the poem by heart. Try different tempi; add rests if needed; and play with the rhythm, the timbre and dynamics until you find your own way of saying a poem together with a particular group. Then consider the available sound possibilities that seem most appropriate for your chosen text. Keep the accompaniment thin, adding one instrument at a time to set the mood and scene, and keep the texture transparent, so the words come through. Sometimes only occasional punctuation is enough, with one or another percussion instrument at a time. Sometimes you may want to assign a solo voice to a line or two, or repeat a meaningful line tutti. Sometimes an ostinato or two seem appropriate. Play with the possibilities. Such a setting would never come out the same with a different group, or on a different occasion.

Let me leave you with an urgent suggestion: Make your own collection of rhymes, poems and stories that are particularly meaningful to you and worthwhile for your students to learn, play with and orchestrate. Learn them "by heart," so that children can remember them all their lives, and pass them on to their own children. Nothing less is worth either your time or theirs.

Isabel McNeill Carley is a founding member of AOSA and was editor of The Orff Echo for 15 years. She has led sessions at 25 AOSA national conferences and taught Orff Schulwerk in Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, France, Taiwan, and at her

"Orff-in-the-Woods" workshops in North Carolina. She is the author of more than two dozen books.

Resources

Pedagogy

Orff and Keetman, *Orff-Schulwerk Music for Children*, Volumes I - V and its supplements; Schott.

Gunild Keetman, *Elementaria*; Schott. Indispensable, with its clear progression and many examples of what and how to teach speech, body percussion, ensemble, etc.

Brigitte Warner, *Orff Schulwerk: Applications for the Classroom*; Schott. This book is basic to the intelligent development of an Orff program.

Favorite collections

Jack Prelutsky, *Random House Book of Poetry for Children*. A rich and varied collection from nonsense rhymes to magical poems.

The Annotated Mother Goose; Bramhall House. A fine source for familiar and less common rhymes, with historical notes and references.

The Faber Book of Nursery Rhymes, Ed. Ireson. More rhymes and more varied selection than its competitors.

The Nursery Rhyme Book, Ed. Andrew Lang; Dover. My favorite collection; fine selection plus good notes.

The Arbutnot Anthology of Children's Literature, Ed. Sutherland; Lothrop. A diverse and inclusive collection of rhymes, poems, folk tales and stories. Expensive, but full of treasures for children of all ages.

The Young Puffin Book of Verse, Ed. Barbara Ireson; Penguin Books. A stimulating and varied collection of familiar and unfamiliar material, both folk and composed.

Myra Cohn Livingston, *Wide Awake*; Harcourt Brace. Short poems for very young children. Look for her other collections too.

Arrow Book of Poetry, Ed. Ann McGovern; Scholastic. A delightful, imaginative selection of short poems by a great variety of poets, both American and British. Delightfully cheap as well.

David McCord, *One At A Time, Collected Poems*; Little, Brown. Lots of fine poems for children, with many appealing particularly to boys, and many quite funny ones that would delight middle grade children.

Anne Pelowski, *The Story Vine*; Collier. A stimulating collection of stories from all over the world: string stories, picture-drawing stories, stories with musical instruments and more.

My all-time favorite for development into a mini-opera is the version of "Chicken Little" I learned from a Scottish friend when I was a child. The speech is so musical that it needs no mini-arias or choruses — just sensitive musical speech with simple bordun/ostinato accompaniments by the teacher and capable students. Unfortunately, it is too long to include in this article, but it is on the AOSA video of my 1990 Denver Conference session if you want to learn it.

Creativity and Improvisation: Orff Schulwerk in the Strings Classroom

Jennifer Lyne

Mix a hard-core orchestra teacher with Level III Orff certification and the result is strings teaching designed to sequentially develop creativity and nurture the ability to improvise, compose, and make musical decisions while playing beautifully. The application of the Orff process to the teaching of instrumental music classes fosters an environment for students that is rich in creativity and opportunities for success. During my Orff Schulwerk certification courses, I experienced and observed creativity that was not necessarily a part of orchestral teaching. It became clear that planning for and nurturing creativity was going to fit my stringed instrument classes beautifully.

In addition to Orff Schulwerk, I draw on the ideas of several pedagogues for technique and philosophy when teaching my classes. Paul Rolland developed an approach to string playing called *The Teaching of Action in String Playing*, which provides students with skills to develop beautiful, in-tune playing from the beginning. Students also learn how to analyze and improve their own playing.

Phyllis Young developed a series of exercises for developing all aspects of playing. She wrote them as metaphors in two books called *Playing the String Game* and *The String Play*. Her work provides delightful visualizations for students and insightful descriptions for teachers. An example of one of the games is to imagine plucking a juicy, ripe strawberry with your right hand. This illustrates the effort needed for the bow hold and actually provides somewhat of a model for the hand shape.

Learning to play a stringed instrument is a demanding task. To help make it less difficult, I use metaphors, stories, games and props that help students have fun practicing the difficult technical aspects and remind them how string playing should sound, look and feel. With a curriculum based on Orff Schulwerk process, the Rolland Action Studies, and the joy demonstrated by Young, learning



to play a stringed instrument becomes easier and success is more assured. My goal is to provide an opportunity for students to have an aesthetic "ah-ha!" experience every time I meet with them.

Here are a few stories that illuminate the overwhelming success of an Orff-based string curriculum. One is about a high-needs class of second-year players in sixth grade. Another is about my work with middle school orchestras. The final one is about my volunteer work with the self-contained developmentally disabled class at my middle school.

"Saved" by improvisation!

The second-year sixth grade strings class met after lunch recess in the cafeteria. Only six students in a 30-minute class: I thought that it should be a snap to take them to unbelievable heights. However, these students' emotions ranged wildly from enthusiasm to despair, and as their stories spun themselves out, I realized that all six students had experienced serious abuse — physical, emotional or both. This class emerged as the greatest teaching challenge I've had in a career that spans 28 years and 35 schools. Everything I had learned in all the years of teaching, three degrees in music education, and Level III Orff certification was required to find something that would motivate them.

I stumbled on the activity that made it possible for me to have an impact on both their playing and their lives: D pentatonic improvisation. D pentatonic fits stringed instruments well because, generally, the first notes learned are those of the D scale. When I demonstrated on my viola what I meant by making up songs based on five notes, they were captivated. All of them clamored to have a chance to play their own tunes. I couldn't get them to leave class that day! The next day they bounded in asking, "Can we make up songs again?"

continued on page 32...



Improvisation Revisited

Tasks that encouraged them to be creative and make decisions were the ones that ultimately captivated these students and kept them focused and excited. In fact, at times they were downright rowdy about sharing their ideas! Though they carried tremendous personal pain, they encouraged one another to share ideas, take part in plays, or do something that would allow the others to give them compliments. Improvisation transformed this class, giving the students a model to apply to their own lives. For example, as they learned a recruitment play called "The Fine Fiddler of Lacey," there were many opportunities for students to make decisions about dialogue, action and music. As they developed the play, they kept in mind that they would be performing for young students. They chose jokes that their audience would understand and enjoy, and chose songs they could play well and that the students would like to hear. Their process used our model for improvement: do something, evaluate the effectiveness, prescribe what should happen next, and then test the results.

Enhanced middle school orchestra

Middle school orchestra classes have more students than elementary strings classes, which caused some students to feel intimidated when asked to improvise in a large group. However, someone always wanted to be first. That first solo broke the ice for most of the rest.

I specified guidelines for improvisation since I did not teach all of the students in grade school. Students were to leave out G and C#, start and end when it seemed the correct time, and be convinced that anything they played was theirs and, therefore, correct! If they played G or C# accidentally, they were not to worry. After all, they were just one note away from a correct one!

Students accompanied the improviser by playing open D and A strings pizzicato as a bordun-like chord in half notes. Once students were comfortable with free improvisation, we imposed the rhythm of a familiar nursery rhyme to help provide melodic structure. The concept of musical question-and-answer structure was identified and constantly reinforced.

In order to help students gain confidence as improvisers, I varied how many students improvised at a time and how they were chosen. Sometimes we went by row; sometimes by individual (but always with the option to "pass"); and sometimes we improvised by section: violins, violas, cellos and basses. We then discussed the relative success of that process. Sometimes two students asked to play at the same time, an exciting experiment for both (and the rest of us!). Everyone else played the D/A bordun accompaniment. We discussed what sounded most effective, or why another improvisation did not "succeed."

Students usually agreed that there was too much sound going on at once when more than one person improvised simultaneously. I mentioned that sometimes people who improvise together pace their playing the same way people carry on conversations. One person talks while the other listens. The second speaker's comments relate to the first speaker's. After discussing conversation style, two students improvised together again. We heard long notes or rests from one player while the other played a moving passage. We heard students begin

to copy rhythmic and melodic figures, and we saw a lot of eye contact between the two players. The two players and the rest of the class enthusiastically recognized the second duet improvisation as much more enjoyable or successful than the first attempts. It was exciting to see how amazed and pleased the duo-improvisers were with themselves!

Success for developmentally disabled students

Two seventh grade orchestra students helped in weekly music sessions for a self-contained middle school class of 13 developmentally disabled students. The two orchestra students held the bass and helped with movement activities. Activities included body percussion, a color recognition activity using colored ribbons and a rhyme, tossing bean bags to mark the beat, using colored scarves to inspire interpretive movement, and finally a dance sequence of movements which we all did while I played "Old Joe Clark" on the violin.

Edward was a non-verbal, severely retarded, autistic student. He loved music and especially enjoyed playing the bass

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with a bow while placing his left hand on the top of the bass. Everyone had opportunities to play the bass, but it became Edward's instrument during each music session. While I played violin and Edward played bass the other students danced as a group and as soloists with applause and "bows." Eventually they played hand drums as they danced.

I taught the dance and the use of the hand drum to all of the students. Even those who couldn't physically accomplish all the movements were excited about the dance. The dance movement involved the following pattern with movement on the beat: walk four steps forward, turn in a circle in place four beats, walk backward four beats, then finish by flexing knees four times in place while saying in a low-pitched voice, "hoh, hoh, hoh, hoh." Simultaneously, the students clapped two drum-like plastic bowls together in the rhythm, "ta tee tee ta ta." (Eventually I was able to obtain hand drums for all.) Those who could talk were encouraged to sing the words to "Old Joe Clark" while I played. As I taught the rhythm pattern for the drums, Edward evolved from rhythmically random bowing to matching most beats with us. During the third 20-minute class, we observed Edward playing "ta tee tee ta ta" much of the time. At the year's final class in June, Edward was all smiles. He played on the beat, stopped playing when we ended the song most of the time, made a lot of eye contact with me, and was ebullient.

I invited the students to perform their dances as solos. A gregarious boy with Down syndrome volunteered immediately. All but one student followed with their solos. The others played their plastic bowls enthusiastically and cheered for the soloist. Even though in past group performances Edward had played continually with what seemed to be little relationship to the fiddle tune, he seemed to be connected to the solos. He usually stopped playing when the soloist ended and then began again with the cue, "Edward, are you ready? One, two, ready, go."

Members of this class exhibited a wide range of motor, language and anger-management skills. Their ability to relate kindly to others varied greatly. I spoke to them about how musicians encourage

each other and asked them to likewise support one another when they came into the orchestra room. This seemed to make a difference. They encouraged the soloists, and encouraged Edward and cheered for him. These sessions were the only formal music instruction that they received. I hope that it made a difference in their lives. It certainly made a difference in mine.

Models for learning

Through learning to play a stringed instrument, my students are offered something that is unique to music-making and which may not be accessible to them in any other part of their lives.

William Magers gave me the Rolland pedagogy that guides students toward beautiful playing and gives them self-diagnostic skills in order to be capable and responsible for improvement. Phyllis Young gave me the metaphors and the model to help the tedious process of skills acquisition to be meaningful and enjoyable. Grace Nash and other Orff Schulwerk teachers gave me a broad and detailed view of Orff process and helped me see how it could be applied to any learning situation. These pedagogues model the never-ending quest for excellent teaching. My goal for myself is clear: to make the world a more musical place! What a great job it is!

Jennifer Lyne, Ed.D., currently



teaches in the North Thurston School District in Olympia, Wash. Previously she taught orchestra in Federal Way, Wash., and, for 19 years, in Flagstaff, Ariz. She received a bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri/Kansas City, a master's degree from Florida State University, and her doctorate in music education from Arizona State University. She has studied viola performance and strings pedagogy with Dr. William Magers. She completed her Orff Schulwerk certification with Grace Nash at Northern Arizona University in 1983, and independent study in Orff, focusing on the teaching of improvisation, with Liz

continued on page 34...



Improvisation Revisited

Gilpatrick and Judith Cole at Colorado State University in 1997. Jennifer writes articles and presents workshops for music teachers throughout the country incorporating the Rolland Action Studies, Orff techniques, and strategies for optimal music education.

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"The Sound of Those Instruments!" A Portrait of Barbara Grenoble

Liz Gilpatrick

"It was the wonderful sound of those instruments!" As we enjoyed a cup of tea in the sunny kitchen of her studio in Englewood, Colorado, Barbara Grenoble recalled a performance presented by a group of children prepared under the guidance of Doreen Hall. That performance took place at Toronto in the summer of 1962 during the Special Conference on Music Education-Orff Schulwerk, and "those instruments" were, of course, the Orff ensemble.

That summer conference, part of Doreen Hall's ongoing teacher training classes, brought together an eager, able group of men and women. Many of them, like Barbara, went on to become mentors for thousands of others, especially in Canada and the United States. The faculty for that first group included Carl Orff, Gunild Keetman, Doreen Hall, Wilhelm Keller, Barbara Haselbach, Lotte Floch, Keith Bissell, R. Murray Shaeffer and Hugh Orr.

In 1962, Barbara was teaching general and instrumental music in Englewood Public Schools, a small district bordering the southern edge of Denver.

"I arrived in Englewood from Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, in 1956 expecting to take an instrumental position," she told me. "By the time I got off the train, the job had changed to general music. I couldn't just get on the train and go back home! They assigned me two schools here in general music and choir. Later they added band, too. Choir, band, and general music — all of it. I was trained as a flute player and had only one general music methods class.

"I was about six years into my teaching career when I began hearing about Orff. People were talking about it and I was curious," she recalled. "Then an article [about Orff] appeared in an MENC journal and Ruth Hamm wrote a rebuttal to it. I thought that was interesting and said, 'what is going on?' Just about that time it was announced that [Carl] Orff was going to come to Toronto

to be with the teachers from the Mozarteum. That's how I found out about the conference."

With only her dog to keep her company, Barbara motored to Toronto, taking a circuitous route that began in Denver and included a side trip to the Seattle World's Fair. When she finally arrived at her Canadian destination, she began the training that would become the driving force behind her professional — and much of her personal — life for years to come. Barbara described that first summer of Orff instruction:

"I simply went up there to find out what this was all about. In the dorm, I shared a 'room' with 20 others on the third floor, barracks style. Off I went, literally not knowing anybody. This is where I met my present day Orff colleagues, especially those I met in the first two years. The second summer, Ruth Hamm and I were roommates and we hung out the dormitory windows to cool off and discuss the day's events. The faculty gave us no written notes, nor was there time to write anything down during classes. Those discussions became our 'notes.'"

"That performance was the thing that really caught me, because I had the sound of my beginning bands and orchestras in my head and this — this was such an unbelievable difference and I just thought — 'OH! I would love children to be able to make that kind of beautiful music!'"

"That first year I was intimidated because I had never been in the presence of such greatness before. Oh, I had been around a bit; I had gone to concerts in Philadelphia and New York, but I really felt like this was it — this was the real thing. This was ORFF! I went along to class and I participated, but I didn't always understand what was happening. For the most part I was pretty overwhelmed."

"Body percussion threw me the first time. I thought, 'How in the world will I

ever be able to do this myself, let alone teach children?' But, our teachers would back it up and break down the steps so we could get it. The same thing happened in ensembles and movement classes. We wore black leotards for movement. I must admit I felt really self-conscious coming out of the dressing room and I did position myself behind the poles."

"Barbara Haselbach could move so beautifully and everyone else on the faculty — it seemed they were so accomplished in every area: body percussion, hand drumming, movement and recorder. Thinking of myself in the position of Orff teacher to children was sometimes difficult. But, I knew there had to be ways to get in there [into understanding that process]. The thing that really attracted me to it all was the sound of that ensemble. When Doreen Hall had her children performing all these pieces live on stage, I just couldn't believe it and I thought, 'I want to be able to have my children make that sound!' That performance was the thing that really caught me, because I had the sound

of my beginning bands and orchestras in my head and this — this was such an unbelievable difference and I just thought — 'OH! I would love children to be able to make that kind of beautiful music!' So, I bought an alto xylophone and a soprano glockenspiel and back home to Denver I went."

"After that first summer of Orff training, Barbara returned to her Englewood teaching position determined to share what she was learning with both

continued on page 36...

her students and their parents. Rather than attempt to interpret the Orff process in words, she chose to inform parents through the same sort of children's performance she had witnessed in Toronto the summer before."

"We gave a little program for the PTA because the scheduled presenters could not come. The principal called me and said, 'Barbara, you have to do something. If we don't have children or someone special involved here, the parents won't come.' I said, 'I don't have anything special prepared to do, but I could present a music lesson.' Well, he wasn't too pleased and I heard nothing more about it. Later he came back and said, 'Well, you're the only thing I've got.' So, what could I do? I told him that the children and I would explain this thing that I was learning — this Orff — to the parents. We gave an Orff demonstration — my very first. We used body percussion, speech, movement, small percussion and the two tone-bar instruments I brought back from Toronto. We used what we had. I told the parents, 'You're only getting to see a piece of this program and I would like you to hear the whole ensemble.' So, I played the old Angel recording for them of the piece that we had just performed. Those parents said to me afterwards, 'Do you mean my children could make that kind of music?' and I said, 'Yes, they could, if we had the ensemble.'

"They asked me, 'What would it take?' and I answered, 'Oh, I'm not certain, but I think around \$2000.' Well, those parents disappeared and they went at it! They raised money through bake sales and such and gave us all the money from the school carnival. Then they went to the board of education and said, 'If we raise half of the money, will you put up the other half?' And the board said they would. That's how I got that first set of instruments."

In 1962 prospective buyers ordered directly from the manufacturer in Munich. After receiving a letter telling her the instruments had been shipped, Barbara and her students tracked their journey across the Atlantic and up through the St. Lawrence Seaway. When they reached Chicago, the instruments were detained at U.S. Customs because they were "not properly identified" —

Studio 49 had forgotten to affix their signature little yellow labels. With a flurry of calls to both Studio 49 and the American Consulate, the problem was resolved — the American Consulate himself affixed the stickers to the resonating boxes! When the instruments finally reached Colorado, Barbara hurriedly readied children from one of her elementary schools to give a demonstration for the Englewood Chamber of Commerce. She recalled that day:

"I took those children into performance much earlier than I should have, but you don't know that at the time. It was important that the community see and hear the instruments they had purchased. I am quite sure," she recalled with a hearty laugh, "that I crammed down a couple of pieces. We did not do much creating. We began the first piece and as the boy playing the timpani began his ostinato in the wrong rhythm, I said to myself, 'Oh dear, I hope we can play on top of that.' We added the rest of the instruments and the piece really wrenched itself in coming together. Finally I stopped the group. I can still see him shaking his mallets at me when he said, 'Now, Miss Grenoble, don't you worry, I've got it now!' All together we reviewed our ostinati and discussed what we had to do — and away we went! The audience had a glimpse of a real classroom situation and I learned about sharing the Orff process versus performance."

She confessed that her own philosophy underwent a great transformation as she felt the power of decision-making in the classroom flow from her to the children. Though she thought she was still "doing it wrong," Barbara continued to draw courage from the children in her own classrooms and from her new Orff friends across the U.S., who confessed to having some of the same teaching dilemmas. When those first students returned to Toronto for further studies, they began to discuss with the teachers the need for assistance in transferring the summer experiences to the classroom. Doreen Hall began to add more pedagogy to the classes, taking one summer off to re-organize the program into levels of teacher training."

Those summers of training in Toronto were exciting, stimulating and frustrat-

ing, but full of experiences, fresh ideas, and materials to take home for exploration and experimentation with students and colleagues. Geographically, we were dispersed, but there was common need to keep alive the sharing of knowledge and experience from our summer training. Three important events set the course for further Schulwerk training and bringing it to the United States. The first International Symposium of Orff Schulwerk in the United States took place in Bellflower, California, in 1967. Some who were at that Bellflower symposium in the spring of 1968 decided to call a meeting, and as a result of that meeting, ASOA was founded. The very next year, 1969, the first ever AOSA conference was held in April. Interest in Orff Schulwerk was just exploding and there was a cry for training."

The establishment of teacher training programs within the U.S. was a welcomed development. Barbara directed one of the first on-going, three-week teacher training programs in the United States at Denver University's Lamont School of Music from 1974 to 1985. In 1987, a new course was established at the University of Northern Colorado and ran until 1994.

The same determination that saw Barbara through her first years of Orff training helped her begin her musical studies as a child. Her father, a clock-maker and silversmith, was also a well-known amateur musician who played violin in the Harrisburg, Penn., symphony, conducted, and led a folk dance group. He often took his daughter to musical events and there was plenty of live music in their home. Barbara loved all of it.

"My father had a music store and I fell in love with a beautiful engraved French flute displayed in his window. He told me that I could take lessons if I could play it the first time I picked it up. He thought he had gotten rid of me!" she exclaimed with a big smile.

In exchange for some after-school goodies from her brother's bake shop, the first flutist of the high school band gave Barbara lessons on the sly. Barbara told her father, "Dad, I'd like to try that flute you have in the window, and he said OK, so I played 'Hot Cross Buns.' I am



pleased to report that I began lessons almost immediately."

She smiled as she recalled her initial decision not to attend college after high school.

"I grew up in a college town," she remembered, "and I didn't like the way those college kids behaved — too 'party-ish.'"

Instead, she went to work in a local bank for two years, a job she found unsatisfying. She decided to become a music teacher. Her father thought studying music education was an "extravagant" thing to do — that a person could simply teach music without college, but Barbara prevailed and headed off to the Eastman School of Music.

"Even though I was trained as an instrumental supervisor with a minor in flute, I found I really enjoyed classroom music once I was thrown into it. I had participated in Girl Scouting and had supervised a playground for a couple of summers, so when I found myself in the general music classroom, I enjoyed it. But the thing that 'did it' for me — that really made me want to stay in the general music classroom was that 1962 performance of Doreen Hall's children and the sound of those instruments!"

Liz Gilpatrick serves on The Orff Echo Editorial Board.

Editor's note: Part 2 of this portrait of Barbara Grenoble will appear in the Winter 2002 issue.



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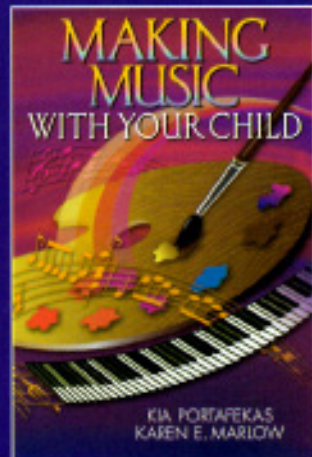
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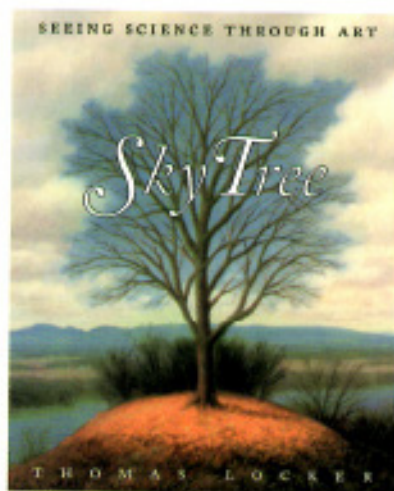
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Reviews

Judith Cole and Marjie Van Gunten, Editors

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SKY TREE

Seeing Science Through Art

By Thomas Locker with Candace Christiansen

HarperCollins, 1995. \$16.95 cloth; \$6.95 paper.

When a friend shared this book with me several years ago, we both knew that it would become a favorite for generating one of those all-encompassing experiences so characteristic of Orff classrooms. Thomas Locker's lyrical prose and his breathtakingly beautiful illustrations of a tree invite sound and movement exploration and, thus, feed the soul of the emerging musician-dancer-poet.

Just one tree standing alone on a hill by a river is seen from cover to cover in this book. The illustrations were all painted in oils on canvas in a range of natural colors that reflect a tree's life through the seasons and elements. The paintings evoke a wide range of emotions, causing the reader to feel the warmth of the glowing sun on the tree's leaves in the summer as well as the chill when the tree is shrouded in winter's fog. The reader feels the violence of a summer tempest on the tree's branches as vividly as the stillness of those same

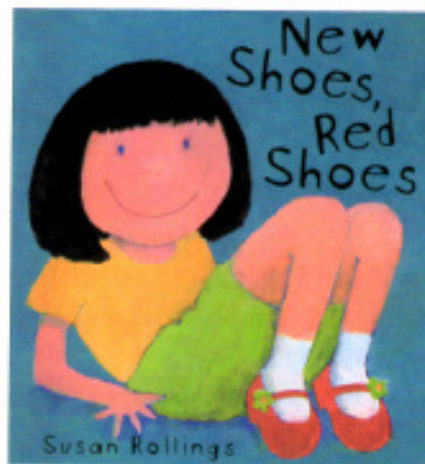
barren branches on a cold, winter evening.

Locker shows how a single tree, when painted against the ever-changing sky, can invite a deep sense of wonder. In the first of his 14 illustrations, we see the gentle, green summer tree with puffy white clouds against a brilliant blue sky. The same tree is transformed when it is shown against a dark, ominous sky, and the reader is sure to respond with a changing mood. We see bright orange and yellow pigments in autumn, muted golds and violets of fading evening light, gray and bare branches in winter mist, crow-filled naked branches in winter frost, soft white silence on a snowy day, millions of stars twinkling through empty branches on a clear night, and the yellow sun glowing hopefully with the spring's first buds.

The descriptive text draws the reader into experiencing summer breezes, cold nights, gathering and drifting clouds, streaming light and uncurling leaves. The river, seen in the distance beyond the tree, participates in the story as it ripples, glistens, freezes, thaws and provides nourishment. Turtles crawl, sleep and lay eggs in the mud as the sap rises to the tree's buds. Birds chirp, squabble, sing and beat their wings to fly. Squirrels race, scurry, hide nuts and huddle for warmth.

Teacher Candace Christiansen adds scientific depth by embellishing each illustration with a thought-provoking question about the changes that mark the tree's world. At the conclusion, further questioning provides opportunity for the reader to ponder moods and feelings caused by the artist's choice of colors and brush strokes. The reader is left to consider a final question about the relationship of the sky and tree when asked, "Why do you think this book is called *Sky Tree*?"

-Judith Cole



NEW SHOES, RED SHOES

By Susan Rollings

Orchard Books, 2000. \$15.95.

A little girl is going on a shopping trip to buy some new shoes with her mother. On her journey, she joyously discovers a world of fascinating footwear all around her - as if for the first time. From "low shoes and high shoes" to "big and noisy racing shoes," the little girl notices the differences and similarities of each pair of shoes she encounters. The brightly painted illustrations bring out the uniqueness of the shoes and the diverse individuals wearing them. British author and illustrator Susan Rollings has created a book that is a celebration of shoes and of life, expressing the wonder with which young children experience the world around them. The text is sure to entice children to snap their fingers and move their feet with its driving intensity and syncopated rhythms. "Happy shoes, dancing shoes, skipping to the party shoes." Beware: *New Shoes, Red Shoes* will convince little girls they too need a new pair of shoes!

-Carlos Abril



FROGGIE WENT A-COURTING
An Old Tale with a New Twist
 By Marjorie Priceman
 Little, Brown and Company, 2000.
 \$14.95.

For over 400 years, people have enjoyed singing various versions of the song about Froggie and Miss Mousie. The folk song originated in Scotland in the 16th century; since then hundreds of verses have been created to tell, enhance and further the tale celebrating the wedding of these two very different critters.

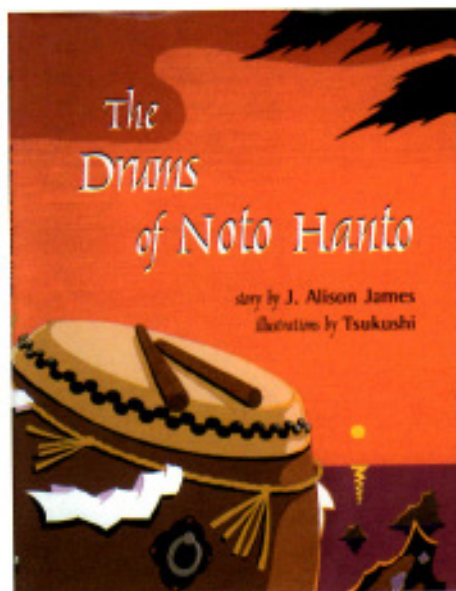
In this version, Caldecott Honor-winning illustrator Marjorie Priceman chooses present-day New York City as the setting. When Froggie goes a-wooing, he takes a taxicab to Miss Mousie's place on the Upper West Side. When Miss Mousie gives her consent, the announcement is seen in lights on Broadway, only to be protested by Auntie Rat who exclaims, "You cannot marry an amphibian! A slimy frog — he's not our kind!"

Following the traditional folk song format, questions about the wedding details are posed and answered. We learn that the wedding will take place at the top of the Statue of Liberty. Readers are led to other familiar New York City sites: the wedding gown is made in Chinatown, the cake has as many layers as the Empire State Building, and the guests arrive by various bridges and tunnels. Also following tradition, various critters take part in the festivities, including the fishes that set out the dishes, the bees that play

jazzy melodies, and finally, the tomcat that chases Auntie Rat. While Auntie Rat's fate is unfortunate, the wedding party escapes just in time by jumping onto a ferry. Aboard the Circle Line, the celebration continues and the tale ends with the rodent and amphibian catching a plane to Paris.

This version features brightly colored illustrations, which will evoke the imagination of any child. The references to New York City landmarks in both text and illustration provide a wonderful gateway for exploration. In keeping with the many versions of this folk song, which entice the singer to contribute additional verses, I can hardly wait to invite children to create a version based on their own regional landmarks and characteristics.

- Judith Cole



THE DRUMS OF NOTO HANTO
 By J. Alison James; illustrated by Tsukushi
 DK Publishing, 1999. \$16.95.

Each year since 1576, the people of Nabune, Japan, have held a festival commemorating their ancestors' victory over a fleet of invading samurai. *The Drums of Noto Hanto*, with its beautiful illustrations and percussive text, presents the history.

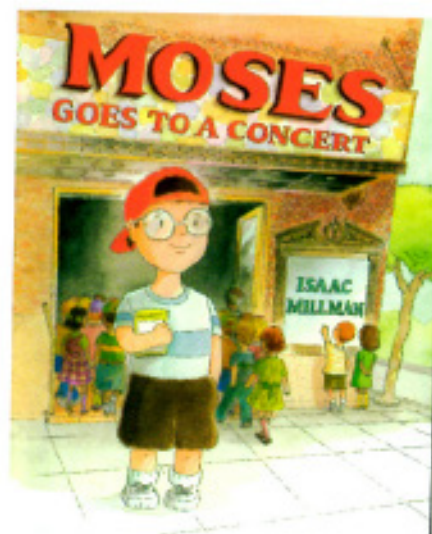
A powerful warlord seeking riches sets out to conquer a small coastal

village. The weaponless villagers know they cannot outfight the invaders yet believe they can outwit them. They decide to use drums of all sizes, hoping the sounds will intimidate the enemy. The children create terrifying masks from bark and seaweed to add to the forthcoming drama.

Author J. Alison James uses the texture and timbre of words to express the unique sound of each drum - DON kada DON kada, Podo pada Podo pada, Tiki tiki tik, DON DON DON. The percussive words cry out to be performed, chanted and repeated over and over again. Reading these words makes you feel like you are hearing the drums; saying the words makes you feel like you are playing them. The words' placement on the page, different sizes, exclamations and capitalization suggest tonal inflection and dynamics. The meticulously detailed paper collage illustrations by Japanese artist Tsukushi complement the rhythm of the story. Bold colors and the expressive qualities of each page will surely capture the attention and imagination of children. If you look closely you can see the various textures of the papers utilized in the art. The creative possibilities for the classroom are endless.

As the samurai approach the village in their boats, they hear ominous sounds coming from the shore and spot gruesome monsters dancing in the sand. The invaders shoot arrows to the shore but the drums roar an answer: DON da Don da DON! Overwhelmed by the sights and sounds from the village, the samurai turn away. Since that day, it is believed that the beat of the drums "stalls the beat of the heart." Readers of all ages are certain to have the beat of a Koto koto ko and a DON DON DON in their heart by the story's conclusion.

-Carlos Abril



MOSES GOES TO A CONCERT

By Isaac Millman

Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998. \$16.

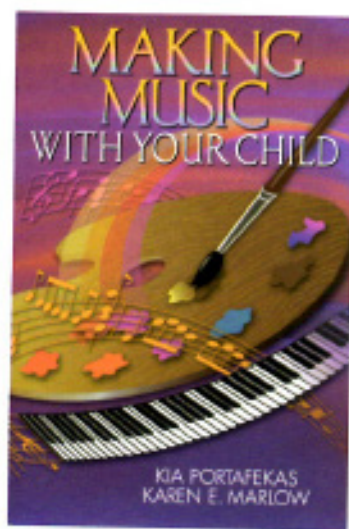
Upon first glance, *Moses Goes to A Concert* may seem like another picture book about the instruments of the orchestra or the concert-going experience, but a closer look reveals something more. This is a story about Moses, a young boy who has a dog, a toy-filled room and a new drum. He enjoys playing his drum, although he can't hear the sound it makes. Moses is deaf; he relies on feeling the vibrations of the drum through his hands and feet. He and his classmates, who are also deaf, are going on a fieldtrip to attend a young people's concert. Readers soon realize that this concert experience may be a little different from the usual.

The children find their seats in the concert hall and eagerly await the performance. They notice a variety of percussion instruments assembled in front of the orchestra, and their teacher, Mr. Samuels, describes some of them. When the female percussionist walks on stage to bow, Moses and his classmates applaud by waving their hands - as traditionally done in the deaf culture. This is only one example of the careful research the author has undertaken to authentically and respectfully represent the deaf community.

Before the music begins, Mr. Samuels hands his students balloons, which they hold to feel the vibrations produced by the musical instruments. Young readers will be intrigued by the ways in which deaf children can enjoy music. This may even spark a discussion about sound waves and the mechanics of the inner ear. Following the concert, the percussionist, who is also deaf, discusses her career and the obstacles she has overcome to reach her goals. Inspired by her story, Moses realizes that he too can do anything he sets his mind to. He excitedly goes home to share his experiences with his parents. Moses decides he will be a percussionist when he grows up.

Isaac Millman, author and illustrator of *Moses Goes To A Concert*, has written an inspirational story that teaches and entertains. He tells the story through traditional text, watercolor illustrations, and American Sign Language (ASL). The ASL illustrations, which include hand signs, body movements and facial expressions, are accurately depicted, enticing the reader to try them. The cartoon-like illustrations will capture children's attention without distracting from the story. Readers learn how those with hearing disabilities are able to communicate and participate in many activities enjoyed by others. And most importantly, children discover that through hard work and dedication they too can do anything they set their minds to - with or without a disability.

-Carlos Abril



MAKING MUSIC WITH YOUR CHILD

By Kia Portafekas and Karen E. Marlow

MMB Music, Inc., 2001. \$12.95.

This little volume focuses on Ms. Portafekas's creative approach to teaching piano to students of all ages, with Ms. Marlow's collaboration in the writing process. Any music teacher, whether in a private studio or at any level of elementary, secondary or college teaching, is likely to be enlightened and challenged by the ideas in this book. The author's emphasis on helping the child express himself aligns very closely with the childlike discovery and improvisation so important in Orff Schulwerk.

How many of us were taught piano or an instrument from a method book, page by page by page? In elementary school, how many of us sat and sang songs from a book? How many hours did we spend in college ensembles performing the works of the classical masters? When were *our* musical ideas solicited, notated and shared with others? The answer is: never or hardly at all. By the time we became adult musicians, our creative sap had hardened inside petrified wood. Our discovery of Orff Schulwerk as teachers let the sap flow again, and books like this one can give us some special insights on opening and keeping the creative process flowing for our students.

In the author's studio, students practice technique in imaginative ways and work on two or three pieces each

continued on page 43...



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session. Lessons are fluid, though, and the author is always ready to seize a teachable moment and leap into the unknown.

From the outset, students explore the language of pure sounds, create their own ideas, tape them if they wish, and then keep them in their own special volumes. For beginners, the teacher will write these pieces down; later, students notate their own pieces. Play and discovery come first, followed by notation of a meaningful experience.

The book is divided into two main sections. "Simple Melodies," chapters 1 through 5, contains ideas on getting started, breathing exercises, basic theory, and ways to unlock creativity. "Now Take It," chapters 5 through 19, includes "one hundred games, ideas, exercises, and fantasies designed to release the creative flow."

The author uses the word "riff," taken from the jazz idiom, to describe this playful exploration of artistic elements that will become new expressions wherever they are tried. While developed for a piano studio, many of these riffs can be easily adapted for an elementary music classroom. These 14 chapters of riffs appear in a general directory in chapter 6. For example, there are ideas for children under age six, for energizing when tired, for starting a song, and for two or three people. They are also organized by topics: "Breathing Riffs," "Riffing Off Rhythm," guided fantasies, "Singalong Riffs," "On the Move" and "Musical Make-Believe."

This book makes it clear that activities which prepare students for and lead them into musical composition need not sit on the back burner of our lesson plans; instead, in this day of standards-based curricula, they should be the spark and fire that maintain creativity.

Pablo Picasso's quote in this volume, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up," will challenge us to nurture self-expression beyond the elementary school years.

Read this book with an open heart. Let this author's many-faceted and lively process speak to you. Then, choose your own path and dance with your students, leading them to experience their very own musical ideas.

-Veronika Schultz



WELCOME TO MUSSOMELI
Children's Songs from an Italian
Country Town (Book/CD)

By Rosella Diliberto with Bryan
Burton

World Music Press, 1999. \$20.95.

Rosella Diliberto was born in England to Italian parents and moved to Mussomeli, Sicily, at age 13. In this small Italian town she learned many children's songs and games that were a part of growing up in that area. In *Welcome to Mussomeli* she shares seven songs and much of the culture of her family's hometown.

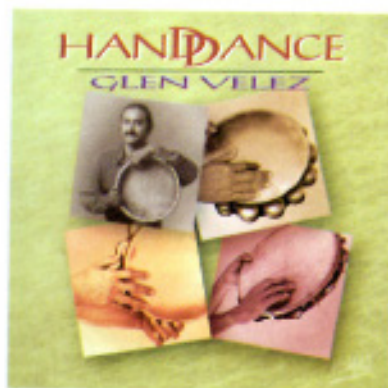
The songs, ranging from the silly ("Twenty-four Blue Cats") to the graceful ("Oh How You Dance, Beautiful Girl"), were all very appealing to my American students. While a few are obviously intended for younger children, each is appropriate for all elementary-aged students. A version of "Ring Around the Rosie" and a cumulative song helped my classes make connections to game songs with which they were already familiar. Most of the pieces have instructions for traditional movements and for extensions into other subjects, and all of the selections have suggestions for improvising movements or accompaniments. (None of the tunes are pentatonic and children would need to discover the chord structure before attempting accompaniments.) The cultural background of each song is also given.

All the tunes are easy to sing and remember. Each song is printed with

Italian lyrics and an English translation and includes permission for teachers to make copies for the classroom. The CD features Rosella speaking the text clearly — with pauses for student echoes — followed by the entire song accompanied by piano. This makes learning the songs practical and easy for teachers and children who do not speak Italian. A printed pronunciation guide is provided.

Also included in the book are historical and geographical information, two Diliberto family recipes, many photographs of Mussomeli, and a guide for linking the songs to the MENC National Standards. Three "OK-to-copy" sections are provided: a map of Italy, a timeline of Sicilian history, and three pages of cultural connections available on the Internet. These added features make this book valuable for foreign-language and social studies classrooms as well, bringing a new dimension to the music class.

-Alan Purdum



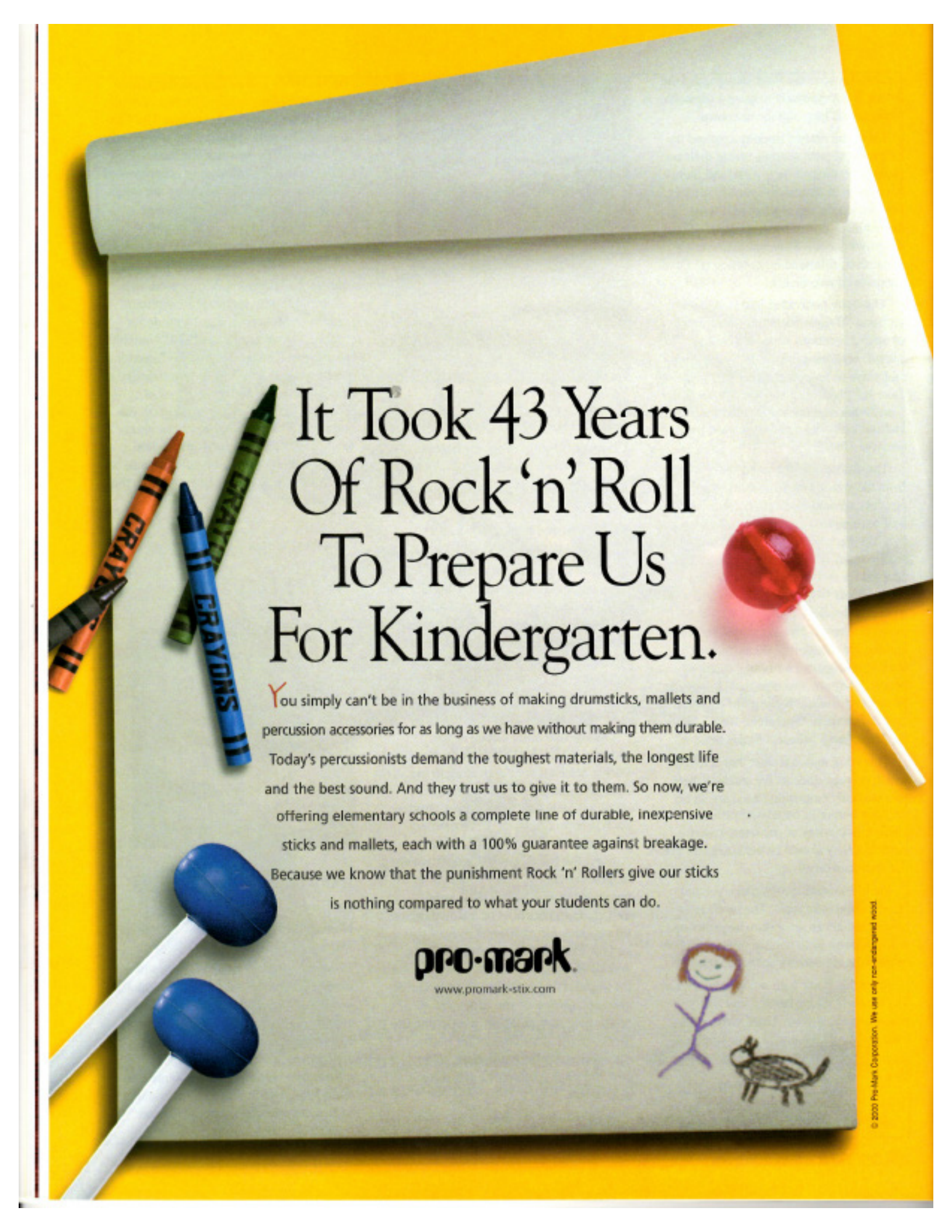
HAND DANCE (CD)

By Glen Velez

Nomad (a division of Music of the
World, Ltd.), 1996.

Master drummer Glen Velez, who is a member of AOSA's Advocacy Council, has developed a dedicated following among AOSA members since his first AOSA appearance at the San Diego conference in 1991. This CD is a re-release of a recording by the same title from 1987, which was a re-release of an earlier recording titled *Frame Drum*

continued on page 45...



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Music. It includes six selections that vividly display the unique talent of Glen Velez with assistance by his drumming partner, Layne Redmond (author of the book *When the Drummers Were Women: A Spiritual History of Rhythm*).

Rocky Maffit's 1999 book, *Rhythm and Beauty*, defines the frame drum as "simplicity itself" and, indeed, Glen Velez makes playing it sound effortless. Although some frame drums are square or multi-sided, most are circular for obvious reasons. Frame drums are a part of long-standing musical traditions throughout the Middle East and Northern Africa, in Italy as well as Ireland, and within indigenous cultures throughout the Americas. Hardly a location or people on this planet or throughout the ages has been exempt from use of the frame drum.

Glen Velez plays them all — the Moroccan bendir, the Brazilian pandeiro, the Irish bodhrán, to name a few — using amazing techniques he has gathered and synthesized from his study of world drumming practices. He uses every part of his hand — palm, heel, knuckles, fingertips, fingernails, thumb, fist — to hold, shake, snap, roll, scrape, brush, tap and flick. He applies pressure to the drumhead to "bend" the tones and he rapidly alternates fingers to produce "flutter tongue" effects. The listener is easily convinced that his hands are truly dancing as if possessed by the spirit world.

If one could diagram his hand and finger work, it would make Guido d'Arezzo's famous hand in the music history textbook look like a kindergarten drawing.

The CD includes selections inspired by Brazilian samba rhythms, layered cross rhythms of Zimbabwe, and traditional Nubian music. In the Nubian example, Velez plays the bendir, an interesting drum having strands of animal gut stretched underneath the drumhead to create a snare-like effect. In the Shona example, the pandeiro is enhanced by a 12-beat ostinato played on mbira, along with a constant beat produced by ankle bells. To this, he adds quietly hummed melodic patterns and overtone chanting. Velez has mastered this art, often associated with Tuuvian "throat singing"

and Tibetan Buddhist practices.

The centerpiece of the collection is a 21-minute improvisational work in uncommon meter. The bodhrán remains a constant force throughout, to which are added an Afghan tambourine called a doira, a Lebanese tambourine called a duf, and a Spanish square frame drum. The piece seems to have five major parts, much like a suite, which rise out of the undercurrent of constant bodhrán rhythms like tidal surges.

Fortunately, there are a number of Velez's recordings available. This CD is just one example of his extraordinary talent.

-Judith Cole



**BEHOLD THAT STAR!
An American Song Quilt (CD)
Revels Records, 2001**

Let me first reveal a dreadful secret from a musician: I never sit and listen to recorded music. I listen as I drive to work, I listen as I do housework, I listen as I sew, paint, wrap, puree, tuck, tape and floss. Recently I set a stack of progress reports next to my grade book, pushed *Behold That Star!* into the CD player, and prepared to listen as I entered

grades onto quarterly reports. This lasted about 30 seconds. I was compelled to move to the rocking chair to sit, close my eyes, and really listen. Over the next hour I smiled, clutched my bosom and sighed, and even laughed out loud. What a glorious collection of American songs, ranging from spirituals and shape note hymns to blue grass and Salvation Army bands.

The concept of *Behold That Star!* came from the Washington Revels, a charitable trust with a mission of bringing seasonal community celebrations to Washington, D.C. It is an attempt to recreate the urban singing communities of the late 19th century. Urban "pioneers" gathered into neighborhoods of similar ethnicity. However, these diverse pockets of refugees from poverty, slavery and oppression were also neighbor to each other. Their varied musical traditions met and blended, particularly at Christmas time.

Vocal contributions to this CD come from The Shepherd Alley Singers, who display a stunning ability to sing in very disparate vocal styles. "Balm in Gilead" is rich and luscious, with vibrato so broad that you fall right in and are rocked and cradled. "The Babe of Bethlehem," on the other hand, is so strident it's like a bite of green apple. The Good News Brass plays hymns to save your soul as well as tunes just right for sipping lemonade on the Fourth of July. This banquet of sound is completed by The Tiber Creek Band, a bluegrass ensemble *par excellence* that just won't permit you to sit still.

The CD comes with notes about each song, giving information about origin as well as interesting anecdotes. *Behold That Star!* is an excellent classroom resource or simply a jewel for your personal listening library.

-Marilyn Gunn

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From the Classroom

Marilyn Gunn, Editor

In the review section of this issue you will find a variety of children's books for your consideration. This column takes a closer look at two of these books and explores their place in the music classroom.

Sky Tree: Seeing Science Through Art, by illustrator Thomas Locker and Candace Christiansen (HarperTrophy), is the visual equivalent of the musical form theme and variation. The tree is the theme, constant from one page to the next. Each variation is a season or a transition from one season to another. To create an "aural illustration" of the tree in its many seasons, students must first compose the theme. What are the salient characteristics of the tree? Do these characteristics suggest a melody, a rhythm, a timbre, or a combination of these elements? The theme may take the form of a *basso continuo*. It might be a song. It might be a rhythm piece based on the descriptor words generated by the class. Whatever form the theme takes, it will become the foundation upon which each variation is built.

Light and color play a significant role in the transformation of the tree. This is a perfect opportunity to compare visual color with auditory color. Is the significant difference between the theme and its variations going to be one of color? The theme can be repeated with each turn of the page, varied only by instrumentation. Voices also have different colors. Vowels can be categorized as bright or dark. Vary a sung theme by changing vowel sounds.

Texture plays a part in the changes the tree undergoes throughout the year. Sometimes the tree is thick with leaves. Other times it is bare. The variations can be a matter of adding and subtracting instruments. Don't forget the vocal instrument.

How could students use space and motion to show theme and variation? All children can play the part of the tree at once, discovering ways to vary their movements as the seasons pass. Or a single child can be the tree with other students providing the variations in the dances around the tree. The variations

can also take the form of props. Fabric, paper and other found objects can add visual color and texture to the dance. Don't forget that instruments can also be a part of the dance.

Along with the lovely illustrations and the poetic text, this book includes scientific information about trees and seasons, easily the basis for a shared lesson with the classroom science teacher.

If you are inclined toward thematic teaching, consider shoes as one of your topics. *New Shoes, Red Shoes* by Susan Rollings (Orchard Books) can be a delightful part of a whole shoe unit. One of my students has attended a local dance school for several years. One day I asked her to inquire at her next dance class if my school could have some "orphan" shoes to show to students in music class. Within a few days I had received a bag of shoes that included boys and girls ballet slippers, tap, jazz, and character shoes, and the grand queen of all shoes, the toe shoe. As we learned about different dance styles, the shoes were passed around the room. The children were fascinated by the shoes, in particular, the toe shoe. It was squeezed and poked, inside and out, and students were quite reluctant to relinquish the shoe to the next person.

Like *Sky Tree, New Shoes, Red Shoes* can be a great lesson in theme and variation. Students can begin by making observations about the shoes they are wearing. Pair children with a partner or two and let them remove their shoes to arrange on the floor in a pattern that can be performed by assigning a body sound to each shoe. The rhyme and repetition of this book begs for body percussion ostinati. The "shoe ostinati" created by the students can be used as the background for a reading of the story. Children can transfer these patterns to voice and other instruments, or can explore the use of shoes as mallets on various classroom instruments, particularly large barred instruments.

When I investigated shoes as a teaching theme last year, I found several

shoe rhymes, such as "One, Two, Tie My Shoe." I also found many songs about things that shoes do — songs about hopping and running and walking. All of these can be accompanied by a "shoe bordun" (using shoes as mallets on the bass xylophone).

Students enjoy "shoe improvisation." Choose a child to direct the action. The director conducts with a walking shoe, a running shoe and a dancing shoe. Some students play pentatonic barred instruments along with a variety of unpitched percussion, while other students improvise their dance. The director holds one of the shoes aloft to indicate to the players and dancers whether they are creating walking, running or dancing music and movement.

While I was exploring shoes in music, the art teacher in my school continued the theme in her class. She asked each child to design a pair of shoes, which they cut from poster board and decorated with mixed media. She punched a hole in each shoe and the children tied their pairs together with a length of yarn and brought their completed shoes to music class. For every dance, we learned an alternate "art-shoe dance," which we performed seated or standing on the risers. The children's feet stayed put, but they made their art shoes dance in the air. I had over 100 first graders in the program *Shoes* for the PTA. For every song and rhyme, one group played instruments, one group danced, and the rest sang while doing their art-shoe choreography. In this manner, everyone got to play, sing and dance, which is a major feat with nine dozen six-year-olds.

Theme and variation is one of the most fundamental techniques of composition. *Sky Tree* and *New Shoes, Red Shoes* present a context in which your students, from the youngest to the oldest, can experience this very essential concept through sight, movement and sound. It is through giving children these many ways of knowing that they become intuitive musicians.

Idit Kubitsky: "Ewe Children's Music from Ghana in the Classroom" *Beth lafigliola*

The small hands of children at play gently trace circles in the sand, and with one unified motion, the group emphatically passes a pebble to the right in this rock-passing game. The children sing about the care and repair of shoes as they squat barefoot in the dry dust near their mud huts in southeastern Ghana. The values and traditions of the elders are passed through the songs of play. Just as the men in the village weave intricate patterns on their looms, the people weave song, dance, the playing of traditional instruments, and drama into the fabric of village life. In this session, the songs of the children become an important element in understanding the values and traditions of the Ewe people.

Idit Kubitsky recorded the music of Kopeyia, Ghana, while completing her master's degree work during the summers of 1996 and 1997. Ms. Kubitsky, who teaches high school music in Israel, skillfully shared a sample of her work at the AOSA Conference in Rochester, November 2000.

The session begins with a videotape showing the simple life of the village. The recording gives a point of reference for the activities that follow, and Ms. Kubitsky often returns to show other segments that lend authenticity to the games the group learns. With this introduction, Ms. Kubitsky immerses the participants into the culture by singing a song about buying shoes. With no electricity or running water, the village values the few shoes they own and take good care of them. With the rhythmic pulse of the rock-passing game and the gentle encouragement of the song leader, the participants put aside their own experiences and begin to value the lessons of the Ewe.

Continuing in a circle formation, Ms. Kubitsky introduces a handclapping game. She asks the participants to extend their left hands to their neighbors, palms up, and clap their neighbors' hands to the right. In accord with village life and the Orff Schulwerk process, the presenter

introduces the hand pattern with a speech chant that coordinates the motions of the hands. The last word of the chant is set apart by rhythm and motion. Each time the last word is chanted, the leader improvises a new motion, which the group must instantly recognize and mimic. The group breaks into partners, each partner taking a turn being the leader in this enjoyable activity.

Ms. Kubitsky challenges the group to take the chant to a new level of difficulty. Instead of using the chant as a reaction game, the last word becomes a place where the hands reverse motion. Ms. Kubitsky adds a layer of melody to the handclap activity that introduces cross rhythms in the African style. In Western notation, says Ms. Kubitsky, we perceive the beat in groups of three, but in Africa, the beats are grouped in twos and realized through a sidestep motion in the feet. This puts two against three in the body of the participant and becomes a challenge for everyone.

The videotape returns, showing a child making a drum from a can, plastic sheeting, and a wire loop for a rim. The

child inserts wood fragments around the drum rim to tighten the head and plays the drum with sticks. He seems quite pleased to test his new toy, perhaps proud because drum playing usually is reserved for the men of the village. The Ewe make another instrument using a can as a resonating chamber, a bowed stick, and one string that they pluck. Ms. Kubitsky demonstrates a song, and the videotape shows variations of playing techniques.

The last part of the session is a story that includes singing, drumming and dancing. Ms. Kubitsky demonstrates each instrument in the drum and percussion ensemble. She shows how the patterns complement the whole and then allows the group to practice layering the sounds in the body and voice before adding the authentic instruments. The drums are magnificent as the participants pool their imaginations to create a drama from the tale. The session ends with the addition of dancers using steps seen on the demonstration tape.

This videotaped session will be a wonderful resource for learners of all ages. (AOSA AVLibrary:112IK)

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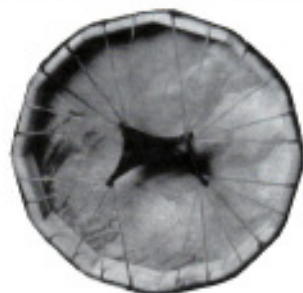
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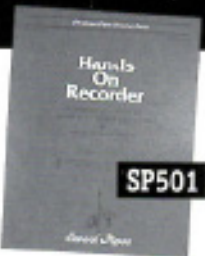


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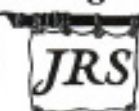
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Index of Advertisers

American Drum	46
American Recorder Society	52
Backyard Music	6
Beat'n' Path Publications	5
General Music Store	42
John's Music, Inc.	34
J.W. Pepper & Son, Inc.	2
Lyons	25
MMB Music, Inc.	28
MMB Music, Inc.	38
Music Is Elementary	34
Music Together	49
OAKE	46
Percussion Plus	6
Peripole Bergerault Inc.	4
Peripole Bergerault Inc.	26-27
Peripole Bergerault Inc.	back cover
Pro-Mark Corporation	44
REMO, Inc.	6
Rhythm Band, Inc.	15
Rhythm Band, Inc.	31
SAMBA (Hohner, Inc./HSS)	38
Silver Burdett/Scott Foresman	9
SONOR (Hohner, Inc./HSS)	inside front cover
Suzuki Musical Instruments	17
Sweet Pipes, Inc.	49
Ted Brown Music Co.	52
Warner Bros. Publications	13
Waterloo Music	34
Wayne Manthey — Drummaker	49
Wenger Corp.	18-19
West Music	inside back cover
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